

dens and splendid pile of buildings, including a truly beautiful church, afforded, moreover, ample means of occupation, not only entertaining but instructive and edifying as well. The pupils of the Sisters' schools—St. Euphrasia's, St. Mary's, and St. Joseph's—had prepared a charming programme. Charming also was it carried out. Recitation, music, dancing, and everything were perfect. It, however, one thing was, or could be, better it was the tableaux that were shown. They were indeed magnificent. The principal paper read at the session was one by Dean Phelan on the work of the

#### Sisters in Australasia.

High testimony was borne to their heroic services, but it was well supported, by facts and figures, and all who heard it were unanimous in their agreement that, if anything, the praise bestowed was less than that deserved. The paper was spoken to by his Eminence the Cardinal, who eloquently and feelingly supported and added to what had been said. The Bishop of Christchurch in also speaking made special allusion to the institution near his Lordship's own city, Mt. Magdala, Father Ginaty's great and perpetual monument. Dr. Grimes quoted the testimony of a local inspector of police who had expressed to his Lordship his astonishment at the work done by the Sisters, adding that so much could not be accomplished by the force under his command.

Within the walls at Abbotsford there are at present 1066 souls—366 inmates of the Magdalen Asylum, 310 inmates of the Industrial and Preservation Schools, 290 children attending the day school, and 110 members of the community of religious Sisters. A brochure, prettily bound in green and gold and containing a short sketch of the origin and progress of the Order, was presented to each visitor as a souvenir of this session held at the convent. Not, in fact, is it likely to be forgotten by any of those who were present at it. The visitors were also entertained by the Sisters at afternoon tea.

Previous to the opening of the session at Abbotsford his Eminence the Cardinal, the other visiting members of the hierarchy, the Monsieurs O'Haran, Bechinor, Treacy, Fowler, the Very Rev. M. Carey, the Rev. Fathers Fleming and McCarthy, Dr. A. L. Kenny (hon. sec.), K.S.G., and other laymen on whom had been conferred Papal decorations, were received at Government House, where they were presented to the Governor-General and Lady Northcote by his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne.

## CATHOLIC ENGLISH VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE

In connection with a very carefully written and exhaustive paper on the English Versions of the Bible (says the 'Austral Light') prepared for the Catholic Congress by the Rev. Philip O'Doherty, P.P., M.R.I.A., a large collection of the various editions has been made and will be on exhibition during the Congress week at the Cathedral Hall.

This collection, though necessarily incomplete, is amply sufficient to refute the old calumny regarding the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the translation and circulation of the Sacred Scriptures. All our Catholic English versions are based on the Rheims translation of the New Testament made in 1582, and the Douay translation of the Old Testament made in 1609. Hence all our English versions are usually known as the Douay Bible. At the very time when persecution was most intense in England, and the profession of the Catholic faith meant exile or death, some exiled English priests undertook, for the benefit of their countrymen at home, to translate the Sacred Scriptures into English. The translation was made chiefly by the Rev. Gregory Martin, Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, assisted by Dis. Allen (afterwards Cardinal), Bristow, Reynolds, and other scholars of high reputation. But the chief part of the labor fell on Dr. Gregory Martin, of whom Wood tells us, in his 'Athenae Oxonienses,' that he was a man 'of great learning and knowledge, especially in the Greek and Hebrew tongues, and of extraordinary modesty and moderation in his behaviour.'

#### The New Testament

was the first translated and published at Rheims in 1582. The English College of Douay, founded by Dr. William Allen in 1568, was, owing to the success of the Prince of Orange, violently broken up in 1578, and transferred to Rheims, where it continued till 1593, when it was re-established at Douay. Hence it is that the translation of the New Testament was made and published at Rheims, and that of the Old Testament at Douay.

The chief characteristic of Dr. Martin's translation, both of the New and Old Testaments, was its 'scrupulous

accuracy and fidelity' (Kitto Encycl. Bib. Lit. Art. Vulgate). Protestant scholars of the highest eminence, like Dr. Westcott, bear testimony to its 'scrupulous and even servile adherence to the text of the Vulgate.' 'To fidelity and accuracy the translators sacrificed beauty of language and elegance of expression, deeming it better, as Dr. Todd rightly observes, to offend even against the rules of grammar than to risk the sense of God's Word for the sake of a fine period.

A second edition of the New Testament was published at Antwerp in 1609. A third appeared at Antwerp in 1621, a fourth by John Coustonier in 1633.

#### The Translation of the Old Testament

was first published at Douay in 1609-10. This edition contains an address to English readers, giving as an explanation of the cause of the delay in publishing this second part—'Our poore estate in banishment,' and also giving the reason why the translation was made from the Latin Vulgate rather than from the Hebrew or Greek:—'If it be asked "Why we translate the Latin text, rather than the Hebrew or Greke, which Protestants preferre, as the fountaine tongues, wherein holie Scriptures were first written?" to this we answer "That if in dede those first pure editions were now extant, or if such as be extant were more pure than the Latin, we would also preferre such fountaines before the rivers, in whatsoever they should be found to disagree." But they explain that the MSS now existing are not as free from error as those used by St. Jerome, and accordingly they translated the Latin Vulgate rather than the less accurate Hebrew or Greek extant texts. The second volume of the first edition appeared in 1610. The second edition of the Douay version of the Old Testament appeared in 1635. This edition was published by John Coustonier, who had published the fourth edition of the New Testament in 1633.

Since that time innumerable editions both of the Old and New Testaments have been published in English. As time went on the asperities of the earlier editions were smoothed without any sacrifice of the sense, and our English translations at present, though without the strength or rhythm of the Authorised Version, give a more faithful rendering of the original.

#### All These Early Versions

were published on the Continent, because, as the translators sadly indicate, they dare not publish them in England. This fact will account, too, for the Latinized style of the early translations. The sound of the English language was lost to the ear, and its idiom was at variance with the language which the translators were forced, habitually, to speak on the Continent.

When copies of the Rheims version of the New Testament reached England in 1582, we are told by an impartial authority, J. R. Dore, in his most instructive book, 'Old Bibles. An Account of the Early Versions of the English Bible,' dedicated by permission to the Archbishop of Canterbury (1888), that 'this translation and the annotations attached to this version excited great opposition; many copies were seized by Queen Elizabeth's searchers, and confiscated. If a priest was found with a copy in his possession, he was at once imprisoned.' Nay, more, incredible as it may seem, the author proves that priests were not only imprisoned, but tortured in prison for

#### The Heinous Crime

of having a copy in their possession. Cecil, Lord Burleigh, speaking of a certain priest punished for this offence, says: 'He was charitably used, and was never so racked but that he was presently able to walke,' and 'that the warders whose office it is to handle the racke were charged to use it in as charitable a manner as such a thing might be.'

Mr. Dore's comment on this defence made by Lord Burleigh is as follows:—'So that there is no doubt that torture was applied to those who circulated this translation of the Testament, and inflicted by those who most zealously advocated the unlimited right of private judgment' (Second Edition, p. 292.)

The same author gives (p. 306) another proof of 'the hatred of this version of the New Testament by the dominant party of the day.' So bitter was it, he tells us, 'that an oath sworn on the Rheims version was not deemed valid. A touching incident in the life of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, about five years after the first edition was published, shows this. When Mary offered to pledge her word upon it that she had not conspired against the life of Queen Elizabeth the Earl of Kent exclaimed: "The book is a popish Testament, and, of course, an oath on it is of no value." "It is a Catholic Testament," rejoined the Queen, "and on that account I prize it the more, and, therefore, according to your own reasoning, you ought to judge my oath the more satisfactory."'