

## About Some Editions of the Bible.

**I**T is very natural that there should be different and conflicting notions concerning the Bible. Amid the many and too often contradictory statements which the average reader continually meets with, even in his ordinary reading, he is often at a loss what position to take. There are, however, certain points which every day seem to be growing clearer to the world at large. On one of these the *Ave Maria* touches in a recent issue when it refers to the learned author of "Saunterings in Spain" and quotes a reviewer in the London *Tablet* as writing that "he reminds us as how, through the Polyglot Bible of Cardinal Ximenes, issued from the University of Alcala the New Testament in Greek was in Spanish hands two years before that of Erasmus and eight years before that of Luther appeared." This, it will be seen, is not quite accurate. In his book entitled "Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts," published in 1896, Frederic Kenyon gives these details. In 1502 Cardinal Ximenes formed a scheme for a printed Bible, containing the Hebrew, Greek and Latin texts in parallel columns. Many years were spent in collecting and comparing manuscripts with the assistance of several scholars. It was not till 1514 that the New Testament was printed and the Old Testament was only completed in 1517. Even then various delays occurred, including the death of Ximenes himself, and the actual publication of this edition of the Greek Bible (known as the Complutension from the Latin name of Alcala, where it was printed) only took place in 1522.

Meanwhile, the great Dutch scholar, Erasmus, had received from a Swiss printer named Froben, the proposal to prepare an edition in Greek which should anticipate that which Ximenes had on hand. Erasmus consented: the work was rapidly executed and as rapidly passed through the press, and in 1516 the printed copy of the New Testament in the original Greek was given to the world. The first edition was full of errors of the press. It was based on no more than six manuscripts at the most and of these only one was either ancient or valuable and none was complete so that some of the verses of the Apocalypse are actually re-translated by Erasmus himself into Greek from the Latin; and what is more remarkable, some words of the translation which occur in no Greek manuscript