

their action. Of the character of the opposition they must leave others to judge ; but the fact of it has been made so public that it might be thought there was no answer to be given did this Report close without any reference to the subject. The position held by the Committee and its predecessors in office for the past sixty years has been substantially this : they have universally given preference to versions made from the original tongues, and they circulate them among Roman Catholics wherever it is possible to do so. But there are millions of Romanists abroad who are taught to regard these versions as falsified for Protestant ends, and they refuse to touch the Word of God save in certain translations made from the Latin Vulgate, which their priests use and admit to be genuine, though they fear the people reading them in their own tongue. Now if these translations were in the main faulty, the evil would outweigh the good, and it would be wrong to aid their circulation. But such is by no means the case. It is not pretended that they are faultless ; for, if they were, why give the preference to other versions at all ? But it is maintained, first, that the defects in these versions are greatly overstated, fair examination reducing them to very slender proportions ; and, secondly, that even when overstated they fade into insignificance, beside the vast mass of pure Gospel teaching which they contain, for they tell, in some instances more strongly even than our Authorized Version, that 'there is but one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus ;' and that 'if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' Who will take upon himself the awful responsibility of saying to the Roman Catholic, 'We find certain flaws in this, the only Bible you will accept, and therefore you must go without the Book altogether !' Your Committee assuredly dare not assume any such responsibility ; and so long as there are countries in which the great mass of the Roman Catholics will look at translations from the Vulgate as no others, so long must your Committee, not for expediency, but from highest motives of Christian duty, continue to give them the versions, faithful, and in the main, accurate, which reveal a Saviour and rebuke the fatal errors of the Church of Rome. They would as soon refuse water to a dying man because it was not filtered, or bread to the starving because it was not made of the finest wheat. After all, the objectors at home are not the only judges of the work whose opinion is entitled to weight. What do Protestant workers abroad say of these versions ? They use them themselves as their sharpest weapon against Rome, and they beseech you not to take the sword out of their hands because you may discern a speck of rust upon the blade. What do their converts say ? 'We were brought to Christ by these very translations, which taught us to see and renounce the errors in which we had been trained.' What does Rome herself say ? Does she favour these versions which are supposed to favour her ? No, but she burns them ; or else, as in Italy and Madagascar and South America, she is constrained to bring out authorized and annotated editions of her own to counteract them ; and her hatred is the best guarantee for the character and tendency of the versions in question. Above all, what does the Master say ? 'By their fruits ye shall know them ; a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.' And so, if it be seen that the use of these versions enlightens the mind and sanctifies the heart of the reader ; if through them multitudes have attained to a knowledge of the Gospel who otherwise must have lived and died in ignorance, and God has thus given 'testimony to the word of His grace,' not all the objections levelled against them can persuade your Committee against their circulation. They desire, after their Lord's own example, to be servants of all ; and, if they are to minister to the Roman Catholic world the highest reasons combine to support the course they have hitherto adopted."

The Archbishop of Canterbury said : My lord, I have to move the first resolution, and in doing so I am reminded of the words which were addressed