

Contributed Articles.

OUR LIBRARY BIBLES.

I - FACSIMILE MANUSCRIPTS.

AS might be expected in the library of a theological college a great many Bibles of one kind or another are to be found upon its shelves. They make a respectable collection of themselves already, even though no special effort has been made to secure them. Not many of them are in English, though these are not wanting. About twenty different languages or dialects are represented altogether and one would need to be something of a linguist to be at home with them all. Of course some of them are of comparatively little interest, being merely ordinary editions in various modern languages, such as may be obtained almost anywhere from the depository of the Bible Society. Others, however, are of sufficient importance and rarity to make some description of them probably interesting to a portion of the readers of the JOURNAL. Brief notices have already appeared of most of these from time to time as they came into our possession through the kindness of various friends of the college. But they have never been grouped together so as to give a right impression of their number and value.

At the head of such a list we naturally would place any manuscript copies of a date earlier than the invention of printing if we had them. Unhappily for us, though there are some 3,000 of these known to exist, few if any are to be found on this side of the Atlantic in any language, and certainly none of any great importance. But we are fortunate enough to have facsimile copies of the three great leading Greek manuscripts of the Bible which are now without hesitation placed in the forefront of any critical apparatus for determining the original text of the New Testament or the Septuagint version of the Old, viz.: the Vatican, Sinaitic and Alexandrian Codices. All of these are printed editions from type cast specially to resemble the handwriting of the originals. Now that photography is being applied to the exact and comparatively cheap reproduction of such documents we may hope to see the number considerably increased in the future. But in the meantime these three great witnesses for the text are at hand for easy consultation in copies that are admitted on all hands to be accurate.