

men of typography, but proved a financial failure and was sold mainly in sheets as waste paper, so that copies are rarely met with; and finally Walton's London Polyglott issued in 1657. Through the generosity of the Rev. L. H. Jordan, the the last of these is on our shelves along with Castell's famous Heptaglott Lexicon which was published at the same time and usually accompanies it. Walton's work is a noble production in six large folio volumes, and is by far the most scholarly and useful publication of this class. Nine different languages and seven different alphabets are used in it, though no one book of the Bible is printed in so many. The various versions are taken either from standard editions or good manuscripts while the prolegomena and collections of various readings were the first serious attempt at a scientific criticism of the text. One is not surprised to learn that nearly all the leading scholars in England were employed on the work in one capacity or another, and yet it is but one of the evidences of the pre-eminent learning and intellectual vigour with which England was blessed in the days of the Commonwealth. It was published by subscription under the patronage of Oliver Cromwell who permitted the paper for it to be imported free of duty. The earliest copies that were issued contained a grateful recognition of this favour in the preface. But Walton had no special ad-

miration for the Protector, and as the Restoration took place before the edition was all bound and delivered he cancelled that portion of the preface, substituting a bitter invective against republicans with a fulsome eulogy of Charles II. which he had done nothing to deserve. Hence there are two classes of copies of this great work, known as the republican and the royal. The former are much the rarer and command a higher price, but the only difference is in the preface. Our copy is beautifully ruled by hand with red lines between the different versions, greatly improving the appearance of the page and facilitating the ease of reference.

3. An interesting work of a somewhat different character but which may not improperly be associated with these Polyglotts is one of Bomberg's great Rabbinical Bibles, presented to the library by the Rev. Aaron Matthews of Liverpool, well known in Montreal through several visits paid to the city. It is rather a remarkable fact that the Hebrew text of the Old Testament had been printed in full more than twenty-five years earlier than the Greek text of the New, the first edition having appeared in 1488 while a second saw the light before the close of the century, both being intended solely for the use of the Jews. In the sixteenth century the great printers of Hebrew Bibles were the Bombergs of