

Bunker Hill, and the ship in the harbour which took part in the Civil War, we were able to visit the Semitic and Oriental Museum at Harvard.

Perhaps the chief advantage of any such Conference is the opportunity it affords of meeting enthusiasts and of discussing subjects of mutual interest. A friendly welcome met one everywhere, and the hospitality of the Americans lived up to its high reputation.

One of the unofficial discussions might interest readers of SCRIPTURE. From Fr. Vosté's observations we gathered that the time is not far distant when a translation into Latin direct from the original languages of the Bible will be made and authorized for the Liturgy. This has, of course, already taken place in the new version of the Psalms. A corollary to this is that many of us may live to see the day when we shall hear read in church a new English translation of Holy Writ made from the original languages through a Latin translation. It is noteworthy that the Pontifical Biblical Commission in its answer of 30th April 1934 to a question submitted by the Dutch Hierarchy, declared that the version to be read in churches must be made from "a text approved by the Church for the Sacred Liturgy."

D. J. LEAHY.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Since the Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament were to be fulfilled only in the then distant future, how did contemporary Israelites recognize the divine mission of the prophets and distinguish them from false ones?*

To keep the expectation of the Messiah vivid in the mind of Israel by ever clearer prophecies concerning Him was indeed one of the functions of the prophets, but it was not their main or primary one. Their chief duty was to proclaim Yahweh as the true and only God and maintain the people in His worship without any admixture of superstition and idolatry, cf. Ricciotti, *Storia d'Israele*, vol. I, p. 384. Their task involved the reassertion of the divine revelation, given to Abraham and Moses. Moreover, since Yahweh was a holy God, it included the inculcation of the moral law and the observance of the Ten Commandments. The sublimity and purity of the teaching of the true prophets cannot but have been in obvious contrast to the spirit of compromise and hypocrisy of the false ones. The true prophets stood out also by their personal sanctity, frequently suffering persecution and even death as a recompense for their preaching; whereas it was notorious that the false prophets sought the favour of the great and powerful in the land.

In the next place, the divine mission was attested either by physical miracles of which many are recorded in the Old Testament or by manifestations of miraculous knowledge of which likewise there are many instances on record in the Bible. Such miraculous knowledge referred to matters which, though in the present, could not have been known to the prophet in the normal way, e.g., I Kings ix, 20; or they referred to events in the near future, so that the fulfilment could be verified in proof of the claim of the prophet to a divine mission, e.g., Num. xvi, 30; IV Kings vii, 1. The concurrence of these two means of recognition—the first indirect and negative, the second direct and positive, enabled men of goodwill to recognise with moral certainty the prophets that were really sent by God.

No doubt false prophets simulated a divine sending and deceived some, but in this matter as in other religious questions the truth of God's word applies: " ' If you seek me with all your heart, I shall let myself be found ' saith the Lord."

J. P. ARENDZEN.

*Are we to hold that the anonymous sinner of Lk. vii, 36ff, Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and Mary Magdalen are three distinct persons, or two, or one and the same person?*

St. Luke mentions an unnamed sinner who anointed the feet of Christ (l c.) St. Luke and St. John speak of Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha, who was hostess to Christ at Bethany (Lk. x, 39-42; Jn. xi, 1-33; xii, 1-8). All four Evangelists mention Mary Magdalen ("the Magdalen") as one out of whom Christ had cast seven devils, who was one of the holy women who accompanied Him in His Galilean ministry (Lk. viii, 2), who went up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem before the Passion, and stood near the Cross (Mt. xxvii, 55; Mk. xv, 40; Jn. xix, 25), and on the Resurrection Day went to the tomb with the other women to anoint His body (Mt. xxviii, 1; Mk. xvi, 1; Lk. xxiv, 10), was the first to see the Risen Christ (Jn. xx, 16; Mk. xvi, 9), and was sent by Him to the Apostles to announce His Resurrection.

Since the time of St. Gregory the Great the opinion that the three Mariés are one and the same person has been widely popular in the west, and its popularity may mislead many into regarding it as the traditional opinion. Fr. Holtzmeister has shown conclusively that there is no exegetical tradition among the Fathers on this matter. The Eastern Church venerates the Sinner on 31st March, Mary of Bethany on 18th March, and Mary Magdalen on 22nd July. In the Latin Liturgy, the Church makes use of texts relative to all three women in the Mass and Office of the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, but in so doing has no intention of proposing an infallible judgment on the question of their unity or