

THE  
BIBLICAL REPERTORY.

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JULY 1838.

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No. III.

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ART. I.—*The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. By William Tyndale, the Martyr. The Original Edition, 1526, being the first vernacular translation from the Greek. With a Memoir of his Life and Writings. To which are annexed, the essential variations of Coverdale's, Thomas Matthew's, Cranmer's, the Genevan, and the Bishops' Bibles, as marginal readings.* By J. P. Dabney. Andover: printed and published by Gould & Newman; from the London edition of Bagster. New York: corner of Fulton and Nassau Streets. 1837. 8vo.

THE first printed translation of the Scripture into English was the New Testament of William Tyndale. The first published translation, however, was that of Wickliffe. But it was published, as were all other books of that remote period, only in manuscript. There appears to have been little or no connexion between Wickliffe's translation and those which succeeded. It was made from the Latin, and between it and Tyndale's there occurred the long interval of a century and a half. But from Tyndale onwards there was an almost continuous series of praiseworthy efforts to render perfect the English translation of the Scriptures, giving birth successively to Coverdale's in 1535, Matthew's in 1537, Cran-

mer's and Taverner's in 1539, the Geneva Bible in 1560, and Parker's or the Bishops' Bible in 1568, and resulting at last in that noble version, made by order of king James, which soon threw into disuse all its predecessors, and which has reigned ever since, unrivalled and alone. All these successive translations, thus crowded into the space of little more than half a century, though made by men skilful in the original tongues, yet purposely conformed each to the phraseology of its predecessor, so far as was supposed to be consistent with propriety of expression or fidelity to the original. They all therefore bear a strong family likeness, and their authors stand out in bold relief as a noble band of fellow-labourers, who, though separated in time and independent in action, yet combined to the production of one glorious result.

Tyndale lived to publish only his New Testament. He had in readiness for the press, however, nearly all the historical parts of the Old Testament, and was preparing to give his countrymen the whole Bible in their own tongue. Though he lived not to see his great design complete, yet he had the singular honour of giving them the first vernacular translation of the New Testament from the Greek. His labours were made the groundwork, more or less directly, of all the subsequent efforts, and enter largely into the composition of our present English Bible.

The copies of Tyndale's Testament have become exceedingly scarce, particularly of the earlier editions, and of the first edition it is believed only two copies are in existence, one very imperfect and defective, the other complete and in a beautiful state of preservation in possession of the Baptist college at Bristol. It was therefore a highly commendable undertaking in Mr. Offor, the English editor, to give the public in 1836 an exact reprint from this Bristol copy, together with a valuable memoir of the venerable author's life. The publication before us professes to be a reprint of the English work (the Memoir somewhat abridged), together with a short preface, an historical notice of the six translations which intervened between Tyndale's and James', and, at the foot of the page, the *various readings*, or passages which any or all of those "ante-James translators" rendered differently from Tyndale.

This last is a very important feature of the publication and sufficient to constitute it a new work. It is in fact to give not Tyndale's translation merely, but a sort of polyglot of all that family of translations of which he was the illustrious proge-

nitor. To form an idea of the value of such a design, if adequately accomplished, it is only necessary to recollect the extreme scarcity of these Bibles. It is next to impossible, perhaps in this country entirely impossible, for an individual at any expense to obtain access to them all, so as to be able to compare them side by side and to judge of the progress of the language and of the merits of the different translators; and it would have supplied a great desideratum if the publishers had at once enlarged the book and given these translations in full in parallel columns, in the manner in which polyglots are usually printed. To give them, as is professed to be done in this volume, by means of variations printed at the bottom of the page, is indeed practicable, but requires extreme care and accuracy on the part of the editor. And such a work, though not so desirable as the one suggested above, would yet have afforded materials for independent criticism to those who had not access to the ancient copies. This appears to us the obvious design of a publication of this sort, and, to be of any practical utility, the variations should be given line for line and word for word, just as they occur. This however the editor thinks too laborious and hypercritical, and prefers giving them only "for substance."

"In the notation of various readings from the versions here embraced, *infra lineam*, regard has in the main been had only to essential differences, i. e. to differences in sense: to have extended it to particles and phrases, except when these had a bearing on the whole texture of the verse, would have been tedious to the collator, unasked for by readers, and encumbering to the work."

This course may have been less "tedious to the collator," but to our mind it detracts materially from the value of the work. The reader, who wishes to form an independent opinion as to the merits and peculiarities of the different translations, is no better off than before. He has not the means of judging for himself, but is obliged to rely on the judgment of the editor as to what constitutes "essential differences."

What qualifications the editor brought to the task we have no means of judging except from the book itself. He does not in the outset create any prepossession in his favour by the general tone of disparagement which he uses towards the received version. He mourns over it as something "which is for ever entailed on the English community of both continents; and this, without the faintest hope of any future revision." He speaks of it as "so often and so strangely admired, like—if it be not rather *unlike*—the bird in the fable,

for borrowed plumage, and praised, as if an independent translation, for virtues not its own." "We are apt to speak of the advantage, in some walks of authorship (as in that before us), to a later work, from the number of models and guides in kindred enterprises that preceded; and to find an apology for the defects of an earlier one, in having an un-beaten path to travel. But when we turn in the present instance to look at the results, we are well nigh tempted to suspect that in our mother-tongue at least the order of biblical translation has, by some chance, been inverted." He calls Tyndale "the *only* independent translator." He speaks of "the Received Version (*so called*)," and says "its nursing-fathers of the throne and the hierarchy urged it into circulation among an unwilling people." And, after quoting English opinions to the effect "that James's translators have less merit than any of their predecessors," that they "did little more than copy the Genevan version," that this last "is not so absurdly literal as the one in common use," and is "altogether the best English version that has yet appeared;" "he ventures to say further,—that of the very few among us, whose peculiar turn of mind and course of studies warrants them to speak to this point, and yet more, warrants them to be heard, he knows of no one who fails to coincide with the trans-atlantic testimonies already cited." Now we may not be of the number of "the critical few" who are entitled to be heard, still we may venture to affirm that such sentiments as these do not commend the author to us as one in whose judgment implicit confidence can be placed, as to what constitute "essential differences" of reading. Nor is our estimate of his qualifications for the task increased by the confused manner in which the various readings are designated, as explained in pp. vi. and vii. of the Preface.

"There are some readers, it is not unlikely, who will need instructions towards the profitable use of the Notes. The citations, as all know, stand in lieu of the words following the same numbers in the text. They are extended (whenever the case would permit,) until the versions above and below again meet: where this was inconvenient, the ordinary rules of grammar and syntax, it is hoped, will make it clear how far the marginal substitute is to run, at the first glance, or on a slight comparison. The meaning may occasionally not be so clear in respect to insets, i. e. notes within notes. They occur only where two or more authorities are affixed to the same citation; and the inset in crotchets denotes that one of these authorities varies from the others as to a word or clause of the fragment common to them. The clause or word within the crotchets—as an uniform rule—answers to that which directly precedes it. Perhaps it will occasionally relieve uncertainty and doubt, to say, that where the inset is meant to stand for *all* the antecedent part of the citation, it begins, (and then only), like the principal note itself, with a capital. But in



relation to the notes and the dilemmas they may sometimes create, there can, as a general advice be no greater convenience than the open page of the familiar scriptures; with whose phraseology, the marginal citations, especially if from the Geneva or Bishops, will be so apt to correspond. Crotchets in the text show the extent of the omission by the version referred to below. The reference *post* [i. e. afterwards] signifies that the authority before it, repeats the specified expression once or oftener again in the chapter, if in answer to the same word in the list."

It is not customary in regard to works of this kind to remark upon mere matters of style. But where the editor adopts such a principle of collation as to make the whole question turn upon his taste and judgment, it becomes in a manner necessary. There are faults, however, upon which it is both painful and idle to dwell. The want of grammatical English seems to preclude all criticism upon any thing higher. We throw into a note, therefore, a few sentences from the prefatory part, leaving it to the reader to decide, whether the man who writes thus is the one to sit in judgment upon different versions, and to speak so contemptuously as he does of the one in common use.\*

These remarks, it will be seen, apply only to the marginal readings which accompany the American reprint, and which were supposed to give it such a superiority over the English edition. And had those readings been given in a manner that would have furnished the basis of intelligent criticism, and by an editor, whose taste, scholarship and reputation would have inspired the necessary confidence, they would undoubtedly have possessed an interest and importance fully equal to that of the original work. As it is, we cannot but regard much of the labour that has been bestowed upon the

\* "The honour of giving to the public the first complete English Bible, was reserved for MILES COVERDALE; and who thus divides in some sort with his predecessor Tyndale, that interest and reverence with posterity, which we naturally yield to the other, as the great pioneer of a forlorn hope."—p. 85.

"The noted test of the heavenly witnesses (John v. 7.) appears within crotchets: it may [here be anticipated to say, in this connexion, that the same remark applies to the Bibles of Cranmer and Taverner."—p. 86.

"In the marginal readings of the present work, it will be apparent how often they are found together and alone; and the deference, with which the later treads in the steps of the earlier work."—p. 90.

"Coverdale, to whose name the reader has now become familiar, had in Edward's reign returned to England," &c.—p. 92.

"Of the works noticed in the present sketch, the rarity of some of them, in this country at least, exceeds that of almost all other books in the language."—p. 92.

"It may be doubted where shall we seek for one, who has taken a wider survey or pursued a more minute comparison of most of the modern versions of Europe."—p. 94.

American edition, as nearly thrown away. The preface, and historical notice of the early versions, are trashy in the extreme; and the readings of those versions are rendered comparatively useless by the principles upon which they have been introduced. Still, after every abatement, the publication is one of high interest. The New Testament of Tyndale is in itself a remarkable performance. It has, too, the enviable peculiarity of being the first ever printed in our vernacular language. Its phraseology enters largely, as we said before, into the composition of our present version, and through it into the mass of English literature, and the language of common life. We hail its reprint, therefore, as an evidence of good taste, and as a valuable addition to theological literature. Its language now more than three centuries old, will make it interesting to the philologist; its well written biographical details cannot fail to be acceptable to the general reader; its presence in a theological library should be considered as almost indispensable; while its typographical beauty render it fit for any place.

The translation of Tyndale, we said, was in itself a remarkable production. Six or seven independent translations succeeded, made by men of learning and ability, and some by large companies of learned men, and with years of labour. And yet the reader will be surprised to find how few places it was found necessary to correct or improve in this first attempt which formed the groundwork of their successive labours. In proof of this assertion, almost any page may be adduced with confidence. To make the experiment fairly to those who are not used to this kind of reading, it will be necessary to strip it of its black-letter type and its ancient orthography. The same, let it be remarked, is done in regard to our present version, the orthography of which is by no means the same as when the translation was first made. King James' version, by its universal adoption and use, did much, no doubt, to fix the orthography of the language, before extremely unsettled, and the changes in this respect were much less in the two centuries which followed than in the half century preceding; still many changes have been made since that time in the spelling of numerous words, and the Bible has been made to correspond in this respect with the mass of other books. But to proceed with the promised quotation, which we take from the third chapter of Colossians, and which we give in modern type and spelling.

"If ye be then risen again with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things that are above, and not on things which are on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ which is our life shall show himself, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

"Mortify therefore your members which are on the earth, fornication, uncleanness, unnatural lust, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is worshipping of idols: for which things' sakes the wrath of God falleth on the children of unbelief. In which things ye walked once, when ye lived in them.

"But now put ye also away from you all things, wrath, fierceness, maliciousness, cursed speaking, filthy speaking out of your mouths. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his works, and have put on the new, which is renewed in knowledge of God, after the image of him that made him, where is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarous or Scythian, bond or free: but Christ is all in all things.

"Now therefore as elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another (if any man have a quarrel to another) even as Christ forgave you, even so do ye. Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness, and the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which peace ye are called in one body: and see that ye be thankful.

"Let the word of God dwell in you plenteously in all wisdom. Teach and exhort your ourselves, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs which have favour with them, singing in your hearts to the Lord. And all things (whatsoever ye do in word or deed) do in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him."

Now let it be remembered that the above extract is from the first attempt to translate from the original, made by an unaided and persecuted individual, in a foreign land, more than three centuries ago.

The peculiarities of Tyndale's version we hope to have another opportunity of discussing. All that is proposed at present is to give some very brief sketches of the life of this distinguished reformer.

William Tyndale was born at Hunt's Court, Gloucestershire, about the year 1477. At an early age he went to the University of Oxford, where he soon evinced that fondness for the scriptures which was the most prominent trait in his character. He was a diligent and successful student, and made such proficiency in learning that he read and expounded the New Testament together with sundry topics of divinity to his fellow students. While still at the University of Oxford, more than twenty years before he set about printing his New Testament, he began translating the scriptures into English, and the specimens of this juvenile attempt that are quoted, show a most extraordinary degree of proficiency and skill. The original autograph of these translations is in the possession of Mr. Ofor, the English biographer. "It is in quarto, the margins ornamented with borders, and each por-

tion accompanied with a drawing in imitation of some ancient missal. His initials W. T. occur in many places, and on two of the ornamental pillars he has placed the date, 1502; the capital of one having an inscription preceding the date,—*TIME TRIETH, 1502.*” Even so early as this he seems to have felt himself to be an obnoxious man. A scroll in one of the ornaments of this manuscript contains this striking inscription, “*Defend me, O Lord, from all them that hait me. W. T.*” His early proficiency in translating may be estimated by comparing an extract from this college performance with a corresponding extract from his matured work published twenty-three years later.

*MS. of 1502.*

“And one of the Pharises desired him that he wolde eate with him. And he wente into the Pharises house; and sat downe to meate. And beholde a woman in that cytie (whiche was a sinner) as soone as she knewe that Jesus sat at meate in the Phrases house, she brought an alblaster boxe of oyntment, and stode at his fete behynde him wepyng: and began to wasshe his fete with the teares, and dyd wype them with the heeres of her heade: an kissed his fete, and anoynted them with the oyntment. When the Pharise whiche had bydden him, sawe, he spake within himselfe, saynge, yf this man were a prophet, he wolde surely knowe who, and what maner of woman this is that touched him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus answered, an saide vnto him: Simon, I haue somewhat to saye vnto the. And he saide. Master, say on.”

*First Edition, 1526.*

“And one of the pharyses desired hym that he wolde eate with hym. And he cam in to the pharises housse, and sate doune to meate. And beholde a woman in that cite, which was a synner, as sone as she knewe that Jesus sate at meate in the pharises housse, she brought an alblaster boxe of oyntment, and she stode at his fete, behynde hym wepyng, and began to wesse his fete, with teares, and did wipe them with the heeres off her heed, and kyssed his fete, and anoynted them with oyntment.

“When the pharisee which bade hym to his housse, sawe that, hespake with in hym sylfe: saynge: Yf this man wer a prophet, he wolde surely have knowen who and what maner woman this is which toucheth him, for she is a synner. And Jesus answered, and sayde vnto hym: Simon I haue somewhat to say vnto the. And he sayd: Master saye on.”

After acquiring much celebrity at Oxford, he went to Cambridge also, for the purpose of “increasing more and more in learning, and being ripened in the knowledge of God’s word.” In Cambridge he met with that zealous and eminent reformer, John Frith. Frith was considerably younger than Tyndale, but the similarity of their tastes and feelings brought them much together, and laid the foundation of that lasting friendship which subsisted between them.

In 1502 Tyndale was ordained at the conventual church of the priory of St. Bartholomew’s in Smithfield, and in 1508 he took the vows and became a friar in the monastery at Greenwich. Of this part of his life little is known. In



the "Parable of the wicked Mammon," which he published twenty years afterward, he alludes to his having been "a brother of Greenwich." A curious memorandum has recently been found in a book belonging to the Cathedral library of St. Paul's. The book is the "Sermons de Herolt," printed 1495, and appears to have been given to the monastery by Tyndale's father, and to have found its way into the present library on the dissolution of the monastery. The memorandum is this: "Charitably pray for the soul of John Tyndale, who gave this book to the monastery of Greenwich of the observance of the minor brothers, on the day that brother William, his son, made his profession, in the year 1508."

Tyndale did not continue long as a friar. The first we hear of him, after his leaving the community, is in his native county, where he engaged as chaplain and private tutor to the family of Sir John Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, famed for his liberality and good cheer. The worthy knight's table was much frequented by the neighbouring clergy, and the conversation often fell very naturally upon the subject of Luther and his new doctrines, and various controverted topics of scripture, which Tyndale, from his previous studies and turn of mind, was much more competent to discuss than his clerical companions. So apt was he with his quotations from the scriptures, so hard did he press them with his quick replies and pertinent arguments, that they finally chose, in Fuller's quaint phrase, "to forbear Master Welch's good cheer, rather than to have the sour sauce therewith, Master Tyndale's company." The story is told with so much pith by the honest martyrologist, Fox, and is withal so characteristic of the times, that we cannot refrain from quoting the passage entire. "Leaving the university, he resorted to one Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children, and in good favour with his master. This gentleman, as he kept a good ordinary commonly at his table, there resorted to him sundry Abbots, Deans, Archdeacons, with divers other Doctors, and great benefited men; who there together with Master Tyndale sitting at the same table, did use many times to enter communication and talk of learned men, as of Luther, and of Erasmus; also of divers other controversies and questions of the scripture. Then Master Tyndale, as he was learned and well practised in God's matters, so he spared not to show unto them simply and plainly his judgment in matters, as he thought: and when as they at any time did vary from

Tyndale in opinions and judgment, he would show them in the book, and lay plainly before them the open and manifest places of the scriptures, to confute their errors, and confirm his sayings. And thus continued they for a certain season, reasoning and contending together divers and sundry times, till at length they waxed weary, and bare a secret grudge in their hearts against him." Unable therefore to contend with Tyndale, and yet unwilling to lose ground with so good a host as Sir John, they sought an opportunity of prejudicing him in private against doctrines, which it was easy to perceive would hurt their craft and perhaps break up their comfortable quarters. Accordingly, "not long after this, it happened that certain of these great doctors invited Master Welch and his wife to a banquet; where they had talk at will and pleasure, uttering their blindness and ignorance without any resistance or gainsaying." These representations made some impression on the minds of the good knight and his lady, especially the latter, who seems to have been disposed to regard it as presumptuous in a poor schoolmaster, like Tyndale, to set up his opinion against that of such *wealthy* doctors. So "Master Welch and his wife, coming home and calling for Master Tyndale, began to reason with him about those matters, whereof the priests had talked before at their banquet, [and] Master Tyndale, answering by scriptures, maintained the truth, and reprov'd their false opinions." Then said the Lady Welch, a stout and a wise woman, (as Tyndale reported) "Well, said she, there was such a doctor which may dispense an hundred pounds [a year], and another two hundred pounds, and another three hundred pounds: and what, were it reason, think you that we should believe you before them?" Tyndale discreetly made no reply; but relying upon the good sense of his patrons, when approached in a way that did not interfere with their prejudices, set about translating the Enchiridion of Erasmus, a work prepared by that eminent scholar and reformer to set forth the insufficiency of masses, fasts, vigils, pilgrimages, &c. in the matter of salvation and the necessity of regeneration and holiness of heart. Having completed the translation of this little manual, he presented it to the knight and his lady, and in this quiet unobtrusive way gained an impartial attention to the same arguments which, delivered by himself and in the heat of controversy, would have had no effect. The result may be conjectured. "The doctorly prelates," says Fox, "were no more so often called to the house, neither

had they the cheer and countenance when they came, as before they had." The priests, therefore, foiled in their attempt to lessen Tyndale in the estimation of his employer, adopted every means of annoyance and vexation to make, if possible, his own county "too hot" for him, and thus drive him away. "Flocking together to the ale-house (for that was their preaching place) they raged and railed against him, affirming that his sayings were heresy, adding, moreover, unto his sayings, of their own heads, more than ever he spake." They even had him arraigned before the Bishop's Chancellor (lawyer or justice), who, although no accuser dared to appear, yet "threatened him grievously, reviling and rating him as though he had been a dog." "The grudge of the priests increasing more and more against Tyndale, they never ceased barking and rating at him, and laid many sore things to his charge, saying that he was an heretic in sophistry, an heretic in logic, an heretic in divinity." The account which Tyndale himself gives of these country worthies, accords well with the previous statements—"a sort of unlearned priests, being full rude and ignorant, God knoweth: which have seen no more Latin than that only which they read in their Portesses and Missals (which yet many of them can scarcely read), except it be Albertus de secretis mulierum, in which, though they be never so sorrily learned, they pore day and night, and make notes therein, and all to teach the midwives, as they say; and also another [work] called Linwood, a book of constitutions to gather tithes, mortuaries, offerings, customs, and other pillage, which they call not theirs, but God's part, the duty of Holy Church, to discharge their consciences withal." Having such men to deal with, and finding that his further stay in Gloucestershire would be not only vexatious to himself, but troublesome and perhaps dangerous to his friends, he resolved to withdraw entirely from that part of the country. It was not however without one memorable incident. "It was not long after, but Master Tyndale happened to be in company of a certain divine, recounted for a learned man, and in communing and disputing with him, he made him to that issue, that the said great doctor burst out into these blasphemous words, and said; we were better to be without God's laws than the pope's. Master Tyndale, hearing this, full of godly zeal and not bearing that blasphemous saying, replied again, and said; I defy the pope, and all his laws," and then added the memorable saying, "IF GOD SPARE MY LIFE, ERE MANY

YEARS, I WILL CAUSE A BOY THAT DRIVETH THE PLOUGH TO KNOW MORE OF THE SCRIPTURES THAN YOU DO."

How amply he redeemed this noble pledge, we shall see hereafter. Leaving Gloucestershire Tyndale went to London, and after preaching awhile in the suburbs, applied to Cuthbert Tunstall, then bishop of London, in the hope of obtaining some situation in his palace that might afford him a subsistence and leisure at the same time to pursue his biblical studies. It is stated that he brought to Tunstall a letter of introduction from Erasmus. Be that as it may, he did not choose to rely upon it only, but brought with him evidence of his learning that could not be gainsayed. Tunstall, according to Fuller, "was a great scholar himself, and therefore probable to prove a patron to a learned man. Him Tyndale presented in vain with an oration out of Isocrates, which he had translated into English. But though he sued for himself in two tongues, Greek and English, both proved ineffectual, the bishop returning, "That he had more already than he could well maintain." Tyndale's amiable disposition, however, seems to have made him friends wherever he went. Accordingly it was not long before he met with a worthy alderman, Humphrey Monmouth, the counterpart of the good Gloucestershire knight. This Monmouth, when afterwards arraigned for heresy on the ground of his temporary connexion with Tyndale, gave this curious account of his guest. The document was found by Mr. Offor among the Harleian collection of State Papers. "Upon three years and a half past, and more, I heard the foresaid Sir William preach two or three sermons, at St. Dunstons in the west, in London, and after that I chanced to meet with him, and with communication I examined him what living he had, he said, none at all, but he trusted to be with my lord of London in his service, and therefore I had the better fancy to him. And afterward he went to my lord and spake to him, as he told me, and my lord of London answered him that he had chaplains enough, and he said to him that he would have no more at that time, and so the priest came to me again, and besought me to help him, and so I took him in my house half a year, and there he lived like a good priest as me thought, he studied most part of the day and of the night at his book, and he would eat but sodden meat by his good will, nor drink but small single beer; I never saw him wear linen about him in the space he was with me; I did promise him ten pounds sterling to pray for my father, mother, their



souls, and all Christian souls. I did pay it him when he made his exchange to Hamboro'. When I heard my lord of London preach at Powles Cross that Sir William Tyndale had translated the New Testament in English, and was noughtely translated, that was the first time that ever I suspected or knew any evil by him, and shortly all the letters and treatises that he sent me with divers copies of books that my servant did write, and the sermons that the priest did make at St. Dunstons, I did burn them in my house, he that did write them did see it. I did burn them for fear of the translator more than for any ill that I knew by them."

As was the case with the other Reformers, light broke in upon Tyndale's mind very gradually. He had by this time, however, become fully convinced of the necessity of a thorough reform in the church. The first step towards this was to give the people the scriptures; and for this Tyndale was now ready. But the attempt to print, as circumstances afterwards showed, would have brought both the author and his book together to the flames.

The arbitrary and tyrannical character of Henry VIII. is well known, as also how little he was disposed for any reformation beyond the transfer of the supreme ecclesiastical power from the pope's hands into his. All too are familiar with the fierce, unrelenting persecutions of Tunstall, Gardiner and the other bishops opposed to reform, and the haughty domination of that proud and powerful ecclesiastic, Cardinal Wolsey. To this list of persecutors we are pained to add the name of the learned and witty Lord Chancellor, Sir Thomas More. The author of "Utopia" was a strange compound of kindness and cruelty, of seriousness and jest. We have, from some cause, always been accustomed to look upon the favourable side of his character, and to see in him only the eminent scholar, the amiable philanthropist, the enlightened statesman. The examination into which this work has led, has brought a painful revulsion of feeling. The opponent of Tyndale appears as a fierce and bigoted polemic, who wrote nine volumes (most of them in folio) of the most virulent controversy, and who persecuted the poor reformer with a relentless zeal that led a contemporary to compare him to a hunted hare with twenty brace of greyhounds after him. He even directed it to be inscribed upon his tomb as a part of his epitaph. "*Furibus, Homicidis, Hæreticisque molestus*"—"a passing good praise," says Fuller, "save, after the way which he there calleth heresy, pious people worship

the God of their fathers." With such men to wield the arm of power, civil and ecclesiastical, Tyndale found it necessary to leave his native land, and complete abroad his long cherished purpose. There were at this time resident at various cities on the continent, numerous English merchants of wealth and influence, who, together with those of their own class at home, were generally disposed to favour the doctrines of the Reformation. The necessary commercial intercourse between these merchants and their friends in England, gave to Luther and the other Reformers on the continent a channel of communication and influence against which Henry and his ministers strove in vain. Tyndale resolved therefore to go abroad, where even the long arm of Wolsey and Henry might not reach him, and there printing without molestation his Testament and his other writings, trust to these pious merchants for their diffusion among his beloved countrymen. Towards the close of the year 1523, therefore, being now about forty-five years of age, he left England never to return; and during the remaining thirteen years of his life he was engaged in a series of labours and sufferings the most harassing for the good of that land from which he had made himself a voluntary exile.

Tyndale sailed directly to Hamburg, whence he soon after proceeded to Saxony to see and confer with Luther, with whom he remained some time. Although he went to several other places, he settled down eventually at Antwerp, where he became chaplain to a company of English merchants. There is some strange confusion as to dates; but the London Christian Observer, in a very elaborate and able article on the life and writings of Tyndale, makes it evident that the first edition of his New Testament was printed at Wittemberg in the year 1525. In getting it ready for the press, he was assisted by his friend Frith, and William Roy, another Englishman then on the continent. Having printed the New Testament, he proceeded to translate the Old, and, when he had the Pentateuch ready, sailed for Hamburg to get it printed. On the voyage he was shipwrecked and lost all his papers. Getting upon another vessel he reached Hamburg at length, and found Miles Coverdale, who by appointment was awaiting him there. Coverdale and he set about re-translating the Old Testament, and, before Tyndale's death, they had completed in company all the historical books, and the book of Jonah. How Coverdale pursued and finished this noble work, is well known. Our present business is with Tyndale.

It is difficult to conceive the consternation and alarm produced in England by the introduction of edition after edition of his Testament, as well as by the numerous treatises which with unceasing activity he poured into the country by means of the foreign merchants and their friends. Tunstall at first tried to buy up the books. More wrote against them. Henry issued his bloody edict, tantamount to a general search warrant, sweeping through the realm from the palace to the hovel. Numbers of pious people, in whose hands the "wicked abomination" was found, were cruelly imprisoned and put to death. Still the books found their way into the country, and were read with an avidity equal to the zeal with which it was sought to extirpate them. These last ten years of Tyndale's life were the busiest, and furnish the amplest materials for profitable discussion. But it is not within our design to give a connected life of this great reformer. All that can be attempted here is to give the general outline, with here and there a detailed sketch. We pass over, therefore, in silence, though with regret, his controversy with Sir Thomas More, the history of the successive editions of his Testament and of his other writings, the pope's bull, the king's proclamation, the fines, imprisonments, and burnings which pervaded the land. Henry and his advisers appear at last to have come to the conclusion that the only effectual way to put a stop to Tyndale's influence, was to get possession of his person. To this end, Wolsey, More, and even the monarch in person, set about a series of secret intrigues to inveigle Tyndale, and induce him by fair promises to return to England. Frith was in this way induced to return, and had Tyndale followed his example, he would no doubt have met with the same pitiable fate. Confidential agents were sent to the Low Countries on this business, the chief of whom was a man by the name of Vaughan, and the correspondence between them and their august employers is found among the papers in the British Museum. Extracts from this correspondence have been given in previous biographies, but Mr. Ofor has been the first to give all that relates to Tyndale, and it forms one of the most valuable portions of his Memoir. In one of these letters, Vaughan remarks, "the man is of a greater knowledge than the king's highness doth take him for, which well appeareth in his works. Would God we had him in England!" Another long fragment is given of a letter from one of these emissaries, who obtained a secret interview with Tyndale outside of the city, and

who, finding himself unaware in the presence of his long sought victim, was so awed by his dignified purity and truth, that in answering him, he tells his royal master he did it as his poor wit would serve him.

"The day before the date hereof, I spake with Tyndale without the town of Antwerp and by this means. He sent a certain person to seek me, whom he had advised to say, that a certain friend of mine, unknown to the messenger, was very desirous to speak with me; praying me to take pains to go unto him to such place as he should bring me. Then I to the messenger (said) what is your friend and where is he? His name I know not, said he, but if it be your pleasure to go where he is, I will be glad thither to bring you: thus doubtful what this matter meant, I concluded to go with him, and followed him till he brought me without the gate of Antwerp into a field lying nigh unto the stream, where was abiding me this said Tyndale. At our meeting, do you not know me? said this Tyndale. I do not well remember you, said I to him; my name, said he, is Tyndale. But Tyndale, said I, fortunate be our meeting. Then Tyndale: Sir, I have been exceeding desirous to speak with you. And I with you; what is your mind. Sir, said he, I am informed that the king's grace taketh great displeasure with me for putting forth of certain books which I lately made in these parts, but especially for the book named the Practice of Prelates, whereof I have no little marvel considering that in it I did but warn his grace of the subtle demeanor of the clergy of his realm towards his person, and of the shameful abuses by them practised, not a little threatening the displeasure of his grace and weal of his realm. In which doing, I showed and declared the heart of a true subject which sought the safeguard of his royal person and weal of his commons, to the intent that his grace thereof warned might in due time prepare his remedies against the subtle dreams. If for my pains therein taken; if for my poverty; if for mine exile out of mine natural country, and being absent from my friends; if for my hunger—my thirst—my cold—the great danger wherewith I am everywhere compassed—and finally if for innumerable other hard and sharp sicknesses which I endure, not yet feeling their asperity by reason I hoped with my labours to do honour to God—true service to my prince, and pleasure to his commons, how is it that his grace thus considering may either by himself think or by the persuasions of another, be brought to think, that in this doing I should not show a pure mind, a true and incorrupt zeal, and affection to his grace. Was there in me any such mind when I warned his grace to beware of his cardinal whose iniquity he shortly after approved according to my writing? Doth this deserve hatred? Again, may his grace, being a Christian prince, be so unkind to God, which hath commanded his word to be spread throughout the world; to give more faith to the wicked persuasions of men, which presuming above God's wisdom and contrary to that which Christ expressly commandeth in his Testament dare say, that it is not lawful for the people to have the same in a tongue that they understand because the purity thereof should open men's eyes to see their wickedness!! Is there more danger in the king's subjects than in the subjects of all other princes, which in every of their tongues have the same under privilege of their sufferance, as I now am, very death were more pleasant to me than life, considering man's nature to be such as can bear no truth.

"This, after a long communication had between us, for my part making answer as my poor wit would serve me which were too long to write. I said him with gentle persuasions to know whether he would come into England ascertaining him that means should be made if he thereto were minded without his peril or danger that he might so do. And that what surety he would devise for the same purpose, should by labour of friends be obtained of your majesty: but



to this he answered that he would not durst come into England, albeit your grace would promise him neversomuch the surety. Fearing lest, as he hath before written, your promise made should shortly be broken by the persuasion of the clergy which would affirm that promises made with heretics ought not to be kept. After this he told me how he had finished a work against my Lord Chancellor's book, and would not put it in print till such time as your grace had seen it, because he perceiveth your displeasure towards him for hasty putting forth of his other works, and because it should appear that he is not of so obstinate mind as he thinketh he is reported unto your grace. This is the substance of his communication had with me, which as he spake, I have written to your grace, word for word, as nigh as I could by any possible means bring to remembrance. My trust, therefore, is that your grace will not but take my labours in the best part. I thought necessary to be written unto your grace. After these words, he then being something fearful of me, lest I would have pursued him, and drawing also towards night, he took his leave of me, and departed from the town, and I toward the town, saying I should shortly peradventure see him again, or if not, hear from him. Howbeit, I suppose, he afterward returned to the town by another way, for there is no likelihood that he should lodge without the town, hasty to pursue him I was not, because I had some likelihood to speak shortly again with him, and in pursuing him, I might perchance have failed of my purpose, and put myself in danger. To declare to your majesty what in my poor judgment I think of the man, I ascertain your grace I have not communed with a man" . . . . .

The following is another passage in a letter from Vaughan to the king, which exhibits Tyndale's character in a lovely aspect.

"I have again been in hand to persuade Tyndale, and to draw him the rather to favour my persuasions, and not to think the same feigned, I showed him a clause contained in master Cromwell's letter, containing these words following. And notwithstanding other the premises in this my letter contained, if it were possible, by good and wholesome exhortations to reconcile and convert the said Tyndale from the train and affection which he now is in, and to excerpte, and take away the opinions and fantasies sorely rooted in him, I doubt not but the king's highness would be much joyous of his conversion and amendment. And so being converted, if then he would return into his realm, undoubtedly the king's royal majesty is so inclined to mercy, pity, and compassion, that he refuseth none which he seeth to submit themselves to the obedience and good order of the world. In these words I thought to be such sweetness and virtue as were able to pierce the hardest heart of the world. And as I thought, so it came to pass. For after sight thereof, I perceived the man to be exceeding altered, and to take the same very near unto his heart, in such wise that water stood in his eyes. And answered what gracious words are these. I assure you, said he, if it would stand with the king's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the scripture to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the emperor in these parts, and of other christian princes, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same: but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his royal majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or tortures, yea what death his grace will, so that this be obtained. And till that time, I will abide the aspect of all chancés whatsoever shall come, and endure my life in as many pains, as it is able to bear and suffer. And as concerning my reconciliation his grace may be assured that whatsoever I have said or written, in all my life against the honour of God's word, and so proved; the same shall before his majesty and all the world, utterly renounce and forsake. And

with most humble and meek mind embrace the truth, abhorring all error soever at the most gracious and benign request of his royal majesty, of whose wisdom, prudence and learning I hear so great praise and commendation, then of any other creature living. But if those things which I have written be true, and stand with God's word, why should his majesty having so excellent a gift of knowledge in the scriptures, move me to do any thing against my conscience with many other words which were too long to write. Finally, I have some good hope in the man, and would not doubt to bring him to some good point, were it that some thing now and then might proceed from your majesty towards me, whereby the man might take the better comfort of my persuasions. I advertised the same Tyndale that he should not put forth the same book, till your most gracious pleasure were known, whereunto he answered, mine advertisement came too late, for he feared lest one that had his copy, would put it very shortly in print, which he would let if he could, if not there is no remedy."

Tyndale, notwithstanding the tenderness of his nature and his anxious desire to bring about an accommodation, as manifest in the above extracts, still understood too well the character and designs of Henry and his advisers to yield to these solicitations to return to England. The king finding it impossible to allure his victim to England, threw off the mask, and declared he would not have the soil of his realm polluted by such a desperate heretic. His majesty, too, began to have a new cause of alarm, and to find that he had committed to his agents a dangerous task. The proud monarch, who had entered into a sort of personal contest with a poor unprotected exile, was tormented with the mortifying suspicion that his own confidential agents were becoming converts to the man whom they were employed to ensnare. To prevent such an untoward issue, Henry caused the secretary of state, Lord Cromwell, to draw up a suitable answer to Vaughan's letter. The original of this dispatch is among the state papers now for the first time published. It contains many alterations, made according to Mr. Offor, by the king himself; though the editor of the *Christian Observer* dissents from this opinion, and conjectures that the corrections were by More. This document is so curious that we intended to give an exact reprint of it, as quoted in the *Observer*. But our extracts have already perhaps exceeded the proper limits, and we desist.

In the epistle to the reader at the close of the first edition of his *New Testament* in 1525, Tyndale acknowledges that there are many imperfections owing to the difficult nature of the task and the discouraging circumstances in which it was performed, and promises in due time to revise and correct it, soliciting to this end the criticisms of all that are "learned Christianly." "Them that are learned Christianly, I beseech: forasmuch as I am sure, and my conscience beareth me record, that of a pure intent, singly and faithfully I have

interpreted it, as far forth as God gave me the gift of knowledge, and understanding: that the rudeness of the work now at the first time offend them not: but that they consider how that I had no man to counterfeit, neither was helped with English of any that had interpreted the same, or such like thing in the scripture before time. Moreover, even very necessity and cumbrance (God is record) above strength, which I will not rehearse, lest we should seem to boast ourselves, caused that many things are lacking, which necessarily are required. Count it as a thing not having his full shape, but as it were born before his time, even as a thing begun rather than finished. In time to come (if God have appointed us thereunto) we will give it his full shape: and put out if ought be added superfluously: and add to if ought be overseen through negligence: and will enforce to bring to compendiousness, that which is now translated at the length, and to give light where it is required, and to seek in certain places more proper English, and with a table to expound the words which are not commonly used, and show how the scripture useth many words, which are otherwise understood of the common people: and to help with a declaration where one tongue taketh not another. And will endeavour ourselves, as it were to seeth it better, and to make it more apt for the weak stomachs: desiring them that are learned, and able, to remember their duty, and to help thereunto: and to bestow unto the edifying of Christ's body which is the congregation of them that believe) those gifts which they have received of God for the same purpose. The grace that cometh of Christ be with them that love him. Pray for us."

In the numerous editions which followed he made no alterations till 1534, when he profited by the criticisms both of friends and foes and gave a new edition in 8vo at Antwerp with his last corrections. In the following year he published an edition in a provincial orthography, supposed to be that of his native Gloucestershire, and with a view perhaps of giving a still more literal fulfilment to his prediction to the priest, that ere many years the very plough boy should know more of scripture than they did. This provincial edition however was not repeated, all subsequent reprints being made from the revised edition of 1534.

Whether Tyndale translated all of the Old Testament, is not known. It is certain that he intended to translate the whole, and that he did translate a large portion, and it is

highly probable that his manuscript was used by his fellow labourer, Miles Coverdale, who brought out the whole Bible in English shortly after Tyndale's death. His principal writings besides the Prologues and Expositions upon different parts of the scriptures, were his Answers to Sir Thomas More, the Parable of the Wicked Mammon, the Obedience of a Christian Man, the Practice of Prelates, the Pathway into the Scriptures, and a treatise upon the Sacraments, together with sundry minor pieces and letters. These were collected and published by the pious martyrologist Fox in a folio volume, together with the works of Frith and Barnes.

The reader cannot fail to have been struck with the perfect sincerity and honesty of purpose manifest in the extracts we have given from this pious Reformer. It was a striking trait in his character, and shines as a ray of light from every page of his writings. He sometimes, too, expresses himself with a simplicity that is very touching. In a letter to Frith, not long before his death, he speaks thus of his translation. "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus Christ to give reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would do this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches might be given me." "Judge, good Christian reader," says Frith, "whether these words be not spoken of a faithful, clear, and innocent heart."

The manner in which he lived at Antwerp, while chaplain to the company of English merchants, is thus described by Fox. "He was a man very frugal and spare of body, a great student and earnest labourer, namely in the setting forth of the Scriptures of God. He reserved or hallowed to himself two days in the week, which he named his days of pastime, and those days were Monday the first day in the week, and Saturday the last day in the week. On the Monday he visited all such poor men and women as were fled out of England by reason of persecution into Antwerp, and those well understanding their good exercises and qualities he did very liberally comfort and relieve: and in like manner provided for the sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round about the town in Antwerp, seeking out every corner, and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell, (as God knoweth there are many) and where he found any to be well occupied, and yet overburdened with children, or else were aged, or weak,<sup>e</sup> those also he plentifully relieved. And thus he spent his two days of pastime as he called them.



And truly his alms was very large and great: and so it might well be: for his exhibition that he had yearly of the English merchants was very much, and that for the most part he bestowed upon the poor as aforesaid. The rest of the days in the week he gave him wholly to his book wherein most diligently he travailed. When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant's chamber, or other, whither came many other merchants: and unto them would he read some one parcel of scripture, either out of the Old Testament, or out of the New, the which proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly and gently from him (much like to the writing of St. John the Evangelist) that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the scriptures: and in likewise after dinner, he spent an hour in the aforesaid manner."

The fate of Frith and many others, and the indefatigable efforts that were made to get possession of himself, seems to have impressed Tyndale with the belief that sooner or later they would succeed. In one of his tracts, he says, "some man will ask peradventure, why I take the labour to make this work, insomuch as they will burn it, seeing they burnt the gospel. I answer, in burning the New Testament they did none other thing than I looked for, no more shall they do if they burn me also, if it be God's will it shall be so." And again elsewhere, "Whoso findeth or readeth this letter, put it forth in examination, and suffer it not to be hid or destroyed, but multiplied, for no man knoweth what profit may come thereof. For he that compiled it, purposeth with God's help to maintain unto the death, if need be. And therefore all Christian men and women, pray that the word of God may be unbound, and delivered from the power of Antichrist, and reign among his people. Amen."

The life of this good man was now drawing to a close. Finding it impossible to seduce him back to England, his enemies there of the Romish party sought means to have him arrested and imprisoned on the continent. As it was difficult to accomplish this openly at Antwerp, where he was so much esteemed, he fell a victim to a secret conspiracy, the most heartless, treacherous and cruel on record. The agent in this base transaction was one Henry Phillips, who was employed for the purpose by Sir Thomas More and others in England. Fox describes the affair with great simplicity and pathos, though rather discursively; and it was our intention to quote his narrative (somewhat abridged) by way of conclusion to this article. But it is already beyond

the proper limits. Suffice it to say, therefore, that Tyndale was immured for nearly two years in the castle of Vilvoord, or Filford, near Brussels, and finally, in 1536, burnt at the stake, where from the midst of the flames he uttered these memorable dying words, "LORD, OPEN THE KING OF ENGLAND'S EYES."

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ART. II.—*The Music of Nature; or an attempt to prove that what is passionate and pleasing in the Art of Singing, Speaking, and performing on Musical Instruments, is derived from the sounds of the Animated World. With curious and interesting illustrations.* By William Gardiner. Boston. J. H. Wilkins & R. B. Carter. 1837. Svo. pp. 505.

So long as Music continues to be an art subsidiary to religion, it may legitimately fall within the scope of the Christian critic. The work just named is by no means new in England, but has recently been offered to the American public, in a reprint so truly honourable to the typography of Boston, as to afford, of itself, an inducement to examine its pretensions. Not merely the type, but the expensive copper-plates of the edition contribute to make it quite a gem.

The reader may expect an article somewhat desultory, inasmuch as the book itself is one of the most miscellaneous and fragmentary which it has ever been our lot to peruse. It has no thread of unity except its relation to the extensive subject of Music, and even this limit is transcended by the author's frequent diversions into the fields of Elocution. The secondary indication of its contents, upon the title page, is certainly erroneous. In no part of the work do we find even a categorical assertion, of the proposition there stated, viz. that 'what is passionate and pleasing in the art of singing, speaking, and performing upon musical instruments, is derived from the sounds of the animated world:' still less is there any train of reasoning to sustain this interesting and specious position. Facts there undoubtedly are, scattered through these fascinating pages, which in the hands of a theorist might form part of an ingenious and plausible induction; but so far as our memory serves us, no such process is attempted. Indeed Mr. Gardiner, whom we suppose to be