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field, may we not bid another listen for the call to write? St. Paul has reached more with his pen than he ever reached with his tongue. It is a noble and a glorious ambition to seek to indite words that will live, words that will in days to come bring glory to the name of our Redeemer.

It is very possible that in the remarks I have made I have made mistakes. If so, I shall be glad to be corrected, for I am only too conscious of the very limited character of my knowledge of the subject. But I feel no doubt or hesitation in the main contention of this paper, and I pray that it may contribute, in however slight a degree, to bring about the provision of the works that the Church so sorely needs.

A. C. DOWNER.

ART. VI.—TYNDALE.

The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. —St. John i. 5.

Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.—2 Tim. ii. 9.

THE English Bible is the greatest treasure of the English people. In whatever form the Word of God had been introduced to our countrymen, it would, as the revelation of the Son of God, the record of the foundation of His kingdom, the source of spiritual and civil liberty, and the ground for the inspiring hope of a life beyond the grave, have been of incalculable importance. But the distinguishing glory of our English version is the sublime dignity and simplicity of the language, its stately rhythm, its noble homeliness, its native and spontaneous ring of the genuine English genius, the matchless ease and vigour of its style, the absence of all bathos, ruggedness, and stilted affectation, the readiness with which it touches the heart and sinks into the memory. On it has been formed the English language; on it has been founded English literature; by it has been moulded English history and English character. It lives not only in the pages of its innumerable copies, but in the hearts and lives of the people. Its characters are the most familiar images in the thoughts of millions who may have little else to elevate their minds. Its precepts are a code of morals which few care seriously to dispute. Quotations from its writers at any part of the long 2,000 years of their contributions, all harmonious and homogeneous in our translation, fall like notes of music in our speeches, articles, and books. To no other influence is the English people so incalculably indebted.

The message itself we owe to God and His inspired Apostles and Prophets. But the determination that the Bible should be given in the common tongue to the English, and the consummate beauty of the translation which has made it the very life-treasure of our race, we owe to one man, William Tyndale. Tyndale has been called the true hero of the Reformation. We owe so much to so many at that critical epoch that it would be invidious to set one above another. To Cranmer we owe the Prayer-Book and the Reformed constitution of the English Church. Ridley was an indispensable assistant to Cranmer in theological research and exposition. Latimer and Hooper convinced all classes by their sermons, and made the Reformation a movement of the people. But Tyndale stands out as the one man who had absolutely no blemish on his character, and who at a time when in England no such enterprise was possible, voluntarily expatriated himself, and devoted his whole life to the magnificent conception of first translating the whole Word of God, and then presenting his countrymen with as many printed copies as could possibly be executed. Modest, unassuming, self-sacrificing, learned, patient, persevering, far-sighted, prudent, courageous, he seems to have lacked no single quality which would fit him for his magnificent task. He had one end in view, and he had faith to believe that it would be accomplished. He was in no hurry about it. He was willing that the whole of the splendid first edition of his laborious work should be bought up, that he might have the money to make a more perfect translation and a better edition. He knew from the first that he must face persecution, danger, and death, but he never faltered. He encountered bitter disappointments, but he looked beyond them. He cared nothing for honours, reputation, or even recognition. He had early in life become convinced that the one thing for the English nation was to have the Word of God in their own homely language in their own hands. That he saw was the key of the whole position. To that he devoted himself heart and soul and mind and strength. That he accomplished. He was martyred before he had finished the whole of the Old Testament, which he took up after the New; but his friend, inspired with his methods and by his spirit, accomplished it as if he had done it himself. Besides his great work of translation, Tyndale, in his prefaces, comments, and tracts, showed himself a master of the theology of the Gospel, and may be studied as one of the most clear-sighted, spiritual, faithful, and consistent of the Reformers.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the darkness and corruption of the Church before the Reformation. The persecuting laws of the House of Lancaster had checked the influence of Wycliffe and the Lollards. The voice of Evangelical teaching

was silenced. Wycliffe's rough translations of the Scriptures were circulated in secret; but the clergy thought all danger over; they returned to their evil ways, and the scandals so severely denounced burst forth afresh with new luxuriance. The ignorance of the clergy, particularly the religious orders, seemed deeper than ever. Tyndale asserted that there were 20,000 priests in England who could not translate into plain English the clause of the Lord's prayer, "Fiat voluntas tua." Bishop Hooper found scores of clergy in Gloucestershire unable to tell who was the author of the Lord's Prayer, or where it was to be read.

The Bible was practically unknown, either to clergy or people. Canterbury Convocation had expressly forbidden any man to translate any part of Scripture into the English tongue, or to read such translation without the authority of the Bishop; an authority not likely to be granted, as the enactment was already a hundred years old. The study of Holy Scripture did not even form part of the preparation for Holy Orders; theological summaries by the schoolmen took the place of the Word of God. As the inevitable result, religion had degenerated into an unprofitable round of superstitious customs and ceremonial observances. The service of the Church was so intricate that the study of years was necessary to enable priest or people to perform rightly the difficult task. The use and teaching of these ceremonies had become entirely obsolete; they were impediments to the very idea of religion. Relics, pilgrimages, pictures, images, commemorations, had lost all meaning, and were abused for purposes of imposture and debauchery.

To these evils of superstition was beginning to be added that of hypocrisy. Men continued to join in the services of the Church; they offered candles, they went on pilgrimages, they kissed St. Thomas's shoe, and knelt at the image of Our Lady of Walsingham; they fasted and paid the dues of the Church; but all this was no longer in the spirit of faith and reverence; smiles of incredulous derision were on the face of many a worshipper, and many sharp expressions of shrewd scepticism might have been overheard at many a shrine. Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, and Erasmus, Professor of Greek at Canterbury and Walsingham, were but expressing what was generally beginning to be felt.

Little is known about Tyndale's parentage, youth, and early manhood. He was probably born about 1484, the year before the battle of Bosworth, and most probably in Gloucestershire, possibly at the village of Slymbridge, in the lovely vale of Berkeley below the Cotswold Hills. It struck him even as a child, in reading his chronicles, how "King Alfred caused Holy

Scripture to be translated into the tongue that was then in England, and how prelates exhorted him thereto."

About 1508 or 1509 he went to Oxford, took his degrees in 1512 and 1515, and afterwards went to Cambridge. "At Oxford," says Foxe, "he by long continuance grew and increased as well in the knowledge of tongues and other liberal arts, as specially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted, insomuch that he, lying there in Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and Fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity, instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures. Whose manners also and conversation, being correspondent to the same, were such, that all they that knew him respected and esteemed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition, and of life unspotted." There is a picture of him at Magdalen Hall with this inscription: "This canvas represents, which is all that art can do, the likeness of William Tyndale, formerly student and pride of this Hall; who, after reaping here the happy first-fruits of a purer faith, devoted his energy at Antwerp to the translation of the New Testament and Pentateuch into his native language; a work so beneficial to his English countrymen, that he is not undeservedly called the Apostle of England. He received the crown of martyrdom at Vilvorde, near Brussels, 1536; a man, if we may believe his opponent, the Procurator-General of the Emperor, very learned, pious, and good."

Why he removed to Cambridge is not known; possibly because of the spirit that had been aroused there by the lectures of Erasmus. Cranmer, Gardiner, Latimer, and Bilney would be there at the time, but they are not mentioned by Tyndale. To Erasmus he always looked up as his principal guide until he came under the influence of Luther. Of the University learning of the time Tyndale had the poorest opinion: "Remember ye not how within this thirty years and far less, and yet dureth to this day, the old barking curs, Duns' disciples, and like draff called Scotists, the children of darkness, raged in every pulpit against Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; and what sorrow the schoolmasters that taught the true Latin tongue had with them; some beating the pulpit with their fists for madness, and roaring out with open and foaming mouth, that if there were but one Terence or Virgil in the world, and that same in their sleeves, and a fire before them, they would burn them therein, though it should cost them their lives; affirming that all good learning decayed and was utterly lost since men gave them unto the Latin tongue."

Of preparation for orders he gives an equally dismal

picture: "In the Universities they have ordained that no man shall look at the Scripture until he be nursed in heathen learning eight or nine years and armed with false principles, with which he is clean cut out of the understanding of the Scripture. . . . And when he taketh first degree he is sworn that he shall hold none opinions condemned by the Church, but what such opinions be, that he shall not know. And then when they be admitted to study divinity, because the Scripture is locked up with such false expositions and with false principles of natural philosophy that they cannot enter in, they go about the outside, and dispute all their lives about words and vain opinions pertaining as much unto the healing of a man's heel as health of his soul."

On leaving Cambridge, Tyndale settled as chaplain and tutor in the house of a wealthy squire at Little Sodbury, in Gloucestershire. The house is still standing, with its great hall and pleasant rooms. The little church behind was unhappily removed in 1858. Foxe gives us a charming picture of this quiet part of the Reformer's life: "As Sir John Walsh kept a good ordinary commonly at his table, there resorted unto him many times sundry abbots, deans, archdeacons, with divers other doctors and great beneficed 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 upon 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 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."

Here Tyndale began his work as a translator. Erasmus might convince some who refused to listen to argument with an obscure priest. Erasmus had written in Latin "The Manual of a Christian Soldier." "It was a bold, outspoken protest against the whole method of theological study of that age, and against the wicked lives of so many of the monks and friars." With his own incomparable good sense he says: "Those things which pertain to faith, let them be expressed in the fewest possible articles; those which pertain to good living, let them also be expressed in few words, and so expressed that men may understand that the yoke of Christ is easy and light

and not harsh; that they may see that in the clergy they have found fathers, and not tyrants, pastors, and not robbers; that they are invited to salvation, not dragged to slavery." This noble treatise had been translated into several languages, and Tyndale rendered it into English. He did not print it, but lent it about. Lady Walsh, a stout and practical woman, had at first been sceptical as to the possibility that Tyndale, their tutor and chaplain, could be right against men of such splendid substance as the abbots and deans. She was now satisfied. The dignitaries were more rarely summoned, and at last withdrew altogether.

Tyndale preached much in the neighbouring villages and on the College Green at Bristol. The ignorant and violent priests raged and railed against him in the alehouses and misrepresented his teaching. The bishop of the diocese was an Italian, living a thousand miles away in Italy. Wolsey, who farmed the revenues, was also non-resident; but the Chancellor summoned him. "He threatened me grievously, and reviled me, and rated me as though I had been a dog, and laid to my charge things whereof there could be none accuser brought forth." Tyndale refuted the charges, but began to see the vitality and overwhelming predominance of the ignorance, superstition, and wickedness against which he was contending. Consulting a friendly neighbour who was Chancellor to another bishop: "Do you not know," said his adviser, "that the Pope is very antichrist, whom the Scripture speaketh of? But beware what you say; for if you shall be perceived to be of that opinion, it will cost you your life."

Long after, in his preface to the "Five Books of Moses," he describes how he was led at this time by such thoughts as these to his gigantic undertaking of the translation of the Bible: "A thousand books had the priests rather to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrines than that the Scriptures should come to light . . . which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I had perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the Scriptures were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text; for else, whatsoever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again."

Talking soon after with a divine accounted learned, Tyndale obtained from him this rash assertion: "We were better without God's laws than the Pope's." Tyndale's reply was memorable: "I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost."

So Erasmus had spoken: "I totally dissent from those who are unwilling that the sacred Scriptures, translated into the vulgar tongue, should be read by private individuals, as if Christ had taught such subtle doctrines that they can with difficulty be understood by a very few theologians, or as if the strength of the Christian religion lay in men's ignorance of it. The mysteries of kings it were perhaps better to conceal, but Christ wishes His mysteries to be published as widely as possible. I would wish even all women to read the Gospel and the Epistles of St. Paul. And I wish they were translated into all languages of all people, that they might be read and known, not merely by the Scotch and the Irish, but even by the Turks and the Saracens. I wish that the husbandman may sing parts of them at his plough, that the weaver may warble them at his shuttle, that the traveller may with their narratives beguile the weariness of the way."

Opposition increasing in Gloucestershire, Tyndale determined to go to London and seek the protection and encouragement of the Bishop, the young and learned Tunstall, who had a reputation for liberality to scholars, and had been praised by Erasmus. He started over the Cotswolds, never more to see his native valley, and arrived in the summer of 1523. With great difficulty he obtained an audience of this lofty prelate, a man right meet and convenient—so Warham had assured Wolsey—to entertain ambassadors and other noble strangers at that notable and honourable city in the absence of the King's most noble grace. Tyndale was repelled by the cold and silent manner of the Bishop, whom he describes as a still Saturn that so seldom speaketh, but walketh up and down all day musing. Tyndale describes himself as evil-favoured in this world, and without grace in the sight of men, speechless and rude, dull and slow-witted. He had nothing to recommend him but a translation of Isocrates, which he brought in his hand as a specimen, and his hopes of translating the Bible in like manner. What he asked for was the Bishop's patronage that he might have maintenance while he executed his great work. Tunstall chilled him with coldness and reserve. "I thought," says Tyndale, "if I might come to this man's service, I were happy . . . but God, which knoweth what is within hypocrites, saw that I was beguiled, and that that counsel was not the next way to my purpose. And therefore he gat me no favour in my lord's sight, whereupon my lord answered me, his house was full, and advised me to seek in London, where I could not lack a service."

"And so in London I abode almost a year, and marked the course of the world, and heard our praters (I would say preachers) how they boasted themselves and their high

authority, and beheld the pomps of our prelates, and how busy they were (as they yet are) to set '*peace*' and '*unity*' in the world . . . and understood at the last, not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England, as experience doth now openly declare." "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not."

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

(*To be concluded.*)

Notes and Queries.

THE bold and striking utterance of Professor Schlatter, of Berlin, will be read with interest by many. I am indebted for the original German to the kindness of the Berlin correspondent of *Evangelical Christendom*. What is here offered to the reader is a faithful paraphrase, rather than an exact translation of the Professor's published letter. I hope, however, that I have both retained the most important of his words and the unimpaired substance and spirit of the whole.

There are many who say, Can any good thing come out of Germany? Let them read the Professor and judge. There are not a few who would persuade us into the delusion that living Christianity has no defenders in the German Professoriate. These also may vouchsafe to read Professor Schlatter.

H. J. R. MARSTON.

Advent, 1895.

A member of the theological faculty of Berlin declared that he could not understand how theologians had taken part in the meeting of the Church, and he especially named me in the following terms: "This man and others like him not only give their names to the convocation of those who resist the free play of scientific theology, but neither do they enjoin moderation about points in which they will eventually sustain defeat from criticism."

When a man of such wide views professes to find in my action a mystery, a little elucidation may be of use. Our opponents deceive themselves with their eyes open about the nature of the opposition which separates us. They maintain, and publicly, that we protest against science. It would indeed be folly for men, the labour of whose lives is devoted to science, to take part in such a protest.

But all this is mere evasion. The opposition between us is a religious one. I took part in the Church Assembly, just because I am of the opinion that what are here opposed are belief and unbelief; and to be more precise, that the opposition touches belief in Christ the Lord. By this I do not mean for a moment to charge on our opponents total unbelief or repudiation of Christ. There are various degrees in the religious estimate of Jesus before we come to belief in Him; before He is for us the Lord to whom we look and by whose grace we live.

Belief in Him in an inward and earnest sense may really exist—a belief which has to a certain extent its ground in Him, and yet which looks