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The ter-century of the authorized version of the English ...

F. T. Tagg

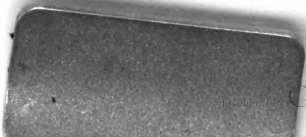


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REV. F. T. TAGG, D. D.

THE TER-CENTENARY
OF THE
AUTHORIZED VERSION
OF THE
ENGLISH BIBLE
1611—1911

**An Address delivered at Frederick, Maryland,
at the request of the Protestant
Preachers and Churches**

BY REV. F. T. TAGG, D. D.
Editor "The Methodist Protestant"
BALTIMORE, MD

1911

"The best evidence of the Bible's being the inspired word of God is to be found between its covers. It proves itself."—Charles Hodge.

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INTRODUCTION.

REV. T. O. CROUSE, D. D.

DURING this year of grace, 1911, the English-speaking people on two continents have been celebrating the tercentenary of the English Bible, or, in other words, the three hundredth anniversary of what is known as the "King James" or "Authorized Version" of the Holy Scriptures. We do well to recall with devout gratitude and joy this notable and truly epochal event, more world-wide, blessed and permanent in its influence than any other achievement in the annals of modern times.

Volumes would be required to trace and record the vast and ramifying influences of the Bible upon the literature, the legislation, the individual, social and political life of the English people. The King James Bible has been called "the chief classic of the English tongue," "a well of English undefiled." Nor is this to be wondered at when it is remembered that in the providence of God it had its birth in what has been fitly called "the heyday of the golden age

JUL 5 1928

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of English literature." Its translators were co-temporaneous with Bacon, Shakespeare, Milton and other acknowledged masters in the art of terse and graphic diction. To quote the felicitous language of another: "When England was a nest of singing-birds, when there were not only erudite scholars in the land, but also writers of beautiful and picturesque English, the phrasing of the Bible had a richness and dignity of its own, which is often missing in the work of the modern scholar."

But our English Bible has a value far above its purely literary worth. For the English-speaking peoples it is the fountain-head and perennial spring of our common laws and free institutions. Tyranny, oppression and class privilege cannot survive where the principles of the Bible are imbibed; and not a little of the history of liberty among English-speaking peoples is directly due to the fact that the inspiring sentences of this book have become familiar to the ears and the understanding of the common people. With the Bible teaching men in their native tongue that there is one God and Father of us all; that on the forehead of each son and daughter of the race our Maker has written, "Made in the image of God;" that the ties of our common brotherhood are paramount to all the con-

ventional divisions between man and man made by clothes, culture, creeds, position and possessions; that in our dependence, sinfulness and need of redemption through the merits of the Saviour of the world there is no difference between any of us; there is no longer a refuge for caste, and no defence for those who would exalt their rights and privileges above the rights and privileges of others.

But after all, the supreme value of our English Bible is to be found in its message and ministry to the individual. It is peculiarly the book of the people. Up to the time of the translation of the Bible into the English tongue it was the book of the cloister, of the scribe, the priest and the learned few. John Wycliffe, "the morning-star of the Reformation," had given to the English people, in the later years of the fourteenth century, a translation of the Holy Scriptures; but the vernacular of the times was very crude and not a fit medium for the thoughts and sentiments of the old Hebrew and Greek writers. Moreover, Wycliffe's translation was in manuscript, and copies could only be made with tedious labor and at great expense. His work was followed by the translations of William Tyndale, of Miles Coverdale, of John Rogers and others; these in turn were succeeded by the

Geneva Bible, and by what is known as the Bishops' Bible; but not until that version with which we are familiar—the King James Version of 1611—was there in the truest sense a Bible for the whole English-speaking world. From its advent the Word of the living God has been accessible to the peasant in his humble cottage as well as to the prince in his palace, to the serving maid in the kitchen as well as to the lady in her luxurious boudoir. Among all classes and ranks this book of the people has healed broken hearts, has hushed the voice of weeping, has been bread to the hungry, waters to the famishing, has encouraged the despairing, has strengthened the faint, has charmed childhood and has been a staff to feeble age, has shed light on the pilgrim's path and winged men's thought and hope to a larger, fuller, better life, where there shall be no more curse, and death shall be no more, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away.

In a graphic and most interesting way Dr. F. T. Tagg, the well-known and able editor of "The Methodist Protestant," has told the story of the King James Bible. It has been said that no enterprise at all commensurate with the making of our Authorized Version of the Bible is so little known

in the details of method and order of working as that one. And Dr. Tagg has done us a good service in gathering together so much historical data and in presenting it in such strong and graceful diction. Those of us who have been privileged to hear his paper (for the substance of his treatise was delivered before several delighted audiences, including the Baltimore Preachers' Meeting) think that his prolific pen has produced no more interesting, informing and inspiring piece of writing than this. His compend of facts is full and discriminating; his diction is choice; the reverent and appreciative spirit he exhibits is delightful; and one can scarcely find a more timely and helpful booklet than this story of how we got our English Bible. Its widest circulation and most general and careful reading cannot fail to do good, and make all lovers of the Book of books more grateful for the greatest common heritage of the English people—the King James Version of the Holy Scriptures.

PREFACE.

THE substance of the following address was delivered in the Lutheran Church at Frederick, Md., at the request of the Protestant preachers and churches of that city. Subsequently it was read by request to the Inter-Church Club of Baltimore, and finally to the Methodist Protestant Preachers' Meeting of Baltimore. Very kindly the Preachers' Meeting made a unanimous request for its publication in book form. In complying with the request, I deemed it proper to make some slight alterations and additions, which could not well have been used in the time usually allotted for a public address.

This little book is dedicated to my many friends throughout the Methodist Protestant Church, whose kindness, co-operation and personal friendship I prize far above rubies, and for whom I can wish nothing better than a saving acquaintance with the Holy Bible, which is the inspired and divinely revealed will of God to men.

F. T. TAGG.

The English Bible—a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power.—T. B. Macaulay.

THREE CENTURIES —OF— THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

IT IS impossible to separate the Bible from the God which it reveals, or from His providence which it interprets, or from the plan of salvation which it unfolds. We think of it as a book or a series of books, but it is far more. It is a revelation, just as the religion which it proclaims is more than a scheme or a doctrine, more than a creed or a faith. It is a life—an embodiment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. It is God manifest in the flesh. The Bible discloses the purposes of God with regard to the human race for all time and for all the nations of the world. When it is so recognized it is not difficult to account for its marvellous influences, and its constructive power upon all the elements that enter into a salutary and progressive civilization.

It comes to us not like a treatise composed by one man, or a systematic philosophy drawn out after the rules of modern thought. It is a cluster of separate growths,

nurtured by a divine hand, going on through the ages, and yet, like some vast and sturdy oak, all its additions, to the last and outermost twig, cohere around one trunk, stand in the one root and partake of the peculiar nature of the original. At the outstart it begins with the one supreme postulate upon which all rational philosophy must rest—"In the beginning God." Its earliest scenes are the simple histories of pastoral life; its latest teachings carry us onward to the most renowned and progressive civilizations. But whether it speaks in creative terms of a cosmos, or in a simple picture language of Hebrew life, or in the stately terms of a Paul, its testimony to truth, to virtue, to goodness or to godliness is grandly one. If the Book itself has no symmetrical literary structure, it yet harmonizes the moral sense of the ages and gives to the widely separated periods of history one mind, one heart, one interpretation and one universal aspiration. It always allies itself with the people against every form of usurpation, tyranny and oppression. The progress of freedom has always been contemporaneous with the spread of the Bible. The development of education, of individual responsibility, of noble standards of morality, of refined social conditions, of civil, political and religious liberty have never gone farther than the Bible has carried them.

The history, morality, theology, consistency, authority, the genuineness of the Bible, have frequently been called in question; the truth of its prophecies has been boldly denied, the possibility of its miracles fiercely assailed, and yet when we come to it it shows itself, and proves itself to be, the Word of God. It is a light which discovers itself; but it also discovers all things else, without any other testimony. Let the smallest child bring a candle into a dark room, and, as it discovers other things, it will discover itself. So in the Word we discover God and the methods of His providential government; but we also discover ourselves, our condition, our needs and our divinely intended destiny.

The Bible is distinctively the people's book, not to be restricted nor withheld from the people or interpreted and explained under prelatical authority, but to be widely and freely given to the people. An unchained Bible is synonymous with an emancipated humanity. Coleridge well said: "In the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together. The words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being, and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Ghost."

The Ter-centenary anniversary of the Au-

thorized Version is a time to remind us of the immeasurable influence of the English Bible upon the history, the progress and the destiny of the Saxon race, and through it upon the entire world.

Before translations began to be made the Old Testament was nearly all in the Hebrew. The exceptions were parts of Ezra and Daniel, which were written in the time of the Babylonish captivity, and were, therefore, written in the Chaldean tongue.

Several hundred years before our Saviour's birth the civilized world, which was then conquered by Alexander the Great, had become prevaillingly Greek. So many Jews settled in Egypt and colonies under Greek control that they became Greeks in language and were known as Hellenists, and developed some noted philosophers, notably such as Philo of Alexandria. Seventy of their students and scholars became conspicuous in translating the Old Testament into Greek, and gave us what is now known as the Septuagint. Aristololus, who was tutor to Ptolemy Physcon; Philo, who lived in our Saviour's time, and Josephus speak of this translation with great commendation and respect, and it is the version constantly quoted in the gospels and by the apostles, and has thereby received the highest sanction that could be given it. And thus it came to pass that

when the Gospels, recording the life of our Saviour, were written, and when the Apostles came to write their inspired epistles to the newly established congregations, they were written in Greek. So that for a period of several hundred years the Greek Bible was universal and read everywhere in the churches. But as the Greek civilization began to decay and Rome became the leading power among the nations, and Latin became the language of schools and commerce, of diplomacy and jurisprudence, there came a demand for the Bible in that language.

This was about three centuries after Christ. Learned men would translate into Latin such parts as they were most interested in, and these would be copied for wider use. The translations were not uniform, many of them faulty, and most of them were depreciated by glaring errors. At last a monk of Dalmatia, a most learned scholar of his day, a man who had traveled widely and who lived for many years in Palestine, amid the very scenes of which the Bible speaks, was commissioned to revise the Latin versions of the Psalms and Gospels. The Gospels were finished in 384 A. D., and the rest of the New Testament shortly after, but the work on the Old Testament required fourteen years more.

Latin was the language of learning

and literature for many centuries during the Middle Ages, and down to the day of Christopher Columbus, Martin Luther and Queen Elizabeth the Latin Bible was used. Early attempts were made to translate Bibles in the language of the people, and especially by great and learned missionaries. In the fourth century Ulphilas, about the year 365 translated the Gospels into the Moeso-Gothic language, which is the foundation of both our English and German tongues.

During the Middle Ages there were several translations of parts of Scripture into the German language, while Charlemagne made an attempt to disseminate uniform manuscripts of the Latin Bible.

Latin versions became numerous for that early age. Among the more celebrated are the *Vetus*, or *Itala*, which appears to have been made about the beginning of the second century. Few fragments of it remain, but such as have been preserved were collected and published by Blanchini in Rome in 1720 and Sabatier in Rheims in 1743. The most notable of these was the translation of St. Jerome, about A. D. 400, and which has ever since been known as the Vulgate. All the English translations up to and including Wickliff's were from this Latin Vulgate. The same is true of most of the German translations, and of the Cathelic, or Douay,

translation. The Vulgate contained numerous errors. But prelates and scholars felt that the translations, which had been made of various parts of the Scriptures, were marred by false transcriptions, by clumsy corrections and by careless interpolations, and should be corrected. Jerome said "there were almost as many forms of texts as copies," and the confusion which resulted suggested but one remedy, and that was a translation from the original by competent scholars. Jerome, therefore, applied himself to the great task. He met with hostility from those who were friendly to older translations, and yielded more or less to the prejudices of the times, and allowed interpolations and glosses to remain, which he would probably have changed had he been entirely untrammelled. As it is, the Vulgate stands as one of the noblest triumphs of Biblical scholarship. It prepared the way and became the basis of many later translations into other languages.

In the seventh century the English translation began to appear, and yet it shows what a factor time is in the process of perfecting God's plans when we remember that it was nearly nine centuries later before the King James version, the noblest monument of Biblical scholarship in the world, appeared.

Caedmon made some translations in the

form of a poetic paraphrase which soon became popular. Bede, his only historian, is said "to praise him none too highly." He is called "the father of English poetry." He composed a poetic version of narratives of the Creation, the Exodus, and the Incarnation and Passion of our Lord. The translations were not specially accurate, but they were tolerably faithful and quite popular. One writer says: "His paraphrases, sung to the harp, are not literal translations, but they are beautiful poetry and put the story of the Scriptures before the people, practically none of whom could read the Vulgate, and could not have afforded it had they been able."

A few years later Guthlac, the first Saxon, made a version of the Psalms in Anglo-Saxon; but if there are copies now in existence they are hidden away in monasteries. About 706 the Psalms were also translated by Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, a man distinguished among his contemporaries for great learning. He was quite a poet, and wrote a somewhat famous treatise on the praise of virginity, first writing it in prose, and then turning it into hexameters. His Psalm translations were used in the churches for a time.

Then came Bede, surnamed the venerable, remarkable alike for his learning, skill

and piety, and for an industry and assiduity that remained to the very end of his saintly and wonderful life. St. Cuthbert tells us that "the old man lay dying on Ascension Day in 735. The little monastery on the south bank of the Tyne was pervaded by a solemn stillness. The brethren spoke in anxious whispers. His wasting frame and fading eye told that death was rapidly approaching. His young secretary sat near him, with pen fast flying over the open roll. He breathed slowly and with great labor. Gazing affectionately upon the face of the dying man, he said: 'Now, dearest master, there remains one chapter for translation; but the exertion is too great for you.' 'It is easy, my son; it is easy,' he replied; 'take your pen and write quickly.'

"There was another pause; nature seemed exhausted. The boy spoke again: 'Dear master, only one sentence more is wanting.' It, too, was pronounced slowly, but painfully. 'It is finished,' said the writer. 'It is finished,' repeated the dying man, and then added: 'Lift my head; place me in the spot where I have been wont to pray.' Then, with folded hands and eyes lifted to heaven, he said: 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' and with the last word his spirit passed away, and thus was

completed the first Anglo translation of John's Gospel."

After Bede the history of translation of various books into English is a little vague. King Alfred, who founded the University of Oxford, affixed the ten commandments in English to his laws, and is said to have translated some of the Psalms. After him the distinguished Anglo-Saxon scholar Ælfrie, who became Abbot of Peterborough, engaged in Biblical translations, which included the greater portion of the Pentateuch, with several other books in the Old Testament.

Then came the Norman invasion, covering a period of more than two hundred years. During this period there were invasions and conquests, and these wasted the country, disheartened the people, and at times conquered its armies and put to flight the kings which had reigned over them. The activities in Biblical scholarship were checked, the people's attention was turned to war. The crusades were also inaugurated during these centuries, and, aside from the ruthless squandering of human lives, it was a device of the popes to obtain universal power over kings and armies, and a plenary indulgence was the Crusader's reward. The Christian princes were exhausted in the long struggle, while the Pope became omnipotent over both clergy and people. George VII.

decreed the celibacy of the clergy, which Archbishop Anselm enforced in England. Later on Gregory IX. founded the Inquisition, for the purpose of discovering and punishing heretics. Monasticism also took root during this period, and all the machinery for crushing investigation, for suppressing the efforts of independent scholarship and for controlling, under the power of an ambitious and unholy priestcraft, the freedom and conscience of the people was set in motion. The people were advised to worship crosses and images; the calendar of saints was immensely extended; the adoration and healing power of relics supplanted the salvation of Christ. Piety rapidly declined into cold formality and commercialism.

In the meantime the clergy became more ambitious and more worldly. Their vanishing religion increased their adherence to a proud and selfish hierarchy, and under its laws they were required to withhold the Word of God, as well as the wine of the Eucharist, from the laity. So that any other than a priest pretending to exercise private judgment upon the meaning of Scripture was considered guilty of presumption and rebellion.

It is impossible, however, to hold the human mind in bondage to restriction and unreasonable authority. Freedom to think

is an inalienable possession, involved in the very nature of man, and becomes more vigorous and more pronounced as the problems he has to meet deepen in their significance. Individual responsibility is an essential doctrine and an irrevocable fact, and this demands the freest and largest liberty in personal inquiry. Any system that limits inquiry paralyzes the mind. Whatever contributes to intellectual thralldom, whether in the church or out of it, is an offense against man and God. Freedom of thought is a divinely ordained right that cannot be justly restricted or abridged by any power. Peter Waldo, a rich merchant of the city of Lyons, in France, had parts of the Bible translated into the tongue of the people (the Romance dialect). He held family prayers, in which others joined. The clergy learned of it, and opposed and prohibited such services. But Waldo was undeterred by priestly hostility, and succeeded in establishing the Waldensian Church, but its members suffered numerous persecutions and banishments, but in their dispersion they spread the doctrines of the Gospel in Lombardy, Calabria, Germany, Bohemia, Belgium and England. What a strange and distressing fact that piety and priestcraft are incongruous forces!

John Wickliffe, a distinguished Oxford student and scholar, found special delight

in the study of the Holy Scriptures, and wrote notes, expositions and homilies in several parts of them which were so scholarly and so enlightening that he was given the title of Doctor Evangelicus, or the Gospel Doctor. In 1360 he distinguished himself by his wise and zealous opposition to the encroachments of the begging friars, and shortly afterward by a controversy on the subject of the poverty of Christ. Soon after he was advanced to be master of Balliol College, Oxford, and four years later to be warden of Canterbury Hall, which he had recently founded. About this time Pope Urban had given notice to King Edward that he would be cited to the papal court for refusing homage to the Roman See and for refusing to pay tribute money. The King resisted the claim, and Parliament approved his course. A monk attempted to vindicate the Pope's action, and Wickliffe replied to it with such vigor and zeal as to demolish his arguments and bring his effrontery into contempt. Having taken his degree of doctor of divinity, he read lectures on theology, which gained for him the unqualified indorsement and approval of his students and hearers. It is needless to say that in a short time he found the priests taking a strong, hostile stand against him. But the more he endeavored to reform a corrupt age

the more he found himself in conflict with the church, and the more his enemies sought opportunities of revenge. When the ecclesiastics dared to hinder his work in acquainting the people with the truths of the Gospel, he was one of the first and one of the ablest who dared to declare against priestly inhibitions. He aroused the people by public lectures and discussions against a corrupt clergy, and appealed to the Bible as a witness against the unholy and unscriptural practices of the friars and the monks. He began his translation at Oxford, and occupied twenty-four years in its completion. It was a translation from the Vulgate, and a successful one; it contained many errors, but it marked a definite era in the history of the English people. The demand for it was immediate, and it long remained the standard Bible of the British nation. But he was cruelly persecuted, cited to trial, ostracised, and then expelled from Oxford, and finally summoned to the Vatican by the Pope. But feeble health, and death soon after, saved him from Rome, and probably from the martyr's stake. Forty-three years after his bones were dug up and burned and his ashes thrown into the river Swift, to be carried out into the ocean. An evidence of heartless bigotry, but also an emblem of the great principles for which he stood, and which have

now become universal. He was to England what Luther was to Germany. He appealed to the Scriptures as the final seat of authority in religion, and not to traditions and papal decretals. Branded as a heretic, persecuted, imprisoned, more and more he found solace in the Scriptures, and more and more he believed the people should be able to read them, and not left to the hard and unscrupulous direction of the priests in all religious matters. And yet at this time there is little opposition by the church to the Scriptures being translated, although every attempt is made to suppress the "Lollard" preachers. Wycliffe's translation attained a wide reading. But it was soon revised by a fellow-worker in the Reformation—John Purrey. Purrey had also been inhibited from preaching by the Bishop of Worcester, and he, too, had seen the inside of prisons. His revision was an advance on Wycliffe's original, inasmuch as the idioms were stronger and the style more lucid and chaste. Wickliffe did a noble and lasting work. He has been fitly termed "the John the Baptist" of the English Bible and the "Morning Star of the Reformation." His translations definitely prepared the way for, and gave a distinctive character to, the Reformation in England. The Reformation in Germany, Switzerland and Scotland was largely produced and di-

rected by men of commanding genius. England had no Luther nor Calvin, no Knox nor Zwinglius. It was dependent mainly for the propagation of vital godliness upon the circulation of a vernacular Bible. Wickliffe furnished it, but he also blazed the way for the magnificent work of William Tyndale more than a century afterward, who was born just a century after Wycliffe's death. Foxe says he was brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he was singularly addicted to the study of the Scriptures. Learning and literature have had a new birth in Europe since the death of Wycliffe. The study of Greek and Hebrew has been taken up with enthusiasm. Tyndale saw that the time had come for a new version of the Bible. Wycliffe was not a Greek scholar. He had made his translation from Jerome's Latin version, which, notwithstanding the declaration of the Council of Trent, is far from being inspired. A number of inventions had come out, providentially, about this time: The art of printing, and that other art without which printing would be of little value—namely, the manufacture of paper from rags.

While Tyndale's life was not long, the story of it is long and thrilling. We have space for but the briefest outline. A manuscript Bible was necessarily very expensive;

equal, it is said, to a laborer's wages for about fifteen years. It was laid on the young scholar's heart, now that a book could be put out at a possible price, to put the Bible in a form in which it would be accessible to all. He relates that being in conversation with a learned divine, he gave expression to this purpose. The "divine" replied, "We were better to be without God's laws than the Pope's." Tyndale's answer was, "I defy the Pope and his laws; and if God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than the Pope." This sentiment was heresy of the rankest sort, and it was not long until the author found it expedient to make his escape from England. He did not leave his great purpose behind him, however. On the continent he went from one place to another, his steps being dogged by papal spies. The first edition of the New Testament was in press in Cologne, when he was discovered and had to make a hasty escape. Taking his printed sheets with him, he went to Worms. This was four years after Luther's immortal defense of his faith before the Diet there. It was surely in accordance with the fitness of things that from this famous old town where Luther had thrown down the gauntlet to Rome, Tyndale should now send forth the divine chal-

lenge. Two editions of the New Testament, a quarto and an octavo, of three thousand copies each, were completed. But a more difficult problem remained: how could they be conveyed in safety to England and put into the hands of the people? The Lord opened the way. He gave both king and cardinal enough to engage their attention in state affairs. The books were safely landed, eagerly welcomed and widely circulated. These six thousand New Testaments are said to have revolutionized England.

The king, on the recommendation of Wolsey, ordered the books to be seized and burned, and this was the fate of many copies. The great workman, the Apostle of England, as he has been called, labored on, revising and reissuing the New Testament and translating the old. The enemies of the Bible had great wrath, and finally, through the influence of the cruel and capricious King, Henry VIII., he was arrested in Antwerp in 1535, and the next year he was tried for heresy, condemned and hung. His body was then burned. Mr. Froude beautifully remarks that "his epitaph is the Reformation."

No end of eulogies have been pronounced on Tyndale's translation. It was original work from the Hebrew and Greek, and, therefore, far more faithful than Wycliffe's rendering of the Vulgate. To Tyndale more

than to any other we are indebted for the beauty, the simplicity and the melody of our English Bible, which, in turn, has stamped its traits on the English tongue. Tyndale's last words were, "Lord, open the eyes of the King of England." Tyndale died, but "Europe woke up with the New Testament in its hand." The revival of Greek learning, which had become a power in the Reformation movement in Germany and England, inspired Tyndale to a work his predecessors had not attempted. At Cambridge he came under the impulse given to learning by the great edition of the Greek New Testament coming in volume after volume from the learned Erasmus. From that moment a dominating ideal possessed him. He discovered the impossibility of building up a real religious consciousness in England until the Scriptures were in the hands of the people. He went to the original Hebrew and Greek, and did not depend upon the Latin Vulgate. He cast aside all inferior and defective translations, all glosses and dogmas, and sought certified original sources in the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts. His sole object was to place the English reader in direct contact with the sacred writers. He was a devout student of God's Word, and not of the schools of human philosophy or ecclesiastical theology. He was entirely free

from prejudices. He adopted the language of the English people—that noble language which Shakespeare has placed on a level with the noblest literature of Greece and Rome. Throughout his whole translation there is the stamp of truthfulness. With perfect sincerity he was able to say, “I call God to witness that I never altered one syllable of God’s Word against my conscience.”

Other translations appeared from time to time, which it will be necessary to note briefly in studying the evolution of the Authorized Version.

MILES COVERDALE’S VERSION.

About a year before the martyrdom of Tyndale, an English version, bearing the name of Miles Coverdale, was printed at Zurich and distributed in England. It was the first complete English Bible ever issued. But the translation was not original. Coverdale was not qualified for such a task, for his knowledge of Hebrew was quite limited, and he says in his preface or dedication, “I have faithfully translated this out of five sundry interpreters.” Coverdale followed Tyndale’s version very closely in the Pentateuch and New Testament, and any changes he introduced are taken either from the German or Vulgate.

MATTHEW'S BIBLE.

One of the closest friends of Tyndale was John Rogers, the Reformer and martyr. He was educated at Cambridge, and distinguished for his scholastic attainments. After his ordination to the ministry he was appointed chaplain at Antwerp to a company of English merchants. There he met Tyndale, was convinced of the errors of Rome and became an ardent student of the Bible. It is probable that he assisted Tyndale in the work of revising the latter's translation for the press, and in the preparation of the Old Testament, which Tyndale had not finished before his death. Rogers determined to go on with the noble work and publish a complete English Bible. But as his name had been associated with Tyndale's, and would consequently be displeasing to that section of the people who had persecuted Tyndale, he published under the feigned name of Thomas Matthew. This fact is vouched for by Foxe, but it has been questioned, and also affirmed that Matthew was a real person, an assistant of Rogers. However this may be, the English Bible was put to press, and through Cromwell's favor a license to circulate it was obtained from the king.

THE GREAT BIBLE.

The English authorities were not satis-

fied with either Tyndale's or Coverdale's version, both of which were in circulation in 1537, so a new English translation was determined upon. Matthew's Bible was adopted as the basis, but the whole text was carefully, though perhaps not very judiciously, revised and compared with the Hebrew and Greek. The printing of the Bible was begun in Paris by royal license, but before it was completed permission was withdrawn, and the sheets seized and condemned to the flames by the Jesuits. Many were actually burnt, but a considerable number were sold, as Foxe narrates, "to a haberdasher to lap caps in." Before the seizure some copies appear to have been sent to Cromwell through the ambassador at Paris. After much trouble, presses, type, paper and workmen having to be brought to London, the Great Bible was issued there in April, 1539. This is also sometimes called Cranmer's Bible, either because he wrote the prologue or was one of the originators of the scheme; its size gave it the name it was usually known by.

The demand for the Bible among the English people at this period was so great that it was almost impossible to supply it. Most of the editions were composed of copies that were large and expensive, and yet they were bought up and read with extraordinary eagerness. From the time of the publication

of Tyndale's New Testament in 1525 till 1542 no less than thirty-nine editions of the New Testament, and fourteen of the whole Bible, were issued. The effect of the circulation of the Scriptures was wonderful. People of every age, rank and class seemed animated by an irrepressible desire to read or hear the Word of God. Those who had the means bought it; those who were able and willing to read it in public had crowds of eager listeners always round them. Boys and old men, girls and matrons, flocked to the churches, where ponderous Bibles, chained to the massive pillars, lay open upon stands for the use of the public. "So mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed."

THE GENEVIAN BIBLE.

This version, issued in 1560, and published at Geneva, was dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, who had but lately succeeded to the throne of England. It was far superior to any Bible that had preceded it. It is confessedly the best in the English language except the Authorized Version. Though never formally sanctioned for public use in the churches, it soon took the place in public estimation hitherto held by Tyndale's version, and long continued to be emphatically the Bible of the English people. It very

nearly supplanted all others, and during about eighty years, in which it retained its place, it passed through nearly one hundred and fifty editions. Its birthplace and the style of its annotations endeared it to the Presbyterians of Scotland and the Puritans of England. It was the first English Bible printed in the Roman type, all previous editions having been in "black-letter," and it was also the first in which the text was divided into verses.

THE BISHOPS' BIBLE.

After Elizabeth came to the throne the authorities of the English Church began to prepare a version which should commend itself to all sects and classes in the nation. None of the previous translations had fully attained this end. From the fact that a majority of the revisers were bishops the version was called "The Bishops' Bible." The work upon it was begun in 1564, and the publication of the volume took place in 1568, a magnificent folio in form. On the whole, it was not satisfactory, for the scholarship of the editors seems to have been defective, especially in Hebrew. A new edition appeared in 1572, the New Testament portion having been further revised. Still, it did not command the confidence of the learned nor satisfy the wants of the church, nor gain

the affections of the people, who still preferred the Genevan. "The Bishops' Bible," however, is worthy the attentive consideration of every student, for it formed the basis of our "Authorized Version," although the latter was prepared on different and far sounder principles.

THE RHEMISH VERSION.

This was a translation undertaken by the Roman Catholic divines, who had charged the various Protestant versions with grievous errors and gross misrepresentations of the divine Word. Its authors were certain English refugees at Rheims, where it was published in 1582. It is sufficient to say of this version that it retained all the corruptions, errors and interpolations of the Vulgate, from which it was translated. The editors did not adopt the text of Jerome as their standard, though even that was not perfect, by Jerome's own admission. They took a text which during a long course of years had gradually grown more and more corrupt, until the Council of Trent was forced tacitly to acknowledge its defects. The language of the Rheimish version is barbarous, many of its words being unintelligible to ordinary readers, while many of its renderings are erroneous. It seems to have been intended to conceal, instead of

to reveal, the true meaning of Scripture. Unquestionably one of the objects the translators had in view was the propagation of the dogmas of Popery by comments which have been well described as "a mass of bigotry, sophistry and unfairness."

The great prayer that Tyndale uttered when he was led to the martyr's stake was answered in the King James translation. There is little in the life and character of that monarch, whose name has been made immortal by this association, to command honor or respect. But such was the character of the age. Kings assumed to control and direct religious worship without feeling under obligation to show much piety or practical godliness in themselves.

Soon after James I. came to the throne of England a conference of leading clergy was held at Hampton Court in January, 1604, "for the determining of things pretending to be amiss in the church." At the suggestion of Dr. Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and a leader of the Puritan party in the church, that a new version of the Bible should be prepared under the supervision of representatives of the church and state. There was some opposition from the extreme churchly party on account of the quarter from whence the movement originated, but the King smoothed

things out and appointed a committee of fifty-four of the most learned scholars of the realm, without regard to sect or party, and solely on the ground of eminent qualifications. These selections reflect great credit upon the King, and prove his wisdom and discrimination, whatever may be said of his personal character. The competency of the translators, according to the light they then had, has never been questioned. If they had had the critical apparatus of our age, with all our modern resources of philology and grammar, there would probably have never been a need for the revision of their work.

Of the fifty-four scholars who were originally appointed only forty-seven undertook the work. They were divided into six classes, and ordered to sit, two at Westminster, two at Oxford and two at Cambridge. When the work was completed it was called THE AUTHORIZED VERSION, and published in one large black-letter folio.

After the manuscript had been revised and completed for the press, a preface was prepared for it by the learned Dr. Miles Smith, which preface is generally omitted from our common editions, though the fulsome dedication to the king is retained. Dr. Smith says: "Truly we never thought from the beginning that we should need to make a new translation, nor yet to make a bad

one a good one; but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against—that hath been our endeavor, that our mark.” The general accuracy and faithfulness of the previous versions of Tyndale and Coverdale, and of the Bishops’ and Geneva Bibles, is acknowledged by the translators. The main idea was to bring their own version into closer conformity to the original; and when we consider the rules by which they were to be guided, the varied learning of the translators as linguists, antiquarians, historians, naturalists—when we regard the time they were occupied, and the repeated revisings of the work by individuals, by classes, and by the whole committee together,—it is no wonder that they have left a work of marvellous beauty and power. Every verse appears to have been studied, as it were, with a microscope, with the most scrupulous care, and everything was adopted which could make the version more literal and plain, more terse and expressive. The original texts were always the final standards of appeal, but assistance was made use of from every quarter, whether ancient or modern; and in expressing the sense in vigorous, idiomatic English words and phrases were freely taken from others. In the New Testament the admirable Latin version of

Beza, first published by Robert Stephens at Geneva, in 1556, was used for bringing out the finer shades of meaning which previous English translators had sometimes overlooked. Not only was the sense of the original faithfully studied, but the selection of words and phrases, and the structure and rhythm of sentences, best calculated to give force and beauty to the version, were watched with the most scrupulous care. Every clause, and indeed every word, was anxiously weighed, and no point was considered too minute for the keen, critical eyes of the laborious and conscientious revisers. The italics and marginal readings show how anxious they were to bring the reader into contact with the very letter of the originals. By the italics he could see at a glance any word inserted for explanation, and which had no direct representative in the Hebrew or Greek. (The original edition of 1611 was printed in black letter, and the supplemental words, now printed in italics, were in small Roman letter.) By the marginal readings he could see where, after all researches and study, a doubt as to the best rendering remained on the revisers' minds.

The fifteenth century was one of the greatest in our era. It ushered in the Renaissance, the new learning, the great intellectual and spiritual awakening. Igno-

rance and superstition and oppression had been imposed, and had lain heavy on the mind, the heart and the imagination of men. But now the blighting spell was breaking, and out of it came the universities and the Reformation. The wars in Turkey and other Eastern upheavals and readjustments made the Renaissance possible. Old and precious manuscripts were thus freed from secluded libraries and other musty resting places. These were brought to Europe by masters of trading vessels, soldiers of fortune, and by interested scholars. Among these manuscripts were many Greek copies of the New Testament. Fortunately there were scholars competent to recognize their value. Four of these manuscripts fell into the hands of Erasmus, then the most learned man of his day, who in 1516 published a revised New Testament in Greek. Then at intervals he corrected that Testament as other and better Greek manuscripts were brought to him. This he continued to do until 1527, when his last edition was published. But as some of these manuscripts were incomplete in parts, he translated the missing parts from the Vulgate. It is quite suggestive of how much the Vulgate itself needs to be revised, and also how independent our New Testament is of this Catholic translation, that the greater num-

ber of changes made by our recent revisers were found in the parts Erasmus copied from the Vulgate. This Greek New Testament, edited by Erasmus, is the basis of our New Testament. Other manuscripts coming into the hands of such scholars as Stephens, Beza and the Elzevirs of Amsterdam enabled them to produce such a satisfactory copy of the New Testament in Greek, that in 1611 it was made the *Textus Receptus*, and translated into English by the revisers in England. For the Old Testament part of our Bible these translators of 1611 translated direct from the Hebrew into English. So that our Bible, in its production and in its scholarship, is a book distinct from the Latin Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. In this remarkable period of English history, a period in which there was a very tumult of awakening forces, the chain of events which culminated in the Authorized Version of the English Bible began.

Meantime the art of printing had been invented, and the first book ever printed in Europe with movable types was the Bible. This was the celebrated Gutenberg Bible of 1456, a copy of which was sold recently for \$50,000. It now was possible to distribute thousands of copies where before each single one had painfully to be written off by pen and ink. The Bible headed the mighty revo-

lution brought about by the discovery of printing. It was the first book to keep the printing press busy, and today, after centuries, it is still the only book that continues being printed constantly through the generations, and that outstrips in numbers all other books disseminated by the printer's art.

Between the first printed book in 1455 and the discovery of America in 1492, the two great scholars, Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther, were born. Erasmus was 17 years older than Luther. In 1516, one year before Luther nailed up the theses, Erasmus printed the first edition of the New Testament in Greek, with a new Latin translation. Six years later, in 1522, Luther printed the first edition of the New Testament in German, and three years later than this Tyndale printed the first edition of the New Testament in English.

Luther's Bible modernized and made the German language, and remained substantially as it was until the end of the nineteenth century; but the English Bible went through a series of retranslations for almost a century, (while the Roman Catholic or Douay Bible also appeared) until in 1611, the Authorized Version appeared, and the English Bible, like the German, was now fixed for all time.

Though by no means perfect, and though we do not know at this day by whom or how it was "authorized," the Authorized English Version attained a pre-eminence and an influence which places it alongside of Jerome's Vulgate and Luther's Bible. For as the Latin Vulgate created a new Latin literature and life, extending through centuries; and as Luther's Deutsche Bibel "created the modern German language as an instrument of literature" (Schlegel), so the King James or Authorized English Bible turned the English language from a Latin and Norman vocabulary into a simple Saxon tongue, which bids fair to stand for centuries to come, whatever minor changes may be introduced by way of revision.

The remarkable reign of Elizabeth had just come to a close with the completion of the Authorized translation. The Puritan spirit was coming into power. About this time the flight of John Robinson to Leyden occurred. Subsequently he transferred his followers to New England. When they left him he lifted a Bible high above his head and said: "There is yet more light to break out of this old book." With what amazement and surprise he would look upon the present day fulfilment of his prophecy. Cromwell was a child, and Charles I., who afterward died on the scaffold, was of almost the same age.

John Milton was not yet born. The Ulster Plantation, a scheme of colonization in Ireland, gave a new element to the world's movement. It was a period of dissension and violence, not of anarchy, but of mighty moral forces struggling for liberty of conscience; a period of tumults and wrongs, but out of which grew much that is best and noblest in the life and history of today. A certain national temper was necessary, a temper of heroism, born of faith in God, and of belief in the high duties of man. The people were in a mood to hear and act. In no other age, perhaps, could such a version have been prepared or have gained such power. The Bible was almost the only literature in the language. The translation came just when the language was taking on its strength and beauty. It became the book of the people. It moulded the thoughts of the people, and in so doing turned the nation into a church, and established moral and political standards that are now incorporated in Saxon laws and institutions. For three centuries this version has held its high place. It is woven into our philosophy and literature; it has produced a definite cast in our thought; its strength and beauty have given it popularity and power, and today it is read as no other book in the world. The Spirit of God is in it, as

it has been in it from the beginning, and it will continue to be in it and live to bless and ennoble the Saxon race, and through it to bless and ennoble the whole world. Its literary perfection has won the supreme admiration of the wisest, the purest and the best men in the English-speaking world. Men in all lands and of all shades of theological thought have borne voluntary testimony to its general faithfulness and extraordinary beauty. It has entered into all our literature, into our jurisprudence, into our Constitution and laws, into our forms of government and into all the forces of our civilization.

The literary perfection of our present version has been the admiration of the wisest, best and purest men in the English-speaking world. Men of all shades of theological opinion, in all lands, have combined in bearing testimony to its general faithfulness and its extraordinary beauty. "The style of our present version," says the great scholar, Bishop Middleton, "is incomparably superior to anything which might be expected from the finical and perverted style of our age. It is simple, it is harmonious, it is energetic." Dr. Geddes, a Roman Catholic divine, thus writes: "The highest eulogiums have been pronounced on the translation of James I., both by our own

writers and by foreigners; and indeed if accuracy, fidelity and the strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute the qualities of an excellent version, this, of all versions, must in general be accounted the most excellent." Dr. Faber, one of the most distinguished scholars who has left the Church of England for that of Rome, gives still more remarkable testimony: "Who will say that the uncommon beauty and marvelous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives in the ear like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities seem to be almost things instead of words; it is a part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness; the memory of the dead passes into it; the potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses; the power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. . . . In the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible." And in our own land one of the finest panegyrics of the Bible comes from a man who was thought to be very much misguided in regard to what the

Scriptures taught. The late Theodore Parker said: "The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from the land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book from a nation alike despised in ancient and modern times (the Jews). It is read on a Sabbath in all the ten thousand pulpits of our land; the sun never sets upon its gleaming page; it goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king; it is woven into the literature of the scholar and colors the talk of the street; the barque of the merchant cannot sail without it; no ship of war goes into conflict but the Bible is there; it enters men's closets; it mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life; the affianced maiden prays to God in Scripture for strength in her new duties; men are married by Scripture; the Bible attends them in their sickness; when the fever of the world is on them, the aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath; the mariner escaping from shipwreck clutches this first of his treasures and keeps it sacred to God; it goes with the peddler in his crowded pack, and cheers him at eventide when he sits down dusty and fatigued." The one end of the Bible is, indeed, to tell the world about God and the great salvation. But while it has done this, it has done more,

supplying rhetoric with powerful and happy diction, and enriching literature with noble thoughts and images, and the fine arts with memorable subjects. On examination one must have been astonished with the few solid thoughts, the few suggestive ideas, which survive from the perusal of the most brilliant of merely human books. Few of them will stand three readings. But our English Bible is solid; it will stand a thousand readings, and the man who has gone over it the oftenest and the most carefully is the surest of finding new beauties there.

There have been many books the representatives of cultured mental activity and constructive power, brilliant phenomena of intellect and genius, learned philosophical systems, beautiful mythological poems and dreams; but never a one that points the hopeless crowds to a real, profound and fruitful regeneration. Solon and Socrates uttered great and noble truths, but the multitude groped on in ignorance and idolatry. Where this book goes, it is as a great light that enlighteneth every man who comes within the radius of its influence. It changes the moral, the social, the political, the religious state of mankind. It pours into the souls of men new enlightenment and new powers; it liberates the human mind so that it may be free to study laws of nature and

of God. For every human being it proposes a destiny not otherwise discoverable. It makes man a subject and a freeman, without bringing him into conflict with himself or with his Maker. It offers an effectual remedy for the evils that burden and ruin humanity, and opens wide the gates which lead to the liberty of the children of God. It speaks in languages more numerous, and in tongues more eloquent, and to nations more populous than ever before. It marshals soldiers that shrink from no conflict and who rise triumphant over every foe. It shakes down old philosophical systems that exalt themselves against God. It makes the steam press creak under its multiplying volumes, and the steam horse groan under the burden of its increasing charities. It emancipates the slave, it civilizes the lawless, it ennobles literature, inspires poetry and music, and sends forth art and science, not to decorate kings' palaces, but as the vice-gerents of God, to make the earth bud and blossom as the rose. It gives a divine breadth and energy to the civilizations which it inspires, elevating savage tribes into Christianized states, repeating glorious pentecosts in the bosom of hoary paganisms, and ever increasing the circles of light it has created until they shall meet at last in a universal illumination.

If in nature's wide field we can discover the footprints of God, as did Newton and Faraday and Hugh Miller, much more surely can the Christian discern His finger-prints in the pages of this book, which, as John Locke declared, "had God for its Author, salvation for its end, and truth without any admixture of error for its matter." And of which Newton said, "We account the Scriptures of God as the most sublime philosophy. I find more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history whatever." And of which Gladstone said, "What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed, or can fail, to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? Amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market-place, where every thought of every soul seems to be set on the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure; there, too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest." It is a direct challenge to our faith, and yet we are slow and sluggish in accepting it. It proves its beneficent value in its application to life and conduct, and yet we are so tardy in putting it to the test. It admonishes us "to prove all things and hold

fast to what is good," and yet we act as if its message was not authoritative or divine, nor its requirements imperative and salutary. Yet it is this Bible which made England the greatest maritime nation on the earth. It is this Bible that made Protestantism the dominant faith of the Saxon race, and the Saxon the greatest factor in modern civilization and progress. It is this Bible that gave impulse to the spirit of freedom and made possible Magna Charta and the Declaration of American Independence. Had it not been for the influence of this book the Latin races would have dominated the North American Continent, and there would have been no American Republic. There would have been no Wesleyan revival, no Methodist denomination, no Protestant Christianity. It has entered into our political and national life; its principles are embodied in state and national constitutions and laws, and its ethical precepts have become the standards of life and conduct for the people. If our greatness and our prosperity are to continue, it will not depend upon the shrewdness of our captains of finance and the development of our material resources, nor yet upon the multiplication and enlargement of our schools and colleges, and still less upon our armies, navies and materials for war, but upon our respect for the Bible as the Word

of God, and our devotion and obedience to its principles and teachings. It is the mirror of divinity, the rightful regent of the world. It shines with ancient and unborrowed rays. It is the gift of God and has in it the words of eternal life.

It adds interest to this ter-centenary period that England and Canada are also giving much attention to it. At a celebration held in June the Archbishop of Canterbury described the men of the Mayflower, the early colonists to America, as entering their new land with the Bible as their guide-book. Then Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister, a man of immense ability, rose probably to a higher altitude in intellectual eloquence than he ever did before. One of his sentences was most comprehensive. In speaking of the national homage now paid to the Bible, he summed up its contents in "the teaching which inspires, the consolations which soothe, the faith which can move mountains, the hope which endures to the end."

Mr. Asquith declared that the "Authorized Version of the Bible delivered the people of England from a yoke to which they will never again submit." He also affirmed that the Bible is the symbol and safeguard of unity. His last paragraph was:

"One of the truths which we have slowly

realized, but which is now firmly rooted, I believe, in the faith of all Christian men and women on both sides of the Atlantic, is that war between the English-speaking peoples would not only be a crime against the civilized world, but an unforgivable breach of those Commandments ever enshrined and sacred in the New Testament, upon which both nations have been bred. There surely could not be a worthier, more proper, more splendid monument of this ter-centenary than that it should witness the sealing of a solemn pact between us which would end, once and for all, the hideous, unthinkable possibilities of fratricidal strife."

A few days later a deputation, headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, waited upon His Majesty the King, to present him with a Bible in celebration to the ter-centenary of the Authorized Version. The deputation was thoroughly representative of science, commerce and literature, whilst every religious denomination in the country sent its representative, the Methodist representatives being the Rev. John Hornabrook (Wesleyan), the Rev. S. S. Henshaw (Primitive), the Rev. H. T. Chapman (United). The Marquess of Northampton presented the Bible, and with it an address, which was read by the Archbishop, and which contained the following memorable passage: "The

growth and strength of the Empire owe much to the English Bible. It has sweetened home life; it has set a standard of pure speech; it has permeated literature and art; it has helped to remove social wrongs and to ameliorate conditions of labor; it has modified the laws of the realm and shaped the national character, and it has fostered international comity and good will among men."

In reply His Majesty said: "The labors of the translators deserve to be held in lasting honor. Their glories and memorable achievement, coming like a broad light in darkness, gave freely to the whole English people the right and the power to search for themselves for the truths and consolations of our faith; and during three hundred years the multiplying millions of the English-speaking races, spreading ever more widely over the surface of the globe, have turned in their need to the grand simplicity of the Authorized Version, and have drawn upon its inexhaustible springs of wisdom, courage and joy. It is my confident hope, confirmed by the widespread interest your movement has aroused, that my subjects may never cease to cherish their noble inheritance in the English Bible, which, in a secular aspect, is the first of national treasures, and is, as you truly say, in its spiritual significance,

'the most valuable thing that this world affords.' "

The great Redeemer, Whose work and history it records, gave His life blood for the salvation of men, and the history of the Bible translations is largely a history of blood—as it was demanded in the persecution of the noble men who did the work. The "Outlook" well says:

"The German Bible was the work of Luther, whose genius made its language the speech of Germany. The English Bible was the creation of generations of Englishmen in the years of heroic history. It was born in storm and fire, and the blood of martyrs was shed for it. Wycliffe died of his tremendous labors on it as truly as if he had been burned at the stake; Tyndale, scholar and hero, of dauntless courage and loving heart, gave the translation its noble rhythm, the pulsation of its life, its restrained richness, and its impressive earnestness, and, after eight years of tireless work and narrow escapes from his persecutors, was hunted down, strangled and burned. Miles Coverdale, who brought to the work a quick feeling for harmony, a musician's sense of cadence, and a command of the happy phrase, was deposed and banished. Matthew's Bible, which appeared in 1537, was edited by John Rogers, the first martyr under

Queen Mary; the Genevan Bible was made by exiles. Into the translation, as into the original, life was poured without measure. From Genesis to Revelation, from the making of the first manuscript to the completion of the English translation, the Bible took form in the deepest experiences of life, and was fashioned out of the sacrifice which it recorded from age to age." No wonder it appeals to the English heart as no other book can.

Yet it is the one book "which reveals men unto themselves, not as creatures in bondage, not as men under human authority, not as those bidden to take counsel and command of any human source. It reveals every man to himself as a distinct moral agent, responsible not to men, not even to those men whom he has put over him in authority, but responsible through his own conscience to his Lord and Maker. Whenever a man sees this vision he stands up a free man, whatever may be the government under which he lives."

Governor Woodrow Wilson well says: "Our present life is a very imperfect and disappointing thing. We do not judge our own conduct in the privacy of our own closets by the standard of expediency by which we are daily and hourly governed. We know that there is a standard set for us

in the heavens, a standard revealed to us in this book which is the fixed and eternal standard by which we judge ourselves, and as we read this book it seems to us that the pages of our own hearts are laid open before us for our own perusal. This is the people's book of revelation, revelation of themselves not alone, but revelation of life and of peace. You know that human life is a constant struggle. For a man who has lost the sense of struggle, life has ceased.

"Can you imagine a man who did not believe these words, who did not believe in the future life, standing up and doing what has been the heart and center of liberty always standing up before the king himself and saying, 'Sir, you have sinned and done wrong in the sight of God and I am His messenger of judgment to pronounce upon you the condemnation of Almighty God. You may silence me, you may send me to my reckoning with my Maker, but you cannot silence or reverse the judgment.' That is what a man feels whose faith is rooted in the Bible. The man whose faith is rooted in the Bible knows that reform can not be stayed, that the finger of God that moves upon the face of the nations is against every man that plots the nation's downfall or the people's defeat; that these men are simply groping and staggering in their ignorance to

a fearful day of judgment and that whether one generation witnesses it or not, the glad day of revelation and of freedom will come in which men will sing by the host of the coming of the Lord in His glory, and all of those will be forgotten, those little, scheming, contemptible creatures that forgot the image of God and tried to frame men acquainted with the truth according to their own selfish conceptions, rather than after the pattern shown them in this book."

It is still true, as it has been from the beginning, that heaven and earth may pass away, but My Word shall not pass away, saith the Lord of Hosts.

But to outweigh all harm, the Sacred Book
 In dusty sequestration wrapt too long,
 Assumes the accents of our native tongue,
 And he who guides the plow or wields the
 crook,
 With understanding spirit now may look
 Upon her records, listen to her song,
 And sift her laws—much wondering that the
 wrong
 Which Faith has suffered, Heaven could calmly
 brook.
 Transcendent boon! noblest that earthly king
 Ever bestowed to equalize and bless
 Under the weight of mortal wretchedness!
 But passions spread like plagues, and thousands
 wild
 With bigotry shall tread the offering
 Beneath their feet—detested and defiled.

—Wordsworth.

The Christian, however, may still join the song of an ancient lover of the Bible: "I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testi-

monies as much as in all riches. I will delight myself in Thy statutes. I will not forget Thy Word. Thy testimonies are my delight and counsellors. Behold, I have longed after Thy precepts. I will delight myself in Thy commandments which I have loved. I will never forget Thy precepts, for with them Thou hast quickened me. O, how I love Thy law: it is my meditation all the day. How sweet are Thy Words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. I love Thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold. Thy Word is very pure; therefore Thy servant loveth it. I rejoice at Thy Word as one that findeth great spoil. I have longed for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my delight. Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. The righteousness of Thy testimonies is everlasting. I have known of old that Thou hast founded them forever."

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