

THE
BIBLE ADVOCATE.

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THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

[It is always, interesting to the inquisitive mind, and often beneficial, to trace back our blessings to their source, to observe when and how the God of Mercy has provided and set in motion the causes which produce them, and to mark the progress by which, through his good providence, they have descended to us. The following sketch of the History of the English Version of the Scriptures appeared in a recent number of the *Boston Recorder*. It is so ably drawn up, and the principal facts are so judiciously selected and exhibited, that we have transferred it to our pages, instead of the purposed History of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which will be resumed and continued, occasionally, in some future numbers.—ED.]

THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

It is now having a glorious career, but it had a struggle, even for existence, at the outset. Bright as this luminary now is, and is yet to be, clouds and thick darkness gathered over it as it first entered our horizon. We are indebted to John Wickliff

for the first translation of the entire Scriptures into our language. The Romish Church, then in the plenitude of her power and insolence, scowled malignantly upon him as he fished up this precious pearl from the sea of the dead languages. They would have plunged it back again into the depths, but John Wickliff was a stout fisherman, and they were foiled. A Romish historian makes the following statement. "Wickliff made a new translation of the Bible, multiplied its copies by the aid of transcribers, and by his poor priests recommended it to the perusal of his hearers. In these hands it became an engine of wonderful power. Men were flattered by an appeal to their private judgment; the new doctrines acquired partizans and protectors in the higher classes who alone were acquainted with the use of letters; a spirit of inquiry was generated, and the seeds were sown of that religious revolution, which, in little more than a century, astonished and convulsed Europe." We can further see that the birth of the English Bible was a sorrowful affair to the Catholics,