

residing here, he often entered into controversy with the company, and especially the priests who frequented the house of Sir John, which excited their enmity and brought him into trouble. He was charged by the Chancellor of the diocese, with several articles of offence; but he defended himself so ably that his adversaries were confounded and constrained to release him. Yet their malice did not subside; they continued to molest and distress him by every means in their power. To escape their fury, he returned to London, where he preached occasionally at St. Dunstan's in the West, and had fuller opportunities of detecting the abominations of the Church and the extreme ignorance of the clergy.

In that age, disputations were frequent among scholars, and in general the sentiments and reasonings of the leaders among the different sects of the philosophers, were more highly esteemed and more frequently quoted than the declarations of Holy Writ. The clergy were, for the most part, ignorant of the Scriptures, and often of human learning; indeed some of them could scarcely read, and were unable to write. Tyndale, who was well versed in the Scriptures, in addition to his other attainments had therefore, in every dispute with the Popish clergy, a decided advantage over them. He used to declare that the period was approaching when the rudest peasant, with the Bible in his hand, would be their superior in that knowledge which leads to everlasting life: a prediction, which, to a certain extent, has been fully realized.

It was during his residence in London, that his purpose of translating the Scriptures was matured, and the execution of it commenced. The celebrated Wickliff had, more than a century before, prepared a version for the use of the people at large; but the bishops, and clergy, had caused its suppression; and besides, the lan-

guage was much changed since his version was executed. Tyndale resolved to repeat the experiment; he prepared the materials, and his mind seems to have dwelt upon the subject with the ardour of devotion and the resolution of a martyr. When we consider the period at which such an object was avowed, we need not be surprised that the ignorant and bigotted supporters of popery should fear the light, and endeavour, by all the aids of persecution and calumny, to silence a man whom they knew not how to answer.

Tyndale withdrew into retirement for about six months; during which time he completed his translation of the New Testament. There is no doubt, however, that it had cost him much previous labour; and it is certain that he still employed unwearied assiduity in perfecting a work, for which he could find but few helps in the learning of the age; and in which, from the spirit of the times, he durst hardly accept of a coadjutor, even if one had offered.

Finding it impossible to print his work at home, he was desirous of visiting the reformers on the continent. Providence raised him up a friend in Henry Mommouth, who furnished him with money to pay the expenses of his journey. He formed an acquaintance with Luther, and other learned men; and having more fully embraced their doctrines, he disseminated them among those of his countrymen who attended his ministry at Antwerp and its vicinity. In 1526 he obtained the assistance of John Frith, a learned and pious man, by whose aid he was enabled to publish his Translation of the New Testament into English. This first edition was in octavo, without a name, it consisted of 1500 copies, a great proportion of which were taken into England and privately circulated.

The Romish clergy were both enraged and alarmed. Some of them