

which nothing earthly can fill. But the prayer-meeting—the earthly communion of saints—is ever pleasing, ever new, and those who truly enjoy its blessings wish to enjoy them again and again. Surely those who are conscious that the present life is but an introduction to an eternal and unchanging future, and that future is to be passed in the unveiled and direct presence of our blessed Redeemer, cannot qualify themselves for heaven and its enjoyments by any means equal to the prayer-meeting.

Then all the storm of life subsides,
And the vexed spirit into rapture glides.

MILES COVERDALE.



OF the early life of Miles Coverdale very little is known, nor, indeed, have we more than scanty information respecting many of his later years. It has been supposed that Coverdale's name points to his birthplace, and that, like Wycliffe, he was a native of North Yorkshire. The year of his birth was 1488.

The first notice which we possess connects him with the monastery of the Augustine Friars at Cambridge, at the head of which was Dr. Robert Barnes, well known in the early records of the Reformation. In 1526, when Barnes was required on pain of death to abjure the errors laid to his charge, Coverdale stood by his side. His earliest extant writing is a letter which (probably in 1527) he writes to Thomas Cromwell, then one of Wolsey's dependents, afterwards his successor as Lord High Chancellor. In this letter Coverdale refers to the "godly communication" which Cromwell had had with him in the house of "Master More" (Sir Thomas More), and earnestly solicits assistance in the prosecution of sacred studies. . . . If we pass over some incidental notices of his preaching, very interesting as showing the distinct opposition which he offered to the errors of the Romish Church, the next reference to Coverdale is presented in Foxe's statement (quoted above, Vol. II., p. 124), that in 1529 he assisted Tyndale in translating the Pentateuch. It is impossible to say what reliance is to be placed on the details of this isolated statement; but the passage has the look of truth, and some of the minor particulars have recently been proved accurate. . . . Tyndale would certainly welcome, and would receive valuable assistance from, such a companion as Coverdale, whose zeal in the good work was only equalled by his retiring modesty. After this Coverdale passes away from view until the appearance of the first English Bible, in 1535. . . . In 1533 Craumer was made Archbishop of Canterbury; and the Convocation over which he presided in 1534 made petition to the king that "his Majesty would vouchsafe to decree that the Scriptures should be translated into the vulgar tongue by some honest and learned men, to be nominated by the king, and to be delivered to the people according to their learning." In this year Coverdale committed his Bible to the press, and the printing was finished on the 4th of October, 1535. The place of publication is still a matter

of dispute, but the probability is that the volume was printed by Froshover, of Zurich. Though issued under the patronage of Cromwell, and dedicated to Henry VIII., the book appeared without express licence. In 1536 Convocation petitioned the king "that he would graciously indulge unto his subjects of the laity the reading of the Bible in the English tongue, and that a new translation of it might be forthwith made for that end and purpose."

The following year a second and a third edition of Coverdale's Bible were published by Nycolson, of Southwark; and here at last we read at the foot of the title-page, "Sett forth with the Kynges most gracious license."

We next find Coverdale in Paris, engaged, under Cromwell's direction and patronage, on Biblical work. In the same year were published three editions of a Latin-English Testament, containing the ordinary Latin text of the New Testament (the Vulgate), with an English rendering by Coverdale. All these labours on the translation of Scripture will presently be noticed in detail. As long as Cromwell lived, Coverdale seems to have retained his close connection with his patron. His last letters to Cromwell are dated from Newbury, where he is employed in proceedings against Romish usages and books. In July, 1540, Cromwell died on the scaffold. Coverdale appears to have left England for Germany in the same year, for in a letter to John Calvin, written from Frankfurt in 1548, he speaks of his approaching return to England, "after an exile of eight years." During this exile he was occupied with the instruction of pupils, and with the care of a church at Bergzabern, not far from Strasburg. On the accession of Edward VI. he was made one of the king's chaplains. His appointment on the commission against Anabaptists (1550) is another proof of the high estimation in which he now was held. In 1551 he was promoted to the bishopric of Exeter, a preferment which he retained for two years only, being deprived of his see on the accession of Queen Mary. For some months Coverdale remained in a position of considerable peril; many a less active opponent of the party now in power atoned for his zeal by the sacrifice of his life. Coverdale owed his release to the intercession of the King of Denmark. After a second exile of about three years, towards the close of which period we find him at Geneva, he returned to England in 1558. In 1564 he was appointed to the living of St. Magnus the Martyr, London Bridge; but either through the pressure of age and infirmity, or in consequence of his adhesion to the views of the Puritan party in the matter of vestments, etc., he retained his benefice only two years. He died in February, 1569. His character is faithfully reflected in his writings, especially in the work which will immediately come under review. The brief sketch which we have given is sufficient to show how zealous, consistent, and devoted was the life of the second Translator of the Bible.

[The above sketch is an abbreviated extract from an article by Professor Moulton, on "The Translation of the Bible," appearing in the third volume of "Cassell's Bible Educator." This series of volumes is invaluable to the student, and in fact to every thinking Christian.]

GOD'S PRESENCE.

MY days begin, pass, and end in pleasure, and seem short because they are so delightful. It may seem strange to say it, but really so it is, I hardly feel that I want anything. And the reason, the great and sufficient reason is, that I have more of the presence of God with me than I remember ever to have enjoyed in any one month of my life. He enables me to live for Him, and to live with Him. When I awake in the morning, which is always before it is light, I address myself to Him, and converse with Him, speak to Him while I am lighting my candle and putting on my clothes, and have often more delight before I come out of my chamber, though it be hardly a quarter of an hour after my awaking, than I have enjoyed for whole days, or, perhaps, weeks of my life. He meets me in my study, in secret, in family devotions. It is pleasant to read, pleasant to compose, pleasant to converse with my friends at home; pleasant to visit those abroad—the poor, the sick; pleasant to write letters of necessary business by which any good can be done; pleasant to go out and preach the Gospel to poor souls, of which some are thirsting for it, and others dying without it; pleasant in the week-day to think how near another Sabbath is; but, oh,