

Goddspelless hallghe lare
 with fulle mahhte (might) follghe rihht
 thurh thohht, thurh word, thurh dede."

With this holy and poetical aim always in view, he is careful to a fault lest he may say or do anything that may defeat it. Out of his personal love of the Bible and his whole-souled interest in its circulation among the people, he prays—

"thatt all Ennglisshe lede (people)
 with aere (reverence) sholde lissstenn itt,
 with herrte sholde itt trowwenn, (trust)
 with tonge sholde spellenn (speak) itt,
 with dede sholde itt follghenn."

He is never weary of repeating, for the sake of helping the poorer folk of England, just what the Gospel can do for them, in the variety of their spiritual needs. Monk and friar that he was, he deeply sympathized with the every-day cares and trials of the common classes and was convinced that the source of their relief was not to be found in this or that legislative enactment, but only in the Word of God. It is most interesting to note how he specifies these ways and means of spiritual help as in truly theological order he states and unfolds the seven distinctive blessings that come to the people through the Gospel and the cross of Christ, beginning with the incarnation for human redemption and ending with the rewards of the righteous at the great "Domess dagg"—day of doom. After praying that God may give all his readers grace to follow the Scriptures, he closes his Dedication with a prayer, equally fervent, that all who read or hear the Bible as he has translated and explained it may, in turn, earnestly for him "this bede biddenn"—this prayer pray, that he may find, as the recompense of his devoted labor, "soth blisse" (true joy) in heaven.

Such is the tenor of the *Ormulum* and such the spirit of its author; and he must have read these Old English writers with indifference or settled bias who does not see that, as a general rule, they were devout and sober-minded men; writing and teaching for the common weal and the cause of truth; for what Bacon has termed "the glory of God and the relief of man's estate." Many of them, as *Orm* himself, were as ingenuous and simple-minded as children; versed in little else than the Scriptures and the Fathers, and making no claim whatsoever to mental acumen or literary art. The Bible and the old religious writings, however, they did know. As Shakespeare has it, they were thoroughly "gospelled," and, in an earnest and a somewhat homely way, aimed to "gospel" others by prose and song. What such a poem as the *Ormulum* lacks in mental grasp and æsthetic finish of word and phrase, it fully makes up in ethical spirit and simplicity of method and motive. A kind of homiletic manual for the people's use, it is expressed in honest rustic verse and, if devoid of the brilliant poetic flash of much of the mediæval literature of the time, was also devoid