

ally to cordially unite with trustees, school boards and teachers, in promoting such religious exercises in the schools, and thus to improve the character of our youth, and to form a community distinguished not only for intelligence, but for its fair-dealing and law-abiding and moral qualities."

### JOHN WYCLIFFE.

THE five hundredth anniversary of the rescue, in 1378, by the citizens of London, of John Wycliffe from his persecutors, after his second trial at Lambeth Palace, has been recently celebrated in England by various services and meetings, with the object of vindicating his place in history and his character as the great English archetype of Christian patriotism. Evangelical Churchmen and Non-conformists have combined to do honour to this foremost scholar, patriot, and divine, to whose self-sacrificing devotion and unparalleled labours which he continued for thirty years almost single-handed against the most formidable opposition, England owes under God its liberties and its greatness. He has been rightly called "the morning star of the Reformation." He was, says the Bishop of Meath, "a Reformer before the Reformers, a Protestant before the Protestants, an Old Catholic before the Old Catholics, a translator before those to whom that title was usually given, a writer and a collector of tracts before the Tract Society had 'a local habitation and a name,' a man of great intellectual power, of statesman-like wisdom, of great and varied learning, of dauntless courage, of true piety, and above all, a self-sacrificing, earnest follower of the Great Master."

Yet it is but lately that his real merits have been recognized, and the foul aspersions cast upon his life and teachings by the enemies of the Truth cleared away and triumphantly disproved. Although, as might be expected, the organs of sacerdotalism cannot refrain from sneers and insinuations at the honour shown the great Reformer. These, however, serve to show the spirit of the system which they upheld and to prove the necessity for those very demonstrations which they dislike. For as the Rev. Dr. Vaughan, the Master of the Temple, in his recent commemorative sermon, said, "Wycliffe struggled for the very same truths for which we are struggling now." As is more and more evident every day, the work of Wycliffe has to be done over again. It is befitting then to set before ourselves his example, that we may seek to emulate his loyalty to the truth and his fearless steadfastness.

When the Evangelical Doctor, as he was called, went forth from Oxford, whose great light he had become, his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the idolatry of his countrymen. Like Tyndale, he "perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before them in their mother tongue." Hampered as he was by inefficient instruments, without the Scriptures in their original languages, and without the labour-saving power of the press, he with incredible labour proceeded to give to the English people for the first time the whole Bible in their own tongue—a priceless boon.

His pungent tracts went everywhere with

their brave, truthful words. He was a bold and popular preacher, fearlessly denouncing the tyranny and corruption of the Church.

He laid the axe to the root of sacerdotalism, the dogma of a mediating human priesthood between the sinner and the Saviour. The keystone of vital Christianity is the immediate and direct relation of the individual soul to God.

The priest must have a sacrifice. With sacerdotalism is inevitably connected the figment of the so-called Real Presence, in Wycliffe's day held in its grossest and crudest form of Transubstantiation.

But Wycliffe declared that the elements were not to be considered "as Christ or as any part of Him;" but "as an effectual sign of Him."

Appealing to the Scriptures and to the ancient creeds which assert the eternity and immortality of the Saviour's existence, he solemnly demands, "may the thing made turn again and make Him who made it?"

Is it said that in this enlightened age we are in no danger of relapsing into so gross an error? Alas, we fear that this confidence is misplaced, when such a practice, as that lately reported in the London "Guardian," and the report of which is asserted by the editor to be accurate and trustworthy, could exist. It is there stated that the custom now prevails among these Anglican sisterhoods, concerning which a committee of Convocation recently made a not unfavourable report, of reserving and carrying about with them a "consecrated host" in a small silver box.

Another error springing from the same root of bitterness—for sacerdotalism is the source and spring of all these pernicious doctrines—is that of Auricular Confession, which finds to-day its open advocates in our Reformed Church. Against it, Wycliffe earnestly protested on the ground that the Gospel itself was a sufficient guide to every Christian soul. And the same errors to-day can only be met by the assertion of the same truths. The Gospel of Jesus simply preached, heartily believed, is the only barrier against superstition and priestcraft.

All honour to those heroes of old who impelled by strong convictions and in the power of a living faith achieved for us the glorious heritage of truth and freedom in which our lot is cast. It is well that we should frequently recall the costliness of the price by which it has been secured to us, the sorrow and shame and death by which our fathers purchased it. For them let us give God thanks, and let us ask Him to bestow upon us the same spirit of self-sacrifice and of loyal devotion to the truth.—*Evangelical Churchman*.

### THE LATE REV. ANDREW DRYBURGH, CANADA.

In the obituary of Thursday occurs the name of Rev. Andrew Dryburgh, minister of Hawkesville and Elmira, Ontario, Canada, on the 6th inst., from scarlet fever. He was a native of Pathhead, Kirkcaldy, the only child of his parents. His father, David Dryburgh, kept a school for many years, and afterwards was postmaster of Pathhead. Young Andrew, after attending school in Kirkcaldy, went up to the University of St. Andrews in 1846, and had a distinguished career as a student. At the close of his first session, he stood first on the honorary list of students of merit both in Latin and Greek, besides getting a first-class for translations of the *Spectator*, English translations of Livy, and exercises in Latin prosody. His second

session was no less distinguished, standing again first in Latin and Greek, with equal honours as a translator—his rival, who obtained the second ranking, being John Duncan, now Rev. Dr. Duncan, Seconie. In the logic class, under Professor Spalding, he was second on the list, Dr. Duncan having surpassed him in essay writing, and second in mathematics, Dr. Duncan being again his superior rival. During 1848-9, he was once more first in Latin, Dr. Duncan being second and third in moral philosophy, under Professor Ferrier—Dr. Duncan being first and third in mathematics, while Dryburgh was second. His fourth session was passed in Edinburgh University under Professor James D. Forbes. Strongly attached to the Free Church, he entered the New College under Principal Cunningham and the noble band of professors then associated with him, and prosecuted his studies for licence as a probationer. At various times, before and after being licensed, he was employed in teaching in Merchiston under Mr. Gibson, in Leith High School, in Arbroath High School, Dundee, and other localities. With his brilliant antecedents as a student it might have been anticipated that he would take a foremost place as a preacher. But his style of delivery—a rapid and unmusical monotone, so singular in one with a good ear for music—a style that had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength—prevented his success in the pulpit. For some time he was stationed at Port William, on the Solway, and had preaching work hither and thither in wearisome rotation. Along with his unsuccess, and doubtless as a factor tending to its production, came ill-health, depriving him of the nerve to give emphasis to his preaching. Yet, withal, Mr. Dryburgh, with his vigour of mind and splendid scholarship, and desire to serve Christ in the ministry of the Gospel, ought to have had a settled charge at home at least twenty years ago. For some time we had lost sight of him, and only two nights ago made inquiry at one of his old pupils regarding him. And now he has been carried off, after finding a sphere and a work in the great Dominion, by the disease of childhood, from which his tender-hearted mother so carefully screened him. We drop a tear of sorrow over his departure, as over one of the truest, most honest and devout Christian men we have ever claimed as friends.—*Edinburgh Daily Review*, 30th March, 1878.

### KNOX COLLEGE ORDINARY FUND DEBT.

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