

tion of Tyndale's. His work was accordingly dedicated to Henry VIII. One passage in his dedication shows that, though the versions had been made from the originals, other versions had been consulted. He exhibits also that noble catholic spirit and that honest desire that his countrymen might possess the word of God in pure form, which Tyndale had before manifested. He tells his sovereign that he submits his work to him "to correcte it, to amende it, to improve it, yee, and cleane to reiecte it, yf youre godly wysdome shall thinke necessary. And as I do with all humblenes submitte myne understandyng and my poore translacyon (having God to recorde in my conscience) that I have nether wrested nor altered so moch as one worde for the maynynce of any manner of secte: but have with a clene conscience purely and faithfully translated this out of fyve sundry interpreters, having only the manifest truth of the Scripture before myne eyes."

This version, too, was printed in part on the Continent where it was made, but was finished and issued in England in 1535.

In 1537, through the importunity of Archbishop Cranmer, Tyndale's entire Bible, with very few corrections, was printed in England, under the name of Matthew's Bible, "set forth by the king's most gracious license." This was with the people generally a favorite version, as they had for several years been familiar with the New Testament portion of it. But with many of the clergy it was not acceptable.

Cranmer therefore undertook, by royal permission, to have still another version prepared which should meet the approval of all. His mode of procedure was this:—"First he began with the translation of the New Testament, taking an old English translation thereof, which he divided into nine or ten parts, causing each part to be written at large in a paper book, and then to be sent to the best learned bishops and others, to the intent they should make a perfect version thereof. And when they had done, he required them to send back their parts, so corrected, unto him at Lambeth, by a day limited for that purpose." The "old translation" used as a basis for the New Testament was that of Tyndale, though it had been but a few years in print. It is not so clear how the Old Testament was prepared. The work was published by Grafton and Whitchurch, the same who had borne the expense of Matthew's Bible; and Miles Coverdale, just returned from the Continent, was the corrector of the press. Though this work, known by the title of the "Great Bible," is said to have been prepared from the Hebrew and Greek, it strongly resembles that of Tyndale.

For reasons now unknown, it was proposed to print this work in Paris, and it was in part executed in that city. But being threatened by the Inquisitor-General, who succeeded in burning numerous sheets, the publishers hastened with all they could save to England, and completed its publication there.

This "Great Bible," thus issued by authority, and commonly called Cranmer's Bible, though read in churches and circulated to some good extent, did not prevent still other versions from being made.

In 1539, Richard Travener, a distinguished reformer, prepared a further version, which was little more, however, than a corrected edition of Matthew's Bible. This passed through many editions, and was widely though rather silently read, as it was never considered an authorized version.

For several years the Scriptures in different versions were circulated extensively, and eagerly perused. Of the New Testament, some twenty-five editions were issued; and, at the close of Edward's reign in 1553, it was supposed that not less than one hundred and seventeen thousand copies were in circulation among the English people.

In the reign of Mary, which succeeded, the use of the Scriptures was prohibited; but the English exiles who had gathered at Geneva, with Coverdale among the number, prepared still a new version of the Testament, and which was there published in 1557. This was in some respects an improvement on all previous versions, was carefully made from the originals, and was divided into verses. It was, too, accompanied with short notes, which were highly valued and long used.

In the time of Elizabeth, in 1560, the Old Testament of the Geneva version was published in connection with the New. The Geneva Bible was long in high repute, so that no less than six editions of it were published after the issuing of King James's Bible, to which it eventually gave place.

In the first part of this reign, Cranmer's Bible was in general use in churches; but, as some objections were raised against it, a new version was prepared and brought out in 1568, under the superintendence of Archbishop Parker, aided by various other bishops.

This version, published by authority, was used in churches for more than forty years, though the Geneva version, for private reading, was generally preferred and used. That which has given this version, the "Bishop's Bible" as it is called, a repute, is that it was afterward by order made the basis for the present received version.

In the year 1609, the Rhemish version was published at Douay. This version, unlike those that preceded, except that of Wiclif, was made from the Latin Vulgate, and retains its peculiarities. This is the Bible of English Roman Catholics, so far as they use an English Bible; and, though it has some errors of translation, these would be comparatively harmless, were it not for the far more objectionable notes which are sure at all times to accompany the text.

We now come to the preparation of our present version, first issued in 1611. This, as is well known, was made in the reign of James I. and in a measure by his direction. There is a growing belief, however, that it was an undertaking in which he felt little personal interest, and aided but little towards defraying its expense, or in any other way. It was first proposed incidentally by Dr. Reynolds of Oxford, at the convention for other purposes at Hampton Court. The object of the new version was to get rid of some wrongly translated words in the Bishops and the Geneva versions then in use; also to avoid the notes of the latter; and to secure, if possible, one uniform translation for all. To carry out this purpose, it was proposed to employ fifty-four translators, though it does not appear that more than forty-seven ever took part in the enterprise. These men were mostly of high repute for scholarship and piety. They were divided into six companies, and held their meetings, some at Oxford, some at Cambridge, and some at Westminster. They were to take the Bishops' Bible as a general guide, but not confined to it, when the original required a deviation. The six companies, meeting at three places, prepared three different entire copies or versions. Two from each company were then selected to make a common version. The new work was commenced in 1607, was brought to a close in 1610, and came from the press, as we now have it, in the following year.

As to the merits of this version, little at this day need be said. In comparing it with that of Tyndale, Coverdale, that of the Geneva exiles, or the Bishops, there is seen to be a great similarity, and yet some obvious improvements. As one at the time observed, "They took an already good version and made it better." It was true to the inspired originals; it was so free from sectarian bias that it soon became the common version of all parties who used the English tongue, and has accomplished an amount of good for the race which no man can describe. In France, Germany, and Holland, two or more Protestant versions have been and still are in circulation, in regard to which there is a difference of estimation, and on this account, no doubt, a "weakening of Bible authority and influence with common readers. In the English tongue, for more than two centuries, men of all names have gone to one divine standard, and have been assured by their respective teachers that they possessed a true guide. How much this circumstance has had to do with the unparalleled circulation and use of the Bible in this tongue is a matter worthy of grave consideration, and especially by those who are preparing versions for the unevangelized nations.

THE PURITANS.

[From Macaulay's Essay on Milton.]

We speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men perhaps, which the world has produced. The odious and ridiculous parts lie upon the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration, they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and the stage were the most licentious. They were not men of letters; as a body unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The unostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scripture phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements were indeed fair game for the laughers—But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence

of that potent ridicule, which has already misled so many writers.

Those who rouse the people to resistance who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years,—who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe has ever seen—who trampled down King, Church and Aristocracy—who in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth, were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were external badges, like the signs of freemasonry, or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body, to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations, and not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles I. or the easy good breeding for which the court of Charles II. was celebrated. But if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassino in the play turn from the specious caskets, which contain nothing but Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix our choice upon the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was to them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seems to vanish, when compared with boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority; but his favor; and confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they felt assured they were recorded in the Book of life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns which should never fade away! On the rich and the eloquent, on the nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt: for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, noble by the right of an early creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged—on whose slightest action the Spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest—who had been destined before the heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away.—Events which short sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been rescued by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had arisen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God!

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion; the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions and groans, and tears. He was half-maddened by glorious and terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels, or the temptings of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from the dreams of the everlasting fire. Like Vane he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But, when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind him. People, who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and nothing heard from them but their groans and whining

hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh, who encountered them in the hall of debate, or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil or military affairs a coolness of judgment, and an immutability of purpose, which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors, and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world.—Enthusiasm had made them Stoics, had created their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never choose unwise means. They went through the world like Sir Arteagle's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to be the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach. And we know that, in spite of their hatred of popery, they too often fell into the worse vices, of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity,—that they had their anchorites, and their crusades, their Dunstons and their De Montforts, their Domonise and their Escobars. Yet when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

GOD IS PRESENT.

Consideration of God and of the Divine presence, is a general counter charm against all sin; for as sin is an aversion from God, so the cause of all sin does at last resolve into forgetfulness of him, and a non-consideration of his presence and inspection. Why should not God's seeing us have the same influence upon us as our seeing God? In short, notwithstanding our proneness to evil, we need no other guard either against sin or against temptation, than these three words well considered: God is present. But there is one particular sin to which this consideration is utterly irreconcilable, and against which it is a peculiar antidote, and that is, the sin of hypocrisy. Let us be persuaded to make use of this expedient of holy living; always to set God before us; to have him always in our thoughts, as the supreme good, as a pattern, and as an observer; thus shall we have a perpetual encouragement to do well, and a sufficient counterpoise against all temptations.—Norris's Discourses.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, AUGUST, 1818.

DR. BUSHNELL AND THE ATONEMENT.

We take it for granted that most of our readers are partially acquainted with Dr. Bushnell. We have spoken of him more than once before, as a clergyman of high attainments and liberal cast of mind, holding a prominent place among the Orthodox in the United States. His well established reputation as a man of independent thought and action, led to his invitation by the last graduating class of the Divinity School at Cambridge [Mass.] to deliver the usual annual discourse before them. The topic selected for discussion by him on that occasion was the atonement. This, as every one knows, is alleged by our orthodox friends as the vital doctrine of the Gospel, and the measure of mercy is very limited which they award to Unitarians, who disbelieve its vicarious character. And now it turns out that Dr. Bushnell rejects its vicarious nature. This, however, only affords additional evidence that the orthodox party have no precise and settled ground on which to stand as regards the atonement. There are wide and striking diversities of opinion among them on this point, which is nothing