



JOHN WICKLIFFE.

**I**N the year 1324, about five hundred and fifty years ago, in the town of Wickliffe, County of York, England, John Wickliffe was born. Nothing is certainly known of his parents or his early years, until at the age of sixteen he was admitted into Queen's College, Oxford, from which he soon afterwards removed to Merton College.

While there he was distinguished for his diligence in study, and was regarded as a very learned man. His greatest delight was in searching the Holy Scriptures, upon which he wrote notes, expositions and discourses, until he was sometimes known as Dr. Evangelicus, or the Gospel Doctor.

In 1360 he became noted for his zealous opposition to the begging friars and ecclesiastics, and in the following year he was made master of Baliol College, at Oxford. In 1372, having received the title of doctor of divinity, he read lectures on theology before the students, and wrote various tracts. The next year he was sent as an ambassador to Rome, where he became sensible of the pride, covetousness, and ambition of the pope, and on his return did not hesitate to expose him, and also to rebuke the wickedness and idleness of the English clergy. He was persecuted at various times, but was permitted to remain in his parish at Lutterworth, where he died at last of palsy, in 1384.

Forty-one years after his death, by the decree of the Council of Constance, his remains were dug up from his grave and burned, and the ashes thrown into the river. But says old John Foxe: "Though they digged up his body, and burned his bones, and drowned his ashes, yet the word of God and the truth of his doctrine, with the fruit and success thereof, do remain, notwithstanding the transitory body and bones

of the man were thus consumed and dispersed."

Wickliffe wrote and published many different books, but the crowning labour of his life was what is believed to be the first translation ever made of the whole Bible into the English language, which he, aided, no doubt, by other good men, sent forth to the world about the year 1380.

The art of printing was not then discovered, and this translation was only circulated in manuscript, a written copy of the New Testament alone, costing an amount equal to about two hundred and twenty-five dollars, as late as the year 1429; and the possession of such a book costing many a poor man his life if discovered by the persecuting priests.

The English language has greatly changed since Wickliffe's time, for his translation, as he wrote it, could scarcely be understood at the present time. The following is the Lord's Prayer (St. Matt. vi. 9-3) as found in the Testament, reprinted as nearly as our modern type will allow:—

"Oure Fadir that art in heuenes, halowid Thi name, Thi kingdom come to be Thi wille don in erthe as in heuene. Geue to us this day oure breed, ouir other substaunce, and forgeue to us oure dettis as we forgeuen to oure dettouris, and lede us not into temptacion, but delyuer us from yuel, amen."

Since Wickliffe's days the battle regarding the Bible has been fought and won, and for over three hundred years full liberty has been given to all English-speaking people to read and study the Holy Scriptures.

Oh! that all would take advantage of it for the good of their souls.—*Adapted from the Little Christian, Boston.*

A LITTLE boy came to a city missionary, and holding out a dirty and well-worn bit of printed paper, said: "Please, sir, father sent me to get a clean paper like that."

Taking it from his hand, the missionary unfolded it, and found it was a page containing that beautiful hymn of which the first stanza is as follows:—

"Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come!"

The missionary looked down with interest into the face earnestly upturned to him, and asked the little boy where he got it, and why he wanted a clean one.

"We found it, sir," said he, "in sister's pocket after she died; and she used to sing it all the time when she was sick, and loved it so much that father wanted to get a clean one to put in a frame and hang up. Won't you give us a clean one, sir?"

The little page, with a single hymn on it, had