

part Lyra adheres very closely to the words of the text in his comments, and presents his explanations in few words with the greatest possible simplicity and lucidity, much after the style of Bengel, whom among moderns he most resembles. So characteristic are these features that he gained the title of "plain and profitable doctor" (*doctor planus et utilis*.) It follows that though he often misses the point, his explanations are in most cases thoroughly evangelical; for no man who adheres closely to the grammatical sense of Scripture can well get any other teaching out of it. But occasionally he turns aside to discuss what he regards as the theological bearings of a passage, and in these discussions he shows at once his bondage to the scholasticism of his day. They read like quotations from Duns Scotus or Thomas Aquinas, and plainly contradict his own exegesis. But he is to all appearance entirely unconscious of the contradiction, and calmly goes on putting his new wine into the old bottles as if the one had been made for the other and nothing could ever happen. His theological training led him in one direction and his sanctified common sense in another. The strange thing is that he never seems to have discovered the difference between the two.

The key to Lyra's anomalous position is probably to be found in the fact that the two diverse tendencies of theology

had not in his time come into such open conflict as to make a combination of them mentally impossible. The dates of his birth and death are significant. He could not have been more than four years old when passed away Thomas Aquinas, the very incarnation of scholastic theology who enthralled all minds in his massive system of thought, and whose *Summa Theologiæ* is still the great recognized standard in the Roman church. In the very year he himself died John Wycliffe was born, who gave such an impetus to the evangelical movement by translating the Bible into the English vernacular. All unconsciously, Lyra was the link between these two in theology as well as in time.

Notwithstanding his great popularity, perhaps to some extent because of it, the authorities of the church seem to have felt somewhat uneasy as to the general drift of Lyra's teaching, and after his death took measures to correct its tendency in a quiet way by appending notes of a reactionary character under episcopal sanction. Had it not been for his logical inconsistency, they would probably have proscribed his works altogether.

Unfortunately for the permanence of Lyra's reputation, his scholarship was not equal to his good sense. He had taken the trouble to learn Hebrew and had made good use of his knowledge; but he apparently knew nothing of