

acquaintance with them and was quite satisfied, as we shall see, to do what he did through the medium of ordinary agencies. This conceded, however, it is not to be forgotten that Latimer had more than the average share of English mother wit. From a plain parentage he had inherited a plain habit of life and thinking; had been taught to see things as they were; thought more of common sense than of educated sense and was never better pleased than when he confounded the logic of the "school-doctors" by a kind of intuitive perception of the nature and relations of things. In common with many of the noblest of his day and in full accord with that type of English life that then prevailed among the yeomanry, he saw what he saw at first sight or did not see it at all; knew what he knew beyond all questioning or did not know it at all; spoke when he spoke from the heart out and often thus accomplished, even among the great, what mere scholarship could never have achieved. "The honestest man among the English Reformers," as he has been called; earnest in his work up to the point of possible intensity; fearless in his spirit in the presence of popes, prelates, kings, cardinals, councils and papists, he had a message to proclaim and he proclaimed it, and when the time came to die at the stake, in attestation of his faith, did just what he exhorted his fellow martyr, Ridley, to do—played the man.

As to Latimer's writings, we may say with Saintsbury, "that his only literary work was his sermons." What are called his epistles, dissertations, disputations, and letters, as cited in Bishop Tanner's list of his works, would form no substantial exception to this statement. His sermons, as edited by Corrie of London (1844-5), give us a sufficiently accurate basis for the study of his thought and manner. Latimer is for us to-day Latimer the homilist—a student of theology at Cambridge, preacher at the university and at court, curate at West Kingston, Bishop of Worcester, student of divinity with Cranmer at Lambeth, and a martyr to the truth at Oxford. Some of the salient features of his sermons may profitably be noted.

Their thoroughly English character is at once apparent. They are, out and out, home-spun; the writings of a man out and out home-bred; a true son of the soil; proud of his birth-right and birth-tongue; proud that, with Tyndale's Bible in hand, he was able to speak to his fellows in the very tongue in which they were born, and thus appeal more directly to their hearts and minds. A living critic of repute goes so far as to say "that Latimer was one of the first writers of vigorous modern English." So he was. Though he spoke at times to the clergy in Latin, and often in his preaching gave the biblical references in Latin, this was mainly in deference to the homiletic habit of the day. In his famous Sermon of the Plow, he thus ironically writes by way of rebuking the papists: "Let all things be done in Latin. God's Word may in nowise be translated into English. This is the