

Scriptures, as the rule of faith and practice. This is the very backbone of Christianity. All things are to be weighed, measured, and tested by the Bible. This was the standard which Wyclif raised in England. God grant it may never be lowered!

HE was the first Englishman who attacked and denounced the dangerous errors of the Church of Rome. He denounced her ignorance, her immorality, and the doctrine which interposed the priest between men and God. All this he did a century and a half before the reformation. In these days, the edge of the old feeling about Protestantism seems to be growing a little dull, and there are worse signs abroad.

WYCLIF was one of the first who revived the Apostolical ordinances of preaching. His "poor preachers," as they were called, did much to break up the fallow ground, and to pave the way for the Reformation of Ridley, Latimer, and their companions. This alone would entitle him to our undying gratitude. He fought strongly against the tendency to set up the priests as mediators between God and man, rather than as simple preachers of the Word of God.

AGAIN Wyclif was the first Englishman who translated the Bible into the English language, and enabled it to be understood by the people. Of the difficulties which must have attended him in that task no conception can now be formed. To inspect the machinery of such an institution as the Bible Society, and then to think of the toil that must have been undergone by Wyclif, is enough to take one's breath away. Nevertheless, no less than one hundred and seventy complete copies of Wyclif's Bible were found when it was reprinted at Oxford forty years ago. The good done by the translation of the Bible in Wyclif's day will never be known. The possession by the people of the Bible in their own language is the greatest national blessing that can be enjoyed. A free Bible is the grand secret of national prosperity; it is the Book on which the well-being of nations hinges, and with which it is inseparably bound up.

IN conclusion, the Bishop expressed the sincere trust that this commemoration would not be without some distinct results; he did not want it to be a mere display of fireworks:—

FIRST and foremost I would say rally round Wyclif's great Principle of the supremacy and sufficiency of the Bible, watch against the dangerous errors of the Church of Rome, and encourage the full and faithful preaching of God's Word. More courage is wanted to-day, more boldness, more men who are not afraid to stand alone if need be, as Wyclif did for so many years. Finally, the Lord God of John Wyclif is not dead but living, and He never changes. Men in these days are always demanding something new. The Gospel of Jesus Christ never changes, and it is that Gospel we want in these days.

THE afternoon Conference at the Mansion House was devoted to considering how best to perpetuate the memory of Wyclif. Practically the result was a resolution to endeavour to promote the printing and circulation of Wyclif's works and the erection of the statue on the Thames Embankment.

IN the evening Exeter Hall was crowded, and amongst those who spoke were Canon Taylor, Revs. Dr. Donald Fraser, J. Guinness Rogers, and H. P. Hughes.

LORD SHAFTESBURY, who presided in the evening gave an exceedingly interesting address. Replying to the question, What is the use of a commemoration? he said:—

IT has been settled long ago. St. Paul settled it eighteen centuries ago, in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, and intended it to be read in churches day and night to the latest period of time, when he gives you a long series of great and good men, telling you of all that they suffered, telling you that they were God's heroes, and that we ought to have them before us, so that when we rise in the morning to go out to our work we may see their names written on our doorposts and on our walls—in fact, that we may think of them, that we may see and hear them every moment of our existence. This commemoration will do a vast amount of good. It will circulate an amount of information and knowledge, and make men acquainted with much that they had hitherto been ignorant of. There are some men who know a great deal about Wyclif, but others, though they have heard of him, have never known what his true greatness was, what

his real services were, and why he ought to be everlastingly in our memories.

WYCLIF has been called "the Morning Star of the Reformation," and there are some who deny him the honour; but that he was so there can be no doubt. Others may have preceded him in showing the iniquities, the faults and errors of the Church of Rome, in showing all the dangers to which we were exposed; but he was the morning star of practical reform, he was the man who took the first practical step to remedy these evils. He began by that great practical act which has been and which will be the movement of every real reformation, the translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures. In that he was the first and the great substantial reformer. He left us a basis on which we can ever stand, a guide which we can ever follow.

WYCLIF is to be studied because his history will show how in the darkest times God has never left Himself without witness; and if you are looking for dark times to come in the world, and probably your expectations will be fulfilled, you will take some comfort from that fact, and feel assured that even in those times light will not be denied.

CANON Taylor spoke of Wyclif as a patriot, a reformer, and a translator and teacher of Scripture.

WYCLIF was a link in the chain of witnesses that God raised up. For seven hundred years before his time gross darkness had overspread the ecclesiastical firmament, but even then God had men who bore testimony to His truth. At the beginning of that period there was Augustine, who had very clear views on some points of the controversy, especially on the Lord's Supper. Wyclif was rightly called the "Morning Star of the Reformation," but, though he did a great work, it was even then of a preparatory character. A hundred years, moreover, went by after he was laid in the grave before the chain of Papal thraldom was snapped. As Butler had said, the order of nature is slow and deliberate. John Wyclif lived many years, did a great work, wrote against the Papal supremacy, and yet one hundred and fifty years went by ere the people rose against their thraldom. It was to be regretted that there were men now-a-days aiming to bring back again the errors of those dark times. He would ask them to be on their guard against those sappers and miners who are doing all they can to restore the darkness and idolatries of mediævalism.

LESSONS FROM THE JEWISH CHURCH HISTORY.—In an address before the Jewish Missionary Society, the Bishop of Liverpool said:—We all know perfectly well that the Jewish Church has lessons in it for the Gentile Churches, and as we are one of the Gentile Churches we ought to look back to the history of the Jewish Church and see what lessons we may draw from it. I refer to the Church in the days of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the last fifty or sixty years of its existence, before there came the great Roman invasion, before Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Temple burned, and the Jews were carried into captivity. I want to impress upon you some lessons for the Church of England from the Jewish Church of that period. We know that our lot is cast in a day when there is a vast amount of external Christianity in our country. There never was a time since the Church of England was a Reformed Church when such an amount of attention was paid to the outward ceremonial of Christian worship. More money is spent on restoring and decorating churches, more money is spent on expensive musical services, in ornamenting churches at all the festivals of the year, than was ever known before—flowers, bought at a reckless expense, costing an enormous sum—and all this is a grand characteristic of the times in which we live. I think we have but little idea of the immense amount of money spent on the decoration of the churches at the great festivals. The other day a friend of mine said he had been down to the Scilly Islands, and had found that a vast amount of money was made every year by cultivating flowers and sending them to Covent-garden for the decoration of the churches at the great festivals. One clergyman there found it so profitable that he determined to devote a part of his glebe to the cultivation of flowers to be sent to London for the decoration of churches. Let no one misunderstand what I am saying. If any one thinks I like old slovenly churches he will be mistaken. My dear church in Suffolk, which I left four years ago, and which I may not see again, I would willingly show for beauty and reasonable Scriptural ornamentation with any church in the land. I dislike slovenly churches, and the old sheep-pens in which people were wont to sleep in a corner,

not caring what went on. I like the service of God to be carried on in a manner worthy of that God whose service it is, decently and in order. But there is a very great lesson to be learnt from the state of the Jewish Church in the days of our Lord and the apostles. All are apt to think there is a great increase of true religion because there is an increase of external ceremonial and ornamentation of churches. In some of those churches which are so greatly ornamented, where the music is so splendid, and the organist is paid so highly, and the choir is so well trained, I should like to know how much money is provided for sending the Gospel to the heathen and to the outcast in the East-end, and in the slums and alleys which, as in London, are to be found in our large cities. (Hear, hear.) I should like to ask whether the amount spent on music and decorations, upon the organist and the choir, and upon all outward matters, bears any proportion to the money spent in doing good to people's souls and in bringing people to the knowledge of Christ. (Hear, hear.) I should like to see the balance-sheets of some of these highly decorated churches. What there would be for the organist, for the choir, and for the surplices of the choir, for camellias, for gardenias, and for maiden-hair ferns, there would be a large sum, I have no doubt. But I should like to know how many pounds go from the same churches to sending the knowledge of Christ to India, to China, to the uttermost parts of the earth; and how much for the evangelization of the large neglected parishes in our land, of which we hear so much at the present time. People are often disposed to think that in the days of Jesus Christ, when He was rejected, crucified, treated as a malefactor, the Jews were a very ignorant, unbelieving set of people, that there was not much religion going on among them. My Lord, there was a very great deal of religion in Judea at that time, but it was not of the right sort. Take their Temple; we have nothing like that glorious building, for the builder and designer and first architect was God Himself. They had a ministry, and everything about the ministry was appointed and ordained by God. The Jews had a most carefully-ordained ritual, everything in which was appointed and ordained by God. In the wide liberty which the Lord, in His mercy, left to the churches, after Christ left the world, we have no ritual so thoroughly ordained by God as the Jews had. They had splendid services—services which all who have written on the Jewish Church have described as far exceeding in splendour and beauty anything we have. They had the repeating of prayers, the reading of the Scriptures, they had singing—and I fancy we have no singing that would beat the Temple singing. They had the most beautiful robes; the grandest chasubles and copes are not to be compared with the splendid dresses of the High Priest. What did it all come to? With all this religion, there was an amount of wickedness, utter immorality, ungodliness, and want of faith, repentance, and holiness in the Jewish Church which brought it at length to ruin, and called down upon it the judgments of God; the people were scattered, the Temple destroyed, and the Jews became wanderers over all the earth. The lesson we ought to learn is, that we ought not to be content with an outward ceremonial of religion. With all that is going on at the present day of great choirs and splendid organs, and all the talk about bright services and earnest services, how much work is being done in those congregations for the Holy Ghost, how many temples of the Holy Ghost are there among the men and women? When they turn their backs upon the Church, what do they go away to do? To evangelize the people? To press the Gospel upon the souls of other people? Depend upon it, there is much that is rotten in the day in which we live, much that ought to set us thinking, and asking whether, with all this outward show of religion, increasing year by year, there is much real religion increasing, religion that is acceptable in the sight of God. Not long ago I met an American clergyman. He had not been in England for nine or ten years. I see not a few American clergymen passing through Liverpool, and I am always glad to talk to them. Many of them are excellent men. Of course the American Churches are not one whit more perfect than the Church of England. If folks think that disestablished churches are perfect, they are mistaken. They have their difficulties and divisions quite as much as we have. When I talked to this man I asked him what he thought, after an absence of nine or ten years, of the present condition of religion in the Church of England. His answer was very remarkable. He said, "I have been among a great many of your churches and have sat in the midst of your congregations. I notice that there is a great deal more singing, a great deal more show of religion, a great deal more ceremony, a great deal more to catch the eye and tickle the ear; but if you ask me whether I think there is an increase of true religion, I must say