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WESTMACOTT'S MONUMENT TO Wiclif, in Lutterworth Church.
WICLIF.

"The very names of Wiclif, Lord Cobham, Huss, &c." says Gilpin, "will not only awaken sentiments of gratitude and veneration in every ingenuous heart, but will likewise excite a laudable desire of being particularly acquainted with the lives and characters of those eminent worthies who, in times of peculiar danger and difficulty, nobly dared to oppose the tyrannical usurpation, and barbarous supression of the Church of Rome, and sacrificed every valuable consideration on earth to the cause of truth and liberty. Wiclif was in religion what Bacon afterwards was in science, the great detector of those arts and glosses which the barbarism of ages had drawn together to obscure the mind of man."

A short memoir of the great man whose name occurs first and foremost in the above passage, will doubtless be acceptable to the readers of the Saturday Magazine. We therefore present it, in illustration of the beautiful piece of sculpture, an outline copy of which appears at the head of this paper; the original bas-relief, the work of Mr. Richard Westmacott, jun., having been placed in the parish-church of Lutterworth, Leicestershire.

John Wiclif, called the morning-star of the Reformation, was born about the year 1324, near Richmond, in the county of York, of good family and standing. His childhood is not well known; but we learn that when only sixteen he was admitted commener of Queen's College, Oxford. He soon afterwards removed to Merton College, where he was first probationer, and afterwards fellow. He was soon regarded as a person of profound knowledge. The study of the Holy Scriptures, however, afforded him the most delight. He wrote notes, and expounding, and homilies on several parts of them; and thence acquired the title of the Evangelical, or Gospel Doctor. In 1360 he distinguished himself by his wise and vigorous opposition to the encroachments of the begging friars, whose order had been introduced into England in 1221, and who had now increased to an extravagant number. In exposing the "hypocrisie, covetise, simonie, blasphemie, and other leasings" of this mendicant fraternity, it is no wonder that Wiclif heaped up for himself a formidable accumulation of wrath; but this was of little importance to a champion successfully engaged in one of the most momentous contests recorded in the history of the Church.

In 1361 he was advanced to the Mastership of Balliol College, Oxford, and four years afterwards to the deanship of Canterbury Hall, which had been then recently founded by Archbishop Islip. He was, however, in 1370 expelled from the latter situation by a bull from the pope, who also imposed silence upon him and certain secular clerks, who had also been ejected.

We now arrive at a most important event, not only as it relates to Wiclif, but to the Church of England. Pope Urban the Fifth had given notice to the king (Edward the Third), that he intended by process to cite him to his court, then at Avignon, to answer for his default in not performing the homage which King John acknowledged to the see of Rome, for his realm of England and Ireland; and for refusing to pay the tribute granted to that see. Such claim the king had determined to resist, and the parliament had approved the determination, when an anonymous monk had the effrontery to vindicate the Pope, and insist on the equity of his claim. In opposition to that writer, and in defence of England against papal usurpation, Wiclif presented himself as a zealous, able, and successful antagonist.

In 1372, having taken his degree of Doctor of Divinity, and became Theological Professor in the University of Oxford, Wiclif publicly read lectures on theology, and again directed his attention to the exposition of the abuses which had at that period crept into the Church.

In 1374 Wiclif was sent by the king, with other ambassadors, to treat with the pope, and to protest against the improper disposal of English benefices on Italians, Frenchmen, and other aliens, ignorant of our language. In the course of this treaty, which lasted for two years, Wiclif was made more sensible than ever of the pride, covetousness, and ambition of the pope. He wrote against the doctrine of indulgences, and, by his zealous opposition to the Church of Rome, encountered no small share of obloquy and annoyance. He had now been appointed Prebendary of Aust; and in 1376 the king presented him with the rectory of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire.

The time having arrived for a violent attack to be made on Wiclif, by enemies who had long been watching for an opportunity to gratify their revenge, a citation was issued, commanding him to appear before the convocation at St. Paul's on the 19th February, 1377. On the appointed day Wiclif, accompanied by his friend and patron, John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and Henry Percy, earl-marshal, attended at St. Paul's, when, in consequence of a quarrel between the prelates of London and the earl-marshal, which led to a dreadful riot out of doors, the court broke up without adopting any measures.

In June, 1378, the papal delegates sat again, having assembled at Lambeth, for the execution of their commission, when the queen-mother, widow of the Black Prince, sent for Sir Lewis Clifford, to forbid them to proceed to any definitive sentence against Wiclif. At that meeting Wiclif attended, and delivered an able and interesting paper, in which he assigned reasons for the statements he had made, but had been cited; but his explanations being unsatisfactory to the delegates, they commanded him no more to repeat such propositions, either in the schools or in his sermons. By the death of Pope Gregory XI. in this year, an end was put to the commission of the delegates, and Wiclif appeared before them no more. About this time he published his book on the Truth and the Scriptures: so in 1379, in consequence of the fatigues he had endured, he was seized with an alarming illness, and appeared to be at the point of death. From that attack, however, he recovered, to the inexpressible joy of the Reformed Church.

In 1380, in his lectures, sermons, and writings, Wiclif exposed the Romish court and clergy. At the same period he was engaged, with other pious and learned men, in translating the Holy Scriptures into English. This translation was bitterly assailed, but it was ably defended by Wiclif, who also firmly maintained and upheld the right of the people to read the Scriptures. In this and the following year he ably opposed the papish doctrine of transubstantiation. This opposition excited the malice of his enemies, and he was censured by the Chancellor of Oxford, and some doctors of the University. Wiclif appealed from this decree of the chancellor to the king. Archbishop Sudbury, about this time, being besieged by the rebels, William Courtenay, bishop of London was translated to the see of Canterbury, by the pope's bull, and, in 1382, in a court of certain select bishops, condemned several of the opinions of Wiclif, as pernicious, heretical, and repugnant to the doctrines of the Church.

In addition to these, and other strong measures, Courtenay obtained letters-patent from the king, directing that Wiclif, with other excellent men, should
be expelled from the University of Oxford, and ordered that his publications should be everywhere seized and destroyed. Thus persecuted, and overcome by force, he was at length obliged to quit his professor's office, and retire to Lutterworth; where, however, he still continued his studies, and endeavoured to promote the reformation of those corruptions which he was convinced were everywhere prevalent, through the glosses and unscriptural assumptions of the Romish Church. Soon after his removal to Lutterworth, he was seized with a fit of the palsy, of which he soon recovered, being again able to perform the pastoral functions of his parish, and to undergo those severe labours which his sense of duty, in trying times, had imposed upon him. Still hunted by his enemies, he was cited to appear before Pope Urban, but he returned a letter of excuse, and did not attend. Though his health had now begun gradually to decline, he preached the word of God, in season and out of season; till at length, on Innocent's day, 1384, he was attacked with another fit of the palsy, while performing the service in Lutterworth church. In this state he remained two days; and was finally taken to his rest on the last day of the year, and in the sixty-first year of his age.*

* Wiclif had well studied all the branches of theological learning, was deeply skilled in the ecclesiastical and civil law, was grave, yet cheerful, and, above all things, loved God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself. His writings were numerous and learned, and assisted greatly in bringing about the establishment of our Reformed Church, which is the true instructor of the people in pure and undefiled Christianity, and on the principles of which our Constitution, in Church and State, are founded. May those principles ever be respected!

A DISCOURSE ON GEOLOGY.

II.

HEAT OF THE GLOBE.

The solar rays are the principal source of heat on the surface of the globe, the temperature varying in relation to the amount of these rays, and consequently decreasing from the equator to the poles. The temperature also varies with day and night, and with the seasons of the year. At a certain depth below the surface, nowhere exceeding one hundred feet, these variations become insensible, and the temperature is constant, or fixed, being nearly the same as the mean temperature at the surface.

If from this point of equable temperature, we find a gradual decrease of heat as we dig deep into the earth, we must necessarily conclude that the interior parts are colder than the surface, and that there is no reason to imagine the earth to have any other heat than that derived from the solar rays. But if, on the contrary, it be found that as we descend into the earth, an increase of temperature occurs, we cannot but admit that the earth has a proper or inherent temperature derived from internal sources. Experiment proves the latter to be the case.

These trials to determine the internal heat of the earth have been made at various depths, and under different circumstances—in artesian wells, salt pits, coal-works, and mines; and it appears to be fully ascertained, that in situations far removed from volcanic action, and in different kinds of strata, water, air, and rocks continually grow warmer as we descend in the earth. Without a single exception, the interior of the globe has been found to be warmer than the surface; and the heat augments constantly with the depth; the mean or average increase, being one degree of Fahrenheit in forty-five English feet. Indeed, the heat in some deep mines becomes so oppressive, that the miners can with difficulty pursue their labours.

Such being the case, it will be evident, if the same ratio of increase continue, that the heat at considerable depths in the interior of the earth must be most intense, acting as the mightiest counteracting cause before alluded to which prevents the compression of the materials in the interior of the earth. The notion of an inverted desert mass in the interior of the earth is startling to many, and not without discomfort to some; but so far from finding in this any cause of alarm, a further consideration of the subject will declare to us that the preservation of the world in its existing state is probably dependent on this powerful agent.

Thus, in thy world external, Mighty Mind, Not that alone which solaces and shines, The rough and gloomy too demand our praise. The winter is as needful as the spring; The thunder as the sun.

The temperature at the surface is, as has already been observed, dependent on solar radiation; and the rocks in the upper strata of the earth are such bad conductors of heat, that no sensible effect appears to be produced at the surface by this internal heat. It may, and probably has sufficient influence, to prevent the refrigeration or cooling of the earth beyond the present temperature at the surface, and thus may act its part in adapting the earth for the present races of organized beings. But we must remember that this intensely heated mass in the interior of the globe is no new condition of things, but that if it exist, it must have existed for many centuries, probably from the era of man's creation. For it appears, there is no reason to conclude that any change has taken.