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The doctor remarks that the dread of being kidnapt, of blood, of cloud shapes, of shooting stars, and of the

end of the world seems to grow less as the boys and girls grow up, but the dread of thunder-storms, reptiles, robbers, machinery, and self-consciousness seems to increase. He remarks further that "many infantile fears remain through life."

## MISCELLANEOUS SECTION.

### THE PREACHER'S READING OF EARLY ENGLISH LITERATURE.

By D. S. GREGORY, D.D., LL.D.

BETWEEN the Old English or Anglo-Saxon Literature and the Early English of the latter part of the fourteenth century, there has been seen to be a rich and varied literature, partly in the Latin language and partly in the French. It was produced while the two chief elements of race and language—the Anglo-Saxon and the Norman—were being combined into the English nation and speech. Long before the completion of that combination—indeed, from the year 1200 A.D.—the New English began to be written; but its notable period was the fourteenth century, or rather the last half of that century. That century was undoubtedly one of the grandest in English history. In it Edward I. reigned from 1272 to 1307, and Edward III. from 1327 to 1357: the one the English Justinian, and the other the Father of English Commerce; in it the Black Prince won imperishable glory in the wars with France; in it occurred the remarkable Reformation under Wyclif and the literary Renaissance under Chaucer and his contemporaries.

It is not the purpose to dwell here upon the well-known literary names of the period. Geoffrey Chaucer (1328-1400) undoubtedly stands out as the foremost merely literary name of the times, well called the Father of English Poetry, if Caedmon be not rather entitled to that name. His works are familiar to most intelligent readers,—

"The Canterbury Tales," etc., being in every library. Lawrence Minot, who represented the national and military spirit of the age, was, however, the earliest true poet, master of thought and lyric form, who wrote in English, about 1352, ten poems in celebration of the noted battles and victories of Edward III. The "Voyages and Travels" of Sir John Mandeville (1300-1372)—in which he embodies in prose his knowledge of men and things the world over, as gained by his travels of a third of a century, together with many of the most marvelous legends of the Middle Ages then familiarly known over Europe and the East—is also a well-known work, giving a graphic view of English outlook and enterprise.

Less familiar, but perhaps quite as important to ministerial readers, are the works of John Gower (1320-1408), the contemporary and friend of Chaucer. In particular his three great poems—the "Speculum Meditantis" (The Mirror of One Meditating), which is, or was, in French; the "Vox Clamantis" (The Voice of One Crying [in the Wilderness]), which is in Latin; and the "Confessio Amantis" (The Confession of a Lover), which is in English—may be looked upon as representing the three phases of thought of those early centuries: the Norman-Latin, Norman-French, and English. In him the earlier forms may almost be said to have overlived their time. The "Speculum Meditantis" long since disappeared, tho it may some day turn up again among the dusty manuscripts in the old libraries. The "Vox Cla-

mantis," which was edited by Rev. H. G. Coxe, in 1850, consists of seven books in Latin elegiacs. The allusion in the title is to John the Baptist, and to the general clamor then abroad in England.

It is by his "Confessio Amantis," written in English, that Gower is chiefly known. Several editions of it have been printed, but perhaps the most complete and convenient is that of Dr. Reinhold Pauli, in three volumes octavo, London, 1857. It extends to over thirty thousand lines. It is in the form of a dialog between a lover and his confessor, who is a priest of Venus. The lover, unable to gain the favor of his lady-love, seeks instruction on the subject from his priest, who takes the opportunity of testing his virtues and of initiating him into all the mysteries of the Aristotelian philosophy and of alchemy. The poem is an encyclopedia of ancient erudition, laying under contribution all the learning of the age, such as it was, and casting it into "the mold required by the frigid conceits of the Courts of Love of the Provençal and the early English romances."

In the large, Gower may be said best to represent the pedantic scholarship of the age, as Chaucer represented its romantic spirit and the court life.

But one must look elsewhere for the expression of the deeper thought and feeling of the English people. It may best be studied in the works of three men who left their mark permanently on English thought and life.

I. The first of these is John Wyclif (1324-1384), known in Protestant Christendom as "The Morning Star of the Reformation." He was even more truly "The Father of English Prose" than was Chaucer "The Father of English Poetry." He was educated at Oxford, and was Master of Balliol College in the university. His knowledge of scholastic divinity, of Aristotelian logic, of civil and canon law, and of the Latin Fathers, was most remarkable. Such learning, combined with

great vigor and acuteness of understanding, and a sturdy Saxon independence of character, would have made him distinguished in any age. He is regarded by church historians as "the earliest instance of an open and direct attack by a learned clergyman upon the authority of the Church and of the Supreme Pontiff."

His attacks were aimed especially at the mendicant orders. The rising opposition to the claims of the Papacy to the vassalage of England, and to the hideous and open corruption of the clergy, demanded an exponent and leader. Wyclif was just the leader for the crisis, and became the champion of the Bible and of human rights in England and for the world. Milton said :

"Had it not been for the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wyclif to suppress him as a schismatic or innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther or of Calvin, had ever been known."

It is not possible here even to outline his life. It will be found delineated in the special biographies, and in such church histories as that of Neander. It is enough to say that he gave himself with all his genius to the work of saving England by the Bible. For this, in his later years, he was saved from active persecution by the intervention of the queen-mother and the great Papal schism breaking out in 1378. When debarred by royal command from further lecturing at Oxford, he retired to carry on his work in his parish of Lutterworth until his death, in 1384.

For the learned circles of his age Wyclif's thought naturally found expression in the Latin tongue; but, when at the height of his power at Oxford, he began to send out many disciples under the name of "poor priests" (Lollards) to preach his doctrines to the common people in their own vernacular, in which he also preached to them. Thanks to Thomas Arnold and to the Early English Text Society, these

utterances of Wyclif are now accessible in print.\*

In Volume I. of Arnold's edition are printed 123 short sermons on the Gospels for Sundays and Festivals. In Volume II are 289 sermons on the Ferial Gospels and 55 on the Sunday Epistles, with treatises on "The Eight-fold Wo," on the Pharisees, and "On Ministers in the Church." In Volume III. are Miscellaneous Works. They are expository and controversial. Some of the topics will indicate their range and intense practicalness :

"The Ten Commandments," "On the Seven Deadly Sins," "The Seven Works of Mercy Bodily," "The Seven Works of Mercy Ghostly," "Five Questions on Love," "Of Whored Men and Wives and Their Children Also," "Concerning Ministers' Stipends."

More controversial in character are such as the following :

"Simonists and Apostates," "Church Temporalities," "Concerning Holy Prayers," "The Church and Her Members," "Fifty Heresies and Errors of Friars," "Concerning Blasphemy," "On the Twenty-Five Articles," "Concerning the Eucharist."

Mr. Matthew has made a valuable addition to Wyclif's accessible writings in issuing many of those hitherto unprinted.

Wyclif's method and the keenness of his thrusts may be seen from a summary of one of his treatises. Take that of "Of the Leaven of the Pharisees" :

Ch. I. Christ commands us to flee the leaven of the Pharisees, who belonged to a singular religion. The religions of these days are like them.

Ch. II. Proofs of Hypocrisy. Their pride, envy, persecution of true preachers, covetousness, self-indulgence, and uncharity.

Ch. III. How they offend against each of the Ten Commandments.

Ch. IV. How they do the contrary of the works of bodily mercy.

Ch. V. How they do the contrary of the works of spiritual mercy.

\* "Select English Works of John Wyclif." Edited by Thomas Arnold, M.A., of University College, Oxford. 3 vols. Macmillan & Co., 1869. "The English Works of Wyclif Hitherto Unprinted." Edited by Frederic D. Matthew, London, for the Early English Text Society. London: Trübner & Co. 1880.

Ch. VI. How they fall in Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Ch. VII. The duty of exposing their wickedness.

Ch. VIII. Cowardice and falseness prevalent among all classes. Faults of priests.

Ch. IX. Faults of Lords.

Ch. X. Faults of Commons.

Ch. XI. Faults of the Religious are much the worst.

But by many, Wyclif's "Translation of the Holy Bible" from the Latin Vulgate, completed in 1382, is regarded as his chief work for the English race and speech. Separate portions of the Scriptures had been translated into English before, but his was the first rendering of the whole Bible into that speech. It was not printed, of course, until long after—the New Testament first in 1781, and the Old Testament in 1850—but in manuscript form it exerted an immense influence upon the people and upon subsequent versions. Wyclif's translation of the Bible into the vernacular doubtless had also much to do with the great literary awakening of the close of the fourteenth century,—as indeed such translation uniformly leads to such awakening.

Out of his teachings there came, abroad, John Huss and Jerome of Prague, and at home the foundations in the Lollards for the subsequent religious awakenings and the Puritan movement of later ages.

II. There was another man, belonging to an entirely different class, whose popular influence would seem to have fallen little short of that of Wyclif,—indeed, so of the common people was he that his name is scarcely known, whether it be *Langland* or *Langley*. William Langland—let us call him that, assigning him to the years 1332–1400—appears to have been a monk, a plain man, of ordinary education, of the west of England, the Bunyan of that age. His subject in this great poem is the crusade of our mortal life. It consists of a series of visions; is allegorical, like "The Pilgrim's Progress;" alliterative, without rhyme, reaching almost 15,000

lines; satirical and directed against the corruption of the Romish priesthood and Church. It embodied the Puritan spirit of the Saxon in its earlier outcome, and was fitted to reach the common people because its thought was the one that filled the mind of the age.

His chief poem survives in many manuscripts—showing how wide must have been its circulation—and in three main texts, entitled "A," "B," and "C." To the Early English Text Society we owe it, again, that a splendid edition of the Whitaker Text, or Text C, published in 1873, is available. It is entitled "The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman, Doweell, Do-bet, and Do-best, By William Langland (1398 A.D.)."

As seen from the title, the poem is made up of four parts or Visions, each of which has its distinct features and subdivisions. These need to be studied in close connection with the history of the times, the striking facts of which—Wat Tyler's rebellion, the three great pestilences in some of which the grass grew in the streets of London, the Great Tempest that made men think that the end of the world had come, the wars of Edward and the death of the Black Prince, the religious awakening under Wyclif, etc.—everywhere color the poetry. A brief outline, drawn from Skeats, will indicate the scope and value of the work. Professor Skeats has said:

"It was a calm, allegorical exposition of the corruptions of the state, of the church, and of social life, designed not to rouse the people to violent resistance or bloody vengeance, but to reveal to them the true causes of the evils under which they were suffering, and to secure the reformation of those grievous abuses by a united exertion of the moral influence which generally accompanies the possession of superior physical strength."

A. There is first "The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman." This consists of a Prologue and seven Passus or Cantos, and may again be divided into two Visions:

1st. The Vision of the Field Full of

Folk, of Holy Church, and of Lady Meed, occupying the Prologue and Passus I.-IV.

In the Prologue the author describes how he sits down to rest upon Malvern Hills, and there falls asleep and dreams of a great field full of all sorts of folk before him, between the tower of Truth, who is God the Father, and the dungeon which is the abode of evil spirits. Suddenly he sees a rout of rats and mice conspiring to kill the cat, from which they are dissuaded by a wise mouse.

In Passus I. he sees a lovely lady of whom he asks the meaning of the tower. She explains that there dwells God the Father, and in the dungeon the Father of Falsehood; informs him that she is Holy Church; tells him how great a treasure Truth is, and that the way to heaven or God the Father lies through Love.

In Passus II. he asks how he may know Falsehood, and Holy Church bids him see both Falsehood and Flattery. He sees a woman in glorious apparel, Lady Meed (i.e., Reward or Bribery), who is to be married to Falsehood on the morrow. The wedding is arranged, and Simony on Civil reads a deed of the property with which Falsehood and Meed are to be endowed. Theology forbids the bans, and they go to Westminster, led by Gulle, to obtain a decision. The king vows that he will punish Falsehood if he can catch him, and all run away but Meed, who is held a prisoner.

In Passus III. Lady Meed is brought before the king, the justices assuring her that all will go well, and she continues her bribery. The king proposes that she wed Conscience, but Conscience refuses, exposes her faults, and declares that Reason shall one day reign upon earth and punish all wrongdoers,—following which is a description of the year of Jubilee.

In Passus IV. the king orders Reason to be sent for, who comes with Wit and Wisdom. Just then Peace enters with a complaint against Wrong. Wrong, knowing it to be true, wins over Wit and Wisdom to his side, by Meed's help, and offers to buy Peace off with a present. Reason, however, advises the king to act with strict justice, and the king is convinced and prays Reason to remain with him forever afterward.

2d. The Vision of the Seven Deadly Sins, and of Piers the Plowman, occupying Passus V.-VII.

In Passus V. the dreamer awakes, but soon falls asleep over his prayers, and sees once more the field full of folk and Reason preaching to them. Many repent and confess their sins.—Pride, Luxury or Lechery, Envy, Wrath, Avarice, Gluttony, Sloth. Robert the robber too repents and desires

forgiveness, and Repentance prays for all the penitents. Then all set out to seek Truth, but no one knows the way. Piers the Plowman then first appears, declaring that he knows Truth well, and he describes the way.

In *Passus VI.* the pilgrims still clamor for a guide, and Piers promises to show them when he has plowed his half acre. Meanwhile he gives advice, makes his will before starting, and sets all who come to him to hard work, reducing them to subordination by the sharp treatment of Hunger. Then follow some most curious revelation regarding the diet of the poor, strikes for higher wages, and discontents from brief prosperity.

In *Passus VII.* Truth (*i. e.* God the Father) now sends Piers a bull of pardon, especially intended for the higher classes and the laboring poor, and even for some lawyers and merchants, in less degree. A priest challenges the validity of Piers's pardon and wants to see it, and the dispute becomes so violent that the dreamer awakes, and the first poem—the Vision concerning Piers the Plowman—ends with a fine peroration on the small value of the Pope's pardons, and the superiority of a righteous life over mere trust in indulgences, at the Last Great Day.

B. There is secondly "The Vision of William concerning Do-well," in which the author finds his quest for a right life satisfied in Charity. This Vision is extended and discursive, and contains among many things of interest a curious prophecy of a king who should come to beat the religious orders for their corruption,—later referred to Henry VIII.

C. There is thirdly "The Vision of William Concerning Do-bet" (*Do-Better*). This poem is artistically constructed, opening with a reference to the duty of Christians to convert the Mohammedans, and designed to point out that Jesus is the only Savior of men. Its scope and truth may be summarized as follows:

We are introduced to Faith, personated by Abraham, and to Hope, both of whom pass by the wounded man who has been stript by thieves. But Love, who is the Good Samaritan, and none other than Jesus in the dress of Piers the Plowman, alone has compassion on him and saves his life.

With growing power and vividness the poem describes the death of Christ, the struggle between Life and Death and between Light and Darkness, the meeting together of

Truth and Mercy, Righteousness and Peace, while the Savior rests in the grave.

The poem closes with a triumphant description of the descent of Christ into hell, and his victory over Satan and Lucifer,—and the poet wakes in ecstasy, with the joyous peal of the bells ringing in his ears on the morning of Easter day.

D. There is fourthly "The Vision of William Concerning Do-best," which, alas! reveals how far off the end yet is. The secret is shown to lie in faith, in the promise of the Holy Spirit, and in the Cross of Christ.

The Savior leaves the earth and Antichrist descends upon it. Willy foes assail the Church; dire diseases fasten on mankind; death dashes into dust the great ones. Conscience, in death-grapple with Envy and Pride and Sloth, cries in vain to slumbering and benumbed Contrition to help him; but rouses himself with a last effort, seizes the pilgrim's staff, determined to wander wide over the world till he shall find Piers the Plowman (Jesus). And the dreamer awakes in tears.

There is not to be found in all literature another so wonderful portraiture of the religious struggles of a people, in the toils of Popery, after Truth and Christ. The poem is a fitting counterpart to Wyclif's work.

There is barely room to mention Langland's "Piers the Plowman's Creed" and his "Richard the Redeless."

III. There remains for consideration a third man, belonging to still a different class, whose influence was also doubtless very great—Richard Rolle of Hampole—with whom should be associated his disciples Walter Hilton and others.

Richard Rolle, who retired from Oxford and his father's house before his twentieth year, to the life of a hermit, near Hampole in Yorkshire, and who died in 1349, has—as recently said by *The Speaker*, of London—"the glory of being the first original writer of English prose whose name we know, and, scant as is our knowledge of him, he is a figure of profound fascination, as mystical theologians are wont to be." He was a disciple of Bonaventura, the Seraphic Doctor, and also the product of a violent reaction

from the dry, frigid scholasticism of Duns Scotus. The Macmillans have lately made his writings accessible by publishing "Yorkshire Writers: Richard Rolle of Hampole, an English Father of the Church, and His Followers," edited by C. Horstman, late Professor in the University of Berlin. One who reads the book must feel that the modern mystics, and especially the Keswick school, are yet a far cry away from the heights of this early mystic, both in terminology and in experience. Of this new book, a writer in *The Speaker* justly says:

"It is a book burning with the divine zeal, the work of men driven by Bonaventura's 'Goad of Love,' and casting themselves upon poetry, allegory, ejaculation, for the expression of their passionate hearts. With Sir Thomas Browne, they love to 'lose themselves in an *O Altitudo!*' and, as the same writer has it, they 'have been so happy as personally to understand Christian Annihilation, Ecstasy, Exolution, Liquefaction, Transformation, the Kiss of the Spouse, Gustation of God, and Ingression into the Divine Shadow,' and therefore 'they have already had an handsome Anticipation of Heaven; the glory of the World is surely over, and the Earth is Ashes unto them.' . . .

"But these mystics . . . are not, like the great masters of Catholic mysticism, intellectually hard to comprehend, but fervent and simple. Their pages are not divided into rigid logical sections, but are a vehement stream of entreaties and outcries, starred with 'Ah, sweet Jesu!' and rapturous appeals. Rolle, at least, has a singular poetical charm in imagination and in phrase, a true literary instinct amid his ecstasies. Thus, Conscience is 'the Abbey of the Holy Ghost,' founded by the Father of Heaven. The Holy Ghost is its warden and visitor: and twenty-nine 'ghostly ladies' inhabit it, of whom Charity is abbess, Wisdom prioress, Meekness sub-prioress, God's four daughters dwell in the convent: Mercy and Truth are Abbess Charity's chaplains, Righteousness is Wisdom's, Peace attends upon Meekness. It is like Bunyan, but more consistent in theological meaning, less vivid in dramatic art. The plangent sentences are full of piteous beauty and simplicity. What a reverent realism in this scene from the Crucifixion! 'And then took they such another rugged nail and drove it with an hammer through both His feet at once into the hard Tree. Ah, Lord, how that rugged nail crashed among the hard bones!' This is no Spanish Jesuit of Renaissance times, nor Italian Passionist of our own: it is a north-

country Saxon hermit of the fourteenth century. But, like all who have what Wesley called 'heart religion,' he loves the personal and physical, and concrete details of the Scripture narrative, and to amplify them in his imagination."

"The Form of Perfect Living," containing the counsels for daily life, with which the book opens, is in its directions full of sanity, common sense, and knowledge of human nature; in its statements direct and plain,—and yet all in rigorous conformity with the teachings of Augustine and Bernard and the great masters.

Richard Rolle doubtless influenced even Wyclif by his writings, but much more largely that extensive class of retiring natures who in that age of turmoil withdrew from public and spent their life in retirement; but who always to a great extent furnish the ideals and ideal forces that shape society.

It need hardly be contended that the three men — John Wyclif, William Langland, and Richard Rolle of Hampole—deserve from our English preachers everywhere an attention that they have not hitherto received—at least since their own age.

The purpose of this paper is accomplished if it has opened up to some aspiring preachers a long-forgotten or hidden field of treasures that, compared with what the world prizes and seeks, are priceless.

#### FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE AS A HYMNIST.

BY REV. JAMES H. ROSS, A. M.,  
BOSTON, MASS.

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE died in London on Sunday, October 24, 1897. He was a poet and a hymnist, a lover of poetry and hymns, a professor of poetry in Oxford University, elected in 1885, a compiler of collections of poems and hymns that proved worthy of their titles, "The Golden Treasury of English Lyrics," 1861, and "The Treasury of Sacred Song," 1890.

He regarded the writing of a good