

THE

25703

FORTNIGHTLY REVIEW.

EDITED BY

T. H. S. ESCOTT.

37

VOL. XXXVII. NEW SERIES.

JANUARY I TO JUNE I, 1885.

(VOL. XLIII. OLD SERIES.)

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LIMITED,

11, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C. >

1885.

[*The Right of Translation is reserved.*]

CONTENTS.

AUTHOR.	PAGE
ABERDEEN, The Earl of	Union of Presbyterian Churches 717
ARNOLD, Arthur, M.P.	The Queen and her Family 766
BLUNT, Wilfrid Scawen	Ideas about India :—
	IV. The Native States 234
	V. The Future of Self-government. 386
BOWLES, Thomas Gibson	The Navy paralysed by Paper 253
	Give and Take with the Colonies 679
BROADLEY, A. M.	English Interests in North Africa 566
BURNAND, F. C.	Behind the Scenes 84
BURY, The Rev. W.	Squires, Spires, and Mires 352
CADOGAN, The Earl	The State of the Turf 105
CAILLARD, V. H. P.	Albania and the Albanians 461
CHIBOL, M. Valentine	Persia <i>in extremis</i> 116
COURTNEY, W. L.	Mr. Swinburne's Poetry 597
CRAIK, Henry	A Minister of Education 476
DOW, John G.	Shakespeare's Fugues 532
EDWARDS, H. Sutherland	Social Science on the Stage 491
	An Operatic Crisis 842
FONBLANQUE, E. B. de	Caroline Bauer 130
FYFFE, C. A.	The Coming Land Bill 286
	The Arguments of a Peer 557
GARDNER, Professor Percy	The Hellenic After-world 808
GOLDSMID, Sir Julian, Bart.	Ismail : A Vindication 741
GRIFFIN, Sir Lepel, K.C.S.I.	Peace or War 589
HARRISON, Frederic	Review of the Year 177
	George Eliot's Life 309
IRVING, Henry	The American Audience 197
KEBBEL, T. E.	Jane Austen at Home 262
LAING, S., M.P.	Peace with Russia 869
LAVELEYE, Emile de	Scotch and other Townships 831
LEWIS, George H.	Marriage and Divorce 640
LORNE, The Marquis of, K.T.	The Saskatchewan Scare 799
MACDONALD, Mrs.	Buddhism and Mock Buddhism 703
MACKENZIE, Morell, M.D.	Specialism in Medicine 772
MAIER, Julius	Recent Progress in Electricity 654
MAIN, Professor J. F.	The Upper Engadine in Winter 168
MARINDIN, G. E.	Eton in Eighty-five 753
MARLBOROUGH, The Duke of	The Transfer of Land 544
MARSHALL, Frederic	Paris as an English Residence 819
MAY, Henry	The Bank of England, 409

AUTHOR.	PAGE
MILLIGAN, Professor W.	Wyclif and the Bible 788
MIVART, Professor St. George	Organic Nature's Riddle 323, 519
MORISON, Jas. Cotter	Scientific <i>versus</i> Bucolio Vivisection 249
OUTISKY, Prince	Bismarck : A Retrospect 664
PIGOTT, Richard	The Parnellite Programme 852
ROBERTSON, Eric S.	Education for the Hungry 95
ROTHSCHILD, Baron Ferdinand	The Expansion of Art 55
STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, Lord	Radical Theorists on Land 297
TRAILL, H. D.	A Pious Legend examined 223
TULLOCH, Principal	Coleridge as a Spiritual Thinker 11
VINOGRADOFF, Professor	Oxford and Cambridge through Foreign Spectacles 862
WILLIAMSON, Stephen, M.P.	Agricultural and Commercial Depression 70
WILSON, H. Schütz	Tasso 399
 Conservatives on Themselves :—	
I. Conservative Organization. Bartley, George C. T.	611
II. The Past and Future of Conservatism. Curzon, The Hon. George N.	620
III. Jonah. English Tory, An	632
 England and Europe :—	
I. The Bulwarks of Empire. Hozier, H. M.	437
II. The Armed Strength of England. Field Officer, A	450
 England's Place in India :—	
I. An Indian Thersites. Griffin, Sir Lepel, K.C.S.I.	371
II. Ideas about India. Blunt, Wilfrid Scawen	386
 Gordon :—	
I. How we lost Gordon. Williams, Charles	689
II. In Memoriam. Myers, Ernest	701
 Redistribution by Different Lights :—	
I. The Seats Bills. Courtney, Leonard, M.P.	26
II. Seats and No Seats. Arnold, Arthur, M.P.	37
III. The Political Resultant. Candid Conservative, A	44
 Representation and Misrepresentation :—	
I. The Crusade for Proportional Representation. Shaw-Lefevre, The Right Hon. G., M.P.	202
II. The Coming Steps in Representation. Hare, Thomas	216
 Royalty and Viceroyalty in Ireland :—	
I. The Irish Viceroyalty. Jephson, Henry	500
II. A New Era for Ireland. O'Hara, R.	512
 The Ideas of the New Voters :—	
I. By Henry Broadhurst, M.P.	149
II. By A Trades Union Official	155
III. By Alfred Simmons	160
 The Problem of Empire :—	
I. Imperial Federation. Farrer, J. A.	338
II. The Federation League. Mills, Arthur	345
The Revolution of 1884	1
Home and Foreign Affairs	138, 271, 424, 575, 726, 879

WYCLIF AND THE BIBLE.

THE attention recently called to the great Reformer of the fourteenth century will be legitimately revived by the appearance of the revised edition of the Bible. It will not therefore be inappropriate to endeavour upon this occasion to grasp the fundamental elements of his character and the guiding principles of his life, as well as to determine the most important lessons which he left behind him, both for his own and succeeding times. Wyclif's extraordinary abilities were fully acknowledged during his lifetime, and have never been disputed. He was not merely a theologian, but was widely acquainted with the science of his day. He was familiar with what had been done in mathematics, chemistry, optics, and natural history; and the effect was not only to widen the field of his mental vision, but to supply him, in lectures, sermons, and published treatises, with illustrations which lent vivacity to his reasonings, and brought them into closer contact with the every-day life of man. In his own more peculiar field, again, of scholastic disputation, he was an unquestioned master. Even his bitterest enemies magnified the extent of his learning, the subtlety of his intellect, and the keenness of his insight. Professor Shirley ranks him with Duns Scotus, Ockham, and Bradwardine, as one of the four great schoolmen of the fourteenth century.¹ He was a diligent student of the fathers without being a slavish follower of their opinions. He thought and spoke for himself. That in doing so he laboured under the disadvantages of the scholastic method, is true. He could not entirely separate himself from the traditions of centuries. Had he broken with these he would not have effected what he did. But it is something to be able to say of him that, if he still adheres in no small degree to the dry disquisitions, the trifling distinctions, and the wearisome repetitions of the schools, no man did more to introduce a brighter sunshine and a healthier atmosphere into the modes of thought and exposition which had ruled till his time with almost undisputed sway. Another point ought to be noticed which admits of no dispute—the purity of his life. His worst foes never breathed suspicion against him upon that score. At a time when the morals of the clergy were far from correct, he was not only unstained by reproach, but noted for his austere and blameless walk. This high tone of life was in full correspondence with his exalted conception of the moral character of Christianity. He felt strongly, too, the responsibility attaching to his own position as a priest.

(1) *Fasciculi Zaniorum*, p. li.

By nothing, however, was he in all probability so much fitted for his work as by the deliberate and exhaustive manner in which he first surveyed his ground, and then by the coolness, not less than the resoluteness, with which he occupied it. In this respect he differed essentially from Luther, and the difference must be kept in view when we weigh the nature of the results achieved by them. Luther, no doubt, possessed many advantages which did not fall to the lot of his predecessor. The revival of learning had taken place. The mind of Europe had been expanded by contact with the treasures of ancient literature poured into it after the fall of Constantinople. The laity felt their power. Scholasticism had declined, and the printing-press had been invented. Yet the main difference between the work of the two men does not lie in these things. It lies rather in the men themselves, and in their personal experiences. Luther was from the first quick, emotional, passionate, a child of the people, at every point of his life intensely human. Wyclif was more the scholar, the recluse, the speculator, the calm and diligent investigator. Not that he wanted passion; but passion was in him a hidden fire, great in volume, burning clear, while in Luther it was a furnace, bursting forth into great sheets of flame, and kindling whatever came into contact with it. Luther's work began in the struggles of his own soul with sin, and in the cry for pardon and reconciliation with God; Wyclif's began rather in the region of the intellect, in the assertion of the right to think, and in the claim to investigate truth. Above all, Luther beheld around him only men the victims of superstition, men betrayed in the highest of all relations by the paltriest and most unsatisfying substitutes for true religion, blind guides leading the blind in matters of eternal moment, and both falling into the pit of spiritual darkness and despair. Wyclif, in at least the most active period of his life, beheld around him not simply men but fellow-countrymen, oppressed by a foreign yoke, and handed over to a distant and tyrannous power by those who ought to have been the guardians of their liberties and the protectors of their national birthright. It may be doubted if the later Reformer had much of the idea of country in his mind at all. Certainly he had no traditions to make his soul burn or his eye flash when foreign hands were laid upon the wealth of his native soil, or when efforts were made to silence the voice of her people's parliaments for the sake of a corrupt court and dissolute nobles. The earlier Reformer had the traditions of a little island where the winds had been always free, and where the waves, as they dashed upon its rock-bound coast, had long been answered by a like stirring spirit in its people. Such things made a great difference between the two Reformers, and must be taken into account when we think either of their personality or of their works.

In the meantime, however, we have to do with Wyclif; and the

most interesting question that meets us in connection with him has reference to the fundamental, the guiding principle of his life and work. The natural qualities of his character, admirable as they were, were after all no more than the formal preparation of the man or the instruments he was to use. Something more was needed to be his real preparation, the determining principle of his course of action, the power by which the whole machinery of his nature was to be put in motion. In this respect he has been too often thought of mainly as the Englishman; as the patriot interested in the liberties of his country; as the civil rather than as the religious reformer. It is not unnatural that such a view should be entertained, for it was in this capacity that he made his first entrance upon public life; and during the greater part of his after career he was closely associated with all those movements of his time in which his country vindicated her independence of a foreign yoke. But when we look more closely into the matter, we shall find that religious principles and religious aims did far more to determine what he was than the aspirations of a merely patriotic heart. It was these that made him what he was. His Christianity was the root of his patriotism, not his patriotism the root of his Christianity. In his religious and Christian convictions reached and, except in the extent of their application, matured during the years of his Oxford training previous to A.D. 1366, lay the seed of the plant that was afterwards to bear so large and ripe a crop of fruit. No one will deny that that seed was the Scriptures, or that from the very beginning of his studies he must have been drawn to them, and must have found in them both the nourishment of his own spiritual life and the treasure on which he drew for others. Except on this supposition it is impossible to explain the singular degree to which he identified himself with them, the strength of language with which he recognises their authority, the minute acquaintance with them which appears in all his writings, or the title which he received of the "Evangelical Doctor," which then meant the doctor devoted to the Scriptures in contrast with all other teaching.

It is not enough, however, to say this. The point upon which we desire at present especially to dwell, and in which we seem to find a key to Wyclif's life that has not yet been used, is, that in his study of Scripture he would seem to have come powerfully under the influence of the writings of St. John. He quotes him often, and Dr. Lechler tells us that again and again in his *Triologus* and other works he refers to John i. 3, 4, as if it were the germ of all his views. Strangely enough Dr. Lechler thinks that he misunderstood the passage, and that the words will not bear the rendering that he gave them. In both the authorised and revised versions the translation, with an unimportant difference, is as follows:—"And without Him was not anything made that hath been made. In Him was life,

and the life was the light of men." Wyclif connects the clauses differently, and translates: "And without Him was not anything made. That which hath been made was life in Him; and the life was the light of men."

But Wyclif is right. He has followed the early fathers, and has apprehended the real meaning of the words. What St. John tells us is, that the Eternal Word was life, life absolutely, and therefore life that could communicate itself; that He was the fountain of all life; and that in Him principally was the life of every creature before it was called into existence. The teaching will be better understood if we compare the words of the Gospel with those of the song of the four-and-twenty elders in the Apocalypse: "Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honour and the power; for Thou hast created all things, and because of Thy will they were, and they were created." All things *were* before they were created. In other words, it is St. John's principle appearing alike in the fourth Gospel and in the Apocalypse, that in God, and, if in God, therefore also in that Word to whom the Father, who hath life in Himself gave to have life in Himself,¹ there is an eternal pattern of all things that are realised on earth. By this pattern must all things on earth be judged, and to it all of them must, as far as possible, be conformed. This is the idealism of St. John, and Wyclif caught the inspiration.

Here, then, we seem to obtain the key to most at least of what Wyclif both was and did—to his philosophical system; his work as a reformer of ecclesiastical abuses; his views on property, so often misunderstood and harshly judged; and even to his *method* of reasoning upon any point he had in hand.

Let us look for a moment at the last point first, and the Reformer's idealism at once explains to us why he should always, in reasoning, go back to first principles. It is often in no small degree burdensome to the reader to find the commonest question discussed from the most remote and far-drawn considerations as to the nature of God and the eternal relations existing between Him and His creatures? But how can Wyclif argue otherwise? He can only deal with existing things by comparing them with the pattern in the Mount. He must reach that "one first" which is the measure of all others.² Let us turn to his philosophy. It is well known that he was a Realist, and this harmonizes exactly with what has been said, for the Realists, as distinguished from the Nominalists, believed that generals or universals have an existence prior to, and independent of, the individual objects to which they relate. In the words of the scholastic philosophy they were *universalia ante rem*.

(1) John v. 26.

(2) The following words are quoted by Dr. Lechler from a Vienna MS. :—"In omni genere est unum primum quod est metrum et mensura omnium aliorum," vol. i. p. 472, note 1.

But, above all, it was this same lofty idealism that lay at the bottom of Wyclif's career as a reformer of ecclesiastical abuses. His conception of the Church of Christ, gathered from Scripture, was essentially ideal. In almost every important particular it was directly the opposite of what he beheld around him. An outward and carnal institution had taken the place of the spiritual kingdom which Christ had founded. Even within this institution the clergy alone were regarded as the Church, the possessors of all her power, and the dispensers of all her privileges. The people were entirely in their hands, with no independent standing, no right of free access to the Father of their spirits, and no responsibility except that of obedience to ecclesiastical superiors who, even in the most favourable circumstances, treated them as children. Let us not blame the spiritual rulers of that day too much as if nothing of the kind could occur again. The evil sprang from deeper than Romanist roots, from roots which will probably never be eradicated while human nature is what it is. Nay, it is often the ablest and best men who are in danger of being the first to yield to it. Their own motives are pure: they know how they will use the influence they may acquire. They have such a vision of the glory of their beneficent work that they cannot believe in the existence of worldly ecclesiastics who will not be lightened and elevated by the same glory. Would that experience confirmed the justness of their expectation! There can be no nobler thought than that of upholding, vindicating, strengthening the Church of Christ, when the true idea of that Church is preserved—the idea of service, toil, suffering for the sake of Christ's body and of mankind. There can be none more disastrous when there is substituted for this the thought of a great hierarchy with power, riches, splendour, and worldly pomp. Men say, You gain the world in this way; we say, No, you lose the Church. Thus Wyclif felt, and far more interesting, accordingly, in this point of view than any, even the most memorable, of his overt acts, is the principle upon which he proceeded. That principle reminds us again of the writings of "the beloved disciple," and confirms what has been said as to the Johannine idealism which lay at the bottom of all the Reformer's views and movements. Wyclif drew a distinction between the Church and the elect within the Church. He recognised the fact that false members must be included in the former. He proceeded upon the principles involved in our Lord's own parable of the vine, when, saying of Himself, I am the true Vine, Jesus immediately spoke, not only of fruit-bearing branches, but of branches that bear no fruit, that must be taken away, "and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned." Still, these branches were a part of the Vine, a part of the body of Christ, a part of that visible Church which, though by reason of their presence imperfect, was yet struggling towards perfection. The

elect, however, within the outward Church were the true kernel; all of them, without distinction of clergy and laity, priests unto God and the Father, admitted to the same privileges, summoned to the same life, bound, except in so far as God had otherwise appointed, to the same duties.

The distinction thus drawn by Wyclif is not the same as that drawn by the later Reformers between the visible and the invisible Church, while it is possessed of infinitely more practical power. According to the later view the *invisible* Church is the body of Christ, and it cannot be sought on earth, for it consists of "the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be." The visible Church, on the other hand, consists of all who upon earth "profess the true religion."¹ Our thoughts are thus divided between what is ideal but cannot be realised on earth, and what is realised on earth but must always be actual, not ideal. Our aspirations are transferred from earth to heaven, and we need not strive after the ideal here, because we cannot reach it here. There is upon this view, strictly speaking, no body of Christ upon earth at all, but only an institution, a family, a house, or rather many institutions, families, houses, in which we are trained to be members of that body. Wyclif's view again fastens our attention upon something which exists within the outward Church, which is ideally perfect, which is therefore entitled to our first regard, which shows us what the whole Church ought to be, and which, because it is ideal, must supply a standard of attainment to everything occupying a lower ground. Were one to follow out the thought he would perhaps say that the body of Christ is here, in the form of the outward professing Church, and that, like Christ's own earthly body, it is dwelt in by the spirit which is yet to pervade it wholly and to transfuse it wholly into a spiritual body when the appointed moment comes. Any way, the main point is this, that there is a truly ideal element within the present outward framework, that there is a Church in the highest sense within the Church in a lower sense, and that upon this, and not upon a distinction between the visible and the invisible Church we are to fix our thoughts. The one may, indeed, although in a different way, be as visible as the other.

Such was the principle, and a consequence of great logical importance flowed from it upon which Wyclif must have more or less acted whether he presented it clearly to his own mind or not. In looking upon the outward and professing Church as the body of Christ, it was of course possible to think only of Christ in His state of humiliation. The visible and professing body was not perfect enough to be identified with Christ in any higher state. But if so, it naturally followed that the inner circle of believers, the essence of the Church, those from whom we learn what the Church should be, were to be identified

(1) *Westminster Confession*, chap. xxv.

with the glorified Redeemer, with the Redeemer who had surmounted all imperfection and limitation, and who now, clothed with His "spiritual body," was complete. That thought cut in an instant at the root of all the secularisation and worldliness of the Church. What pretensions could she have to earthly honour and dignity, whose duty it was to take her Master's place in the world and do His work? What desires could she have for them, the distinguishing characteristic of whose position was that she was already passing out of the region of earthly, and was seated in the region of heavenly things? Her pretensions could only be to a cross, to more toil than other men, to more suffering than other men, to self-denial and self-sacrifice, to do good which would be unrewarded here, to rest which would be found only on the other side of the grave. Her desires could only be that she might walk more worthily of her ideal standing in the heavenly places. In proceeding upon these principles the great Reformer of the fourteenth century laid down lines which even the Reformers of the sixteenth century did not see with equal clearness, and which are not fully comprehended to this day.

Out of this ideal view of what the Church of Christ was all Wyclif's efforts as a Reformer flowed. It was thus that, negatively, he set himself with so much determination against the worldliness, pride, luxury, and selfish ease of the prelates and priests of his time. He went back to the early Church. He contrasted in a thousand ways the condition of our Lord and His apostles with that of those around him who arrogated to themselves the name of the Church. He attacked them with reproach, scorn, indignation, with every species of invective. And yet through all, the reader is chiefly overpowered, as he is overpowered in St. John, with the wail of melancholy. It is the thought of Christ's little flock untended, uncared for, that rends his heart, and that dictates these passionate appeals to the Almighty, to the God of holiness and mercy. Nor was it otherwise with his efforts after positive reformation, with his attack upon the citadel of Romish error, the doctrine of transubstantiation, with his devotion to preaching, with his institution of "poor priests," and with his translation of the Bible into the tongue of the people. Upon these things individually it is not necessary to dwell. Enough to observe that all of them may be traced to the operation of the same great principle, of the same ideal view of the position and privileges of the true members of Christ's Church on earth. Nor need it in the least degree surprise us that, while himself retaining his living at Lutterworth, he sent forth his itinerant preachers without gold or silver or brass in their purses, believing that the labourer would be found worthy of his food. He was trying the ideal system which he discovered in the New Testament, but it was by no means necessary on that account to do away with the existing system either of parishes

or of parish tithes. The functions of the two sets of preachers, the parochial and the itinerant, were indeed entirely different. The former were to edify the Church, and to administer her ordinances for the sake of an already believing flock. The latter were to awaken the careless, to reclaim wanderers, and to convert the unbelieving. In his relation to the two classes, therefore, the labourer might well be sustained in wholly different ways. No one will deny that the ideal system upon which the Saviour sent forth His disciples to preach would lend to the Church enormous power in dealing with the masses of a nation that have as yet refused to listen to the call of the Gospel. But it by no means follows that where a Christian congregation has been formed the same system is equally important. Wyclif appears to have felt this. He saw no contradiction between drawing the tithes of his own parish and sending out his "poor priests" with nothing to depend on but the alms of those to whom they preached. He even complained at one time (A.D. 1366) that attempts were made to engage him in controversy in order to deprive him of his ecclesiastical benefices;¹ and, although he may have afterwards gone farther in his views, he retained his emoluments at Lutterworth to the last, and no one has ever attempted to charge him with inconsistency.

In all these ecclesiastical and religious movements, then, we appear to trace the working of a high New Testament idealism as the chief guiding principle of Wyclif's life. He has been upon the Mount with God, and his great aim is to find as far as possible practical expression for the pattern that has been shown him there.

But Wyclif's idealism not only explains his work as an ecclesiastical reformer, it goes far also to explain his views on property. Upon this point it is desirable to say a few words, partly because of its immense importance, and partly because Wyclif's position in connection with it has been often misunderstood. Even so eminent an historian as Dr. Stubbs declares that "his logical system of politics applied to practice turns out to be little else than socialism."²

One point seems to be clear. The system must be applied to *all* property. The attempt has been made, but unsuccessfully, to separate between its application to Church property and to property of other kinds. Wyclif did not hold that every man's private property was his own, but that the Church's property belonged to the State. He applied his principle to the latter; but the principle covered all. That principle is expressed by the celebrated apothegm that "dominion is founded on grace;" and the meaning is that no man, and no body of men, could claim an absolute and inherent right to the goods possessed by them. All things belonged to God, and were granted by Him as fiefs are by a feudal superior. As originally

(1) Vaughan, *Monograph*, p. 108.

(2) *Constitutional History*, vol. ii., p. 440.

bestowed they were forfeited by sin, but were restored by grace or mercy, on conditions opposed to sin, and which sin must again invalidate. It follows as a natural consequence that the man who uses his possessions ill forfeits them in principle, and ought to lose them. The difficulty is of course to find out the point at which the goods are forfeited, and who has a right to take them. Until the treatise in which Wyclif's views are fully explained is published, it is not possible to say precisely how he would have met these difficulties in the case of civil or personal property. We know, however, that he strenuously denied that, upon his principle, a debtor might escape payment of his debt, a tenant of his rent, or a servant of his obligations, whenever these several persons were satisfied that the creditor, the landlord, or the master was a wicked man. We know that he maintained that by the law of God "common men should serve meekly God and their lords, and do true service to God and their masters. By the law of Christ if the lord be an untrue man and tyrant to his subjects they should yet serve him." "Pay to all men debts," he says, "both tribute and custom, and fear, and honour, and love. Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered meekly a painful death from Pilate; and St. Paul said that he was ready to suffer death by doom of the emperor's justice, if he deserved to die."¹ In such cases he seems to have satisfied himself with the general statement that to property misapplied and abused the owner had no longer a rightful claim.

The case of Church property opened an easier and clearer path to his conclusion. In judging of his argument it is essentially necessary to bear in mind the precise state of matters with which he had to contend. It was urged by his opponents that under no circumstances whatever could either the persons or the property of the clergy be touched by the civil power. Both were sacred. God had granted His Church an indefeasible and inalienable claim to freedom from all interference on the part of the State. The State had no right to touch the persons of churchmen, whatever their deserts, or the property of the Church, however it might be abused. With his keenest irony, therefore, Wyclif showed to what absurdities this contention led. For such abuses there must be a remedy, and the remedy rests upon the principle that dominion, which is distinct from power, is founded on grace. Here, too, he had another advantage, for his principles led him, as we have seen, to maintain that the clergy were not the Church. The whole people of the land, the king, the parliament, and the nation, were as much a part of the Church as the clergy were. For them the clergy existed, not they for the clergy. The latter were not masters; they were ministers or servants for the common good, and all servants must be liable to give an account of

(1) *Pennington's Life of Wyclif*, pp. 75, 76.

their stewardship. Thus looked at, the interference of the State with the property of the Church was not the interference of an extraneous power. The magistrate was the vicar of God,¹ the nation was a Christian nation acting through its natural representatives, who disowned neither their duty nor their responsibility to represent it. It was taking stock of goods which had been bestowed upon it from a divine source, and for divine purposes. The source had been lost sight of. Even in pleading that their dotations were divine the clergy had forgotten what the divine meant. The purposes had been abused; instead of being divine they were become worldly, sensual, devilish. The Christian nation had need to reform itself, and in doing so it was entitled to see that Church property was applied to the Christian objects for which it was intended. All this, it will be seen, was the very reverse of what is nowadays urged as the Voluntary view.

But although Wyclif's path was thus easier in the case of Church than of personal property, his principle really embraced both. What are we to think of it? Professor Shirley has endeavoured to defend it by the consideration that it "was put forth by its author as an ideal, and with the full admission that it was incompatible in many of its results with the existing state of society;"² and Canon Pennington pleads on behalf of the promulgation of it that it was "only a theory."³ Both apologies are unsatisfactory. Ideals may not be capable of being at once reduced to practice, but there is nothing so truly practical as they are. Nor is there anything that a man is less justified in putting forth than a false theory. Both ideals and theories present an end which we are not simply to admire, but towards which we are to work. They contain in them the seeds of an endless growth. Much of Christianity is in the best sense ideal; and because it is so, it is entitled to the admiration of men now, and will command the allegiance of the best of men until they have a higher ideal (and when will that be?) set before them.

The true justification of Wyclif is that his principle is sound. No man has in all circumstances an absolute right to what he has acquired or inherited. Why should we hesitate to say so? Even if we look at the principle in its relation to mere worldly movements it will, perhaps, appear not so absurd or dangerous as we might at first sight suppose. The difficulty of the application may be granted, but upon what other principle shall we justify the expulsion of the Stuarts, the Bourbons, or the Napoleons? We may not always see clearly when to enforce it. The principle is ideal. We are commonly very far

(1) Comp. extracts from the Reformer's works in *Life*, by Vaughan, vol. ii., p. 282, and in *Monograph*, by the same author, p. 450.

(2) *Fasciculi Zizaniorum*, p. lxii.

(3) *Life of Wyclif*, p. 74.

from the ideal. But there come moments in history when, under the pressure of mighty wrongs, the divine righteousness and justice rise before a nation's eyes like a vision of the third heaven. In moments of that kind the nation is in an ideal world; and, under the influence of the ideal, it executes righteousness and justice with a decision and a swiftness of which, when it afterwards returns to its normal state, it can only say that it was then hearing unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. That seems to be the real meaning of Wyclif's principle; and, thus applicable even to personal property, it is more easily applicable to the property of the Church. Wyclif had certainly not the slightest idea of secularising the latter when it was well used. It was never more than "the superfluity of the temporal goods" of the Church that he desired to attain, and his very assertion, that dominion was founded in grace, rendered it necessary to maintain that where this grace was, nothing should be permitted to interfere with the dominion. The principle may come to be needed again; and it will be well that, in any changes that may be before us, it be interpreted in its author's sense, and for such ends as he would have proposed.

We have said enough. It has been no part of our plan to sketch the life of Wyclif, to describe his enormous labours, or to follow him into all those varied spheres of activity in each of which he accomplished enough to make any man famous, though he had done nothing else. We have simply aimed at pointing out a view of the man which has been too little noticed, and which yet seems to supply the real key to all he did. The lesson is an obvious one. We ought to encourage idealism in the Church, and especially in the clergy. Many fear both, and dread—what is by no means impossible even in our day—a return to the old oppression exercised by the clergy over the laity. To counteract this they would lower the conception of the Church's and the minister's work. The true prevention is to heighten both. That is the New Testament plan; and, if the spirit of the New Testament be adhered to, it will be found wise to follow it. Wealth, ease, luxury, pomp, great worldly state, are the very last things to which our Lord or His apostles would have pointed as what ought to characterize the ministry which they founded—the very last, unless there be something still more remote from their thoughts, dominion over the souls of men. The true glory of the ministry does not lie in such things, but in humility, love, self-denial, self-sacrifice, a heavier cross than is given other men to bear, and labours from which there shall be rest only in eternity. That is the Christian ideal; and when the Church strives to realise it in ever-increasing measure, men will have no need to fear her. They will rather encourage her, and say, "While you keep to paths like these we will go with you, for we see that God is with you."

WILLIAM MILLIGAN.