that the earl-marshal would have played the master there, or been so troublesome, he would not have suffered him to come into the court.' On which many angry words passed betwixt the bishop and the earl-marshal. The duke of Lancaster took the earl-marshal’s part, and told the bishop that ‘ the earl-marshal’s motion was but reasonable, and that as for him, who was grown so proud and arrogant, he would bring down the pride, not only of him, but of all the prelacy of England ; that he depended upon the greatness of his family, but that they should have enough to do to support themselves.”@@1

The duke of Lancaster did not then stand high in the popular favour ; and his magnificent palace of the Savoy was attacked during the tumults which followed this stormy discussion. A clergyman, who had the misfortune of being mistaken for Lord Percy, was put to death by the populace. The decease of the aged king ensued on the 21st of June 1377, and he was succeeded by his grandson Richard, who had not completed the twelfth year of his age. A parlia­ment was summoned soon after his accession, and the sub­ject of the papal encroachments was again resumed. By this parliament, a question was submitted to the judgment of Wycliffe, whether a kingdom might not, in a case of ne­cessity, prevent its treasures from being conveyed to a foreign country, although it should even be demanded by the pope himself. Here we have a sufficient proof that the charge of heresy, however it might expose him to re­sentment from the rulers of the church, had not diminished his credit with the rulers of the state. What answer the professor of divinity returned to this question, no reader can fail to anticipate. His opinions as to the temporalities of the church must have been thought fully as dangerous as his theological doctrines ; and on the same day no fewer than four different bulls had been issued against him by Gregory the Eleventh ; three of which were directed to the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London, and a fourth to the chancellor and university of Oxford. All these documents, together with an apostolical epistle ad­dressed to King Edward on the same subject, are dated on the 22d of May. The bulls of this “ servant of the ser­vants of God,” enjoin the parties to whom they are ad­dressed to commit John Wycliffe to prison, and, having transmitted to Rome a full account of his heretical tenets, to detain him in custody until they should receive further instructions ; but should they fail in their endeavours to seize his person, they are required to affix in suitable places a citation for his appearance before the pontiff within three months from the date of such citation. These pastoral mandates were not however very effectually executed ; but during the earlier part of the year 1378, he appeared be­fore a meeting of papal delegates in the archiepiscopal chapel at Lambeth. His doctrines were rapidly extending their influence, not merely among the people, but even at court. The populace were now alarmed for his personal safety, and, having surrounded the chapel, many of them forced their way into it, and gave sufficient indications of the part which they were prepared to act; nor was the mortification of the delegates diminished by the appearance of Sir Lewis Clifford, who, in the name of the queen mother, the widow of the Black Prince, prohibited them from pro­ceeding to any definite sentence respecting the doctrine or conduct of Wycliffe.

He therefore returned to his former occupations, and by his pulpit discourses, his academical lectures, and his vari­ous writings, laboured to promote the cause of truth. The great and glorious labour of his declining years was his complete version of the Bible. It has always been one of the chief arts of priestcraft to keep mankind in a state of ignorance ; and it may easily be conceived that an attempt to render the sacred books intelligible to every person ca­pable of reading his mother-tongue, could not fail to kindle the fiery rage of the old Red Dragon. In our own time, we have heard divers denunciations from high-churchmen as to the danger of circulating the Bible without the Book of Common Prayer. According to their estimate, it is better to withhold the one, unless it can be duly qualified by the other. Are we then to conclude that there is no safety beyond the precincts of their own church ; that the religion of protestants is only a safe way to salvation, when that way is paced in certain trammels, and swept with a white surplice ? Or is the spiritual improvement of man­kind of real importance in so far only as it may be circum­scribed within the boundaries of episcopacy ? The spirit of popery is not confined to professed papists. To trans­late the Bible was in Wycliffe regarded as an act of heresy, and his version continued to be a proscribed book till the era of the Reformation. Being ignorant of the Hebrew and Greek languages, which he had no oppor­tunity of learning, he was under the necessity of trans­lating from the Vulgate.@@2 What aid he may have re­ceived from others in the prosecution of his laborious undertaking, it is impossible to ascertain ; but it is com­monly understood that he was not without coadjutors. In a theological point of view, the value of his translation is far from being inconsiderable, and its value is still more conspicuous in illustrating the history of the English tongue. Wycliffe may indeed be regarded as the father of English prose. His version affords a very ample specimen of the language, as it existed in the fourteenth century ; nor is it a little curious to remark, in very many instances, how im­materially his phraseology differs from that of the autho­rized version executed in the reign of King James. Of his translation of the New Testament, an edition was pub­lished by Mr Lewis in the year 1731, and another by Mr Baber in the year 1810; but it is not very creditable to his countrymen, who have derived so much benefit from his pious labours, that his translation of the Old Testament still remains in manuscript. This great deficiency however is at last to be supplied: Mr Forshall and Sir Frederic Madden, both of the British Museum, are now engaged in preparing an edition, which is to issue from the university press at Oxford. Of the influence of Wycliffe’s biblical labours, no person seems to have obtained a clearer view than Dr Lingard. He made, says this historian, “ a new translation,@@3 multiplied the copies with the aid of tran­scribers, and by his poor priests recommended it to the perusal of their hearers. In their hands it became an en­gine of wonderful power. Men were flattered with the appeal to their private judgment ; the new’ doctrines insen­sibly acquired partisans and protectors in the higher classes, who alone were acquainted with the use of letters ; a spirit of enquiry was generated ; and the seeds were sown of that religious revolution, which, in little more than a century, astonished and convulsed the nations of Europe.”

Wycliffe had at first exposed the discipline of the church, and the scandalous lives of churchmen ; but he at length raised his voice against several of its doctrines, and parti­cularly against the doctrine of transubstantiation. Wher­

@@@1 Lewis's History of the Life and Sufferings of the reverend and learned John Wicliffe, D. D., p. 53. Lond. 1720, 8vo. See however p. 57 of the last edition, Oxford, 1820, 8vo, which contains various additions.

@@@a Jablonski bas described Wycliffe as “ vir excellenti ingenio, magno animo, et pietate solida praestans, sed quem linguarum sacrarum peritia, literarumque elegantiorum studia deficiebant.” (Institutiones Historiæ Christianae, tom. i. p. 329.)

@@@3 From the researches of Mr Baber, who has bestowed much attention on the subject, it clearly appears that no entire translation into the English language had preceded that of Wycliffe. This editor has prefixed memoirs of the translator, including a long catalogue of his works. See likewise Dr Vaughan’s Life of Wycliffe, vol. ii. p. 379.