

# BIBLES OF ENGLAND.

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*The Lollards' Bible, commonly called Wyclif's Bible.*

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Editions consulted and quoted from :—

First version, by John Wyclif and Nicholas de Hereford, 1380.—Forshall and Madden's edition.

Song of Solomon, in Adam Clarke's "Commentary."

Second version, revised by John Purvey, 1388.—Forshall and Madden's edition.

New Testament in Bagster's "Hexapla."

THERE is no book that, in respect of either its practical value or its historical interest, can, in the estimation of Christians, be put in comparison with the Bible. The Bible is regarded by Christians as the Word of God, in which may be found all the spiritual truth, undiscoverable by reason, that God has been pleased to reveal to men for their guidance and comfort. The knowledge communicated in the Bible has the special distinction of making men wise unto salvation. The English Bible, moreover, is one of the most notable books of literature, which every student of English literature requires to read and study ; and a comparison of ancient and modern versions of the Bible in English gives the careful reader considerable insight into the structure and history of the English language itself. All information, therefore, on the history of the Bible, and especially on its presentation to the people of England and Scotland in their native tongue, should be both interesting and useful to English-speaking people, and particularly to English-speaking Christians.

On every occasion of public worship in Protestant Churches at the present day the Bible is produced, and a part of it is

audibly read by the officiating minister, or his assistant, for the edification of the worshippers. It is on some verse or passage of the Bible, too, that, Sabbath after Sabbath, every Christian preacher, in our Protestant Churches, builds his discourses. In view of these facts, it cannot but seem strange that the Christian religion was established in this country several hundred years before there was a Bible either read to, or written for, the people in a language they could understand. Yet such is the case. Christianity was introduced into England more than 1200 years ago (some historians say about 1800 years ago), and long before the year 1000 A.D., the land was overspread with Christian Churches, and a Christian ministry was maintained by the tithes of the land's produce. But in those early times there was no version of the Bible, or at least of the whole Bible, in English. Knowledge of the Bible was then, by those that could read Latin, usually sought in the Latin translation known as the Vulgate; and to those that could not read Latin, it was sparingly conveyed by the lips of the priest, in homilies and paraphrases, which were not remarkable for accurate representation of Scripture truth.

To John Wyclif belongs the honour of having given to his countrymen the first complete version of the Bible in English. This was in, or about, the year 1380. Long prior to that date, however, portions of the Bible had been transcribed both in English and in Anglo-Saxon. About the end of the seventh, or beginning of the eighth century, the Psalter was rendered into Anglo-Saxon by Aldhelm, Bishop of Sherborne. In 735, the venerable Bede bequeathed, "for the advantage of the Church," an Anglo-Saxon translation of the gospel by St. John. Among other portions of Scripture translated into Anglo-Saxon may be mentioned four chapters in Exodus (xx-xxiii), by King Alfred (about 890); the four gospels, by Aldred, a priest of Holy Isle (about 950); and the books of Moses, Joshua, and Judges, by Aelfric, Abbot of Peterborough, and

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† "The work of Aelfric is by no means a complete version of the above-mentioned books. His object was to furnish his countrymen with a translation of those parts of the Scripture only, which he conceived to be most important for them to know; and, in the execution of his purpose . . . he has, for the most part,

afterwards Archbishop of York (about 1000). Of the Old-English versions of portions of Scripture, previous to 1380, it will suffice to mention a metrical paraphrase of the Gospels and Acts, by Orm or Ormin, a monk, who is supposed to have lived in the latter half of the twelfth century; a prose version of the Psalms, by Richard Rolle of Hampole (about 1349); and a gloss of a considerable part of the New Testament (the gospels by St. Mark and St. Luke, and the Epistles of St. Paul), supposed to have been written about the same time as Rolle's Psalter. These excerpts, as they might be aptly enough termed, were not widely circulated; and, although they furnished devotional reading for people of rank and education, they did little to enlighten the community in the knowledge of Scripture. Some of them have to this day been preserved; and not only may old manuscript copies of them be seen in college and other libraries, but printed copies of them (or of parts of them), may be found in books that are quite accessible to the public.<sup>1</sup> In such a popular work, for instance, as Clarke's *Commentary on the Bible*, many curious and interesting extracts are given from an old English annotated manuscript psalter, which, from its archaic phraseology, is evidently of an earlier date than Wyclif's translation.<sup>2</sup>

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stated in his own words only the substance of the precepts inculcated, and the history recorded by the sacred penmen."—*Baber*.

<sup>1</sup> The following are curious samples of old translation:—Gen. ii., v. 23, "Tha cwaedh Adam, Heo is ban of minum banum, and flaesc of minum flaesce : beo hire name *Uirago*, thaet is faemne." Aelfric : Mark i. v. 6, "And Jhone was kladde wir heris of cameyls, and a gerdel of askyne aboute his lendis, and he ete honysokyls and honye of ye wood; and he prechyde seyande, a stallworthier yane I shal come afr me, of whom I am not worthe downfallande or knelande to louse ye thonges of his chawcers."—*Gloss on St. Mark about 1350*.

<sup>2</sup> A comparison of the 23rd Psalm in this old Psalter, and in Rolle's Psalter, indicates that Dr. Clarke's manuscript is either a copy of Rolle's translation or a very slight amendment of it. The second clause of Ps. ciii. v. 5, is in Dr. Clarke's manuscript rendered

"Newed sal be als of aeren thi youthed,"

and appended to this translation is a curious note explanatory of the way in which science accounted for the eagle's rejuvenescence. "The arne (eagle), when he is greved with grete elde, his neb waxis so gretely, that he may nogt open his mouth and take mete : bot then he smytes his neb to the stane, and has away the slogh, and than he gaes til mete, and he commes yong agayne."

In saying that an English translation of the Bible was in, or about, 1380 *published* by Wyclif, a word of explanation must be added. At the present day the publication of a book means the printing and issuing for public sale of a large number of copies. In the days of Wyclif there was no printing. Books were all hand-written, and copies of books were transcribed, singly and separately, as occasion required. But although it was with so much labour that copies of Wyclif's Bible were produced, it is certain that soon after its publication, a goodly number of copies was issued and disposed of. It is commonly alleged that 170 copies, written previous to 1430, are still in existence. It is not unlikely, too, that transcripts of parts, as well as of the whole, of the Bible were made and sold. In Dr. Clarke's *Commentary* there is inserted, as a great curiosity, a translation of the Book of Canticles, or Song of Solomon, from a manuscript of the 14th century; and this fragment has now been identified as part of the first edition of Wyclif's Bible.

For more reasons than one, it may be said that, in Wyclif's day, the time had come for the English people to have a Bible in their own language. The people of other countries had that privilege. In a speech attributed to

"Old John of Gaunt, time honoured Lancaster,"

there was a demand expressed, therefore, that in a matter of such high concern, England should be abreast of her neighbours. "We will not be the dregs of all," shouted the speaker, "seeing other nations have the law of God, which is the law of our faith, written in their tongue." To the same effect, John Purvey wrote in his prologue to the revised edition of Wyclif's Bible, 1388: "Freenshe men, Beemers and Britons (*i.e.*, Belgians and Normans) han the Bible . . . translatid in here modir language: whi shulden not English men have the same in here modir language, I can not wite." It was the controversies, however, which Wyclif had with the Romish Church, that were the immediate occasion of his publishing the Bible in English. In those days, corruption had reached its climax in the Church of Rome. The cup of scandal and iniquity was full. There

was corruption in doctrine, corruption in ritual, corruption in discipline, and enormous corruption in the patronage of Church livings. At many of the things he saw and heard in the Church, Wyclif was scandalised and shocked. For thirty years he was a trenchant and vehement assailant of ecclesiastical abuses. With voice and pen, he laboured incessantly to effect a Reform in the Church. He derided the doctrine of transubstantiation, ridiculed the worship of images, denounced the sale of indulgences, scoffed at pilgrimages, and had the hardihood not only to call the Pope Anti-Christ, but to accuse his holiness of being "the most cursed of clippers and purse-kervers." And maintaining, as he did, that the doctrines and practices he assailed had no warrant nor foundation in Scripture, Wyclif said that the surest way to put an end to ecclesiastical superstition and presumption was to acquaint the people with the Bible. He resolved, therefore, to publish the Bible for the people in their mother tongue. That, he concluded, would be the true cure for corruption, and would give to the men of England what John the Baptist was appointed to teach the palsied nation of Israel—"the science of health."<sup>1</sup>

It need scarcely be said that it is from the original tongues in which it was written that the Bible should be translated. That would be going to the fountain head. But, in the days of Wyclif, there was not in all England scholarship enough for such an achievement. Instead, therefore, of translating the Old Testament from its original Hebrew, and the New Testament from its original Greek, Wyclif was content to give to his countrymen a translation of the Vulgate, that is of the Latin version of the Bible, which was virtually accepted in the Church of Rome as the true canonical Scriptures. How long he was actually engaged in the work of translation cannot be confidently stated. It is generally admitted that in 1378 he had commenced his work, and the date commonly assigned to its completion is 1380.

Although it is customary to say that Wyclif gave to his

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<sup>1</sup> Wyclif may be said to have anticipated a modern phrase by rendering "knowledge of salvation" (Luke, i. 77) "the science of health."

countrymen an English version of the entire Bible, we are not to suppose that all the translation was his own work. He had a collaborateur, in the person of Nicholas de Hereford, who translated the Old Testament from Genesis to the middle of Baruch. The remainder of the Old Testament (from Ezekiel to Malachi), and the whole of the New Testament, are believed to have been rendered into English by Wyclif personally.

That Wyclif's Bible, in its first form, was a work of much merit, and that it supplied a great want in England, is universally conceded; but it had many imperfections nevertheless. Probably no one was more alive to that fact than Wyclif himself, and we may presume that if he had lived a few years longer, in health and strength, he would have issued a new and a revised edition, with corrections and amendments. But he was denied the opportunity. In 1379, he had a stroke of paralysis; and in 1384, he died. After his death, however, there rose up in England another anti-papalist of eminent scholarship. This was John Purvey,<sup>1</sup> who set himself to the task of revising Wyclif's translation, and, in (or about) 1388, gave to the world the fruits of his labours. All critics concur in according to Purvey's revision<sup>2</sup> very high commendation.

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<sup>1</sup> In some books, *e.g.*, "Mombert's English Versions of the Bible," he is called Richard Purvey.

<sup>2</sup> In the translation of poetical passages, such as the Psalms, Purvey was less stately in his diction than Hereford. The latter made large use of "congenial inversions" in the structure of his sentences, which Purvey, in his revision, discarded. Some people will probably consider Hereford's taste in this matter more correct than Purvey's. The following passage will illustrate the respective styles of the two men, in the rendering of poetical pieces:—

HEREFORD.

Psalm ciii., 7-10.—Knowen he made his weies to Moises, and to the sones of Jacob his willis. Reewere and merciful the Lord, long abidende and myche merciful. In to evermore he shal not wrathen, ne in to withoute end he shal threte. Astir our synnes he dide not to us, ne astir oure wickednessis he zelde to us.

PURVEY.

Psalm ciii., 7-10.—He made hise weies knowun to Moises: hise willis to the sones of Israel. The Lord is a merciful doer, and merciful in wille: long abidinge and myche merciful. He schal not be wrooth with-outen ende: and he schal not thretne with-outen ende. He dide not to us astir oure synnes: nether he zeldide to us astir oure wickednessis.

As a piece of scholastic workmanship, it is characterised by great carefulness. It was prefaced, also, by a long and an interesting prologue, explaining the principles on which "the simple creature" proceeded in his revision, and shewing the pains he was at to make the translation as good as loving labour could. "With comune charite to saue alle men in our rewme (realm), which God wole haue sauid, a symple creature," he said, "hath translated the bible out of Latyn into English. First, this symple creature hadde myche trauaile, with diuerse felawis and helperis, to gedere manie elde biblis, and othere doctouris, and comune glosis,<sup>1</sup> and to make oo Latyn bible sumdel trewe: thanne to studie it of the newe, the text with the glose and othere doctouris, as he might gete: . . . the thridde tyme to counseile with elde gramariens and elde dyuynes, of harde wordis and hard sentencis, hou tho mighten best be understonden and translatid: the fourth tyme to translate as cleerli as he coude to the sentence, and to haue manie gode felawis and kunnynges at the correctyng of the translacioun."

As a matter of course, when Wyclif quarrelled with the ecclesiastical powers he had to reckon with his host. Both at home and at Rome he was regarded as a heretic; and although he did not attain to the honours of martyrdom, he had the privilege of enduring some persecution.<sup>2</sup> More than once, he was taken to book for venting erroneous opinions; and on one occasion the Pope directed the king of England "to retain the said John in sure custody and in chains." But he never was actually prevented from going at large; and he died in the enjoyment of both his priestly functions and his

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<sup>1</sup> The word gloss is commonly used to signify an explanatory statement. In early times it was used differently. Glosses, says Dr. Eadie, were interlinear vernacular translations, "neither free nor yet literal translations, but the interlinear insertion of the vernacular, word against word of the original."—*History of English Bible*, Vol. I., p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Both Hereford and Purvey suffered for their opinions also. Hereford was excommunicated and imprisoned, and seems to have regained his liberty by renouncing his Lollardism. Purvey was imprisoned in 1390; in 1400 he was frightened into recantation; and in 1421, having recovered his courage, he was thrown into prison again.—See Moulton's "History of the English Bible."

ecclesiastical benefice. Forty years after his burial, however, his remains were disinterred by ecclesiastical order ; and, in the presence of a distinguished assemblage of prelates and priests, they were burned on the bridge of a stream close by his grave. And, to make his ignominy complete, his calcined ashes were disallowed either honoured urn or quiet tomb to rest in, but were thrown from the bridge, and committed to the current of the underflowing waters.

After Wyclif's death, his Bible was judicially condemned. In 1408, a Convocation at Oxford, proceeding on the preamble that "it is a dangerous thing to translate the Holy Scripture, it being very difficult in a version to keep close to the sense of the inspired writers," decreed and ordained that "from henceforward no unauthorised person shall translate any part of the Holy Scripture into English or any other language, under any form of book or treatise ; neither shall any such book, treatise, or version, made either in Wyclif's time or since, be read, either in whole or in part, publicly or privately, under the penalty of the greater excommunication, till the said translation shall be approved either by the bishop of the diocese or a provincial council, as occasion shall require."<sup>1</sup> Considering that, long before Wyclif's time, there had been many translations of different parts of the Bible made both in English and in Anglo-Saxon ; that these translations, before being issued to the public, had never to pass any official scrutiny ; that they were read, apparently with ecclesiastical approval, and certainly without ecclesiastical remonstrance, by persons of quality, and in fact by all people that could read, and could afford to purchase such costly manuscripts ; this decree of the Oxford Convocation, in 1408, may well excite our astonishment.<sup>2</sup> Its

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<sup>1</sup> Temporal pains seem to have been subsequently added to spiritual anathemas. Dr. Eadie states that, about 1414, the law inflicted on all Englishmen that were guilty of reading the Scriptures in their mother tongue the forfeiture of their "land, catel, lif, and goods from theyr heyres for ever."—"Hist. of English Bible," Vol. I., p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> "The fact stated by Archbishop Arundel in his funeral sermon on Anne of Bohemia, wife of Richard II., that she habitually read the Gospels in the vulgar tongue, with divers expositions, was probably true of many others of high rank."—Smith's "Dict. of Bible," Article Version authorised, p. 1066.



rigour is doubtless to be accounted for by the fact that, rightly or wrongly, the Popish priests imagined that Wyclif's translation was, by the countenance it seemed to give to un-churchly doctrines, a dangerous source of heresy and schism. This is what Sir Thomas More, writing a hundred and fifty years after Wyclif's death, averred. "The great arch heretike," said that Catholic apologist, "did, in his translation, purposely corrupt the holy text; maliciously planting therein such words as might, in the reader's ears, serve to the proof of such heresies as he went about to sow; which he not only set forth with his own translation of the Bible, but also with certain prologues and glosses which he made thereupon."

It was not till 1850 that English readers had the privilege of seeing the whole of Wyclif's Bible in print. Portions of it had been printed and published long before that date. In 1823, the Song of Solomon, from Wyclif's original version, was published in Dr. Clarke's "Commentary on the Old Testament." The whole of the New Testament, from Purvey's revision, was published as far back as 1731, and has several times been reprinted since. And, strange to say, this Wyclifite Testament was supposed by its successive editors to be the original version of 1380, instead of the revised version of 1388. Even in Bagster's "Hexapla" that mistake is made. The first appearance in print of Wyclif's own version of the New Testament seems to have been in 1848. But in 1850 the whole text of both versions—the original and the revised—Wyclif's and Hereford's own, 1380, and Purvey's amended one, 1388—was published under the editorial care of the Rev. Josiah Forshall and Sir Frederic Madden. The two versions are there given side by side, in parallel columns: the older on the left hand column, and the later on the right hand column of each page. And not only are both versions printed with great care from two of the best extant copies in manuscript, but a large number of different readings found in other manuscripts are appended in footnotes.

To give the reader some idea of the alterations made by Purvey on Wyclif and Hereford's version of the Bible, one or two sentences, printed in parallel columns, shall here be cited from

the original (1380) and the revised (1388) versions respectively. And, as the later version of the New Testament had long been mistaken for the earlier, it may be premised that one means of determining the question of priority is furnished in the prologue prefixed by Purvey to the version of 1388. The true principle of translation, Purvey says, is "to translate after the sentence, and not oneli after the wordis, so that the sentence be as open (or openere) in English as in Latin, and go not fer fro the lettre: and if the lettre mai not be suid (*i.e.*, followed) in the translating, let the sentence euere be hool and open." Many Latin forms of expression he accordingly thought should be resolved into their equivalent English forms, even although a change of grammatical structure should be necessitated. He would not, for instance, always render a Latin participle by an English participle, or a relative pronoun in Latin by a relative pronoun in English. "A participle of a present tens . . . may be resolved into a verb of the same tens, and a conjuncion copulatif . . . and a relatif may be resolved into his antecedent with a conjuncion copulatif." Purvey's version of Wyclif's Bible may thus be distinguished from the original version by its freer rendering of Latin participles and Latin relatives. To bring out this distinction there shall be given, in a separate column between the earlier and later renderings, the corresponding passages from the Vulgate as now commonly printed. The words italicised will indicate the distinctive phraseology of the two versions:—

WYCLIF AND HEREFORD, 1380.	VULGATE.	PURVEY'S REVISION, 1388
Acts xxi., v. 2.—And whanne we founden a schip passage over into Fenyse, wi <i>stizynge</i> up, schippiden (or <i>sciliden</i> )*.	Acts xxi., v. 2.—Et cum invenissemus navem trans-fretantem in Phoenicen, <i>ascendentes</i> navigavimus.	Acts xxi., v. 2.—And whanne we founden a schip passynge ouer to fenyce we <i>zoenten</i> up <i>into it</i> , and saileden forth.
v. 5.—And the days <i>ful-filled</i> , we <i>goinge forth</i> <i>zoenten</i> , alle men with wyues and fre children <i>ledinge</i> forth us til to withoute the citee; and the knees <i>putt</i> in the see brynke, we preiden.	v. 5.—Et <i>expletis diebus, profecti</i> ibamus, <i>deducentibus</i> nos omnibus cum uxori-bus et filiis usque foras civitatem: et <i>positis</i> geni-bus in litore, oravimus.	v. 5.—And whanne the dayis <i>weren filled</i> : we zeden forth, and alle men with wyues and children <i>ledden</i> forth us withouten the citee, and we <i>kneliden</i> in the sea brynke and preiden.
Gen. xli., v. 43.—And	Gen. xli., v. 43.—Fecit	Gen. xli., v. 43.—And

\* The letter *z* in Wyclif's Bible is either silent or pronounced like *y*, and *u* is often pronounced like *z*.

made him steyz upon his secound chaar, *cryynge a bedel*, that alle men shoulde bifore hym knele, and they shoulde wite hym to be prouest to all the loond of Egypte.

Numbers xxiv., v. 1.— And whanne Balaam hadde seen that he schulde plesse to the Lord for to bless to Ysrael, he wente not as he wente bifore, for to seke dyuyninge, but *dressynge* his chere agens the deseert, and *arerynge* the eyen, saw Israel in the tentis dwellynge bi her lynagis. And the spirit of God *fallynge* into hym, *takun to* a parable, seith,

que eum ascendere super currum suum secundum, *clamante praecone*, ut omnes coram eo genu flecterent, et praepositum esse scirent universae terrae Aegypti.

Nom. xxiv., v. 1.— Cumque vidisset Balaam quod placeret Domino ut benediceret Israel nequaquam abiit ut ante perrexerat, ut augurium quaereret: sed *dirigens* contra desertum vultum suum, et *elevans oculos*, vidit Israel in tentoriis commorantem per tribus suas: et *irruente* in se spiritu Dei, *assumpta* parabola, ait,

Farao made Joseph to stie on his secounde chare, *while a bidele criede*, that alle men schulden knele bifore hym, and schulden knowe that he was souereyn of al the loond of Egypt.

Numbers xxiv., v. 1.— And whanne Balaam siz that it pleside the Lord that he schulde blesse Israel, he gede not as he hadde go bifore, that he schulde seke fals dyvynyng, bi chiteryng of briddis, but *he dresside* his face agens the desert, and *reiside* izen, and siz Israel dwellynge in tentis bi hise lynagis, And *whanne* the spirit of God *felde* on hym, And *whanne* a parable was taken, he saide,

The above passages shew that both the original version of the Bible by Wyclif and Hereford, and the version revised by Purvey are written in very antiquated English.<sup>1</sup> It is not the oldest form of English, however, but what is technically termed Middle English.

Even in the later of the two versions, which is the one that specially claims our consideration, because it was the ultimate

<sup>1</sup> In both editions of Wyclif's Bible, notes or explanations are here and there incorporated with the text, but printed with different type. In the first edition, few notes are found in the part translated by Hereford, but a considerable number in the New Testament, which was translated by Wyclif himself. Purvey rather high-handedly reversed this arrangement, inserting notes where previously there had been none, and abolishing the notes where they had formerly been. The following two examples will give the reader a general notion of the nature of the glosses inserted by Purvey. "If he cometh to me, *that is bi his grace*. Y schal not see hym: if he goith away, *that is, in withdrawynge his grace*. Y schall not undirstonde."—Job, ix., 11. "Fatnesse, *that is, pride comyng forth of temporal aboundance*, hilde his face, *that is, the knowynge of undirstandyng*, and outward fatnesse hangith doun of his sidis."—Job., xv., 27. The following quotations will shew on the other hand what kind of glosses in the first edition were expunged from the second. "Forsothe in the oon of the saboth, *that is, of the woke*, mary mawdeleyn cam erly, whanne derknessis weren zit, at the grave. And she syz the stoon turned azen fro the grave."—John, xx., 1. "Therefore god schal sende to hem a worching of errour, that thei bileue to leesyng, *or gablyng*, that all be demyd, *or dampnyed*, the whiche bileuden to treuthe, but consentiden to wickidnesse."

form that Wyclif's Bible assumed, and it superseded the earlier edition, the grammatical structure of the language is very peculiar. Both verbs and nouns are differently inflected from what they are now. Prepositions are used in unfamiliar senses, and in strange combinations. Interrogations are indicated in ways we are not accustomed to; and inexperienced readers are as much bewildered as amused by the eccentric spelling and the still more eccentric applications of pronouns. At the present day most nouns end with *s* in the plural. A few, however, such as *men*, *women*, *children*, *oxen*, have their plural number indicated by the termination *en*.<sup>1</sup> In the days of Wyclif and Purvey, *en* was a more common sign of the plural. In Purvey's version of the Bible we find *been* for *bees*; *kien* for *cows*; *izen* for *eyes*; and *lambren* for *lambs*. And *en* was a much more frequent termination of verbs, than of nouns, in the plural. It was, in fact, the usual termination of verbs that followed a plural nominative. The verbs *did*, *seide*, *found*, *fled*, *went*, *blamed*, *believed*, were all, when attached to a plural nominative, changed into *diden*, *seiden*, *founden*, *fledden*, *wenten*, *blameden*, *believeden*. A passage that exhibits this peculiarity in the inflexion of verbs very clearly and fully, is the account by St. Matthew of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem: "The disciplis *sedden* and *didden* as Jesus commanded hem, and thei *brousten* an asse and the fole, and *leiden* her clothis on hem, and *maden* hym sitte aboue, and ful myche puple *streweden* her clothis in the way, other *kittiden* braunchis of trees, and *strewen* in the wey, and the puple that *wenten* before and that *sueden*, *crieden* and *seiden*, osanna to the sone of Dauith." Of frequent occurrence, also, are such verbal inflexions as the following:—"mai not be *undo*" (undone); "hath *bore* (born) a son"; "thei han *take* (taken) away my Lord"; "Moses *fley*" (was afraid); "wolde haue *slawe*"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the earlier version of Wyclif's Bible we find *kneen* for *knees* (Gen. xxx., v. 3); and, on the other hand, *axis* for *oxen*; "I shall offre to thee *axis* with buckis of geet" (Ps. lvi., v. 15).

<sup>2</sup> Other inflexions similar to *fley* and *slawe* may be found in the earlier (1380) version of Wyclif's Bible. In Isaiah, xliv. 19, we read, "I *hook* (baked) upon his coles *boeues*" (loaves), and in 2 Sam., xxii. 8, "smyten and *squat*" (squeezed).

(slain); "what art thou *to doynge?*" (Acts, xxii. 26,—"*quid acturus es?*"—(Vulg.) "what are thou going to do?"); "if thou haddest *be* (been) here, my brother hadde not *be* (bcen) dead." Very odd, again, appears<sup>1</sup> to be the sense in which some of the commonest prepositions are used:—"In the bigynnyng was the word and the word was *at* god." . . . "Dare ony of zou that hath a cause azens another be demed *at* wicked men, and not *at* holi men." . . . "Have pacience *in* me, and I schal zelde to thee alle thingis." . . . "If we to day be demed *in* the gode deed *of* a sike man, *in* whom this man is made saaf." . . . "In that tyme, ihesus wente *bi* cornes *in* the Saboth dai." . . . "The word of the Lord was sowun *bi* (throughout) all the countrey." . . . "It bihofte him to passe *bi* samarie." . . . "Thei schuln dampne hym *bi* deeth." . . . "We stonen thee not *of* gode werke, but *of* blasfemy." . . . "This is the werke of god that ye bileue *to* hym whom he sente." Some prepositions, too, appear to be used interchangeably, and without any regard to rhythm or reason. In one sentence we read, "thou schalt loue thi lord god *of* al thin herte and *in* al thin soule;" and in another sentence, "whoever swerith *bi* the temple of god it is nothing, but he that swerith *in* the gold of the temple is dettour." In a verse already quoted in this paragraph, it would be noticed how oddly some of the pronouns are spelt. *Their* is uniformly spelt *her*, and *them*, *hem*. We find such combinations, too, as *hem silf* for *themselves*, and *us silf* for *ourselves*.

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<sup>1</sup> I only say "*appears* to be the sense," because in almost all the cases referred to in this and the following sentences, the seemingly odd prepositions used by Wyclif and Purvey are literal translations of the Latin words in the Vulgate:—"The word was *at* God," (John, i. 1) *apud* Deum; "*In* the good deed *of* a sick man," (Acts, iv. 9) *in* benefacto *hominis* infirmi; "Stone thee not *of* gode werke, but *of* blasfemy," (John, x. 33) *de* bono opere non lapidamus te, sed *de* blasphemia; "*Of* all thine heart, and *in* all thine soul," (Mat., xxii. 37) *ex* toto corde tuo, et *in* tota anima; etc. In Beza's Latin translation of the New Testament most of these prepositions are changed. "*Apud* Deum" remains; but "*in* benefacto *hominis*" is turned into "*super* beneficio *in* hominem;" "*de* bono opere," and "*de* blasphemia" are altered into "*ob* bonum opus" and "*ob* blasphemiam;" and in Mat., xxii. 37, the preposition "*ex*" is continued all through the sentence.

But the application of the pronouns is more remarkable. At the present day there are many anomalies in the use of pronouns. Sailors, from a feeling of affection to the frail vessel in which they skim the main, speak endearingly of a *ship* or boat as *she* or *her*; and west highlanders may occasionally be heard applying *it* and *itself* to a venerated laird or a respected minister of the gospel. In Wyclif's Bible, *he* and *it*, and *him* and *it*, are used very indiscriminately: the one pronoun in a verse, say, of St. Matthew's Gospel, and the other in the corresponding verse of St. Mark's or St. Luke's Gospel. And some applications of pronouns, which in Wyclif's day were reckoned quite orthodox in the guild of letters, have a somewhat ludicrous effect now. In St. Matthew's Gospel we read, "if thy rizt ize sclaudre thee, pull *hym* out and cast fro thee . . . and if thi rizt hond sclaudre thee kitte *hym* away and cast fro thee, for it spedith to thee that oon of thi membris perische, thanne that al thi bodi go in to helle." The gospel of St. John concludes in like manner:—"there ben also many other thingis that ihesus dide, whiche if thei ben writun bi eche bi *hym* silf, I deme that the world *hym* silf schal not take tho bokis that ben to be writun."

As might be expected, there occur in both of the Wyclifite versions many words that are widely different from those we find in the same passages in our modern translations. In some instances we meet with words that are now obsolete, and in other instances we find words whose meaning has undergone considerable change. Sometimes proper names are translated by their English equivalents, and sometimes they are left untranslated; occasionally ecclesiastical terms of technical meaning are introduced, as if to furnish Scriptural authority for certain foregone conclusions.

Of obsolete words the store in both versions of Wyclif's Bible is inexhaustible. To begin with Purvey's version: a word that meets our eye in the first chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel is *clepid*, which means called or named, and in the course of the New Testament this word occurs times without number. We read of "ihesus that is clepid Crist" . . . "poul the seruant of ihesus Crist, clepid an apostle," . . . "thilke that he bifor

ordeyned to bliss, hem he clepid, and whiche he clepid hem he justified." For "mill" the word *querne* is used, as in the passage, "twein wymmen schulen ben gryndyng in o querne, oon schal be taken and the tother left." For "ascendeth" we find *stieth*; as in the verse,—“No man stieth into heaven but he that cam doun from heaven.” An archaic expression that stands for “this deceiver” is *thilk gilour*, and an obsolete Anglo-Latin substitute for “the river Jordan” is *the flum Jordan*. More than once the expression “ful wood” occurs:—“Two men metten hym that hadden deuils, and camen out of graves full wood (exceeding fierce), so that no man might go bi that way.” “Poul, thou maddist, many letters turn thee to woodnesse.” A strange word that we meet with in the parable of the prodigal son is *croude*:—“Whanne he (the elder son) cam and nized to the hous, he herde a symfonye and a croude.” This does not mean that along with the players on instruments there was a roaring rabble at the house. The *croude* was a kind of guitar or violin, or rather a combination of both, with four bow strings and two thumb strings. Another word that has long passed out of Queen's English is *birle*, in the sense of “cause to drink” or “ply with drink.” In the authorised version of the prophecies of Jeremiah we read: “Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me: Take the wine cup of this fury at my hands, and cause all the nations to whom I send thee to drink it.” The latter clause of this command is concisely and pithily rendered by Purvey “thou schal *birle* thereof to alle hethene men.” Another obsolete word in the later version of Wyclif's Bible is “chepyng,” which means market-place:—“He seide to hem in his techyng, be ze ware of scribis, that wolen wandre in stolis (long robes) and be salutid in chepyng.” And this incidental use of the word *wander* suggests another passage, which for its quaintness as well as the obsolescence of some of its terms, may well be quoted. It is the account of the cure of the cripple who sat at the gate of the temple begging alms:—“In the name of ihesus of nazareth, (said Peter) rise thou up and go: and he took him by the rizt hond and *heued* him up, and anoon his leggis and his feet wren *soudid* to gidre, and he leppid and stode and *wandrid*,

and he entrid with hem in to the temple and *wandrid*, and *leppid*, and *heried* God." The common designation now-a-days of those that devote themselves to the cure of the sick and infirm is physician, but in the days of Wyclif and Purvey another word, apt to be misapprehended by modern readers, was in use. This was leech.<sup>1</sup> We read, accordingly, in one passage of Purvey's Bible:—"Leche, hele thi silf," and in another, "hoole men han no nede to a leche, but thei that ben yuel at ease." This is very primitive diction, but still more quaint, both in its tenderness and alliteration, is the announcement,—"luk the leche, moost deare, and demas, greet you wel." A word that has a place in Wyclif's vocabulary, and still survives in some of the local dialects of Scotland is *shog*. It is not a very refined term, and would be voted out of place in the House of Commons. It is introduced, however, with considerable effect into the narrative of Christ's walking on the sea:—"Whanne the euenynge was come he was there (on the hill) alone, and the boot in the myddil of the see was *schoggid*<sup>2</sup> with wawis." Another antiquated expression, very concise, but not very precise, that we find in Purvey's version is "dalf,<sup>3</sup> a lake." This is what our modern translators with more regard for details have rendered "dugged a place for the wine fat." Some of the obsolete words in Purvey's Bible are words whose desuetude is much to be lamented, and others are words that can be spared, without either loss or regret, from the vocabulary of living English. For the long, cumbrous adjective, *unleavened*, we have in Purvey's Bible the neat, tidy little term *therf*, as in Luke xxii., v. 1,— "the halidai of the therf loues, that is seide (called) pask nyzed;" and in Acts xx., v. 6,

<sup>1</sup> The physician did not, because of his penchant for blood-letting, get the cognomen of *leech* from the reptile, but the reptile got its name of *leech* from the physician, because, like him, it healed those that were "yuel at ease." The English word leech or leche is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *læce*, one who heals.—*Skeat's Dict.*

<sup>2</sup> Shog is often used as an intransitive verb, in the sense of move off, by English writers of no great antiquity. More than once it occurs in Shakespeare's play of Henry V. "Will you shog off? . . . I would have you solus."—*Act 2, scene 1.*

<sup>3</sup> A literal translation of the words in the Vulgate, "fodit lacum."



"we schippiden aftir the daies of therf looues fro filippis." But, on the other hand, the word *leaven*, suggestive of spiritual influences, and interesting on that account, is personated in Purvey's Bible by the vile, realistic compound "sourdough," so that we read of "the kyngdom of heuene (being) like to sourdough, which a womman took and hid in thre mesuris of mele til it were al sourid." A very sorry and unhappy account, surely, of the effects of Christianity on the world!

A small class of obsolete words found in both editions of Wyclif's Bible are verbs derived from adjectives. These often enabled a writer to express his meaning very briefly and tersely, and sometimes very happily and daintily. The word *nigh*, for instance, is often used as a verb in Wyclif's Bible. "Whanne he *nyzed*, he siz the cite and wepte on it, and seide, for if thou haddist knowen thou schuldist wepe also."—Luke, xix., 41. A similar use was made of the words *high* and *low*. "Eche that enhauncith hym schal be *lowed*, and he that *mekith* hym shall be *hizid*."—Luke, xiv., 11.

The following among other obsolete words will also be found in Purvey's edition of Wyclif's Bible:—*Alie*, father-in-law (A. V.)—Exodus, xviii., 5, (ally); *aseeth*, contentment or satisfaction.—Mark, xv., 15; *arerid*, lifted up.—Mark, i., 31; *atwynny*, asunder.—Acts, xv., 39; *biclippid*, embraced.—Acts, xx., 10; *biggeris*, buyers.—Mark, xi., 15; *bouge*, bottle.—Ps., lxxviii., 13; *stonen cannes*, pitchers.—John, ii., 6; *bie*, a necklace.—Prov., i., 9; *burionone*, to germinate, "buriowne at the odour of water and . . . make heer" (hair, foliage).—Job viii., 9; *calue*, bald, "a man whos heed heeris fleter awei is calu and clene."—Lev., xiii., 40; *cardue*, thistle.—2 Kings, xiv., 9; *chaffare*, trade.—Luke, xix., 13; *colle*, embrace, "tyme to colle, and tyme to be far fro collyngis."—Eccles., iii., 5; *critouns*, "refuse of frying pan." *Skeat*,—Ps., cii., 3; *cosynes*, kinsmen.—Acts, x., 24; *clerensse*, praise or honour.—John, v., 41; *cacchepollis*, serjeants.—Acts, xvi., 35; *culuer*, dove.—John, i., 32; *coddis*, husks.—Luke, xv., 16; *cracche*, manger.—Luke, ii., 7; *deidli men*, mortal.—Acts, xiv., 15; *disciplesse*, a woman that believed in Jesus Christ.—Acts, ix., 36; *fardels*, baggage.—1 Sam., xvii., 22; *felli*, craftily, "thei thouzten felli." Josh., ix., 4; *fouued*, foolish.—1 Cor., i., 20; *grees*, stairs.—Acts, xxi., 40; *hoose*, hoarse, "my cheekis weren maad hoose."—Ps., lxix., 3; *irchons*, hedgehogs.—Ps., civ., 18; *jewlich*, as the Jews.—Gal., ii., 14; *lesewis*, pasture.—John, x., 9; *male ese*, sickness.—Mat. iv., 24; *mynutis*, mites.—Mark, xii., 42; *moistide*, watered.—1 Cor., iii., 6; *mysturne*, pervert.—Gal., i., 7; *neisch*, soft or slack, (mollis, Vulgate) "he that is neisch and unstedfast in his werk."—Prov., xviii., 9; *feyned*, punished.—Acts, xxii., 5; *purpuresse*, woman that sells purple.—Acts, xvi., 14; *rue*, repent, "The Lord swoor and it schal not *rewe* him.—Heb., vii., 21; *snapeve*, to stumble.—Prov., iii., 23; *seyn*, pleasant or agreeable.—Acts, xv., 28; *sege*, scat or throne.—Mat., xxv., 31; *soler*, upper room.—Acts, i., 13; *sopun*,

swallowed.—1 Cor., xv., 54; *sort*, lot.—Acts, viii., 21; *sonking fere*, foster brother.—Acts, xiii., 1; *sweuencs*, dreams.—Acts, ii., 17; good *thewis*, good manners or resolutions.—1 Cor., xv., 33; *thirsten*, press or throng.—Mark, iii., 9; *tristili*, boldly.—Acts, xviii., 26; *unbileful*, incredible.—Acts, xxvi., 8; *unconuen-able*, profane.—1 Tim., iv., 7; *underfongen*, received.—Gal., i., 9; *ver*, cup or glass.—Prov., xxiii., 31; *yreue*, spider, "His trist schal be as a web of yrene."—Job viii., 14.

Most of the foregoing obsolete words, which are taken from Purvey's edition of Wyclif's Bible, are doubtless to be found in the earlier version also, although not always in the same book and chapter. For instance, where we read in the later version, "*chaffare* ye till I come," we read in the earlier, "merchaundise ye till I come." Instead of being called "the *alie*," Jethro, in the earlier version, is designated the "cosyne" of Moses. Most of the obsolete words, however, that have been quoted in the foregoing paragraphs, from the later version of Wyclif's Bible, will be found somewhere in the earlier version. And there are many very antiquated words in the first version which do not appear in the corresponding passages of the second. An expression that may often be heard at the present day, and which probably is used by many people who are ignorant of its meaning, is *scot free*. It is perhaps not necessary to say that *scot* in this connection has nothing to do with Scotsman, but there are probably some persons who reckon themselves not ill-educated, that need to be told it means assessment or contribution. In olden times, when people sat together in a tavern, they had to give their *scot* to the reckoning. And in this sense the word is used in the earlier version of Wyclif's Bible. <sup>1</sup> "Thei tendende to drinkis, and zivende scot shul ben wastid." Another word that may still be heard, where slang is spoken, is *buffer*. What its precise import is in modern speech need not be discussed, but it doubtless conveys a vague idea of reproach and contempt. Although, however, it is only in degenerate speech that the word is heard now, it had once a place in the English Bible. Its ancient meaning was stutterer or stammerer, and it occurs in the earlier of the Wyclif versions, at the fourth verse of the thirty-second chapter of Isaiah:—"The tunge of bufferes swiftli shal speke." A quaintly expressed verse in

<sup>1</sup> In later version, "zyuyngge mussels togedre," (giving morsels together).

Hereford's translation is 2 Sam. xiv. 26—"The more that he (Absolom) *doddied* the heeris, so mych more thei wexen, forsothe onys in the year he was *doddied*, for the heere heuyde hym." Very graphic and plain-spoken, too, although somewhat coarse, is the title that Hereford bestows on enchanters, and persons of a kindred order, "*deuel-cleperes*," or invokers of Satan. Two things he represents the prophets to say shall come on the destroyers of Israel, in one moment—widowhood and loss of children—"They shall come upon thee, O Babylon and Chaldea, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for 'the huge hardness of thi *deuel-cleperes*,'"—Is., xlvi., 9. And speaking of coarse, or so-called coarse expressions, it may here be remarked that while indirect and allusive language is one of the forms in which modern refinement displays its delicacy of feeling, that art does not seem to have been mastered, if even studied, by Wyclif and Hereford. These reformers spoke bluntly, and called things by their proper names.<sup>1</sup> And we may be quite certain that their moral and religious sentiments were as pure and exalted as are those of men who now talk with greater excellency of speech and wisdom.

Among other obsolete words in the earlier version of Wyclif's Bible, the following may be mentioned:—*anyte*, vesture.—Heb., i., 12; *armaries*, chronicles. Ezra, iv., 15; *biys*, white silk.—Luke, xvi., 19; *bob*, to jeer, "I am afraid of the Jews . . . lest . . . thei bobbe to me."—Jer. xxxviii., 19; *bugle*, a wild ox.—Deut., xiv., 5; *childide*, brought forth a child, "she childide her firste born sone."—Luke, ii., 7; *cleen*, hoofs or heels, "bitynge the cleen of an hors."—Gen., xlix., 17; *crockere*, potter.—Ps., ii., 9; *costrils*, vessels for holding water.—Ruth, ii., 9; *croote*, what Purvey terms *critouns*.—Ps., cii., 3; *culture*, knife, "set a culture in thi throte."—Prov., xxiii., 2; *dymes*, tenths or tythes.—Gen., xiv., 20; *eggiden*, provoked.—Deut., xxxii., 16; *em*, uncle's son (A. V.), "ananeel the sone of myn em."—Jer., xxxii., 9; *festu*, a small piece of wood, a twig, "seest thou a festu in the eize of thi brother."—Mat. vii., 3; *flotereth*, "flotereth and wagereth," rock and stagger.—Is., xxix., 9; *fulfattid*, *fulgresid*, fat and gross, (*incrassatus*, *impinguatus*, Vulg.)—Deut., xxxii., 15; *garringe*, chiding, "garringe to us with yuale wordis.—3 John, 10; *gab*, "before God I lie not, or gabbe not."—Gal. i., 20; *keetling*, whelp, "Dan, keetling of a lyon."—Deut., xxxiii., 22; *loute*, bow down.—Gen., xxxvii., 7; *obite*, death.—Gen., xxvi., 11; *oker*, give on loan for interest, "he shal oker to thee."—Deut., xxviii., 44; *plaag*, district, "the

<sup>1</sup> One sentence of even more than Doric plainness in the earlier version of Wyclif is 1 Samuel, v., 9:—"He smoot the men of ech cytee fro litil unto more, and the *arrroppis* of hem goynge out stonken: and gethey wenten into counseil and maden to hem letheran sectis."

cest plage of Eden."—Gen., iv., 16; *poos*, peacocks.—2 Chron., ix., 21; *routeʒh*, snoreth, (stertit, Vulg., snorteth, Donay Bible) "he that 'routeʒh in somer' is a son of confusion."—Prov., x., 5; *raskeyl*, the common people, "of the puple <sup>1</sup> seuenti men, and fifti thousandis of the raskeyl," (*porail*, Purvey)—1 Sam., vi., 19; *sparlyvers*, calves of legs.—Deut., xxviii., 35; *stellion*, "a stellion, that is, a werme depeynted as with steris."—Lev., xi., 30; *stithie*, an anvil, "streyned as the stithie of an hamer betere."—Job., xli., 24; *twisil*, double, "the mouth of the twisil tunge I wlate."—Prov., viii., 13; *tretable*, (ad *tractabilem* montem, et *accensibilem* igneum, Vulgate), "ze han not come to the tretable fyer."—Heb., xii., 18; *walkere*, fuller.—Mark, ix., 3; *withies*, willows, (seven green *withs*.—Judges, xvi., 7, A. V.), "In withies in the myddes of it, wee heengen up our instrumens."—Ps. cxxxvii., 2; *wonyng*, habitation, "cite of wonyng."—Ps., cvii., 7; *warysshit*, protected (munitum, Vulg.)—2 Samuel, xxiii., 5.

Of words not strictly obsolete, but used in an obsolete sense, many interesting examples might, without difficulty, be culled from both versions of Wyclif's Bible. Confining ourselves in the mean time to the later of the two versions, we find the word *chimney*, which in modern parlance means the flue or vent of a fire place, used by Purvey for furnace:—"In the endyng of the world, aungelis schulen goen out, and schulen departen yuel men fro the myddil of just men, and schulen sende hem in to the *chymeney* of fier." It will be seen, too, that in the sentence just quoted the word *departen* is used in the peculiar sense of separate or divide. This is a very common usage in Wyclif's Bible:—"Eche kyngdom *departid* azens itself schal be desolat, and eche citie or hous *departid* azens itsilf schal not stonde." And so also the word "avoid" is used, not in the sense of shun or evade, but in the sense of make void or destroy:—"It is good to me," Paul writes, "rather to die thanne that ony man *avoid* my glorie." The word "defamed," which at the present day means slandered or reviled, is by Purvey employed in the harmless sense of published or proclaimed:—"Se ye" (said Jesus) "that no man wite; but thei zeden out and *defameden* hym thoruz all that land." This untoward generation is, in like manner, strangely described as "this *schrewid* generacioun": unlearned and ignorant men are termed "unlettered and *lewid* men": nations are designated *folks*; Bethany, the town of

<sup>1</sup> The word rendered "puple" is in the Vulgate, *populus*, and the word rendered "raskeyl" or "porail" is *plebs*.

Mary and her sister Martha, is dignified into "bethanie, the *castel* of marie and martha": and the fields into which the prodigal son was sent to feed swine are called a *town*. The word "sad," again, is used repeatedly in the sense of strong or sure, as in the verses:—"We *sadder* men owen to susteyne the febleness of sike men": and—"We han a *sadder* word of profecie." The adverb "rather" occurs as the comparative of an old adjective *rathe*, which meant early or soon, as in the statement: "If the world hatith you, wite ye that it hadde me in hate *rather* thanne zou." And so, also, the composite term "fulfilled" is, with a somewhat odd effect, substituted for "filled full," as in the oft-quoted verse: "Eche man settith first good wyne, and whanne men ben *fulfilled*, thanne that that is worse." Another word frequently used in an odd connection is "science," in the sense of knowledge; as in Luke i. 77—"the science of helth," instead of "the knowledge of salvation"; and in Eph. iii. 19—"the charite of Crist more excellent thanne science," instead of "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." In several places again, where in modern translations of the Bible the term *goods* occurs, the word "catel" appears in Wyclif's version; as in Luke xv. 11-12—"a manne hadde tweie sones, and the yunger of hem seide to the fadir, fadir geve me the porscioun of *catel* that falleth to me, and he departid to hem the *catel*;" and in Luke viii. 43—"a womman hadde a fluxe of blood twelve yeer, and had spendid al her *catel* in leechis, and she myght not be curid of ony." Incurable disease is, of course, suggestive of death; and closely associated to us with death is *coffin*. This is a word by which Englishmen at the present day mean and signify the chest in which a corpse is enclosed and conveyed to burial. Etymologically, however, it simply means a basket; and in this sense it occurs more than once in the later version of Wyclif's Bible.<sup>1</sup> In the account of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, as related in the fourteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, it is said that "alle eten and weren fulfilled, and thei token the relefis of brokun

<sup>1</sup> "He turnede awei his bak fro birthens: hise hondis serueden in a *coffyn*." Ps. lxxxi. 6—"had served in *baskets*"—Douay Bible; "were freed from the basket"—*Revised Version*, 1885.

gobeitis twelve *cofyngs ful*." But, although coffins were baskets, all baskets were not coffins. In the Greek language there are two words for basket, *kophinos* and *spuris*. In the Latin Vulgate these words are translated respectively *cophinus* and *sporta*; and these Latin words are by Wyclif and Purvey rendered in English *coffin* and *lepe*. Strange to say, *kophinos* is the name given by all the evangelists to the baskets that were filled after the feeding of the five thousand men; and *spuris* to the baskets that were filled after the feeding of the four thousand. In Purvey's version of Wyclif's Bible, we, therefore, read, Mat. xvi. 9-10,—“Undirstonden not ze nether han mynde of fyue loues in to fyue thousand of men, and hou many *cofyngs* ze token. Nether of seuene looues in foure thousand of men, and hou many *lepus* ze token?” In the hasty and secret deposition of St. Paul from the wall of Damascus, it was a *spuris*, and not a *kophinos* that was employed; and he is said, therefore, to have been let down “in a lepe.” One other word of which a very curious use is made by Wyclif and Purvey, and, it may be added, by Tyndale and Coverdale, also, is the word *minister*. In Scotland, the common ecclesiastical meaning of “minister” is priest or pastor; and although Scots ministers have ever, since the days of Knox and Melville, laid claim to the exclusive power of what are termed *the keys*, the innocent public never surmised that it was the keys of the jail they insisted on wearing at their belts. To the simple reader, Wyclif and Purvey may seem to throw doubt on this matter, for in their version of the Sermon on the Mount it is said: “Be thou consentynge to thin adversarie sone, while thou art in the weye with hym, leest perauenture thin adversarie take thee to the domesman, and the domesman take the to the *mynystre*, and thou be sent into prisoun.”

The following are a few more of the words used by Purvey in an obsolete sense: *abood*, waited for, “he abood the rewme of God”—Mark xv. 43; *borde*, bank, (which etymologically is *bench*), as in the parable of the talent, “why hast thou not zounn my money to the *borde*, and I comynge schulde haue axed it with usuris”—Luke xix. 23; *briggid*, shortened, “the lord schal make a word briggid on alle the erthe.”—Rom. ix. 28; *disese*, care, “disese of the world . . . entrith and stranglith the word.”—Mark iv. 19; *duyk*, governor, Mat. ii. 6; *fetele*, fix, “in his hondis the fetching of tha nailis.”—John xx. 25; *foond*, maintained or supported,

"resceyued us bi thre dayes benyngli and foond us."—Acts xxviii. 7; *knighthood*, host (militiae, Lat. Vulg.) "serue to the *knighthood* of heuene."—Acts vii. 42; *medelid*, mingled,—Mark xv. 23; *mysels*, lepers,—Mat. x. 8; *ostler*, innkeeper, "he brouzte forth tweie pens and zaf to the ostler, and seide, haue the cure of hym."—Luke x. 35; *profession*, census or taxing. "alle men wenten to make *profession* eche into his owne citee."—Luke ii. 3; *sermon*, treatise, "first I made a *sermoun* of alle thingis that ihesus began to do and to teche."—Acts i. 1; *studyes* (studia, Vulgate) ways or works, "telle ye hise studyes among hethen men."—Ps. ix. 11; *wed*, pledge,—Job. xxii. 6; *worschip*, honour, "my fadir schal worschip hym."—Johu xii. 26.

From the earlier edition of Wyclif's Bible other instances of familiar words used in senses that are now obsolete might with little difficulty be selected. The word *fable*, for instance, is generally considered to mean a story without any foundation in fact. But this is more than it means etymologically. The word literally signifies a spoken narrative, and in that original sense it is used in the first version of Wyclif's Bible. In our Church Testaments, we are accustomed to read, Luke xxiv. 15,—"it came to pass, that, while they *communed* together." In the Vulgate, from which Wyclif made his translation, this is latinised, "factum est, dum *fabularentur*," which Wyclif renders, "it was don the while thei talkiden or *fableden*." The word *comfort* is a word that at the present day is largely used as a verb, both in religious writings and in religious speeches; and, when so used, it invariably means to cheer or console. It is derived, however, from the same root as *force*, and it literally signifies to strengthen. In many passages where the word *strengthen* occurs in modern English Bibles (as in Luke i. 80, Acts ix. 19, Phil. iv. 13, Col. i. 11, 2 Tim. iv. 17), *confortare* is the corresponding term in the Latin Vulgate; and *confortare* is usually in Wyclif's Bible and Purvey's revision rendered by its English derivative *comfort*. We read, for instance, Luke i. 80, "the child wexed and was counfortid in spirit;" Acts ix. 19, "whanne he hadde take mete he was counfortid;" Phil. iv. 13, "I may alle thingis in hym that counfortith me." But, in the earlier edition of Wyclif's Bible the word *comfort* is used in a much more remarkable connection than any of those now instanced. It is said, in our authorised version of the Scriptures, Isaiah xli. 6-7—"They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said

to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheth with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the sodering; and he fastened it with nails that it should not be moved." Barring one clause, which is changed and made more relevant to the context in the Revised Version, 1885, this statement is very simply and clearly expressed. But the verse as originally rendered by Wyclif presents difficulties of interpretation that to plain English readers might seem well nigh insurmountable: "Eche to his nezhebore shal helpen, and to his brother seyn, Tac counfort. Counforten shal the metal smyth smytende him with an hamer that forgede that tyme, seiende to the glyu, It is good: and he *counfortide* hym *with nailes* that it shulde not be moved."<sup>1</sup> The word "stable," again, is a word that by long usage has been restricted to a house for horses. In the Latin language, *stabulum* generally bears the same meaning, but is sometimes used for an inn, or a place of entertainment for travellers. In the Vulgate, *stabulum* occurs in Luke x. 34, and *stabularius* in the verse following; and in the Rhemes Testament these words are rendered respectively *inn* and *host*; while in Purvey's edition of Wyclif's Bible they are translated *ostrie* and *ostler*. But in the original version of Wyclif's Bible they are rendered *stable* and *kepere of the stable*; and the passage reads—"He puttynge on his hors ledde in to a *stable*, and dide the cure of hym.<sup>2</sup> And another day he brouzte forth twey pens, and zaf to the *kepere of the stable*, and seide, Have thou the cure of him."

The following are also curious examples of common words used in a sense that is now obsolete. *Cristendom*, baptism, "buried with him bi cristendom in to deeth," Rom. vi. 4; *side*, long, "thei nakiden hym the *side* coote to the hele," Gen. xxxvii. 23; *waardropis*, privies (Purvey), jakes (Douay), draught house (Authorised), 2nd Kings x. 27.

<sup>1</sup> How literally Wyclif in this instance translated will be seen from the words in the Latin Vulgate, which are, "Unusquisque proximo suo auxiliabitur, et fratri suo dicit: *confortare*. *Confortavit* faber aerarius percutiens malleo eum, qui cudebat tunc temporis, dicens: Glutino bonum est: et *confortavit* eum clavis, ut non moveretur."

<sup>2</sup> The word *cure*, as used by Wyclif in this passage, is the representative of *cura* in the Vulgate, and means *care*, not restoration to health.