William Tindale

A Biography

Being a Contribution to the Early History

of the English Bible

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4 Bouverie Street; 65 St. Paul’s Churchyard, E.C.

1904

CHAPTER XII

TINDALE’S LIFE AT ANTWERP: REVISION OF  
THE NEW TESTAMENT: CONTROVERSY  
WITH GEORGE JOYE: SEIZED

A.D. 1533-1535­

FOR nearly two years Tindale seems to have remained quietly in Antwerp, watching the progress of events in his native land, busily engaged in literary labours, and filling up the intervals of leisure with that simple routine of holy and useful living which Foxe has so beautifully described, from the information of the merchant with whom Tindale chiefly resided.

‘He was,’ says Foxe, ‘a man very frugal and spare of body, a great student, an earnest labourer in the set­ting forth of the Scriptures of God. He reserved or hallowed to himself two days in the week, which he named his pastime, Monday and Saturday. On Monday he visited all such poor men and women as were fled out of England, by reason of persecution, into Ant­werp; and these, once well understanding their good exercises and qualities, he did very liberally comfort and relieve; and in like manner provided for the sick and diseased persons. On the Saturday he walked round about the town, seeking every corner and hole where he suspected any poor person to dwell; and where he found any to be well occupied, and yet over-burdened with children, or else were aged and weak, these also he plentifully relieved. And thus he spent his two days of pastime, as he called them. And truly his alms were very large, and so they might well be; for his exhibi­tion that he had yearly of the English merchants at Antwerp, when living there, was considerable; and that, for the most part, he bestowed upon the poor. The rest of the days of the week he gave wholly to his book, wherein he most diligently travailed. When the Sunday came, then went he to some one merchant’s chamber or other, whither came many other merchants, and unto them would he read some one parcel of Scrip­ture: the which proceeded so fruitfully, sweetly, and gently from him, much like to the writing of John the Evangelist, that it was a heavenly comfort and joy to the audience to hear him read the Scriptures; likewise, after dinner, he spent an hour in the same manner. He was a man without any spot or blemish of rancour or malice, full of mercy and compassion, so that no man living was able to reprove him of any sin or crime; although his righteousness and justification depended not thereupon before God, but only upon the blood of Christ, and his faith upon the same.’

It is evident from these words of the Martyrologist, that the vague assertion so frequently hazarded, that Tindale was the chaplain of the merchant adventurers in Antwerp, is quite without foundation. Many of the merchants were undoubtedly favourable to the doctrines of the Reformation; but at that time it was simply impossible that any person who had taken a prominent part in propagating the opinions of the Reformers could hold the *office* of chaplain. Lambert, whose opinions were far less developed than those of Tindale, had, as we have seen, been taken before Sir Thomas More on the charge of heresy; and it is quite evident that Tindale did not conduct any religious services in

Antwerp in an official capacity. Not improbably, in­deed, for a considerable period of his exile, Tindale had never known the happiness of publicly joining in the worship of God; ‘He sayeth no service at all,’ Sir Thomas More has asserted, ‘neither matins, evensong, nor mass, nor cometh at no church but either to gaze or talk;’[[1]](#footnote-1) and, making due allowance for controversial bitterness, the charge is probably in the main true. The Roman Catholic worship he was not likely to attend; in Antwerp no other was tolerated; and Tindale’s ministrations were evidently nothing more than a species of family devotional service.

Another popular error on this point may also be here rectified. It has been taken for granted that John Rogers, the proto-martyr of the Marian persecution, immediately succeeded Lambert as chaplain at Antwerp, that he was therefore contemporary with Tindale for some years in that city, and that he was a man entirely kindred in his opinions to the illustrious Translator. The truth is, however, that Rogers held a living in London till the month of October, 1534; and when he came to Antwerp as chaplain he was almost certainly no adherent of the cause of the Reformers; but, as even Foxe has remarked, ‘performed the sacred offices after the common custom of the idolaters [i.e. the Romanists] of the time.’[[2]](#footnote-2) Rogers could only have known Tindale for a few months before his imprisonment; but this brief acquaintance sufficed to make a deep impression on his mind. He seems to have succeeded in part to the place which Frith had previously occupied; he assisted Tindale in his literary labours; and to him was bequeathed, according to a tradition that has never been disputed, the honour of completing that great work to which Tindale had consecrated his life.

Vaughan also was again in Antwerp, and to his correspondence we are once more indebted for some not uninteresting gossip concerning Tindale and other refugees. He informs us, among other curious details, that Sir Thomas More, who had then fallen into dis­grace, had sent ‘oftentimes and lately to Antwerp,’ books to be distributed there, including *his Confutation of Tyndale,* and his *Answer to Fryth,* so anxious was the ex-Chancellor that his works should find readers[[3]](#footnote-3). Again, he informs Cromwell that it was reported in Antwerp that Tindale had been requested by the party in England opposed to the royal divorce to correct a treatise which had been composed against Henry’s marriage with Anne Boleyn, but that he ‘refused to do so, saying that he would no farther meddle in his Prince’s matter, nor would move his people against him, since it [the marriage] was done[[4]](#footnote-4): so that Tin­dale had probably begun to perceive that his opinions on the royal divorce had brought him into intercourse with strange companions.

After his settlement at Antwerp, Tindale seems to have returned with all his energy to his great work of completing and perfecting his translation of Holy Scrip­ture. For some time he had allowed himself to be withdrawn to other labours, which appeared to him indispensable; but, fortunately, his true work again occupied him in these last few months of his life.

In 1534, he reissued the Pentateuch, with some slight changes in the Book of Genesis, in the Prefaces, and in the appended explanatory tables; his engagements probably not allowing a more thorough revision at that time.

The great work of the year 1534, however, was the entire revision of his New Testament, and the issue of a second edition, which has been, not inappropriately, styled ‘Tyndale’s noblest monument.’ Since the first printing of the work at Worms it had been frequently reproduced, but never under Tindale’s superintendence. The original edition had been reprinted, but without any attempt to introduce any of those corrections which Tindale had promised in his ` Preface to the Reader,’ in his first issue; indeed, so far from being improved in these subsequent reprints, innumerable errors had been permitted to creep in from the ignorance of the foreign printers.

The history of the English Bible between the years 1526 and 1534 is still so badly ascertained that it cannot be given in detail; but on the whole we may accept, as probably coming near to the truth, the abstract given by one who has already been several times mentioned, and who will occupy a prominent place in this chapter—George Joye.

‘Thou shalt know that Tyndale, about eight or nine years ago [Joye is writing in December, 1534, or January, 1535], translated and printed the New Testament in a mean great volume [he means the octavo at Worms], but yet without Kalendar, Concordances in the margin, and Table in the end. And anon after, the Dutchmen got a copy, and printed it again in a small volume, adding the Kalendar in the beginning, Concor­dances [i.e. parallel passages] in the margin, and the Table in the end. But yet for that they had no Englishman to correct the setting, they themselves, having not the knowledge of our tongue, were com­pelled to make many more faults than were in the copy, and so corrupted the book that the simple reader might ofttimes be tarried and stick. After this they printed it again, also without a corrector, in a greater letter and volume, with the figures [woodcuts] in the Apocalypse, which was therefore much falser than their first. When these two prints (there were of them both about five thousand books printed), were all sold more than a twelvemonth ago[[5]](#footnote-5). Tyndale was pricked forth to take the Testament in hand, to print it and correct it as he professeth and promiseth to do in the latter end of his first translation. But Tyndale prolonged and deferred so necessary a thing and so just desires of many men in so much that in the mean season the Dutchmen printed it again the third time in a small volume like their first print, but much more false than ever it was before. And yet was Tyndale here called upon again, seeing there were so many false printed books still put forth, and bought up so fast; for now was there given, thanked be God, a little space to breathe and rest unto Christ’s Church, after so long and grievous persecution for reading the books [i. e. probably after the legislation of March, 1534]. But yet before this third time of printing the book, the printer desired me to correct it; and I said, “It were well done, if ye printed them again, to make them truer, and not to deceive our nation with any more false books; neverthe­less, I suppose that Tyndale himself will put it forth more perfect and newly corrected, which if he do, yours shall be nought set by, nor never sold.” This notwith­standing yet they printed them, and that most false, and about two thousand books, *and had shortly sold them all.* All this long while Tyndale slept, for no­thing came from him, as far as I could perceive. Then the Dutch began to print them the fourth time, because they saw no man else going about them; and after they had printed the first leaf, which copy another English man had corrected to them, they came to me and desired me to correct them their copies; when I an­swered as before, that, “if Tyndale amend it, with so great diligence as he promiseth, yours will be never sold.” “Yes,” quod they, for if he print two thousand, and we as many, what is so little a number for all England? and we will sell ours better cheap, and therefore we doubt not of the sale.” So that I per­ceived well and was sure that whether I had corrected their copy or not, they had gone forth with their work, and had given us two thousand more books falselier printed than ever we had before. Then I thus con­sidered with myself, England hath enough and too many false Testaments, and is now likely to have many more; yea, and that whether Tyndale correct his or no, yet shall these, now in hand, go forth uncorrected too, except somebody correct them; and what Tyndale doth I wot not, he maketh me nothing of his counsel; I see nothing come from him all this long while, wherein, with the help that he hath, that is to say, one both to write it and to correct it in the press, he might have done it thrice since he was moved to do it. For Tyndale I know well was not able to do it without such an helper, which he hath ever had hitherto.’[[6]](#footnote-6)

In short, Joye, at the urgent request of the printer, who was the widow of Christopher of Endhoven, under­took to correct the press for the extremely moderate remuneration of fourpence-halfpenny sterling for every sheet of sixteen leaves. It is probable, it is in fact certain, that Joye has omitted, through ignorance, some of the early surreptitious reprints of Tindale’s New Testament; but from his statement it is evident that besides Tindale’s own editions, four others had been issued previous to that which Tindale himself revised in November, 1534. Unfortunately, these surreptitious editions have not been identified;[[7]](#footnote-7) but we are probably not exaggerating when we suppose that on the average, every year since its first issue, a new edition had been printed and circulated in England. And it must be remembered that these editions were all reprints of the octavo of Worms, and that they were therefore without note or comment, containing simply the text of Holy Scripture in English, with references in the margin to parallel passages.

Some writers, anxious to find excuses for the authori­ties who prohibited the Bible and punished those that read it, allege that it contained offensive notes, which no authority, lay or clerical, could be expected to tolerate; but this is a total delusion, a defence of ancient bigotry by modern ignorance. It must not be forgotten, that what was prohibited, what was condemned, what was burnt, was the simple text of Holy Scripture, without any note, or comment, or prologue of any kind whatsoever.[[8]](#footnote-8) The Bible-burners of the sixteenth century would have repudiated with indignation the motives which *candid* moderns have been kind enough to invent for them. In their judgement the whole question was entirely free from those complications which modern refinement has introduced; and they pronounce their opinion with a plainness which at once supersedes all doubt.

‘The New Testament translated into the vulgar tongue,’ says one of the chief opponents of the Re­formers, ‘is in truth the food of death, the fuel of sin, the vail of malice, the pretext of false liberty, the protection of disobedience, the corruption of discipline, the depravity of morals, the termination of concord, the death of honesty, the well-spring of vices, the disease of virtues, the instigation of rebellion, the milk of pride, the nourishment of contempt, the death of peace, the destruction of charity, the enemy of unity, the murderer of truth!’[[9]](#footnote-9) That men who cherished such sentiments as these should proscribe and burn the Bible in the native tongue, was as natural as that men who dread contagion should burn all infected garments.

The narrative of Joye, which we have just quoted, was intended as a sort of explanation and defence of his conduct in issuing a revised reprint of Tindale’s New Testament, although he was well aware that Tindale himself had for some time been occupied in a careful revision and correction of his own work. Joye, indeed, took care not to connect Tindale’s name with his edition; but it was undeniably little more than a reprint of Tindale’s, with a few changes intro­duced. These, moreover, were made without any attempt to confer the translation with the original Greek, a task for which Joye’s scholarship was wholly inadequate. He himself acknowledges that he merely ‘mended’ any words that he found falsely printed, and that when he ‘came to some dark sentences that no reason could be gathered of them, whether it was by the ignorance of the first translator or of the printers,’ he had ‘the Latin text’ by him, and ‘made it plain.’ In fact, the work had no pretension whatever to be considered an original production, and was simply such a plagiarism as any modern laws of copyright would interdict or punish. It was ushered into the world with a pompous and affected title; ‘The New Testament as it was written and caused to be written by them which heard it, whom also our Saviour Christ Jesus commanded that they should preach it unto all creatures’; and the colophon paraded it as ‘dili­gently over-seen and corrected.’ Not much diligence, however, could be expected for fourpence-halfpenny a sheet; and although the printers did their part well (for the work is got up with remarkable neatness), Joye’s diligence seems to have been in proportion to the smallness of his remuneration.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The changes which he has introduced are few in number, of the very smallest possible consequence, never in any case suggested by the original Greek, and probably not in a single instance effecting any improvement either in the accuracy or the clearness of the version which he thus presumed to correct. In the three chapters of St. Matthew, for example, which contain the Sermon on the Mount, he only ventures to make *eight* changes in two of them he is certainly wrong; in a third he has mistaken the meaning of Tindale; in a fourth he has misunderstood the sense of the original; a fifth is a per­missible variation in the rendering of a participle; and the remaining three are grammatical trifles, such as the substitution of *shall* for *will, into* for *to.* This may probably be taken as a fair specimen of Joye’s work, which scarcely aspires beyond the province of an ordi­nary corrector of the press, and, except in one respect, was, with all its pretensions, simply a barefaced reprint of Tindale’s Testament.[[11]](#footnote-11)

One change, however, and that not unimportant, Joye did venture with most intolerable arrogance to intro­duce. In his intercourse with Tindale there had been frequent discussions on an abstruse doctrinal question much controverted in the Christian Church,—the con­dition of the souls of the dead between death and judgement. In his controversy with Sir Thomas More, Tindale had asserted, or, at least, had admitted, that ‘the souls of the dead lie and sleep till Doomsday,’ whereas Joye maintained, in common perhaps with most members of the Church, Reformed or un-Reformed, that at death the souls passed not into sleep, but into a higher and better life. On this point, according to Joye’s own narrative, he and Tindale had frequently been engaged in rather sharp discussions; and he complains that Tindale had repeatedly treated him in a somewhat abrupt and uncourteous fashion, upbraiding him with his want of scholarship, and ridiculing his arguments, ‘filliping them forth,’ as he alleges, between his finger and his thumb after his wonted disdainful manner.’ Full of this doctrinal controversy, Joye believed that Tindale had obscured the meaning of Scripture in several passages by the use of the term *resurrection,* where it was not the resurrection of the body that was really intended; and he therefore in his revision struck out the term, and substituted for it the phrase, ‘life after this,’ which was more in accordance with his own opinions.

A single specimen will show more clearly than any description the nature of the change thus effected; and the matter is of so much consequence in the personal history of Tindale, that it is necessary to understand it accurately. The words of our Lord (St. Matthew xxii. 30, 31), rendered in our Authorized Version, after Tindale,’ in the *resurrection* they neither marry nor are given in marriage . . . as touching the *resurrection* of the dead, have ye not read?’ &c., are translated by Joye, ‘in *the life after this* they neither marry’-and ‘*as touching the life of them that be dead,’ &c.* Joye did not, as has been sometimes said, discard the word resurrection altogether, neither did he intend to express any doubt as to the doctrine of the resurrection of the body; but he confined the use of the word to those instances in which it was unquestionably the resurrection of the body that was intended (e.g. Acts i. 22); and in all other cases, in order, as he supposed, to avoid instilling prejudices into the minds of the unwary readers, he employed such circumlocutions as ‘the life after this’ or ‘the very life.’

The doctrinal controversy thus raised does not fall within the province of our biography; but some know­ledge of the facts involved is indispensable at this period of Tindale’s life, all the more so, as they have been very considerably misrepresented by some previous writers.[[12]](#footnote-12)

From what has just been written the reader will be prepared to anticipate the indignation which Joye’s proceedings excited in the mind of Tindale. For many months he had been engaged in a most elaborate revision of his New Testament, which must have cost nearly as much labour as the original translation; and now, just as his work was ready for the press, Joye’s edition appeared. Not only was the real author of the trans­lation thereby threatened with the loss of the fruit of his long and weary labours; not only was he dishonestly defrauded by the employment of his own previous toil against himself; but, to add insult to injury, he saw his translation tampered with by Joye, so as to give countenance to what he had often condemned as the mere ‘curious speculation’ of a stupid and ignorant man. Beyond all question Joye had acted dishonourably; he had injured and insulted Tindale; and no human patience could have submitted unmoved to his proceedings. Tindale felt keenly the injury that had been done; he gave vent to his indignation in bitter and reproachful terms; and a personal controversy was thus excited, which was not appeased even at the time of his appre­hension.

But before entering upon the narrative of this per­sonal dispute, the work of Tindale deserves a more detailed notice. Tindale’s first version had been made under considerable difficulties, as we have formerly seen; and he was himself aware that it was susceptible of many improvements. Not only might the text be improved by more accurate, more clear, or more concise, renderings; but, in his own estimation, it was desirable to give the work completeness by separate introductions to each of the books, and by greater attention to the marginal glosses, with which, as with a brief com­mentary, it was equipped. All this was accomplished with great pains in the edition of 1534. He had diligently gone over the whole of his translation, not only comparing it once again with the Greek text of Erasmus, but bringing to bear upon it that enlarged experience of Hebrew which he had acquired in his translation of the Old Testament, and which he now saw to be of no small service in illustrating the Hellenistic of the New. In his ‘Epistle to the Reader,’ he states the general principles on which he proceeded, and they are not unworthy of consideration.

‘Here hast thou, most dear reader, the New Testa­ment or covenant made with us of God in Christ’s blood, which I have looked over again, now at the last, with all diligence, and compared it unto the Greek, and have weeded out of it many faults, which lack of help at the beginning, and oversight, did sow therein. If aught seem changed, or not altogether agreeing with the Greek, let the finder of the fault consider the Hebrew phrase or manner of speech left in the Greek words; whose preterperfect tense and present tense is often both one, and the future tense is the optative mood also, and the future tense oft the imperative mood in the active voice, and in the passive ever. Likewise person for person, number for number, and an interrogation for a conditional, and such like, is with the Hebrews a common usage[[13]](#footnote-13). I have also in many places set light in the margin to understand the text by. If any man find faults either with the translation or aught beside *(which is easier for many to do than so well to have translated it themselves of their own pregnant wits at the beginning, without an ensample),* to the same it shall be lawful to translate it themselves, and to put what they lust thereto. If I shall perceive, either by myself or by the information of other, that aught be escaped me, or might more plainly be translated, I will shortly after cause it to be mended. Howbeit, in many places methinketh it better to put a declaration in the margin, than to run too far from the text. And in many places, where the text seemeth at the first chop hard to be understood, yet the circumstances before and after, and often reading together, make it plain enough.’

The diligent correction promised in these words was faithfully and laboriously carried out, in such a manner as amply to justify the declaration of the title-page, that it was `corrected and compared with the Greek.’[[14]](#footnote-14) The corrections introduced may be reckoned by thousands, and in the great majority of cases their obvious ten­dency is to bring the English version into closer correspondence with the Greek original. Tindale’s scholarship comes out in very marked contrast with the carelessness and ignorance of his rival. In the Sermon on the Mount, as we have just seen, Joye intro­duced eight changes in all, half of them mistakes, and none of them improvements; Tindale has made no fewer than fifty-one changes in the same chapters, the merit of which is sufficiently indicated by the fact that, after several subsequent revisions, many of them still exist in our Authorized Version.

A specimen of Tindale’s ‘revision and correction’ will make palpable to the reader the enormous differ­ence between his well-considered alterations and Joye’s trifling and heedless changes. In St. Matthew v. 13, the original version of 1525 had run as follows:-, Ye are the salt of the earth, but and if the salt be once unsavoury, what can be salted therewith? it is therefore good for nothing but to be cast out at the doors, and that men tread it under feet.’

In Tindale’s revision of 1534, it is thus amended, and brought nearer to the Greek:—‘Ye are the salt of the earth, but and if *the salt have lost her saltness,* what can be salted therewith?[[15]](#footnote-15) It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out *and to be trodden under foot of men.’*

Again, in verse 16, the previous reading, ‘See that your light so shine before men,’ is changed into the more literal and more beautiful, ‘Let your light so shine before men.’ And similarly in the succeeding verse the incorrect rendering, ‘Ye shall not think that I am come to destroy the law,’ is more accurately translated, `Think not that I am come’; and the phrase, ‘Heavenly Father,’ in verses 45 and 48 of the old rendering, is replaced by the more euphonious as well as more accurate, ‘Father which is in heaven.’

In the sixth chapter, the first translation had omitted the Doxology at the end of the Lord’s Prayer; the revised version, founding upon a collation of other printed texts, has inserted it; and several minor im­provements are also introduced; thus, e.g., ‘Consider the lilies’ for ‘behold the lilies’; ‘what ye shall put on ‘for ‘what raiment ye shall wear.’ And in the seventh chapter, among other alterations, he effected a considerable improvement in the force of the last words of the sermon, by bringing the English into closer approximation to the Greek: ‘It was *over­thrown,* and great was the fall of it,’ had been the version of *1525;* for which Tindale now substituted the simple rendering which we now use, and which retains the rhetorical figure of the original: ‘and it *fell,* and great was the *fall* thereof.’

These changes may be taken as a specimen of the revision to which Tindale submitted his former transla­tion; and only those who have some slight acquaintance with the difficulties that beset the revision of a finished work can fully appreciate the amount of care and labour which Tindale must have bestowed upon his task. In the vast majority of instances his changes are obvious improvements; they give clearness to what was pre­viously obscure, or force to what was formerly weak and pointless; they improve the melody and rhythm of the sentence; or, above all, they bring the English into more exact grammatical and verbal conformity with the original. Revision is a difficult and delicate task; seldom undertaken by the writers to whom we owe the original, and seldom ably performed by any other. Tindale is great in both capacities; he trans­lated with unequalled felicity; he revised with un­rivalled success; he has shown his countrymen both the true spirit in which the Holy Scriptures may be worthily rendered into English, and the true method by which that translation may be gradually improved and perfected.

A more complete examination of the revised edition of 1534 would only confirm the verdict that has now been pronounced. A highly-competent authority has ascertained, e.g., that *thirty-one* changes have been introduced into the translation of the First Epistle of St. John; ‘of these about a third are *closer approximations to the Greek;* rather more are variations in connecting particles or the like, *designed to bring out the argument of the original more clearly; three new readings are adopted;* and in one passage it appears that Luther’s rendering has been substituted for an awkward paraphrase; yet it must be remarked that even in this revision the changes are far more fre­quently at variance with Luther’s renderings than in accordance with them.’[[16]](#footnote-16)

The New Testament of 1534, besides being carefully revised in the translation, contains Prologues to all the Books except the Acts and the Apocalypse. These have to a considerable extent been translated from the German of Luther; although, with his characteristic independence, Tindale in no case confines himself to the mere functions of a mechanical translator. In general, he condenses and abridges Luther’s works; but in some cases he writes in direct opposition to his great prototype; and he is always careful to avoid that sweeping and unconditional recklessness of assertion, which makes the works of Luther sometimes stumbling­blocks to friends as well as to enemies. His Prologues to Hebrews and to James are, in the main, an argument against the opinions of Luther, who, as is well known, had treated both these books as not entitled to Apo­stolic authority; and after carefully examining all Luther’s reasons, Tindale concludes, in direct oppo­sition to Luther, that they ought ‘no more to be refused for holy, godly, and Catholic than the other authentic Scriptures,’ but ‘ought of right to be taken for Holy Scripture.’[[17]](#footnote-17)

In addition, moreover, to these Prologues, which, with one exception, had all been specially prepared for this revised Testament, Tindale furnished his work with marginal glosses, intended to throw light upon the text, and to guide the reader to its true meaning and its moral lessons. From the destruction of the original quarto of Cologne, which was also, as the reader will remember, supplied with these marginal comments, it is not possible for us to assert definitely, how far these glosses were composed for the revised edition of 1534, or how far they were mere reprints of those which had previously appeared. If we may judge, however, from an examination of the fragment of the first quarto which remains, it would seem probable that nearly the whole of the glosses were rewritten for the occasion. They are less polemical, and more strictly expository than those which had been originally appended to the New Testament by Tindale; and it will be generally admitted that this dissociation of the Word of God from the expression of human indignation is a vast improvement.

They are wonderfully terse, without any affectation of rhetorical antithesis; and they are as favourable speci­mens of pregnant and pithy comments’ as the English language contains.

Thus on Christ’s announcement of His death follow­ing immediately after that confession of St. Peter, which He had so highly praised, he remarks, ‘When aught is said or done that should move to pride, He dasheth them in the teeth with His death and passion.’ What an admirable definition of *strong* is that contained in the comment on Romans xv. i: ‘He is strong that can bear another man’s weakness’! How truly does he catch the spirit of the Apostle’s advice to the Corin­thians on marriage, ‘If a man have the gift, chastity is good, the more quietly to serve God; for the married have oft much trouble; but if the mind of the chaste be cumbered with other worldly business, what helpeth it? and if the married be the more quick-minded thereby, what hurteth it? Neither, of itself, is better than the other.’ Occasionally, the gloss is merely a species of catchword placed in the margin, indi­cating the subject treated of; and sometimes it is simply explanatory, as when he notes that by ‘a penny is always to be understood a sum of money equal to sevenpence amongst us.’ Polemical notes are not entirely omitted, but the sting of them seems to have been deprived of its poison, as the former bitterness of expression is considerably modified. Thus, on St. Paul’s advice to the Thessalonians, ‘That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands,’ he remarks simply, ‘a good lesson for monks and idle friars.’[[18]](#footnote-18)

The Prologues and glosses do not exhaust the whole of Tindale’s additions to the text of the New Testa­ment. At the close of the work he has added a trans­lation of the ‘Epistles taken out of the Old Testament, which are read in the Church after the Use of Salisbury,’ on certain Saints’ Days and other occasions. These included not only extracts from the books of the Pen­tateuch which he had already translated, but also from many of the other parts of the Old Testament, from Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi; as well as from the Apocry­phal books of Esdras, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus.[[19]](#footnote-19)

In fact, the New Testament of 1534 was an approxi­mation to the familiar *Church Service* of the modern church-goer; and seemed to point to the possibility of the same use in public as well as in private religious worship. Tindale’s hopes were beginning to rise after long years of toil and danger, and the sky was brighten­ing with the promise of the coming day. For eight years it had been a crime in any Englishman to sell, to purchase, or to read a copy of the New Testament in his native tongue; now, in God’s providence, the persecution had died down; men might even dare to possess the English Bible and read it in private, and Tindale seems to have anticipated the possibility of its being publicly read in church for the edification of the people.

This, too, was closer at hand than most men believed. For in England events were moving with the speed of a revolution. The papal supremacy was formally abolished by Act of Parliament; the laws against here­tics were relaxed; More and Fisher were in the Tower; Anne Boleyn was supreme in the king’s affections, and had very recently used her authority to intervene for the protection of an English merchant who had been involved in trouble in Antwerp by his zeal for the circu­lation of the New Testament. Anne’s theological con­victions may not have been very profound or very enlightened; but there is no doubt of her favourable inclination towards the Reformers; and her letter to Cromwell on this subject is worth preserving, as the first official recognition extended by those in authority to men who had been for years hunted as outlaws.

‘Anne the Queen: Trusty and right well-beloved, we greet you well; and whereas we be credibly in­formed, that the bearer hereof, Richard Herman, mer­chant and citizen of Antwerp, in Brabant, was in the time of the late lord cardinal put and expelled from his freedom and fellowship of and in the English House there, for nothing else, as he affirmeth, but only for that he did, both with his goods and policy, to his great hurt and hindrance in this world, *help to the setting forth of the New Testament in English:* we therefore desire and instantly pray you, that with all speed and favour convenient, ye will cause this good and honest merchant, being my Lord’s true, faithful, and loving subject, to be restored to his pristine freedom, liberty, and fellowship aforesaid, and the sooner at this our request, and at your good leisure, to hear him in such things as he hath to make further relation unto you in this behalf: Given, under our signet, at my Lord’s Manor of Greenwich, the 14th day of May.’[[20]](#footnote-20)

Time was bringing about its revenge; the day had gone past when a merchant might be seized, and his goods confiscated, for no other crime than his con­tributing to print the Word of God in English; and the company of merchant adventurers in Antwerp were doubtless remonstrated with by Cromwell in such a manner as speedily to reinstate Herman in all his privileges as a member of their House. That Herman, who had risked his goods and endangered his life by helping to set forth the English New Testament, was acquainted with Tindale, may be taken for granted; and that the whole story of Anne’s gracious interven­tion, heightened by the charm of her beauty and her winning manners, was recounted to Tindale by the grateful merchant-this also may surely be accepted without proof. That the heart of the exile, so long a stranger to kindness from men in authority, would be cheered by this unexpected act of royal patronage, and would begin to expand with the hope of the ulti­mate success of that glorious cause for which he had laboured in sorrow and disappointment, surely needs not to be suggested to any one of ordinary under­standing.

It is true that the kindness had come from one whose elevation to the throne he had formerly condemned, as one of the pernicious ` practices’ of the prelates of England acting in the interest of the pope; and we have no reason for believing that he had even yet entirely abandoned these opinions; yet all the more on that very account would he appreciate the generosity and magnanimity of the fair and unfortunate queen. His gratitude, it is believed, was exhibited in a charac­teristic manner. When his work of revision was com­pleted, he caused a copy of the amended New Testament to be printed upon vellum, and decorated as a present meet for a queen. The volume still exists, an honour­able memorial at once of Tindale’s gratitude, and of Anne’s generous protection of a British subject who had been injured by his efforts on behalf of the English Bible. It is beautifully printed; and is illuminated and otherwise ornamented with great care and taste. The original binding has probably perished; at present it is bound in plain dark blue leather, without any ornament beyond the coat of arms of the Rev. Mr. Cracherode, who bequeathed it to the British Museum; and who, it may be conjectured, had rebound it. On the edges, which are richly gilt and tooled, are inscribed in large letters, which time and incautious handling have almost effaced, the words ANNA, ANGLIAE REGINA.[[21]](#footnote-21) It is not unworthy of notice that the prefatory matter has been omitted, and that the name of Tindale nowhere occurs in it; for the book was simply the offering of a grateful heart, not the gift of a fawning Churchman eager to propitiate the favour of a royal patron. The Bible needs no adventitious aid of dedications to ‘Most High and Mighty Princes’; and it would have been well if in this respect subsequent revisers had imitated the noble independence of the first translator[[22]](#footnote-22).

From the description of the New Testament of 1534 which has now been given, the reader will be able to understand with what truth it has been asserted that it is Tindale’s noblest contribution to the English Bible. He had added to the obligations under which his first New Testament laid his countrymen, by carefully revising every word of the text, giving clearness to what was obscure, replacing weak by more emphatic renderings, removing grammatical inaccuracies, improving the rhythm of the language, and in general making it more exactly than before a reproduction in English of all the force, and beauty, and simplicity of the original. The one excellence which has so often been wanting to the perfection of a literary work, Tindale possessed in the highest measure. He was master of what the poet calls `the last and greatest art, the art to blot’; he was the *beau ideal of* a translator, uniting consum­mate felicity in the first draft of his work with unwearied care in the subsequent revision of it.

Such a work, with the accompanying prologues, glosses, and translations from the Old Testament, must have fully occupied all Tindale’s energies during the year 1534; and it is not surprising, therefore, that he should have been extremely indignant at the proceed­ings of Joye in attempting to deprive him of the fruit of his labours, by filling the market with a cheaper and inferior translation, and so curtailing the circulation of the new and improved version. His conduct appeared to Tindale so dishonourable, and his changes in the New Testament so dangerous, that he added to his revised edition, *a second* preface, directed especially against Joye; and it was the publication of this preface which led to the prolonged and bitter controversy to which we shall now briefly advert.

‘Thou shalt understand, most dear reader,’ so runs the address, `when I had taken in hand to look over the New Testament again, and to compare it with the Greek, and to mend whatsoever I could find amiss, and had almost finished the labour, George Joye secretly took in hand to correct it also, by what occasion his conscience knoweth, and prevented [anticipated] me, in so much that his correction was printed in great number, ere mine began [to be printed]. When it was spied and word brought me, though it seemed to divers others that George Joye had not used the office of an honest man, seeing he knew that I was in correcting it myself, neither did walk after the rules of the love and softness which Christ and His disciples teach us, how that we should do nothing of strife to move debate, or of vain­ glory, or of covetousness; yet I took the thing in worth as I have done divers other in time past, as one that have more experience of the nature and disposition of that man’s complexion, and supposed that a little spice of covetousness and vain-glory (two blind guides) had been the only cause that moved him so to do; about which things I strive with no man, and so followed after, and corrected forth, and caused this to be printed without surmise or looking on his correction. But when the printing of mine was almost finished, one brought me a copy [of Joye’s edition], and showed me so many places in such wise altered that I was astonied, and wondered not a little what fury had driven him to make such change, and to call it a diligent correction.’

The changes which thus excited Tindale’s indigna­tion were not, indeed, so numerous as he seems to have imagined; but, under the circumstances which have been already narrated, they were extremely irritating and offensive. Joye had had the assurance to reprint Tindale’s translation almost *verbatim,* while at the same time announcing his work as a ‘diligent correction’; and not content with thus robbing the Translator of the fruit of his toil, had the further assurance to change the renderings in a few verses, so as to favour his own opinions on the question which he had so often debated with Tindale, the condition of the soul after death. Against this double injury Tindale protests with great vehemence. With obvious and unanswerable rhetoric he urged that Joye should have put his own name to a translation which so materially misrepresented the opinions of its actual author; he claimed no monopoly of the right to translate the Scriptures into English, but it was not lawful, he submitted, ‘nor yet expedient for the edifying of the unity of the faith of Christ, that whosoever will, shall by his own authority take *another man’s translation,* and put out and in, and change at pleasure, and call it a correction.’

As to the character of the changes, he proceeds to remark somewhat sarcastically, ‘George Joye hath had of a long time marvellous imaginations about this word *resurrection,* that it should be taken for the state of souls after their departing from their bodies, and hath also, though he hath been reasoned with thereof and desired to cease, yet sown his doctrine by secret letters on that side the sea [in England], and caused great division among the brethren, insomuch that John Fryth, being in prison in the Tower of London, a little before his death, wrote that we should warn him and desire him to cease, and would have then written against him, had I not withstood him. Thereto I have been since informed that no small number through his curiosity [whimsical speculations] utterly deny the resurrection of the flesh and body, affirming that the soul, when she is departed, is the spiritual body of the resurrection, and other resurrection shall there none be. And I have talked with some of them myself, so doted in that folly, that it were as good persuade a post, as to pluck that madness out of their brains. And of this is all George Joye’s unquiet curiosity the whole occasion; whether he be of the said faction also, or not, to that let him answer himself.’

His own opinions on the subject Tindale sets forth at length in the noble and earnest *protestation* which has been repeatedly printed:­

‘Concerning the resurrection, I protest before God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and before the universal congregation that believeth in Him, that I believe, according to the open and manifest Scriptures and Catholic faith, that Christ is risen again in the flesh which He received of His mother the Blessed Virgin Mary, and body wherein He died: and that we shall all, both good and bad, rise both flesh and body, and appear together before the judgement-seat of Christ, to receive every man according to his deeds: and that the bodies of all that believe and continue in the true faith of Christ shall be endued with like immortality and glory as is the body of Christ.

‘And I protest before God, and our Saviour Christ, and all that believe in Him, that I hold of the souls that are departed as much as may be proved by manifest and open Scripture, and think the souls departed in the faith of Christ and love of the law of God, to be in no worse case than the soul of Christ was from the time that He delivered His Spirit into the hands of His Father until the resurrection of His body in glory and immortality. Nevertheless I confess openly that I am not persuaded that they be already in the full glory that Christ is in, or the elect angels of God are in; neither is it any article of my faith: for if it so were, I see not but then the preaching of the resurrection of the flesh were a thing in vain. Notwithstanding yet I am ready to believe it if it may be proved with open Scripture: and I have desired George Joye to take open texts that seem to make for that purpose, as this is, “ To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise”; to make thereof what he could; for I receive not in the Scripture the private interpretation of any man’s brain, without open testi­mony of any Scripture agreeing thereto.

‘Moreover, I take God (which alone seeth the heart) to record to my conscience, beseeching Him that my part be not in the blood of Christ if I wrote of all that I have written throughout all my book aught of an evil purpose, of envy or malice to any man, or to stir up any false doctrine or opinion in the Church of Christ, or to be author of any sect, or to draw disciples after me, or that I would be esteemed or had in price above the least child that is born; save only of pity and compassion I had and yet have on the blindness of my brethren, and to bring them unto the knowledge of Christ, and to make every one of them, if it were possible, as perfect as an angel of heaven; and to weed out all that is not planted of our Heavenly Father, and to bring down all that lifteth up itself against the knowledge of the salva­tion that is in the blood of Christ. Also my part be not in Christ if mine heart be not to follow and live according as I teach; and also if mine heart weep not night and day for mine own sin and other men’s in­differently, beseeching God to convert us all, and to take His wrath from us, and to be merciful as well to all other men as to mine own soul; caring for the wealth [welfare] of the realm I was born in, for the King and all that are thereof, as a tender-hearted mother would do for her only son.

‘As concerning all I have translated or otherwise written, I beseech all men to read it for that purpose I wrote it, even to bring them to the knowledge of the Scripture; and as far as the Scripture approveth it so far to allow it; and if in any place the Word of God dis­allow it, there to refuse it, as I do before our Saviour Christ and His congregation. And where they find faults let them show it me if they be nigh, or write to me if they be far off; or write openly against it and improve [disprove] it; and I promise them, if I shall perceive that their reasons conclude [are conclusive], I will confess mine ignorance openly.’

If Tindale’s animadversions upon Joye were severe, it will be admitted that the severity was not undeserved; the conduct of Joye would have been base even in an enemy of the Reformation, but in one who professed to be a friend, it was altogether inexcusable. Tindale’s remarks, naturally enough, stung him to the quick, and he prepared a defence of himself, which he proposed to publish to the world as widely, if possible, as the attack had been circulated. Mutual friends intervened, and attempted to arrest a controversy which was sure to be seized by the Romanists as a proof of the inevitable discord which attended all secession from the pale of their communion. It was agreed accordingly that Joye should not publish his defence, and that Tindale should, in subsequent editions of his New Testament, modify the assertions of his damnatory epistle. From some cause, of which we have only Joye’s partial account, this arrangement was not carried into execution; Joye’s defence was printed; and the minds of all lovers of the Reformation were scandalized by this public quarrel between two who for some years had been among the recognized leaders of the Reformation.

Joye’s work was entitled, *An Apology, made by George Joye, to satisfy, if it may be, William Tyndale: to purge and defend himself against so many slander­ous lies feigned upon him in Tyndale’s uncharitable and unsober epistle.*[[23]](#footnote-23)His defence of his conduct in appro­priating Tindale’s translation without acknowledgement is extremely lame and unsatisfactory; and his abuse of Tindale would have been unjustifiable, even if Tindale’s attack had been entirely unprovoked. But on the spec­ulative question debated between them Joye defended himself with very considerable ability. Tindale, in fact, had not been consistent in his teaching on the subject, and Joye argues with great force and pertinacity in favour of his own views. Tindale, moreover, had somewhat mis­represented or misunderstood Joye; Joye did not deny the resurrection of the body; he merely maintained that, according to Scripture, the state of the soul between death and the resurrection of the body was a state which was appropriately described as a life, and that Tindale had erroneously used the word *resurrection* in his version in passages where the resurrection of the body was not at all alluded to, but rather the continued life of the soul after its separation from the body.

The question thus debated is speculative rather than practical; one which Scripture has not clearly decided, and on which, accordingly, a variety of opinions has always prevailed in the Church of Christ; but on the whole Joye seems to have the best of the argument, he certainly espouses that view of the question which has found most favour among Protestant theologians. In learning and in ability of every kind, however, Joye’s inferiority to Tindale is conspicuous; he seems to have been alike ignorant of Greek and Hebrew, and could only translate from the Vulgate; and, in fact, it is obvious that he was one of that class of shallow, troublesome, narrow-minded men of one idea who in colloquial parlance are denominated *bores;* so that we are at no loss to understand Tindale’s impatient gestures and contemptuous treatment of his interminable arguments as they ‘walked in the field together.’

One opinion, however, expressed by Joye, seems to have made considerable impression upon Tindale, and is so sensible that it deserves to be remembered to his credit. It was the first and plainest protest that had yet been uttered in favour of the circulation of the pure simple text of Holy Scripture, leaving the Word of God to convey its own message without the aid of glosses and comments.

‘In good faith,’ says he, ‘as for me, I had as lief put the truth in the text as in the margent; and except the gloss expound the text, or where the text is plain enough, I had as lief leave such frivole glosses clean out.

*I would the Scripture were so purely and Mainly translated that it needed neither note, gloss, nor scholia, so that the reader might once swim without a cork.’* This was certainly the true ideal at which all translators were bound to aim, and it is not impossible that the remark may have profoundly affected Tindale in the work in which he was now engaged.

For, once again, and for the last time, Tindale had addressed himself to the task of revising and improving his New Testament. Joye’s *Apology* was written at the close of February, 1535, and he informs us that Tindale was even then preparing a new edition of his great work. Before, however, it was passed through the press, the illustrious Translator was arrested and imprisoned; that fate which he had so long apprehended overtaking him, most appropriately, while he was still busied with that glorious task to which he had conse­crated so many years of labour, and for which he was ready, if need were, to sacrifice his life.

This edition of 1535 furnishes abundant evidence of Tindale’s continued care in revising and improving his work. For the first time headings were prefixed to the chapters throughout the Gospels and the Acts; and in almost every page one can find proof of the assertion on the second title that it was ‘diligently corrected and compared with the Greek.’ Errors of the press, which, in spite of all care, had crept into the edition of 1534, are removed; even the `Epistles from the Old Testa­ment,’ which were subjoined as a species of Appendix, and which would most naturally have been exempt from any but a most conscientious revision, bear traces of the same careful and elaborate superintendence; and throughout the text of the New Testament numerous changes are introduced, tending in general to communi­cate additional force and clearness to the version, and to bring it into closer correspondence with the original. And it is worthy of notice that this-Tindale’s last New Testament-was issued without any marginal notes. Whether he had felt the justice of Joye’s suggestion, or whether any other cause unknown had induced him to adopt this plan, we cannot, of course, determine; it was, however, manifestly an improvement, and on the whole it is not unworthy of notice that his very latest edition of his work should have contained that ‘bare text of the Scripture,’ of which he had so solemnly declared years before, that he would ‘offer his body to suffer what pain or torture, yea what death his Grace [Henry VIII] would, *so that this be obtained.’*

The chief peculiarity, however, of this edition of 1535 lies in its strange and unwonted orthography, which has seriously perplexed scholars, and has given rise to many curious theories. Among the peculiar forms which occur are such as *faether, moether, maester, stoene, moost, &c.*[[24]](#footnote-24)

To some biographers this appears to be one of the finest instances of the sublime that has ever occurred; for it has been assumed that this curious spelling was adopted in order to facilitate the perusal of Holy Scrip­ture by the ploughboys of Gloucestershire, in accordance with Tindale’s original prophetic declaration that, if God spared him in life, he would make the boy ‘who followeth the plough’ to know the Word of God as well as any of the pope’s doctors. If this theory could be established it would certainly throw a romantic interest around this last fruit of Tindale’s labours as a translator; unfortunately, however, for the romance of this delightful conjecture, there is not the slightest reason for believing that this unusual spelling in any way represents the dialect of Gloucestershire; and, if it did, it is employed so intermittently that it would have been but a slight aid to devout ploughboys en­deavouring to spell their way through Scripture.

On the other hand, some philologists, taking little account of Tindale’s life and character, have imagined that this singular spelling was in reality a profound system of phonological reform; that, in fact, after much investigation of the defects of English orthography, Tindale had devised an elaborate method for bringing the spelling of the English language into exact corre­spondence with the pronunciation. To state such a theory is to refute it; only a philologist mad with enthusiasm for his special study could either imagine such an explanation or by possibility believe it. The true explanation, in all probability, is that which lies on the surface; the work, begun in the commence­ment of 1535, when Tindale was at liberty, was not printed till after his arrest, was consequently issued without his personal supervision, and was corrected by some Flemish compositor, who naturally introduced, in many cases, Flemish equivalents for the English vowel sounds.[[25]](#footnote-25)

While busied with his work, Tindale was treacher­ously arrested; and his labours were brought to a premature termination. He had been preserved in safety during years when dangers threatened on every hand; and now, when the heat of the battle was over, when the horizon on all sides was bright with prospects of coming prosperity and peace, he was unexpectedly seized, and fell a victim to the persevering vengeance of his enemies. He was overwhelmed by that terrible death which at one time had seemed so imminent, but which even he had perhaps begun to look upon as no longer the probable conclusion of his career. Nobly and heroically had he done his work, nothing was wanting to complete the splendour of his life but the crown of martyrdom. Still the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews were to find their mystic accomplishment, and the `Testament was not to be dedicated without blood.’

1. *Confutation,* p. 415. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See *Life of Rogers,* by Lemuel Chester. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *State Papers,* vol. vii.p. 489. Vaughan to Cromwell, August 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. *Ibid*., vol. vii. p. 516*.* October 21. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Joye, who left England in December, 1527, had remained at Strasburg till about 1532, and therefore could only know some of those facts from hearsay; it seems strange, however, that he had never heard of the Cologne quarto, which had Concordances. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Joye’s *Apology,* Arber’s Reprint, pp. 20-22. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. They are scattered about, if they exist at all, in cathedral libraries and other collections not easy of access. In such places, books of this kind are practically lost (some of them have in fact disappeared); and it is a great pity that they are not placed under proper charge in some accessible position. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. I except, of course, the edition of 1530, in which it is supposed that the Prologue to the Romans was inserted. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The passage is worth quoting in the original Latin, as *a tour de force of* rhetoric: ‘Novum Testamentum, a Luthero in patriam linguam traductum, vere pabulum est mortis, fomes peccati, vela­ men malitiae, praetextus falsae libertatis, inobedientiae praesidium, disciplinae corruptio, morum depravatio, concordiae dissipatio, honestatis interitus, vitiorum scaturigo, virtutum lues, rebellionis incendium, superbiae lac, esca contemptus, pacis mors, charitatis peremptio, unitatis hostis, veritatis perduellio.’ Cochloeus’s *An licet Laicis,* &c., signature B. iv. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Only one copy is known to be in existence, that in the Gren­ville Library in the British Museum. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In St. Matthew vi. 24, Tindale’s New Testament had by mistake the words, ‘or else he will *lene* the one and despise the other,’ which Joye could make nothing of, and so, conjecturally, he printed, ‘he will *love* the one,’ &c. In Tindale’s own revision the error is of course rectified, ‘he will *lean* to the one.’ I do not pretend to have collated all Joye’s book; but after examining several passages in the Gospels and the Epistles, I am satisfied that the estimate in the text is a correct one. Westcott gives an excellent account of it: *History of the English Bible,* p. 57. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. I am no admirer of Joye, but I cannot help protesting against the treatment he has received from Anderson. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. And yet this is the person who is supposed not to have known anything about Hebrew! [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The title is as follows:—‘The New Testament diligently corrected and compared with the Greek, by William Tyndale, and finished in the year of our Lord God, 1534, in the month of November.’ It was printed by Martin Lempereur, in Antwerp; Joye’s, by the widow of Christopher of Endhoven, in Antwerp. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. On this reading see any critical edition of the New Testa­ment. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Westcott, p. 185, and Appendix iii. Tindale has also indi­cated the passage (1 John v. 7), which is now generally considered spurious, by printing it in smaller type and in brackets. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Westcott has examined the whole matter with admirable care; pp. 157-203. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. I join my regret to that of Westcott that these glosses, along with those on the Pentateuch, were not included in the Parker Society Edition of Tindale’s *Works.* The Editor has done his work in a most creditable manner, but it is unfortunate that he has omitted writings so characteristic, and on which Tindale had evidently bestowed so much labour; all the more so as it is extremely improbable, considering the enormous depreciation of the value of the Parker Society’s publications, that any new edition of Tindale’s *Works* willbe issued for many years. In the present case the Editor’s omission of these glosses has been attended by a curious result, which shows how important it is that the whole of an author’s writings should be comprised in what professes to be a complete edition of his *Works.* Mr. Chester, in his *Life of Rogers,* claims for that distinguished martyr the honour of being the first *Commentator* on Holy Scripture of the English Protestant Church. And in support of this claim he asserts (p. 48, note), ‘After his most zealous exertions, Professor Walter could collect together only about nine octavo pages of Tyndale’s *Anno­tations,* while those of Rogers would fill a considerable volume; moreover, those few notes of Tindale appear to have had little or no circulation, and it will be seen by examination that Rogers retained very few of them.’ All this, it is evident, is mere mis­conception, arising chiefly from Professor Walter’s omission to print the glosses in the New Testament of 1534 and in the Penta­teuch, which would fill a considerable volume: but proceeding, also, in part from Mr. Chester failing to perceive that the *nine octavo pages* were not the *whole* even of Tindale’s glosses on his first Testament, but only all that exist in the few leaves which constitute the Grenville fragment; a misapprehension which is unaccountable in one so exact and painstaking as I know my friend Lemuel Chester to be. I omit altogether the question, evidently a most important one, whether those notes of Rogers on which the claim depends, may not have been as much Tindale’s as the translation which they accompanied. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Westcott has given a complete list of these Epistles. Anderson has, not very honestly, suppressed all notice of the Apocrypha. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Cotton *MSS., Cleopatra, E. v.* The year is not given, but must have been either 1534 or 1535, and in all probability it was the former. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Various romantic details have been circulated concerning this interesting book, as e.g., that passages in it have been underlined, presumably by Anne herself, for devotional purposes. This has probably arisen from confounding it with another copyof the Testament of 1534 in the Museum, which has passages under­lined, though not such as would naturally be used for devotional purposes. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. It is not intended to be asserted that there *is* any complete documentary proof that this New Testament was actually a gift from Tindale to Queen Anne; it is a question not *of direct* but *of circumstantial* evidence; but the circumstances are so strongly in favour of the truth *of* the theory, that we may well insist upon the old logical axiom, *neganti incumbit, probatio.* [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. It contained on the title-page the quotation from the Psalms, ` Lord, deliver me from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue’; and the declaration, ` I know and believe that the bodies of every dead man shall rise again at Doomsday.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Some two hundred in all: a complete list has been printed by Mr. Fry for private circulation among scholars. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The whole appearance of the peculiar orthography is such as, at the first glance, to suggest its Flemish origin. Westcott (p. 65, note) has given the same explanation as that in the text; and so has Mr. Ellis in his profound and exhaustive treatise on *Early English Pronunciation.* Ibelieve Westcott and Anderson are both mistaken in supposing that Tindale revised this edition while in prison: Joye, whose *Apology* was written in February, 1535, says expressly that Tindale was *then* engaged on the work. For place of printing see *Addendum, p.* 460. [Mr. Fry some years ago discovered the text of the 1535 in a 1534 edition. Possibly therefore the 1535 may be only a pirated misspelt reprint of the 1534 edition.] [↑](#footnote-ref-25)