William Tyndale

William Tyndale, an eminent English divine, was born about 1484. He received an ample education at Cambridge and Oxford, and took holy orders. Embracing the doctrines of the Reformation, he excited so much enmity among Romanists by his zeal and ability in expounding them, that he was compelled to seek refuge in Germany. Believing that the Scriptures should be read by the masses in the vernacular, he produced a complete version of the New Testament in English, which, though ordered to be suppressed, was in such demand that six editions were published. This version was also the model and basis of that of King James, and is but little more obsolete. He also translated the Pentateuch. For these and other reformatory writings, he was arrested at Antwerp at the instigation of the English government, and after eighteen months' imprisonment, was burned, first being strangled by the hangman, 1536.