

That work was also to be done by their children to-day. The following part of his address some who read this may use as a "skeleton"—of course not for "the closet." He said that for a light to be able to shine all around it must be, 1, *properly placed*; 2, *properly lighted*; 3, *properly led*. In conclusion he hoped that every unconverted Waldensian would be able to celebrate his glorious return to his Father's house.

The choir sang Luther's hymn, "Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott" (A strong-walled city is our God).

M. Tron, pastor in Venice, spoke from Acts i. 8: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Their forefathers received that power. What gave their history its special character of greatness was not so much their deeds of arms, their acts of bravery, nor even their martyrs, as their faith and the steadfastness thereof in the midst of all dangers, all trials and all struggles. They could make all sacrifices. Nothing shook them. The stronghold of their heart was more invincible than were those of their mountains. To-day they enjoyed full liberty, that they might carry the Gospel throughout all Italy. What God had done for their forefathers He would do for them.

M. Longo, pastor in Milan, said that the Christian should be a witness for the truth. Then, so should the Church. The Waldenses were a Christian people. They should be, in the presence of Italy, a witness-bearing people. Their evangelists had come in by the breach of the Porta Pia in Rome, and taken up their abode near the Quirinal, which was formerly the palace of the popes. Their preachers were few, but God would enable them to continue faithful. If the people sustained them by their sympathy and their prayers, they would be able to do much for the evangelization of Italy, which God grant.

M. Appia, pastor of the Lutheran Church in Paris, led in prayer.

M. Peyrot, pastor at Serre, held up before the minds of his hearers a most admirable panorama of the events connected with Balsille during the Glorious Return.

Another piece was sung, then the foreign deputies spoke.

M. Van der Hoorn, of Holland, expressed the loving greetings of the Reformed Church of Holland to the Waldenses.

Dr. Clark, of the Irish Presbyterian Church, spoke in French. It was good for him to be there. He would never forget these valleys. The dukes of the Waldenses formerly presented them. To-day their well beloved king, descended from these dukes, came to their help with a generous gift for the erection of their monuments. To-day Italy is free. Long live Italy! Long live the king! God bless him! These words called forth deafening cheers.

Dr. Matthews, Secretary of the Presbyterian Council, said that he brought to them the salutations of many distant churches which had no representatives among them, but who took a great interest in their festivals. They also had had their persecutions and their triumphs. The hearts of their brethren were interested in them, and their eyes followed them. Each of their brethren desired for them a greater blessing in the time to come than they had ever had.

M. Pages, pastor in Toulon, representing the Huguenots, conveyed to the Waldenses the brotherly greetings of the Reformed Church of France.

M. Champendal, Vice-Moderator of the Church of Geneva, expressed to the Waldenses the salutations of those who, like them, had suffered and, like them, had obtained liberty, which they wished to maintain at any cost.

M. Christ, of Bale, said that his people regarded the stay of the Waldenses in their country from 1686 to 1689 as the flower of their history, and the generous hospitality which their forefathers had shown them as one of the best of their deeds.

Two descendants of the Waldenses, who fled to Wurtemberg two hundred years before, were the last speakers. One used the Waldensian dialect, the other German.

Shortly before one p.m. the meeting closed with prayer, the singing of the *Te Deum* and the blessing.

A dinner was given in the memorial school-house. Toasts were drunk in honour of the king, the foreign delegates, who returned thanks through two of their number, and to the press, coupled with the name of the correspondent of *La Gazette Piemontese*. The picnics, which numberless small parties had on the grass by the side of the stream, were not the less happy.

Elder's Mills, Ont.

THE FREE ITALIAN CHURCH.

From the bi-monthly journal of the Church we extract the following affecting story: "Giovanni Ronchetti, a cook by trade, having embraced the Gospel in 1883, was admitted to the communion of the Church in May, 1884. His first thought was to send his only little girl to the Sabbath school; but his wife, a rigid Catholic, strenuously opposed this, saying: 'Rather than that my child should go to the Evangelical School I would trample her under foot.' The discord in the family was of long continuance, and the wife often threatened to leave her husband. But his bearing was so loving and his manner so calm that eventually her resentment was quieted, and even at last she consented to allow her little girl to go to the Sabbath school. Little Ronchetti was one of the most active, studious and best behaved of our scholars; with what readiness she answered every question, with what devotion she prayed! When she went home she always repeated to her mother what she had learned in the school.

Thus through the good life of the father, and the witness of the child, the mother was at last convinced that there was salvation only in Christ. Then came trials and persecution. The poor husband was dismissed from his employment, and was utterly unable to find work in any of the hotels, or in the rich Catholic families. At last he got a situation as a porter, but, as soon as it was known that he and his family were Evangelicals, he was dismissed. This occurred three times. At length a liberal-minded Catholic gentleman, respecting the man for holding to his convictions, engaged him as a porter; and this gentleman's daughter felt so much sympathy for the poor mother and child that she gave them substantial assistance. But when these trials seemed ended, a heavier trial came—the sudden death of the poor mother. On her deathbed the mother testified to her loving faith in Jesus, and when some of her friends wanted to send for the priest, she frankly confessed that she was an Evangelical. The funeral was very affecting; on the coffin lay a beautiful wreath sent by her benefactress. Such is one of the many fruits of that right-arm of the Church, the Sabbath school."

This school is under the care of Rev. Signor Conti, the minister of the Church in Rome. There has been very great opposition by the Roman Catholic priests, who have planted seventeen schools around our school; and by offers of food and clothing and rich prizes have done all they could to tempt scholars to leave the Protestant school; for there, and there only in all Rome, do you find the Bible in the school. But, in spite of these temptations, and the threats of withdrawing work and employment from the parents of the scholars, even yet there are 104 boys and girls attending this school, which the Pope can see from his own window. There are forty-seven in the senior classes, thirty-eight in the junior, and nineteen in the preparatory classes.

In this flourishing school there are 185 children in attendance. Many of them come from Roman Catholic families. Here is one proof of the good training the scholars receive. One of the girls of the school, after listening to a discussion about the adoration of saints and of the Madonna, said: "I pray neither to saints nor Virgin Mary, but to God only, and to Jesus Christ, as the Gospel teaches."

Among the hundreds of saints to whom the Catholics pray, St. Anthony is to so great a degree revered by the Italians, and so much trusted in for help in time of sickness or distress, that he is generally called "The Saint." He was born 700 years ago (1195) in Lisbon, but lived the greater part of his life in Padua. When he died, it is said that the bells in Lisbon tolled of their own accord. He died (1231) and was buried in Padua—hence called "St. Anthony of Padua." Yet while his two arms lie there at Padua, the Venetians say they have another, and the Portuguese worship another in Lisbon—four arms!

The boys and girls of Italy wear suspended from their necks a little image of St. Anthony. It is made of bone, and is nearly two inches in length. Let me tell you what often happens:—

There is a mother—we shall call her Mary—watching the little baby sleeping on her knee. But what if the babe should become sick; what if some one should have ill-will to the babe! The mother must protect her babe; and so she goes and buys a little bone image of St. Anthony, and puts a thread through the head of the image, so as to hang it upon the baby's breast. But the priest must bless the image; therefore mother takes baby to the priest, and he says a Latin prayer over the bone image. She does not know Latin and often the priest does not know it either; but the priest knows to take money for the blessing, and so the deceived mother goes away, trusting that the bone image of St. Anthony will shield her babe from all evil. And sometimes you might see her dip the bone image in baby's food to prevent sickness.

But men and women also wear this little image round their necks. Soldiers wear it when going to battle; sailors wear it to help them in the storm; students wear it to help them to pass their examinations; old men wear it to give them an easy death.

You can now understand what the little girl meant when she said: "I pray neither to saints nor to Virgin Mary, but to God only, and to Jesus Christ, as the Gospel teaches." She learned that blessed truth at the school in Florence.

This school is under the superintendence of that venerable minister of the free Italian Church, Rev. Francesco Lagomarsino. The school itself is the object of the fiercest opposition—priests, friars, nuns, all unite in doing their utmost to draw away the young scholars. Yet there are about 200 boys and girls in daily attendance; and at the Sabbath school 100 children attend who are not allowed by their parents to attend the day school. There is also a class for forty women. One girl, on leaving school to go to work, took her Testament with her to read to the others in the work. The lady of the workshop wished to put away the girl for this, but the conduct of the girl was so winning that the lady is now herself a reader of the Bible. Again—one example more. A little girl—let us call her Violetta—has an unbelieving father, to whom she wishes to tell the beautiful stories of Jesus which she learns in school; but he will not hear them. Yet little Violetta is so fully persuaded of the love of Jesus that she cannot stop speaking of Him, and at last the father is won, and kisses his little daughter, and sits down to hear her read about the Saviour.

Think of the great change in this little girl. No doubt before she began to read the Bible stories and to love Jesus she wore one of the common charms around her neck, and

trusted to it. I told you of the little bone image of St. Anthony, which is often put round the baby's neck. There is another very common charm—the Scapulary. It is only a little bit of white cotton cloth, on which is printed the picture of the Virgin Mary and the child Jesus. But the Virgin Mary is the chief figure. It is worn upon the breast, suspended by two white cotton tapes passing over the shoulders—hence called a *Scapulary*, from the Latin word *Scapula*, the name of the shoulder-blade. Strange to say, the Scapulary was first given to the people by an English friar, Simon Stock, 600 years ago. He pretended that he had received one from the Virgin Mary herself, which she had made in heaven. Nowadays these white cotton scapularies are worn by millions of people, young and old, in Italy, who trust to it for their health and safety. They believe that after the Scapulary has been blessed by the priest that it protects the wearer from sickness and accident. Therefore the Scapulary is worn always—never put off night nor day. And when at last death does come, it is still trusted to, for the people believe that it gives a sure and a happy entrance into glory to all those who die on Saturday; and as for those who die on any of the other days of the week, they have to wait in Purgatory only till the next Saturday; and even during that short time the Virgin Mary sends an angel to lessen the fire.*

Do you ask: Why do people trust in little bone images or in little bits of cloth? Let the answer be found first by turning to the old story of "the brazen serpent that Moses had made." The story is to be found in Numbers xxi. 9. The brazen serpent was ordained by God as the visible means of cure from the bites of the "fiery serpents;" so that all who looked to it lived. And when its work was done it was preserved carefully as a memorial of that wonderful miracle. But in course of time the people began to worship the brazen serpent, because man is ever apt to cling to something which the eye can see, and which the hand can touch. Thus we are told in 2 Kings xviii. 4, that in Hezekiah's reign, "unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it." The brass serpent had begun to take the place in the people's minds which God alone should have had. Therefore Hezekiah "brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made," and so put an end to this form of their idolatry. Moreover, the "serpent which Moses had made" Hezekiah called "Nehushtan;" that is, a piece of brass—only that, nothing more. Truly, it deserved to be broken in pieces and called "a piece of brass," for it had usurped the place which God alone should have filled in the minds of the Israelites. And it is for the same reason that we should teach the Italian boys and girls to put away their little bone images of St. Anthony and the bits of cloth with the Virgin Mary printed on them. We must not mock them, or laugh at them, for the boys and girls know no better—they have been so taught by the priests. But let us send them the teachers, by whom they will be guided to look beyond these charms and images, and to do with them as Hezekiah did with the famous brazen serpent—brake them in pieces and cast them away.

The past year has been made memorable in the religious history of Italy by the publication of the Bible in Italian in weekly numbers at one-half penny each, and this, as a commercial enterprise, undertaken by the great publisher, Sonzogno, from whose great establishment issues one of the leading newspapers of Italy—*Il Secolo*. People of all creeds, and of no creed, buy these weekly issues of God's Holy Word all over the country. True, it is the Martini annotated edition—the papist notes—yet notwithstanding this it is the Bible. The text is printed in large, readable type, and the pages embellished with the pictures familiar to readers of Cassell's Illustrated Bible.

Rev. Signor Borgia writes: "The great event of the year was the publication in our city of the illustrated annotated Martini Bible by Sonzogno. A happy thought occurred to me, which was received with joy by the people. Every Thursday evening we had a critical discussion of the notes of Martini. Our brother Antonietti sold the weekly numbers at the door of the church, and my audience followed me, Bible in hand, so to speak, as I showed the passages which the Church of Rome had altered to suit her dogmas. This led to the purchase of our evangelical version by Diodati, on a large scale, so that I believe there is scarcely a family in Milan now without the Bible. The Publisher's Bulletin of last month speaks of the small sale of books in 1888, but says the Bible triumphed over the general apathy. It has become the book in 50,000 families of Italy, says the same journal, and well it may, for it has awakened and kept alive the thought of mankind. We trust this event will be but one among many in bringing about a much longed for revival of pure and undefiled religion in our land."

GOOD EXAMPLE.

There is a contagious and controlling power for good, as well as for evil, in a positive and well-defined example. Not only is it true that two watches or clocks, set near each other, will come, as if by sympathy, to tick and move in unison, but it is sometimes found that a watch or clock that moves and stops fitfully: all by itself will move with undisturbed regularity under the influence of a fellow-timekeeper of good habits placed near it. One well-behaved boy in a Sunday school class, or a neighbourhood, will make his example felt on a half-dozen or a score of wild companions, by simply continuing true to his own high standard in spite of all temptations. A single Christian believer, who is all that he ought to be, is an unmistakable force in any church, or in any community; and sooner or later his example will have weight with those who have seemed least regardful of it. A good example ordinarily makes less show than a bad one; but it does its work quite as effectively.—*Sunday School Times*.

*All this is taught dogmatically in the Papal Church. It is contained in the Bull of Pope John XXI., and the Bull is called *Sabatina* because it begins with that word.