THE MISSIONARY BELL.

BY MRS. LOUISE MORSE.

We are all acquainted with "The creed of the bells" but why does the old Dutch bell ring out a sweeter creed than the rest?

A century and a half ago a devout man in Holland left a legacy to have a bell cast and sent to America. The mission of the bell was to ring out the Sabbath joy from the Dutch steeple in Nassau St. It served its purpose there, and now it hangs from the bell tower of the magnificent church on Fifth Avenue, where it rings out the same notes which were heard by six generations.

On the day of the casting the master workman invited his wife and a number of her friends to be present. As the glowing fluid was entering the mould a woman, thinking of the holy service for which it was destined beyond the sea, quickly cast in a large piece of silver. The bystanders caught the idea, and, to enrich and sweeten the notes, they cast unknown quantities of silver into the mass. We have no list of these coins, we know not their number; the names of these donors are unrecorded. And as we hear that bell, we have no power to catch and segregate the silver element of sound from the ring of base metal. These things, one and all, are known only to God, and so the world has been hearing for a century and a half glad sounds of grace, whose sweetest element is measureless and nameless. But the old Dutch bell is one of a million things which are sweet and inspiring to us to-day, while we know not the sources of their influence. Voices are falling on our ears; great impulses fill our souls; lofty ambitions beckon us on; restraints stand around us, strong and towering, but these influences have an analysis which only Divine chemistry can prove. The real powers which grasp and hold society are harmless. The silver coin which has mingled in the mass of social force was dropped in so quickly, and it melted so quickly out of sight, that no man can search it out. It is a grand idea which comes back to us as we hear that bell, that the sweetest and most lasting things in human life have no earthly register. That upright Judge wins our applause; but God knows that the honest ring of his judgment is only the silver coin which his godly mother cast into his child life. The statesman who has power to rise in simple majesty above the mere politician may not be conscious that the blood of a noble ancestry runs through his veins. That Christian missionary who worked out his day on Indian shores and then died in obscurity, was proving what wealth, beyond silver and gold, of heavenly piety had sunk down into his nature; and so it is that as the molten mass of character is running into form, there are standing over it those who cast in their treasure of holy example, sweetening and sanctifying human life. God sits in silent patience, "a refiner of silver," watching the processes which make up life and character and power. He writes down the names of quiet women who, nameless on earth, are forming the wealth of their lives into those who live after them. He makes note of all these humble, honest services, meant only for His eyes, which are the real and only lasting glories of our life. He saw the sculptor chiselling the whole of the statue which was to stand in the cathedral where only a part could be seen, and He heard the sublime reason: "I made it perfect because I knew God would see it."

Go on, holy men and women! cast in your coin! God will see the act and He will direct the tone which your piety secures. Go on, sculpture for eternity! God will mark every stroke of your chisel, and the careful finishing of your work, which man can never see, will all be viewed by celestial witnesses. Go on, weary and worn out toilers! No matter where you are or what you do; no matter if your services win no notice and no approval; no matter if even you yourselves cannot think it worthy of regard, go on working, waiting, suffering, and be sure that all the silver you cast into human life will ring clear, sweet and loud in the ear of Omniscient God! What will be the reward of those that work for the Master? If no crown of vanishing glitter is worn here there will be a crown of righteousness laid up for them in heaven. Every child of God is a king; he has a crown which no one else can wear; a hope which responds to no other touch. The brilliant imagery of the Revelation of St. John, has tingled to fill the mind of the Christian church with a heaven of one idea—a world of golden harps. The harp is only a symbol—a symbol of the harmonious blossomings of life. Every thought, every prayer, every hope, every affection, every sense of right, every soul ideal will be a harp thrilling with eternal song, a golden chime of bells. Many harps, many bells, many stars, many flowers. They all speak of a heaven which is every day a new creation. Newton on earth, gathering the pebbles of the sea, may take many a voyage over silver seas to seek for the gold of knowledge that is far, far away.

When John Stuart Mills was passing through a grave and dark crisis of thought, he found much solace in music. But one reflection tormented him; he was afraid that the world's store of music would be exhausted, and at one day he and the last song in creation would be standing together in a dark world under a dawnless sky. He thought of the octave, consisting only of five notes and two semi-tones, and of the limited number of combinations possible with such a small range. And it seemed to him that most of these had already been discovered and there could not be room for a long succession of Mozarts and Webers. He was sailing close under the hills of midnight then; he had not heard the murmur of the infinite sea—the sea that hath no shore but God, nor the chime of the bells of the New Jerusalem.

The worker for God will have a home of eternal progress from glory to glory, from mansion to mansion. The centuries of time are covered with sad fragments of human endeavor; harps of song whose strings were snapped assunder by the rude hand of death; tender-hearted prayers, whose wings were broken in the stormy night against the lighted window of heaven; large-minded reformers wrecked in sight of the desired haven; noble-souled enterprises lost on the Alpine summits and buried in the drifted snow of ages—fragments everywhere of the good, the true, the divine. When Mendelssohn was spending his last summer, underneath the pine trees of Interlaken, he could not help fretting at the near approach of death. The man who had given his first composition at 13 had much more to give at 37. "What is the use of planning? I shall not live," and he fell asleep, leaving behind him the fragments of his Christis and Lorello.

What is the use of planning? Child of God, keep on planning. God does not mean to deprive thee of what is nearest to thy heart; He only means to take thee to a larger room that thou mayest do it better—into the silent land.

"To you, ye boundless regions of all perfections,
Tender morning visions of beautious souls:
The future's pledge and band;
Who in life's battle firm doth stand,
Shall bear life's tender blossoms into the silent land."

Is there one here who is casting no coin into the Master's treasury? No coin of prayer or alms that will ascend as incense into heaven? Are you willing to take the golden harp and crown hereafter? While here have you kept for yourself the silver and gold which are His? "Millions know not Christ, whom to know is life eternal." God calls, "Go work in My vineyard, to-day." God calls and you not answer! Fear ye not, the "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto the least, ye did it not unto Me"?

The Higher Criticism.

BY REV. RICHARD CORDLEY, D. D.

The higher criticism is often confounded with certain results of it. The term suggests to many minds the names of certain destructive critics who have advanced extravagant theories of the Bible. But the higher criticism is not a theory of the Bible but a method of investigation. It has been used vigorously by the destructive critics, but they have no monopoly of the method. In fact, if their attacks are to be repelled, they must be met on their own ground.

There are two lines by which scholars investigate any ancient document or book. The first has to do with the text to find just what the document is. In studying the letters of Cicero we first want to know just what Cicero wrote. All the manuscripts and old copies must be carefully examined and compared. All interpolations and additions and changes must be thrown out, until we have as nearly as possible the exact text as Cicero wrote it. This is called the textual or lower criticism. The next thing to be done is to examine these letters historically to ascertain when they were written, under what circumstances and for what purpose. The letters would be carefully researched, compared with each other and with all that is known from other sources of Cicero and his times. This is called "the higher criticism."

These are both legitimate lines of investigation. Either of them may be abused and pushed to wrong conclusions. Then the only thing to be done is to correct the wrong in the line of its own reasoning. To talk of "the crime of the higher criticism" is like talking about the crime of the broadaxe. A broadaxe may be used to hew a stick of timber to build a house, or to break down a door in order to rob a house.

Both these critical methods have been applied to the Bible. After the old manuscripts were discovered scholars applied themselves to correcting the text of the Bible. There was a great outcry at first against this. It would rob us of the Bible. It would destroy the sacredness of the Bible by confusing people as to what was really in the Bible. But the old criticism has restored to us our Bible which officious copyists had marred. Now when we read the New Testament we know we are reading just what its authors wrote.

The higher criticism does for the substance of the Bible what the lower criticism has done for the text. It would examine each book thoroughly as to its form and style and contents to find just what the book is from its own testimony and from its relations. Such a method may be abused and pushed to wild conclusions. But the books are still there, and it is the privilege and duty of the friends of the Bible to meet prejudice by fairness and partial investigation by full knowledge. When the whole field has been searched and all the facts are known the final verdict can be given.

Meanwhile our faith in the Bible must find a broader basis, so that it will not depend on dates and names and men. Our faith must be so broad that it cannot be shaken by a modification of some of our notions about the Bible. Our faith in the Bible must rest on its eternal verities. It must be too deeply founded to be affected by the date of a book or the name of an author. It is the record of divine movement for the redemption of men which culminated in Jesus Christ. That the revelation was progressive there can be no doubt. That there is in it a human element there can be no doubt. How far this human element goes is a question for reverent scholarship to ascertain. We may leave to "reverent scholarship" a wide margin and yet not lose one whit of our faith in the divine presence as manifested in the Bible.

Other ancient writings have been subjected to the same process. Men have held that Homer never lived. They have held that there were two Homers. They have held that the Iliad is a composite work made up from several authors, but no college has thrown the Iliad out of its curriculum on account of these discussions. No lover of Homer has abated one whit of his admiration on account of the decision of any critic. The beauty of Homer's verse, the majestic march of his numbers and the sustained interest of his story are independent of any question of dates and localities and authors. Homer will still hold his place in literature whatever may be the outcome of what is technically known as the "Homeric question."

Any lover of art who visits the Louvre in Paris will be impressed by the Venus of Milo. It will catch his eye long before he reaches it and will hold his attention till he has passed entirely away. Its naturalness and life, its perfect poise, the grace of its form and the beauty of its face are something marvellous. There is so much of force and character in the whole statue that one can never forget the impression he receives. And what is the Venus of Milo? By whom was it made? Nobody knows. It was dug up about seventy years ago in a field by a peasant in the island of Milo. It must have lain there for many centuries, for there have been no people in that region capable of producing such a statue since the palmy days of Grecian art. But no Greek author speaks of it, and scholars can only conjecture its author or history. They do not even know for what it was intended. They called it the Venus of Milo, but the best critics now think that it was not a Venus but represented the Goddess of Victory. Besides all this mystery hanging over its origin and design, the statue is mutilated. Its arms are gone. We can only guess as to the position of the arms, if, indeed, it had any arms. But in spite of all this it stands matchless among the statues of the world. It matters not who made it, or when or where or for what. Its intrinsic beauty and grace are their own credentials. Let the critics go on discussing its authorship and purpose. Its artistic merits are independent of their decision. They may search the ground where it was found for testimony for one view or for another. It matters not what they find or fail to find. They cannot rob this masterpiece of a single grace, or detract in the least from any man's admiration of it. The genius and beauty that appear in the work need no indorsement and can suffer no detraction.

All things excellent carry their own credentials. Every true gem has a value independent of its origin. If you have a genuine coin you do not care to know the mine from which the gold was dug. A genuine poem may be picked up on some barren island, but if it have the true poetic spirit it will approve itself to poetic souls. The Bible has in itself the signs of a Divine presence. It has been a comfort to those in distress, a guide to those in darkness and doubt. It has stayed men's hearts when they were ready to faint. It has quickened conscience, inspired hope and transformed lives. Take it away and the grandest hopes men have ever cherished become empty of meaning. Such a book does not depend for its proof on dates and names and places. Its power in the lives of men is its best proof.

More than all, the Scriptures contain the record of Jesus Christ. He is the culmination of its history and teaching. He is the complete and all-sufficient proof of a Divine presence among men. We would like to know all about the Bible and to be able to solve all its mysteries and clear away all its difficulties. But we do not hold our faith in suspense until this is done. Our faith rests on other grounds which are ample without these and which are not affected by any of these things. It rests, first of all, on Jesus Christ, who walks among men with a step so divine that all who see Him join in the centurion's cry, "Surely this is the Son of God."—*Congregationalist.*

Dom Pedro's Love of the Bible.

The death of Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, removes from me the restraint of telling some things in regard to the inner life of this great man, which I now give as my contribution to his memory. I lived for many years in Brazil, during which I saw, first and last, a good deal of him, and was honored with his friendship. Now that he is gone, I wish to bear testimony to his serious and devout character, as shown especially in his reverent and daily reading of the Word of God.

The world knows him, not only as the most enlightened sovereign of his time, but as the generous patron of science and art and literature. But he was something more than all this. In my earliest acquaintance with him, I found that he loved to talk of mere serious things; that, although greatly absorbed by the cares of State, in the discharge of which he was most conscientious, he found time for reading works of a religious character. In 1855 I presented him with the "History of the Reformation," by my old teacher, D'Aubigné, of Geneva, Switzerland. That he read it, I knew from his conversation with Agassiz about the great men, the scientists of Switzerland, De Candolle, De Saussure, etc., etc., to which he added, "And we must not forget the Reformers, those men who blessed the world." But with all this, I was hardly prepared for what I heard from his own lips in the summer of 1864. I knew how liberal he was; I knew that when (now thirty years ago) Dr. Kelly's little congregation of Brazilian and Portuguese Protestant converts were beset by a mob; and there came the first test of that clause of the Brazilian Constitution, which declared the religion of the State to be Roman Catholic, but guaranteed religious toleration to all beliefs within certain conditions; it was the Emperor himself who determined that the constitution should be maintained, and that these men should be respected in their rights. It was at his orders that armed police and cavalry were sent to put down the mob. In the summer of that year I had one of the accustomed notes from the Emperor, inviting me to the palace at an hour when we should be alone. I supposed that it was for conversation on literary matters, and took with me a volume of elegant English extracts and criticisms of the late George S. Hillard, of Boston, the author of "Six Months in Italy." I waited alone for a few moments in his private cabinet, and began reading in the volume that remarkable and sublime poem, "The Burial of Moses," which had appeared anonymously in an English magazine, but which, some months after this, the late Dr. James Hamilton (of Regent Square Presbyterian church, London), informed me was written by Mrs. Alexander, of Glasgow. While thus engaged, the Emperor entered, and seeing a book in my hand, said: "What have you here, Mr. Fletcher?" I explained to him the nature of the work, and called his attention to "The Burial of Moses." Our conversation was in French, and I translate it literally, as I recall it. I was seated at his side, and he took the volume and said he wished to read the poem, preceding which are these words from Deut. 34: 5, 6—"So Moses, the servant of the Lord, died there in the land of Moab, according to the Word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; but no man knoweth his sepulchre until this day." After he had read this, I expected him to go on reading the poem, of which this was the text. Instead of this, he closed the book, keeping his finger between the pages where the poem was, and then, in a low and humble tone, in the quietness of that secluded room, said to me:

"Mr. Fletcher, I love the Bible. I read it every day, and the more I read it, the more I love it. There are some people who do not love the Bible. I do not understand them." These words surprised me, especially with his manner and voice. Not only did I listen, but I had been watching the lips which had uttered them, with evident, though suppressed emotion. I also noted that instead of looking me intently in the face, as was his wont with those with whom he was conversing, his eyes were in humility cast upon the floor.

When there was a pause, I broke the silence by saying that "those who did not love the Bible were those who did not read it." He answered, "I do not understand such people, but I love it; I love its simplicity and I love its repetitions and reiterations of truth. As I said, I read it daily, and the more I read it, the more I love it."

After this he read the whole poem, stopping from time to time to note its beauties and its deep spiritual meaning. He then read it a second time without comment, drinking in the sublimities of one of the most remarkable poems in the English language.

Now no man can "love the Bible" and "read it every day," and "the more he reads it the more he loves it," without having within him that which is far more significant than a liking for the mere literature of the Bible. I noticed that day, as I had noticed before, that over the entrance door to his chapel, instead of the usual Roman Catholic adornments of the image of some saint or of the Virgin Mary with the bleeding heart, there was nothing but a simple lamb, sculptured in low relief, reclining upon a cross, and beneath it in Latin the words "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29). From that time I believed Dom Pedro to be, like Thomas a Kempis, Fenelon, and Madame Guion, a sincere and devout disciple of Him who is the one Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

As the world knows, the cause of Dom Pedro's downfall was the just fear, from past experience of the regency of the Princess during the illness of the Emperor, that her reactionary views and those of her husband, the Count d'Eu, were obtaining too much influence in the Councils of State, and the Brazilians, who would have allowed the father to rule to the end of his days, would not permit the daughter to ascend the throne. This determination led them, while the Emperor was still living, to carry out their resolution in November, 1889, and the whole Imperial family were sent into exile. I believe that Dom Pedro had some foreboding of coming events when I saw him last, in Naples, in 1888. He had been sick nigh unto death in 1887, and a voyage to Europe was prescribed by his physicians as his only hope of recovery. When he arrived in Naples, the birthplace of his devoted wife, he seemed bright mentally, but physically weak. He remained some weeks, and I saw him many times. He lingered with pleasure over the memories of the past at Rio, spoke of Agassiz, Whittier, and Longfellow, of his visit to the United States, of George W. Childs, and of others whom he esteemed.

He left Naples in the latter part of May, and when I went to say farewell to him, he desired to see me alone. His words were few and touching, and at the close of our conversation (in which I felt that he was the same God-fearing man as in 1864) he embraced me in the Brazilian manner, saying in a low tone, which seemed full of sorrow, "O Fletcher! old friends are the best friends."

From Naples he went north, and in a rain storm on the Lake of Como caught a severe cold, which threw him into a relapse, from which it seemed he would never recover. But he finally rallied, and reached Rio about a year before the event occurred which deprived him of his throne. The Brazilian Revolution was not a violent one. The Portuguese Americans are a more law abiding people than the Spanish Americans; they have been long schooled to a liberal constitutional monarchy, and are better fitted for a republican form of government than any other of the Latin peoples. I have faith that the United States of Brazil will succeed. And when, in days to come, Brazil looks back over the past, the memory of no person in her history will be more revered than that of Dom Pedro II.

After the death of the ex-Empress at Oporto—a death probably hastened by the exile from Brazil—the ex-Emperor was never the same man. He died peacefully, at Paris, when he had just completed his sixty-sixth year, and his last reported words were his sincere wishes for the peace and prosperity of his native land.

It may be interesting to the readers of *The Evangelist* if I should give one of the many letters I received from Dom Pedro. The following was written on board the French steamer Orenoque, while off Dakkar, on the coast of Africa, when Dom Pedro, after his second visit to Europe, was on his homeward voyage. I translate it literally:

"On board the Steamer Orenoque,
Off Dakkar, September 14, 1877.

My Dear Mr. Fletcher: You know how rapidly I travel, and will certainly excuse our mutual friend, the Viscount of Bom Retiro, for not having given me your letter until on board this steamer.

I accept with the sincerest feelings, which you know me to possess, the title which you have given me of your "friend." And I am sure that you will ever render me the affection which I have for you.

My travels since I left you [in Naples] have been exceedingly interesting, above all, in Holland and Switzerland, which hitherto I have not personally known. These two little countries, struggling for existence against the natural difficulties which circumscribe them, merit the highest esteem from all who love industry.

In a few days I shall see again my native land, which the Creator has so wonderfully endowed, and I hope that what I have learned during my absence will prove useful to my country. That which I can truly say, is that I return to Brazil with an infinitude of *saudades* [an almost untranslatable term in Portuguese, signifying yearnings, longings, and homesickness], and with a passion for progress stronger than ever.

I enclose for you my last photograph, and in asking you to present to Mrs. Fletcher my *souvenirs affectueux*, I am sure that you will ever believe me your affectionate friend,

DOM PEDRO D' ALCANTARA.

—*Rev. J. C. Fletcher, in Evangelist.*

The Family Altar.

BY A BUSY MAN.

Memory fails to tell me of the day when I became acquainted with the institution that bears this time-honored title. Those who are authorities on the matter of my infantile doings declare that as soon as I could sit alone in my little chair I always clamored for a certain small edition of the New Testament which, at family devotions, was put into my hands largely to keep them out of the mischief in which they were generally engaged. Long before I knew a single letter nothing but that one Book would content me while the older members of the family were reading in turn the morning chapter. That little volume became primer and first reader as I mastered by degrees its simplest words, until, one proud birthday, I graduated to the ownership of an entire Bible.

From Genesis to Revelation, in unvarying order, was the pathway along which my daily thoughts were led. I believe we did skip the genealogies in Chronicles and subdivided the 119th Psalm, but with slight exceptions we followed faithfully, chapter after chapter, from one lid of sacred Scripture to the other. I do not recall my father's petitions as tedious—they certainly were never formal—yet I used wickedly to amuse myself in trying to guess how soon he would arrive at the opening words of the Lord's Prayer and the closing "Amen," which set me free from that kneeling posture where wriggling was so attractive. And yet, despite the fact that I sometimes grew impatient with the regular routine of family worship, I can now look back and gratefully acknowledge its influences which will ever helpfully abide with me.

Now I have grown to manhood, and under my roof are a goodly group of children to train for Christ and His service. Their home is not, like my early one, in a quiet country parsonage; their father must rush from his coffee cup to the steam cars and a city office, instead of leisurely retiring to sermon making, and the question becomes a somewhat perplexing one, "What is to become of the 'family-altar?' When, where and how is it to be 'erected'? Shall I impair digestion and imperil promptness at my work by delaying the old-time type of morning devotions? Shall I turn it all over to my wife? Shall I give it up altogether, as I fear too many have done in like circumstances?"

Here is the answer to this question which our home is giving. I offer it for what the readers of this column may deem it worth. Through some vivid experiences we have discovered that there is only the one point in the twenty-four hours when we are sure of getting the whole household together, and that is just after Maggie has brought in the oatmeal. It is morally certain that some one of the children will be "all frough," "scused" and at play or work before the others have finished, but we are reasonably certain of a real family gathering when breakfast begins. And at just this point, before covers are removed or spoons set in motion, we worship God. We do it simply, briefly, but sincerely and, as I believe, effectively.

A Testament is in readiness, sometimes from father's pocket, sometimes from the children's shelf. Usually a few verses—never more than ten or twelve—are read, from the Sunday-school lesson or a connected passage, the next Sunday's Golden Text is rehearsed, and a few questions and hints make sure that the children have gained a message from God's Word. All heads are now bowed, unless it be that of a very hungry three-year-old daughter who is allowed a mug of milk on condition of disposing of it quietly. A simple and direct prayer voices the gratitude of all for the mercies of the night and the new day, and asks specially for a blessing on the present food and grace for the coming tasks. Not only are father and mother remembered, but Margaret and Bertha and Helen are mentioned frequently by name, and their needs and trials and temptations for the coming hours are taken to God in prayer. Our church, our Sunday-school, our pastor and all our dear absent ones are remembered, and in scarcely more words than have been used in describing it our family has offered united worship, and in the closing sentences of the Lord's Prayer even the baby's milk-bedewed lips unite. Not more than six or seven minutes—sometimes not over four—have passed, the oatmeal has not suffered and we all feel that we have together given ourselves to God for the day, and received from Him a blessing that shall last us till its twilight shadows.

Does some one say, "This comes short of the traditional family altar"? In some ways it does, in other ways it goes far beyond the formalities of the olden times. It makes religion a simple, natural, homely thing. For one, I am not sure that we need keep the old-time form or phraseology. I question whether the mere sound of "family altar" has not terrified some timid ones from the simple and natural worship which is within the power and reach of every Christian home. "Altar" suggests victims and suffering, and in this connection it has too often had a literal application in the case of those who have tried to imitate an old form instead of securing a reasonable reality adapted to modern circumstances.

By all means let us have our daily devotions. On Sunday mornings they can easily be lengthened and made to include the voice of song and the bended knee. On Mondays and Tuesdays let the worship be sensibly adapted to the existing conditions, with the full assurance that God will be honored and His children truly blessed.

Let us be simple with Him, then,
Not backward, stiff, nor cold,
As though our Bethlehem could be
What Sinai was of old.

—John A. Dawson, Esq., ex-M. P. of Pictou, N. S., writes: "I was troubled with dyspepsia of the very worst kind for twenty years. K. D. C. cured me completely. It is worth its weight in gold. Will give information to any one who will write me."

R. R. R.

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HOW MANY PEOPLE

Suffer miserably after eating, from sour stomach, which causes either pain and sickness or disagreeable scalding in the throat and raising of food. A dose of "Dyspepticure," taken after meals, will prevent this suffering; when taken at bedtime for a week or two "Dyspepticure" will remove the cause of the trouble.