

missioner, or plenipotentiary, to set right all religious abuses. The place where this new title occurs, as well as the drastic measures of reform that he instituted after his return, support this view.

**BOOTHs**—The agricultural people of Palestine have always lived in villages for security and effective defence. This meant that the land of a few would be some distance away. In the autumn, partly for convenience in

gathering their various harvests, and partly to watch their ripening grain and fruit, they lived in booths on their ground. It was natural that the great harvest feast should at first have incorporated this custom; but when the worship of the nation was centralized in Jerusalem, where the booths were inconvenient and had little meaning, it is easy to see how they dropped out of the festival.

**APPLICATION**

*They read . . . the law of God distinctly*, v. 8. Christians have been called "the world's Bible." There are many people who never

**The World's Bible** read the printed Word of God, or go to hear it preached. These will never know its blessed truths unless they see them reflected in the lives of God's children. This places a great responsibility upon each of us. How sad it would be if any one were to miss the way of life because we wrongly represented the heavenly teaching! And how sweet will be our joy if some one is led to the Saviour through seeing His words mirrored in our speech and actions! It will amply repay any effort we may have made.

*They gave the sense* (Rev. Ver.) v. 8. The Bible is food. But there is no sustenance in food while it is kept in a tin can and laid on the larder shelf. The can must

**The Soul's Food** be opened and its contents prepared for the table. There is no virtue in a Bible in the best room, with a tidy cover it. It must be read and understood. Even the mere memorizing of its words will be of comparatively little value, if the sense be not given and believed. A man with a phenomenal memory in the north of Scotland could give chapter and verse for any text in the Bible, but when questioned on the very simplest doctrine was found destitute of comprehension, and so his vast memory was of little practical service. It is the sense that is needed, and so Paul says, "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, than by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

*The people wept, when they heard the words of the law*, v. 9. An eminent but unbelieving

lawyer, stricken with an incurable disease that must carry him off in eighteen months, turned seriously to religion. He asked

**The "Two-Edged Sword"** for some book to prove the truth of Christianity. He was wisely recommended to read the Bible and to begin at the beginning. The first parts he read with an affected air of incredulity. But when he reached the law he became suddenly melancholy. He could not fling it from him. Before its searching demands he stood self-condemned. Labored arguments often only further antagonize, but the clear statement of God's law carries conviction, and melts the heart into tears of penitence and sorrow.

*And send portions*, v. 10. The remembrance of the poor is one of the unique characteristics of the true religion. London alone

**A Unique Feature** gives to charities yearly through public institutions \$15,000,000, and through private benevolence \$35,000,000; while one million of its population receive medical advice gratuitously. Whatever there may be in common between the religion of the Bible and other religions, "the charity which seeks the lost, loves the poor and consoles the sufferer, is exclusively its own."

*The feast of the seventh month*, v. 14. Thanksgiving Day, which is the modern equivalent of the old Feast of Tabernacles,

**A Feast Instead of a Fast** began unofficially in one part of the New England States in this fashion. There had been dull times. A meeting was convened to arrange a fast. One wise farmer remarked that they had always been provoking heaven with their complaints, and advised now that they remember God's mercies with a day of