

president graces the highest seat of honor. A new professor sits in judgment on Freshman's views; and last but not least, the first lady matriculant into the Bible College sits among the boys, and learns the lessons of holy writ. Surely this is a progressive age. We are glad to have in our little band of Canadians two others—Bros. Ford and Gates—whom we welcome most heartily into our midst. Now we can make the strains of our "National Air" ring out louder and longer in our "Old Kentucky Home." A. N. S.

#### WEST GORE LETTER.

I know you all like to hear good news, so I will give you from a private letter, the following which speaks for itself: "I suppose you have heard that we are trying to clear off the debt on the church property. We shall probably succeed in doing so by the New Year. Hurrah!"

The above is from a brother in Charlotte-town; and when you think that the debt was one thousand dollars, and that there were only a few to make it up, and then they have done it so quietly, I think you will say they deserve credit and praise for their effort. Halifax next.

On Tuesday, October 22nd, we met and organized a church at Nine Mile River. Bros. James McDonald and John Wright were chosen elders; Bros. Stillman McDonald, James Fraser, and Hiram McDonald were chosen deacons. With a nice little house, free from debt, to worship in, the little band starts bravely to keep house for themselves. May they grow in every way that is good.

We are looking forward to having the Annual at West Gore.

The cold winter is nearly here; all the products of the farm are being gathered in, and the fields are looking bare. While we have been busy preparing fire for the nourishing of the body, so as to be warm and well fed, what are we going to feed the mind on? I like the suggestion made by the office editor in the last CHRISTIAN. During these long winter evenings let us improve our minds. What a number of useful things we might learn this winter. Knowledge is power, and it is obtained only by patient study. Books are very cheap; and any one who wishes can soon have quite a respectable library, and books—good books—become very dear friends. Life is real. We only pass through this world once, let us make the best use of our time. "It is not so much where we stand as the direction we are moving in."

As I have no particular local news to tell you, I will give you an extract from the writings of Pythagoras, a philosopher who lived and flourished B. C. 540. Large numbers of students came to him for instruction, and the following lines will show what self-examination was found necessary by this great teacher:

"Nor let soft slumber close your eyes  
Before you've recollected thrice  
The train of action thro' the day:  
Where have my feet chose out the way?  
What have I learnt, where'er I've been.  
From all I've heard, from all I've seen?  
What know I more that's worth the knowing?  
What have I done that's worth the doing?  
What have I sought that I should shun?  
What duty have I left undone;  
Or into what new follies run?  
There self enquiries are the road  
That leads to virtue and to God."

W. H. HARDING.

#### Original Contributions.

##### THE BIBLE versus INFIDELITY.

W. H. HARDING.

#### II.

Chrysostom in the fourth century is credited with first calling the scriptures "the Bible," *La Biblia*, "THE BOOK." Prior to that they were known as the "Holy" or "Sacred Writings." The story of the preservation and transmission of the Bible through the ages is more wonderful than any romance. As you take your Bible in your hand, do you ever think what it is, and how it is that you have so easily in your possession that which was revealed and written so long, long ago?

1st. Take the Old Testament, with its thirty-nine books, containing the history of this whole world for nearly 4,000 years, and, according to some, for a much longer period. Moses, who wrote the most of the first five books, lived about 1,500 B. C. Malachi, who wrote the last, lived about B. C. 400.

Some have wondered as to how these ancient writers managed for writing material. We find that in Egypt they had a material made from the fine tissues of the papyrus. These were put together and dried in the sun. This was used long before Moses was born. In latter days we find the use of parchment coming into vogue. The ancients made inks of various colors—from burnt wood and certain juices taken from plants.

It would take up too much space for me to tell all I would like to about the writers of the Old Testament. I must be content to commence with Ezra, who gathered together the books of the law and the prophets and the haliographar (holy writings). It is generally conceded that after the captivity he compiled the whole, except Malachi, and arranged the canon of the Old Testament about as we have it now. This he did by divine guidance and the help of the great synagogue, which was organized by him. Malachi was added to the canon presumably by Simon the Just, who lived a few years before Alexander the Great was born. He was of great repute among the Jews as a member of the great synagogue, which consisted of a hundred and twenty wise men. Of course these men did not all live at one time, but are to be thought of as covering a period of about two hundred years. Starting from this period (B. C. 400) we now trace the Old Testament down the streams of time.

The next event to be noticed is the translation of the scriptures into Greek, forming what is commonly called "the Septuagint." There was a tradition that this was done by seventy-two men appointed by Ptolemy Philadelphus, so as to allow him to have the Jewish scriptures in a large library established in Alexandria. But the truth seems to be that Alexandria became, after the dispersion, a centre of Jewish population and religion, and as the Jews lost command of Hebrew, they decided to have a translation into Greek—the language in general use. This work was begun B. C. 288, and we have the Septuagint version to-day after being used and quoted from by Christ and the apostles.

We have the translations of Aquilla (A. D. 130), Theodotian (A. D. 160), Symmachus (A. D. 193), the Targums, the Syriac (373), then the Vulgate, of which a celebrated writer has said, "that as a monument of ancient linguistic power, this translation of the Old Testament stands unrivalled and

unique." This translation was made from the Hebrew and was finished A. D. 404.

But I have now reached a point where the New Testament intersects (speaking from a literary point of view). I have shown that the books of the Old Testament, B. C. 300, were about the same as now. Then we have the testimony of Philo and Josephus to the same effect, and we also see that Christ and the apostles quoted from nearly all the books in the Old Testament; and lastly we find, in every century as we go along, catalogues of the books of the Old Testament agreeing with what we have to-day. But please remember that we neither claim inspiration nor infallibility for translators.

2nd. The New Testament consists of twenty-seven books, claimed to have been written during the first century of this era. At first the early church did not deem it important to collect the writings of the apostles; they had the Old Testament, and the verbal utterances of the apostles were still fresh in their minds. But after a time disputed questions caused them to examine what had been written by the apostles. The first class of writers who mention the New Testament are "the Apostolic Fathers." Clemens Romans (A. D. 97), Ignatius (A. D. 105), Polycarp (A. D. 120), Papias (A. D. 125). Here are four men whose writings have come down to us who were personally acquainted with the apostles, and who had talked with men who had seen the Lord in the flesh. These writers quote from the different books of the New Testament, particularly the epistles.

In the second century we have Justin Martyr, Ireneus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian. Some of these lived on in the third century. For a time certain books were rejected by some; and there were books like the "Epistle of Barnabas," "Shepherd of Hermas," that some accepted. But by the beginning of the third century the canon was settled as we have it now,—so we are told by Eusebius, who lived A. D. 265-340. His church history is still extant. Origen, A. D. 200, gives the first catalogue of books as we now have them. Then we have Athanasius, Cyril, and, at this time (A. D. 380), the council of Laodicea, all testifying to the canon of scripture as we now have it.

From this time on for a few centuries the scriptures were translated into different languages, and copies multiplied very fast. But the Roman Catholic church did all in its power, after it gained sway, to hinder the spread of the Bible; and it is the greatest humbug for people who have tried their best to destroy the Bible to claim that they have been the means of preserving it.

Between the fifth and thirteenth centuries there was much opposition to the Bible.

Still we find even in this dark period parts, and in some instances the whole of the Bible translated, and every little while we read of a new version.

I wish I had time to write something about the manuscript of the Bible, several of them fifteen hundred years old. There is the *Codex Sinaiticus* in St. Petersburg; the *Codex Alexandrinus* in the British museum; the *Codex Vaticanus* in the Vatican library. But I want to write something about our English Bible.

The first English Bible that we read about is in the fourteenth century, that of Wycliffe. It cost two hundred dollars to get one of these books in England. Tyndale is the next great name in connection with the Bible. He lived in the sixteenth century—the century of the reformation. The printing press, then lately invented, helped these ardent men. Tyndale's persistence in having Bibles printed