

survey of the situation, and then throw off his coat, and, throwing it over a chair, rolled up his red-flannel shirt-sleeves with as much energy as though he was going to chop wood. Then he sat down at the table, counted out as many sheets of sermon paper as he thought he would use, and pronounced himself all ready. By this time it was a few minutes after nine o'clock.

"Well," said he to himself, "the first thing I suppose ministers have to settle is, what text they will select." Here he took up the Bible and glanced through it. There were plenty of texts there beyond doubt, but which one? This was a puzzle. Now he thought of a certain verse—now of another. He read part of a chapter here, and part of another there, and then lay back in his chair and thought—the lower button was suffering terribly.

Here was a text that would do, but the minister had preached upon it lately—here was another that would make a splendid discourse, but the condition of the church was not such as to warrant that kind of a sermon. After a great deal of reflection, both of these were rejected.

Firstly: Just then, to the deacon's horror, the clock struck eleven. He caught up his pen and dipped it in the ink—but there was that stubborn fact, he must have a text. He wondered how ministers decided that very important matter. "Oh! now I have it," he exclaimed. "No; that won't do either."

Secondly: The hour soon passed, and thus ended the first half-day.

Thirdly: Promptly at twelve the minister's wife called him to dinner, and although much inclined not to, he yet went.

Lastly: This was the last of the deacon's attempts to write a sermon.—S. S. Workman.

#### FLOWERS IN THE WINDOW.

See that these beautiful objects have suitable care from day to day. Water them, keep off the vermin, wash them once a week or so, and occasionally give them a little guano in the water that is applied. Let them have all the sunlight possible, for most plants do not well in the shade. Home is made pleasant by beautiful plants, and children as well as others are made the better by their cultivation and care. It is a cheap and available source of pleasure, and within the reach of all. How often have we been reminded of this, as we have seen a rose geranium, or some other plant in the window of some poor person who could not afford a flower-pot, but made use of an old tea-pot with the nose knocked off, or some other vessel of little value. Flowers educate and refine. We always feel that we can put more confidence in those that love flowers. We are better Christians for growing flowers and enjoying their beauty. Count not that time and money lost that is devoted to their growth.

#### THE MODEL WIFE.

Rev. Dr. A. A. Willits, in a recent lecture delivered in Brooklyn, described the model wife of ancient times. Among other traits of her character which he referred to, was her industry. He said:—

"She was the model woman of that period, for this age, and for all ages to come. Costume and customs had changed, but all these essential features of womanly character are as fitting now as then. The speaker then read the description of her in the book of Proverbs, and remarked that all that human genius had labored for centuries to embody in marble, on canvas, or in the pages of poetry for conception of that which was true and graceful and beautiful in woman, we might challenge the whole world to bring a picture of woman worthy to be compared with this. The whole picture was lighted up with the glow of a most cheerful, healthful activity. She not only superintended the duties of her household, but worked with her own hands. The daughters of modern society might here learn a useful hint. The idea prevailed, now-a-days, to a great extent, among young ladies, that work was degrading; that it belonged to 'common' people. The modern idea of womanly beauty was an ethereal creature, with fair features and a frail body, supported by whalebone. The hearty, vigorous, blushing rose used to be the emblem of beauty, but it is now the lily, even though lily white be made accessory to such a result. It might be truly said of them, 'They toil not, neither do they spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.' The idea of domestic industry being vulgar is one of the conceits of modern days. Neither rich nor poor" were exempt from the divine law that industry was healthful and proper. You, ladies, to become model wives should be industrious."

A Sunday school teacher, in my presence, told the children that the Lord checked Simon Peter as he entered the house. Matt. xvii. 25. "And when he was come in, Jesus prevented him." It means only that our Lord spoke first on the subject which he knew Peter was going to present to him for decision.—C. S. Robinson, D.D.

#### ENCOURAGING FACTS CONCERNING CHINA.

The London *Missionary Chronicle* enumerates the following:—

First:—China possesses a written language through which we may communicate our ideas to Chinamen in every province of the Empire.

Second:—Education prevails very extensively. Every village or town has schools in proportion to its size. Shopkeepers can all read and write and keep accounts. The sons of well-to-do farmers, and innkeepers, and many of the peasants who attend markets, can read, though this is not true of the mass of farm laborers.

Third:—Their literature is all based on truth and moral maxims to which missionaries can refer with great power, even as we refer to the Bible.

Fourth:—The Chinese youth are indoctrinated in all the principles and high morality of their ancient books.

Fifth:—None of the Chinese classes encourage idolatry. They denounce it. No idols were known in China till within the last 2,000 years.

Sixth:—Their theory of government is among the most perfect on earth. Their laws about succession, the selection of the wise and the talented for rulers, and their code of laws are all admirable.

But the great want is some vital and lofty principle of action which their religious systems cannot furnish. For lack of this their high moralities are only theories while the life is vile. The body is there, the animating spirit is wanting. The temple of the King of Kings waits his occupation.

#### "LIBERAL" CHRISTIANITY.

There is one thing in particular which it behooves the general public to take note of in connection with the case of Rev. George H. Hepworth. It is the exceeding liberality of the so called "Liberal Christianity."

It has been the boast of Unitarian leaders that their denomination, above all others, tolerated freedom of opinion in religious matters. The denomination has encouraged such freedom by steadily refusing to formulate a distinctive doctrinal belief. It has charged Congregationalists and other Evangelical bodies over and over again, with narrowness where it was broad, and has pointed triumphantly to instances of our rigid adherence to the faith once delivered to the saints in proof of the charge. Unitarians, it has been stoutly claimed, are the truly liberal Christians. All others are wholly illiberal.

The case of Mr. Hepworth is a striking and undeniable proof that all this boasted liberality is a name and not a thing. Here is a man and a minister, who, whatever may have been the opinions held of him in private circles, has been publicly praised and flattered by the organs of the denomination for years and now that he has undergone a change of religious belief, and has made a new religious profession, he is turned upon with undisguised malignity, and made the object of all manner of abuse.

We alluded briefly last week to this "change in the wind," as noticeable in the utterances of Rev. Dr. Bellows. What shall be said of the following editorial which also appears prominently in the *Liberal Christian*?

"An anxious friend inquires:—'What is to become of the Unitarian body without George H. Hepworth, and of the country without James Fisk, Jr?' We give it up. Time will tell."

We are happy to admit that the words above quoted far exceed in bitterness and meanness any others that have come under our notice, but none of the Unitarian comments which we have seen upon Mr. Hepworth's withdrawal from that denomination, whether in press or pulpit, are in keeping with its professed liberality in such matters. Its boasted principles have been tried and found wanting.

We cannot help comparing the Unitarian treatment of Mr. Hepworth with the Evangelical treatment of some ministers whose names occur to us, who have recently stepped from Presbyterian or Congregational to Unitarian churches. Nor can anybody for a moment hesitate to say which has been the most truly liberal. It must be set down as a fact that, while Unitarianism is very loud in its paper professions, when it comes to actual cases Evangelical sentiment is far more catholic and tolerant towards those who depart from it.

The truth is that the Unitarians are very sore over Mr. Hepworth's withdrawal, and their chagrin is ill-disguised.—*The Congregationalist*.

Mount Vesuvius is now in eruption, although not very actively. A correspondent of the *Athenaeum*, who, in company with some friends, visited the neighborhood of the great crater not long since, relates a noteworthy fact in regard to the large blocks of stone which are hurled into the air at intervals. They ascend without any rotary motion whatever, so that their shapes can be clearly perceived; while, on the other hand, they rotate rapidly in descending, and their motion is then accompanied by a hissing sound.

#### THE MOHAMMEDANS IN INDIA.

In a late number the *London Spectator* uses the following language relative to India:

"Our dominion hangs even now, today, by a hair. At any moment, in any year, a Musselman Cromwell may take the field, and the empire be temporarily overwhelmed in universal massacre."

Commenting on these words, a Baltimore journal says that the Mohammedans, who number thirty millions, were, in 1857, excluded from the military and civil service, and the Hindoo preferred for these positions. This degradation, it is said, the Mohammedans keenly felt, and as they comprise the best military material in India, they are not to be despised. One of the most dangerous classes of the Mohammedans is a sect called, after their founder, Wahabees, which, in 1822, established a colony on the northwestern frontier of Hindostan, beyond the plains of the Indus. The doctrine which they most urgently preach is the religious obligation of extirpating the Europeans.

But the Wahabee movement is not limited to a revival among the Mohammedans of this most terrible feature of their faith, but it is also directed towards the conversion to Islam of the other races of India. This effort is wonderfully successful. One of their fundamental tenets is the absolute social equality of all Musselmans. This attracts the lower classes of Hindoos. Consequently the converts to Islam have increased by scores and hundreds of thousands every year. Accessions of entire villages at once, have been frequent. These converts are so many recruits for the threatened rebellion. The first duty of their new religion is the extermination of their foreign rulers. Thousands of these fanatical missionaries, organized with great skill and concealed by disguises, are said to be traversing India, circulating tracts of their faith, and preaching a universal revolt and massacre of the European infidels. Of course, the British Government will take due measures to prevent the success of any such movement. The lapse of India into Mohammedanism, from its present high condition of civilization, would be truly deplorable.

#### CHANGES IN JAPAN.

Newspapers of a certain kind, in the native language, have been published in Japan, for about four years; but the *Yokohama Daily News*, a purely Japanese paper, which has recently been started, is meeting with the greatest success. It is a four-page sheet, and is about the size of the *London Illustrated News*, or *Hearth and Home*.

The changes which are taking place throughout Japan in regard to dress are not only numerous but oftentimes amusing. The customs of the West are rapidly coming into fashion, and when the dandies about town endeavour to blend the two styles of America and the Orient, they often appear as funny as do the American Indians when visiting Washington, with their legs enveloped in deer-skins, and their heads covered with black hats. It was only a few days ago that one of the officials of the government was seen passing into one of the public offices dressed entirely like an American gentleman, when the attending messenger stopped him and said, "that foreigners were not admitted without a proper passport;" and when the subordinate discovered his mistake, he was almost ready, in a fit of excitement, to commit hari-kari.

Within the enclosure of his castle the Emperor is now building a residence on the European plan, which will be furnished by the artisans of France.

The ability to read and speak the English language is now considered by the government a quite necessary accomplishment among the leading officials. Not only are English-speaking Japanese preferred for all the important offices, but the government is inaugurating the policy of sending the natives of one part of Japan to another, no matter how remote, to assist in public affairs, whereby the varied interests of the people may be better understood.

#### TAX ON WORDS.

What a pity there is not a tax upon words! what an income the Queen would get from it! but, alas! taxing pays no toll. And if lies paid double, the government might pay off the National Debt; but who could collect the money? Common fame is a common liar. Hearsay is half lies. A tale never loses in telling. As a snow-ball grows by rolling, so does a story. They who walk much lie much. If men only said what was true, what a peaceful world we should see! Silence is wisdom, and, by this rule, wise men and women are scarce. Still waters are the deepest; but the shallowest brooks brawl the most; this shows how plentiful fools must be. An open mouth shows an empty head. If the chest had gold or silver in it, it would not always stand wide open. Talking comes by nature, but it needs a good deal of training to learn to be quiet; yet regard for truth should put a bit in every honest man's mouth, and a bridle upon every good woman's tongue.

#### EXCEEDING ABUNDANTLY.

Rev. Dr. Merle D'Aubigny tells how the riches of divine grace reached his heart:

"We were studying the Epistle to the Ephesians, and had got to the end of the third chapter. When we read the last two verses, 'Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory, etc.,' this expression fell upon my soul like a revelation from God. 'He can do by his power,' I said to myself, 'above all we ask, above all even that we think—very, exceedingly abundantly above all!' A full trust in Christ for the work to be done within my poor heart now filled my soul. We all three knelt down; and although I had never fully confided my inward struggles to my friends, the prayer of Isaac was filled with such admirable faith as he would have uttered had he known all my wants. When I arose in that room at Kiel, I felt as if 'my wings were renewed as the wings of eagles.' From that time forward I comprehended that my own efforts were of no avail; that Christ is able to do all by His power that worketh in us; and the habitual attitude of my soul was to lie at the foot of the cross, crying to Him: 'Here am I, bound hand and foot, unable to move, unable to do the least thing to get away from the enemy who oppresses me. Do all Thyself. I know that Thou wilt do it. Thou wilt even do exceeding abundantly above all that I ask.'

"I was not disappointed; all my doubts were removed, my anguish quelled, and the Lord extended to me 'peace as a river.' Then I could comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge. Then was I able to say, 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.'"

#### SACRIFICE AND CULTURE.

The truth is that the whole culture of the world is built on sacrifice; and all the nobleness in the world lies in that. To show that, it is only necessary to point to those classes of men and spheres of action, which exert the widest influence upon the improvement and welfare of mankind. They will all be found to bear that mark.

Look, first, at the professional teachers of the world—the authors, artists, professors, schoolmasters, clergymen. In returns of worldly goods, their services have been paid less, than any other equal ability and accomplishment in the world. Doubtless there have been exceptions; some English bishops and Roman prelates have been rich; and some authors and artists have gained a modest competence. More are doing it now, and yet more will. But the great body of intellectual laborers, has been poor. The instruction of the world, has been carried on by perpetual sacrifice. A grand army of teachers—authors, artists, school-masters, professors, heads of colleges—have been through ages, carrying on the war against ignorance; but no triumphal procession has been decreed to it; no spoils of conquered provinces have come to its coffers; no crown imperial has invested by pomp and power. In lonely watch-towers the fires of genius have burned, but to waste and consume the lamp of life, while they gave light to the world.

It is no answer to say that the victims of intellectual toil, broken down in health or fortune, have counted their work, a privilege and joy. As well deny the martyr's sacrifice, because he has joyed in his integrity. And many of the world's intellectual benefactors have been martyrs. Socrates died in prison, as a public malefactor; for the healing wisdom he offered his people, deadly poison was the reward. Homer had a lot so obscure, at least, that nobody knew his birthplace; and indeed some modern critics are denying that there ever was any Homer. Plato travelled back and forth from his home in Athens to the court of the Syracusan tyrant, regarded indeed and feared, but persecuted and in peril of life; nay, and once sold for a slave. Cicero shared a worse fate. Dante, all his life knew, as he expressed it,—

"How salt was a stranger's bread,  
How hard the path still up and down to tread,  
A stranger's stairs."

Copernicus and Galileo found science no more profitable than Dante found poetry. Shakespeare had a home; but too poorly endowed to stand long in his name, after he had left it; the income upon which he retired was barely two or three hundred pounds a year; and so little did his contemporaries know or think of him, that the critics hunt in vain for the details of his private life. "The mighty span of his large honours" shrinks to an obscure myth of a life in theatres of London or on the banks of the Avon.—From *"Selfhood and Sacrifice,"* by Rev. O. Dewey, in *OLD AND NEW* for February.

On the coast of Scotland marriages fluctuate with the catch of herrings—no herrings, no weddings and vice versa.

If we must talk, at least let us be free from slander, let us not blister our tongues with backbiting. Slander may be sport to tale-bearers, but it is death to those whom they abuse. We can commit murder with the tongue as well as with the hand. The worst evil you can do a man is to injure his character; as a Quaker said to his dog, "I'll not beat thee, nor abuse thee, but I'll give thee an ill name." All are not thieves that dogs bark at, but they are generally treated as if they were; for the most part believe that where there is smoke there is fire, and what everybody says must be true. Let us then be careful that we do not hurt our neighbour in so tender a point as his character, for it is hard to get dirt off if it is once thrown on; and when a man is once in people's bad books, he is hardly ever quite out of them. If we would be sure not to speak amiss, it might be as well to speak as little as possible; for if all men's sins were divided into two bundles, half of them would be sin of the tongue. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

Gossips of both genders give up the shameful trade of tale-bearing; don't be the devil's bellows any longer, to blow up the fire of strife. Leave off setting people by the ears. If you do not cut a bit off your tongues, at least season them with the salt of grace. Praise God more and blame neighbours less. Any goose can cackle, any fly can find out a sore place, any empty barrel can give forth sound, any briar can turn a man's flesh. No flies go down your throat if you keep your mouth shut, and no evil speaking will come up. Think much, but say little; be quick at work and slow at talk; and, above all, ask the great Lord to set a watch over your lips.—*John Ploughman*.

#### ROBERT MOFFAT AND THE "DOGS."

When the missionary, Robert Moffat, began to preach to the heathen, he was barely of age. On his arrival at the Cape of Good Hope, it was some time before he could get the consent of the government to preach outside the colony. There was a suspicion at that time that missionaries going to the tribes in the interior would carry with them guns and ammunition. During the delay, Moffat's time was not wasted. He lived with a pious Hollander, who taught him Dutch; and when he received the consent of the government he was qualified to preach to the Boers, or Dutch farmers, and their native servants.

On his first start up the country, he begged a night's lodging of a burly farmer, who roared out his refusal like a beast of the forest. The homeless stranger, however, met with a better reception from his wife, and was offered both bed and board.

"Whither bound, and what's your errand?" he was asked; and when he told he was going to Orange River to teach the way of salvation, "What!" was the exclamation, "to that hot, inhospitable region; will the people there, think you, listen to the gospel, or understand it if they do?"

He was then asked by the kind-hearted *frau* to preach to her and her husband, which gave him great delight. The Boer had one hundred Hottentot servants, but these did not appear.

"May none of your servants come in?" Moffat said to the farmer.

"Eh?" roared the man, "Hottentots? Go to the mountains and preach to the baboons; or, if you like, I'll fetch my dogs, and you may preach to them."

The quick-witted missionary, taking the word out of his rough friend's lips, read as his text, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

The text was fastened as a nail in a sure place, as thoroughly as if it had been driven home by a master of assemblies.

"No more of that," cried the Boer, "I'll bring you all the Hottentots in the place."

He was as good as his word. The barn was crowded, and the sermon was preached.

"Who," said the farmer, in a more musical voice, "who hardened your hammer to deal my head such a blow? I'll never object to the preaching of the gospel to Hottentots again."—*The Foreign Missionary*.

Franklin was a printer. Bolivar was a druggist. Mahomet Ali was a barber. Virgil was the son of a potter. Milton was the son of a scavenger. Horace was the son of a shopkeeper. Demosthenes was the son of a cutler. Robert Burns was a plowman in Ayrshire. Shakespeare was the son of a wood stapler. Cardinal Wolsey was the son of a pork butcher. Oliver Cromwell was the son of a London brewer. Whitfield was the son of an innkeeper at Gloucester. Columbus was the son of a weaver, and a weaver himself. John Jacob Astor once sold apples on the streets of New York.