

THE BIBLE STAND IN THE FAIR OF SANTANDER.

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(From *Evanqelical Christendom*).

This is the most important provincial fair, and is attended by people from all parts of the north of Spain. Two years ago I applied for permission to erect a Bible stand in this fair, to the commission that grants the licenses and assigns the places. The commission sent me to the mayor, the mayor turned me over to the governor, and the governor sent me back to the commission,—and so on in a continuous round for three weeks, when the commission blandly told me that the time was up, and that there was no more room on the fair grounds!

This year, at almost the last moment, the colporteur proposed that we repeat the application, but this time to place only a table on the grounds. I assented, as it could do no harm to make the request, but I did not have the slightest hope of its being granted. He made the request of the mayor, who at once replied that no one would be permitted this year to place any open tables in the fair, and that license would be granted only for the erection of stalls or of little houses. "What do you wish to sell?" he asked. The colporteur showed him a copy of the Bible. "This book, in different forms and bindings." The mayor looked it over for a moment: "Well, as I have told you, I do not allow you nor anybody else to place tables on the grounds, but you may put up a house (*casita*) if you like." "But there is not time for that." "That is your look-out. It is not my fault if you have come to late with your application,—but a house you may put up if you will." The mayor had no idea that in the few hours remaining, and those mostly of night-time, we would think of attempting to put up a house,—hence his great liberality. The colporteur hastened to me, and in a moment we decided to accept the offer. Back the colporteur went to the government house. The printed permission was filled in, the locality assigned, and we went our way rejoicing in the providence that had so unexpectedly favoured us.

THE WORK BEGUN.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon of the day before the fair. We hired two intelligent carpenters, bought boards and materials, and, to the amazement of those who had already completed their stands, and the numerous carpenters of the beautiful grounds, began work at four o'clock in the afternoon. Our Catholic carpenters caught the enthusiasm of the rest, and set themselves to the work as though their honour was at stake in finishing it within the allotted time. The happy company worked *all night*, and at ten o'clock next morning the little house was complete! The carpenters, out-doing themselves, not only made a safe and commodious stand for the books, but finishing the open front of about fifteen feet in columns and arches, and with sundry adornments, had produced a really beautiful striking effect. By a singular providence the location was the most conspicuous one in all the fair,—in the very front of the great half circle around which centred the most brilliant illumination, and in which, on all occasions, the people gathered in large numbers.

When at noon of the appointed day the commission passed up the *alameda* to inspect the grounds and stalls, and to open the fair, what was their astonishment to find on our allotment the elegant *kiost* that had sprung up during the night! After looking at it a little while with concealed disgust, they turned away muttering to themselves,—but not without hearing some good-natured exclamations and laughter from the amused bystanders. It was too late now for them to undo the blunder. Our beautiful stand, brilliant at night, the inside walls adorned with Biblical pictures, and the counter and shelves covered with the volumes of varied size and form in which the Scriptures are offered to the Spanish people, attracted the attention of thousands.

WHAT THE STAND ACCOMPLISHED

Many interesting scenes occurred during the following five or six days of the fair,—conversations with curious callers, interviews with priests of whom there were those politic and those furious; the

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