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J. BLACKETT ROBINSON, Manager and Editor

Ottawa, Wednesday, Sept. 28 1904.

"THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS." *

Dr. Jordan has given us in this book an interpretation of Paul which every one must value who has any earnest desire to know more about the foremost man of the race.

It is a book well fitted to answer the needs of the average man who is not a theologian, nor a scientist, but who wants more light on the things that matter most.

Here we see "The great constructive genius of his age" a living man facing the most overwhelming circumstances with an unshaken mind. We are carried back to Philippi and A.D. 60 and we realize "that the revelation which the Great Apostle received from his Master and ours is neither ancient nor modern but power of life through all time."

It is the struggle of the most heroic soul that ever lived so far as we know in an environment the most adverse, inspired by an enthusiasm of humanity the like of which we have no record of in human annals.

We are told that "Paul at this time was often weak and lonely, oppressed with cares and harassed by many distressing circumstances, and yet his letter had a triumphant tone." "The great conquerors entered Rome in triumph acclaimed by the fickle crowd and with broken hearted kings and wretched slaves in their train as visible proofs of their power. Paul came as an obscure captive weary and travel-stained, but he has proved to be a greater force in the world's highest life than any conquering Caesar. The documents he sent from his prison have had more permanent power than the edicts of the emperor."

The book is full of sentences one would like to quote. "Abstentions from a few evil or questionable things may suffice to make a Conventional Christian, but falls far short of the aspiration of a living disciple." "To die is to gain." "That is an utterance of faith, reached not by reason-

ing from a creed but by seeing the real outcome of God-given life." "Paul because he entered so fully into the lives of others stands before us as a man who is rich in nature, noble in spirit, independent in judgment, strong in character." Read the chapter which tells us that he was a Rationalist, a Moralist and a Mystic, and "It is because Paul was all of these things that he was each one in the right way."

This book will prove a friend and charming companion to him who knows how to use it aright. It will help him to face the trials of life with more steadfast front, for the writer has been able to present "that most living and mobile spirit the world has ever seen," in a way that commands our interest and appeals to our best impulses. As Dr. Jordan says himself "These meditations are utterly vain and feeble if they do not assist in deepening the impression that we have here a series of noble utterances worthy of one who being constrained by the love of Christ, poured out his life in the service of humanity."

INTERNAL CONDITION OF RUSSIA.

A correspondent of the London Times, who speaks from personal knowledge, discusses the internal condition of Russia. He points out that freedom of speech is at a considerable discount in other countries as well, but in Russia there are also incalculable and unsuspected restrictions upon freedom of thought. In the sphere of religious belief, for example, secession from the Orthodox Church to German sects is punishable with exile to Siberia and loss of civil rights, while the adoption even of creeds which are not prohibited in Russia is only possible with the sanction of the Minister of the Interior. In any case, for a person to "dissent" from the established Greek faith is to incur the loss of all civil rights, including the *jus parentis*, while a number of administrative restraints are superimposed in addition. Moreover the ecclesiastical authorities possess powers of their own which are independent of the State and of the police. The Consistory Courts are able to condemn even suspected "dissenters" to life long imprisonment in a prison or in a monastery, or to exile them to Siberia. In the matter of political and religious freedom the Jews are, of course, at a notorious disadvantage. They are not allowed to live near the frontier, nor in particular towns nor in specified quarters of certain towns, nor are they permitted to engage in certain trades. With regard to the "freedom" of the Press, the Minister of the Interior may at any time prohibit any journal from accepting advertisements, or from being offered publicly for sale, or from discussing certain topics. The Minister of the Interior, the Minister for Education, the Minister of Justice, and the Procurator of the Holy Synod can at all times suppress any newspaper. In addition to the political censor, there is also an ecclesiastical censor, a censor for military affairs, and a special censorship for public libraries. The right of public meeting lies absolutely and entire-

ly at the discretion of the police, and strikes are in all circumstances forbidden. Elementary education in Russia is at a deplorable level, and yet whosoever teaches his children or causes them to be taught reading or writing without official permission is liable to heavy penalties because the authorities are afraid that the knowledge thus acquired may be put to an unlawful use.

CIRCUMSTANCES ARE OPPORTUNITIES.

Annie Payson Call, in Leslie's Monthly points out that circumstances, however difficult, are always—without exception—opportunities, and not limitations. They are not by any means opportunities for taking us in the direction that our own selfishness would have us go; they are opportunities which are meant to guide us in the direction we most need to follow—in the ways that will lead us to the greatest strength in the end. The most unbelieving of us will admit that "there is a destiny which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may," and it is in the stupid resistance to having our ends shaped for us that we stop and groan at what we call the limitations of circumstances. If we were quickly alert to see where circumstances had placed the gate of opportunity, and then steadily persisted in going through it, it would save the loss of energy and happiness which results from obstinately beating our heads against a stone wall where there is no gate, and where there never can be a gate.

The work of the Protestant deaconesses makes great advances in Germany. Pastor Fliedner opened the first house for deaconesses October 13, 1836. To-day there are 75 such "mother" houses, with 14,501 sisters therein enrolled. These ministrants by the bedside of the sick are scattered over 5,211 fields of labor, including 1,221 hospitals, 48 homes for convalescents, and 313 for incurables. Others are engaged in orphan asylums, founding homes and rescue missions for fallen women. The income of the principal institution is now fourteen million marks. The Church of Scotland deaconesses are doing a good work in that country. There are many cases in which a kindly Christian woman is more useful than any male visitor could be among the poor and lapsed.

Miss Von Petzold has the doubtful honor of being the first woman appointed as a pastor in England. She is, however, not English, but the daughter of a German officer. Also, she is not connected with any of the Evangelical Communions; she has been appointed by a Unitarian congregation in Leicester. Her portrait represents her in face and costume, as much resembling the stage Portia. One remembers the story of the lady preacher who was confronted with the statement of St. Paul against such exercise of female gifts—"Ah, but," said the lady, "that is just where I do not agree with St. Paul."

*Meditations—the most recent work of Rev. Prof. W. G. Jordan D.D., Queen's College, Kingston.