

oath in the fact that he had himself declared it was not binding upon him. In the face of all this the Apostle of Negation and Iconoclastic principles had the hardihood to present himself at the table of the House to take the oath, and what is worse, Government had the temerity to support him in so doing. But to the credit of the House, be it said, they would not provide a majority to support so sacrilegious a proceeding, and the Government were defeated by a majority of over 50. Notwithstanding that a four line whip was issued, some two or three hundred Liberal members kept away from the House altogether. The Government now propose to bring in a measure altering the law so that an Infidel may affirm. Although to my mind this is bad enough, still it is not so bad as allowing a loud-mouthed champion of infidelity to take an oath on the Holy Scriptures and in the name of Him whom he is constantly blaspheming. So I apprehend the latter measure will pass. That will be an important departure in British politics and it is thus I have dwelt at length on the matter.

Her Majesty the Queen is noted for her strong sympathies. It appears she has shewn this virtue to a remarkable degree during the illness of the late Earl of Beaconsfield. After the late Earl's death, when it was rumoured that Her Majesty intended paying a visit to the grave before its being finally closed, many accepted the rumours as idle gossip. But to-day (the 2nd May) we have a full account in the papers of Her Majesty having visited Hughenden Church on Saturday to have a farewell look at the burial-place of her favourite Minister. She was accompanied by the Princess Beatrice, and drove the whole of the way in an open carriage from and to Windsor Castle. The affair was kept quite a secret, and no one except the parties engaged in the journey, &c., was aware of the visit till all was over. Her Majesty and the Princess each placed a wreath of flowers in porcelain on the coffin.

Family Department.

LYRA MISSIONARIA — II.

ANTESIGNANI.

[Written for the Church Guardian.]

The trumpet sounds: the legion lines
Stream with their Eagles to the port:
Before those glittering signs
One champion band leaps from the sheltering fort!

Their hickering brands the first to show:
Through targe and iron helm to crash;
At every panting blow,
Life's reeking torrent answers from the gash!

Yet 'twixt the standards and the foe,
They fall, as fall the straggling trees
When deadly tempests blow
On to the marshalled groves that swell the breeze.

And though they stem the bloody tide,
Long e'er the standards reach the fight,
They shall not see them glide
Calm to the evening camp in Victory's light!

Still must it be, where hosts have held
At the swords point their conquering way,
Far in their front, are felled
The unrecked heroes of the desperate day!

Or patriot oath, or victim wraith,
Or Nazarene vows, some spirits high
Sets in the blast of death.
Their lot is separation, and to die!

Fatherless, friendless, where no hand
Can shield or save their onward speed,
A superhuman band,
The victors who before the battle bleed!

Nor vainly, tho' alone they faced
The flame of hate, the shriek of scorn
Upon the trampled waste,
Now placid in the beam of Truth new-born!

Nor vainly still, in distant post
Of peril, foremost meet the fray—
The standards of the host
Soon! soon shall follow on their hard-won way!

Torn from the crowd, mid haunts of crime,
In forest, on wild shore to stand,
Brothers! in God's good time,
Fail tho' ye may, His light shall fill the land.

W. E. W.

SOMETHING OF THE LITERARY HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

No. I.

Compiled by the Curate of Yarmouth.

Dr. Johnson relates in his "Lives of the Poets" that he visited Collins, a genius of no mean name, in his latter days, when he was broken down by physical weakness and mental anxiety. He had withdrawn from study, and he travelled with no other book than a small one, such as children might carry to school. When his friend took it in his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen,—“I have but one book,” said Collins, “but that is the best.” It was the New Testament.

In Western Pennsylvania there is said to be a Bible which has been in different sections of the same family for many years. A long time ago, in France, when by means of the Inquisition it was sought to put an end to the reading of the Bible by the com-

mon people, this copy was successfully concealed and kept by being tacked to the bottom of a common wooden stool in a poor man's house—even though on one occasion the officer, wearied with his vain search for the hidden treasure, sat on that very stool to rest himself.

In the State of Ohio there is now carefully preserved another Bible which was saved from seizure under similar circumstances by being baked in a loaf of bread.

We are all more or less familiar with the history of the brilliant French writer, Voltaire, an avowed opponent of Christianity. With an overweening idea of his own intellectual power, he bought a printing press, and employed it for issuing tracts against the religion of Jesus, boasting that before he died he would overthrow all belief in the truth of the Bible. After the infidel's death that printing press was bought, and, simple though its construction was, it was used for printing many copies of that Sacred Book it was intended to destroy.

Did we know no more than such simple stories as these concerning this Book, even they would, I think, excite in our minds at least a passing curiosity to know more.

Literary men have considered it as of sufficient interest to record that Dr. Allibone was engaged for more than 16 years on his great work called the "Dictionary of Authors." Gilhoun, eloquent and great as a writer, was occupied for 20 years on the history of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Dr. Adam Clarke spent 26 years in writing his commentary. Bancroft gave 35 laborious years to his history; while Webster gave his huge Dictionary 36. If these be points of interest, then we are at once aroused when we know that from the time that the foundation of this grand structure was laid, more than 1500 years elapsed before the last inspired architect stood upon the finished work and pronounced that all was done.

It is not only the captivating language and deep plot of the story that give its interest to the unfinished state of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood"; but because, ere it was completed, Charles Dickens's hand was still in death, and a nation wept around his grave. But here, before this vast revelation of mysteries was finished, one writer after another, to the number of perhaps 40, had laid them down to die, before St. John took up his pen to write that simple, and yet deep story of *Incarnate Love*—the last written of the Books of the New Testament and the Bible—which commences, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."

"Of making many Books," says the wise man, "there is no end." We know, however, that of the "many" so written, comparatively few are from their own original language translated into any other, and a still smaller number survive the centuries to be read by posterity with as great a zest as by the earliest readers. But here we have a Book made up of what were at first detached portions, written in different parts of the earth far distant from each other—amid desert wanderings, in the luxury of a palace, in the familiar homes of Jerusalem, under the very shadow of the Temple of Jehovah, and in mournful exile on the banks of the River Chebar, and, in later days, on missionary journeys; from the prisons of Rome; and, perhaps, in banishment "in the Isle that is called Patmos." This Book, in its different portions has been read and studied, and pondered over by an ever widening circle of readers for considerably more than 3,000 years;—it has been translated from its original tongues into at least 210 languages and dialects—(Sample & Newton)—and during the year 1874 one single Society distributed no less than 2,619,427 Bibles, or portions of the Bible.

It is believed that there are altogether about 70 Bible Societies in the world. The issues of 7 of these may be summarized as follows:—

B. & F. Bible Society,	73,750,538
American Bible Society,	31,893,332
National Bible Society, Scotland,	4,563,069
Prussian Bible Society, Berlin,	4,083,413
Hibernian Bible Society,	3,962,581
Württemberg Bible Society,	1,279,966
Netherlands Bible Society,	1,258,643
Total,	120,792,142

In, say the last 70 years. To most minds, columns of figures belong to a class of reading usually known as "dry," but these cannot but be of interest to all.

But if we are seeking for reasons why everything connected with our Bibles should be of interest to us, we can rise higher than mere statistics even such as these. There is a touching pathos in the story of the courtier of the Northumbrian King, who, in council with his master and fellow-nobles in Early British history, when it was being discussed whether or no Paulinus the Missionary should be allowed to preach, was bold enough and thoughtfulness enough to say, "Man's life is like a little sparrow, which, whilst your Majesty is feasting by the fire in your apartment with your royal retinue, flies in at one window, and out of another. Indeed, we see it that short time it remaineth in the house, and then it is well sheltered from wind and weather; but presently it passeth from cold to cold, and whence it comes and whither it goes, we are altogether ignorant."

"Thus we can give some account of our soul during its abode in the body, while housed and harboured therein; but where it was before, and how it fareth after, is to us altogether unknown. If, therefore, the preaching of Paulinus will certainly inform

us herein, he deserveth, in my opinion, to be entertained."—(Bede Ec. His. ii. 13.)

And a blessing, indeed, above all price is that Book which has given to us the Divine Revelation respecting the destiny of man, and the realm into which he enters when the hand of Death, as the messenger of God, dismisses the soul from the body. Of that Book, in its integrity, we can do no less than echo the words of Bishop Horne, himself a great and learned student of it. "It has God for its Author, truth, without any admixture of error, for its matter, and the salvation of man for its end and aim;" or we may recite the words of our own Sixth Article, "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it ought to be believed, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

The names which, in all ages, have been applied to this Book, or portions of it, are themselves proofs of the high respect with which it has always been regarded. Among the Jews, to whom we know were first "committed the oracles of God," separate names were given to the several collections of Books as grouped by themselves, which we cannot here notice further than to say that these divisions were referred to by our Lord and His Apostles, as, e. g., when they spoke of the "Law and the Prophets," or Moses and the Prophets, or St. Peter's reference to "The Book of Psalms," but in so far as the Jews wanted one word for the whole of what we call the Old Testament, they used the term *Mikra* (what is read or recited), and, though in a restricted sense, the word "*Kethubim*," or "*Writings*," which last readily reminds us of our Lord's mode of quoting the Scripture, as, indeed, was customary, with the *præfate*, "*It is written*." It may be interesting to note here in passing that the sacred book of the Mohometans is called the *Koran* (*Korawan*), the meaning of which is the same—the "*Writings*."

Among the early Fathers of the Christian Church it was very common to speak of the "*Sacred Books*," until in the Western Churches the name of *Biblia Sacra* became the ordinary title. The word *Bible*, as now used by us, was not known to our Saxon forefathers; they used "*Ge-writ*," or the "*Writing*." "*Bible*," Bishop Ellicott says, came into use through the Norman conquest and the prevalence of French. Chaucer uses it in his earlier poems (House of Fame, book iii., l. 244), "Men might make of them a bible 20 foot thick;" where the word is evidently applied to any book; but in the prologue to the *Canterbury Tales* (l. 437), his latest work, it stands as "*The Bible*," with its new, distinctive honors—"The study of this doctor of physic was but little on the Bible."

For the great division which we have long been accustomed to make of Old and New Testaments, I can but refer you to St. Paul's words in his 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, iii. 6-14.

Speaking generally, we may say that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New in Greek; but were we exact, we would point out that certain small portions of some of the later books of the Old Testament were written in the Chaldee language, because the Jews, while in captivity in Babylon, had become more familiar with that tongue than with Hebrew. If I do not weary you with too close attention to details, I would particularize—Ezra from 8th verse of 4th chap. to 18th verse of 6th chap., and chap. vii., verses 12-26, inclusive, were written in Chaldee, probably because it was desired to record the *original words* which those portions contain. The prophet Daniel was, we remember himself one of the "children of the captivity," we will not, therefore, be greatly surprised to learn that 200 verses of this prophecy are written in *Chaldee*, viz., from 4th verse of chap. 2, to the end of chap. 7. "But his remaining prophecies," says Bishop Newton, "are written in Hebrew, because they treat altogether of affairs subsequent to the times of the Chaldeans, and relate not at all to them, but principally to the Church and people of God." One other single verse there is in the Chaldee language, the 11th of the 10th chap. or Jeremiah, and the reason is thus plainly given by the learned Dr. Lowth—"As if the prophet designed to put these words in the mouths of the Jews, wherewith they might make a public profession of their faith in the true God, and be able to answer the heathens that would entice them to idolatry. In all, these Chaldee verses number 268."

Since the time of the return of Judah from the Babylonian Captivity (about 535 B.C.), there have been two copies of the Pentateuch or 5 Books of Moses, the one, that of the Jews, and the other, in the possession of the Samaritans. When we remember that these two peoples were for centuries bitterly hostile to each other so that "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans," we would readily suppose that a comparison of the two could not but tend to a confirmation of the truth, since the versions might act as mutual checks, each upon the other. There has been, even among scholars of high repute, considerable variety of sentiment upon this point; but Gesenius has, by a masterly dissertation, pointed out that, as a whole, the Samaritan Pentateuch cannot, because of its errors, be used as a means of correcting the Hebrew text. Were the case otherwise, a brief glance at the origin and history of the Samaritans and the interesting causes of the enmity existing between them and the Jews would have been in order; but under these circumstances it would be beyond our purpose.

(To be continued.)

OUR LORD'S ASCENSION.

How glorious to the Christian is the fact of Christ's Resurrection—the hope of his own Resurrection and Eternal Life. Says the Apostle, and the Festival of Easter has revived the blessed news, "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." And again "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Having this hope, we are taught by another Apostle to "purify ourselves even as Christ is pure." Having been buried in His grave (by baptism into His death) "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." And yet, knowing our sinful disposition, and feeling our weakness, how can we overcome sin; how can we grow strong? The blessed promise of Christ is beginning to be fulfilled. "It is expedient for you that I go away. If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you." Says the Apostle, "If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." Truly then, the Ascension which seemed so terrible a loss brings great comfort to the soul. "It is needful for you that I go away," the Saviour had said. Yes, needful for the outpouring of His Holy Spirit, that in His strength we might overcome sin, needful, so that we might have an Advocate with the Father—ever living to make intercession for us. What a precious truth to know that the Son of Man has taken His Glorified Body into the Eternal Heavens, assuring us that we, too, in Him, and by the power of His Holy Spirit, shall become Immortal, and hereafter forever dwell with God above. "Seeing, then, that we have a Great High Priest that is passed into the Heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession; for we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Though we come short in everything and find, after all our efforts, that we have seemed to gain nothing in conformity to Christ's image, yet we are to press forward still, in the eager desire and determination in everything to be true followers of Him.

THE EDITOR'S BOX.

(All questions to be addressed to "Church Guardian," Box 120, Moulton, N. B.)

13. Will you or any one of your numerous readers kindly inform me how far the golden vessels of the Temple can be traced after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans? I have seen it stated that they are now at the bottom of the sea, having been lost by shipwreck with other treasure while being taken from Rome by the Goths. Is there any truth in this?
 QUERIST.

Ans. After the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, the Emperor Titus had the golden candlestick and the golden table of shew-bread, the silver trumpets and the book of the law taken out of the temple and carried to Rome, and Vespasian placed them in a temple consecrated to Peace. Our library does not furnish any further information as to their history. Perhaps some of our readers could throw some light upon it.

14. What is the most accurate explanation of "spoken by Jeremy" in St. Matt. xxvii. 9?
 QUERIST.

Ans. It appears to us that undoubted reference is here made to Zechariah ix. 12, 13. Some, however, suppose that there is an allusion to the potter's field in Jer. xviii. 2, 3, and in the reference to the valley of the son of Hinnom in connection with the "potter's earthen bottle" in Jer. xix. 2, Chrysostom and Eusebius, supported by Bishop Wordsworth, suppose that in the first instance it was delivered by Jeremiah. We incline to the opinion that the solution accepted by Keil and many others is the correct one, viz., that it was the error of a very old copyist, who substituted Jeremiah for Zechariah. He lived probably before the earliest of the critical helps which have come down to us. Errors of a similar nature have crept into the text at later periods. The contraction *Zerion* may have been altered to *Iron*, and then *Jeremion*. It is right, however, to say that some authorities give a probable solution by holding that the pure text was *dia ton propheton*, and that no prophet was mentioned. The Peschito, Syriac and Italic translators have not *Jeremion* in their copies, and Augustine testifies that some of the *Codices* have the word prophet only.

15. Is there not an error in Chronology in the article upon "The Harvest Moon" in the GUARDIAN of April 14th, when the writer states that 430 years before Israel's departure out of Egypt Joseph's family came into Egypt?
 Respectfully yours, &c.,

A READER OF THE GUARDIAN.

Ans. If our inquirer will turn to 12th Exodus, 40, 41, it will be seen that the writer of the article did not incorrectly state the facts, although a little explanation may be needed. Four hundred and thirty years before the Exodus Abraham arrived in the land of Canaan, and 215 years afterwards Jacob went down into Egypt. The 430 years are counted from Abraham's (the head of Joseph's family) going into Canaan, and the Scriptures so express it.