

## The Home Mission Journal.

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This Bible as Literature and Much More.

ROBERT STUART MACARTHUR.

XVII

(Continued from last issue.)

Often Misinterpreted.

A statement of some of the characteristics of the Bible in this lecture and in other lectures in this course will help those who hear and read these words, better to understand and to use this celestial weapon. It is to be affirmed that few books have been so greatly misrepesented as the Word of God. Many critics have misrepresented it because of their profound ignorance of its design and its substance. They have practically acted upon the principle which governed Sydney Smith, who it is said, affirmed that he did not read books which he was to review; the reading of the volumes might prejudice the judgment which he might form and express. It would be simply risible on our part, if the act were not so culpable on their part, but so many critics of the Word of God have written out of their ignorance and not from their knowledge, and that so many others have been governed by a spirit of malevolence in their treatment of the Bible. This spirit is manifested on every page of their writings. Their criticisms are far less malefic than they otherwise would be, because the evil spirit which inspired them is so constantly manifested. They write with a bitterness difficult to explain, were it not for the deep-seated evil in the human heart. Still others, like Rousseau, oppose the book because it condemns the sins to which they are inclined. When the Bible condemns our sins, we must either turn against the sins or against the preacher, and the truth which points out the sins which thus bring us into condemnation. Many critics of the Bible get their opinions at second hand, and seem to go much farther back in order to find the origin of their opposition to the inspired word. No one can read the current literature in opposition to the Bible without discovering that many of the opinions and criticisms of to-day are just the revamped objections of Volney, Paine and others of their class. The objections to the Bible are simply old faces with new faces. The Bible has long been in ecclesiastical warfare with the Malakoff tower was during the Crimean war. We remember that fierce battle was waged around this historic tower. The number and ferocity of these battles indicate the importance which friend and foe attached to the possession of this stronghold. It was felt that here was the key to the opening of Russia to the allied forces. General Todleben erected earthworks and fortifications by his rare genius, and these works for many months kept the armies of France and England at bay. The Malakoff and the Redan, now historically familiar, were the most formidable of these fortifications. The siege of Sebastopol, the "angust city," ranks among the most famous sieges in history. It lasted for eleven months. These famous towers sustained repeated bombardments. Finally, on September 8th, 1855, the Malakoff and Redan were captured, and the Russians were forced to evacuate these strong holds.

Though our Malakoff may be violently attacked, it can never be captured. The Bible possesses a vitality all its own. What has been said of the

church may with literal truth be said of the Bible; it is an anvil which has worn out a great many hammers, and it certainly is prepared to wear out a great many more. If men but knew the Bible, they could not help but admire it for its archaic history, its seraphic poetry, its resistless logic, and its profound spirituality. Sir Thomas Lawrence tells us that when he visited the famous picture galleries at Rome, at first he saw but little to attract his attention and to evoke his admiration. But he soon discovered that the fault was not in the picture galleries, but in himself. He was too unfamiliar with the treasures of art stored in these famous galleries fully to appreciate them when his first visit was made. We are told that for six successive months he continued his visit daily, day after day; as the artistic sense was developed in his soul, remarkable beauties appeared in the paintings. Where at first he saw nothing to win admiration, later he saw transcendent beauty. Locke has well said that it takes a sunny eye to see the sun. So it takes a clear eye, a true life, and a pure heart rightly to see the glory of God and to feel his presence on the pages of his inspired book. This blessed book is an overflowing fountain, unexhausted and inexhaustible. For these hundreds of years it has flowed through the centuries, and its stream is undiminished to-day, as it goes scattering untold blessings on its joyous way. The Bible is like the sun in the abundance of light which emanates from it, and in the variety of blessings of which it is the source. It comes of us to-day with all its original beauty and power. All its true students find it to be an armory filled with weapons of celestial temper, a divine laboratory of roborant medicines, and a mine deep as the heart of the earth and abounding in noblest wealth. Its truths fall upon our souls softly as the dew, and yet they are resistless in their power as the storm. If men were robbed of the Bible, the world to many would be as if it were without a fountain or a flower, and all life would be without charm, and death would be without hope.

(To be Continued.)

With this issue we begin a narrative of personal reminiscences and experiences connected with the Civil War in the United States. As a faithful recital of the perils of that time we commend it to our readers. The articles recently appeared in the *Chicago Standard*, and were widely read, but as few of our subscribers see that paper we reprint them as a serial. We have no doubt the exciting events related will interest our readers and cause them to be devoutly thankful that they live in a land of peace.

Within The Lines.

Reminiscences of The Civil War.

By MRS. M. M. HUNTINGTON.

I.

Looking back over the lapse of half a century to my girlhood among the Green Mountains of Vermont, it seems to me that no girl was ever so happy or blessed as I. I was married to a young physician whose health failed in a few years from overwork, and in the fall of 1851 we went to Georgia to spend a few months, taking with us our little son Henry, then one year old.

What a change from the town we left in October, so cold and dreary, wrapped in rain and sleet, to Macon, where the roses were in full bloom in an atmosphere as soft and balmy as that of the month of June! What a source of interest were the quiet ways of the people and the funny ways of the Negroes! But a few weeks passed and the novelty wore off. The ways and faces became wearisome and strange, oftentimes seeming cold and distant.

One morning a jovial southerner, noticing my despondent looks, laughingly prophesied that in ten years all the dogs in Georgia would fail to drive me away. Vexed as I was with him then, I found it even so. I grew to love the South and its people. My husband had intended to remain but a few months, but gaining his strength by

degrees and being successful in business, months and years glided by. We flitted back and forth through the summer, sometimes from choice, sometimes from necessity.

When we went north in the fall of 1860 we found much excitement among our friends, who urged us not to return. One said in laughing bravado: "If you go back, we will come down there and destroy you; burn your houses, demolish your gardens and drive you back in fear and trembling." "You cannot do it," I returned, "you do not know the southern people!" "Oh, yes," he answered, "I know they are plucky, but we are too many for them." I thought often of that prophecy afterward, made in jest but fulfilled in earnest. With sad, anxious hearts we bade our friends good-bye and returned to our southern home, only to find the excitement even more intense than at the North. They would not have Abe Lincoln rule over them! Our home, interest and many sincere friends were in the South. While in the North were the friends and relations of our childhood. We, together with many southerners, were bitterly opposed to secession and did not believe that there would be a war or that a war could end favorably to the South.

In the spring of 1861, after many of the states had seceded, we thought seriously of going North, but we had recently moved to Atlanta. The location was healthful, beautiful; favorable for my husband's business, and we could not leave without great sacrifice. Nor could we believe the war would be of any length, even if there should be fighting. Eut active military preparations were going on, more thorough and extensive than we could have supposed. The southern papers were full of inflammatory matter, and exciting stories, and the northern papers were fast being suppressed, among them the leading journal of the day, the *New York Tribune*. No further proof than that a person took it was necessary to establish his disloyalty to the South. Northerners everywhere were looked upon with distrust. We soon found ourselves cut off from intercourse with our neighbors, though some personal friends would not believe amiss of us and treated us kindly.

Looking back upon it now, it seems perfectly natural that we should have been regarded with coolness. It no doubt seemed unnatural to them that we should enter to any great degree into a course that would bring us into direct opposition to our own flesh and blood and all the teachings of our childhood. No wonder they wished us away. I remember one, a plain-spoken southern girl, said: "I wish those northerners were all back where they came from; we don't want them here."

That hurt me; then, it seemed such a cruel thrust.

The evening we received the news of the fall of Fort Sumter a small party of us were at a mineral spring, where we were joined by a friend just from town, who said with some excitement, for he was a northern man heart and soul, "Fort Sumter has fallen!" One of the party, an enthusiastic little southern girl, clapped her hands and hurrahed, when, glancing around at the sober faces of the rest of us, she said with evident disgust: "Oh, I forgot you were all Yankees!" How could we rejoice at what seemed the knell of our bright hopes.

(To be Continued.)

You may as thoroughly misinterpret the gospel by teaching its truths out of proportion, as by directly misrepresenting those truths. The teachings of the faith are related to each other, and the man who can only see one thing in the New Testament, does not see that as it was intended that he should see it.

The Apostle Paul enjoins us to show mercy with cheerfulness. One may show mercy with such a sour, churlish, and disagreeable spirit that all the beauty of the virtue disappears.

It is men of faith, not men of means that do God's work.