

many years closed against missionary effort voices are raised entreating, "Come over and help us." China and Japan have flung wide their gates to the Gospel; without let or hindrance from the governments of these lands, Christ may be preached, and His glorious salvation made known. Thibet is almost the only land that up to the present refuses to give encouragement to missionary effort, but even here some are ready, at least, to listen. India with its teeming population, and Africa with its countless millions, are rapidly being evangelized, and the Church is in the forefront of the battle.

Brethren, what are you going to do? What part are you willing to take in this mighty contest between the powers of light and the powers of darkness? Surely our baptismal and confirmation vows pledge us to the great Master's service, to fight His battles and partake of His victories. Shall we "as good soldiers of Jesus Christ" obey His commands, or refuse to do so? Upon you each rests this solemn responsibility.

Brethren, the time is short; already is heard the sound of the King's chariot wheels. We know not at what moment He will come, and when He shall come, to those who have neglected His parting command, He will say, "I never knew you; depart;" but to those who from the heart have prayed, "Thy kingdom come," and who have endeavored, according to their means and opportunities, to "hasten his coming," He will say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

### Books and Periodicals Department.

*Quo Vadis.* By Henryk Sienkiewicz. Translated from the Polish by Jeremiah Curtin. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

This is a stirring tale of the days of Nero and the struggles of early Christianity with the monster power of paganism. The author, translator, and publishers have all done their work well, and have produced a handsome book of absorbing interest. The author writes as if possessed of full classical knowledge. He has studied well the characteristics of the age about which he writes, and, as everyone knows, it was a dreadful age. He lays bare the heartless cruelty, the incredible depravity, the hopeless misery of the Roman people—the cold oppression of the wealthy, with their refined and excessive luxuries, the wretched condition of the slaves and the poor—all is vividly pictured. And at the root of this rotten tree there is the gnawing of a new power, despised, misrepresented, ridiculed, but destined to bring it down and grow up in its place, purified and healthy, and capable of checking the terrific evil that there is in man. Such was the Christian religion, represented by St. Peter and St. Paul (both of whom are made to take their part in the development of the book), and by Christians of all kinds and in all ranks of life. It would take a long article to review this book properly, the characters are so numerous and their peculiarities so striking. For this we have no room, but would refer the book to anyone who wishes to learn something of the darkest period of pagan history, preceding the dawn of a new day, ushering in a pure and holy faith destined to subdue the world.

(1) *The Expositor.* (2) *The Clergyman's Magazine.* London: Hodder & Stoughton.

In the December *Expositor* Principal Fairbairn continues his suggestive article on "Christ's Attitude to His Own Death," and the Rev W. W. Peyton weaves together a number of thoughts, not often dwelt upon, regarding the massacre of the babes of Bethlehem, as an unhappy inheritance which came upon them from the history of their country and the degeneration of their parents. From this he deduces many things regarding "Vicarious Heredity," which are well worthy of thoughtful consideration. Dr. Wright has another of his entertaining articles on the topography of Palestine, the present one bearing the title of "The Home Land of Jesus." "It is impossible," he says, "to point out with certainty any spot on which our blessed Lord stood; and it is well, the tendency to degrade sacred places with mean superstitions being so human. We can, however, mark in broad outline the boundaries of His earthly wanderings, and fill in with ample details the hamlets and hills and glens among which He lived His lowly life."

In *The Clergyman's Magazine* Principal Moule treats of "The Philippian Alms for St. Paul." How wonderful and how refreshing indeed is the study of such a document as St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians! What depths of humanity are touched by it, and what deep searchings of heart does it arouse! The Advent and Christmas thoughts of this magazine are valuable.

*Sunday Hours for Boys and Girls.* London: The Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row, E.C.

The Religious Tract Society has a soft place in its heart for boys and girls. Its *Boy's Own Paper* and *Girl's Own Paper* have greatly interested the young people for years, and has imparted to them a large amount of useful information, but now the society, in addition to these favorite periodicals, has produced a new monthly designated as above. It is designed for supplying good reading for boys and girls after church and school on Sundays. From the attractive style of the book, it will doubtless be read on week days as well as Sundays. We have already noticed the weekly edition of this "juvenile," but we are pleased to note that a monthly part is now published, in which the weekly pages are bound together. This new venture, published at sixpence a month, ought to receive hearty support.

The other publications of the Religious Tract Society are quite up to the usual mark. *The Sunday at Home* has, among many other things, an article by Rev. A. R. Buckland, on the late Archbishop Magee, and an interesting sketch of "Zanzibar and the Universities' Mission," illustrated from original drawings by Bishop Tucker and from photographs. The frontispiece picture, "Prayer in the Desert," is very beautiful. In *The Leisure Hour*, Marie E. Belloc has a pleasing article on "Future Kings," with portraits of boys and girls who are the present heirs to thrones. The "Sense of Direction in Animals," by Charles Dixon, is continued.

*The Homiletic Review.* New York and Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Co. \$2.50 a year.

*The Homiletic Review* for December, 1896, worthily closes Vol. xxxii. with a very full and complete "index" of departments, authors, subjects, and texts. In addition to the usual representative sermons, from Professor Walker, of the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary of Virginia; President Henry G. Weston, of Crozier Theological Seminary; Bishop John F. Hurst, of Washington, etc., there is a very timely and suggestive collection of Christmas sermons, thoughts, and texts from the German, English, and American pulpit. Dr. Gregory gives an original and striking exposition of "Mark, the Gospel for the Roman," in which he furnishes the natural key to that gospel, while showing its relation to the others. The symposium on the bicycle question is largely in favor of clergymen using the silent steed. Why such an easy, expeditious, and inexpensive means of locomotion should not be used by clergymen we are at a loss to see.