

tion on these led to its writing. The next question that presented itself to his mind was, Should it be published? He first sent the letter to Ingersoll himself, who, after reading, returned it, stating that there was nothing in it to which he could object, only that he did not accept its conclusions. It was then submitted to President McCosh, the late President Hopkins, Judge Harlan, of the Supreme Court, and to General Lew Wallace, the author of "Ben Hur," all of whom urged its publication. It ought to be widely circulated and read with candour, as it is eminently fitted to be helpful to many. As a popular plea for Christianity, it is as timely as it is able.

STUDY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

PROFESSOR HARPER, of Yale University, has called attention to a question of great educational importance. He has for some time been advocating the introduction of the study of the English Bible as a text book in the colleges of America. It does seem strange that ancient classics should have held almost undisputed sway so long in the universities and colleges of both continents while this, not to speak of its religious and moral value, the greatest of English classics may be said to have almost no place. Considering the world-wide influence that the English Bible has exerted, it is at least singular that a proposal for its introduction as a recognized study should hardly have been made till now. To the student of theology and the preacher of the Gospel, a knowledge of the Scriptures in the original is essential, but for students in general the study of the Bible in their own language is no less important.

It is too often taken for granted that acquaintance with the contents of Scripture is far more general than it is. Many young men well-informed in many respects are by no means so familiar with the history and teaching of the sacred Scriptures as one might suppose. The age of dreamy indifference is past. The utilitarian in education, as in all else, is the prevailing tendency. The cry is only for what is practical, and that too often only in its most sordid sense. The young man who is studying for any of the learned professions other than the clerical, if not possessed of strong religious convictions, is disposed to ask, What benefit will Bible study be to me? It is only a distraction from what is most serviceable in the life work I have chosen. I have more than enough to master without giving up my precious time now to a book which I can read any day. This mode of reasoning may be very practical, and in view of the real value of the Bible to a man in any walk of life, most superficial, yet by not a few it is acted upon. Were the Old Testament a prescribed study for a certain period in a college curriculum, many who would not think of bestowing attention on it otherwise would not only derive great benefit but might come to make the Bible the man of their counsel.

Professor Harper has been in correspondence with the heads of a number of American colleges, and has published their replies to his inquiries. It is significant that though there are diversities of opinions as to whether such study should be prescribed or elective, there is remarkable unanimity of belief that there should be such study in all the higher seats of learning. In some of them the study of the English Bible is not altogether neglected. From the expressions of opinion on the subject which appear in *The Old Testament Student* for September, one or two are placed before the reader. President Seelye, of Amherst College, Mass., says:

The effort to secure a larger study of the Bible in our colleges is one of the healthiest signs of the times. Such an effort should be successful, on any theory of the college course. The study of the Bible is the most interesting of all studies and the most important. Whatever we may think of its origin, or its contents, no other book has had such wide relations to the history of mankind, and, judging from its actual effects alone, no other book has such power to stimulate thought and to discipline thought. I believe that the college which studies it most will be the purest and the strongest. If this be true its enlarged study is certainly feasible. Anything can be done which is truly desirable, and if other courses have to give way to this, any loss thereby occasioned will be more than compensated.

The practice of President McCosh, of Princeton, N. J., is thus described by him:

I may state that in this college every student is under Bible instruction once a week. Nearly the whole of this is connectedly the English Bible, viz., the Old and New Testaments. In the academic department, however, we use the Greek Testament with the sophomores, taking them through the Gospel according to St. John. The end we

have in view is solely religious instruction for the benefit of the student. The plan is well adapted for this purpose. We cannot take our students through every chapter of the Bible, but we take up various parts of the Bible.

Only one more extract from the pen of Dr. William C. Gray, the versatile and accomplished editor of the *Chicago Interior*, need here be given:

The editor of *The Old Testament Student* asks my opinion of the "advisability and feasibility of making the study of the English Bible a part of the regular college curriculum, at least as an elective." It will be admitted that the college ought to do the best it can for the intellectual development, discipline and furnishing of the student. I leave moral, and much more religious considerations out of view, and base the conclusion solely upon the effect of the study of the Scriptures upon the intellect. I will take the liberty of referring to a highly distinguished living journalist, Mr. Murat Halstead, of the Cincinnati *Commercial Gazette*, for an example. Mr. Halstead never has been a believer in the Bible as a product of divine inspiration. If he has ever read it for spiritual guidance, it is since the time when we were fellow students. And yet any one who will study Mr. Halstead's literary style will see that he has been a close and appreciative Bible student. His marvellously clear, strong and elegant English is constantly enriched, reinforced and dignified with biblical allusions. Mr. Halstead never would, in my opinion, have reached the position he now holds in literature had he not received, from Dr. Robert H. Bishop, thorough drill in the Bible as a classic. As a classic, the Bible is wholly unapproachable by any other. Let a writer draw an illustration or an authority from Homer, and nine-tenths of his readers will receive an unpleasant reminder of their ignorance of the Greek. But let him draw upon the Scriptures, and all those readers will catch the flash of the light and delight in it. There has been no eminent English writers in the past whose writings fail to show familiarity with this wonderful classic. I hold it to be impossible for a writer or speaker to attain his best, or even any considerable eminence, without it. He must have his English, he must catch its tone, he must be familiar with its principles, or he never can sway the minds and hearts of the populace.

Books and Magazines.

BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER. A Story of the Great Rebellion. By John R. Musick. (New York and Chicago: J. S. Ogilvie & Co.)—This well-written and interesting story forms one of the volumes of the Fireside Series.

THE CANADIAN CONGREGATIONAL YEAR BOOK. Edited by Rev. William Wye Smith. (Toronto: Congregational Publication Co.)—The Congregational Year Book for 1887-8 is of goodly proportions, having no fewer than 282 pages. It contains a very full record of the proceedings of the Unions, the condition and progress of the educational and missionary associations connected with the Church, also reports of individual congregations and much other interesting and useful material.

THE ENGLISH ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE. (New York: Macmillan & Co.)—The September number completes another volume of this superb magazine. The frontispiece, an exquisitely-engraved "Study of a Head," by Bourne Jones, is a thing of beauty. The interesting description of "A Visit in a Dutch Country House" is concluded. G. F. Russell Baker contributes a capital paper on "Westminster School." F. Marion Crawford's powerful novel, "Marzio's Crucifix," and B. L. Farjeon's "A Secret Inheritance," reach their conclusion in this number. The illustrations are numerous and of decided excellence.

THE PLEASURES OF LIFE. By Sir John Lubbock, Bart, M.P. (London and New York: Macmillan & Co.; Toronto: Williamson & Co.)—The distinguished scientist was frequently called upon to distribute prizes, and deliver brief addresses, to students in English educational institutions. The chapters in this little work were the speeches delivered on these occasions, though he tells us in his preface that he has eliminated from them all local colouring. He also says, "Being myself naturally rather prone to suffer from low spirits, I have at several of these gatherings taken the opportunity of dwelling on the privileges and blessings we enjoy." The themes on which he interestingly discourses are The Duty of Happiness, The Happiness of Duty, A Song of Books, the Choice of Books, The Blessing of Friends, The Value of Time, The Pleasures of Travel, The Pleasures of Home, Science, Education.

RECEIVED:—SHOPPELL'S MODERN HOUSES, an illustrated architectural monthly (New York: Co-operative Building Plan Association), **THE WOMAN'S MAGAZINE** (Brattleboro', Vt.: Frank E. Housh & Co.), **THE NEW MOON,** a people's magazine for old and young (Lowell, Mass.: The New Moon Publishing Co.), **VICK'S MAGAZINE** (Rochester: James Vick), **STATISTICAL ABSTRACT AND RECORD** for Year 1886 (Ottawa: The Department of Agriculture).

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN ASIA.

There are no Protestant missions in Beluchistan, Afghanistan, in the French possessions of Anam and Tonquin, or in Siberia and the adjoining countries under Russian rule, but in the other nations Protestant missionaries are preaching the Gospel and making steady progress.

Over one hundred years ago missionaries commenced work in the Russian possessions. The Moravians sent missionaries among the Calmur Tartars in 1765, but abandoned the mission in 1824. The Scottish Missionary Society commenced work among the Tartars of Russian Tartary in 1802, but discontinued it in 1833. The London Missionary Society, between 1817 and 1820, established four missions in Siberia, but the last one was abandoned in 1842. A German Missionary Society commenced mission among the Tartars in 1822, and among the Armenians of Georgia in 1824, but discontinued them in 1833.

At first the missions in the Russian possessions received some favour from the Russian Government, but afterward the policy changed and the restrictions placed upon them were such as to prevent their further prosecution, and Protestant missionaries are still prevented from preaching the Gospel to the millions under Russian rule in Asia.

Arabia.—In South Arabia, in the vicinity of Aden, has been commenced a mission by the Free Church of Scotland, and at Aden is a mission of the English Church Missionary Society. These are meeting with some favour among the Arabs, and it is believed they are full of promise.

Asia Minor and Mesopotamia.—The English Church Missionary Society has a station at Bagdad, an outpost of the Persia Mission. The Church of Scotland has a mission at Smyrna. The American Reformed Presbyterian Church has interesting missions at Tarsus and Marsine. The Foreign Christian Missionary Society of the United States reports a missionary at Marsovan and one at Tarsus. The American Baptists have also missionaries in Asia Minor.

The American Board of Foreign Missions has had for many years large and successful missions among the Armenians in Asia Minor. The Western Turkey Mission was organized in 1819, Eastern Turkey in 1836, and Central Turkey in 1847, and these three missions reported in 1886 sixteen stations, 267 outstations, forty-three ordained missionaries aided by ninety-three other missionaries from America, physicians, wives and single women. There were also 613 native labourers and 8,328 members. The schools numbered 397 with 15,784 pupils.

Syria and Palestine.—The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society has a mission at Damascus and one at Nazareth. The Free Church of Scotland has also established one of its missions at Tiberias. The St. Chrischona Missionary Society of Basle, Switzerland, has an orphanage in Jerusalem. The Berlin Missionary Society reports missions in Jerusalem, Bethshela and Hebron. The Moravians have a mission in Jerusalem, and the Friends missions at Brumana and Ramallah. The Presbyterian Church of Ireland has a mission at Damascus. The American Reformed Presbyterian Church has a mission at Latakia. The London Missionary Society for the Jews is at work at Jaffa and Damascus. The committee of the Lebanon schools has fifteen schools on the slopes of Mount Lebanon. The British Syrian schools are at Beirut, Damascus, Zahleh, Baalbec, Tyre, on Mount Lebanon and on Mount Hermon. There are mission schools at Jaffa, conducted by Miss Hay and Miss Arnot. At Nablous (Shechem) Rev. El Karey and wife are conducting an independent mission. The American Presbyterian Church has important missions with headquarters at Beirut, Abeh, Sidon, Tripoli and Zahleh, with thirty-eight foreign missionaries, 179 native labourers, nineteen churches, and 1,440 members. The Syrian Protestant College at Beirut is a very important and successful evangelizing agency in its educational and publishing work. The English Church Missionary Society has its missions at Jerusalem, Nazareth, Gaza and Nablous.

Siam.—The American Baptist Church has a mission at Bangkok to the Chinese, with five missionaries, six native preachers, six churches and ninety-six members.