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NOTICE.

We have enclosed envelopes in a recent issue of THE HOME MISSION JOURNAL in papers sent to those who have heretofore subscribed for it and have not paid for the paper, and hope it will be convenient for them to enclose the five ten cent pieces before the end of the present calendar year. Those to whom we have been sending the paper as a sample copy will also enclose five ten cent pieces if they want the paper continued. They will then get it until the end of the year 1900 for the one subscription price.

This is a good offer and we hope all who have been getting it as a sample copy will avail themselves of this arrangement. Enclose the five ten cent pieces in the holes in the envelope, and be sure to sign your name, and give your post office address. Some have sent money but have given no names nor post office address, and some have sent notice that they do not want the paper but have not signed their names, and have not given their post office address. Now it is impossible for us to know who they are. We do not know who to credit the payment to or do we know who it is that wants their paper stopped.

Will those who have sent us letters without names or post office address please notify us by postal card.

Bible Study in Baptist Schools.

A report prepared for the Baptist Educational Union by Dr. A. K. de Blois, until recently president of Shurtleff has just been printed in an enlarged and revised form for the information of those interested in Bible study in Baptist colleges and academies. It presents the results of a most thorough investigation carried on by Dr. de Blois at the request of his colleagues in the Educational Union, in the course of which answers to a list of questions were received from forty-two Baptist colleges and eighteen Baptist academies. The object sought was to ascertain in how many schools any systematic instruction in the Bible is given; whether part of the regular curriculum, either required or elective, or conducted through other agencies, and particularly to discover the degree of thoroughness aimed at and secured, and the influence on the students. By a series of tables, accompanied by full explanations and comments by the author, the report gives a full and accurate idea of the present situation. It is therefore a document of the highest interest and importance. From time to time the observation is made that Bible teaching is not given its proper place even in colleges and academies distinctly Christian and denominational, but the statement has hitherto been unsupported by definite figures.

"The neglect of the study of the Bible in our schools and colleges is surpassingly strange," says Dr. de Blois. "The causes that tend to keep Bible study out of state universities and the public schools have, or should have, no force in avowedly Christian institutions. Although it is incorrect to assume that the Bible cannot be taught as literature without introducing sectarian interpretations, yet that claim may be allowed some plausibility when made for a college supported by public taxation. But that in a school founded by Christian men for the Christian education of young people the instruction in the world's greatest book and Christianity's charter should be left to chance effort on the part of student organizations, or committed to some member of the faculty selected for his piety and obliging nature rather than for scholarly knowledge of the scriptures, is both astonishing and humiliating. Baptists have in some quarters been among the most active in defending the use of the Bible in public schools; Baptist scholars in the United States hold an honorable place among the specialists on both Old and New Testaments. Shall Baptist schools, because of the manifest difficulties involved in Bible teaching which shall be at once scholarly

and attractive to indifferent pupils, abandon the field to the Christian Association, the pastor of the local church, or the Sunday-school? That is what is being done in far too many of our institutions, especially the academies. It is indeed encouraging to learn that Baptist schools are no worse off in the matter of Bible teaching than those of other denominations, but that is a poor reason for complacency.

Eleven Baptist colleges of the forty-two which replied to the inquiries have no organized Bible study in the curriculum. All of these report some substitute, such as lectures by professors or local clergymen. Sunday-school classes, Christian Culture Courses, or Bible classes organized by the Young Men's Christian Association. But as Dr. de Blois points out, such arrangements cannot in most instances be regarded as being on the same plane of thoroughness and required preparation as prevails in the teaching of Greek or mathematics or chemistry. Nearly all the institutions, both colleges and academies, which have thus compromised the matter apologize for the deficiency, recognizing that as thorough work ought to be given and as modern methods used to teach the subject of biblical literature and history as for any other branch of liberal education. In a few cases the opinion was expressed by instructors that the voluntary system of classes organized by the students with spiritual profit as the chief aim and critical study subordinate, is preferable to courses in the regular curriculum, but this view received little support.

Colleges offering Bible courses make them elective in the majority of cases, and this Dr. de Blois finds to be the preferable method; while he inclines to the opinion that some work, at least, in the academies should be required of all students. But it is extremely desirable that if such courses be required they be conducted in as systematic and thorough fashion as possible. Instead of courses occupying one hour a week, usually on Sunday, and running through an entire year or even through several years, there should be "a compact three or five hour a week course, rounded out and completed in a term." The recitation method, requiring no investigation and no thinking, but only memorizing, has survived in Bible teaching in institutions where it long ago disappeared from other instruction. It is of course destructive of any worthy achievement in students of mature age and active minds.

The two difficulties which have hindered improvement in Bible teaching in colleges and academies are these: First, the lack of teachers with special training adequate to enable them to treat the subject properly; or rather, in the case of many small institutions, the lack of money to pay such teachers; second, a confusion of ideas respecting the purpose to be sought in such teaching. As a remedy for the former difficulty Dr. de Blois suggests that "it would be wise for two or three of the smaller colleges to unite in their efforts, and employ a competent teacher, who should divide his time between the different institutions, spending a term in each, and doing full work during his period of residence at each school." As to the aims of Bible teaching in colleges, he believes that the intellectual aim should predominate. That is to say, the object should be to familiarize the student with the Bible as literature; to know its contents as well as what people have written about it; to know enough to be able to read the English poets without stumbling clumsily over every biblical allusion as the average college senior does to-day. There is no danger, in his opinion, that such an aim would lessen the respect of the student for the Bible as a divine revelation, a source of spiritual enlightenment and a guide of life. Rather the religious agencies of the college, co-operating with the biblical instruction given in the curriculum and turning it to their own account, should profit largely thereby.

Ignorance of the English Bible on the part of educated people is a disgrace to Christianity as

well as to the college. It will not cease until large numbers of earnest Christians come to feel the disgrace and the anomaly so keenly as to insist upon energetic and radical reforms.

Dem 'cieties.

An old colored preacher was asked how his church was getting on, and his answer was "Mighty poor, mighty poor, brudder." "What is the trouble?" And he replied, "Dem 'cieties. Dey is jist drawin' all de fatness and marrow outen de body and bones ob de blessed Lord's body. We can't do nuffin widout de 'ciety. Dar is de Lincum 'Ciety, wid Sister Jones and Brudder Brown to run it; Sister Williams mus' march in front of de Daughters of Rebecca. Deu dare is de Dorcases, de Marthas, de Daughters ob Ham, and Liberian Ladies." "Well, you have the brethren to help in the church," we suggested. "No, sar, dar am de Masons, de Odd Fellers, de Sons of Ham, and de Oaklahoma Promised Land Filgrims. Why, brudder, by de time de brudders and sisters pays all de dues an' tends all de meetin's, dere is nuffin left for Mount Pisgah church but jist de cob; de corn has been shelled off and frowed to these speckled chickens."

Going to Jesus.

One evening, after a children's service, a teacher was talking to a young girl who was weeping for her sins, but could not feel that she was pardoned. "Suppose," said he, "that Jesus was in this room, what would you do?" "I would go to him at once," she replied. "And what would you tell him?" "That I was a lost sinner." "And what would you ask him?" "Oh, I would ask him if he would forgive me." "And what would Jesus answer?" She hesitated for a moment, and then she looked up, smiling through her tears, for at once she saw it all. "Why," she said, "he would answer 'Yes.' And, simply trusting in the Saviour's words, she went to him there and then, and Jesus said "Yes."

Is it the Best Way?

Are there any direct and visible results from the booklets and tracts on Systematic Giving which are coming in countless numbers from our presses, and conference discussions on the subject which seem to have become a regular part of association programmes? It would seem as if the churches should be greatly stirred on the question and their treasuries filled to repletion, and the income of our Missionary Societies much increased, if not doubled. We do not hear of these results, although in isolated cases there might be some advance. It may seem somewhat pessimistic, but we confess to a feeling that much of our labor is lost in these perennial discussions. It ought not to be so, for it is rational to enforce the principle of system in our religious life. Perhaps if we magnified the objects for which money is sought and cultivated the faith and sympathy of the people in and for them, we might gain better success. We fear that this hammering away on the dry subject of "giving" is not the best way to attain the desired end. Let us talk of the great objects for which money is needed. If the American people had issued an abstract essay on Charity, with a closing reference to the loss and suffering in Porto Rico the response would have been nothing. They pursued a different line. They said little of the principle of giving, but detailed the dire needs of the people, and that drew out their charity. In the case of appeals for our missionary work too much prominence is given to the organized societies that are conducting the work, and too little to the opportunities, needs and successes of the work itself. Let us "leave behind" the abstract principles and go on to the concrete facts of the work which we have in hand.