

The Presbyterian College Journal.

Published MONTHLY throughout each Session (from October to April, both inclusive) by the ALMA MATER SOCIETY of the PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL, P.Q.

J. H. MACVICAR, *Editor-in-Chief.*
W. A. MCKENZIE, B.A., J. H. GRAHAM, B.A., *Assistant Editors.*
J. L. MORIN, B.A., S. A. A. THOMAS, *French Editors.*

Business Managers:

W. FRASER, B.A., . . . W. M. ROCHESTER, . . . J. H. HIGGINS.

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION:

For the Session, 60 cts., and two copies, \$1, invariably in advance.
Single copies, ten cents; Extras to Subscribers, five cents each.
All communications and exchanges should be addressed to THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE JOURNAL, 67 McTavish Street, Montreal, P.Q., Canada.

MONTREAL, P.Q., MARCH 18th, 1884.

PROGRESS OF THE BIBLE.

Since 1804 the Bible has been translated into 226 languages, and during the last seventy years it has had an aggregate circulation of over one hundred and fifty millions. The receipts of the British and Foreign Bible Society last year amounted to about one million, and those of the American Society, to say nothing of smaller organizations, to six hundred thousand dollars; and it is estimated that in Britain and the United States during the nine years ending in 1879 there were expended upon Foreign Missions alone sixty-seven million dollars, and, of course, a much larger sum upon Home Missions, church work, and various forms of Christian beneficence, all of which are the legitimate outcome of the Word of God. These sums are small, it must be confessed, compared with what the same nations spend on war, tobacco and strong drink, but this only shows how much even Christian people have yet to learn of the meaning spirit of this book. In 1600, or eleven years before the issue of King James' version of the Bible, there were only about five millions of English speaking people in the world to whom it could be offered, while to-day there are at least ninety-six millions who speak our language, and who may receive our Revised English New Testament. Nor should we forget the millions upon millions speaking other languages to whom the Word is made accessible. Ours is undeniably the age of missions and Bible circulation, in which many run to and fro and knowledge is increased. We have vastly better facilities and stronger forces for doing this work than ever before. Steam presses, railways and telegraphs have become the Lord's servants in this connection; and it will be found, upon a comprehensive survey of the history of Christianity, that it has made more progress and achieved greater victories during the last eighty years than during the preceding eighteen centuries. The Bible is not losing its hold upon the hearts and intellects of men, but the very reverse. True, there are a few uppish by-standers who firmly believe in themselves,

and scarcely think it worth while to believe in God, who affect to despise it, and place it down on a level with the writings of Socrates, Plato and Confucius, and the Vedas and Shasters of India. Such talk loftily of the approaching collapse of morals, and the failure of Christianity, but this is only to perpetrate an ignorant travesty upon the plainest facts of universal history. It is also vain to talk of the Bible being upheld only by weak and fanatical pietists. The strongest, purest and profoundest minds in the world are arrayed on the side of God's Word. There never was such a vast army as now of clear-headed, critical, learned men, who are thoroughly persuaded that in holding fast and holding forth the Word of Life they have not followed cunningly devised fables. They know, because they have critically tested it, that the book comes down to them far more fully accredited than any work of antiquity; attested by evidences internal, external and collateral, which are ever increasing in force and conclusiveness, and which have always been to sensible people possessed of overwhelming power.

It is idle to raise the vulgar cry that science is hostile to the Bible and destined to consume it. This may serve to alarm the timid and ignorant, but intelligent people know very well that the searching critical spirit evinced by science is that which is fostered and enjoined by the Bible. It provokes and challenges criticism, and fearlessly says to every man, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." There should be no unnatural and wicked quarrel between theology and the other sciences. Let theologians frankly recognize the wisely-directed efforts and brilliant successes of learned physicists. Let workers in the field of the natural sciences by all means push forward the lines of knowledge and discovery far beyond their present limits—let them find out and formulate new laws of the physical universe, and let them assail and destroy all forms of superstition, ancient, mediæval and modern that fall within their domain. But after science has nobly done her work, and sits enthroned in her own beautiful temple, and after she holds a much larger place than now in the thought and confidence of the world let no one be so simple as to think that the Bible is superseded. No. Its domain lies above and beyond the field of the natural sciences, and it speaks upon themes of profoundest interest to the human heart upon which they are and ever must be silent. What can any science, except theology, tell us about a Saviour, repentance, and pardon and eternal life? What can chemistry and mathematics say about the removal of sin in its power, pollution and penalty? What can anatomy astronomy or geology tell us about moral courage, and faith and purity, and all that goes to make up a true and exalted man? But these enter deeply into human experience, and so long as they continue to do so—and that will be to the end of the world—the Bible will be found indispensable to our race.