

and beautiful more than any other material man can use. The perfect forms of the Greek potter, the exquisite colours of the Persian and Arabian and Chinese painters, the brilliant lustres of the Moorish and Italian decorators, are here displayed and are in a sense imperishable. The paintings of Egyptians and Greeks and Romans have perished; their pottery remains. The antiquarian and the historical student have sought here for many things and have found many. The artistic sensibility has also seen much to enjoy. That we in this country are so little able to comprehend all this is partly owing to that necessity which has compelled us to pass our lives in hewing down trees, damming rivers, killing bears, cheating Indians; and partly to the fact that we have had no examples of pottery or porcelain in the country. We are now doing something to overcome this, and the private collections of Messrs. Prime, Hoe, Avery, Waloz, Pruyne, and others will soon give the opportunity to see and learn which many may seek.—*C. W. Elliott, in November Atlantic.*

THE BIBLE.

No correct theology could ever come out of convents. The Bible, from beginning to end, is the work of out-door men. Moses from the time when his parents put him on the waters in a wicker-boat to the time when he passed from the crest of a mountain into heaven, was a child of Nature. Joshua, David, the twelve disciples, Christ Himself, all were outdoor men; and John saw heaven in vision while camping out on the Isle of Patmos. God never chose a diseased organization to be a channel of communication with the race. Those who were to be His interpreters to mankind have always been stout, healthy men; men of toil; men who lived simply, in accordance with the great law of Nature. The reason is not hidden from us. As the lenses of a telescope must be smooth, free from irregularities, properly shaped, and undimmed by moisture, that it may yield a true view of star and sun, so the mind that would truly reflect God must be in the highest possible condition. A great many men have thought they saw God, when, in fact, they saw nothing but the fancies of a diseased organization deified. "I lift mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help."

THOU KNOWEST NOT HOW.

I looked upon the wrong or back side of a piece of arras (or tapestry); it seemed to me as a continued nonsense. There was neither head nor foot therein; confusion itself had as much method in it—a company of thrums and threads, with as many pieces and patches of several sorts, sizes and colors, all of which signified nothing to my understanding. But then, looking on the reverse, or right side thereof, all put together did spell excellent proportions, and figures of men and cities; so that indeed it was a history, not written with a pen, but wrought with a needle. If men look upon some of God's providential dealings with a pure eye of reason, they will hardly find any sense therein, such their muddle and disorder. But, alas! the wrong side is objected to our eyes, while the right side is presented to the high God of heaven, who knoweth that an admirable order doth result out of this confusion; and what is presented to him at present may hereafter be so showed to us as to convince our judgments in the truth thereof.—*Thomas Fuller.*

IF WE WOULD.

If we would but check the speaker,
When he soils a neighbor's fame,
If we would but help the erring
Ere we utter words of blame;
If we would, how many might we
Turn from paths of sin and shame!
Ah! the wrongs that might be righted,
If we would but see the way!
Ah! the pains that might be lightened
Every hour and every day,
If we would but hear the pleadings
Of the hearts that go astray.
Let us step outside the stronghold
Of our selfishness and pride;
Let us lift our fainting brothers,
Let us strengthen ere we chide;
Let us, ere we blame the fallen,
Hold a light to cheer and guide.
Ah, how blessed—ah, how blessed
Earth would be if we but try
Thus to aid and right the weaker,
Thus to check each brother's sigh;
Thus to walk in duty's pathway
To our better life on high.
In each life, however lowly,
There are seeds of mighty good;
Still we shrink from souls appealing
With a timid "If we could;"
But God, who judgeth all things,
Knows the truth is—"If we would."

—Selected.

SOME TIME.

Some time when all life's lessons have been learned,
And suns and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have
Spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes
Wet,
Will flash before us amid life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans were right,
And what most seemed reproof, was love most
True.
And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me—
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see;
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.
And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friend,
And that sometimes the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send;
If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's working see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery find there a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plan's like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart—
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold;
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
Where we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we shall say, "God knows the best."

PERNICIOUS SAYINGS.

There are some common sayings that are so plainly conceived in sin, that one cannot help wondering how they ever came to pass into adages. Still they are heard from the lips of men making high professions of morality and even of religion, and are handed down from generation to generation as precious heirlooms of language.

One of the most common of these and one of the wickedest is: "It will make no difference a hundred years hence," applied to some error that might have been avoided, some sin—that need never have been committed, or some word uttered that had better have been left unspoken. Now, if we stop and think, there is no simplest act

but that will make a difference a hundred years hence, and perhaps a great difference. The cackling of a flock of geese is a very simple thing, but it saved Rome, and had its influence upon succeeding years of a nation's existence. The impulse of one conspirator to save a friend saved the Gunpowder Plot from destroying a whole parliament, and perhaps changed the whole future of English history. A burnt finger may delay a journey that would have cost a life and turned the path of whole generations. It is an insult to the good God, who does not let a sparrow fall without his cognizance, to say that any act, however simple, may not have its influence on following years and ages.

There is another saying touching the sowing of wild oats, that is, perhaps, the worst of the lot. It has driven many a lad to destruction, furnishing him with an easily-spoken excuse for youthful follies and youthful sins sure to bring misery in their wake. That Christian statesman and author, Thomas Hughes, has spoken most eloquently against the use of this saying. "In all the range of accepted British maxims," he exclaims, "there is none, take it for all in all, more thoroughly abominable than this one as to the sowing of wild oats. Look at it on what side you will, and I will defy you to make anything but a devil's maxim of it. What a man—be he young, old, or middle-aged—sows, that, and nothing else, shall he reap."

Was there ever anything truer? We see boys sowing wild oats every day—and we see them as men reaping the crop they have sown. These wild oats bear bitter grain. Sometimes their fruitage is disgrace that is paraded out to the world as Satan's victory. Sometimes it is the dishonoring of a parent's tender love, and its fruitage is "grey hair brought to the grave in sorrow;" lines of suffering on the faces of loved ones; and bitter remorse that we have turned the sweetest thing on earth to gall. Oh, these wild oats, they are like the witch-grass and the white-weed in the farmer's land—they cannot be rooted out, and they taint every good crop that follows after the sowing. Boys need not sow wild oats; the ground is waiting for good sweet seed that will thrive and bring forth teaming harvests of goodness—and God is ready to care for the crop with the sunshine of his love and the tender rains that fall from his hand.

There is another saying that we hear now, that seems to me strikingly untrue in view of the lessons taught us by the world's history: "*Vox populi, vox Dei*."—"The voice of the people is the voice of God." We swamp all true progress by such a saying. Was it the voice of the people that called first for the Reformation? No, it was the voice of heaven-endowed, defiant, impetuous Martin Luther—and he was in a very small minority indeed when he began. The voice of the people and the hand of the people, saving some strong spirits, were against him—and had he listened to either as the voice of God, he had accomplished no revolution against corrupt and thriving popes.

Oh, no—the voice of the people is not always the voice of God—or Lot would have stayed in Sodom, and Lot's wife would not have been transformed into a pillar of salt.

Was the voice of the people the voice of God when the people cried out "Crucify him! Crucify him!" and shouted in derision as he climbed Calvary with his burden of the cross? No, this *Vox populi, vox Dei* is a stumbling-block to progress—for through man's proneness to error it is often the cry of sin and oppression, of persecution and shame.