

The poor people huddle around a dish of embers, made from wood or roots, in a room without any outlet. A fellow traveller of mine took pneumonia and nearly died in Jerusalem.

LEAVES—The books of the ancients were long pieces of parchment with a roller at each end. The writing was traced in columns

of varying width across the strip, and as the reader finished one or two columns he wound them up on one roller and unrolled the unread part. The law is still written in this fashion among the Jews and Samaritans, and a full copy covers about sixty prepared sheepskins. Single books, however, are often written on a parchment for convenience.

### APPLICATION

*So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll, v. 21.*  
Sir William Champney in the reign of Henry III., was, it is said, the first to build a turret

A Willing  
Heart

on his house, that he might overlook his neighbors. Not long after he was smitten with blindness, so that he could see nothing at all. As useless as the turret to the blind man will the Bible be to us, unless we are ready to obey its teachings. The obedient, and they alone, will find in it peace, happiness, blessings that will brighten all their way through life, and the pure, unending joys of heaven. It is the willing heart that sees the way of life.

*He cut it with the penknife, v. 23.* There have been many attempts to destroy the Bible, since Jehoiakim first used his penknife.

The Sharpest  
Knife

It has been prohibited by pagan rulers. It has been banned and burned by the very church that was built upon it. Infidelity, ridicule, scorn have attempted to tear it page from page. But like the oak tree on the wind-swept mountain side, these blasts have but driven its roots the deeper into our human life. The penknife that has injured it most of all is the indifference that has left its leaves unturned and its truths unknown in the nominal Christian's home.

*Yet they were not afraid, v. 24.* Said an infidel, "There is one thing that mars all the pleasures of life. I am afraid the Bible may be true. This fear is a thorn

The Greatest  
Peril

that stings me, a sword that pierces my very soul; for then I am lost forever." While there is such a respect for truth still left, there is hope that salvation may yet come. But, alas! are there not many who, like the courtiers of Jehoiakim, can calmly see the word of God reduced to ashes in the brazier and yet not tremble? If the fear of the Lord is the be-

ginning of wisdom, the absence of such fear is the last extremity of folly.

*The Lord hid them, v. 26.* The faithful man who lifts his voice valiantly for the truth has in the times of persecution a place of

A Safe  
Shelter

shelter, where even the wrath of kings cannot follow him. David in the hostile Philistine court cried unto the Lord and found deliverance. Elijah was preserved by the brook Cherith and fed by the ravens. An angel led Peter from his prison-house. While Paul and Silas sang and prayed with their feet fast in the stocks, God sent an earthquake and gave them freedom. When it is God's will to preserve his own, none can pluck them out of His hand.

*Take thee again another roll, v. 28.* Think what might have been written on this second roll. It might have recorded that the king

What Might  
Have Been

of Judah and his people had listened to the prophet's warnings and repented of their sins. Then God would have rolled back the invading hosts of Babylon, and His people would have been free and happy. How is it with us when we read and hear the word of God? Is it written of us that we heed and obey? Or that we despise and reject? Everything really worth while depends on this record.

*All the evil that I have pronounced against them, v. 31.* Jehoiakim could destroy the roll, but he could not alter the curse that was contained in that roll. All the

Truth Eternal evil pronounced against him was as true a prediction after as it was before. That a book on geology should be lost does not change the various strata of the rocks; that a chemical formula has been forgotten does not affect the combining properties of the elements; that the ostrich buries her head in the sand and can