

FASCINATION OF A MASTERFUL PERSONALITY.

Alexander Smith liked Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales" better than his finished novels, for the reason that while the novels were written for the world, "The Tales" seemed to be written for the author himself. And that is how passages of Thackeray strike one here and there. The author in this way becomes an actor in his story, actor and audience, too, sometimes, and so one gets nearer to him, and there is something very fascinating in a peculiar or masterful personality. The fact that Dickens put a good deal of his young life into "David Copperfield" gives it a special charm, and the same may be said of Thackeray's "Philip." Many students of literature and politics read "Vivian Grey" that they may get at the personality of Disraeli, his political views and ambitions, which critics profess to discover between the lines, as if the author had made a cryptogram for their special information. The sympathetic reader likes to think of Vivian Grey as Disraeli, of Pelham as Lord Lytton, of Childe Harold as Byron. Disraeli must, of course, be ranked among the great masters, but with all his wit and audacity, his vivid studies of character, his knowledge of men, and his sparkling phrases, he is very theatrical. His love of dukes, his admiration for titled ladies, his glorification of everything that is aristocratic and select, suggest what is known as The London Journal style of novel—though I do not desire to detract from that once popular form of fiction. We have long ago chatted of that dead and gone author named Smith, who wrote some remarkable stories in The London Journal, notably "Woman and Master," and "The Will and the Way." Disraeli's heroines are gorgeously dressed; they have either rich or glowing complexions; his heroes rejoice in luxurious curls; his meads are dew-spangled, his dinners are banquets served on gold plate; his wine ambrosia. Unless, say, you happen to be a duke or a duchess, you are apt to feel a little out of it, to use a common phrase, when you sit down with Disraeli; you want a velvet coat, a satin cravat, a diamond pin, and fourteen rings on your fingers, and occasionally even a court suit. But that is better than feeling it necessary to sprinkle your intellect, as it were, with Condy's fluid, or otherwise deodorize your mental atmosphere when you take up certain works of Zola, or certain dramatic narratives of Ibsen, the more recent prophet of what is called realism.

BEACONSFIELD'S BIOGRAPHER.

If ever England comes to grief, it will be through our system of party Government. This may seem an irrelevant observation at the moment, but I have only just come across the announcement that at last a biographer has been found for the great work which Disraeli's devoted and accomplished companion and friend, Montagu Corrie, was not great enough to tackle, and he knew it. The task has been assigned to W. F. Monypenny, only known to a few of the best-informed in the literary world. Mr. Monypenny is an Irishman, and only 39. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and at Oxford. He wrote for The Spectator in 1891-3, and from 1894 to 1899 was assistant editor of The Times. At the end of 1899 he went to South Africa to edit The Johannesburg Star, and in the siege of Ladysmith, served in the Imperial Light Horse. On its revival he resumed the editorship of The Star, and has only recently returned to London—a varied and, in many ways, a remarkable career, betokening not only learning, experience of the world and journalistic acumen, but a capacity for work and discrimination such as cannot fail to be of value in the preparation of Lord Beaconsfield's "Life and Letters."

A GREAT STROKE OF POLICY.

What one will look for in the great statesman's biography and I hope we shall get it will be a clear exposition of the leading principles of his international and Imperial policy. To bring an Indian army to Malta at a critical moment of our relationship with a certain great power, now in serious trouble, was an object lesson which we should never forget. If ever the time came for a supreme effort of this country against a European combination, we have an Oriental army, devoted to us and of

tremendous military possibilities, which, with supremacy of the sea, would, in combination with our white troops, be equal to any emergency. When I say if ever we come to grief it will be through the abuse of our system of party Government, I am impelled thereto by the strangely unpatriotic sentiment and action which have characterized the opinions, and, indeed, the threats of leading partisans of the Government Opposition. I care not what party is in power, so that it assures us, not only of our civil and religious freedom, but the overpowering strength of our fleet, the honor of our flag, the maintenance of the Empire intact, and the knitting closes and closer,

colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land."—Joseph Hutton—(Selected.)

Hope's Quiet Hour.

Editor "Hope's Quiet Hour":

I see so many inspiring thoughts in your columns on different subjects, I thought I would like to hear an essay on "Why I Believe the Bible."—John 22: 5: 36-47. A SUBSCRIBER.



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by trade and commerce, national sentiment and unity of Imperial purpose, of every offspring of the Mother Country.

DISRAELI AND CHAMBERLAIN.

And talking of Lord Beaconsfield, I find in a "Blackwood" article of 1903, a note of the policy of Disraeli which may have inspired Mr. Chamberlain. Anyhow, it is the cue to his sense of duty implied in his very first speeches on colonial policy. "The self-government of the colonies," said Mr. Disraeli, as far back as 1872, "when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of the great policy of consolidation. It ought to have been accomplished by an Imperial tariff, by securities for the people of England, for

Why I Believe the Bible.

Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me. . . . Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words.—S. John v.: 39, 46, 47.

My only excuse for my long delay in adopting Subscriber's suggestion is that the subject was too big for me. To crowd into two columns of space enough materials to fill a thousand volumes, is beyond my power, and to explain satisfactorily all the innumerable reasons "why I believe the Bible," is as impos-



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the enjoyment of the unappropriated lands, which belonged to the sovereign as our trustee and by a military code, which should have precisely defined the means and responsibilities by which the colonies should have been defended, and by which, if necessary, the country should call for aid from the colonies themselves." Mr. Disraeli in that 1872 speech, not only sketched the policy which should guide us in our relations with our colonies, but he did more, he defined his policy, and imposed it as a sacred obligation upon his successors. "In my opinion," he said, "no Minister in this country will do his duty who neglects any opportunity of reconstructing, as much as possible, our

sible as it would be to pack the accumulations of a lifetime in one small trunk. But I feel the importance of expressing some of my views on this subject, even though I can only touch the fringe of it. So, if I get lost in a multitude of reasons, you will know there are thousands more which might be laid before you.

This is an age of criticism, and everything that cannot prove its value is likely to be crowded out. Let us begin by the question: "Is the Bible valuable?" To that question, the answer must be "YES." Man does not live by bread alone, he is hungry for spiritual truth. The Bible is a treasury of inspiring, cheering, strengthening utterances. It

has provided an inexhaustible supply for millions of preachers, and its stores are as rich as ever. Philip the Evangelist once found another man reading Isaiah 53, so he "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Christ Himself, after His Resurrection, began at Moses and all the prophets, expounding to two disciples as they walked along the road "in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." St. Paul took the Old Testament writings as his text when he preached to the Jews, and it mattered little where he began, he could find Christ anywhere. In one of his letters—Epistle to Romans—he alluded to passages in the Psalms, Deut., Gen., Hab., Isa., Ezek., Mal., Exod., Jer., Hos., Lev., Joel, Kings, and Prov., referring to many of these Books many times. There are more than 50 references to the Old Testament in that one letter. Our Lord was constantly referring to the writings of Moses and the prophets, and He says in our text that they wrote about Him and testified of Him, though they had not seen Him.

What would the world be like if there had been no Bible in it? I once read a little story called "The Blank Bible." It was a dream of a world in which all the Bible words had been magically obliterated. Every Bible was a blank book, every sentence quoted from it in other books was wiped out. People were filled with consternation, until one after another wrote down sentences which were familiar, and in time nearly all the most priceless passages were restored. But that was only a dream of a world which had lost the written Word. What would be our terrible loss if we had never known the glorious truths of Revelation?

The Bible is the Word of God, spoken through human instruments. Many are trembling, in these days of criticism, because they are afraid they can no longer trust their Bible as an infallible authority. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," says S. Paul. Can anyone define exactly what that word "inspiration" really means? It meant, in the case of Jonah, that he was sent with a message from God to Nineveh. He was inspired to warn the people, and was given such power that they "believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them." And yet this inspired prophet was very far from entering into the true spirit of the God of Love. When "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that He had said that He would do unto them; and He did it not," Jonah was exceedingly displeased and very angry. His dignity as a prophet meant more to him than the destruction of a great city in which were more than 120,000 little children. The Bible itself tells us that, and need we be surprised if other men who were inspired by God to carry His messages, sometimes failed to understand the Love which sent them?

S. Paul, in 2 Tim., iii.: 15-17, says that the holy scriptures "are able to make thee wise unto salvation," and are profitable "for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Any honest person, reading the Bible in a teachable spirit, must own that it is profitable for these things. In the beginning of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we read that God in past times spake unto the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken unto us by His Son. If the Bible is the Word spoken by God through human lips, much more is Christ the Word of God in human form. The Bible's greatest value is that it testifies of Christ, from Genesis to Revelation. If we want to hear what Christ, the Word of God, is saying to us to-day, we must read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the words He uttered when He walked visibly among men, and must also find out what God wishes to teach us about Christ, through the words of prophets and apostles.

When a missionary goes out to savages, he does not usually—I should think—begin with such searching, spiritual truths as are set before Christians in the Sermon on the Mount. They have to be taught first that it is wrong to kill and eat people, and such elementary truths which we hardly expect to hear impressed on ordinary congregations in this country. The missionary does not at once