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From the Auction

HOW TO READ THE ENGLISH BIBLE

A CANADIAN CHAUTAUQUA LECTURE.

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“ Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto God, for he that cometh to God must first believe that He is.—Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” That word for Protestant Christendom is to be found in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which confessedly contain “all things necessary to salvation ;” and, being “given by inspiration of God,” are the supreme rule of Christian faith and life. Worried with doubts, frenzied by the lashings of an awakened conscience, Augustine fled from the schools of philosophy wherein no rest was found, to the sects of Christendom only to find perplexities multiplied ; flinging himself under a fig tree in despair a voice directed him to the Scriptures in the hands of a friend crying, “Tolle lege ; tolle lege.” “Take, read.” He read and found peace. “The Holy Spirit bore witness by and with the word in his heart.” This is practically the position of the Churches of Evangelical Protestantism as to the relation borne by the Scriptures to the individual soul.

But, as our translators in their epistle to the reader ask : “How shall men understand that which is kept close in an unknown tongue ?” One characteristic of evangelical Christianity is that all men have common right unto and interest in these Scriptures, hence one of its crowning principles is, the Bible in the vulgar or mother tongue to all peoples. Many years ago a returned missionary said to his friends that wherever he went in China, Java, Siam or elsewhere, he met one missionary neither Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Congregational nor Methodist, but who combined the excellencies of all ; who was always ready to speak for God with undoubted