

sugar is four times per head as much as it was fifty years ago ; tea, three and a half times as much ; rice, sixteen times ; eggs, six times ; and tobacco, twice as much. And lastly in consequence, perhaps, of the better food and living and of the better house accommodation, as well as on account of the improved sanitary conditions, the death-rate has diminished, the health of the country has improved, and the expectation of life at the different age periods is now from two to four years better than it was. In the same fifty years the habit of thrift has been considerably developed. The working classes have had more money, and they have found it possible and advantageous to reserve a portion of their income as a provision against sickness and old age. During the half-century the depositors in the savings bank have multiplied tenfold, and the amount of funds which have been placed there for security has increased

from thirteen millions sterling to considerably over a hundred millions. In addition there are co-operative societies with a million of members and fourteen millions of capital ; building societies with fifty millions of liabilities ; and friendly societies almost innumerable. With regard to the last, it is difficult to obtain exact returns, but in 1880 the Registrar reported that he had received returns from 12,687 societies, with 4,800,000 members and £13,000,000 invested funds. It is probable that the total figures are at least double those shown by these imperfect returns. An impartial consideration of the facts and figures here set forth must lead to the conclusion that there has been a very great improvement in the condition of the people during the period under review, and that this improvement has been largely due to the intervention of the state and to what is called socialistic legislation.—*North American Review.*

ELEMENTARY BIBLE KNOWLEDGE.

BIBLE knowledge is a term of wide meaning. It includes an understanding of the Book as a book, of its historic facts as facts, and of its practical teachings as teachings. The simple study of the text as it stands does not give to the ordinary pupil, nor yet to the advanced critical student, all that is necessary to a right understanding of that text. It is needful to know more than the text, in order to know the text. Unless a person knows what this Book is, and what is claimed for it, and who it is who is speaking in any given portion of it, and under what circumstances and in what age of the world the words were spoken, the words read are quite likely to be misappre-

hended in their true force and application.

A great deal is said, and rightly so, of the wonderful progress making in Bible knowledge in these days of Bible study. But while it is probably true that there was never before so much of popular knowledge concerning the origin and the historic framework of the Bible, and of its higher spiritual teachings, it is also true that there is still a great lack, in the community at large, in elementary knowledge concerning facts that are essential to an understanding and a right use of the Bible knowledge acquired. Whether the state of things so far is better or worse than a generation ago, is a question of less importance than