

"At Bahrein (on the Arabian coast) Mackertich became very ill; he grew worse and worse in spite of the doctor's care, and died on the 2nd of May on board the steamer. The captain and officers buried him at Basra at their own expense, greatly lightening my trouble and affliction." Mackertich was Anton's assistant. On this journey the colporteurs sold eighty-eight copies of the Scriptures.

T. R. HODGSON.

ENGLAND AND GOD'S WORD.

In a very special way we English people seem to have stepped into the position of the Jews. *Their* great privilege was to hold in trust "the oracles of God;" and that, it seems to me, is our privilege more than any other nation's to-day. The English people have been in a peculiar sense the guardians of the Scriptures. Most of the modern translations come from us, no matter what the language is. And, indeed, this loving guardianship of the word of God is very characteristic all through our history. The Bible was known and used in the early days of Christianity in England to a degree which we scarcely suspect. Large portions of the books of the Bible were translated into the language of the people, and many Anglo-Saxon homilies survive to show that some knowledge of the text of Scripture is presupposed by the writer. Religious instruction, based upon Scripture, was one of the regular rules of the church. Then came the Norman Conquest which drew our national church nearer to that of the Continent, and, by consequence, introduced continental customs. For some time to come after that date there are small traces of Bible knowledge, until at last when the undergrowth of that which was really English shot up through the superincumbent mass of what was Norman and continental, then we find once more a longing for the pure spring of God's word. Wycliffe only fed a desire which had been previously implanted. Unwise churchmanship, as we believe, strove to repress and extinguish this thirst; but there is abundant testimony to prove that though the church authorities refused to allow the translation of the Bible, independent translators were at work on all sides. The bishops' registers of the fifteenth century give us ample proof of this fact—pathetic proof, too, of the translators' fate. It was only with the sixteenth century that the longings of the people were once more roused and gratified by Tyndale, by Coverdale, by Rogers, and others, until the days of King James and our own Authorized Version. It is not a little significant that the beautiful collect used in the Church of England in Advent week is derived not from the ancient sources whence so many come, but from the pen of Cranmer, who wrote the preface to the Great Bible ten years previous to the issue of our Authorized Version. In this light of history the collect reads like a national thanksgiving for the restoration of the word of God in "a tongue understood of the people," after the manner of the primitive church.

Now it so happens that the century which witnessed the work of our Bible translators, also witnessed the beginning of our great colonizing age. From that time until the present day Englishmen have been passing out in a never-ceasing stream to the farthest bounds of the earth. It was characteristic of the first colonists that they carried the Bible with them. It was only too slowly, however, that our countrymen began to feel that a call was sounding to us as a nation to undertake the "propagation of the gospel," as in some degree our special destiny. It is now nearly two hundred years since the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel began their efforts, only too poorly supported at home, in order to evangelize the heathen. All through the last century these societies persevered constantly, through a hard and unsympathetic age,