

# Bible Society Recorder.

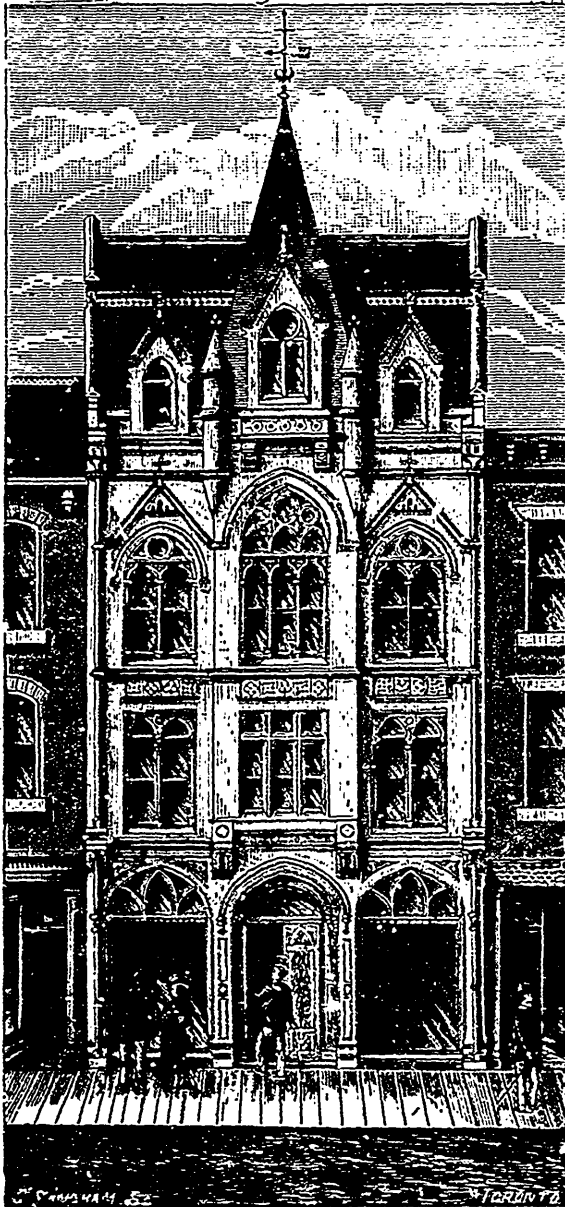
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No. 1.



THE PROPOSED NEW BUILDING.

## THE PROPOSED NEW BUILDING.

On our first page our readers will see a good wood-cut of the beautiful and appropriate front elevation of our proposed new building. Various hindrances have delayed the Building Committee, and as yet only a beginning has been made in getting the amount subscribed that will be required. As the Boards of the two Societies are determined not to go into debt, of course nothing will be done in the way of advertising for tenders until a sufficient sum has been subscribed. But as the Building will only cost between \$12,000 and \$15,000, and the sore need of it is unquestionable, we hope that in a very short time now the friends of the Societies will enable the Building Committee to proceed. The Committee have urgently requested Mr. J. C. Copp, who is so well known both in Toronto and throughout the province, to undertake a systematic canvass for the Building Fund. Mr. Copp has not yet consented to do so, but we earnestly hope that he will. Our friends need not, however, wait to be called upon. We shall be glad to receive the names of those who desire to help in this important and necessary work. We subjoin the names of those who have already subscribed.

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 Subscribers to Building Fund.
 

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Hon. Wm. McMaster .....	\$500	Thos. Lailey.....	\$50
John Macdonald.....	500	F. A. Ball.....	50
Ignatius Cockshutt, Brantford .....	500	J. S. Playfair.....	50
W. Gooderham.....	500	James Brown.....	50
George Hague, Montreal.....	200	Rev. H. M. Parsons.....	50
Miss Helen Lesslie, Dundas.....	200	Herbert Mortimer .....	50
Robt. Baldwin.....	200	Jno. Earls.....	50
James Lesslie.....	100	John Newton, Tweed.....	50
Samson, Kennedy & Gemmel.....	100	Rev. Dr. Reid.....	30
Sutherland Stayner .....	100	David Higgins.....	30
W. H. Beatty.....	100	Rev. Professor McLaren .....	30
W. Mortimer Clark .....	100	Col. Moffat .....	25
Samuel Alcorn.....	100	Rev. J. M. Cameron.....	25
Robert Walker, jr.....	100	Mrs. Eccles .....	20
James Scott.....	100	Mrs. Winn .....	10
W. Alexander.....	50	Rev. John Burton .....	10
S. Rogers.....	50	Thos. J. Mason .....	10

## LUTHER'S BIBLE, AND WHAT IT HAS DONE.

BY REV. JAMES SMITH, M.A.

Luther was twenty years old before he had seen a complete copy of the Holy Scriptures. In the second year of his residence at the University of Erfurt a copy fell into his hands when searching the library for other means of knowledge. His excitement was great, and his interest in the book profound, as he was only familiar with such portions as were read in the service of the Romish Church. It was to him the recovery of a "lost Gospel," and served to change the whole course of his inner and outward life, for in both respects he was turned from the Law to the Gospel. In 1512 he was made a Doctor of the Holy Scriptures, which was not a mere distinction but

an office, in which he was required to expound the sacred writings, and, on receiving which, he swore "to teach purely and simply according to the Scriptures," a vow which was afterwards a source of confidence and comfort to him. His earliest lectures, based upon the Vulgate, or old Latin version, were upon the Psalms and Romans, portions which deepened his own experience, and rooted and grounded him in the Scripture doctrine of justification by faith, "the master key," as he called it, "of the evangelical building."

When placed under the ban of Church and Empire, and carried off in 1521 by friendly violence to the Wartburg, as the only means of safety, the period of his most real and abiding activity commenced. Though supposed by some to have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and by others to have "been carried off by the devil," he was more really the master of Germany, by the opinions and feelings he was forming, than the great Emperor himself. He referred to this time as one of "idleness," but, besides translating the whole of the New Testament, he published in that self-same year no less than 130 tracts, and a greater number in the following year, and was thus forging and polishing for use the instrument by which the greatest and most enduring work of his life was to be accomplished—"the translation of the Holy Scriptures." The response which these holy writings gave to his own conscience when burdened with guilt, and trying to merit salvation by works of law, would, he naturally felt, meet the cries, "uttered or unexpressed" of the whole people. In 1517 he had published the Seven Penitential Psalms, to which were added, at intervals, up to 1521, the Lord's Prayer, the Prayer of Manasseh, the Ten Commandments, the Prayer of Solomon, Psalms, Gospels and Epistles, and these were repeatedly reprinted—an evidence of their necessity and acceptance.

It was first towards the end of 1521, that the idea of translating the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, took hold of him and formed itself into a purpose. Before the close of the fifteenth century, indeed, a translation had been made in the old high German, fourteen editions of which appeared, all founded upon the Vulgate, but none in the common language of the people. It was Luther's holy ambition to give them one in their own tongue, based upon the original Hebrew and Greek, and as free as possible, both from the inaccuracies of the earlier version, as from those of the Vulgate itself. He began most fittingly with the New Testament, which he finished during his nine months' stay in the Wartburg, and which, after careful revision with the aid of friends, especially Melancthon, he published by Michaelmas, 1522. So eagerly this sought after, that in December of the same year a second edition was called for. He forthwith began the Old Testament, and applied himself so zealously to the task, that in the very next year the first part, containing the Pentateuch, appeared. The second and third parts came out in 1524, and at length, in 1534, appeared the first complete edition of Luther's German Bible, from the press of Hans Luft. The final revision was made in 1541, and the latest edition of this final revision, which Luther helped to correct typographically, appeared in 1545. He lived to see no less than ten editions published, and took the utmost pains to secure accuracy in each. Of this great work no less than thirty-eight editions appeared in Germany before 1580, besides seventy-two of the New Testament, and innumerable reprints of other smaller portions. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

The appearance of this work made an epoch not only in the history of the church, but in that of the national life and literature of Germany, and, as substantially the work of one mind, forms an enduring and unrivalled monument of Luther's genius, perseverance and power. He is the best illustration of his own saying: "*Translation is a special gift and grace.* A man may know many languages, and yet be unable to render one into the other." The care with which he did this may be seen from a compari-

son of the different editions on which he worked, till by change of term or transposition of phrase, he hit upon the exact expression which most fully and tersely expressed the Divine thought, and satisfied his own spiritual perception of its significance. In this, too, he sought the co-operation of well-known men; and so much interest did they evince in the effort to secure accuracy that they sometimes returned fourteen successive days to the reconsideration of a single doubtful clause or word. In matters, such as points of natural history, which lay outside their own knowledge, Luther did not hesitate to seek the aid of specialists, and even employed butchers to dissect animals in his own presence, that he might discriminate and render accurately the various sacrificial terms of the Levitical code.

Testimonies to the value of this great work might be quoted from writers of all schools of thought and belief. Poets, philosophers, and divines, men of the most varied tendencies, parties, and confessions, all alike regard this version not only as the first and greatest classical work in modern high German, in a literary point of view, but as worthy of the loftiest position, and deserving to be read before all, and in preference to all. Hitherto, whatever there was of literature—and there was little indeed worthy of the name—was in the hands of one class, the learned; Luther and his associates belonged to no class, but to the people. "His Bible," says Hegel, "became a people's book;" a "fundamental work for the instruction of the people." Vital in every part, clothed in the racy language of common life, its history, poetry, doctrines, and precepts became a most effective means of mental stimulus and instruction, awoke and expanded the intelligence of common men, and moved them to reflection on subjects of the highest moment.

Hence, for the first time in the history of Germany a popular literature was created and was widely diffused. During the last twenty years of the fifteenth century only about forty German works were published. After Luther's appearance the number was simply enormous, and cannot now be specifically enumerated; but up to 1523 hundreds were published, while in that very year, besides Luther's own, no less than 215 by other writers appeared. In other words, more than four-fifths of all that came from the press were in favour of the new movement, while not more than twenty were decidedly Roman Catholic publications.

One production of the German mind owes its origin directly to Luther and the movement he originated. When translating the Psalms, he conceived the idea of making a paraphrase of them for congregational worship, that the people might take a much larger part in service than they had done before. Mere paraphrase, however, did not suffice; original compositions were inspired by the Holy Scriptures, to which he adapted the solemn melodies of the ancient church, and the plaintive airs of popular songs. He himself was said to be the author of thirty-six hymns and paraphrases and of several original tunes adapted to them, and thus enriched the hymnology of the modern evangelical church.

Popular poetry and satire were awakened by, and devoted to, the new movement. Hutten published his bitterest invectives against Rome in verse. He and others, inspired by a positive conviction of the truth, depicted the corruptions and errors of popery in long and vivid descriptions which exercised enormous influence. Hans Sachs, the greatest poet of the day, devoted his genius to the same cause. Thoughts awakened in a mind of rare originality, and instructed by the Word of God, form the basis of many of his ingenious poems, rendered none the less attractive by a slight smack of the workshop, with which this honest shoemaker delighted all classes of the nation.

Art, too, became imbued and ennobled by the spirit of a purified and Scriptural Christianity. Lucas Kranach employed his pencil in works which harmonized with the evangelical faith, or represented scenes, characters, and passions depicted in Scripture narrative, and served to illustrate the pages of the new version. Albrecht Dürer, in the very maturity of his powers, was profoundly affected by the new spiritual life, and the most perfect, perhaps,

of his pictures, the Evangelists Mark and John, and the Apostles Peter and Paul, were produced under its influence, and reflect with vigour and grandeur the wisdom, devotedness, and energy of the first witnesses of the Christian Church.

The same spirit stirred among the learned, and gave a new direction to their activity, and resulted in a loftier intellectual development. The course of studies at the universities was changed thereby. Not only at Wittenberg, Luther's University, but at Freiburg and elsewhere, the Aristotelian philosophy and the Books of Sentences were laid aside, and lectures on the Evangelists and St. Paul's Epistles took their place, and were listened to by crowded audiences; and thus the study of a true Biblical theology was inaugurated, while Luther himself became the father and founder of a sound Biblical exegesis.

The impetus given, also, to the wonderful art of printing, which hitherto had been very inadequately applied and developed, was enormous in all the directions indicated, and can only be approximately estimated by considering the number and character of the writings which appeared in every department of knowledge—theology, philosophy, medicine, art and general literature. Luther's own works amounted to upwards of four hundred, while the number for and against his doctrine and movement cannot be counted up. No less than three printing presses were called into requisition to produce his New Testament rapidly and in sufficient numbers to meet the wide-spread demand. Nor was this impulse confined to Germany. For during the first thirty-six years of the sixteenth century about six hundred editions of the entire Bible and parts of it had been printed in different languages.

Alas! however, the progress of this great work of religious and national development, so signally begun and auspiciously carried on hitherto, was sadly retarded and well-nigh undone by a variety of causes into which we cannot now and here enter specifically. Suffice it to say that religious fanaticism, social conflicts, and the excesses inseparable from such agitations, and more especially the results and issues of the Thirty Years' War, interfered with the work of religious and ecclesiastical reform, and at length culminated in the physical, moral, and religious degradation of the entire nation. The universities and high schools, which were the outcome of the new movement, by-and-by lost sight of their vocation as institutions for the benefit of the nation at large; and, at length, considering it more learned to accumulate knowledge than to learn how it might be profitably used, to speak and write Latin rather than vulgar German, a "priesthood of letters" was gradually called into existence, whose pedantry separated them from the common life of the people, and retarded for at least two centuries the religious and intellectual development of the nation; a reaction which acted as an *incubus* upon the energies and aspirations of the people, and proved scarcely less mischievous and deadly than that of the Romish priesthood from which they had been delivered. Luther's work, consequently, appeared for the time undone. Whole generations grew up without any pure or practical religion, and the lower classes without any education worthy of the name. Luther's Bible was neglected, and his own writings were despised and sneered at as "little German tracts which any village clerk might have written."

The partial regeneration during the present century of the life and vigour of the nation has been, we rejoice to say, brought about by a return of that spirit which Luther first evoked by his Bible and works. The pedantry of the schools which had strangled thought and freedom has again been gradually worn aside, and Luther's dialect has once more become the prevailing language of literature and thought in all departments of life and office. "Being dead he yet speaketh" to Germany and the nations of Europe as no man but he has ever spoken. This has been peculiarly manifest in recent times, in the interest once more taken in the printing and circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Societies for this special purpose sprang into existence in rapid succession throughout every kingdom and state of Germany, as men

found that, after all, the God of the Bible is alone the God and strength of the nations. These societies were, to a large extent, originated or supported by the influence and means of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Even Roman Catholic priests felt and obeyed the impulse. Bishop Sailer commended the reading of the Scriptures. Baron von Wessenberg declared that he would leave nothing undone till every family possessed a Bible. Wittmann, the Principal of the Seminary for Priests at Regensburg, founded a society there in 1805, and translated the New Testament into German. Gossner, in Munich, and Professor Leander van Ess, of Marburg, did likewise. These versions were printed by the Regensburg Society and most zealously circulated; and though this society was afterwards suppressed by a papal bull, it was not until after half a million copies of the New Testament had been distributed. The admirable version of Kistemaker subsequently appeared at Münster in 1825.

Wittmann regarded this work as the best weapon against unbelief, and Gossner spoke of it as the bond which would unite all Christians, however otherwise separated by sea or land, by church or worship. So that, at length, that wish of Luther began to receive a proximate realization: "Would that this one Book were in every language, in every land, and in the ears and hearts of all men!"

It is this desire, which after the lapse of three centuries the Bible Society is seeking to fulfil in accordance with the spirit of Luther's own saying—"Scripture without any comment is the sun whence all teachers receive their light." Above fathers, therefore, and above ecclesiasticism must this opened Bible be held as the ultimate supreme authority in matters of faith, the test and standard of character, the law and spirit of life. From the twelfth to the sixteenth century, with rare exceptions, this could not be. The Romish Church denies to Protestants emphatically any right to use the Bible, much more to interpret its pages. Six hundred and fifty years ago the Council of Toulouse solemnly forbade the laity, to possess the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. Six centuries of struggle, aided by banishment, the dungeon, and the stake have illustrated and confirmed that decree, so far as Rome has had the power. We are safe as men and peoples only so long as we rest on the foundation of the Holy Bible. As we see what the papal hierarchy has done in Italy, Spain, and other nations, let us plant our feet the more firmly on this open Bible, remembering that for us and our descendants for ever it is the foundation of God which abideth sure. *May Germany and the nations of the earth flourish by this Word which liveth forever!*

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## Bible Society Recorder.

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TORONTO, 1st JANUARY, 1884.

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### BOARD MEETINGS.

As the accounts of the Board meetings held on April 17th and May 1st were omitted from the last number of the *Recorder*, and as inquiries have been made about them, we insert them here. The regular monthly meeting was held on April 17th, Herbert Mortimer, Esq., in the chair. The Rev. H. M. Parsons read a portion of Scripture, and the Rev. H. D. Powis led in

prayer. After the confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting, the following resolution was moved by the Rev. J. M. Cameron, seconded by the Rev. Dr. Rose, and unanimously adopted :

“The Directors of the Upper Canada Bible Socie’y greatly regret to miss from their present meeting their highly esteemed Senior Honorary Secretary, Dr. Hodgins, who has served so long on the Board and has been one of the Honorary Secretaries for twenty-three years. Still more deeply do they deplore the sad cause of his absence, and they desire to express their heartfelt sympathy and condolence with him in his sore bereavement in the loss of his beloved wife, who has been the loving partner of all his joys and sorrows for so many years, and whose wisdom and zeal in Christ’s cause, with the many graces of her beautiful Christian character, made her so much esteemed and beloved by all who knew her.”

The Annual Report of the Standing Committee on Agency and Colportage, giving an account of the operations of the Society under their special supervision during the past year, and recommending plans for the coming year, was read. On motion of the Rev. W. S. Blackstock, seconded by the Rev. H. D. Powis, this report was unanimously adopted.

A letter was read from T. G. Mason, Esq., conveying the pleasure of the Trustees of the Metropolitan Methodist Church to grant the use of the church for the Anniversary meeting of the Society, and the Secretaries reported that the Trustees of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church had also cordially granted the use of their church for the preaching of the annual sermon on behalf of the Society. A committee on arrangements was appointed.

The Rev. E. M. C. Botterill was appointed to continue to take up subscriptions in the city through the coming year.

The Secretaries reported the receipt of a handsome donation of one hundred dollars from Henry A. Miller, Esq., of Bridgeport, who was unanimously elected a life member of the Society.

The Depository’s Account was submitted, the record of balances read and the following appropriations voted : To the British and Foreign Bible Society on purchase account, \$6,500 ; to the Quebec Bible Society for Colportage among the French Canadians, \$500 ; to be placed at the disposal of the Agency and Colportage Committee for work in Manitoba and the North West, \$1,000. Agents’ reports and Colporteurs’ reports were submitted, and other routine business attended to, and the meeting was closed by the Rev. R. W. E. Greene pronouncing the benediction.

An adjourned meeting of the Board was held on the 1st of May. The Rev. Professor Gragg, D.D., in the chair. The Rev. J. G. Manly, the Permanent Agent, led the opening devotional exercises. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed. A letter was read from Dr. Hodgins, the Senior Honorary Secretary, acknowledging the receipt of the resolution of sympathy passed by the Board at its last meeting, and expressing his heartfelt thanks for the kindness and consideration of the Board.

Letters were read from the Secretaries of the Quebec Bible Society and the Montreal Bible Society acknowledging with thanks the receipt of grants and contributions.

On motion of Mr. Herbert Mortimer, Messrs. Higgins and Copp were appointed auditors for the year.

The Permanent Secretary read a draft of the Annual Report of the Society, which on motion was unanimously adopted. The Board then proceeded to revise the list of Officers and Directors for nomination at the Annual Public Meeting of the Society. A grant of Bibles and Testaments was voted for the use of the Home for Incurables, and the meeting was closed with prayer led by the Rev. H. D. Powis.

The regular monthly meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, Oct. 16, at 7.30 P.M., the Hon. William McMaster in the chair. The meeting was opened by the Rev. Dr. Rose leading in prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. A letter was read from Messrs. Foster, Clark & Bowes, in reference to a renewal of the lease of ground belonging to the Ketchum Sunday-school Trust. The Rev. Dr. Rose presented a report from the Joint Committee on Ketchum Trusts recommending that the present term of lease be allowed to expire at the date originally intended. This report was unanimously adopted. The Senior Honorary Secretary was requested to attend, as representative of this Board, on the occasion of the leave taking of the Rev. Dr. King from his congregation and to express their deep regret at his leaving the city and their earnest desire that the Divine blessing may accompany him in his new sphere of labour.

A letter was submitted from the Tract Society asking that a discount of 33½ per cent. be allowed to it on Bible Society Bibles sold by its Colporteurs. On motion a special committee was appointed to consider the subject of the letter and to report thereon.

The Permanent Agent's report for September was submitted, and Colporteurs' reports from Messrs. Taylor, Jackson, Currie, and Patterson. The Secretaries reported that by the advice of the Winnipeg Committee, and with the concurrence of the Standing Committee on Colportage, Mr. Patterson had ceased work in Manitoba until the coming spring. Routine business was attended to and the meeting closed with prayer led by the Rev. H. M. Parsons.

The Directors met again on November 20th, at the usual hour. The President, the Hon. G. W. Allan, in the chair. The meeting was opened by the Rev. Dr. Reid reading a portion of Scripture and the Rev. J. M. Cameron leading in prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed. The letter from the Tract Society submitted at the last meeting was read and the report of the Special Committee appointed to consider it, was read as follows :

"The Committee appointed to consider the application from the Tract Society for increased remuneration for the sale of Bible Society Bibles by its



Colporteurs, beg to report, that they have met several times and have very fully discussed the whole matter referred to them, and would now recommend to the Board that as this Society sells all its Bibles at cost price, it should adhere to its practice of allowing no discounts; but that a commission of thirty per cent. be paid to the Upper Canada Tract Society for the Bible Society Bibles sold by its Colporteurs."

After a full discussion of the question this report was adopted.

Agents' reports were submitted from the Revds. J. G. Manly, Jas. Carmichael, John Learoyd, J. L. Murray, Dr. Hodgkin, John Gray, W. H. A. Claris, R. D. Fraser, S. Kappeler, Dr. O'Meara, and D. Gordon.

The Colporteurs' reports were submitted, the Depository's Cash account, and other routine business attended to, and the meeting closed with the benediction pronounced by the Rev. A. Gilray.

The Board held its December meeting on the 18th, at the usual hour. The Hon. William McMaster in the chair. The business was entirely of a routine character.

The secretaries reported another handsome donation of one hundred dollars from John W. Ball, Esq., of Niagara, and were instructed to express to him the hearty thanks of the Board for his repeated liberality.

Several grants were made, and a number of Agents' reports submitted, generally of an encouraging tone, and the meeting was closed with prayer led by the Rev. Hugh Johnston.

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### EXTRACTS FROM OUR PARENT SOCIETY'S REPORT.

#### GERMANY.

A letter was recently received at your Berlin depot, containing the writer's name and address, and couched in the following terms:—

"Excuse my taking the liberty to send you these lines. About three years ago a colporteur came round with Bibles. I refused to buy, saying the print was too small. Later on he came again with books of a larger type: and when I again tried to put him off, he spoke to me so earnestly that I bought a Bible. Amongst other things he said there was still room in our Father's house above, and that God's invitation was for me also. That I have been led to a knowledge of the truth is due, under God, to the colporteur. I do not know whether he is alive or what is his name; but this I do know that I owe him a debt of gratitude, and that it would give him joy to see some fruit of his labours. Will you convey to him my heartfelt thanks? May God repay him for what he has done to me and doubtless to many others also. Wishing the Bible Society every blessing, I remain, &c."

This letter exhibits well the motive that animates your colporteurs, the missionary character of their work, their perseverance and unwillingness to be repulsed, the excuses constantly made, the power of the written Word under the Holy Spirit's teaching, and the evidence of good that now and again meets the eye. The same features are brought out in greater detail in the following conversation between one of the German colporteurs and a shoemaker.

"I knocked at his door; but as no one answered I entered. Perceiving that the man was both deaf and dumb I put a Bible into his hand and pointed to the title page. As I could not understand his signs, he took up a slate at his side and wrote on it 'God cannot help me.' I wrote in reply, 'His blessing alone can make us happy.' 'But what should I go to church for? I suffer hunger and have not enough to eat.' This was the next question, to which I answered: 'To get food for your undying soul.' Then followed this dialogue in writing.

"SHOEMAKER.—My family would get no benefit from that."

"COLPORTEUR.—The Lord cares for His own."

"SHOEMAKER.—But I cannot hear."

"COLPORTEUR.—Every Sunday morning there is a service for the deaf and dumb at Pastor L——'s church. . . ."

"SHOEMAKER.—You're a clever parson."

"COLPORTEUR.—I am nothing but a working man like yourself; but I have found my Saviour."

"SHOEMAKER.—But you speak for money."

"COLPORTEUR.—No, the love of Christ constrains me to try and lead to Him those who do not know Him. There is time now to repent, but there may not be later on. Here is the Bible, which shows the way of salvation."

"SHOEMAKER.—But I am a Roman Catholic."

"COLPORTEUR.—Well, but salvation is for Roman Catholics too, only through Christ alone."

"SHOEMAKER.—When we die it's all over with us.

[Here I gave him part of 1 Cor. xv. to read.]

"SHOEMAKER.—But I have to work on Sundays, and can't be going to church.

"COLPORTEUR.—Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy."

He quite approved of Sunday being a day of rest, and I got him to read part of the Sermon on the Mount. Before leaving I gave him a Portion, for which he thanked me heartily, promising to read it diligently.

This is a fair specimen of the kind of work which is being done throughout Germany by the colporteurs, of whom Mr. James Watt, your new Agent for this field, says:—

"These faithful and hard-working men are the rank and file of our army. They are also our outposts and skirmishers. It is they who keep touch with the main body of the enemy, and are more roughly used in the fight. Deprived of the sympathies of home, obliged to be content with humble quarters and often with wretched food, exposed to the inclemencies of every season and to the still more trying storms of ridicule and abuse, the colporteur must not only possess a stout heart and iron frame, but be a man of faith, one who walks with God. All honour to such men! let us support them with our sympathy and prayers.

Your Agent possesses the advantage of combining loyalty to the traditions of the Society with a quick sense of the requirements of changing circumstances.

No one could enter upon so large an undertaking as the charge of the German-Swiss Agency without finding a large part of his time engrossed at first by the more secular duties of the post. It is therefore a gratification to the Committee to find that Mr. Watt shows that he has in no degree lost sight of the high aim of the Society.

"The British and Foreign Bible Society takes rank among the greatest of missionary enterprises. Take away the spiritual aspects of its work, and you deprive it of its only reason for existence. Its colporteurs, simple, pious men, burning with zeal for the cause of Christ, if not so in name and mode of work, are evangelists in fact, who assiduously embrace every opportunity, when offering their books, to sow the seed of Divine truth. Their auditors are frequently the forlorn and the outcast, those who flee contact with the city missionary and who will not approach the pastor or give him a hearing.

## TURKEY.

From all parts of this Agency come reports of maltreatment, persecution, and even imprisonment, endured by your colporteurs. That men like Seefried in Roumelia, Sevastides in Albania, Yanelli at Mitylene, and Maschobakes at Rhodes, have been able to persevere in their work at all is due, under the blessing of Him who defends His servants, partly to earnestness and patience in the men themselves, and partly to the stand made on their behalf by Her Majesty's Consuls or Vice-Consuls, acting under instructions from the British Embassy at Constantinople.

Yet your Agent is among the last to regret the recent action of his country in Egypt, to a resentment of which these restrictions may, in some measure, be due. He points out that a scheme undoubtedly existed to establish a Mohammedan Caliphate, and treat out all Christian effort; and he declares the common belief of intelligent men resident in the East that not only in Egypt but throughout the Turkish Empire, the cause of liberty and enlightenment has gained by the events of last summer.

So far as the work of the Agency is to be gauged by the circulation of the Scriptures—and let it be always remembered that this is far from being the sole measure of success—there is a decline of 2,727 copies during the past year; but when the stoppage of work in Egypt and its interruption in Cyprus are considered, together with the difficulties of colportage already referred to, it will be seen that a different result could hardly have been expected.

Your Agent thus describes the tyranny of which Seefried has been the victim.

After having been expelled arbitrarily from Uscup, as mentioned in the last Report, he was permitted to return from his exile to Salonica, and settle at Koprili, the nearest important railway station to Uscup. But here he was annoyed by frequent and most untimely examinations of his books, which he was at first required to transport to the Government House, but which afterwards, as a "special favour," were allowed to be examined in his own house. He suffered also from the fanaticism of the Turks of Koprili, one of them having, without the least provocation, struck him a severe blow on the back with a copper vessel, from the effects of which he did not recover for some time. The fanatic collected some dozen others like minded with himself armed with sticks, and attempted further violence, but was prevented by the innkeeper. It is right to add that on this occasion the Cimakam endeavoured to discover the offender and gave Seefried a policeman for his protection. His sales in the region of Koprili were not very successful, partly on account of the poverty of the people, but principally because the territory had been well worked by the American Mission from Manastir.

At length when his exile had been sufficiently prolonged to preserve official dignity, he was permitted, through the kind offices of J. E. Blunt, Esq., C.B. (H.M. Consul-General at Salonica) to return to Uscup, this result being also favoured by the appointment of a new Governor to Uscup. It was thought advisable on his return, that our kind friend the Rev. Mr. Crosbie, who was personally known to the new Governor of Uscup, should introduce Seefried to him, and do all in his power to establish a kindly relation between them: and he succeeded.

Nevertheless, on the night of his return to Uscup with his family by special permit, Seefried was arrested as soon as he left the railway-carriage, and hurried off for examination as a dangerous person. This turned out to be due to the officiousness of an under official at Koprili, who regarded Seefried as a suspicious person, and ignorant that official permission had been given for his return to Uscup, had telegraphed to the authorities there to look after him. The Governor of Uscup was much annoyed at the incident, but the alarm and discouragement which it produced on Seefried and his family were far from trifling. Since then he has worked quietly in and about half

of his former field, being still restricted by the Vali of Kossova from visiting the northern part of it.

Seefried's last letter speak of a hopeful religious movement at Uscup, the people searching the Scriptures and listening to the reasoning of the Protestants. He says that a Greek, alarmed at this, went to the Caimakam and asked what was to be done, as everyone was turning Protestant. "If so," replied the other, "I shall be very glad, for no class gives me less trouble than the Protestants."

#### EGYPT.

In looking to the future of their work in Egypt, your Committee have felt that an increased responsibility lay upon them, and they have decided to make Egypt the centre of a new Agency, which shall also include Syria and Palestine, the Suez Canal and the parts of Arabia and Abyssinia bordering on the Red Sea. Dr. Thomson had for some time felt it impossible for him to pay regular visits to this outlying part of his agency; and the events of last summer seemed to call your Committee to an effective reorganization of this portion of the field.

The work of your Society in Egypt having been carried on to a considerable extent through the American United Presbyterian missionaries in that country, the Committee felt it to be one of their first duties to consult these brethren as to the proposed step. Their letters to Dr. Lansing and Hogg arrived while the annual meeting of the mission was being held at Cairo. This gave an opportunity for laying the matter before the brethren convened from all parts of the land, and their answer was cordially in the affirmative. "We have," they wrote, "for long years done what we could to promote the interests of the Bible Society in this land. We cherish a very warm recollection of all the kindness of your Society to us as a mission. We do not recollect to have ever asked anything from you that has been denied us." Then, after referring to the fifty-five stations throughout the valley of the Nile, and their colporteurs dividing the whole land between them, from Alexandria to Assouan, they justly observe that any Agent sent out by the Society will be able to do comparatively little except with the co-operation of the American missionaries. Having full confidence that a wise selection will be made by the Committee, they express their 'readiness to extend the right hand of fellowship to the new Agent, and welcome him as a true yoke-fellow in the Gospel.'

PORT SAID.—The highest testimony continues to be borne by friends of the Society passing through the Canal to the zeal and other qualifications of Mr. Weinstein. Dr. Thomson says that while he has often been encouraged by the sympathy of travellers, he has needed much courage to bear the painful repulses with which he too often meets on board the ships. Not unfrequently, too, he finds successful competitors in unprincipled persons who go about offering to the crews and passengers of the vessels the vilest productions of the press. One of the friendly voices that cheered Weinstein in his work last summer was that of Bishop Steere, when on his way to his post of duty and of death at Zanzibar.

#### MADAGASCAR.

Immediately on the arrival in this country of the Malagasy Ambassadors, your Committee waited upon them with an address of welcome, and subsequently, on January 25, their Excellencies met the Committee at the Bible House, and spent an afternoon in inspecting the objects of interest which it contains. Full accounts of these two interviews have appeared in the *Monthly Reporter* for January and March, 1883. It is not needful here to insert the review presented to the Ambassadors of the Society's connection with Christian missions in Madagascar; but it will be of interest to place on record the reply of the first Ambassador Ravoninahitrinarivo.

"If Madagascar is now a kingdom, we feel that it is due to its being based upon the Word of God. That Word we recognise as the true basis of all government, and we are desirous of seeing its influence spread through the whole island.

"When the first Bible was printed it was like the first spark; when the idols were burned the flame spread rapidly, now the Scriptures reach to the Sakalava, the Betsilio, and the most distant tribes, tending to improve and raise the condition of those in all parts of the island.

"This Bible" (placing his hand on the old Bible referred to in the address) "though old, is a monument and reminder of God's mercy to Madagascar. If this had not been kept through those dark years, perhaps all that has been done would not have been accomplished. And we remember, although this Book has been so wonderfully preserved, that but for the labours and sacrifices of your Society we should not have arrived at that point of Christian civilization in which we now rejoice.

"Therefore for all the efforts made by your Society, I beg to thank you in the name of my people and government.

"In that Book is the soul of our progress and the explanation of our being an organised people; and as I look on your faces I see friends through whose efforts has been brought us to the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins, that knowledge through which we hope to meet in eternity."

## AUSTRIA.

The chief impression left on the mind by a perusal of the recent correspondence and reports of your senior Agent, Mr. Edward Millard, is with what an intense aversion the Church of Rome regards the circulation of the Word of God. The many difficulties which have marked the past year have not originated with the people; their attitude, in so far as they are not influenced by the priests, is either favourable or indifferent. Nor are these difficulties to be laid at the door of the Government. The Government of Austria has no easy part to play; it has to control various nationalities that are more or less antagonistic to one another; it find the aid of the Church of Rome too valuable to be cast aside, and little surprise can be felt if, from fear of offending such a powerful ally, it should allow local governors to indulge a repressive policy which it might otherwise repudiate.

It is the priests, in every part of the Empire, who inflame the people and incite the authorities.

More than once during the past year, when the licenses of colporteurs have been taken away, and their lives put in jeopardy, have your Committee considered the propriety of memorializing the Austrian Government on the subject. That they have not done so arises from no lack of sympathy with their harassed and courageous friends, but because they did not wish to speak without effect and because they believed the Government to be at heart well-disposed toward their work. It is possible in a case of this kind to move prematurely and unwisely; and, while ready to take all needful steps in order to vindicate the position they have so long occupied in Austria, the Committee would remember that oftentimes their strength is to sit still.

The factory operatives are described as widely under the influence of Socialist teaching and hostile to the Gospel. "We are too enlightened for such books as yours; take them to the country folk;" such is the frequent reply made to the overtures of the colporteurs.

"Again, we have assurances warmly given and frequently repeated that there is nothing like this book in all the world, that it has not only enlightened the eyes but also pacified the mind. One copy sold several years ago had been so greatly blessed that the colporteur was not only hailed as a welcome guest, but was in consequence able to sell ten copies in two neighbouring families.

"One poor kitchen-gardener was so interested by what the colporteur told

him from his own happy experience of the Gospel that he called his labourers, and master and servants bought four Bibles and one Testament, and it is a question who were more pleased, those who purchased, or the colporteur who sold the books.

"A rag picker boldly said, 'Oh! I have a book like that,' and he at once drew forth a Testament, in which, though otherwise complete, the title page and a few pages of the Revelation were missing. He had found it somewhere in the course of his peregrinations, and what he had found had evidently served some good purpose, as the ensuing conversation, and the man's cheerful promise to attend a place of worship showed."

THE NEED OF VULGATE VERSIONS—"The value, perhaps I ought to say the necessity, of Vulgate versions has been visibly illustrated by an incident connected with our work here. A railway is being built, and our colporteur one day visited the navvies, mostly Italians. One of them fairly leaped for joy when the colporteur told him he had come to bring him the Holy Scriptures. What a pleasure it would be to his good wife! She came, opened the book, but quickly gave it back again exclaiming, with bitter disappointment, 'Diodati the Protestant!' All joy was gone, nothing remained but suspicion and dread. How different would it have been had there but been Martini's name on the title page, the contents being essentially the same. The colporteur wrote on this occasion, 'How often have I witnessed such scenes! Is there really no other edition! If there is, do quickly send me copies.'"

HOW THE WORK IS HINDERED—"The enmity of Rome to the Bible has shown itself to an extraordinary extent. In Bohemian districts in the South our colporteur has since had to leave the field. Not only was he unable to sell a copy, but he had to suffer personal injuries. In German districts one colporteur was so badly dealt with that for a time he was utterly unfit for any work. The attitude of the priests may be gathered from the following statements. One priest proclaimed from the pulpit, that wherever a Bible was tolerated in a house, the devil ruled supreme. Another appointed a man purpusley to go from house to house with his authority to collect and bring to him every one of these heretical books that he could find. A third priest goes to the Post Office to take down the names of parties for whom parcels containing the Scriptures arriv. Another, again, instructs the postman to advise people not to take in parcels of this kind, and the postman does the priest's bidding. We have instructed the colporteurs to report more fully on these unlawful proceedings.

"I met a young couple that had bought a Bible of our dear brother Pietschman, now with the Lord. It had become a precious book to them. 'That book,' said they, 'we would not give up for the world. People say it is false and bad, but it is because they do not read it.' Two things were very clear to me, first that the good folk had found the Saviour, and secondly, that it was through the faithful use of the Bible. That was a precious hour.

"One man said, 'What a good thing it was you did not let me off so soon when, the first time you came, I refused to buy. I have now learned to love the book.'"

THE PICTURE AND THE BOOK—"The celebrated painting of Munkacsy, representing *Christ before Pilate*, which has drawn thousands of spectators from every part of the realm, being on exhibition at Pesth, where we enjoy full liberty of colportage, a man posted himself near the entrance of the hall, and sold several hundred copies of the New Testament, and it was chiefly Jews who bought the Book, in order better to understand the picture. Even when the exhibition was over, there was a demand at the door-keeper's lodge for the Book. When a Jewish family shortly after this event expressed a desire to join the Christian Church, it may well be supposed that it was not so much the dumb picture as the living Word that had awakened that wish."

## RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE, TORONTO, FROM BRANCH SOCIETIES, FROM 24TH SEPTEMBER TO 31ST DECEMBER, 1883.

		On Purchase Account.	FREE CONTRIBUTIONS.		
			U. C. B. S.	B. & F. B. S.	Sundries.
		\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
Glenallan	Branch	5 20			
Parkhill	do	20 00	25 00	30 00	
Bobcaygeon	do	32 00			
Beamsville	do		1 10		
Grimsby	do		4 29		
Galt	do		90 00	210 00	
Queensville	Depository	4 00			
Holland Landing	do	4 11			
Brampton	Branch		82 88	82 89	
Port Hope	do	43 65	212 74		
Arkwright	do		4 85		
Bervie	do	6 57			
Palmerston	do	22 46	34 00		
Sutton	do	33 48	17 80		
Listowel	do	20 00			
Princeton	do	38 52	26 52		
Stirling	do	24 00			
Campbellford	do	20 13			
Madoc	do	35 77			
Roslin	do	7 26	8 03		
Tweed	do	9 85	24 45		
Deseronto	do	15 54	35 85		
Napanee	do	41 07	39 59		
Ayr	do			11 10	
Colborne	do	13 28	5 00		
Coldsprings	do		5 55		
Brooklyn	do		7 52		
Elfrida	do	3 71			
Markdale	do		2 33		
Unionville	do	3 75	12 19		
Mount Albert	do	11 06	1 76		
Mara	do		4 21		
Kinlough	do	1 09			
Bluevale	do	6 06			
East Westminster	do		35 00	80 00	
Armow	do	2 91			
Welland	do	9 50	2 00		
Fonthill	do	5 00	2 13		
North Pelham	do	6 00	2 75		
Drumbo	do	4 52	96		
Pine River and Amberley	do	6 31	17 75	17 74	
Trenton	do	35 00			
Belleville	do	201 91			
Watford	do	5 59	15 09	15 08	
Amherstburg	do		25 00	40 00	
Manitowaning	do	10 00			
Brucefield	do	40 00	5 32		
Norwood	do		50 00		(1)50 00
Emerson	do	70 00			
New Dundee	do	23 53			
New Hamburg	do	25 51			
Waterloo	do	2 00	30 00		
Elmira	do	30 87	14 90		

(1) To Quebec Auxiliary.

## RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE—Continued.

		On Purchase Account.	FREE CONTRIBUTIONS.		
			U. C. B. S.	B. & F. B. S.	Sundries.
		\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
Hespeler	Branch	18 82	34 74		
East Puslinch	do	2 45			
Castleton	do	9 60	3 04		
Grafton	do		3 24		
Vernonville	do		44 76		
Niagara	do	8 37	36 05	25 00	
Ridgeway	do	10 00	8 62	5 00	
Fort Erie	do		5 40		
Cookstown	do		46 95		
Hagersville	do	12 55	8 00	8 70	
Picton	do	53 01			
Bloomfield	do		5 79		
Wellington	do	6 95			
Rockwood	do	17 42	80 00		
Cumminsville	do		4 00	4 00	
Little Britain	do		8 76		
Cambray	do		8 12		
Woodville	do	10 00			
Thornton	do		1 61		
Bradford	do		3 55		
Beeton	do	30 04			
Rosemont	do	6 31	25 25		
Alliston	do	31 94			
Lloydtown	do		20 00		
Laskey	do		20 00	20 00	
Manchester	do	2 92			
Newcastle	do	10 00			
Cayuga	do		24 16	15 00	
Dunnville	do		15 09	5 00	
South Cayuga	do		47 45	24 00	
Cheapside	do	9 90	11 59		
Millbank	do	3 15			
Tavistock	do	15 90			
Lakefield	do	35 15			
Craigvale	do	3 60			
Theford	do	5 77			
Nanticoke	do		24 00	16 00	
Selkirk	do	13 25	4 33		
Blyth	do	11 80	7 10		
Varna	do		5 07		
Bayfield	do		4 94		
Egmondville	do		1 98		
Seaforth	do		15 32		
Clinton	do		13 29		
Plattsville	do	19 72			
Brighton	do	13 90	6 86		
Mitchell	do		35 00	35 00	
Kirkton	do		20 00		
Fordwich	do	13 00			
Hibbert	do	4 80	20 00	20 00	
Uxbridge	do	47 05			
Brantford	do	183 55			
Campden	do		10 00		
Simcoe	do			33 00	
East Williams	do				(2) 3 00
Scarborough (Collection)			5 00		
Oakville	Branch	14 10	11 15		

(2) On Recorder Account.