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THE

BIBLE ADVOCATE.

The Bible Advocate is published monthly, under the superintendance of the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society, and is issued by Mr. WILLIAM GREIG, from



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VOI.. I.

MONTREAL, OCTOBER, 1837.

No. 6.

ADDRESS.

As the funds of this paper are so very low, that, unless speedily and greatly increased, this important undertaking will prove a considerable loss to the Montreal Bible Society, the Committee are induced to press on those who have had the kindness to act as Agents, to exert themselves to procure payment for the copies sent to them, and to Subscribers who have not paid to pay their respective amounts.

The liberty was taken some time since to send copies to a few, who, it was supposed, would subscribe; this present number will in like manner be sent to other individuals, and it is hoped that all, when called on, will readily yield the small sum which constitutes the subscription to a paper so valuable in its object, as the present. The great need of such a work is evident—to make known to the friends of religion what is doing in the glorious work of disseminating the Bible—to induce its perusal—recommend its doctrines—vindicate its authority, and aid in breaking the seal which, to many, is placed on its blessed contents; considerations which, when duly weighed, must assuredly lead to a conviction of the importance of a periodical like the BIBLE ADVOCATE.

To the Editor.

DEAR SIR,—I have always admired the following passages ever since I first read them. You have alluded in your history to the Naval and Military Bible Society, as formed in the year 1780. The extracts I send you are from a sermon preached in behalf of that Society, by the Rev. R.

Robinson. He who can read them without being affected by them, must have but little sensibility and less religion. Wishing success to your publication as a means of extending the circulation and the knowledge of the Sacred Volume, I am, your's respectfully,

THEOPHILUS.

“How pleasing, at least, how alleviating and mollifying are the reflections which rise out of the doctrine of the sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures, under the misfortunes to which we often hear our brave countrymen are exposed. I sometimes fancy I see an old British sailor, having spent his days in the service of his country, sinking under the weight of age and infirmities; and, during a voyage, sickening, and hastening to die. Alone in his hammock he reviews his life; and Conscience condemns it as ‘evil, only evil continually.’ God, who till now, had not been in all his thoughts, seems to summon him to an impartial judgment. He feels he cannot live, and he knows he is not fit to die. Great is his misery upon him. The pains of dissolving nature are aggravated by the agonies of his mind, oppressed with an intolerable load of guilt. Recollections of blasphemies, debaucheries, and cruelties, cleave his soul asunder. In this moment an honest messmate comes, with pity in his heart, and frankness in his eye, bringing in his hand the Holy Scriptures, the message of Almighty God to the wretched, communicated by your charity to the ship; and reads him these words, “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, he shall not die; none of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; for God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. Come now, let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Instantly a new world opens to his view.

God is no longer the inexorable Judge; he speaks the language of a compassionate parent, vehemently concerned for the welfare of his child. This rebellious son melts at his voice, repents, and believes the gospel: throws himself into the arms of divine clemency, and with his last breath mixes his adoration of God with blessings on you his benefactors, by whose means the Scriptures made him wise unto salvation. All this is possible. I ask no more. The possibility of administering such relief to a fellow-creature in such distress, is enough for me.

“I sometimes fancy I see a shipwreck, all the crew, except one, lost; and he thrown upon a desolate island, the waters casting up along with him one of your Bibles upon the beach. What can the Bible do for this poor man? Let us pause. After his first excesses have subsided, after he hath found what at first he could not comprehend, that he could live on the fruits, and sleep in the shade, which the island affords,—let us suppose him sitting under a bush, and reading ‘The Most High doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou? The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their meat in due season. The Lord upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.’ Would not such information as this put into his heart, if not a joy unspeakable and full of glory, yet a calm resignation to the will of Providence, which, in his condition, would be of more value than the whole world. Were such a man to enter into the spirit of the Holy Scriptures

when he saw the carcasses of his late companions floating on the waves, he would hear one voice saying to him, 'Be still, and know that I am God;' and another subjoining, 'Behold the goodness and severity of God: on them severity, but towards thee goodness.' I repeat it again, if all this is possible; and possibility is round of action here.

"Brethren, was it a prospect of possible good, or was it a foresight of the late unhappy fate of the Royal George, that induced you to act as you did? That was the first ship to which you gave Bibles! When she sunk, there were 400 Bibles on board! Whether the men made a proper use of them or not; you have done your part. I am happy to be able to say, that, by letters from some on board that ship, written before the sad event, and which I have been reading again this morning, there is sufficient ground to believe that the holy Scriptures had made some of that crew wise unto salvation.—'When the sea shall give up her dead,' perhaps you may have the honour of saying to the Judge, 'Behold us; and the children which thou hast given us!'"

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

In our fourth Number we inserted some animating extracts from the speeches delivered at the last Anniversary of the Parent Society. We have since received the Thirty-third Report of proceedings. It abounds in facts and details of the most interesting and encouraging character, some of which we shall select for the gratification of our readers.

In reference to Africa, the report observes:—

"A renewed interest cannot fail to have been awakened on behalf of Africa, by the visit of the Rev. Dr. Philip, and of the Rev. Mr. Read, a

Missionary to that country of nearly thirty-seven years standing; accompanied by his son, together with a Christian Caffre Chief, and a Christian Hottentot. The Caffre Chief and the Hottentot attended a public meeting convened by the Directors of the London Missionary Society in August last; and your Committee cannot forbear enriching the pages of the Report with extracts from their addresses, seeing that they bear so immediately upon the one single object which the Society aims to accomplish.

'When the word of God came among us (said the Caffre Chief) we were like the wild beasts, we knew nothing! we were so wild that there was nothing but war and bloodshed. Every one was against his neighbour; there was no confidence between man and man, and each man tried to destroy his brother. The word of God has changed us; the word of God has brought peace, has reconciled one man to another; and in us is fulfilled that text of Scripture, 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb.' I thank the English nation for what we have received at their hands.'

'The Christian Hottentot said, 'I will not dwell upon what we were before, but I will tell you what the Bible has done for us. There are three gentlemen in this country who are witnesses to what Africans were—Dr. Philip, Mr. Read, and Mr. Campbell. I wish to tell you what the Bible has done for Africa. What would have become of the Hottentot nation; and every black man in South Africa, had you kept the word of God to yourselves? When you received the word of God you thought of other nations who had not that word. When the Bible came amongst us we were naked; we lived in caves and on the tops of mountains; we had no clothes, we painted our bodies with red paint. At first we were surprised to hear the truths of the Bible. The Bible charmed us out of the caves, and from the tops of the mountains. The Bible made us throw away all our old customs and practices, and we lived among civilized men. We are tame men now. Now we know there is a God; now we know we are accountable creatures before God. But what was our state before the Bible came? We knew none of these things. We knew nothing about heaven: We knew not who made heaven and earth. The Bible is the only light for every man that dwells on the face of the earth. I thank God, in the name of every Hottentot—of all the Hotten-

tots in South Africa, that I have seen the face of Englishmen. I have been looking whether a Hottentot found his way to this meeting, but I have looked in vain; I am the only one. I have travelled with the Missionaries in taking the Bible to the Bushman, and other nations. When the word of God has been preached, the Bushman has thrown away his bow and arrows. I have accompanied the Bible to the Caffre nation, and when the Bible spoke, the Caffre threw away his shield and all his vain customs. I went to Lattakoo, and they threw away all their evil works, they threw away their assagais, and became the children of God. The only way to reconcile man to man is to instruct man in the truths of the Bible. I say again, the Bible is the light; and where the Bible comes, the minds of men are enlightened. Where the Bible is not, there is nothing but darkness; it is dangerous, in fact, to travel through such a nation. Where the Bible is not, man does not hesitate to kill his fellow; he never even repents afterwards of having committed murder. I thank you today; I do nothing but thank you to-day. Are there any of the old Englishmen here who sent out the word of God? I give them my thanks: if there are not, I give it to their children. The Bible is still amongst us. I will not say much. I have told you that there are three witnesses who came with me, and they will speak of things. Your Missionaries, when they came to us, suffered with us, and they wept with us, and they struggled for us, till they obtained for us the charter of our liberties.

'I am so convinced that the Bible is the word of God, and of the blessings that we derive from it, that were there any thing I could do for my own countrymen I would do it; but it is the work of God to do it. My nation is poor and degraded, but the word of God is their stay and their hope. The word of God has brought my nation so far, that if a Hottentot young lady and an English young lady were walking with their faces from me, I would take them both to be English ladies. Do instruct us—I say again, do instruct us! Do not leave us to ourselves. Hold us under your arm. We are coming on; we are improving; we will soon all be one. The Bible makes all nations one. The Bible brings wild men and civilized together. The Bible is our light. The Hottentot nation was almost exterminated, but the Bible has brought the nations together, and here am I before you. You have the honour, I claim nothing. You give us your pence and your farthings, and here am I; I am yours.'

FRANCE.

The Society's Agent at Paris, Mr.

De Pressensé, in his report, among other particulars, states as follows:

"On every side we find religiously-disposed people coming forward full of zeal, who, availing themselves of the powerful aid afforded by your Society, cheerfully engage to convey the Sacred Volume to such parts as have hitherto remained without its saving influence. I do not here allude to the colporteurs employed by Religious Societies, but to Christian friends belonging to the laity, who during their leisure moments make themselves useful in advancing the kingdom of their God and Saviour. I might specify whole churches, the members of which, without abandoning their ordinary occupations, have thus become true evangelists. The number of copies of the holy Scriptures placed this year in the hands of such depositaries, has amounted to no less than 17,398 volumes, being 8000 copies more than were distributed by the same persons in the year preceding. Could I but submit to you the voluminous correspondence which I have carried on with the friends of the cause, you would find reason to bless the Lord for the successful results of their labours.'

The labours of the colporteurs are next adverted to, and several pleasing facts are adduced, to prove how beneficial they are:—

"In reference to the operations of the colporteurs, employed by the numerous Evangelical Societies, which have made choice of France as the principal field of their labours, I have before me the most encouraging proofs of the increasing benefits resulting from their endeavours. This year these indefatigable labourers have circulated 43,510 copies of the Scriptures.

"You will see from this, what powerful auxiliaries the Bible Societies have in these humble evangelists, whose whole life is devoted faithfully to plead the cause of the Bible, and whom God makes use of as messengers to convey his word into every part of our country; for you will doubtless learn with pleasure, that through their means the whole of our provinces will soon be regularly visited, with a view of supplying the wants of the Scriptures, which may be found to exist. I have already had occasion to remark, that it is the Evangelical Societies that send forth these colporteurs. Two of these in particular employ a considerable number of them, namely, the Evangelical Societies of France and Geneva. Both are richly blessed of the Lord, and the former seems to have been called to labour in an immense field. The following will serve to confirm this assertion. It is only four years since it was

first established. In the first year it employed only six agents, whereas at present their number amounts to forty-three. During the first year its receipts were only about 7000 francs, whereas its subscriptions and distributions for the last year exceeded 40,000 francs; and what is more especially encouraging is, that hitherto God has made use of their instrumentality, for leading many souls to embrace with sincerity the religion of the Bible."

THE BLIND.

By those who feel for the pitiable condition of the blind (and what benevolent Christian does not?) the following notice will be read with interest and pleasure:—

The Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society beg to inform the Subscribers to the Society, the Friends of the Bible, and the Conductors of Institutions for the Blind, that they hope shortly to have copies of the Gospel of St. Luke, with the Acts of the Apostles, printed on a RAISED TYPE, for the use of the Blind, prepared by Mr. Gall of Edinburgh; as also the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, in type prepared by Mr. Alston of Glasgow. They are likewise expecting to receive from America, copies of the Book of Psalms, prepared at the Institution for the Blind in Boston, U. S., under the superintendance of Dr. Howe. They have also promised assistance to a Society in Bristol, engaged in preparing books for the blind, in characters invented by Mr. Lucas, instead of the ordinary letter. This Society has undertaken to print the Gospel of St. John in that form. The Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society further beg to state, that they are prepared to proceed with the printing of the entire New Testament, so soon as they shall have received sufficient information to lead them to believe that readers will be found for the copies that may be prepared. Any information from the friends of the blind, as to their number and desire to learn, or the actual attainment of the ability to read, will be gratefully received.

A. BRANDRAM, } Secretaries.
G. BROWNE, }

Bible Society House, June 5, 1837.

TESTIMONY TO THE VALUE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

NO. II.

With the same restrictions as on page 14, and with the same views as

were there expressed, we quote the following:—

Rapin says, "sparkling images and magnificent expressions are best borrowed from Scripture; let the preacher that aims at eloquence, read the prophets incessantly, for their writings are an abundant source of all the riches and ornaments of speech."

Dr. Watts says—"As in the conduct of my studies, with regard to divinity, I have reason to repent of nothing more than that I have not perused the Bible with more frequency; so if I were to set up for a poet, with a design to exceed all modern writers, I would follow the advice of Rapin, and read the prophets night and day."

Mr. Hervey says—"I think we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by studying God's holy Word no more. I have, for my part, been too fond of reading every thing elegant and valuable, that has been penned in our own language; and been particularly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But were I to renew my studies, I would take my leave of those accomplished trifles. I would resign the delights of modern wit, amusement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scriptures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. This wisdom, whose fruits are peace in life, consolation in death, and everlasting salvation after death; this I would trace, this I would seek, this I would explore, through the spacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Testament. In short I would adopt the apostles' resolution, and give myself to prayer and to the word."

With such testimonies before him, can even the mere English reader, who has the Bible in his hands, have any cause to repine for the want of means of intellectual and moral advancement? Surely not. He is

better off, than he would be with all the learning and all the books in the world without the Bible. There is nothing else which can so expand the intellect, so elevate the mind, so sublimate the affections, so prepare men for the duties of life, and the enjoyment of the world of spirits.

Again, how important and benevolent a work is that, whose aim is to put the Bible into every family of our country and of the world. It will put a new intellectual aspect on every destitute family and district that receives it, and studies it. It will change and improve the moral character of all who make it their counsellor. It will raise from degradation and sin, and inspire with immortal hopes.

Those who have the Bible should bind it more closely to their hearts, should be more grateful to God for it, should make it the basis of all their principles and conduct, should breathe its pure spirit, practice the benevolence it inculcates, and cherish its immortal hopes. There is a price put into their hands to get wisdom; may they have a heart to improve it.—*Christian Mirror.*

“I WANT A CHART.”

I was one day standing in the shop of my master, behind the counter, when an old sailor entered, and looking seriously at me, accosted me thus: “Young man, I want a chart!” “Yes, sir,” I replied, “you shall have one; do you want St. George’s, or the Bay of Biscay, or round Ireland, or the Mediterranean, or—?” “Stay, young man stay!” said the old sailor: “youth is always in a hurry. I want a chart, but I don’t want either one you have mentioned; they are useless to me. I want a chart which shall guide me to heaven, for I have lost my old one. Now, young man, do you understand me?”

I immediately conjectured that he

wanted a Bible; so I took down a few, and showed them to him; when he selected one, evidently much pleased at my readiness to serve him; inquired the price, and paid the money. After a few moments’ pause, he turned round suddenly, and asked me whether I understood *that* chart? I told him that I could read it, and did so very often. “Of that,” said the old man, “I have not the least doubt; but recollect, *that* is not sufficient: you must have it in your life and conversation; before you will receive any benefit; you must love this chart: you must make it your sole guide through life’s maze; and, in entering into the dark and narrow, and, to many thousands, dreadful strait of death, you will find it beneficial—then it will be found indeed a treasure and joy. Therefore, make yourself acquainted with it intimately; lose no time, or a water-spout may burst on you, or a tempest arise, and you are hurried into that strait, whether you know it or not! Good afternoon!” Then looking on me very kindly, and offering me his hand, he rejoined, “We shall meet again.”

For a few moments I was speechless, such an effect had the old sailor’s speech on me; but when I had regained my recollection, I began to question myself as to the truth of what the old man advanced. I could not deny it; no, not a syllable of it. I was conscious that it was true; I felt myself, for the first time, as a sinner; and determined to live more righteously. Alas! here again I erred; I was for substituting my own fancied righteousness for that blessed righteousness of my Saviour—building on a sandy foundation, which soon, at the first attempt of the enemy, tumbled down; need I say that I often endeavored to build again on the same foundation, and as often found my attempts fruitless? I now began to despair; but God, who watches intently all his creatures,

pointed me, by the light of his Spirit on his word, to the Rock which is higher than I. I fled for refuge to the hope set before me—found pardon and peace, joy and grace; and I trust that I shall be enabled to set forth, wherever my lot may be cast, “the unsearchable riches of Christ.”—*London Pilot.*

ILLUSTRATION OF ISAIAH 35: 7.

“And the parched ground shall become a pool.” The word “*sharab*” here translated “parched ground,” is derived from a word, which in Chaldaic and Arabic, signifies to burn up. As these two languages are derived from the Hebrew, it is probable that that word, though not found as a verb in the Bible, was one peculiar to the Jews, and that *sharab* the noun partakes of its signification. It is highly probable that in the passage before us it has direct reference to that extraordinary optical phenomenon often noticed in hot sandy countries, which now obtains the name of the *mirage*. The following extract from the journal of a recent traveller in the east, will explain the effects of the *mirage*:

“The first march from Abusheher we had to pass over a desert plain of considerable extent, on which I amused myself by watching narrowly the various changes, as we were near or remote from it, of that singular vapor, called by the French, *mirage*, and by the Arabs and Persians, *shirab*.”

“The influence of this vapor in changing the figure of objects is very extraordinary; it sometimes gives to those seen through it the most fantastical shapes; and as a general effect, I think it always appears to elevate and make objects seem much taller than they really are. A man, for instance, seen through it at the distance of a mile and a half upon the level plain appears to be almost as tall as a date-tree.”

“Its resemblance to water is complete, and justifies all the metaphors of poets, and their tales of thirsty and deluded travellers.”

“The most singular quality of this vapor is its power of reflection. When a near observer is a little elevated, as on horseback, he will see trees and other objects reflected as from the surface of a lake. The vapor, when

seen at a distance of seven or eight miles, appears to lie upon the earth like an opaque mass; and it certainly does not rise many feet above the ground, for I observed, that while the lower part of the town of Abusheher was hid from the view, some of the more elevated buildings, and the tops of a few date-trees, were distinctly visible.”

Now then the prophesy of which the above quotation is a part, may be paraphrased thus. “By the introduction of the new dispensation, by the preaching of the gospel, the moral desolations of the earth shall be removed. Where there is a state of things as distressing to the saint as the parched glimmering waste is to the thirsty traveller—who, when he expected to find cool water, is deceived by the *sharab*—even there the state of things shall be changed. The river of God shall flow there, he that is thirsty shall drink, the perishing sinner shall receive that living water which shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”—*Gospel Light.*

THE BLESSING OF GOD ON THE PERUSAL OF HIS WORD.

(NO. IV.)

REMARKABLE CONVERSION.—The sudden conversion of four hundred Tyrolians of the Zillenthal from the Romish to the Reformed faith, has been brought about, it is said, in the following manner:—A traveller in the Tyrol left with his host a copy of the Bible, which passed from hand to hand—at first from notions of curiosity, but afterwards for the purpose of daily reading. The result was, that no fewer than 400 persons renounced the Catholic and adopted the Protestant faith. The government of Vienna sought to constrain them either to renounce their newly-adopted faith, or to emigrate into Transylvania, the only province of the empire where the existence of seceding sects is allowed. The Tyrolians, however, protested against a

compulsory emigration, and implored the protection of the king of Prussia. It is in consequence of this appeal that Mr. Strauss has been sent from the court of Prussia on a mission to Vienna to negotiate an arrangement of this matter.—*The Church.*

LYONS.

The number of hearers who regularly attend service at the chapel of Lyons, is about two hundred. M. Monod relates several instances of conversion among his little flock. The Bible especially has been blest as the means of leading souls to Christ. The following are some of the cases mentioned by Mr. M. :—

A labourer finding a Bible at the house of a friend, inquired of him, Who gave you this book? It was M***, a member of the church. Can you procure one for me? Perhaps the person who gave it to me, would also give you one; meanwhile I will lend you my copy. The laborer took the Bible home, read it to his wife, and came with her to the meetings. From that time they attended regularly religious worship, and the hearts of both have been touched by the grace of God.

A whole family was remarked for some weeks, in the chapel for their close attention to preaching. On inquiring for the cause of their coming, it was found that a Christian of Mr. Monod's flock was in the shop of a hair-dresser, and spoke to him of the Gospel. The hair-dresser did not appear to listen; but a stranger who was present by accident, listened, took the directions to the chapel, and attended with his family. So true is it, that it is necessary every where and at all times to scatter the seed of the word, and that God will often make it fall upon good ground at a moment when least expected.

The visits and exhortations of a Christian who traversed the city of Lyons several times, had, with the

blessing of God, introduced the Gospel into a house where several Catholic families lived. Some declared themselves for the truth, others against it. The first sought to establish religious meetings in the house; but the proprietor was irritated, threw obstacles in the way, and drove away one of the families. The rest, however, persevered, and soon from this single house three men with their wives, making six persons in all, attended evangelical preaching.

In the same house were two bigoted Catholics, a mother and her daughter. For a long time they rejected the Bible. But at length the mother was induced to accept the New Testament, and after reading it a few days she took pleasure in it, and determined to attend the chapel. One Saturday evening, when she announced for the first time, her intention of going thither, her daughter, full of grief that her mother was about to be *gained over*, besought her with tears to desist from her design, but without success. Sunday morning came. Well, my mother, said she to her, since you are determined to go to the chapel, I will not leave you; but will go with you,—and you must then go to the mass with me. They both went to the chapel, were both of them *gained over*, forgot the mass, and have ever since diligently attended preaching. They now love Christians, and read the word of God with faith, with interest and profit.

EASTERN TOWNSHIPS.

An Association of twenty gentlemen, has been formed at Eaton Coves, in connexion with the Sherbrooke County Society.

Arrangements have been made with the Rev. Mr. Townshend, of Clarenceville, for the supply of Caldwell Manor.

Subscribers are requested to notify W. Greig, St. Paul Street, should any irregularity take place in the receipt of their papers.