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OXFORD AND THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

In the speech made by Zachary Macaulay in 1812, at the formation of an auxiliary society for Clapham, a passage occurs which is very suggestive both in the contrast and in the similarity it indicates to the treatment which the Bible Society receives in some quarters now. He said: "Another objection to this Society has been urged with much force and dexterity, and has had some effect on particular individuals. It is, that a Society formed for the purpose of circulating the Scriptures *alone* has a tendency to bring the Liturgy of the Church of England into disrespect. I certainly will not yield to any man in cordial respect for that Liturgy. I concur entirely with those who regard it as standing in the very first rank of human compositions. But if I could believe, for one moment, that the most extensive circulation of that Book, which was given by God Himself for the instruction of mankind, could bring the Liturgy into disrespect, it would not make me less anxious for the dispersion of the Bible, but it might lead me to suspect that my attachment to the Church of England is not so well founded as I believe it to be. Indeed, if anything could alienate my feelings from that Church, it would be that the only opponents of this Institution have been found among its members; that while, in every other part of the world, this Society has no sooner been announced, than it has been received with a sort of enthusiastic ardour; that while no members of any other Church, in or out of England, not even the Roman Catholics,* have raised their voice against it, there should be found among us, not ignorant or irreligious persons, not infidels, not profligate persons, but ministers of the Gospel, dignitaries of the Church, Doctors in Divinity, Professors in our Universities, who deem it a proof of wisdom to place themselves in battle array against it. But, blessed be God, we have many who think very differently, and who deem it their highest honour to concur with this Society in promoting the object which it has in view, the universal circulation of the Word of God."

Sixty-eight years later, at the annual meeting of the County Auxiliary,

* The Protestant opponents of the Society have since got Papal Bulls on their side.

held in Oxford on November 8, 1880, the President of Trinity College, who was in the chair, said: "My standing here is evidence that the friends of the Society in Oxford desire to see the work of the Bible Society gathering together on its platform the representatives of the University, and the city, and of every school of thought in our Church, and of Christian men outside it. It is, I imagine, the comprehensive Christian spirit which directs so much of the labour of this Society, that stirred Mr. Christopher to ask me to occupy this place. And I desire to express my regret that this meeting of the Bible Society has drifted so much from the University—if indeed it has not always been much more of a town than a University meeting.

"If I were addressing University men, I should say that, for the fulness of our healthy life, we should take an interest in the work of great spiritual enterprises. Owing to circumstances, it is almost inevitable that with a great many of us the very weakest side of our life, that which is least cultivated and developed by our daily occupations, is the higher moral and spiritual side of it. And upon that account I should desire always to urge that it is one of our duties as a University to keep our sympathies alive, and to take some personal share in the work of such a great Society as this. The Bible Society is one which appeals most strongly to the members of a University, because it appeals to us not merely as doing a great Christian work—though, of course, that is the greatest appeal of all—but also on another ground, as spreading through the life of infinite multitudes all over the world a civilizing, humanizing influence, and as being the instrumentality by which the one literature which comes home to the great masses of men is put into their hands. If the Bible were removed from the hands of the great mass of the people in our own country, you would have swept away from them the only literature, worthy the name of literature, that has any influence upon them whatsoever. I am taking only a very low ground comparatively, but even on that ground this Society has a very strong claim indeed upon the members of a University. Simply putting aside religion for the moment, if any voluntary organization which was doing a hundredth part of the humanizing, civilising, and enlightening work which the Bible Society is doing in every corner of our own country, and in every quarter of the world, were to come to our University of Oxford, through its agents, and say: 'We were doing such and such a work in the interests of literature and civilization, what will you do to help us?' I verily believe that they would be received with enthusiasm by the representatives of our University. And yet we are in a sort of way so familiar with the work of this venerable and great Society that we let it go on, so far as we are concerned, as if it had no existence at all. That is the first regret which I desire to express to-night.

"I also give expression to one other regret that I feel, and that is that the platform of this Society is not crowded with the representatives of the various parties that unhappily, perhaps, exist in the Church. It is to my mind a subject of the deepest regret that the extremely earnest and powerful section of our Church, commonly known as High Church, is so very shy of the platform of the Bible Society. It is natural enough, but I hope the day may not be far distant when it will not be the case. We hear a great deal said, just now, about unity as between different sections of our own Church, and between ourselves and our Nonconformist brethren. I was at the Leicester Congress the other day, and I heard the most admirable sentiments enunciated from representatives of almost every branch of our church on the subject of Christian unity; and it was surprising to see how those sentiments were most heartily applauded by the whole immense gathering of people. Still more were the sentiments applauded which dwell on the drawing closer together of the bonds of Christian fellowship between members of our own Church and our Nonconformist brethren. No one could listen to sentiments of that kind so enunciated, and accepted by such a meeting as the Church Congress at Leicester, without feeling thankful that there were signs abroad of Christian union. But, now, when we come to the work of particular so-

cities, here or elsewhere, we find ourselves translating into practical action these sentiments and these hopes, and it is then that we expect to see that the union which has been expressed in general terms will bring people together to speak from the same platform, and to work in the same cause. And that translation into practical fact of sentiments which we hear at times in public is, I am afraid, a very slow process, but at the same time, I hope and believe, a constantly growing process.

"It has been very common indeed for clergymen of our Church to follow, as I believe, a mistaken interpretation of what ought to be the real position of a clergyman of the Church of England with regard to the platform of the Bible Society. I trust it may not be long before we see the tide, which we believe has already turned, running so strongly in the other direction that the meetings of the Bible Society will be, let us hope, largely attended by many who have never yet seen their way to take part in them. We are bound to give the utmost credit for honesty of conviction to all who differ from us, but I must confess myself that I should feel it a very difficult thing indeed to take advantage of the work of the Bible Society and yet not heartily to cooperate with those who are carrying on that work. Let us just glance for a moment at one or two of the branches of the work of the Bible Society. If we take the home work we find that everywhere in our schools, and other institutions for the poor, the Bible Society is giving of its resources towards facilitating the acquiring of Bibles for the purpose of teaching the young. In all kinds of institutions—for the blind, the deaf, the dumb, for widows, for orphans, for soldiers and sailors, and so forth—wherever you turn, in fact, as you follow the great variety of philanthropic and religious work throughout our country, you find the Bible Society giving of its resources in aid of that work. If we turn from our home work to the foreign operations of the Society, there is scarcely a missionary society anywhere doing any considerable work that is not indebted to the Bible Society. First of all let us take the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. This Society uses the Scriptures in about twenty foreign languages. Nearly all these versions may be obtained from the Bible Society, but about fourteen of them can be obtained only from the Bible Society. Thus you see this great Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts is compelled to go to the Bible Society for its Bibles in something like fourteen languages. Now, with regard to that, and if I were considering it as a personal question affecting my own action, I should be compelled to say that I cannot accept with one hand these gifts which the Bible Society offers me in order to enable me to do my missionary work, and refuse with the other hand to hold out the right hand of fellowship. If we pass from this Society, we find the Church Missionary Society using the Bible, or some parts of it, in about forty different translations, and nearly all of these obtained through the Bible Society. So again if we turn from our Church Societies to those of the Nonconformist bodies, we find that the London Missionary Society uses the Scriptures in about fifteen different languages, and the Wesleyan Missionary Society in nearly thirty, and all these are supplied directly or indirectly by the Bible Society. Thus you see what an immense amount of work the Society is doing, and how it is doing it for almost all denominations of Christians. I cannot conceive a stronger argument, a stronger claim, which can be put forward for asking all denominations, all shades of Christians, to join heartily in the common work of this great and venerable Society."—*B. & F. Bible Society Reporter for October, 1881.*

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 1st DECEMBER, 1881.

BOARD MEETINGS.

The regular monthly meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, Oct. 18th, at 7.30, p.m., Dr. Hodgins, Senior Honorary-Secretary, in the chair.

After the usual devotional exercises, &c., a letter was read from the Rev. W. Jolliffe, notifying the Board of his removal from the city, and the Rev. E. Roberts was appointed as Director in his place.

It was moved by A. Christie, Esq., and seconded by D. Higgins, Esq., and carried:—That the Secretaries send out to the Agents a circular letter asking them to consult as to the advisability of issuing the RECORDER quarterly instead of bi-monthly, and that the replies be referred to the Agency and Colportage Committee, to be reported on by them to the Board.

The report of the Permanent Agent for September was submitted, and also the reports of the Colporteurs, Messrs. Lowry, Taylor and Blouin. The reports of the Colporteurs were all interesting and encouraging, especially that of Mr. Blouin, the newly appointed Colporteur in Manitoba. The meeting was closed with prayer, led by the Rev. Mr. Cade.

The Board met again at the usual hour on Tuesday, Nov. 15th. The chair was at first occupied by the Hon. W. McMaster, and afterwards by the President, the Hon. G. W. Allan. The Rev. Dr. Rose led in prayer.

The Permanent Secretary stated that the Agency and Colportage Committee were not yet ready to report on the issue of the RECORDER, as they had as yet received only a few of the Agents' replies to the Circular Letter sent to them in reference to the matter.

Several letters were read in reference to various matters, the Depository's cash account, the record of monthly balances, the list of gratuities, &c., were submitted.

Agents' reports were presented from the Revs. J. G. Manly, John Gray, and A. A. Drummond.

A schedule of Colporteurs' labours in the month of October was read, and also the reports of Messrs. Lowry and Taylor.

The Permanent Secretary read a letter of resignation from Mr. Taylor, on account of his desire to move to another sphere of labour, which the Colportage committee had accepted with much regret.

The meeting was closed with prayer, led by the Rev. Mr. Burton.

EXTRACTS OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN REPORTS.

ENGLAND.

“The Rev. F. E. Wigram, who had just been appointed to the Secretariat of the Church Missionary Society, made an admirable speech at Southampton, on the close interdependence of the two Societies; and he indicated the line of policy he should endeavour to pursue in his new position. Nothing could promise more happy co-operation between all evangelical societies than the sentiments and spirit of his address.”

“At Arundel the new vicar, Rev. A. S. Thompson, riveted the attention of his audience by a graphic description of our work in Russia, with which a thirteen years’ residence in St. Petersburg had made him familiar. He had traversed Finland with the Society’s Agent, the Rev. W. Nicholson, upon whom he passed a high eulogium. No more satisfactory testimony could have been borne to the extent, efficiency and usefulness of the Society’s work in that vast empire.”

Mr. Raine relates :—

“Before the Annual Meeting at Slingsby, I met a very remarkable man, in the person of Captain Ward, who was the officer in charge of Nelson’s body on its way to England, after the battle of Trafalgar in 1805. The evening being very dark, the captain could not go to the meeting. He had not been absent before, and seemed much distressed. He told me, ‘Of all societies the Bible Society is the one I love best,’ and that it was a pleasing reflection that he had done some work for the Society, with William Wilberforce, in and about London.”

Of the Association at Norbury, Mr. Thomas says :—

“It was founded by Mr. Luke Sampson, a farmer, of Norbury High Grounds, who, in 1851—shortly after his conversion—attended the Annual Meeting of the Ellastone Association. At its close the deputation—the Rev. H. Western Plumtre, then Rector of Eastwood—asked him to try and do something for the Bible Society at Norbury. Mr. Sampson’s first efforts were put forth in circulating the Scriptures in the neighbourhood. He canvassed the parishes of Norbury and Snelston, calling on almost every family.

“AN EXAMPLE OF GROWTH.

“He found a good many houses without a copy of God’s Word; and no fewer than 134 Bibles were sold in the first year of his work. In addition he obtained fifty-three subscribers who most willingly promised to contribute annually to the Society’s general funds. The following year additional copies of the Scriptures were sold, and the names of subscribers increased to 110. The first meeting was held in November, 1852; and as the Rector refused to lend the Parish School-room for the purpose, the meeting was held in the cheese room of the Farm. Mr. Plumtre was the Deputation and over one hundred people were present. The amount raised in that first year for general purposes was £10, and for Scriptures sold £18. For four years the meetings continued to be held in the cheese room, but as the interest in the Society’s work increased, Mr. Sampson thought it advisable to hire a tent for the meeting and alter the time of holding it from the autumn to the summer of the year, which was done. Canon Bardsley, of Manchester, was the first Deputation to the Tent Meeting, to which were gathered about 350 neighbours and friends. The amount of Free Contributions that year was £29. From that time the meeting has been held every year (with three exceptions) in the tent, Mr. Sampson providing tea for all the visitors. It may safely be asserted that no meetings of the county possess a more sacred or solemn interest than those annual reunions under the Norbury Tent. Some of the foremost of the

clergy and nonconforming ministers have from time to time assisted Mr. Sampson in his splendid efforts—the present Bishop of Liverpool, Dr. Oswald Dykes, Canon Bardsley, Canon Forester, the Rev. Gerard Smith, the Rev. W. H. Aitken, F. Wright, Esq., of Osmaston Manor, Colonel Holden, W. S. Allen, Esq., M.P., Marcus Wright, Esq., &c. A year ago Mr. Sampson's health was so feeble that no meeting could be held; but Mr. Marcus Wright made up for the loss by collecting over £60. The amount contributed to the Parent Society by this little association—for the population is under 400—is more than £1,000."

Mr. Cohen dwells upon the valuable work done by lady collectors, who in several parts of the Metropolis go about among their poorer neighbours, inducing them to purchase Bibles for themselves by weekly instalments. This self denying work deserves all honour:—

"A BRAVE LADY.

"At one house in —, a member of the Ladies' Committee had often called, and as often been repulsed. At last a message came: 'Mrs. — wishes to see you.' Our friend went thinking that after all the people wished to subscribe for a Bible. When she entered the room, Mrs. —, a powerful and turbulent woman, placed her back against the door, and said, 'You are the impudent young lady who goes about asking poor people to buy Bibles! What do we want with the Bible? Here you stay till we choose to let you out.' 'Very well,' said the young lady, quietly seating herself, 'I came hoping you had sent for me to take your name as a subscriber for the Bible, and I will take it even now if you will let me.' She trembled at her own temerity as she uttered the words; but though foul language was used, no further actual violence was done, and after an imprisonment of some twenty minutes she was suffered to go forth. Nothing daunted, that lady collector bravely maintains her post and continues her work."

Two special efforts have been made during the year. One was at the Wimbledon Camp, where the society shared a tent with the Christian Colporteur Association, and had also a Bible cart which roved through the camp.

"The sales were much larger than last year, amounting to 194 copies (50 Bibles, 106 Testaments and 38 Portions), including English, Welsh, Gaelic, French, Italian, German, Hebrew Portions, a Canarese Testament, and—strangely enough in a place where so many keen-sighted marksmen were gathered—ten portions of the Old and New Testaments in 'Moon's system for the blind.'"

The other effort was at the Islington Cattle Show, where the Directors kindly allowed space in the gallery of the small hall, free of charge. Each day of the Show attendance was given from morning until eleven at night by Mr. Nicholls, the Assistant Agent, and the colporteur Dorgan. They found incessant work among the crowds that passed by; and sold 135 Bibles, 137 Testaments, and 52 Portions, among visitors to the stall in many cases after animated and interesting conversation."

"Redditch, is now well known for its good work, Mr. Milward is a worthy successor to his father there. It is a real privilege to be invited to address the great gathering of breadwinners at Morning Prayer in his factory, with several of whom I had cheering conversation afterwards; they have a prolific Bible-box in the factory. At Stourport Mrs. Harrison presides over a whole college of lady collectors, and we had a most interesting and useful meeting. This place and Bewdley have caught much of the loving spirit of the late sweet singer of our Israel who lived, and now rests, among them. The Bible was with Frances Ridley Havergal what it was with Charlotte Elliott, and it is not strange that we have several excellent meetings round Winterdyne."

FRANCE.

"People are disgusted with the absence of conscientiousness in the teaching

of the priests; but they know and feel that man cannot live without religion. This explains the crowded audiences wherever *conférences* are announced by Protestant pastors or laymen. The mairies and theatres are opened at once in places where the Gospel has never been heard, for men who wish to speak of the love of Jesus Christ to sinners. This may well be called 'a sign of the times.'

The meetings with which the name of our countryman, the Rev. R. W. McAll, is honourably associated, continue to spread, not only in Paris but in the provinces. Your Committee have had the pleasure during the year, of meeting Mr. McAll and making a further grant in aid of his Bible classes; and M. Monod (the Society's agent for France) has found it expedient to detach colporteurs for the purpose of following up the impressions made at the evangelistic meetings.

"Roman Catholic working people who hear for the first time the pure Gospel are often touched, and ready to procure a Bible or Testament while they are still under the impression of what they have heard, but they will never apply for it to a Protestant pastor, or even to a bookseller, and perhaps on the following day they will be less disposed to make a sacrifice for such a book. But if they see one of their own class attending the meetings with his colporteur bag, then they are likely at once to get a book."

But the way is often prepared for such gatherings by small Protestant churches which are themselves the outcome of the labours of your colporteurs. Testimony to this is furnished in a letter addressed to your Agent last December by a pastor in the Jura—

"Having no occasion to write to you for the last two years, I have not mentioned our missionary stations of S— and of C—, both of which owe their existence to the passage through our district of your excellent colporteur Terrier. They are chiefly intended for the scattered Protestants, but a certain number of Roman Catholics who have received from M. Terrier some good words, together with the Scriptures, attend our services in both places. We had yesterday above fifty Roman Catholics present, and one half of the children gathered around the Christmas-tree were Roman Catholics. I am personally much indebted to M. Terrier for the large share he has had in the establishment of these services."

Tourn's work on board the ships at Marseilles is most interesting. The sailors who give him least encouragement are the Greeks and Italians, whereas the Norwegians, "as soon as he appears on deck and they see the Bible, take off their caps and remain uncovered while he speaks to them."

"Three years ago Tourn had sold a Bible to a Norwegian sailor, who had not at hand the necessary sum to pay for it. 'Never mind,' said Tourn, 'take it and when I come again on Saturday you can pay me.' But when Saturday came the sailor had embarked on another vessel, and was gone. Tourn took the loss upon himself, and thought no more about it, when, a few days ago, as he was walking along the quays, he felt a heavy hand on his shoulder. He turned back and saw a tall sailor, who said, with a pleasant smile, 'Are you not Mr. Tourn who used to sell Bibles on board the ships?' 'I am.' 'Do you not remember selling a Bible to a sailor who left without paying for it?' 'Yes, I do.' Then the poor man related in touching words what he had gone through since that time, and how that the Bible had been *sa grande consolatrice* during a terrible illness at St. Thomas, and how often he had thought with regret that he had left without paying for it. He did so on the spot, and, says Tourn, 'I never saw a man happier for having discharged a duty.'"

Tourn has taken a prominent part in a revival among the sailors; and he and his wife have given such evidence of high Christian character that your Committee have entrusted them with the care of a new dépôt opened in the

Rue de la République, one of the largest and most frequented streets in the city.

"The dépôt seems to promise well. 'Our opened Bibles in several languages in the front of the window make a splendid show. Crowds are constantly stopping to look at them. The sale of the Scriptures is larger than of any other books. Several of the Jews have purchased Hebrew Bibles, and a Roman Catholic priest bought this morning a French Bible. Many English visitors come and sit down in the shop and talk about the work.'"

"At a village in the Jura an old woman showed the colporteur Terrier a New Testament quite worn out, and said, 'Here is a book like yours: that book has given peace to my poor old husband, who used to read it on his death-bed. But now it is all in pieces!' 'But you can buy a new one.' 'Oh! it is too expensive for me.' 'But no, my good grandmamma, it only costs ten sous.' 'What! only ten sous! then let me have one. I know it is the word of God.' 'It is, and the foundation of true religion.' 'Of course, but do Protestants believe in that book?' 'Yes, my good grandmamma, that book is their only authority.' 'How do you know? You don't mean to say that you are a Protestant?' 'I am indeed.' 'Holy Virgin, you are a Protestant? I have never seen one, and have longed so much to see one. Come here and sit by me if you are a Protestant, and let us talk.' She asked me some questions, and promised to make the Gospel known round her. I asked if she wished me to pray with and for her, and I left her afterwards happy and pleased."

Lebel, who visits the departments of La Manche and Calvados, gives in his report an illustration of the Saviour's words, "I came not to send peace but the sword."

"On passing through a village which I had visited some months ago two persons recognised me, and said how happy they were to have such a good book. They informed me that the village had had a great discussion on that account, and divided into two camps, some asserting that the books were good, others that they were Protestant books, and that the curé's order to destroy them ought to be obeyed. I accustom myself to go repeatedly to the same place, and I frequently sell where I have already sold, or where I had met with a complete failure. The people are curious to know what those books are that we sell so obstinately. 'Is it possible that you cherish the hope of converting us?' 'That is my greatest desire, and all we do has but that one object—to bring you to the knowledge of the gospel, and our constant prayer to God is that His Holy Word may not be spread in vain, but for your salvation and the progress of his kingdom in the world.'"

"On one occasion, however, a town-clerk in Servia addressed the people as follows: 'See, my friends, this is the book from which the Nazarenes are taught. Our priests read the same book in our churches, but we do not understand it. It would be better if we did. You know what good and pious people those Nazarenes are.' The result of this little speech was that the people bought a number of Bibles."

The five colporteurs give many instances of Roman Catholics led by the perusal of the Word of God to abandon the errors of their Church.

"HOW THE LIGHT ENTERS.

"In A—— I met a man who had been converted by the reading of the Bible, and who now does all in his power to make others acquainted with the Word of God. Many years ago he had purchased a Bible, but had not used it, because he thought such a pious person as he was did not need a book of that sort. He was a very zealous Catholic, and when the Jesuits came to his place on a missionary tour, he went eighteen times to their sermons. In one of their discourses, one of the Jesuits warned the people to hold fast to their faith. He said he had known a man—a very earnest Christian, who had

turned heretic and become a Protestant. These words made a deep impression on him. 'A good Catholic turn heretic! that was strange.' One day he tried to convince a Protestant of his errors, and the latter replied: 'Why dispute about the matter? Let God's Word decide.' Well, he possessed a Bible, but was that really a faithful version of the Scriptures? To settle the question he went to the monastery to borrow a genuine Bible and to compare it with his copy. The first priest whom he asked for a copy had none: he knew it all off by heart, he said—at least, all that he needed. The second had to look a long time for his copy, and produced it at last from under a heap of old rubbish. 'What do you want the book for?' he asked, the man told him. 'I gladly lend it you. I know it won't do you any harm, you are a good Catholic.' Well the two copies agreed. The man read and read till he saw that he was wrong and the Protestant right. The end was that he left the Roman Catholic Church, because, as he said, 'I must stick to the very words of God.' He has to suffer much persecution, but he bears it with great joy."

Additions have been recently made to your staff of colporteurs, none of whom works better than Mr. Kantor, the depositary at Warsaw.

"On one of my journeys, the landlord of the inn where I always stop, a very earnest Roman Catholic, said to me, 'Well, sir, I esteem you as an excellent gentleman, but really I think it would be well if you put a stop to the sale of those books. They make a great stir, and they unsettle people's minds very much.' 'Have you ever read the book you judge so severely? It is really too bad to condemn a thing you do not know. Permit me to lend you this book, and let me entreat you to read a few verses every day.' The landlord did not much like the proposal, but he was too polite to refuse. 'Well, what about my Bible?' I asked, when I came back some few weeks later. 'Ah,' said the good man, 'that has been doing a great work in my house. My wife and I prize it highly. We should be sorry to lose it.' He now most willingly bought a copy, and when I asked, 'Well now shall I stop the sale of that book?' he replied, 'Indeed I was blind when I spoke those words. I now say sell as many as you can, and may God bless you.'"

AUSTRIA.

"FALSE GUIDES AND TRUE.

"A woman had been reading the New Testament and had come under deep impression of sin. She felt greatly alarmed, and feared there was no hope for her. Trembling for the salvation of her soul, she went to her own Protestant pastor, asking for advice. The latter turned her away, saying she was out of her mind! She then went to the Roman Catholic priest and endeavoured to unburden her heart to him. The priest advised her to give money for masses. She did so, but this brought her no peace. The priest then said he feared her sins were too grievous, and that she was beyond hope. In this state of despair the woman met our colporteur, who told her Jesus Christ was the Saviour of the chief of sinners."

Thus while the difficulties of the work increase so does the need for it. It is, therefore, cheering to find that even where the men are wearied at heart—where, for example, one of the "best and strongest" of them writes, that he has "for two days been travelling from village to village, yet not a single copy is sold," or again, "in these last days I have offered my books to hundreds of Roman Catholics, and have been able to sell only one copy"—they hold on bravely in hope of better times; and that in districts like Bohemia, where the pressure is greatest, the resolution of the people rises against it, "and a spirit of inquiry is awakened which greatly helps to overcome outward difficulties." Take the following for illustration, which was told by a woman to one of the colporteurs:—

"A few years ago a man came to this place and sold many Bibles. My

husband bought a copy. Our priest, however, collected the books the man had sold and burnt them. My husband refused to deliver his copy to the priest, and told him he had better preach the truth the Bible taught, and put copies into the hands of his people than burn them. The priest replied, "As long as this Bible remains under this roof a curse will rest on your house." "The consequences of that curse I will gladly bear," my husband said. "I love my Bible, and you will not get it." The priest went off in a rage. A few weeks afterwards our house was burnt down. The priest sent us a message that this was the consequence of our not having given up the Bible to him. My husband replied that the Lord would provide, He would help him to get a new house and buy another Bible."

or this :—

"When the Lord is pleased to prosper the work, the machinations of the priests are nothing. In a village in the district, consisting of ninety-nine houses, the colporteur sold forty-seven copies. The landlord at the inn where he got his dinner was so delighted at the whole thing, that he would not charge him more than 3d. in all. And a gentleman, whom the colporteur met in a shop, gave this testimony : 'A few weeks ago my son bought a New Testament from you. I have read the book, and I must confess that, although during my life I have read much, I have never yet met with anything equal to what this book contains.'"

"ALTERNATIVE READINGS.

"It may be useful to refer to a measure introduced several years ago with the sanction of the Committee which thus far has proved a success. In our New Testament editions from the Latin Vulgate, designed for such readers belonging to the Romish Church as have an unconquerable dislike and prejudice to versions issued under Protestant influence, there occurred a few solitary passages that to some minds had an uncertain sound, and perhaps an objectionable tendency, although it must be admitted that most of the terms have found and hold a place in Protestant theological phraseology. There was no authority to alter the text, which is mostly of old standing, and to do so would be entirely to frighten away from God's Word those anxious, truth-seeking persons who are afraid the translation may have been tampered with. To meet the difficulty on both sides, the idea was proposed of adding in the margin *alternative readings* (such as occur in our English Bibles), in which the literal meaning of the original Greek should be given as closely and faithfully as possible. This arrangement has the double advantages that it not only sets the text right without altering it, but it arouses the attention of the ordinary reader, and expressly points him to the precise meaning of the particular expression.

"The experiment was at the time thought somewhat hazardous, as likely to increase the opposition of the Romish clergy against these editions. After several years' trial, it may now be stated that this has not been the case. No controversy has arisen as to these alternative readings. The arrangement presents so happy and simple a solution to a controversy of many years' standing, that after the fair trial now made it seems to deserve general adoption."

Lower Austria.—Amid a population wholly Roman Catholic, your colporteur sold 752 copies in ten weeks. "I find," he says, "that wherever the people know the Bible I am received with kindness and attention."

"The colporteur's experience in some Jewish houses is very striking. 'I was on the point of entering a house, when a boy endeavoured to warn me off, by saying, 'Those people are Jews.' 'Why should that keep me back?' I rejoined. The mother of the family purchased a New Testament, and whilst I said a few words to her about God's promises to his ancient people, her son cried out, 'Look here, mother, this book says that Jesus was the son

of David." At the same place a Jew had lately bought a New Testament, and he said that some people had offered him more than double the price he had paid for it, but he was not going to part with it. Thereupon the Jew and the colporteur had a good talk together about the promises of God to the fathers."

Upper Austria.—This district, which contains the fine scenery of the Danube between Linz and Passau, was one in which your colporteurs were, up to last year, unmolested. Their sales now represent many a hard-won victory. It is only by a persistency that will take no denial that the Bible can be introduced.

"TAKING NO DENIAL.

"I entered a shop. A little girl asked me what I wanted. 'I have Bibles to sell.' The little girl brought word that her parents had plenty of books and would rather sell than buy. This led me to a little more boldness in my attack. I walked in a little nearer, and talking to someone supposed to be in the room, I explained what my books were. 'My husband is a Roman Catholic,' was the reply, 'he would object to read the Bible.' 'But I am very fond of my Bible; may I just read a short portion to you?' Within a second room the husband himself was at work. He overheard our conversation and the passages read, and peeping round the corner, said he would buy a copy. By and by a second man issued forth from the inner room. He would also take a copy. A regular talk, began, and the people said, 'Stay and have some dinner with us.' I did, and we parted capital friends."

When priest and colporteur meet the latter generally has the better of the dialogue.

"A priest said he objected to the circulation of the Scriptures, because the common people did not understand them. 'Take, for instance, Revelation.' 'Well,' replied the colporteur, 'it is remarkable that that very book begins with the words, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy keep those things that are written therein." Besides, would it not be far better if you priests tried to explain these words to the people, and so secured to yourselves and them a joint blessing?'"

Slovenia.—The sales of the colporteur in this more extended district are much larger, especially among the Slovenians, who much desire to have the whole Bible in their tongue. He narrates a singular case:—

"A gentleman, who takes a special interest in our work, asked me to-day how many Bibles I had sold at G——. 'Two,' I replied. 'That is my birth-place,' said he; 'do me the favour to go back and ask the people whether they do not wish to possess the Word of God. I will pay for as many copies as the people will take, provided they promise faithfully to read them.' I went and distributed nineteen copies. Our friend, hearing that so many copies had been joyfully received, then requested me to go to P——, the place where he had been educated, and do the same as at G——, I distributed sixteen copies, and the generous donor was delighted."

"MY OWN BIBLE.

"A merchant buying a copy said he gladly availed himself of the golden opportunity. 'I have another copy, look here,' he said, 'but it is not mine, I borrowed it. It is many years ago since I first saw this book at a friend's. I read a part, and I then offered him a good price for it. No, he would not part with it. A long time after I found a copy, and I learned to prize it highly. I always called it *my own Bible*. Then came that dreadful Turkish war, and I lost my treasure. Once more I had to borrow a copy, which is this book you see, for you know I could not very well be without one. And now I praise God that I have an opportunity once more to purchase a copy.'"

The sect of the Nazarenes at times stands unwittingly in the way of the

colporteurs, since the Bible being the one book which they read and to which they appeal, it and those who sell it share the odium under which the sect labours.

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INCIDENTS OF COLPORTAGE IN SOUTHERN RUSSIA.

From F. MULLER'S report :

(1) "At C— I was not allowed to enter the convent, but I saw the Lady-Superior, who bought 50 copies. I read to her Ephesians ii. She thanked me for coming, and promised to speak seriously to all the nuns on verses 8 and 9 of the chapter. She asked me to call the next time I came to the village. The gate-keeper had conducted me to her apartments, and as he led me away he said : 'You are quite right : no one can be saved by good works. I have been gate-keeper here for several years, and I do not feel myself quite happy. One may chastise oneself as one will, but one commits sin nevertheless.'"

(2) "Having received permission, I visited the law courts, where a number of clerks and others are employed. The gentleman who gave me permission was apparently a man of high official rank, and he bought a copy of the Psalms in Russ. On offering my books to a clerk, he replied that he had no time to read ; he had to work all the week, and on Sundays and holidays he liked to rest. I answered that the book which I had for sale told of a rest through Christ, and I asked him whether he had heard of that rest. 'No,' was the reply. Obtaining permission, I read Revelation xxi. to a number of persons standing around. Several Testaments were bought. One gentleman, who took an Svo. Russ Testament, said, 'What touching words are contained in the Holy Scriptures ! It is well that you came here, for I had no intention of possessing myself of a new Testament.'"

(3) "Among the villages east of the Sea of Asov I colported with little success. One hindrance was the poverty in these parts. The people are chiefly fishermen. Last winter the take of fish was very small, and all articles of food became dearer than the oldest people could remember them to have been. The apathy resulting from such adverse circumstances is a great obstacle to colportage. Another is the lamentable ignorance of the Russian people. The master of a house, when I offered my books, exclaimed that the end of the world would soon come now ; that God's Holy Book was so little revered, as to be sold to any one, even women, who ought not to take such a book into their hands. Only the priests, he said, were worthy to open it. He was doubtless one of the extreme orthodox section of the Russo-Greek Church, who hold the ancient Slavonic to be the Holy language, and reject the editions in modern Slavonic and modern Russ as derogatory to the sacred character of God's Word.

"Another man asked me why our books did not contain the table of daily lessons prescribed by the Russian Church, for without it one might happen to read a chapter unsuitable for the day !"

From L. MULLER'S report :

(1) "I visited a Roman Catholic colony where no colporteur had previously been. The colonists said they had never seen Bibles and Testaments before, and they were afraid to buy them, for if they bought and read these books they would be eternally lost. The only books they can use are 'Heaven's Ladder' and the Prayer Book. With great difficulty I sold 8 copies. Two Testaments were brought back to me on the ground that they contained no Catholic prayers. On my showing them the Lord's Prayer, they were retained.

(2) "The Russian priest of — bought over 70 copies, intending on going

round his district also to sell Scriptures. He hopes for a good circulation, and he will write for more copies when they are required."

From MAZARCHOUK's report :

"I saw a crowd of people standing in the bazaar at E—, and offered them my books. Several replied, 'We have books: we bought them very cheap. There is a Society which exerts itself to give us these books at a low price, and we ought to be thankful for this.' I asked them, 'What Society is it?' They said they did not know. I told them about the Bible Society and gave them two catalogues. They said, 'Thank you: we know now who cares for us.'

"The Jewish recruits bought many single Gospels in Judæo-Polish. An officer was greatly pleased at their eagerness to read the New Testament."

From BEDZULLA's report on Volhynia :

"I came this week into a poor colony where the people would gladly have bought Scriptures, but had no money. They begged me earnestly to come again later, and I promised to do so. In many places I am thus requested to come again, when the people hope to be able to buy. In some places the people lay aside their work to converse with me on divine things, and not a few ask, 'What must I do to be saved?' This is my comfort and joy in my wanderings."

From SCHIDKOFF's report :

"I entered a tea-house in which there is an orchestra of 14 men to whom I had often offered my books in vain. On this occasion, without my saying much to them, they eagerly bought copies, some the Psalms, some a New Testament. I was greatly encouraged by this."

From MOSTOVICHENKE's report :

"In Russian trains, when the guards allow it, the colporteurs pass from carriage to carriage, while they are in motion (being carriages on the American plan), and sell many books in this way. One evening, while inviting the passengers in a train in which I was travelling to buy my books, a captain of Don Cossacks, who was returning from the Caucasus, to visit his relations, learning that I was a colporteur of the Bible Society, warmly greeted me, and gave me good advice respecting the manner of prosecuting my work. Leaving his seat in the second class, he came and sat by me in the third class, conversing with me until I reached my destination. He spoke much to those sitting around us on the importance of God's Word, and why we ought to receive Christ. As he was in full Circassian uniform the people were not a little surprised at his condescension, and at hearing such things from him. The incident afforded me great pleasure."—*B. & F. Bible Society Reporter*, October, 1881.

THE BIBLE TRIED AND TRIUMPHANT.

EXTRACT FROM A DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT THE SEVENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE MASSACHUSETTS BIBLE SOCIETY, BY THE REV. CHARLES H. PAYNE, PRESIDENT OF THE OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY.

After appropriate and impressive words of introduction, the speaker said :—
With what assuring confidence comes this inspiring utterance, confirmed by the history of the ages: "The word of the Lord is tried;" "the word of the Lord endureth forever!"

Tried indeed is that priceless word which this society seeks to spread among the needy millions of earth. It is in the crucible to-day, as it has been through the long ages, but, as with the Hebrews in the fiery furnace, the presence of an unseen Power seems so to guard it with a sacred charm, that not a trace of the burning flame can be found upon it. But rather as the fires burn with fiercer rage and the ages wear away, this sacred book sheds an ever increasing lustre and manifests its divineness with ever intensifying power.

I. Let us give brief consideration to the fact that this divine book *has been thoroughly tried and its value fully tested.*

1. It has been tried in the *fires of bitter opposition and des'ruative criticism.* Why should men hate and assail the book that brings them such messages of love and hope? Because it condemns their sin and brings them face to face with a holy Being for whom they have no affinity. The boast that a bold and talented blasphemer had recently been greeted with a large audience, and could command such an audience at his pleasure, has been appropriately answered by a daily secular paper: "Yes; the witty, blaspheming infidel will not soon be likely to lack an audience, because there are multitudes of men who *want* to believe the Bible is false."

But from whatever cause, the fires of adverse criticism have been kindled around this holy book through successive ages. Now, it is sheer unreasoning infidel hate, and now it is plausible science, with its antagonistic theories, seemingly appealing to men's reason; now, it is the secular power which arrays itself against God's word; and now it is ecclesiastical power, which, in God's name, seeks to restrain the spread of his own truth. But, as the attacks upon the fervid Wycliffe and the intrepid Luther only gave them greater distinction before the world, so every assault upon this divine word has revealed its value and extended its sway.

2. How thoroughly has the Bible been tried by *the crucial tests of advancing civilization?* Suppose, for a moment, that it were the production of the unaided intellect of man! What mind of earth's transcendent genius can scan the future and discern the secrets that lie hidden in the coming centuries, so that never a fresh discovery of the far-advanced ages shall falsify the utterance of the far-back years, in the infancy of the race? What wisdom of Zoroaster or Plato can stand the ordeal of the nineteenth century?

But here is a book, portions of which reach back to the dim twilight of historic times, upon whose pages the discoveries of the on-moving centuries, the revelations of man's latest and highest wisdom, have been pouring their intense beams, and lo! like the burning bush of Horeb, it remains unconsumed! Not a single essential feature is disproved or discredited; nay, rather, its heavenly origin and authority are attested by every new ray of light which man's increasing knowledge sheds upon it.

The Reverend gentleman then went on to shew how the discoveries of the archaeologist, the physicist, the astronomer, &c., add new emphasis to the demonstrated fact, "The word of the Lord is tried," "the word of the Lord endureth forever," "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

3. This book has been tried and its value attested by its demonstrated *adaptation to the varied conditions and multiplied wants of humanity.*

The experience of the race has settled a few things. Water quenches thirst, bread satisfies hunger, a few medicines are specifics for certain diseases. Thirty-three centuries of accredited history have proved that the Bible alone, meets the necessities of the human race.

All man's wants are supplied. All his ills are here remedied. All his wrongs are here redressed. His spiritual nature, always and everywhere seeking sustenance and rest, always and everywhere seeks in vain, until coming to his divine source it finds the bread, which eating it hungers no more, the rest, which securing, its weariness is at an end.

There is no member of the great family of man who does not want deliver-

ance from his guilt; the one only relief is here made known: a pure and perfect object for his affections; such a being the Bible alone reveals: a certain guide to virtue; all other guides flash false lights on our way: a remedy for a disordered nature; here is proffered the only cure: relief from the restless discontent of the heart; here, and here only, is the needed rest: certain knowledge of the dread hereafter; here, "life and immortality are brought to light:" supporting strength in the dying hour; this book alone points out the way to achieve victory over "the last enemy," death.

The ignorance, the poverty, the oppression, the wrong, the misery of earth's teeming millions, all find their cure in proportion as these leaves from the "tree of life," "for the healing of the nations" are scattered over the earth, and brought into contact with the fevered hearts of men.

Is this a beautiful and brilliant theory to fade away like many a philosopher's dream? Nay, the ages of time and the millions of earth's groaning denizens bear witness to these gracious truths. "The word of the Lord is tried," and a countless multitude of witnesses attest its truth. Nations have accepted it and been lifted into prominence and power. Individuals in all classes and conditions have tested its value and found solace and strength.

Yes, this sacred book is "tried," and proved true in its every promise and prophecy and warning.

It reveals the worth of man as immeasurably greater than the whole material universe, and makes manifest the tender sympathy of our common Father, so that we cannot but believe with an illustrious astronomer that, "a single tear ebbing from the heart of humble sorrow is of more value, in the sight of God, than a legion of suns."—*American Bible Society Record.*

RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE, TORONTO, FROM BRANCH SOCIETIES, FROM 21ST SEPTEMBER TO 20TH NOVEMBER, 1881.

	On Purchase Account.	FREE CONTRIBUTIONS.		
		U. C. B. S.	B. & F. B. S.	Sundries.
	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
Woodbridge and Pinegrove Branch.....	5 00			
Deseronto Branch.....	50			
Drayton do.....	56 08	4 03		
Port Rowan do.....	25 00	16 77		
Leamington, per R. W. J. B. Scott.....				(1) 21 50
Arkwright Branch.....		7 62		
Watford do.....	26 34	21 49	21 50	
Smithville do.....	3 35	3 89		
Camplen do.....	7 91	4 69		
Grimsby do.....	11 56	7 02		
Madoc do.....	17 79	4 75		
Moira do.....		7 74		
Tweed do.....	18 52	31 65		
Stirling do.....	33 69	30 00		
Centreville do.....		2 87		
Tunworth do.....	6 00			
Milverton do.....	3 95			

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.
Berlin do	4 52	33 11	33 11	
Glenallan do	6 75			
Theford do	10 00			
Emerson and East Lynne Branch.....	52 79			
Morris Depository (Man.)	5 41			
Angus Branch			6 75	
Niagara do	3 55	5 73		
Stouffville do	3 12			
Mara do		6 02		
Unionville do	5 62			
Shelburne do	11 66			
Newmarket do	37 44			
Mitchell do	10 40	20 00	35 00	
Sarnia do	43 89			
Hibbert do		13 00	14 00	
Port Hope do	56 50	226 00		
Brampton Branch, Col. Child's Meeting.		2 86		
Beverley Branch do		8 25		
Peterboro' do	136 86			
Kirkton do		25 00		
Exeter do	46 33			
Galt do		10 00	40 00	
Ripley do	14 50			
Berrie do	21 78			
Armow do	3 50			
Underwood do	2 20			
Ashfield do		3 95		
Port Albert do	3 06			
Tiverton do		5 32		
New Hamburg do	21 13			
New Dundee do	7 80			
Preston do	4 15	21 04		
Elmira do	38 13	41 72		
Hespeler do	14 23	8 30		
East Puslinch do	4 98			
Hanover (from German S.S.)		1 50		
Newtonville Branch	12 00	2 00		
Cartwright do		10 58		
Kinlough do	74			
Bluevale do	2 63			
St. Helen's do	8 55			
Pine River and Amberley Branch		16 41	16 40	

(1) For Quebec Auxiliary.

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