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Editorial.

THE MERITS AND DEMERITS OF ISLAM.

(Second Article.)

IN our last number we passed in brief review, the native country of Islam, the people among whom this religion arose, and the man who was its prophet, priest, and king. It remains now that we consider the remaining points mentioned in our introduction, *i.e.*, the teachings of Islam and their value—its apostles and missionaries—its probable destiny—and its voice of warning to this young country.

THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM AND THEIR VALUE.

The doctrines of Islam are contained in the Koran, which, according to Mahomet, was at various times read to him by the angel Gabriel, out of a copy, in a volume of silk and gems. The message he received thus, he spoke to his followers, who wrote, from his lips, on palm leaves and the shoulder-bones of mutton, all which lay in confusion in a chest, till two years after his death, when the whole was revised and published as we now have it. The substance of Islam, as revealed in the Koran, consists of two articles of belief, and four practical duties. The two articles are the unity of God, and the Divine mission of Mahomet. The four practical duties were: 1st. Pilgrimage; 2nd. Prayer, which carries a man half way to God,—prayer five times a day, it does not matter where, in

the chamber or on the street; 3rd. Fasting, which brings a man to the door of God's palace, and which must extend over one whole month of each year; and 4th. Alms-giving, which will gain him admittance into the very presence of God. There are also four things, inventions of the devil, forbidden, according to the Koran. *Wine*, or anything which disturbs the reason; *games* of hazard; *stones* of worship; and *divination*, or consulting of spirits, which latter part of the Koran is well-worthy the attention of the Christian nations of our own time and continent.

With regard to these doctrines, duties, and things forbidden, one or two remarks will be sufficient. We cannot refrain from admiring many things in Islamism. It speaks clearly and sublimely on the unity, majesty, and power of the one only living and true God. It also does well to inculcate prayer, fasting, and alms-giving. It does well, further, to forbid wine, gambling, image-worship, and spiritualism. On these points Islam reads a lesson of humility to many a Christian country, many a Christian church, many a Christian professor.

How, then, you ask, has not that religion been a blessing to the earth, instead of being a curse? The answer is this:—True religion may be compared to the *Ilala* steamer, which was transported, lately, in pieces, by the hands of 700 Africans, past the Falls of the Zambezi river. There were some portions that would not be missed much if they were lost; other portions, being lost, would render the steamboat useless for its work. It might look well enough, but it would sink in the first storm, if it went out without its helm, or with some important bolts wanting. So with a religious system.

The defects in Islamism are chiefly these: 1st. It teaches *defective views of God*. In anxiety about the majesty of God as a king, the Koran forgets God's fatherhood and the sonship of his people. There are no such words in the Koran as "Our father who art in heaven," nor such a story as that wherein we read "I will arise and go to my Father." Between the God of Mahomet and his creatures there is a great gulf fixed.

2. *It rejects atonement for sin.* The power of God, according to the Koran, is such that he can forgive sin without any amends being made to law and justice. On this point an interesting reminiscence comes to our mind. While travelling through Galilee, in 1858, our party employed a Mahomedan officer to act as guard for a few days. He was a fine man in appearance, speech, and manner, wearing at his belt pistols presented by some of the Bonaparte family for services rendered to them beyond the Jordan. While parting, and in giving him a copy of the Arabic Testament, we spoke of Christ, of sin, and atonement. He admitted he was a sinner, but God could forgive his sins. How? we asked. Without any penalty or punishment inflicted on you, or on any one in your place? Yes! How would it do for kings to forgive criminals on these conditions? "It would not do; but God is great, He can do what men cannot do." From this he could not be driven by any reasoning. He met all by saying, "*God is great.*" But to grant and receive forgiveness without an atonement, is a general license for sin, a license for playing fast and loose with the law of God. It is not thus pardon is dispensed under any wise government. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." "With thee there is forgiveness that thou mayest be *feared*," expresses the attitude of soul towards God and his law generated by the doctrine of Christ's atonement.

3. *It propagates a dangerous lie.* It is true that there is only one God; but it is a falsehood of the most dangerous kind that Mahomet is the last and the only infallible exponent of God's will. The theory of Mahomet is that God overshadows everything; but the practical issue is, that Mahomet overshadows God, and, worse than that, degrades God. The sins of David and Solomon, which were great, do not in the least affect or compromise the character of our God; for his voice is heard in stern denunciation of the sins of his own people and prophets. But the God of Mahomet is responsible for the adultery of his prophet, for his polygamy, for his rapine and bloodshed, because his voice speaks in favour of all these evil crimes of his servant, and justifies them.

4. It is, further, a *system of intolerance*. "Islam is," as a recent writer remarks, "a vast brotherhood, within which no vengeance was to be felt, to all beyond which no respect or truth was to be shown. Any thing done in God's service is justifiable; nothing done against it could be excused or forgiven. After the victory at Badr, one of the prisoners was ordered out for execution. He asked why he was to be treated so. 'Because of thy enmity to God and to his prophet,' replied Mahomet. 'And my little girl,' cried Deba, in distress of soul, 'who will take care of her?' 'Hell fire,' exclaimed the heartless conqueror, and on the instant his victim was hewn to the ground."—(*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, Jan. 1877.) Christianity is not intolerant. Christians are often intolerant, but that is our fault, not the fault of our Master, Christ. But intolerance is part and parcel of Islam, which is seen equally in the chivalrous Saracens of Syria, in the mild Mussulmans of India, and in the semi-barbarous Turk, whose name is henceforth covered with everlasting infamy by the recent massacre of Bulgaria. The Koran is, therefore, a declaration of perpetual war, and eternal hatred towards every tribe and nation outside the pale of Islam.*

5. But still again, Islam *recognizes and justifies slavery*. It is true that it urges clemency towards the slave, and that in several points it is a more merciful system of servitude than that vile system which lately perished on this continent; but there is no principle in the Koran, as there is in the New Testament, which would lead naturally and ultimately to the extinction of slavery. According to the Koran, slavery is one of the ordinary conditions of society. The Koran, therefore, as the final and universal revelation from God, is an edict of perpetual and hopeless servitude to a large proportion of mankind.

6. And, finally, as our closing accusation against Islam, it *recognizes polygamy*, and thus *debases woman*, and thus destroys the family institution. The family institution as given us by God, at the be-

* The truth of this statement is shown with remarkable power in Gladstone's recent pamphlet, "Lessons in Massacre."

ginning, is the only safe foundation for society. "Woman," as Matthew Henry quaintly puts it, "was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made of his head to top him; not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side, to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." In the same spirit do we find the new Testament speaking: "Husbands, love your wives." "Husbands, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel, as being heirs together of the grace of life." How is it under the rule of the Koran? One of themselves has thus described the position of their women: "Unwelcome at their birth, untaught in childhood, enslaved when married, accursed as widows, and unlamented when they die."

Let Mahomedanism, therefore, be triumphant, we would see established over the world the Asiatic forms of society, and Asiatic modes of belief. Under the guidance of this effete gospel, the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, the father of our Lord and Saviour, is lost in the awful Allah, the stern, despotic ruler of the universe. Under this miserable gospel of lies, the shadow of Mahomet lies forever across the path of progress for humanity; and our race can never break the barriers placed before it by a man who could neither read nor write, who knew but little of the religions, the sciences, the philosophies, the history, of the world whose destinies he aspired to mould. Under this gospel there is no relief for the sin-burdened conscience, nor for the instinct of humanity crying out everywhere, "How can a man be just with God?" This is a gospel of persecution, allowing no liberty of conscience; a gospel of servitude to the poor; a gospel of ignorance and bondage for woman. To it undoubtedly applies the terrible language of Paul—"As I said before, so say I now again: If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

THE APOSTLES AND MISSIONARIES OF ISLAM.

One or two words about the apostles of this false faith. First come the Arabian Caliphs, the fellow-countrymen of the prophet. Mounted on their fast horses, which to this day are an essential feature of

Arab power, they went forth, like a swarm of locusts, as was remarked at the outset, covering the earth, so that, within one hundred years after the flight from Mecca, the arms and the rule of Mahomet's successors extended from India to the Atlantic Ocean. But, as might be expected from the doctrines of Islam, degeneracy, effeminacy, and vice, wrought at length the ruin of the Caliphate. Then arose, as the apostles of Mahomet, the Turkish Sultans, a people issuing from the mountains that guard the sources of the Euphrates, whose rise, progress, and mission, is figured forth in these awful words of the seer at Patmos: "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed and the number of the army were two hundred thousand thousand, and thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and of brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone." These new and terrible missionaries of Islam advanced into eastern Europe, subdued Greece, took Constantinople, one of the Sultans swearing that he would feed a measure of oats to his horse on the altar of St. Peter's in Rome. The wave, in God's great mercy, was driven back as it struck the walls of Vienna; the overflowing, destroying tide of the Euphrates was there arrested in its westward course; and since then the waters have been slowly subsiding.

THE DESTINY OF ISLAM.

Can we penetrate into the future so as to read what the destiny of Islam ultimately is to be? We can see the future but darkly, dimly, through a thick mist. Let us learn, however, to distinguish between Mahommedanism as a *political power*, and Islam as a *religious creed*.

1. As to the former, it is not difficult to read the nearing issue. We can see plainly that as a political power, Mahommedanism is not only sick, but dying, and now about dead. The free institutions of Europe are like a girdle of fire encircling it, and scorching it up into narrower and still narrower limits. Russia is persistently

pressing it from the north, not only in Europe, but also, and to a greater degree, in Asia, by its conquest of Khiya and Bokara.* England is raising up in India a rampart of free institutions that blocks up further hopes of progress towards the east whither Islam would naturally seek to retreat. Strangely significant it is, indeed, that this very year, so ominous to Mahomedan power, our Queen was proclaimed Empress of India, in the city of Delhi, the ancient capital of the Mahomedan empire in India. From the west, Greece and the Slavonic nations are pressing eastward the free institutions of Europe to the very walls of Constantinople, so that now we may safely conclude that the power of Mahomedanism, to all intents, on the soil of Europe, is swiftly expiring. From the side of Africa, where Mahomedanism was once strong, encroachments are steadily advancing hostile to its political supremacy. Egypt is virtually independent of Constantinople; and the Suez canal, with the Christian missions now being established in Eastern Africa, are cutting quietly, but quickly, the last link that held poor Africa tributary to Islam. What a magnificent commentary on that single verse in Revelation that contains the history of the decline, decay, and downfall of Mahomedanism as a political power. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial on the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."

2. Mahomedanism as a religious system is quite a different matter. We know that the loss of the temporal power of the Pope has, to a large degree, tended to strengthen his spiritual empire over the souls of men. For years Islam, as a political system, has had no place or power in India, and yet to-day it is as difficult to convert Mahomedans there to the faith of Christ, as it is in Constantinople. There is no royal or rapid road to the conversion of nations to the faith of Christ. Turkey may die to-morrow as a political power, and the Turks will be as exclusive, as bitter, as hostile to Christ, as they were when they first entered Europe. "This

* This article was written and in type before the declaration of war by Russia.

kind goeth not out but by fasting and prayer." It is only by the slow, laborious, painful policy of teaching and preaching, only by long nights of toil wherein, it may be, nothing is caught, and by carrying forth precious seed, weeping, that the Mahommedan nations can be converted to the faith of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

ITS VOICE TO OUR DOMINION.

Is there not a voice to our young Dominion from across the ocean and seas that separate America from the faith and the people of Mahomet? To us who are now living in Canada has come the great work, never to come again for ever, of moulding the youth of a mighty nation. (1) From the far east a voice cries to us, to esteem highly the knowledge and wisdom taught in the Bible. We are told by the seer of Patmos that the Arabian locusts came out of a great smoke, like the smoke of a furnace, which issued out of the bottomless pit. This is strictly in accordance with the fact that dense ignorance of God, of his Son, of his Word, had crept over the face of the Christian churches of Asia, when Mahomet began his mission as a false prophet. The truth is, that such a man as Mahomet, and such a mission as his, were possible only at a time of deep and dark ignorance. Should we allow our children to fall into ignorance of God, an ignorance to be followed by a lower ignorance in their children, and a lower ignorance in their children again, then truly our continent will also have its Mahomet, as indeed it has already had his forerunners in the persons of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, the apostles of Mormonism. (2) From the far east a voice cries to us, to keep pure and entire the doctrines of Christianity. The essential doctrines of our religion are co-related in such a way that if one doctrine is dropped or marred, the harmony and health of the whole system is impaired. On this very continent, and in some of its leading Protestant churches, subtle attempts are being made to introduce into our Christianity the essence of Islamism, by denying and decrying the doctrine of the atonement. When we give up that doctrine, when Christ ceases to be "the Lamb of God that taketh

away the sin of the world," when he becomes a mere prophet, and nothing more, then the whole system of Christian truth flies into disorder and chaos, and our faith, as times past have shown, becomes little better than a lofty Islamism. (3) From the far east a voice cries to us, "that the great morality is love to Christ." He is the rock. "If any man's work (building on him) shall be burnt, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." But away from him, even gold, silver, precious stones, cannot abide the fire, for the fire tries every man's work of what sort it is." The good points of Islam, its gold, etc., that is, its alms-giving, prayer, temperance, will not save the structure from being consumed by the fire, just because it is not on a right foundation. Neither will a strict outward morality, although supported by legislation, keep a nation secure, unless it is grounded on sound doctrine clustering round the person of Christ.

"Talk they of morals! O thou bleeding Lamb!
The great morality is love of Thee!"

"Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and *we shall reign on the earth.*"

Living Preachers.**A GOOD CONSCIENCE.**

BY THE EDITOR.

Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly."—Heb. xiii. 18.

IT is related of Augustine that he had two wishes—one was that he could have seen Christ in the flesh, the other, that he could have heard Paul preach.

Another of the fathers, reading this, said that he would add a third to the two wishes of Augustine—that, hearing Paul preach, his text and theme should be *conscience*.

As the maid Rhoda, knew Peter's voice at the door, so may we know Paul's voice by the high value he sets on a "good conscience." His highest aim was to have a good conscience, He says before the Sanhedrim, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Before Felix he says: "Herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." Writing to the Corinthians: "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience."

There are three matters of considerable importance in connection with this great theme (a *good conscience*) suggested by the text; the *history* of a good conscience, or *how one may get it*; the *fruits* of a good conscience, or *how one may know it*; and lastly, the advantages of a good conscience, or *why one should seek it*.

I. THE HISTORY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

I. How can one find a good conscience? In his state of innocence, Adam had no need of seeking a good conscience. As he came from the hands of his creator, all the members of his body and all the faculties of the soul were perfect. Conscience, then single, a clear dry light, filled the soul with light; it was then an echo of God's voice; it was then an infallible witness for truth and holiness; it reflected the face of God as the mountain lake on a calm day reflects the face of nature. But the fall destroyed all the perfection of man. Adam lost his position, his

right, his holiness, and his good conscience. And the great problem of all religions is, "How to win back the good conscience lost by the fall." "How can a man be just with God." There is no rest for the spirit of man till he solves this problem.

1. To find a good conscience, one must go to the Spirit to have it *enlightened*. Sin has not slain conscience, nor even blinded it; it has distorted its vision. The fault is diseased, defective, distorted vision. *The eye is evil*. It sees things in false lights, in false colors, in false proportions. It is the work of God's Spirit to rectify the vision. He who formed the conscience and gave it authority, he alone can restore its vision. Let us go to him crying, Have mercy on us, Holy Spirit. And when he asks us what we want, let us reply, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened."

2. To find a good conscience, one must go to Christ to have it *sprinkled with His blood*. A conscience enlightened, and nothing more, is a terrible thing. From this comes remorse that gnaws men's spirit like an undying worm. An enlightened conscience sees sin in its true light, and cries out for an atonement; for something to remove the guilt of sin and restore the sinner to the favor of God. The cry of an enlightened conscience is, What shall I do to be saved? Many answers have been given, but the only answer is this one: "The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, shall purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." This satisfies divine justice and reconciles us to God. "Let us draw, therefore, near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience."

3. To find a good conscience, one must go to the *word of God to have it instructed*. An enlightened and justified conscience is like Lazarus restored to life and standing in the beautiful sunshine, but bound. "Loose him and let him go." Life is full of knotty questions, perplexing problems. The traveller stands often where many roads meet. He needs a teacher, an instructor, a guide. This, God has furnished in his own word, which is a "light to the feet and a lamp to the path." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

4. To find a good conscience one must go into *practical life to have it exercised*. In all the arts of life, skill comes from exercise. A conscience that contents itself with giving forth abstract and sound decisions on

questions of morals and casuistry, will soon become like a sword covered with rust, or like a hand unaccustomed to work. Hence Paul says that "he exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men." A conscience enlightened, sprinkled, instructed, is a beautiful and precious toy until it is exercised in the temptations, trials, duties of the station in which God has placed us, and then it becomes the most admirable and effective of weapons.

Here is, therefore, balm, for a diseased conscience. Light from the Spirit, blood from Calvary, instruction from the Bible, and exercise in the battle-field of the world. Lord, evermore give to us, and keep with us, such a conscience.

II. THE FRUITS OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

II. Let us next consider the *fruits* of a good conscience, or, *how we may know it*. "Man is a being," some one has said, "built around conscience." The conscience is the heart of the man. As the conscience is, therefore, so is the man. Conscience is the heart out of which are the issues of life. What are the fruits of a good conscience? (1) A good conscience makes a man *willing* to be a Christian. The religious obedience of some comes from *fear*. The children of Israel were obedient as long as they were under the rod. The religious duties of others are only an outward *form*, and not from the heart. But where there is a good conscience, the obedience is *willing*, it is from *choice*, it is *sincere*. This is the first step in the Christian life. "*He shall make his people willing.*" It is found in all the struggles of the Christian life. "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." Let us notice, however, that the willingness is not a mere feeble desire, such as many wicked men have after a better life. The word used by Paul is the same as in this phrase—"But they that *will* be rich," those who are determined to be rich. The language of this state is, "Lord, I believe," etc. Dear hearers, have you this mark of a good conscience? Can you say with the people in the days of Joshua, "Nay, but we *will* serve the Lord." Have you this mark, then you are a true Christian and no Atheist.

(2) A good conscience, in the next place, makes a *steadfast* Christian, *willing to live*. There are many who are willing to dream of good life, to describe it, to praise it. But to *live* it, is a different business. A child may make a few steps, or run where the ground is plain. But it takes a man to go through a rough country for days and weeks in all kinds of weather. At the foot of Sinai the children of Israel seemed willing. "All

that the Lord hath said will we do." They seemed to be *willing*, but when it came to put that will into action, they failed—like a painter who has a beautiful picture in his head, but he is too idle, or slothful, or weak; to put it on canvas. The language of a good conscience is—

"I did not stay nor linger long, as those that slothful are,
But hastily thy laws to keep, myself I did prepare."

Are you willing thus to live, thus to practise, day by day; then you are a grown Christian and no babe.

(3) A good conscience, further, makes a *thorough* Christian. *Willing* to live in *all* things. People may be willing to live a good life, but to live it only in some things. Many would be Christians if they were allowed to settle the conditions, to arrange the terms, to pick and choose among the commandments. Adam stumbled here. He was willing; *willing to obey*, but not in all things. Israel was willing to follow the Lord, but not in all things. Herod heard John and obeyed, but not in all things. Ananias and Sapphira gave up a great deal, but not all. The young ruler came very near following Christ, but he stumbled at the "all things." A good conscience makes one willing to live a Christian in all things, in duties divine and human, of charity and piety. The conscience, though a good conscience, may have flies of infirmity alighting on it, but it is made impure if one fly be allowed to lie and die and putrify in it; Universal and Catholic obedience is the touch-stone of a good and bad conscience. "I can do *all things*," said Paul. What is your position in this matter? If in all things you strive to live as a Christian, then you are a *sound* healthy Christian, and no *hypocrite*. "Search me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

(4) A good conscience still further makes a *noble*, lofty Christian,—willing to live *honestly*. *Honestly*, here is not simply for a man to pay his debts, and to deal justly with his neighbors in money matters. It is all this, but much more. It is a word that comprehends as much as any other adverb in the New Testament. It means a thing done in the highest style of excellence, in the best fashion, in a noble, worthy, admirable manner. Some people are content with doing a thing any way if only they get it done. Such ways are too common in all professions. And this slipshod way of doing duty as Christians is also too common, and the bane of the Christian church in our day. But such a style of workmanship will not satisfy the good conscience. The tabernacle built in the

wilderness was adorned with the best material the earth could afford; so the good conscience is not content till the Christian is a temple to God adorned with the highest excellence and beauty. David said that he would not offer to God what cost him nothing. The woman that anointed the Saviour poured on his head a whole box of the costliest spikenard. So with good conscience. It bids the preacher not only to preach, but to labor in season and out of season. The hearer not only to hear, but to hear *swiftly*; not only to give, but to give *obsequently*; not only to be honest, but in all promises to keep to the strict day, and date, and letter of the promise. The good conscience aims high; it does not look at others, but at Christ; it is not content with as little grace as will suffice, but seeks the highest attainable. It asks not where is there a safe path, but where is there an honorable path; it is not content with what is good, but seeks what is *best*. Here is its language:—"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In which of these four classes do you stand?

III. THE ADVANTAGES OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

III. The advantages of a good conscience are many, and the reasons why we should seek it, stronger than we can state them. A man can buy his land, his house, his liberty, his life, too dear, but not a good conscience.

(1) A good conscience is a skilful *physician*. There are some diseases of body that can be reached only through the mind—conscience; only by "cleansing the bosom of the perilous stuff that weighs upon the heart." The cure lies here, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then the peace of God fills the heart, and that sound heart becomes health to the body.

(2) A good conscience is a pleasant *bed-fellow*. See Jesus asleep in the boat, and Peter in prison. There were no thorns in the pillow, for conscience smoothed the bed, and gave God's beloved sleep. On one occasion, Whitefield and another minister were travelling by stage through one of the rural districts of England. It was their lot to pass one night in a roadside inn, where there happened to be a noisy gathering of profane people, whose oaths and ribald songs reached the room to which the ministers had retired. "I must go and speak to these men," said Whitefield. "What is the use?" replied his companion. The noise, however, became so offensive at last, that Whitefield went and rebuked the godless merriment. He returned to his room, to find that

his rebuke produced no effect whatever. "What have you gained by your visit below?" said his friend. "I have gained this," replied Whitefield, "that I have removed a thorn from my pillow, and I can now sleep in peace." He did thus sleep; for having discharged his duty he went to rest with a good conscience. With such a bed-fellow for the night, David in the open plain, with Absalom's army in the rear, could say, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me."

(3) It is a *safe guide*. We stand at times where several roads meet. It may not be safe to ask counsel of friends, nor of prudence, nor of self, but never does a good conscience lead astray. Its ways are ways of pleasantness. "He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely," "To the upright light shall arise."

(4) It is a *sweet comforter* in trouble. Other comforts fail, but this abides. It goes into the prison and sick-room. It waited on Paul in prison. (5) It is a *strong argument* in the ear of God. "Pray for us, for we have a good conscience;" as if he said, "Pray for us, for God knows we are willing in all things," etc. The great argument in prayer is the merit of Christ; but a strong argument lies in a good conscience. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me." A good conscience gives a man courage with God. (6) A good conscience is a *strong stay* in death. When the face of friends is shut out from the sick-room, and even the word of God, the good conscience whispers peace. (7) And further still, a good conscience is an *inseparable friend throughout eternity*. Faith and hope part with the believer at death, but love and a good conscience will keep him company for ever and ever. "When all books shall perish," says an old preacher,—S. Ward, to whom we are indebted for some thoughts in this sermon—"when all books shall perish, and heaven shall melt like a parchment scroll, this book shall be of use; when all devils and damned shall tremble, and wish the hills to cover them, this shall lift up thy head for thy redemption approacheth; when neither friends nor a full purse shall plead, nor the wicked stand upright in judgment, then, then well-fare a good conscience. Without this worm that dies not, hell should not be hell; without this continual feast, heaven should not be heaven. Next the happy vision of God, shall be the company of a good conscience, and next to that the society of saints and angels."

May God grant us, therefore, the best of all blessings—a good conscience, a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. Under its guidance may we live, with its consolations may we die, and in its company may we spend eternity. Amen.

Poetry.

"TO SAY GOOD NIGHT, AND PRAY."

BY MR. M'KENZIE, PRICEVILLE.

[THE incident of the poem happened alas! only a few months ago. The mother, to whom the reference is made, was a noble Christian woman, full of interest in Christ's cause and people. The last time I saw her she was much interested in, and talked with intelligence, on the question of the duty of Christians to give the tenth of their income to the Lord. I had not seen her for many years before, and she seemed in the interval to have grown in acquaintance with God's will, and in an earnest desire to conform to it. She was very careful in the government and godly up-bringing of her children, nine in number, most of them boys. Two of her elder children joined in the communion of the church shortly before her death, very much through her influence. In the prime of life, and in the enjoyment of health, she was smitten by death, after a few hours' illness, in which perished mother and child. "Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."—ED. C.C.M.]

- 1 THAT night when it was time for bed,
A little boy did say,
"May I not go to Mammy's side
To say good night, and pray."
- 2 It was their custom every night,
And always their desire,
To bid their Ma' good night and pray,
Before they did retire.
- 3 How could the father tell his child,
That "Mammy" now was dead,
How could the child him-understand;
"Was she not there in bed?"
- 4 He still to "Mammy's" room would go,
He saw her in the bed,
"Will she not hear me pray, and put
Her hand upon my head?"
- 5 But she is gone my darling child,
Where saint and seraph sing,
Where God's redeemed for ever dwell,
And Jesus is their King.
- 6 Yes, she is gone, as we believe,
To that bright land above,
Where she will sing for ever more,
Of Jesus and his love.

- 7 Dear children then your Saviour serve
And love with all your heart ;
In heaven above you'll meet your friends,
Yes, meet and never part.
- 8 Jerusalem is now her home,
Of which the prophets told ;
There's no such place beneath the sun,
The streets are paved with gold.
- 9 No scorching sun in summer there,
Nor yet, in winter, snow ;
That country's clime is always mild,
There flowers always blow.
- 10 Peace then, all ye, for friends who mourn,
Our God does all things well ;
That wisdom always guides his rod,
His word doth surely tell.

WILL YOU VOTE FOR CRIME ?

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—Rom. xiv. 12.

Your vote is a trust that God has given,
Its record is taken, up in heaven,
As well as on earth below ;
We sing of angels hovering round,
Unseen at our side they are ever found.
Their deep eyes watch us now.

No spot or stain on their white wings fair,
They watch as they sweep through our tainted air—
Shall they carry the news to heaven,
That one Christian man has his trust betrayed ?
His guardian angel would shrink dismayed
As the traitor vote was given.

Will you vote to keep open the tavern door ?
Will you vote to increase its master's store ?
Will you vote for crime and woe ?
Will you vote that the liquor may freely flow,
Till, instead of God's kingdom here below,
Hell's kingdom on earth may grow ?

Will you vote that your child on the village street,
The drunkard's staggering form shall meet,
And his filthy ravings hear,
Till an oath shall seem a familiar thing,
And the lips that should glad hosannas sing,
Speak words that defile the ear ?

Will you vote that life tempters shall still betray,
 And tempt your boys to the evil way,
 That leads where the lost abide?
 Nay! God forbid! In his name we pray,
 Destroy them not with your vote to-day,
 For whom the Saviour diéd. S.R.G.

WHAT DO PEOPLE GO TO CHURCH FOR?

[THE following has been sent us by an elderly gentleman, who says he learned it in his youth. Things, we hope, are not quite so bad in our day, for surely more than one-tenth go to church to worship God. In some places, perhaps, not so many.]

Some go to church just for a walk,
 Some go there to laugh and talk;
 Some go there to meet a friend,
 Some go there the time to spend;
 Some go there for observation,
 Some go there for speculation,
 Some go there to meet a lover;
 Some go there their faults to cover;
 Some go there to doze and nod,
 But few go there to worship God.

Christian Thought.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

UR readers are possibly more or less familiar with the fact that Professor W. Robertson Smith, of the Free Church Divinity Hall, Aberdeen, published recently some articles in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which seem to encroach on the divine authority of the Scriptures. Mr. Smith is no doubt an accomplished scholar in Hebrew and Greek, but it requires something more than grammar to measure the Bible. Mr. Smith, for instance, tells us that the fifty-first psalm was not written by David, because the writer says, "Build thou the walls of Jerusalem," which David could not say wrote before the walls were broken down in the captivity. Now surely any pious cottager, such as Cowper paints, could tell Mr. Smith that David could use these words most appropriately. 1st, literally

as applicable to his work as the man who founded Jerusalem, and who was building its walls when his awful crime seemed to threaten his work with God's curse; and 2nd, figuratively, as applicable to the church which was made bare and naked to the reproaches of the enemy by the crimes of God's anointed.

To be a good critic of the text of Scripture requires qualities that are seldom found united in the same man. The critic must not only know the *languages* of the Bible along with the history and geography of the Bible races and countries, but he must be a *philosopher*, able to grasp the first principles of truth, and a *theologian*, able to survey as a comprehensive whole, the grand scheme of doctrine, which breaks up into minute branches in the separate books and chapters of the Bible. Dr. John Duncan, now alas! dead, had these three qualities, in higher proportion than any man of his age. He was an accomplished grammarian; an acute metaphysician; and a profound theologian. His mantle has not fallen on Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith's mind is acute but not broad; he has knowledge, but is lacking in wisdom; he is logical but not intuitional.

There are however, some of Mr. Smith's critics who push his theories further than he himself would. He has spoken lately to his students in a way that shows that he still holds by the inspiration and the supreme authority of the Scripture. We subjoin the concluding portion of his address as showing that, notwithstanding fears to the contrary he still holds that the Bible is the inspired word of God, which not only *contains* but is a revelation from God.

“The reason why we go to the Scripture from day to day, seeking by the aid of history and the original languages, and every other help we can bring to bear upon it, to know more of the meaning of Scripture, is just that in this Scripture we have the words of everlasting life. I wish to speak with some emphasis upon this point, because there are not wanting some at the present day who identify themselves with the cause of religious progress, who do not hesitate to say that the first step in theological progress must be a modification of the supreme authority of the Word of God. God has given a revelation of Himself, not a mere revelation of doctrine, not a revelation of Christian philosophy, but a revelation of Himself as the living God, who has called us to Him in Christ Jesus, who led His people of Israel through many centuries to prepare them for His manifestation, and who finally in Christ Jesus did set before us the plan of His atoning and redeeming work. The only source we have for the knowing of this great and true history, which is our only hope for salvation, is the

books of the Bible, and surely it is possible for one to believe that in these books of the Bible by means of the inspired word of His own Spirit, we have a complete record of all that we require to know for our salvation, and such a record that we shall never need anything that is not there—such a record, too, that not even the simplest Christian runs a risk of finding anything else there. But yet a continuous progress may be made in the way of comprehending the fulness of what is there, and a progress in the way of understanding the means and ways and measures by which God did bring the knowledge of His way before His people. (Cheers.) These two questions are quite distinct, and I do not see what difficulty there is in holding this position. The Bible is the supreme authority. It is an authority in this sense that all that the Christian can wish to have for salvation is in it, and also that he will not find anything in it contrary to truth. He will find that the sense is not ambiguous nor uncertain, and yet that the whole sense is not exhausted at once, and that we require not only additional exegesis, but also historical and critical studies in order to get to the whole sense. That seems to me a reasonable plan of progress; but, after all, if this knowledge of hope in Jesus is not to rest in the Bible then where is it to rest? (Applause.) Let me remind you that the greatest critic of the present generation, and one of the boldest men in historical investigation, who certainly has not erred on the side of over-caution—Professor Ewald—laid down this principle at the close of a long life of critical work—that the Bible, and the Bible alone, was the sole authority of our knowledge of that religion which is absolute, and which admits of no addition, that the sense of this Bible is neither ambiguous nor uncertain. That was the position held by a man who, in his day, was the leader of the highest criticism. Do not let yourselves be misled by so-called liberal progressive theologians. Do not let yourselves be led into the belief that you yourselves cannot be progressive in your theology. With open eyes look at God's truth through all means of scientific investigation without giving up that which is far more precious than scientific investigation—living faith in the living God whereby we ourselves shall live, and the Church of Christ shall live also. (Loud cheers.)”

TEKEL: WEIGHED AND FOUND WANTING.

OUR Lord Jesus Christ has given the world an invaluable touch-stone by which to try systems of religion and their prophets—“BY THEIR FRUITS YE SHALL KNOW THEM.” There is no evading the logic of facts. Literary

men of rationalistic tendencies may labour to doomsday to make out that Mahomet was a true prophet, and his religion good; but the fact that this religion naturally and necessarily, always and everywhere, produces intolerance, cruelty, blood, this ounce of fact at once annihilates their tons of specious reasoning. The point is not that Mahometans are sometimes cruel, intolerant, and bloody; so are Christians; but that cruelty, intolerance, blood, is a necessary, vital, integral part of Mahometanism. On this aspect of the case, intimately connected with our editorial this month, Mr. Gladstone's recent Pamphlet, "Lessons in Massacre," is an invaluable contribution. It shows and proves under seventeen specific heads, that the massacre in Bulgaria was no accidental blunder, of which Constantinople is ashamed, but only a deliberate act in which it secretly glories, and which it is prepared to repeat as often as necessary if only Europe would stand out of the way. Such is Islam. "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN."

"The lesson which the Turkish Government has conveyed to its Mahometan subjects by its conduct since last May in the matter of the Bulgarian rising cannot be more pithily or more accurately expressed than in three short English words, 'Do it again.' My charge is that this lesson was conveyed, and not only conveyed, but intended to be conveyed. That it is as plain as if it had been set forth expressly in a firman of the Sultan or a fetwa of the Sheik-ool-Islam. The heaviest question of all is not what was suffered in a given district at a given date, but what is the normal and habitual condition of eight or ten millions of the subject races who for fifteen generations of men have been in servitude to the Turk. This is, I may say, the question of questions, and of this we can best judge by observing what is the conduct of the Government and its agents, upon a great and palmary occasion, when for once it is brought fully into view. Let us see, then, what light has just been cast upon it. With the outrages the Porte now stands unalterably identified, and a Government so identified is not merely weak or impotent, or passionate or cruel in this or that particular, it is a Government which reverses the great canon of right and wrong, and which in the holding down of the subject races adopts the motto-given by Milton to his Satan—

'Evil, be thou my good.'

Not indeed that this inverted law is for the Porte an unvarying rule of action. There is no such thing in the world. Man is never consistent in evil or in good. Hope, fear, interest, shame, a better nature breaking into light upon occasion may produce in its commonplace and secondary

action much that is less evil, and even some very few things that are good. But, as in individual life, so in the life of Governments, it is the great crisis that searches nature to its depths and brings out the true spirit of the man. The Bulgarian rising was a great crisis. A people of five millions, the most docile, patient, and submissive in all Europe, had dared to commence a revolt. It was as if the sheep were to attack the butcher and fill him for a moment with alarm. Much violence, some cruelty might in these circumstances, well be understood. Habitual brutality, exasperated by fear, so far from remembering in the hour of wrath the long endurance of a suffering race, determined that in proportion to their effeminacy in bearing should be their deep descent into the pit of suffering. Bulgaria had on the whole, therefore, exhibited the most splendid example of successful Turkism in its perfect submission to terror, in these eming extinction even of the wish to murmur, lastly in the copious revenues yielded by its dogged industry.

“In Bulgaria generally, even the last sigh had been stifled. It seemed not even to fret for freedom. And it is no wonder if to those who had spoiled this magnificent success, this great work of art, there was due on the principles of Turkism, under the impulse of the wild beast that dwells in human nature, an exemplary vengeance. This is not new. The wars of the Serbian and of the Greek Revolutions supplied apparent parallels to the great Bulgarian vengeance. But Christendom had not then the open channels, which happily it now possesses, for tolerably full communication of the facts, and though we may believe, we are not judicially entitled to assert, that the Turkish Government had at those junctures, as it has had now, the wretched perpetrators of the acts for the mere tools of its master-spirit working from the centre at Constantinople for the misery of man. This, I say again, is upon the whole the great anti-human specimen of humanity. To exorcise it will be easy when the exorcisers are agreed, difficult only as long as some remain wrapped in contented ignorance, others case-hardened in political selfishness, and some even possessed, as the British Ambassador has been possessed, with the belief that the condition of the subject races of Turkey ought to be supremely determined by whatever our estimate of British interests may require. Neither weakness, nor accident, nor ignorance, nor an occasional fit of fury, nor the unfaithfulness of agents to their principal, lies at the root of the Bulgarian massacres. They are the true expression of the spirit and policy of the Turkish government in seasons of emergency, when passing from the indifference and contempt with which it commonly regards every function of civil Government, except the receipt of money.

it dispels the precarious ease for which at times that indifference and contempt leave room, and in the words of Bluntschli, 'Does not shrink from sanguinary horrors' in support of its 'barbarous domination.'

Christian Life.

A CONSECRATED LIFE.



EDWARD DENISON'S name is not likely to be forgotten, but it is a duty of those who wish to help modern movements forward to keep his memory and the inspiring recollection of his work, not merely in the public mind, but always at their freshest. Fortunately, his is a story which will bear telling or retelling often enough to make sure of its being maintained as a real working influence.

It is only in that way—as a means of spurring others to self-denying Christian work—that he would care for such perennialness of fame. But his example is one far too precious for us to forego its periodical celebration. We bring it forward, from time to time, in the same way—though we trust with a better likelihood of use—as the Roman Catholic priests bring out at recurring seasons their relics from rich shrines.

“Here,” we say, “is the son of a Bishop, the nephew of a Speaker of the House of Commons, a young man educated at Eton and Oxford, who might have led a fashionable life, but who, instead, turned from trivialities to philanthropy, and by the mere instinctive promptings of love to God, and to the lowest as well as the highest of his fellow-men, hit upon plans of social improvement which the hardest-headed politicians have since approved and made into law; and who did much more than show this theoretical wisdom—who reduced it all to practice, going into the dreary and sin-stricken East of London, and for eight months living in the district of Stepney, among the poor, ignorant, and sinful people he wanted to raise and better, spending his time in school-building, teaching, or visiting.”

This is how the vital part of his history may be summarised, but for the benefit of any to whom Edward Denison may not have been known before, we take the main facts of his career from his biography in a little

more detail.* He was born in 1840, at Salisbury, his father being the bishop of that see, and was educated at Eton and at Christ Church, Oxford. It was intended that he should be a barrister, and from 1862 to 1866 he read the law, and travelled in Italy, in the south of France, and in Madeira, visiting St. Moritz in 1866. His letters show that before this time he had applied his mind seriously to religious and social questions. At St. Moritz he was much struck by the habits and condition of the Swiss peasantry. On returning to England he was first brought into contact with the London poor, by becoming an almoner of the Society for the Relief of Distress in the district of Stepney. He writes that he here saw "the unsatisfactory results of giving relief by doles." In the autumn of 1867, the second year of the great East End distress, he resolved to establish himself at Stepney, to see with his own eyes the terrible struggle going on there, and to take an actual share in it. Accordingly, at the close of the season of 1867, he took up his quarters in Philpot Street, Mile-end Road, and remained there, with only very occasional visits to his friends, for eight months. He built and endowed a school, himself taught in it, gave lectures on the Bible, formed classes, worked conjointly with medical officers, relieving officers, visited, and helped every good work. In 1868 he went to Paris to study the French poor law; later he went to Edinburgh for a similar purpose. In November 1868, he was returned to Parliament as member for Newark, near which his uncle, the Right Hon. J. E. Denison, the Speaker of the House of Commons (afterwards Lord Ossington), resided. His health had long been delicate. At Eton, in the 'eight,' he over-exerted himself in training for a boat race, and the congestion of the lungs which followed, it was afterwards thought laid the seeds of consumption. The doctor advised a long sea-voyage, and in October 1869, he sailed for Melbourne. Instead of improving, he grew gradually worse; a fortnight after he landed at Melbourne, he died.

His going to live among the poor at the East End was Edward Denison's strikingly popular doing. His social position necessarily gives it a picturesque exaggeration. For ourselves we try to make just allowances for that. The self-sacrifice was in some respects made the greater by his going down from a high circle into those dark depths of poverty and sin. But the increase of credit due to him on that score ought strictly to be kept within its limits. He himself in the East End, came upon a poor self-educated letter-sorter in the Post-office, who for two years had kept on foot a ragged-school of seventy children, with a night-school

* See "Letters and other Writings by the late Edward Denison, M.P. for Newark. Edited by Sir Baldwin Leighton, Bart." London: R. Bentley & Son.

twice-a-week, besides preaching on Sundays. It would be difficult to say which deserved the most praise in this extrinsic way,—the letter-sorter for socially ascending to his pious task, or the bishop's son for descending to a sphere of work. No, it is not on that narrow, easily-contested, and difficultly-decided ground that Edward Denison's claim to our love and reverence rests. It cannot even be contended for him that either his opinions or his schemes were absolutely new.

His peculiar merit is twofold. He came to have a clear perception of the great fact, that what can alone cure our social evils is the personal contact of Christian-minded men and women with their ignorant, wretched, debased brothers and sisters, drawing them to religion by example; and, further, having intellectually apprehended this principle, he, in his own individual case, reduced it to actual practice. The pictorial incident of this well-born, highly-educated young man taking up quarters among the roughs of the East End gets its true value in this way, being freed from any suspicion of being an oddity of enthusiasm. This, too, should be added, that no one can read the Memoir of him and his "Letters," without seeing that he for himself discovered this principle of making Christianity revert to its original style and method. It is astonishing to note how little he owed to others. For instance, there is no trace of his having any knowledge of what had long been doing in Germany in this very field. The names which Mr. Fleming Stevenson's admirable volume, "Praying and Working," has made familiar to English readers, seem to have been unknown to him. He enquired into the Poor Law administration in France and Switzerland, but news of the "Inner Mission" of the Germans seems not to have reached his ears at all. It was in studying Hooker, in reading law, and in watching our own Boards of Guardians that the impulse and the knowledge of his work came to him. Possibly, in his special case, so much the better. Perhaps it was this which gave so English an air to his opinions, so native a look to his plans.

If we had room to make extracts from his "Letters," we could give striking examples of his keen common sense as well as of his catholicity of sentiment. For instance, writing in 1866, he wishes, "an early obliteration from the map of Europe of that disgusting stain, the Ottoman Empire." He foresaw the downfall of Napoleon III., and longed for it. But we must find space for two passages relating to higher matters, since they give the key to his method and explain his success. In a paper on 'The Relation of Religion to Morality,' he says, that in primitive times religion was regarded as a spirit pervading life, and adds,—

"Religion now having been reduced to a sort of mechanical art of

escaping hell, . . . distinct from the concerns of this life, . . . what has to be done is to show men that the only test of the soundness of their doctrinal conceptions,—the only proof which will be admitted by the Judge at the Great Assize,—is the effect those conceptions of God have produced upon their dealings with men: ‘hereby we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.’”

And the following passage gives his view of the kinds of presentation of religion which will and will not win the working classes,—

“I have long been under the influence of the ideas expressed by the ex-scavenger Mr. Solomon, that Christ was a liberal and a workman. I have no fears for the spread of Christianity among these men: these are they for whom it was sent, these are they for whom it is declared that ‘theirs is the kingdom of heaven.’ A Christianity taught by Pharisees, and illustrated by Sadducees, in purple and fine linen, has failed to reach their hearts. No wonder. And then men say, forsooth, Christianity won’t do now,—it does not satisfy the instincts of humanity. It is not Christianity, but Christians who are wanting.”

If anybody already engaged in such noble labours wants refreshment or stimulus, they will get it by only turning the pages of the volume of the “Letters.” They will come upon such sentences as these,—“I am warning to my work.”—“A roomful of dock-labourers will meet twice a week, after a hard day’s work, to hear me say what I can for the Gospel.”—“I am building a ragged school.”

“It has been rightly written of him,—

“By the lone wash of Australasian waves
His body rests, but his great spirit lives,
And in the hearts of those who knew him most
That spirit shall remain—it will not die!
His name and fame shall emulation prove,
And his remembered work a history.”

WALTER CURTIS.

Christian Work.

E are glad to find, that the scarcity of money, which has crippled almost every department of commercial activity throughout the world, has not materially affected the great and good work of printing and circulating the word of God. We gather our information on this matter from the report read last month at the annual meeting of the *Upper Canada Bible Society*.

THE BIBLE IN CANADA.

Although the past twelve months have been a time of disappointment and stringency in money matters to nearly every one in our province, the Directors of the Upper Canada Bible Society cannot begin their report otherwise than with a note of praise to God. Whilst our Heavenly Father has withholden from us, in some measure, the temporal prosperity which we wished and expected, He has been giving very abundantly the blessing of His Holy Spirit. In some places there has been very marked religious awakening, and the harvest of souls has rejoiced the hearts of both sowers and reapers. Nor has the blessing been confined to a few places and congregations. Ministers of all churches in different parts of the country, have noticed an unusual readiness among men to be spoken to about the salvation of their souls. Another evidence that God's Spirit has been working on the minds of the people, which is of special interest to this Society, is, that whilst all kinds of business has been depressed, there has been an increased demand for God's Word. This has been seen very plainly in the Colporteurs' reports which have come before the directors from month to month; and it is very gratifying to notice that although the proceeds of sales have decreased—and, indeed, form the only item in which there has been any falling off—yet the number of copies issued has been greater. It is true that the issues of the Society have not increased very largely, but taking into consideration that colportage has been seriously interrupted by death and sickness, that money has been so scarce, and that the sales of Bibles by the ordinary booksellers have been larger, the directors regard even this slight increase as encouraging.

The number of copies of the Scriptures issued by the Society during the year is 98,174, being 603 more than in the previous twelve months. There is a large increase in the number of Bibles issued, and a falling off

in the number of Testaments and portions. This makes the total number of issues since the formation of the Society 1,010,717.

Another cause for thankfulness is that, in such a time of stringency, the operations of the Society have not been curtailed by lack of means. The Directors would, of course, have been glad to have had more to send to the parent Society for its great work among the millions of heathenism, Romanism, and Mahomedanism; and they feel that our Province has not yet done as much as it ought in this matter. Nevertheless, they do feel thankful that in such a year as the past there has been no need of curtailment. It is true they have not been able to carry out all their plans of colportage, but it has been owing to other circumstances which will be explained in another part of the report.

THE BIBLE IN ENGLAND.

From no part of their large field of labour have the Committee derived more satisfaction during the past year than from that which is cultivated at home by their District Secretaries. The reports from every part of the country bear strong testimony to the following facts:—1. That an intelligent knowledge of the Society's principles is more extensively diffused; 2. That sympathy with it in its grand yet simple object, and in the difficulties with which it has to contend, has been largely increased; 3. That not only has the liberality of many abounded, but a disposition has been evinced to make provision for any extension of work which God in His Providence may appoint.

Issues.—One of the most hopeful features of the present day is the extent to which the Word of God is distributed among all classes of people both at home and abroad.

From the Depot in Queen Victoria-street :

Bibles.....	662,937
Integral parts of Old Testament.....	64,151
New Testament.....	484,545
New Testament with Psalms.....	20,392
Integral parts of New Testament.....	296,842
	—————1,528,867

From Depots abroad :

Bibles	187,037
Integral parts of Old Testament.....	107,499
New Testament & N.T. with Psalms.....	494,173
Integral parts of New Testament	364,609
	—————1,153,318

Total.....2,682,185

The total issue of the Society now amounts to 76,432,728.

Bible Women.—The London Bible and Domestic Female Mission reports a larger circulation of the scriptures, through the instrumentality of the Bible women than in any similar period. The number of copies sold within the year has reached a total of 12,269, and realized the sum of £1,659, whilst the number of subscribers yet to be supplied amounts to 7,124.

THE BIBLE IN FRANCE.

M. Monod continues to prosecute his work with his characteristic care and energy, giving much attention to colportage. Large numbers of Testaments and portions were distributed among the sufferers from the inundations. No difficulty was found in inducing the people to accept these; on the contrary, great gratitude was expressed for the kindness shown, and in not a few cases the recipients collected what money they could for the purchase of a whole Bible. Sixty-two colporteurs had been engaged for a longer or shorter period.

The total sales by colportage and through the depots have amounted to 71,725 copies, against 64,540 in the preceding year. Those to religious societies and other agencies number 18,078, and the free grants, including the gifts to sufferers from the floods, have amounted to 5,848, giving a total of 95,646 copies.

THE BIBLE IN GERMANY.

Notwithstanding the vast sums which flowed into the German exchequer after the Franco-German war, there had been much commercial depression. There had also been not a little religious excitement. Neither of these conditions is favourable to the work in which the Bible Society is engaged, though both serve to illustrate the truth which the Bible unfolds. But though the power to purchase the Scriptures had been limited, a season of adversity may not have been unfavourable to growth in grace, and if the excitement consequent upon legislative action in connection with questions of ecclesiastical policy has disturbed for a time the peace of the churches, results may yet be developed which shall prove "that the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of His people shall trust in it."

The circulation of the Scriptures within the limits of the agency had reached a total of 297,242 copies, consisting of 88,175 Bibles, 185,193 Testaments, and 28,874 portions.

The Rev. G. P. Davies points out that the decrease in the German issues has taken place among Protestant populations only.

It is pleasant to be able to record that efforts which for special reasons had during the year been concentrated upon work among Roman Catholics had been eminently successful. God has opened doors in a wonderful manner, giving facility of access to those long-shrouded in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, and the same Hand through which entrance has been obtained has supplied the means for the accomplishment of His purpose.

THE BIBLE IN AUSTRIA.

Mr. Millard commences his report with an allusion to the struggles and troubles of the past year, which had induced him to anticipate a reduction in his sales. Such, however, has not been the case, for though in some localities the number does not reach last year's amount, yet, taking the agency as a whole, there is an increase in the issues of 1,853 copies. These have consisted of 26,682 Bibles, 58,184 New Testaments, and 37,444 portions, or 117,810 volumes, and if to these are added 21,017 supplied to other agencies, a total will be reached of 138,827.

It is pleasant to find that in a province of Austria, so difficult to reach as the Tyrol, as many as 4,378 copies of the Scripture have been distributed.

Another subject of congratulation to which Mr. Millard alludes, has reference to the character of his colporteurs. He feels it an honor to be connected with a body of men who, though of different calibre as regards qualifications, are yet, he believes, with one heart and one mind seeking to serve God, and are supporting the testimony of the book they circulate by the example of the lives which they lead. The Bible Society is thus conferring a double benefit upon the people among whom it works. The men and the Book speak the same language, witness to the same truth, and honor the same Lord; and even where the Book is proscribed, and the people neglect it, there is an eloquence in the calm fortitude and meek forbearance of the men, which wins its way to hearts hitherto hard, and removes prejudices hitherto insuperable.

THE BIBLE IN ITALY.

The mere mention of Italy in connection with the dissemination of God's truth, seems always to give fresh fervour to the prayer of faith, and to fan into renewed ardour the flame of holy expectation. Whatever be the motive; he who is longing for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, looks often towards Italy for some signs of loyalty to its rightful King, as a prelude to the setting up of that kingdom of which there shall be no end. Nor is the interest which the Christian takes in this

land, so famed for the maturity of its art, and the refinement of its taste, without a reflex influence upon his own soul. Its present condition sounds a warning to which it is well that he should give heed. If painting, or statuary, or music, or architecture; could have spiritualized the carnal or vitalized the dead, here would have been found the scene of art's triumph and the proof of its power. But if amidst all that is magnificent in art and refined in taste the tide of sensuality is at the flood, and that of morality at the ebb, and the Gospel of the grace of God remains unheeded, what hope is there that the cultivation of æsthetics will become the channel of light and life to immortal souls. No. The way in which God works is altogether different from this. "Thy word is truth," and "the entrance of Thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple." Such is God's purpose as regards every land, and in seeking to spread the knowledge of God's truth among the Italians, the Society may rely upon God's promise for a blessing.

The condition of Italy during the year had in some respects been favorable to the work. It has been a year of peace and plenty, calling for gratitude to Him who crowneth the year with His goodness, and whose paths drop fatness. The colporteurs have consequently met with less difficulty in their sales through the plea of poverty, though the enemy is never wanting in devices to keep the sinner from the Saviour. Two active colporteurs had been employed in Rome, and one in the surrounding country, with a fair amount of success. The sales at the depot in Rome had amounted to 8,352 copies. Thirty-five colporteurs had been employed throughout the land, and by them far the largest part of the circulation had been effected. The total distribution by colportage, from the depots and by other means, had amounted to 41,194 volumes. This shows a slight increase on the issues of the previous year, but falls far short of the requirements of the population, if they were willing and able to read the word of God.

THE BIBLE IN SPAIN.

Spain seems to be again closing itself against the operations of the Society, but it is encouraging to know that, in 1875, the sales amounted to the goodly number of 5,518 Bibles, 8,628 Testaments, and 40,999 portions, being a total of 54,545 copies, as against 50,704 in the previous year. In addition to this, 2,748 have been distributed as free gifts, and 8,000 have been forwarded to London, making the total issues from the depot at Madrid 60,293. Fourteen colporteurs have been employed on an average during the whole year, who have succeeded in putting into circulation 35,679 copies, consisting of 3,344 Bibles, 5,071 Testaments,

and 27,264 portions. Such a record of work during a period of great trial must be considered most encouraging, and be suggestive of gratitude and praise to the giver of all good, the more so as the increase in the circulation has extended not only to the smaller portions, but to Bibles and Testaments.

NORWAY, SWEDEN, ETC.

In both Norway and Sweden the circulation has been about the same as in the previous year, but in both countries the fruit of former efforts is beginning to appear. In place of the apathy and indifference which prevailed a few years ago, there is proof of spiritual life and Christian enterprise, which have sprung from the seed of the Word, watered by the dew of the Holy Spirit. New churches, home missions, and gospel tents are appearing in various localities, showing that the work of the evangelist and the colporteur act and re-act upon each other. The Bible creates a need for the missionary, and a missionary creates the need for the Bible.

In Belgium and Holland there had been nothing of special interest reported during the year. In Portugal the work had been going on steadily, and the agent wrote very hopefully. The report of the work in Denmark was very encouraging; there had been a large increase in the circulation of the Scriptures, and a revival of spiritual life. In Russia there is much to encourage the hope that the circulation of God's Word throughout its vast extent will be marked by a very rapid growth. In Greece Dr. Thomson reports that there has arisen a genuine spirit of inquiry about Divine Truth, which has been mainly produced by the circulation of the Word of God. In Turkey, the operations of the Society had partaken of the general depression; but there had not been wanting interesting and encouraging incidents, some of which were inserted in the *Record* of last September, and some of which seem to show that the Bible Society is the agency best fitted to reach Mahommedans.

In Syria and Palestine, owing to the severity of the winter and the prevalence of cholera, the sales have been somewhat less than in the previous year, and considerable difficulties remain, but the agent is not daunted, and is upheld by faith in God's promises concerning this interesting country.

THE BIBLE IN CHINA.

Colportage, from various causes, has neither been so extensive nor so successful as in former years, and yet within the period to which Mr. Wylie's report refers, the Colporteurs have visited forty-two prefectures (each prefecture being about the size of an average English county) and

seven departments, and have sold the Scriptures in 102 districts, and to the extent of 29,818 copies. If, therefore, no superstructure of an imposing character has as yet been raised to God's glory, a foundation has nevertheless been laid on which we may build securely, and to which we fairly look for the Divine blessing.

But Colportage is not now, as it was once, a sufficient test of the progress of our work, which is assuming a different aspect through the co-operation of missionaries. Colporteurs have in many parts of the empire been the pioneers, but now that missions are extending their agency, missionaries are to a great extent taking up the work which the Bible Society initiated. They itinerate through the country, and besides preaching the Gospel, sow the good seed of the Word in a printed form, and by insisting upon the book which they distribute being sold and not given, they leave behind them some testimony to God's love, which is more likely to be lasting in its character than their own words, however fitly spoken. Through every agency, then, as far as they have traced, the issues within the limits of this vast empire have amounted to 100,761 volumes.

THE BIBLE IN AFRICA.

East Africa.—Several letters have been received from the Right Rev. Bishop Steere in the course of the year, dated Zanzibar, which are of an encouraging nature, both as regards the translation of the Scriptures in the Swahili language, and the progress of missionary work generally.

South Africa.—The reports of the auxiliaries at Cape Town, Graham Town, Natal, etc., are for the most part encouraging, and very interesting accounts of missionary work in Basutoland have been received. The Sesuto New Testament was ready for the press, and more than half of the Old Testament was completed.

West Africa.—A very encouraging letter from the Rev. J. Zimmerman tells of good work being done by Rev. F. Ramseyer and others who were released by the British expedition in 1874, after four-and-a-half years' captivity in Coomassie. The letter tells of old Christians who had to use spectacles learning to read, and Mr. Zimmerman says the missionaries are astonished at how the young men, who never had a proper teacher before, are at home in their Bible. Mr. Zimmerman is himself engaged on the revision of the Ga Bible, which is a work of much labour, but which he hopes to see completed.

Towards the conclusion of their report, the Committee of the Parent

Society refer to the loud cries for their help coming from Russia, Persia, and Japan; which they were prayerfully considering how best to respond to with most advantage to the cause.

It will be interesting to the friends of the Society to recall the fact that during a period of little more than ten years, separate agencies have been established in Spain, Portugal, Austria, and South Russia, while depots have been opened at Madrid, Lisbon, Rome, Moscow, Odessa, Charkoff, and Tiflis, as well as in Vienna, Trieste, Klausenburg, Lemberg, Pesth, Prague, and Warsaw—a sufficient proof, the Committee venture to believe, that the great interests which they have been commissioned to watch-over have been directed and controlled by a wisdom and power superior to their own.

The survey of their domestic field was most encouraging, and the Committee had received most cordial approval of the course they had pursued.

The free income of the Society amounted to £116,802 5s. 0d., whilst the sum received for Scriptures sold, both at home and abroad, had risen to £105,410 2s. 3d., which, with £108 1s. 8d., received on account of a special fund for India colportage, made a total of £222,320 8s. 11d.

The issues for the year were 2,682,185 volumes, and the total issues since the formation of the Society amounted to 76,432,723.

These are very encouraging figures; but if any one imagine that, therefore, it is time to rest in this matter, let him ponder thoughtfully a remarkable paragraph which we cull from the combined report of the District Secretaries:—

“Within the last few months a statement has been made to the effect that the population of our globe increases at the rate of about eleven millions annually, and probably these figures are below the mark. The Scriptures circulated, not only by our Society, but by it and every other similar organization, do not amount to more than five millions per annum, or not half the yearly increase of the world's population. Add to this startling fact that there are, at least, a thousand millions who never yet possessed a copy of the Bible, and does not the command of Jehovah, delivered by His servant Moses on the shore of the Red Sea, sound forth loudly to his people again to-day, ‘Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward?’”

This shows how far Britain is from having yet accomplished her work in this, her most important mission, of giving to earth's millions the Holy Bible which has so blessed her own thousands, and if there is work for Britons to do, Canadians must and will be found ready for their share of it.

Practical Papers.

HOW TO WIN SOULS.

The following was written to a young minister by one now in heaven.

"He that winneth souls is wise."—Prov. xi. 30.

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever."—Dan. xii. 3.



MY DEAR BROTHER in the self-denying, flesh-mortifying, Gospel of the World's Redeemer: may every blood-bought privilege of Jesus Christ be yours in time and in eternity.
AMEN.

In your last epistle you express a strong desire that I would give you my opinion respecting your duty in the closet. You ask—"I pray for sinners HUMBLY, CONSTANTLY, and FAITHFULLY, before God in my closet, and confess and mourn over the sinfulness of my people before God, will a greater power and unction attend my ministry? And will souls be converted in proportion as I thus act, provided I do it in strong faith? Do, my brother, speak out on these subjects with all plainness, as a father in the Gospel to his son. I do not ask the above questions with any other design than to enable me to see my way clear in the work of God."

ANSWER—All the mighty men of war in the church of God, since the foundation of the world, who have shaken hell to any amount, have been sons of the closet. *Moses* pleaded until he had power to turn aside heaven's red-hot thunderbolt of wrath, and though God said "Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven." But while justice heard him pray in faith, He could not seal the sinner's doom. So that after a mighty struggle, he obtained power with God; spanned his strong arms of faith round six hundred thousand wicked reprobates. *Elijah*, after long and powerful pleading, shut and opened heaven. But I will not speak of what prophets, apostles, and other *inspired* men have done through faith and prayer, lest Satan should

take advantage and tell you that it would be impious to expect the power with God which such holy men had. Look, then at a *Baxter*, who stained his study walls with praying breath; and after he got anointed with the oily unction of the holy Ghost, sent a river of living water over Kidderminster, and was the means of converting hundreds. *Luther*, and his coadjutors were men of such mighty pleadings with God, that they broke the spell of ages, and laid nations subdued at the foot of the cross. *John Knox* grasped in his strong arms of faith all Scotland; his prayers terrified tyrants. *Whitfield*, after much holy faithful closet pleading, went to the devil's fair, and took more than one thousand souls out of the paw of the lion in one day. See a praying *Wesley*, a pleading *Bramwell*, *Stoner*, *Smith*, and *Carvosso*, each of whom led thousands to Jesus; *Ann Cutler*, and *Mrs. Fletcher*, whose breath was prayer, and who had souls in every place. In 1820-21, a few plain, holy, praying Christians were instrumental in leading seventeen thousand souls from Satan unto the glorious Redeemer. *John Oxtoby*, with his one talent, sighed, wept, fasted, and groaned, and prayed for sinners—threw them on the atonement, and bound them there for hours by faith's strong arms—entered the pulpit and spoke words of flame, so that hundreds were saved by his means.

It is to be deplored that there are so few regular *soul-saving ministers* in the present day; I mean men who are blessed in the conversion of souls at every place. But let us look to ourselves. I feel ashamed of myself! My closet, Bible, study, family, church, the world, heaven, and earth—all witness against me. But I must speedily stop, or my epistle will be all introduction. Just allow me to say that I take it for granted that God has saved you from pride, the love of money, the fear of man, and especially from mere party zeal. If you only want sinners converted to gain a great name in the church, to swell your party, or show what great feats you can do, your state of soul is poor indeed. Can you, and do you rejoice when you hear of souls being saved in any other church? If so all hail! Then take the following, which I have taken from the best works I have met with on the subject of closet pleading. If your sanctified heart be burdened and half broken for the salvation of souls, and you feel willing to be anything—even a fool in the eyes of a God-dishonouring world and a sleepy church—so that souls may be saved, if I know anything of the matter, you are in a proper state of soul to begin, and if you do not, are you anything better than a hireling shepherd? Go through the town you live in, and take a clear survey of the wicked, and notice their sins. Count the flaming gin-palaces, beer-houses, tea-gardens, saloons, dancing-rooms, brew-houses, wine-vaults, brothels, play

houses, and other devils' chapels. Look at their desolation until your heart aches with grief on account of their damning sins. See the daring Sabbath-breakers with their open shops, brazen fronts, and hardened hearts. See the moving mass of prostitutes and their vile supporters; the seducer and the seduced rushing madly on together into everlasting burnings. Go through the filthy streets, dirty lanes, and dark squares, and try to find out the reigning sins of every family, if possible. Be particular (for to you as well as to the physician it is of the utmost importance) to know the very worst of the disease. Open your eyes—look minutely—do not turn away, as *most likely* you will be tempted to do. See that poor *old grey-headed* sinner! His hairs have grown grey on the road to hell; his limbs totter on the way to the pit; his eyes are dim with looking on vanity! See what a dark long train of *children and children's children* he is drawing with him! Death and damnation are moving to meet them! See how thousands of the poor, reeling, staggering, filthy, mad *drunkards*, in fits of hellish frenzy, are destroying themselves, and floating into God's presence in their own suicidal blood! See the multitudes of poor loathsome *prostitutes*, polluting the earth, air, and heaven, inoculating thousands with corruption, and glutting the grave and the pit with their slain victims! Nay, my brother, look at the whole mass of sinners wading recklessly through currents of redeeming blood; steeling their consciences against the Holy Ghost; pressing through the prayers of the saints; making stepping-stones to hell of God's book. See them shut their eyes. Yes! they are emphatically *in earnest* to damn their bodies and souls for ever.*

Look at them—look at them—look at them! Do you see them? Then you see them on a slippery hill, and all around is hell! Think how they dishonour God—think how they pierce the Saviour—think how they grieve the Holy Spirit—think how they damn the rising race—think how they people the wide burning pit! See how they push one another off the stage of life into perdition! See, thousands of them have taken all but the last step; so that, if you do not pluck them thence at once, the next step will be hell's fire, hell's devils, hell's brimstone, hell's wails, hell's deep death-groaning, hell's blackness, hell's darkness, hell's hurricane, hell's howling, bleating, blasting, fiery tempest, and that for ever and for ever! AND FOR EVER! AND FOR EVER! Oh, brother, all this is true! and will you not use the weapon which God has himself placed in your hands, and go and wrestle with him to save this people? Think

*See Supplement.

of the origin, power, and value of their souls! Think of the bleeding, pleading love they are slighting! Think of the eternal damnation they are going to! Think of the heaven of increasing glory they are losing! Think of the influence they have in drawing millions with and after them to hell! Think what glory it would bring to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, if they were converted! Think deeply, think long, and think properly, between their living in sin and drawing nations after them to hell, and being converted by God's Spirit given in answer to your prayers, and becoming themselves the instruments of conversion to others. Think of Gethsemane, Calvary, Olivet, and the blood-besprinkled mercy-seat! Think what Jesus has done, is doing, and is willing to do for them! Think of what he has done for millions as bad as they, when they repented, forsook sin, and believed. Think of what he did, for bloody *Manasseh*, the murderer; *David*, the wicked adulterer; mad *Saul*, wicked *Magdalen*, swearing *Bunyan*, the infidel *Rochester*, and millions of other drunkards, thieves, harlots, and the very worst of sinners on this side of the pit. Nay, think until your soul harrows up within you, and melts into pity, or flames into burning charity. Then with your full love-stricken heart enter your closet, and bewail the sins of the people before the Lord. Take up a deep lamentation, and bewail the number, the nature, aggravation, and consequences of their sins with particularity. Make their sins your own (so to speak), that is, feel for them, and pray for them, as though you were in their (nearly damned) condition. Yoke yourself in with them. Be particular in confessing their sins, although it may stab your soul, and make you blush to name them. Yet do not cloke them. Like *Moses*, *Daniel*, *Jeremiah*, *Nehemiah*, *Paul*, and other holy ones, confess them again and again. While you are confessing and mourning over them, keep casting your soul and their sins on the atonement; recognize the more than infinite willingness of the world's Redeemer to save them; and plead with heaven to save them. Don't plead to make God willing to save them, for he is already infinitely willing; but plead because it is your duty, plead because God does and always will answer the pleadings of bold holy faith. Never mind spending your time in studying the philosophy of the thing—it is so. The Book of God and every page of church history says—it is so. The success which has always attended such closet prayers sets it beyond all doubt. As you are pleading, imitate *Moses*. When God was about to cut off guilty Israel, he pleaded his promise, his oath, his stretched-out arm; he pleaded again and again; even after God said "Let me alone," he pleaded in faith. Go thou and do likewise. Plead the power of God; plead the

love of God; plead the mercy of God; plead the "yea" and "amen" promises of God. Plead the life of Jesus. Plead his death, resurrection, ascension, and prevailing intercession. Span your strong-nerved arms of faith around sinners, and bind them to the blood-stained tree. Plead heaven with its everlasting glory; hell with its darkness, fire, and adamant chains. Plead the shortness of time; plead the length of endless *eternity*. Enter deeply and fully into their awful state. I do not want you to be a mere happy, joyful Christian; but one who drinks with Christ the bitter cup. But mind and do all in faith, with a single eye to the glory of God; and, if you plead in this way for hours, you will soon learn the grand secret of shaking any town, and sending a wave of living water over the land. Christ says, "He that believeth, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters: believe, then, and flood your district, no matter what stands in the way. If, while you are pleading, you only believe, something great will be effected. Oh! for a few Moseses, Jeremiahs, or Pauls, to stand in the gap!

My brother, play the man—*do something*. Do it—do it—do it; but do it at once.

Yours, as ever,

A LOVER OF SOULS.

P.S.—If you attend to this holy closet-work, you will get anointed with fresh oil for the pulpit; and then you will bring down God's blessing every time you preach. I admit I have set you some rough work, which flesh and blood will get you to shun, if possible, but *stand to it*. Endure the cross, despise the shame; and then, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, instead of being cut asunder and getting a portion with the hypocrites, as you most surely will if found to be an hireling, you shall appear also with the children whom He hath given you, and receive a crown in which you shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.—Dan. xii. 8.

SUPPLEMENT.

Should any one think I speak too strongly, let him read the following from the Rev. Wm. Burns, of the Free Church of Scotland, a man who has been extraordinarily useful in the conversion of sinners:— I am sure you must see, if the Bible is true, multitudes there are on the highway to hell. Many are fighting for wealth as if they had an eternal lease of life. Many are as proud as if they were not heirs of wrath. Multitudes flock to Satan's encampment on the race-course, and are there

murdered for eternity. Multitudes press into theatres, where devils cry louder than men. Again! Again! Multitudes crowd into the tippling houses, which are the devil's shambles—the open mouths of hell! Young men and women, think of it! Tippling-house-keepers, think of it, and give back your license, or, if you still are resolved to retail for the devil, oh! write, for the sake of miserable souls, above your doors, 'a short road to the pit.' Look at your evening streets! How many sally forth to glut their eyes with sin! How many stagger along to the pit! How many wait and walk about to see if the devil will buy their souls for a lewd companion! Ah, Satan is quick to strike so good a bargain! He buys souls cheap in the Newcastle market; and never more than on the Sabbath, when multitudes flee out of town by land and water, as if the plague were in it, and travel with TENFOLD railway speed to hell. Alas! sinners seem now to ride post to perdition, as if they were afraid of being too late to get in. It seems as if there would be a stir in hell to find room for the shoals that are rushing down to it. 'Sinners! is this state of things to continue? It cannot continue. Mercy or judgment must end it. The town is ripe for Christ's ATONING blood, or for God's devouring wrath. Sinners! you must repent and be saved, or go on and be damned. There is no middle ground to stand upon. The blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Ghost are the only refuge! To these turn, while God waiteth and putteth a drag to the wheels of vengeance.'"

Christian Miscellany.

THE DEVIL'S FOUR SERVANTS.

 HE devil has a great many servants, and they are all busy, active ones. They ride in the railway trains, they sail in the steam-boats, they swarm along the highways of the country and the thoroughfares of the cities; they do business in the busy marts, they enter houses and break open shops; they are everywhere and in all places. Some are so vile-looking that one instinctively turns from them in disgust; but some are so sociable, insinuating and plausible, that they almost deceive, at times, the very elect. Among this latter class are to be found the devil's four chief servants. Here are their names:

"THERE IS NO DANGER." That is one.

"ONLY THIS ONCE." That is another.

"EVERY BODY DOES SO." That is the third.

"BY-AND-BY." That is the fourth.

When tempted from the path of strict rectitude, and "There's no danger" urges you on, say, "Get thee behind me Satan." When tempted to give the Sunday up to pleasure, or to do a little labor in the workshop or in the counting-room, and "Only this once," or "Everybody does so," whispers at your elbow, do not listen for a moment to the dangerous counsel. If the holy spirit has fastened upon your conscience the solemn warnings of a faithful teacher or friend, and brought to mind a tender mother's prayers for your conversion, do not let "By-and-by" steal away your confidence, and, by persuading you to put away serious things, rob you of your life. All four are cheats and liars. They mean to deceive you and cheat your soul of heaven. "Behold!" says God, "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." He has no promise for "By-and-by."—*Christian at Work.*

WHY SINNERS ARE NOT ALARMED.

A MAN travelling on horseback on a dark evening entered a tavern, requesting entertainment.

"Which way did you come," said the landlord.

"I crossed the bridge from the west."

"That is impossible; for there is no bridge there. I'll take my lantern and show you." The planks on a covered bridge had been removed, while the timbers remained. The bridge was high above a deep and rapid stream. The man's horse had at first refused to go; but the spurs pushed him, and he went over. And now when the man saw that his horse had crossed on one of those timbers, he fainted and fell.

The reason you, O sinner, are not alarmed in regard to your soul is, because you do not see your danger. If you saw it, you would be moved.

THE GREAT CONCERN.

THE Bank of England, on a certain occasion, was thought to be in danger of bankruptcy. The directors were closeted in their rooms for a fortnight.

At length they saw that all was safe. One of them walked out, and met a friend.

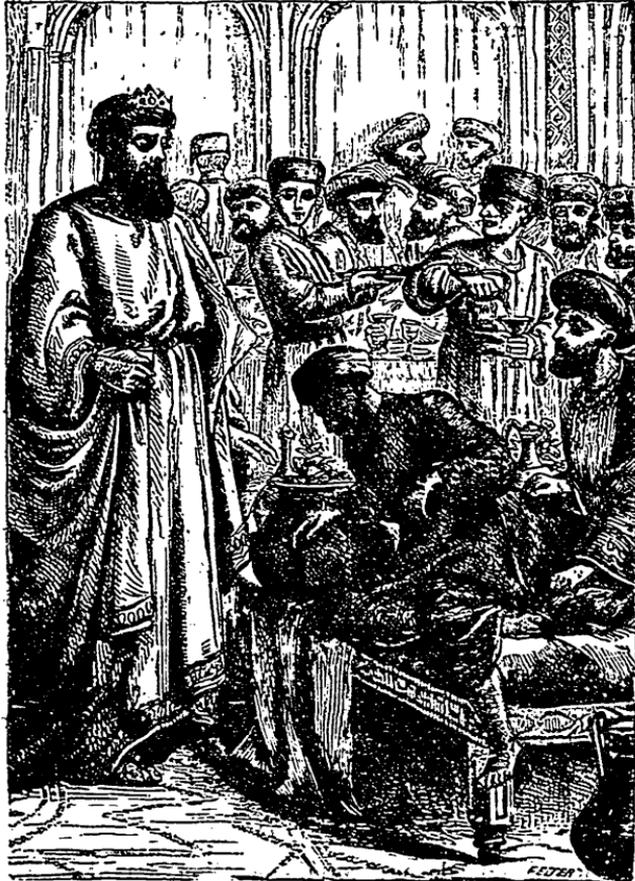
"How is it?" he said.

"It's safe."

"How is your family?" said his friend.

"My family? I did not know that I had one!"

Men can be thus excited upon the affairs of this life. Why should they not be upon the interests of an endless life?



WITHOUT THE WEDDING GARMENT.

Look at the gay throng at this marriage feast. Yet among all those guests there is only one whose dress is not in correspondence with the occasion. The lord of the feast had provided all that was necessary.

The beautiful marriage robe was ready for every invited guest. However many there might be "called," there were dresses for them all. But the poor foolish man is at the table, and has on no such wedding garment. Why? He can, you observe, make no good excuse, and therefore he makes none. He cannot say that none has been provided for him. As little can he urge that he has never been offered any. He is without the required dress because he chose to be so, and in thus choosing he has insulted his entertainer, and condemned himself. What does he deserve who will thus intrude into a King's house, and insult him to his face by refusing his gifts and disregarding his commands? It is not wonderful that he should be put out at any rate, and never allowed to taste of that splendid supper. How foolish! How sinful such conduct! Yes. But there are others far more foolish and far more sinful who expect to enter heaven, and remain there, having no dress but that of their own fancied goodness, and thinking that there is no need of that robe of righteousness which the Lord of glory died to secure, and lives to bestow. "IGNORANCE" knocked confidently at the gate of Heaven after having been long persuaded that he was a true pilgrim, but he got no admittance. He was taken thence to the place of the lost, and the "great dreamer" had to say that from that case he learned "that there was a way to hell even from the very gate of Heaven."

A WORD ABOUT TACT.

TACT is an indefinable attribute, a something that cannot be imparted, yet how quickly it is missed, and how much to be pitied are the unfortunates who possess it not. There are scores of these same unfortunates in the world; kind-hearted, good-tempered, excellent people they are too, yet they are always giving pain to others, or making enemies for themselves, without an idea of their own share in the matter.

Nothing astonishes one of these tactless people more than the untoward results which follow their efforts to be agreeable, nothing is so difficult as to convince them of their mistakes. "What could have been the matter with Mr. Brown?" says one; he behaved so oddly, just as if he was offended at something."

"Why did you talk so pointedly of dishonest officials, when you knew his brother had been accused of embezzling that trust fund?" we ask in return. But the tactless one only says with a look of astonishment:

“Why, I’m sure I never thought of him, and anybody might have known I didn’t. Mr. Brown has too much sense to imagine such a thing.” But Mr. Brown *did* think that a reference was made to his brother, and nothing could convince him to the contrary.

So it is always—the wrong subject started, the wrong person addressed, and only want of tact to blame for it.

Yet is not Christian kindness and courtesy better even than tact, making it impossible for us to offend our neighbor if we love that neighbor as ourselves? Let us then cultivate the law of love.

THE Duchess of Gordon and a companion were visiting a cottage in Scotland, when a pedlar came in, threw down his pack, and asked for a drink of water. The woman of the house handed the water to him, and said, “Do you know anything of the water of life?” “By the grace of God I do.” He drank the water, and then said, “Let us pray.” And this was his prayer: “Oh, Lord, give us grace to feel our need of grace. Oh, Lord, give us grace to receive grace. Oh, Lord give us grace to ask for grace. Oh, Lord give us grace to use grace when grace is given.” He then took up his pack and went away, having preached a powerful sermon in a few words.

AMONG the multiplied arguments for the existence of God, the thoughtful observer must give to human life itself a prominent place. We do not mean human nature or existence, but the earthly course of that existence. Indisputably, the candid mind must find in it a distinct declaration of God as Christianity conceives and the Bible reveals Him. He who having become tolerably conversant with the progress of human life, in general and in particular, and who still persists in finding in it no evidence of the personal, perfect, good God, is left no alternative but that chance, the intricacy, the accuracy, the persistence and the sublimity of which constitute a miracle in itself demanding such a God.

Children's Treasury.

READING THE BIBLE.

 "H, mother!" said Willie, "I have read five chapters this morning." A look of pride flashed on his bright countenance as he closed his Bible, and uttering these words looked up in his mother's face. He felt he had done something great, and expected commendation; for the little boy loved praise, as many boys do. But his mother said nothing then, for she understood well his habit of reading; many days, I am sorry to say, passing without his reading a chapter; and then, when told of his past neglect, he would take a sudden start and run over four or five chapters, and feel that he had retrieved his past negligence. But from such reading little good came. It was too hasty and irregular to make a deep impression. This little incident led me to think of some hints about reading the Bible, which I here offer to my young readers:

1. Read the Bible regularly. A good man of old says, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." This is the true idea. The Bible is daily bread, to be taken regularly, that the soul may grow thereby.

2. Read the Bible attentively. The meaning of the Bible is in the Bible. Unless he that reads gets the meaning, it will not do him good. Hasty reading of a great many chapters at once is of no advantage. Read slowly, a little at a time, and think on what you read, and you will understand and remember it.

3. Read the Bible as God's book, not merely because father or mother wish you to read it, but for a better reason—because God speaks to you in the Bible. When I have seen a little girl run in, her eyes sparkling with joy, crying, "Oh, mother! here's a letter from father to me, for my name is on the outside," I always wish she might so look on the Bible, for it is a letter from our Father in heaven. So feel, and so read, and you will not grow weary of the good book.

These few hints are enough for once. Will not my little readers remember them and read every day, with great attention, the book of God? I love to see a child, as I do sometimes, take her little Bible every morning and sit down to read a chapter, without waiting for any one to tell her to do it. This is a better habit than Willie's, for he only read occasionally, and had need to be often reminded of the duty. Read often, and love to read, dear children, and you will not forget it.—*London Early Days.*



THE LESSON ABOUT THE BIRDS.

It was very interesting to us, last summer, to witness the scene depicted in the picture. A little sparrow fell out of its nest, a distance of nearly thirty feet, and yet it was not killed.

The kind-hearted wife of a gardener ran to take up the poor fledgling, and after warming it at the fire she put it into a cage outside the window, hoping that the old birds would come and feed their nestling. In this expectation she was not disappointed. The parent birds, evidently missing their little one, began a diligent search for it. Their chirpings of distress were soon heard by the poor bird, for in a few moments the parents flew to the cage, bringing it food. They continued this attention; and for days the children of the school took great delight in witnessing this feeding of the little bird, and we are glad to add that Miss Hills, the schoolmistress, wisely embraced the opportunity of giving the children some useful and interesting hints on the importance of kindness to God's dumb creatures.

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH.

WHEN Pompeii was destroyed, there were many buried in the ruins of it, who were afterwards found in different situations. There were some found in deep vaults, as if they had gone thither for security. There were some found who were in the streets, as if they had been attempting to make their escape. There were some found in lofty chambers. But where did they find the Roman sentinel? They found him at the gate, with his hand grasping his war weapon, where he had been placed by the captain; and there where the heavens threatened him, there where the earth shook beneath him, there where the lava stream rolled, he stood at his post, and there, after a thousand years had passed away, he was found. So let Christians learn to stand to their duty, willing to stand at the post on which their Captain has placed them, and they will find that grace will support and sustain them.

PRAYING AND WATCHING.

A LITTLE boy in one of the schools in Edinburgh, who attended a prayer-meeting, said to his teacher:

"Teacher, I wish my sister could be got to read the Bible; she never reads it."

"Why, Johnny, should your sister read the Bible?"

"Because, if she once read it, I am sure it would do her good, and she would be converted and saved."

"Do you think so, Johnny?"

"Yes, I do, sir; and I wish, the next time there is a prayer-meeting, you would ask the people to pray for my sister, that she may begin to read the Bible."

"Well, well; it shall be done, John."

So the teacher gave out that a little boy was anxious that prayer should be offered that his sister might read her Bible. John was observed to get up and go out. The teacher thought it very rude of the boy to disturb the people in a crowded room; and so the next day, when the lad came, he said:

"John, I thought it very rude of you to get up in the prayer-meeting and go out. You ought not to have done so."

"Oh, sir," said the boy, "I did not mean to be rude, but I thought I should like to go home and see my sister reading her Bible for the first time."

Thus we ought to watch with expectation for answers to our prayers. Do not say, "Lord, turn my darkness into light!" and then go out with your candle, as if you expected to find it dark,—*Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*

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