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THE OBJECT OF OUR SOCIETY.

BY THE REV. JOHN BURTON, OF BELLEVILLE.

• To buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest is the world's maxim of business. The mercantile spirit rules. The tendency to weigh all things by profit and loss is found among even intelligent people in the matter of the Bible Society's work, which is judged to be the supplying of cheap Bibles; so that when a Testament can be obtained for five cents, a Bible for fifteen, the climax is reached, the work done. Such judgments keep out of mind that the Gospel is not to be valued at a market price. "It is of more worth than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are *not to be compared* with her."

Recognising the truth that where the Word of God is not, no Gospel is; and, as the foundation of all church work must be the Bible, the Bible Society has set itself to work to supply that word—to spread that Book.

This is its *one work*, which, with single eye, it keeps in view; cheapening the copies thereof is only one of the means it uses to accomplish that end; nor need we press, at this stage of its work, how thoroughly and successfully that means has been used and applied.

To missions such as those of the Jesuits, *e.g.* along the Mississippi or among the wild tribes of the St. Lawrence Indians, whose implicit faith in Rome and a reception of the baptismal rite were synonymous with conversion, the Bible would be of little consequence, but where faith in a personal Saviour, and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus are necessities, the Bible must precede, or at least accompany the missionary. Hence the Bible Society is the pioneer for all Protestant missions. The non-sectarian character of the

Society enables it in the work of translation and of distribution to excel all other agencies : for why ? It is a rare gift for individuals to rise above their sectionalism and walk unencumbered by their own party lines, and it is scarcely ever a church frees itself from ecclesiasticism :—

“The form of things deceives us, and we quarrel o'er our creeds,
While each true heart receives the one truth its spirit needs.”

Few, if any, translations from out of the original tongues in which the Bible was written, but bear the mark of that section of the Church, or of the school from whence that translation came. Even our own noble Saxon version is not altogether free from ecclesiastical bias. “Give us,” said Chunder Sen, a leader of Hindoo thought, on his departure from England, whither he had gone to see the practical side of Christianity, as already, in the Bible, he had seen its Book ; “give us in India the Bible, that Word of God, but, oh ! give it to us without your divisions ; interpret it not for us by your sectarianisms, but give it to us that we may read it for ourselves.” This our Society is endeavouring to do. Composed of earnest men, irrespective of creed, employing those whose only requisites are ability and Christian zeal ; it gives, as far as man can give, to the scattered tribes of earth a Bible in their own tongue, as non-sectarian as the Prophets who foretold, and the Apostles who declared a suffering Saviour, have left us within the pages of Revelation. We want for earth, not an Anglican, Genevan, Lutheran or Calvinistic Bible, but the Word as transmitted to us by Apostles and Prophets, wherein every poor wandering soul may for himself recognise the voice—“This is the way, walk ye therein.”

Nor can the general reader enter into the extreme difficulty of translation. No light labour is it “to teach a foreign tongue the music of one's own ;” nor is the task lighter to render without paraphrase, the shades of Bible thought in plain speech of another language, a difficulty more than doubled by the fact that, in many cases, the language has, in great measure to be created, alphabet and grammar formed—in short the language of many tribes has first to be learned, then re-made and taught back ere the Bible can be given. These simple facts, which could be amplified almost without end, give, or should give, the Society a claim upon the Christian public, than which no prior one can be urged. In a future paper some of these points may be presented at greater length, in the meantime let the reader remember that the supply of cheap Bibles is not the Ultima Thule of the Bible Society work.

AGENCY AND VISITATION.

Our readers will see, by the accounts given in this number of the last two Board meetings, the action that has been taken by the Directors in modifying the system of Agency, Visitation, &c. It is, of course, impossible for them to meet the views and to carry out the suggestions of all the zealous friends of the Society ; but it is confidently hoped that the arrangements for this year will not only prove economical, but will

give general satisfaction, and many friends have already expressed their very hearty approval of the plans adopted. From others have come congratulations to the Society on the appointment of the Rev. W. W. Ross, as Permanent Agent. He has been cordially greeted by the Board of Directors, as a fellow-labourer in this glorious work, and will, we doubt not, be as heartily welcomed by the officers and members of the Branches to be visited by him. The Revs. Messrs. Manly, Warden, Little, Lane, and Shortt will continue the warm friends and advocates of the Society; but they are in various ways prevented from undertaking the official visitation of Branches this year. With these exceptions, the Provisional or Local Agents who did the work last year will, with the help of two or three others again labour in the interests of the Society: each, of course, taking a much smaller field, and in most cases, a different one from that which he visited then. They will, we are sure, meet with the same uniform kindness which they received last year, and we trust also with even more hearty co-operation, the need of which may be seen in the extracts we give from this year's Report of our great Parent Society.

COLPORTAGE.

There can be no doubt that the back Townships have the first claim upon the time and attention of our Colporteurs, but it is a great mistake to think that the older and better settled parts of our country have no need of the labours of these faithful men. This might easily be inferred from the fact that in 1874, 52,643 copies of the Scriptures were circulated by colportage in Old England. It has been proved in our own field by late experience. Our oldest and much valued Colporteur Mr. Lowry has been working in and about the City of Toronto for some time, and has sold since the 1st of June 1049 copies. We give a few extracts from his reports which are most interesting.

“It has been one of the most interesting months that I have ever spent in the Master's work. My sales have exceeded any previous month, with the exception of one month in Bothwell some years ago during the oil excitement. * * I found five families without Bibles. * * I never was so much convinced of the importance of City colportage, as at present, for many will buy the Scriptures who would never think of going to the Depository for them. * * An old gentleman for whom I got one of the largest type Testaments printed by the Society, thanked God that he had at last got what he wanted, and at his request I prayed that, as he intended to commence and read it through, the Lord would give him grace to understand its precious contents. He said there was no Society in the world to compare with the Bible Society. * * * *

In a village near Toronto, “some of the people wondered what had become of me, as they had not seen me for many years. * * A most interesting case was a Romanist whose wife persuaded him several

years ago to buy a Testament from me. He told me he had the Testament yet, and conveyed me along the road when I was going to the Station in the evening.

“A woman could not see how the books were so cheap.”

Bible Society Recorder.

TORONTO, 15TH SEPTEMBER, 1875.

BOARD MEETINGS.—On Tuesday, August 10th, the Board of Directors met as usual at 7.30 P.M. The President occupied the chair, and the Rev. D. J. MacDennell led the opening devotional exercises.

The Rev. W. Reid, chairman of the Standing Committee on Agency and Colportage, submitted a report, the first clause of which read as follows :

“Your Committee beg to submit that they have carefully considered the Report of the Special Committee for the carrying out of which they were instructed to take immediate steps, and, in view of the third clause, would respectfully recommend that the Board of Directors appoint one Permanent Agent, and give them authority to employ in addition as many local agents as necessary to accomplish the work efficiently.”

The Report went on to state what steps the committee had taken, such as advertising, &c., and closed by submitting the names of four gentlemen whom they considered the best qualified among the applicants, to fill the office with efficiency.

Mr. Reid moved, seconded by Mr. MacDonald, that the Report be received and considered clause by clause. Carried.

It was then moved by the Rev. W. H. Poole, seconded by Dr. Geikie, that clause No. 1 be adopted. After considerable discussion, Mr. Poole's motion carried.

The Permanent Secretary then read the applications and testimonials of the gentlemen recommended by the Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by the Rev. A. Sutherland, “That the four names contained in the Report be nominated, and that the election be by ballot. Carried.

Messrs. Kennedy and Gillespie were requested to act as scrutineers, and the Directors then proceeded to ballot. After the ballot had been closed, the scrutineers reported that the Rev. W. W. Ross had received a majority of the votes cast ; he was therefore declared duly elected to the office of Permanent Agent.

It was moved by Mr. Morse, and seconded by the Rev. E. H. Dewart, “That the Permanent Agent's salary be fourteen hundred dollars per annum, and travelling expenses paid.” Carried.

The Rev. Mr. Reid then read a Report from the Agency and Colportage Committee, which had been submitted at the last meeting of the Board, but the consideration of which had been postponed. This Report reviewed at some length the state of the Branches, the system of visitation, and other points connected with the Agency and Co'portage of the Society; and closed by asking the Board to issue a circular to the officers of the Branches and to give them authority to employ, when required, two or three more Colporteurs. After some discussion the Report was adopted. A draft of the proposed circular, was submitted, amended and adopted.

After disposing of some less important matters, the meeting was closed with prayer, led by the Rev. W. Reid.

The Board met again on Tuesday, September 14th, at 7.30, the Hon. Wm. McMaster, Vice-President, in the chair. The meeting having been opened with prayer, led by the Rev. Mr. Potts. Dr. Hodgins read a report from the Agency Committee, showing whom they had employed as local agents, stating that they had laid out the field in thirty-five sections, along the different lines of Railway, and how they had divided the work among the Agents. Adopted.

The Rev. W. W. Ross, the newly appointed Permanent Agent, was then introduced to the Board by Dr. Hodgins, and kindly greeted in the name of the Board, by the Chairman. Mr. Ross thanked the Board for his appointment, and hoped to have a reasonable measure of success by the good hand of God upon him.

The Rev. S. Rose inquired as to the supply of Bibles in the Lunatic Asylum, and the Secretaries were instructed to confer with the proper authorities.

The Rev. J. M. Cameron stated that, at the Hospital, Bibles of a larger type were much needed. The Board ordered that as many as would be useful should be sent.

The Depository's cash account, and Colporteurs' reports, and other routine matters being disposed of, the meeting was closed with prayer, led by the Rev. Mr. Ross.

“ ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN THIS DAY WILL DO HIS DUTY.”

In this year's report of the Parent Society, we find the following passage which much concern us in Canada :—

“ While gratefully acknowledging the trust confided in them by their constituents, your Committee cannot but express the hope that the contributions from Auxillaries, which form the most regular and solid support, may shew a greater elasticity than has been the case. They stand nearly where they did some years ago, despite the increasing wealth of the country and the abundant information which is given of the Society's work. Appealing as it does to all parties, the Bible Society runs risk of being left by every man to his neighbour to support; what is needed is that some friends should in each district take up this cause as their own, throw into it all their energy, and

make those personal local appeals to which so ready a response is ordinarily made."

"There can be no greater error than to assume that elements so precarious as Donations and Legacies will remain constant, and that therefore any single exertion on the part of the Society's friends can be spared. It is true that the income of the past two years has exceeded the expenditure; but the *Financial Engagements* of the Society are large and commit it at the present time to an expenditure of £107,777 Os. 4d. Numerous contracts are being carried out by printers at home and abroad, the cost of which is included in the above sum. The editions now passing through the press are here summarized :

In France are being printed	8,000	copies
Holland	" "	38,000	"
Germany	" "	300,000	"
Switzerland	" "	3,000	"
Austria	" "	67,500	"
Spain	" "	35,500	"
Portugal	" "	13,000	"
Denmark	" "	19,000	"
Norway	" "	20,000	"
Sweden	" "	12,000	"
Russia and Finland	" "	102,000	"
Turkey	" "	12,000	"
Africa	" "	5,000	"
Ceylon	" "	4,000	"
Malaysia	" "	1,000	"
China	" "	30,000	"

"The intimate relation subsisting between your Society and those Foreign Missions which are the glory of the present day, has incidentally been touched upon again and again in this Report. It has been a pleasure to have the opportunity of testifying afresh to the sterling worth of men whose path of Christian service has at many points crossed or run parallel with that of your own agents. "We being many are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another;" for if the Missionary be indebted to the Bible Society for those supplies which are his munition of war, not less is the latter his debtor for exploring new countries, reducing strange languages to written forms, casting the Scriptures into the mould thus prepared, and then aiding in their diffusion. But your Committee cannot avoid perceiving that many Christian people regard missions as the sole instrument for bringing the Gospel to the heathen. Without wishing to subtract any part of the aid deservedly given to those noble institutions, it seems right to claim for your Society cordial recognition as toiling at their side in the same field, and therefore as possessing a title like theirs to public support. While as to the continent of Europe—too often forgotten in the consideration of the world's need—it is not too much to say that the British and Foreign Bible Society is the greatest Evangelical agency employed, and that its colporteurs, without passing the lines laid down for their guidance, convey an amount of New Testament teaching to the victims of dark superstitions that calls for hearty acknowledgement."

* * * * *

"And, lastly, is it blameworthy if your Committee look fondly upon the dimensions which the Society has attained! With the Psalmist they would cry, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory!" yet is the structure imposing and to be viewed with joy. But if tempted to apply to it the description of the seedling grown into an oak, they are reminded that this description belongs of far better right to the progress of the divine Word itself. Upon the human organization they would set no value

at all save as it ministers to the triumph and world-wide empire of the Gospel of the grace of God, whose beginnings were so small, whose onward march no obstacles have stayed, and whose future is so full of glorious promise. For even now

“The seed,
The little seed they laugh'd at in the dark,
Has risen and cleft the soil, and grown a bulk
Of spanless girth, that lays on every side
A thousand arms.”

UNVEILING OF THE STATUE OF REV. T. CHARLES, OF BALA.

The memory of the just is blessed, and in the year 1866, long after Mr. Charles had entered into rest, and much fruit had been gathered from the seed which he was instrumental in sowing, his fellow-countrymen determined to perpetuate the remembrance of his work by erecting a statue of him in the town of his adoption. This idea was realized on Thursday, the 17th day of June. The statue, which is of white marble, and represents Mr. Charles in his preaching gown, with a Bible in his out-stretched hand, as though offering it to those whom he is supposed to be addressing with much earnestness, was unveiled by Mrs. Edwards, the wife of Dr. Edwards, President of the Bala College, and grand-daughter of Mr. Charles, in the presence of a vast concourse of people.

The chair was occupied by J. Roberts, Esq., of Liverpool, and addresses were delivered by Dr. Edwards, Dr. Charles, the Rev. J. Colley, the Rev. T. Levi, the Rev. J. Peters, as well as by the Rev. Charles Jackson and the Rev. W. Dickens Lewis, as representatives of the Parent Society. The Earl of Shaftesbury having been unable to attend in consequence of the invitation to do so being delayed till within a short time of the day fixed for the ceremony, wrote the following letter, which was read to the meeting and received with much enthusiasm:—

“Dear sir,—Had early notice been given to me I should in all probability have been able to find a day for a journey into Wales, and a share in the ceremony to do honour to the memory of the Rev. Mr. Charles, of Bala. But the 17th of this month is an impossible day for me, and I can only express a deep regret that it is not in my power to be present at your gathering, and there say what I think, and feel, on the just and becoming tribute. My Welsh-speaking accomplishments were never great, though I studied the language a little. But I hope you will give my best and hearty love to the Sunday School children of the Principality, and say to them for me in their own tongue,

‘Y gwir yn erbin y byd.’
The Truth against the World.

Urge them to hold fast for ever to our Blessed Lord; and we shall have no fear.

“It is a noble sum for the children to have collected, and may God Almighty be ever with them.

“Your obedient servant,
“SHAFTESBURY.”

A deputation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, headed by its noble President, presented a copy of the Holy Scriptures in Arabic, to the Sultan of Zanzibar, during his late visit to London. In the course of the interview Lord Shaftesbury said “I have only now to say to your Highness, as the Archbishop of Canterbury says to the Queen at her coronation, when he puts the Bible into her hands, “Your Majesty, this is the best book in the whole world.” The Seyyid responded, “We have no doubt as to the Bible and New Testament.” “In that case,” rejoined his Lordship, “we humbly pray

your Highness to do all in your power to circulate these books among your people." To which the Sultan replied, "Should it please God."

The New Testament in Arabic was also presented to each member of the Sultan's suite, and, after an exchange of courtesies, the deputation withdrew.

An illustration of the fidelity and devotion of the Earl of Shaftesbury to the benevolent works in which he is engaged was given during the recent anniversaries in London. On taking the chair at the meeting for the "Society, for improving the condition of the working-classes," he said, "It is 31 years since the meeting was held to found this institution, and now after the lapse of 31 years I am able to say that I have taken the chair at every anniversary."
—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

THE MASTER'S COMMAND.

The following communication has recently been received from the Secretary of the Southampton Auxiliary:—"I have the pleasure to inform you that I am this day transmitting to your Society's credit, in account with Messrs. Williams, Deacon, & Co., the sum of six hundred pounds, being a donation to the Society's General Fund by Captain John Rowlands, of Bassett, Southampton; he gives it 'In obedience to the Master's Command.'"

Copies of Bibles suitably bound were presented by the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society to Messrs. Moody and Sankey before their departure from London.

Several thousand copies of the New Testament and of the Gospel according to St. John have been granted to the Superintendent of the house-to-house visitation which has been carried on through London in connection with Messrs. Moody and Sankey's evangelistic services.

MR. GEO. MÜLLER, OF BRISTOL, ON READING THE BIBLE.

From an interesting article in the *Christian*, on this well known man of faith, and his preaching in London, we take the following extracts:

"Mr. Müller's personal appearance is striking, being tall and commanding. He is in his seventieth year. He has a strong German accent, though he is easily understood by an English hearer.

"In his public ministry he is emphatically a teacher. It has been represented that he has undertaken this journey as an evangelist, but this we venture to think is a mistake. Judging from the last fortnight at Mildmay, the line of truth he dwelt upon was far more calculated to build up Christians than to bring in the unsaved. Yet he frequently brought in the way of salvation in a clear, sweet, persuasive, and striking manner. It has frequently been observed how well suited he is to follow the evangelistic efforts of our beloved brethren Moody and Sankey.

"One of the most striking things about Mr. Müller's preaching is the way in which he induces his hearers to reconsider what has been already said. He frequently says, 'Let us ask ourselves, Have I understood this? How does it apply to me? Is this my experience?' &c.

"He makes much of the *Word of God*. Take the following outline of his address to young converts at Mildmay, on Friday, the 20th ult.:"—

"Let me press upon you the deep importance of reading the Word with meditation and prayer (1 Peter ii. 2, 3)—'as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.' As neglected babes never become healthy men and women, so young converts who neglect God's appointed food, 'the Word,' never become bright Christians."

"I Read the word of God regularly through. Begin with Genesis in the morning, and Mathew in the evening, making a mark where you left off. When you have finished the Old and New Testaments, begin again. As an

earthly will is always read through with great care, so God's will ought to be read entirely through with reverence and godly fear. Consider the *advantages* of this plan—

(a.) We are kept from making a system of divinity of our own, and confining ourselves to a few favourite doctrines and truths. We also become lovers of the whole Word.

(b.) Variety is pleasing.

(c.) When we have finished reading it through, we shall be glad to begin it again. In forty-six years I have read my Bible through a hundred times ; yet it is always fresh and new when I begin it again.

“ 2. Read in a *prayerful spirit*.

“ 3. Read with *meditation*. Ponder over what you are reading.

“ 4. Read *with reference to your own heart*. So many preachers read for their hearers ; parents read for their children ; and school-teachers for their scholars. Ask yourselves—

How does this suit me ?

How does this warn me ?

How does this rebuke me ?

How does this comfort me ?

If you do this, God uses the word by you for others.

“ 5. Always seek to mix ‘ faith ’ with your reading.

“ 6. *Practice what you read*. We must carry out what God tells us. He expects us to be obedient children—‘ If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.’ Come in childlike simplicity to the Word of God. Give heed to it with all earnestness, and let it settle all questions. ’

“ In speaking on Phil. iv. 6, 7—‘ Be careful, for nothing, &c.,’—Mr. Muller insisted, with unusual emphasis, that the child of God ought not to have a single care about anything. Not even the poor woman who has a drunken husband ought to have a single anxiety about him. Everything should be taken to the Lord, *and left there*. If we begin to carry our burdens, the Lord will add to them. If we had a pound-weight of care, and carried it ourselves, the Lord would make it ten pounds, and go on increasing the weight till it crushed us, and, overwhelmed by our trouble, we should be obliged at last to cast it upon Him.

“ Surely if any man has a right to be burdened he has. The care of 2000 orphan children is in itself a marvellous thing ; but, in addition to these, he has responsibilities connected with 10,000 children in forty or fifty schools which he sustains. Then he circulates over three millions of tracts a year, besides a very large number of Bibles and Testaments. Nor does his care end with home missions, but there are numerous missionaries abroad who are partially or entirely maintained through his instrumentality. Yet, amid all this, he comes on the platform with a countenance full of peace and joy, and declares he is so happy in the Lord that he has been constrained to leave home in his old age, to declare this happiness to his ‘ beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, whenever the Lord shall open the way.’

“ Coupled with all this, there is deep humbleness of mind. In his public prayers he frequently asks the Lord to bless his word spoken by these sinful mortal lips ; and in his preaching he calls himself again and again ‘ a poor miserable sinner.’ This is a paradox, but one full of deep meaning to those of us who are younger in the Divine life. Whether it be right to use such a prayer or no, there rises to our lips spontaneously, after hearing such a man of God, ‘ Lord increase our faith.’ ”

SPAIN.

The entrance of God's Word has given light : and the following letter, lately received from Mr. L. B. Armstrong, shows that the struggle for liberty has not been in vain, and that if those who have obtained it will only stand fast in it, through the blessing of God they must prevail :—

"Your excellent, and, by us all, much respected agent is away on his travels; but before he left, he authorized my writing to you in case I should receive any fresh details about the little gathering at Yznatoraf, in the province of Jaen, referred to in his report, and it so happens that I can give you some additional and very interesting information about it, lately received.

"In consequence of the very decided stand which the Protestants of Yznatoraf have made, asking for a cemetery in which their dead may be decently buried, and declining to allow the new-born child of a member to be baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, there has been quite a stir in the village. Some of the members were summoned before the local authorities, and were asked, 'Who is your chief?' 'We have no chief but Jesus Christ,' was the simple reply. 'Who is the man who teaches amongst you? he must go up to Jaen, the capital, to the Governor. So the leader of the meetings went to Jaen on foot, a distance of some thirty miles. The Governor was very kind, and lamented that the villager should have left the faith of his forefathers; this gave the latter the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to the Governor, which he tells me he did. What an interesting scene; the simple man testifying before the Governor of Jesus Christ! 'Convince me that I am wrong,' he added, 'and I will make a public confession of my sin.' The Governor sent him with a card to a priest, who was to bring back the wandering sheep. But the Bible in the hands of the simple man was too much for the priest, who only brought forward man's word; our Protestant answered him with the Word of God: to the authority of the Church he opposed the authority of Christ. Still the discussion did good, and priest and Protestant parted good friends, as did also the Governor, who gave our friend money to aid him in his journey home, promising that the Protestants shall have their cemetery. The Bishop of Jaen, one of the most bigoted and violent in Spain, now comes on the scene. He summoned the parish priest of Yznatoraf to Jaen, and report says the interview was a stormy one. The blame of the existence of Protestants was laid at his door, and when the priest humbly ventured a word in his defence, the Bishop told him 'to hold his tongue, to return to his parish, and that he (the Bishop) would decide what to do with him.' Was this intended as a hint! In the first sermon preached after his return from Jaen, the priest said everything short of ordering the Roman Catholics to murder every Protestant.

"If we had numerous movements such as the above in the villages of Spain it would save the country.

"And all this blessing is owing, under God, to the conversion of one man through a Gospel bought from one of your colporteurs, and then through the circulation in the village of the periodical of the 'El Cristiano,' published by the Religious Tract Society: union work, owned and blessed of God, between the British and Foreign Bible Society and the Religious Tract Society.

"Matters are not in a very hopeful state at present in Spain; the drift is every day more and more towards Rome on the part of the Government; whilst on the part of the people, disgust at and hatred of the system, the acceptance of infidelity, the hardening of the conscience by an outward conformity to rites against which both heart and conscience protest, deepen daily. And what will the end be?

"We are drifting towards a national break-up.

"Meanwhile God is taking out His people. And you are allowed to have the grand privilege of being the instruments to a very great degree in this work. Never was there more urgent need for Bible Colportage. But the work is more difficult now than it was, for many reasons. The Government discourages it; the priests, with their regained power, persecute it; and the people, hardening under infidelity and priestcraft, regard it with ever-increasing indifference. Alas for Spain!

"It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, 'that I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh;' so Spain is included. Her day will come too.

I may not see it, nor you, but we are sowing the seed which will prepare the way for it.

"As to *Bible Women*. I am daily more convinced of the power that these exercise; *they* enter where a *man* cannot, and meet the priest on his own ground—the *family*."—*B. & F. Bible Society Reporter*.

A Bible distributor in Spain has disposed of nearly a hundred Spanish Bibles in Minas, an important town in the interior, which has been repeatedly visited. The fact that the demand for the Word of God is kept up is encouraging. —*Ill. Christian Weekly*.

PORTUGAL.

In a letter recently received by the American Tract Society from an English minister in Oporto, we find the following :

"Bibles and other books may be sold, but no voice may be raised in a public place in behalf of the gospel, and we have to be careful where or how we open a new preaching station. But even this is gradually wearing away. We find that patient and believing labour and perseverance in well-doing are the best means of breaking down the barriers of prejudice, and the public mind from the various indications that present themselves, is coming round to a most favourable attitude in reference to the gospel.

"There is but a small opening, as you know already, for book colportage. Religious publications other than the Bible are regarded with suspicion, and even the Bible, and that the translation from the Vulgate, is often hard to dispose of. It is encouraging, however, to learn from the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society at Lisbon, that the sales this year are considerably in advance of those last year. And besides this, there are often pleasing proofs that the plain Word of God touches the hearts of the people. A colporteur was relating a few days since how he was offered a seat in a cottage belonging to some simple villagers and requested to read. They were much interested, and at the end an old woman slipped a copper (about one cent) into his hand, in token of her appreciation, and another quietly drew a corn-cake from under her cloak, suggesting that he might want it on the way. To avoid offence he accepted these simple tokens of gratitude.

"The Word is gradually producing its effect." &c.

THE TYROL.

ANOTHER ADDED TO THE GLORIOUS ARMY OF MARTYRS, AND MORE VOLUNTEERS READY.

It is sad to think that there are still some parts of the continent of Europe where enmity to God's Word is so virulent that the mere attempt to sell it to those who are willing to purchase exposes the colporteur to the bitterest persecution, and that death itself is not considered too heavy a penalty to expiate the offence.

One faithful labourer in this portion of the Lord's vineyard, of the name of Rauch, has, within a few months, been found dead under circumstances which leave but little doubt that he has been the victim of Romish fanaticism, and that his life has been taken away as the most effectual means of putting an end to his work. The priests had for some time been preaching and writing against him in the public papers with great vehemence, one of the paragraphs being couched in the following language: "The notorious Bible apostle and poisonous tract distributor (the single Gospels are called tracts), whom we have already repeatedly described in this paper, is again busy distributing his filthy articles in Unterjusterthal, with a zeal, energy, and perseverance worthy of a better cause." Such words, addressed to the ignorant and superstitious, produced their desired effect, and the fatal blow was struck.

His pocket-book and stick were found in a lonely spot, within a short dis-

tance of which he was easily traced, his books were in all probability burnt, and his body was found in a neighbouring river some weeks later, stripped of all clothes and bearing evident marks of the foul treatment it had received. Mr. Millard thus refers to the severe loss which he has experienced :

"The name of Colporteur Rauch reminds us of one of the most painful episodes of the year. Agreeably to instructions given him, and following the inclinations of his own warm heart, he went to the Tyrol in the spring for the fourth time, and there laboured with great energy, and abundant success for the dissemination of that Word of Truth which had for so many years been so precious to his own soul.

"The reports which the colporteurs have to send every week came regularly from him until the middle of October. About that time also his wife heard from him, and his children received letters full of kindness and wise Christian counsel.

"Then all at once all intelligence ceased. After a time we heard that his note-book and stick had been found by the roadside, but no trace of his person appeared. We advertised ; we offered a premium if the body were produced ; we did our utmost to stir up the local authorities, who certainly have not on this occasion displayed much energy ; we gave the alarm at the police office at Vienna, and at the usual place of residence of our missing colporteur : we appealed for aid to the Minister of Justice ; all was in vain ; until, about the middle of February, we received from private quarters intelligence that a body, which was supposed to be Carl Rauch's had been found in the river Eisach, near Bozen, on the 13th January, in a state of fearful mutilation and entire nudity. A post-mortem examination had taken place, but not the slightest notice was given to the relatives. Indeed, it was only three weeks after the body was buried that we heard of all this. The widow, for her own satisfaction and for the sake of a small life insurance, being desirous to ascertain whether this was really the body of her late husband, we were compelled to have the grave opened, and the body exhumed. The fact has now been verified, in the presence of several witnesses, that these were the mortal remains of our much-lamented colporteur. How he came by his death is still a mystery, but there are circumstances that compel us to believe that he was murdered and thrown into the river. We had traced his steps up to within a mile from the place where his note-book and stick were found, and only a quarter of an hour before he could have reached that spot he had sold a New Testament. He died in harness. I have known the man for twenty-three years, and cannot but think of him with the highest esteem and affection.

"Once a bigoted Roman Catholic, he had, at Chur in Switzerland, many, many years ago, got a New Testament from a pastor there, Mr. Kind. In 1847 his eyes were opened at Hamburg to see the full Truth as it is in Jesus. In 1848 he returned to Austria, his native country, and for many years at Vienna he was a solitary but faithful witness to Gospel Truth. In the factory in which he was engaged he, the only one among many hundreds, made a bold stand for the sanctity of the Sabbath day. Although he was altogether dependent on his manual labour for his support and that of his large family, he resolutely refused to work on Sundays, and being a Christian, not merely in his words but likewise in his works, he carried his point without losing his employment. For the last seven or eight years he was in the Society's service as a Bible colporteur, and a more faithful and devoted servant the Society has not had. Thousands have not only received the Book out of his hands, but have also heard the Gospel from his lips. Of late years he was repeatedly sent to the Tyrol, and so much was his heart engaged in the work there, that it was the constant theme of his discourse, and the unceasing burden of his prayers. Certainly, I do not mean to say that he was without his failings ; were it so he would clearly not have been like the prophets of old, nor like the children of God of a later date, who all were 'subject to like passions as we are,' but he was unto me a dear brother and a welcome fellow-yokeman. He is gone, but his memory remains well fraught with the fragrance of the Holy Spirit.

“The following extracts from his journal will, under the circumstances, be read with double interest :—

“It was only after a most fatiguing march that I could sell the number mentioned in my report. I did indeed meet with a few individuals with whom I could converse of the dying love of the Friend of sinners, but it is with deep regret that I can think of some villages where, in a hundred houses, and more, I could sell only three copies, and that with the greatest trouble imaginable. The wretched Romish prayer-books and legends have almost entirely crushed out the blessed Gospel, and the poisonous doctrine of Rome brings perdition to thousands.

“At M. I saw friend K. and his family again (this was a house where he had repeatedly been on former occasions, and where the Book seems not to have been read in vain). He at once bought some more Bibles, and said he had frequent demands from people in the neighbourhood. I reproached him, in a friendly way, for not having applied at the head source at once. He took it very well, and I hope we shall soon see this friend coming out more boldly, and making a stand for his Saviour.

“At L., the day after my arrival, I sold ten Bibles and four Testaments. Thus God is opening up the hearts to me in this land, praise be to His name. I was again permitted to find a suitable inn, where the landlord himself took much pleasure in buying a Bible.”

“From this landlord and others, and from several private and public parties, we have since, on our enquiry, received most satisfactory testimonials, concerning Rauch's character and habits. He has not only left a large number of Scriptures in the Tyrol, but he has also left a good reputation, and although dead he speaketh still. In concluding my remarks on the life and death of this valued labourer, it gives me pleasure to be able to state that two of our colporteurs, men of tried faithfulness and sober judgment, and fathers of families, have volunteered to go and fill up the gap occasioned by Rauch's death. If they love their Master well enough to go at the risk of their lives, it is not for me to keep them back. May the Lord's presence go with them, and may their labours be even more abundantly blessed than those of their predecessors.”—*B. & F. Bible Society Reporter.*

ITALY.

GLEANINGS FROM THE REPORT OF MR. BRUCE.—Referring to the events that have occurred at Rome during the past year, Mr. Bruce mentions having met an old soldier who had been brought to a knowledge of the Truth through reading a New Testament presented to him in the Crimea. He says :—

“The generation familiar as contemporaries with the events of the Crimean war is fast passing away; but from time to time we hear of a fact which illustrates the truth of the oft-quoted promise, ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters and thou shalt find it after many days.’ An old soldier, when speaking of his past experience at a meeting of Christian brethren, said that he first got a New Testament in the Crimea. Although some of the officers and others ridiculed him for reading it, he determined he would not give it up. At last he resolved to send it to his father, thinking the book would interest him. The father was much pleased with it, and wrote to his son to that effect. In fact he said so much about it that the son became alarmed, and cautioned his father against allowing his head to be turned by religion. On the son's return home, however, he too began to read the little volume, and, by the blessing of God, to his soul's profit.”

Colporteur Nardini, who resides at Padua, and has during the last summer visited the different towns and villages of the province, including Venice, spent some time among the military encamped in Venetia, and gives the following account of the favourable reception which he met with :—

"In Praglia and the neighbourhood are encamped two regiments of the line, the lancers of Aosta, and some companies of riflemen. You will see from my journal that I have been able to dispose of a considerable number of the Scriptures, and especially of the Gospels, and I can assure you that it gave me great pleasure to see the men, as I often did, reading the little volumes under the shade of some tree during their hours of rest. It would be impossible to describe the various questions that arose in connection with these readings, but I trust that a good work has been begun in the hearts of some of these men."

Colporteur Gerelli wrote during the winter to the following effect:—

"Although this month the priests have done their best to hinder the work, in the end it is the Truth that overcomes. At about 25 kilos from Treviso, on the Piave, is Bosco Mantello, surrounded by various villages, the inhabitants of which (notwithstanding the light of the Gospel) allow themselves to be fatally influenced by the priests, who domineer over them and who are fearful lest they should be aroused to think for themselves. Lately, I happened to be at one of those villages called Nervesa, and in the public square I displayed my books. The priest did not fail to warn the people against me, and with such success that no adult came near me. The children, however, had received no such order, and they were my only visitors. Anxious to do something, I gave to each a small Gospel, with which they went away delighted, but I almost regretted what I had done, because for the rest of the day I was deprived of even their company. Next morning I determined to make another trial, and displayed the obnoxious volumes in the piazza. Presently I saw some men coming towards me, and feared that they came with no good intentions, but was agreeably disappointed. First one and then another drew from his pocket one of the little books which I had given to the children yesterday, and asked if all my books were like those, and if they were the prohibited volumes which must not be read. I replied that it was even so. After some conversation with them they said that now they were convinced of the wickedness of their priests, and purchased from me four Bibles, three New Testaments, and several portions. On leaving they shook hands with me heartily. In a fact like this I recognize the grace and power of my God and Saviour."

At a subsequent period he thus records his experience:—

"Since I came to reside in Udine, I have from time to time paid a visit to Venzone, a place with about 3000 inhabitants. When at the inn for the first time, I offered to the host my precious merchandise, which he contemptuously refused; and I afterwards learnt that he was a member of the brotherhood connected with the parish church.

"I soon found that his conduct was very faulty, especially towards his wife and children; and the former often complained to me of his treatment. One day there arrived a friend of his who had with him a Bible that he had bought in Germany. Knowing the landlord's character, he urged him to read it; and at last persuaded him to do so. He read the book, and was so pleased with it that, on my arrival at his house a few days ago, he cordially welcomed me. I thankfully noticed a marked change in his conduct, and he told me that henceforth it was his wish to live as a true Christian. His wife I found rejoicing at the change in her husband and very thankful for it."—*B. & F. Bible Society Reporter.*

TURKEY.

Recent advices received by the American Bible Society from Dr. Bliss report that as late as the 25th of June, the long promised permission from the Turkish government to print the Bible was still withheld; and the intimation had been thrown out by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, that the permission,

when granted, would be subject to the conditions imposed on all publications by the new press law, which was promulgated on the 23rd of June. This law requires that the manuscripts of all works intended to be published at Constantinople shall be submitted, for approval, to the Ministry of Public Instruction, without whose consent they cannot be printed. When printed, two copies of the work must be submitted to the same Ministry for examination, and if they are found to be exact reproductions of the original manuscript, permission to publish will be given. Publications coming from abroad or from the provinces will be detained at the custom-house for a similar examination, and all works judged to be of an improper tendency will be confiscated. These regulations, on the face of them, seem to be contrived expressly to obstruct the printing and publication of religious works by means of interminable delays, and by such a subdivision of responsibility as will lead to the practical suppression of whatever is antagonistic to the Mohammedan faith. Dr. Bliss illustrates the sensitiveness of the Turks by the following incident :

Some three weeks since, a colporteur selling mission books and Bibles had in his bag a placard, printed eight years ago by the Mission, containing in Turkish a few quotations from the Gospel and Epistle of John ; such as " God so loved the world," etc. A Turk saw the paper and bought it. It was reported to Sir H. Elliot, that the colporteur forced the placard into a Turk's pocket ; and, furthermore, it was an attack on Mohammedanism that could not be tolerated. Our printer was called and threatened for printing the placard without permission. He told them, first, that it was printed eight years ago : was a portion of the New Testament, which was then authorized ; and besides, the man who printed it was dead ; and that he was not responsible for the work of a dead man. This only shows how the truth has taken hold—how Bible truth is cutting to the quick.

By later letters from Dr. Bliss, we learn that the long-promised permission is at last given to print both the Old and New the Testaments in Turkish, in the Osmanlee character as well as in the Armenian character. The authorities were disposed to demand that the cover of every volume should be stamped as a " Protestant book," that Mohammedans might be deterred from purchasing or even handling a copy. This very objectionable demand was, however, waived, and the rules require, instead, that the title-page shall show by whom each book is printed and at whose expense. Every volume will also require some official stamp to indicate that its publication has been approved by the government officials. This concession, readily yielded, shows how unreasonable has been the obstruction of our work for eighteen months past, and how easy it is for men who are opposed to the truth to throw obstacles in the way of its promulgation.—*Am. Bible Society Record.*

OUR BLIND COLPORTEUR IN SYRIA.

REPORT OF THE BLIND BIBLE-READER AT BEYROUT.

For two years past an importance has been felt to be attached to the Scriptures in this land such as was not known before ; this has been seen in the fact that the Greek Church schools have adopted the Bible in their teaching.

I have lately made an effort to get an entrance to the arrack-shops kept by Greeks ; the people got angry, telling me to be content to sell the *Arabic* Gospel, not to teach also in Greek ; but some took my part, and in the uproar I found opportunity to sell ten books in Greek. Some of those were bought by some people from Cyprus, who wished to circulate these books in their island, asking me if I should be able to send them a number more copies. Some others

whose children were learning at school to read Greek, afterwards bought some Testaments.

I was one day in the bazaar, when some people came and reproached me with having left their Church; some young men, however, answered them quickly, that every man must accept that religion which his conscience commends after study of the Bible, and they called upon the people to search the Scriptures for themselves. I was surprised, but on inquiry I found that these men belonged to the Young Men's Society here.

When I found that there was much fever in Beyrout, and my son was ill during the hot weather, I took the doctor's advice, and went to a village a little way up the mountain. When I reached this place I was visited by the Beg and by the Pasha's physician, and with them and many others—among whom were Maronite priests—we had several meetings for reading the Bible. The doctor took a Bible from me and wrote his name and the date in it. The Beg, a Moslem, spoke very warmly of the Protestants, especially of their freedom from the nonsense taught by the ignorant priests. He told me that if he ever became a Christian it should be according to the Protestant system; and he taunted the priests with their shame, that a blind man should come and read with his fingers, while they, the teachers of the people, could not answer his questions, and he said he could foresee that in ten years' time the superstition and power of the priests must fall when the children now in school shall have learned the truth.

When I left the village this Beg declared, before many officers and people, that if Mrs. Mott wished to take his house for any good work he was ready to give it. He is a very clever, sensible man, and he told me that he should like to have a library in his house for the people to read. He has placed a Bible in his office, on which he has written my name.

I went one day to a Maronite house, taking some books with me. There was a woman there, who showed me three charms which she wore—the garment of the Virgin, the heart of Jesus, and the bones of the saints. I showed her the dirt on these charms, and talked long to her about the folly of these things, and tried to show her the right way of salvation. She listened, and at last tore off the things, and wanted to throw them away, but the man of the shop said, "You have believed all these years, and now you want to cast off your religion after a few minutes' conversation, I will not have this in my house." So he turned us both out. The woman sought me out, and came to be taught more, but the priest soon interfered, yet secretly she found me, and listened earnestly. When I came away, she came to me and said, "I am an old woman, and must prepare for death. I have found the right way, which is to trust only in Christ; shall I not throw away all these foolish things?" After that I have seen her no more. The people of that village are very anxious for a school.

The day of our return to Beyrout—I and my children had all had the fever—I could not find an animal to ride back, so I was obliged, in spite of the fever, to spend all the day in walking back. I stopped at the khans by the way, and found many opportunities of speaking to the people, most of whom had never heard the truth, and all of whom listened and asked questions, so that I felt thankful that I had been forced to walk. A Mohammedan officer came and asked to look at the Testament, but some Romanists standing by said it was a Protestant book, and not good. He said, "I don't want to know that. Does it contain the words of Jesus Christ or not?" They said, "Yes." He answered, "If it has the words of Christ that is enough for me, and I respect it, for Christ was sent from God." So they were silenced.

Number of books sold this month:—8 Arabic Bibles, 15 Testaments, 22 Greek Testaments, 12 Arabic Psalms, 1 French Bible. Total, 58 copies.

—*Missiny Link Magazine.*

EGYPT.

Dr. Bliss narrates the following incident, as a specimen of experiences encountered in circulating the word of God :

In a town on the East of the Nile, the colporteur found the people little better than savages. In the house at which he spent the night a number of people gathered, who looked at his books, but bought none. After they left, he found several books were gone. A messenger was sent out to recover, if possible, the missing volumes, and soon returned with a New Testament ; the next morning a large Bible was recovered, but several smaller books could not be found. A few days ago, a blind man, a member of our church, was at a town about two hours from this. He found there a man reading a little book called the "Golden Treasury." On inquiry, the blind man learned from the stranger that a man visited his town, on the east side of the river, and offered books for sale, and that he and his companion had agreed to steal from him what they could. Among the books thus stolen was the little one held in his hand. "But," said the stranger, "on reading the book I found it a good one, and I have been sorry I took it, and if I only knew the man from whom I stole it I would pay him. One day while thinking about it, and supposing that the book might cost about the fourth of a dollar, I gave that amount to a poor man." This same stranger told the blind brother, that one day he was reading the little book in the hearing of an old man in his town, and the old man told him that the verses he was reading were all from the Holy Scriptures. On learning this fact, he went to Cairo and bought two Bibles, one for himself and one for his friend.—*Am. Bible Society Record.*

MADAGASCAR.

The steadiness with which the light of the Gospel was kept burning in this island during a season of most bitter and violent persecution, and the rapidity with which that light spread its cheering and sanctifying influence, notwithstanding every effort that was made to quench it in blood, must impart a peculiar interest to every item of intelligence from that quarter connected with the circulation of the Word of God. The following letter, received from the Rev. H. W. Grange, of Antananarivo, is gratifying in more respects than one :—

"I am happy to say that the second consignment of 5,000 Bibles, shipped in April last, was safely received about two months since. We have also had notice of a third shipment in August, which we are expecting to arrive very shortly.

"Your prompt and generous response to our application places us under very great obligation. We thank you most heartily for this, as well as for the kind consideration which has led you to suggest that the question of reprinting be at once seriously considered. Until the present time we were not in a position to form a judgment on this matter, for we could not but regard the sale of the first consignment of the new edition as altogether exceptional, arising largely from the glad surprise of the people at finding that the whole Bible had at length been brought within their reach, after a season of great scarcity and dearth. * * *

"I am sorry that, in consequence of the very heavy expenses connected with carriage up the country, we are not able at present to forward any money to the Bible Society. You may rest well assured that in this, as in all other matters, both the interests and the objects of the Society will be most conscientiously considered and practically carried out by my brethren here ; and I speak for them as well as for myself when I say that we constantly feel under the deepest obligation to your Committee for the manner in which we are supported by them in all our endeavours, not only to place

the Word of God within the reach, but fairly in the hands of the masses of our people. We rejoice together at the good work already accomplished by means of the Sacred Book. Mixing with the people, we are constantly meeting with cases which illustrate the manner in which God is pleased to work by means of the written Word, at times even by the merest fragment. My friend, the Rev. J. Sibree, told me only two days since that one of the natives at present assisting him in the revision of the Book of Genesis, attributes his conversion entirely to having accidentally met with a small scrap torn from a Malagasy Bible. It appears that until the later years of Queen Ranavalona I., while Christianity was still proscribed, he lived a careless heathen life. He had, indeed, heard of the new religion, but had taken no trouble to make himself acquainted with its truths. But one day, walking past the spot where the Memorial Church of Ambatankanga now stands, he saw on the ground a small scrap of printed paper. Taking it up he found it was a mere fragment of the Book of Psalms. He began to read, and was especially struck with one verse which speaks of the power and majesty of Jehovah as the true God. He could not get rid of the impression it made on his mind that the God revealed in the Bible was the true and living one. He accordingly sought out some of the Christians, and inquired of them about the faith they professed. The result was that he accepted Christ as his Saviour, joined himself to the persecuted company of believers, and endured with them privation and loss for Christ's sake. He has now been for some years a native pastor, and is a most zealous and godly man. He was chosen first as one of the two pastors of the little Christian congregation at Ambohimanga. Afterwards, when the idols were destroyed, he, with two or three of his friends, commenced a new church in a large village about two miles to the south, and there gathered a large congregation of about 800 people from the lowest class of the population. More recently he was led to think that God's providence called him more to the west, where Roman Catholic influence is very strong. There he has already erected a clay building as a church, and is gathering another congregation. This good man's name is Rainivelo. In 1869, he was commissioned by the Government to accompany the officers sent to burn Ramahavaly, one of the chief idols of Imerina. He did this with great delight, and had the satisfaction of chopping up the piece of wood, with its coverings of cloth and spangles, and committing it to the flames. The heathen people were confident that vengeance would not suffer him to live, and expected he would fall a victim to the anger of the indignant idol on the road home; but he survived, and, for several weeks following, went from village to village in the immediate neighbourhood, preaching to the people from the words 'Be not faithless but believing.' Humanly speaking, the good work accomplished by this devoted man is entirely owing to the influence of a mere fragment of God's Word, picked up by purest accident, but proved a seed of life sown in good soil. May the great Husbandman prepare the hearts of many here to receive the good seed in like manner, and generations to come will not only have cause to bless God for the Word, but for disposing his servants to unite together for the purpose of translating and scattering that Word broadcast through the world."—*B. & F. Bible Society Report*.

BRAZIL.

THE BIBLE BEARING FRUIT.

The Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, Secretary of Board of Missions of the Southern Presbyterian Church, has published an interesting and valuable report of a visit to Brazil during the last winter, in which he takes a very hopeful view of the prospect of carrying evangelical influences through that em-

pire. After speaking of the general disposition of the people to listen to the preaching of the gospel and to converse on religious subjects, he says :

“Another consideration akin to this, and quite as encouraging, is the fact that so many copies of the sacred Scriptures have been circulated in that country during the last twenty years, and every day new proof is coming to light, that those Scriptures are being carefully read and studied by multitudes in all portions of that land. Perhaps not less than fifty thousand copies of the sacred Scriptures have been circulated in that land in the space of twenty-five or thirty years. For a long time no visible fruits were seen, and it was thought by many that all this was labour lost. But the eye of Jehovah followed his own word in all its wanderings in that land, and scores of men and women, guided by the light of that word, have found their way to the foot of the cross. We might adduce innumerable illustrations in proof of this fact. Not many months since, a man rode on horseback from the extreme western borders of the province of Minas Geraes to Rio de Janeiro, a distance of eight hundred miles, to connect himself with a church there, that he heard was founded on Bible principles, having come to the conclusion from reading the Scriptures that the Roman Catholic Church, the only one about which he had any previous knowledge, had no such foundation. The same person has recently visited our missionary brethren in Sao Paulo, as we learn from a letter just received from that place. Whilst I was at Sao Paulo, a few months since, a messenger arrived there from a town in the remote province of Rio Grande de Sul, to ask for a Protestant missionary to go there and organize a body of forty or more persons into a church on Bible principles, they having come to the conclusion from reading the Scriptures that the church to which they belonged was not built on that foundation. The last Sabbath I spent in Pernambuco, I saw a gentleman there of the highest respectability and from appearance about fifty years of age, who informed the missionaries that he had procured a copy of the Scriptures about three months previously (it was the first he had ever handled); that he had never spent less than two hours any night since then in reading and meditating upon its contents; and that it was the most interesting and instructive book he had ever read. There is reason to believe that this gentleman and his family, consisting of his wife and adopted daughter, have all been brought to the knowledge of the Saviour from reading the Word of God. In short, there was scarcely a day during my sojourn in that country that there was not some fresh evidence that God was working mightily in the hearts of men there through the instrumentality of his revealed word.”—*Am. Bible Society Record.*

BIBLE DISTRIBUTION IN INDIANA.

A county agent writes to our District Superintendent concerning one result of a recent canvass in Kosciusko County :

“In July of 1872 I called at a log house in Jackson Township, owned by man about fifty years of age, a very marked character—the fiddler of the settlement, the leader in carousals, a hard drinker and a blasphemer. To my inquiry if he had a Bible or Testament in his family, he said ‘No?’ I said I had a hundred-weight of Bibles and Testaments in my buggy, and I should like to supply you with one.’ To his reply, ‘I have no money to buy Bibles,’ I answered, ‘I shall be glad to supply you with one without money.’ He replied, ‘I cannot read, and a Bible would do me no good.’ When I suggested ‘Perhaps your wife or one of your children can read it for you,’ he said ‘Yes, my wife and one of the children can read;’ and added, ‘Well, if you have a mind you can leave one for the old woman,’ meaning his wife. I left a Bible with him, and told his wife, whom I met at a neighbour’s, what I had done, and asked her to read it to her husband and children. This she

promised to do, expressing thanks for the gift, saying it was something they had never had in their house before since they were married, and now they had five children.

"During the second canvass of this county, on the 23rd of June last, I called at the same house, near evening, and asked for a night's lodging. The man eyed me closely, and said, 'I think I have seen you before.' To which I assented; when he added, 'You are the man that left the Bible, and there is no man to whom I would rather give a night's lodging than yourself.' He then described the change which had taken place in his feelings, saying, 'After you left that Bible, my wife began to read it to me and the children of an evening, for we had no other book or papers, and I soon began to feel that my life and that Bible did not agree; and I became so much alarmed about the way in which I had lived, that I used to leave my house and go to the barn, and lock the door, and go down on my knees, and pray the Lord to forgive my sins and help me to do better in the future. After thus praying one day, as I came out, Rev. Mr. Hatchin was passing. Now, if there was any man I hated and despised more than another it was a preacher and Bible agent. But much of this prejudice seemed to have passed away; for when Mr. Hatchin asked me to attend an outdoor meeting the next Sunday and bring my wife, I assented, thinking I should like to attend such a kind of meeting, which belonged to everybody, and where I might go unnoticed, for I had not been inside of a church for nine years.'

"Before going to the meeting he made up his mind to unite with the church, should there be an opportunity, which he did, with his wife. He became an exemplary and active Christian, and was the instrument of bringing fourteen others, sixteen in all, into the church—one of whom is studying for the ministry—and changing the character of the whole settlement. Whereas it had before been distinguished for dancing, drinking, and Sabbath-breaking, it became one of the most moral and orderly communities, so that there were but two persons in the whole settlement who were not professed followers of Christ.

"This great and blessed change was the result of the distribution of one copy of the Bible. For nine years previous to the leaving of the Bible with him by the Bible agent, which he unwillingly received, he had not entered a church, nor heard a sermon, nor received any moral training."—*Am. Bible Society Record.*

A BUNCH OF BIBLE KEYS.

BY LYMAN ABBOTT.

I. Always look to see who has uttered the passage which you are studying, and what is the consequent degree of its authority. Because the Bible is true, it does not follow that every utterance reported in it is true. The clergyman who preached a sermon against future punishment on the text, "Thou shalt not surely die," failed to observe that the devil was his authority. So that other clergyman, who preached against the doctrine of special Providence, on the text, "It was a chance that did it," would have seriously impaired the force of his text, if not of his sermon, if he had told his congregation that it embodied the philosophy of the Philistine priesthood, and was, by the actual event of history, proved false. Temperance orators are accustomed to quote "Touch not, taste not, handle not," in entire oblivion of the fact that Paul cites, in this much abused text, an heretical principle of asceticism for the purpose of condemning it. Their opponents might as well cite in reply, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

II. Always consider the character of the writer. The Bible is not a book; it is a library. It contains poetry, fiction, history, philosophy. It speaks

the truth to the eye in pictures, to the sentiments in poems, to the imagination in story, to the observation in history, to the reason in logic, and to the heart in impassioned feeling. All is true, but the truth of poetry and of feeling is different from the truth of history and of philosophy. No man would apply the same methods of interpretation to Milton as to Macaulay; nor ought the same principles to be applied to the interpretation of David's Psalms as to that of Paul's Epistles or Ezra's history.

It does not follow, because Christ begins his parable of Dives and Lazarus by saying "There was a certain rich man," that the story is of actual persons, and there is small warrant in this sentence for the monkish legend which identifies the houses of the two men. The book of Job may be history; it may be a poem; but that question is not settled by the opening sentence: "There was a man in the land of Uz." We wonder at the absurd literalism of Nicodemus, who questioned how a man could enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born; and at the folly of the Rabbies who insisted that David was the child of illicit love because he said, "In sin did my mother conceive me," and no less at the modern literalism which insists that the bread and wine of the Lord's supper are converted into the literal body and blood of Jesus. But the dogma that the Christian must be willing to be damned for the Glory of God, because Paul, in the fervour of his impassioned feeling, cried out, "I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren," is not one whit less literal, or less contrary to the spirit of the utterance. The letter killeth, the spirit maketh alive.

III. The connection, the times, the circumstances, and the object of the writer need to be studied. A famous German professor, so the story runs, on his death-bed, called his son to him, and said, "My son, I have tried to do too much. I have devoted my life to the study of the definite article. I should have confined myself to the dative case. This microscopic examination of words is called critical study, and it has its uses. But far more important is the study of the Word in its substance and its spirit. No one can rightly apprehend the meaning of a single verse in the fifth chapter of Matthew, who has not read the sermon of the Mount through, *as a sermon*, and, at least in part, understood what Christ is aiming at in the entire discourse. The parables in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew are not isolated stories; they are a series of connected illustrations of the nature of the kingdom of God; each grows naturally out of the preceding parable, and no one is prepared rightly to apprehend one who has not some conception of the significance of the series. Before beginning the study of single words or phrases, always ask yourself, Why was this discourse uttered? Why was it recorded? What spiritual lesson has it for me, for my class, for my congregation?"

I have been studying lately the 34th, 35th, and 36th verses of the eighth chapter of John. The commentaries gave me very little help. They treat it verse by verse, and word by word, but ignore the fact that there is any connection between the verses, that all are one utterance. So they wholly miss what seems to me to be the grand truths contained in them, viz., that this world is not sin's house for ever, that it is the eternal inheritance of the Son of God, who will make of it a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, so that he who trusts in the Son of God shall be really and for ever freed from the dominion of sin and Satan.

IV. One other principle is all I have room for, though I have not exhausted my theme, indeed, have scarcely opened it. In general Scripture is the best interpreter of Scripture, and a good reference Bible is an admirable commentary. It is, indeed, true that there are verbal variations in the sacred writers. Emblems are not always the same in their significance. Leaven is both a symbol of corruption and of grace; the lion stands in one writer for Jesus Christ and in another for Satan. But the essential teachings of Scripture are always the same. When, therefore, we find an interpretation of a doubtful or difficult passage which runs counter to the whole current teaching of Scripture, we may unhesitatingly reject it. When, for example, the Roman

Catholic interpreter asks us to believe that Peter and his successors, the popes, are the permanent vicars of Christ on earth, because Christ says, "On this rock I will build my church," and we find nothing, stable or rock-like in Peter's character, and no evidence that he ever appointed successors or was authorized so to do, and none that he ever exercised papal authority, and much evidence that he did not, and the whole course and current of Scripture teaching an emphatic reiteration of the declaration, "Ye are called unto liberty," it is much safer to say that we do not know what Christ's enigma about the rock means, than to accept from it a doctrine which overturns the rest of the Bible, and even impugns its authority.

The Old Testament is a key, too little used for the interpretation of the New. Though symbolical language does not always bear the same meaning, we are generally safe in interpreting the symbols of the New Testament by the interpretation of the Old. A text which has given the scholars much perplexity is Christ's declaration to his disciples in the prophetic discourse of Matthew, chap. 24, "Whosoever the carcass is there shall the eagles be gathered together." If the commentators had turned to the Old Testament they would have seen that the eagles are symbols of foreign armies, not necessarily Roman, summoned by God to punish Israel for its sins, and they would have read in this symbol the solemn declaration, borne out by the connection and confirmed by history. Wherever national corruption exists, in Jew or Gentile, there the avengers of sin, the executioners of Divine wrath, shall be summoned to destroy the nation that is corrupt.—*Illustrated Christian Weekly.*

THE BIBLE.

The Bible might have been uniform, perfect, without varieties of text or statement, without faults of grammar or diction, without difference of style or progress of doctrine. The Bible is nothing of the kind. It is full of the inequalities, varieties, pauses, silences, lights and shades which indicate the hand of God in creation and which indicate it no less in the multifarious diversity of His own express revelation. In this lies its inexhaustible strength, its boundless versatility, its unbroken hold on the hearts and consciences of men—the true signs of a book wherein resides the voice of Him whose voice is as the voice of many waters, the language in which we all of us hear, "every man"—as it were—"in the tongue wherein we are born, the wonderful works of God."—*The Christian Treasury.*

THE BIBLE WITH PINS IN IT.

It was an old Bible, a family Bible, a well-worn Bible—the Bible of an old lady, who had read it, and walked by it and fed on it, and prayed over it for a long life-time. As she grew older and older, her sight began to fail, and she found it hard to find her favourite verses. But she could not live without them; so what did she do? She stuck a pin in them one by one, and after her death they counted one hundred and sixty-eight. When people went to see her she would open her Bible, and, feeling over the page after her pin, would say, "Read there" or "read here;" and she knew pretty well what verse was stuck by that pin and what by this pin. She could say of her precious Bible, "I love Thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold. They are sweeter to me than honey and the honey-comb."—*The Christian Treasury.*

LOVING THE BIBLE

BY REV. FREDERICK G. CLARK, D.D.

Twenty-seven years ago, in the congregation of my first charge, was a lady whose love for the Bible was something remarkable. In the confidence of a pastoral visit, she told me of her joy in the divine Word, and also recited the incidents of her experience in this regard. She had formerly read her Bible as so many do, a chapter now and half a chapter then, with out much interest or profit. She was even then most interested in religious things. But her chief sources of spiritual strength were in such writings as those of Baxter, Payson, and Robert Phillip. It was her custom to read the Bible from duty, and then turn to these uninspired volumes for the kindling of a higher devotion. For a good while this satisfied her. But at length she came to feel grieved about it. She thought it a dishonour to God's Word that any book should be as interesting to her as the Bible. She tried to change this, but at first with little success. The Bible was still duty. Baxter was pleasure and spiritual elevation.

At length she could bear it no longer. So she took the case to God with strong crying. She told her Heavenly Father how grieved she was that any book should rival the Bible in her affections. She asked this one thing—and she renewed her prayer every day—that her first delight might be in reading the Word of God. I think it was some time before she felt that her request was granted. But at length the answer to her prayer was complete and marvellous. A strange light came over the sacred page. A fascination held her to the Bible. She discovered a depth, a meaning, a curiosity, a charm, which were all new and most wonderful. Sometimes, when she had finished reading her Bible for the night, and had closed the book and had moved towards her bed, she would go back again and enjoy the luxury of a few more verses. At the time of our interview she was thus delighted in the law of God.

The conversation made an indelible impression upon my mind. I remember it, after so long a time, with vivid interest. It might be expected that such a Bible lover would be foremost in every good word and work. She was an example in attendance upon the church services. Her mode of listening to a sermon was vastly encouraging to her pastor. Her sympathy with the entire work of the church was most marked and influential. She was active and earnest, without any extravagance or enthusiasm. The very memory of such a helper moves my heart with tender thankfulness. A pastor never outlives the influence of such a parishioner. This Berean type of piety in the pew is the strongest bulwark of the pulpit. It brings fidelity, sincerity, and whatever else belongs to a loyal church member.

I believe the experience of every pastor will justify the statement that by such things we live, and that we can always lean with confidence upon those who find God's precepts "sweeter than honey."—*New York Observer*.

A SCRIPTURE LESSON.

The late Mr. Nunn was talking, one day, to a little boy (grandson of the late Rev. Hugh Stowell), about a visit he expected to be allowed to pay to his grandmamma on the coming Christmas day. He had not been very well, and Mr. Nunn said to him :

"Perhaps you will not be well enough to go."

"Oh yes," replied the little fellow, "I shall be well."

"How do you know you will?" Mr. N. asked.

"Oh," he replied, "I feel so strong, I am *sure* I shall be well."

"You *cannot* be sure," Mr. Nunn replied.

He was silent for a few moments, then looking at me thoughtfully, as if convinced that Mr. Nunn was right, he said, "I have a verse : 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow.'" (Prov. xxvii. 1.)

RECEIPTS AT THE BIBLE SOCIETY HOUSE, TORONTO, FROM
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AUGUST, 1875.

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		U. C. B. S.	P. & F. B. S.	Sundry.
Merritton Branch.....	\$ cts. 10 00	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts.
Colborne do	12 35			
Brighton do		16 00		(1) 2 00
Parry Sound do		30 18		
Rosseau do		5 56		
AUGUST.				
Molesworth Branch.....	6 00			
Zion do		28 00		
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2. All Reports, Letters and other communications, from Branches, Agents, Colporteurs, and other parties, relating to the Bible Society work, and designed for the Board of Directors, or for the Secretaries, to be addressed to "The Secretaries of the Upper Canada Bible Society," Toronto.

3. All orders for Bibles and Testaments, and for *Recorders*, etc., and all remittances, to be sent (the latter in registered letters, or by other safe conveyance) to "Mr. JOHN YOUNG, Bible Society Depository, 102 Yonge Street, Toronto."

* Parties desirous of communicating with the Bible Society, Toronto, on any of the matters indicated above, will greatly oblige the Secretaries by adhering to the foregoing regulations. Communications relating to any of the three subjects named, may, however, when necessary, be enclosed in one envelope.

Special Notice to Treasurers of Branches.

As the Bible Society year closes on the 31st day of March, but it is important that Branches should remit their funds as soon as they become available, and thus enable the Society to make early remittances to England.

PRICE OF THE "RECORDER."

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