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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Indispensable Book

By ✓

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*"To the Bible men will return because they
cannot do without it."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.*



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To my Mother

FOREWORD

SOME of the matter here presented has been used in informal addresses to young men, and is now published at their request, together with considerable additions. Many striking tributes to the Bible, culled from writers of widely divergent views, have been woven into the various chapters, in the hope that they may be of interest and value more especially to younger readers, who may not have seen them all or who may not have felt the cumulative force of them when arranged as the author has attempted to arrange them here. These citations are so numerous and some of them so well worth referring to again and again that, notwithstanding the brevity of the booklet and the simplicity of its plan, it has been thought worth while to provide it with a full index.

What is said about the Bible in schools is tentative and will doubtless be wholly unsatisfactory to two quite antipodal parties, but it is given in the hope that it may help to impress upon our people the great importance and growing difficulty of this question and may do something towards calling forth a more illuminating discussion of it by some more competent writer.

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I

THE PALLADIUM

WE read in the mythology of the ancients that, after the building of Troy, the founder of the city prayed that the place might be taken under the special protection of the gods, and besought Jupiter to give him a sign that his request would be granted. In answer to this prayer, so the story runs, there fell from heaven that night a wooden image of Pallas, the goddess of wisdom and war. The people of Troy took this Palladium, as the figure was called, and placed it in their citadel, fully assured that if it remained there the town would be invincible, but if it were lost or stolen, some great disaster would befall them. And so it came to pass, when, during the Greek war against Troy, Diomedes and the crafty Ulysses stole the

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Palladium and carried it away, thus bringing about the downfall of the city.

All a superstitious fancy, you say, and so it was ; but in modern times and in our own land we have at least a partial parallel in historic fact. The foundations of this country were laid by our fathers in the fear of God. Many of them indeed came from their native lands to these shores solely for the purpose of securing liberty to worship God according to their own understanding of His requirements. As Green says in his "Short History of the English People," "They were driven forth from their fatherland, not by earthly want, or by the greed for gold, or by the lust of adventure, but by the fear of God and the zeal for a godly worship." In the very beginning of their work in the New World they prayed that the Almighty would have this country under his special care. Their Palladium was not a wooden image, but an inspired book, a precious gift of God which had indeed

come down from heaven through the men whom He had chosen to record His will ; and this book these early settlers and patriots had brought with them from beyond the seas. They were convinced that so long as this Palladium was preserved, so long as this book was honoured, so long as its instructions were obeyed, their work as nation-builders would endure ; but if this word of God were ignored or neglected, the commonwealth would perish. The fathers of the republic were right. The only guarantee of our civilization and character and culture, our freedom and prosperity and power, is the word of God. This fact has been clearly recognized and strongly stated by many of the ablest of their successors. Thus, for instance, Daniel Webster said : “ If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible our country will go on to prosper ; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a cat-

astrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity." Now, however, there are not a few ominous indications that great numbers of our people fail to recognize the knowledge of God's word and obedience to its precepts as indispensable conditions of the permanence and prosperity of our nation. It is therefore more than ever important to remind ourselves afresh of the indispensableness of the Bible to everything that constitutes our true prosperity and success—its indispensableness to our intellectual culture, to the conservation of our national ideals, to the promotion of sound morality and true benevolence, and to the development of our spiritual life.

II

THE BIBLE AND LITERARY CULTURE

THE Bible is a literary necessity. It is indispensable to our best intellectual culture. De Quincey has drawn a suggestive distinction between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. He says the function of the first is to *teach*, the function of the second is to *move*. The first is a rudder, the second is an oar or a sail. A cook-book in so far as it is literature at all belongs to the literature of knowledge. Milton's "Paradise Lost" belongs to the literature of power. What do you learn from "Paradise Lost"? Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cook-book? Something new, something you did not know before in every paragraph. But you would not for that reason put the

cook-book on a higher level of estimation than the great epic. What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge. What you owe is *power*, that is exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite.

By the literature of knowledge, then, De Quincey means that class of writings whose sole aim is to convey information, and by the literature of power he means that class of writings the object of which is not mainly to instruct but to move the feelings and to give pleasure, such as fiction and poetry. But the distinction, while suggestive, is not absolutely correct; for, as De Quincey himself says in a note, a great proportion of books—history, biography, travels, miscellaneous essays, etc.,—do not belong strictly to either of these two classes. Macaulay's "History of England," for instance, contains a vast amount of information, but it is not its stores of information only which have

attracted to it millions of readers ; it is its fascinating style, its power of exciting the emotions, and its appeal to the moral nature.¹ The Bible also belongs to both categories in a still higher sense. It belongs unquestionably to the literature of knowledge, for it is our only adequate source of information concerning the most momentous interests of mankind. It answers with infallible certainty all the great questions which have for ages agitated the minds of men: What is God? What is man? What are the conditions of deliverance from sin and acceptance with God? What lies beyond the grave? That the book which answers these transcendent questions belongs to the literature of knowledge is too obvious for discussion. It is no less clear that the Scriptures belong to the literature of power, and that here too they occupy the highest place. Not only for variety,

¹ H. J. Nicoll, "Landmarks of English Literature," p. 10.

interest and importance of matter, but also for simplicity, dignity and power of style, for perfection of ethical ideals, and for efficacy of impulse to righteousness, these sixty-six heaven-born books never have had and never will have a peer or rival in the literature of the world.

Merely as literature, therefore, the Bible is to the last degree stimulating and creative. There are many books that are mentally quickening, but this Book is unique in the measure of its power to arouse and energize the intellect. "Nothing else," says Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, "so sinews up the intellect, so clarifies the perception, so enlarges the views, so purifies the taste, so quickens the imagination, strengthens the understanding, and educates the whole man. The humblest day labourer who saturates his mind with this celestial school-book becomes a superior man to his comrades—not merely a purer man, but a clearer-headed man.

It was the feeding on this honey from heaven which gave to the Puritans their wonderful sagacity as well as their unconquerable loyalty to the right. Simply as an educator the Scriptures ought to be read in every schoolhouse, and there ought to be a chair of Bible instruction in every college." The late Dr. Teunis Hamlin says: "Follow the linked logic of St. Paul, the glowing fervour of St. John, the brilliant fancy of the Hebrew poets, the majestic eloquence of Amos, Micah, and Isaiah, especially the unapproachable simplicity, directness and profundity of Jesus, and you will have such a mental awakening as neither Homer nor Virgil, Plato nor Seneca, Goethe nor Shakespeare, Macaulay nor Emerson can ever give." "It is impossible," says the *New York Evening Post*, "to overestimate the importance of the Bible as a promotive influence in English literature."

When the Bible was translated into the

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English tongue the people found themselves put into possession of a most noble and original literature; stirring history and romantic adventure, "cosmical theories and priestly injunctions, profound metaphysics and pithy proverbs, psalms of unrivalled grandeur and pastorals of exquisite loveliness, parables fraught with solemn meanings, the mournful wisdom of the preacher, the exultant faith of the apostle, the matchless eloquence of Job and Isaiah, the apocalyptic ecstasy of St. John. Great consequences have flowed from the fact that the first truly popular literature in England—the first which stirred the hearts of all classes of people, filled their minds with ideal pictures and their every-day speech with apt and telling phrases—was the literature comprised within the Bible. The superiority of the version of the Bible made in the reign of James I. over all other versions is generally admitted. The

sonorous Latin of the Vulgate is very grand, but in sublimity of fervour as in the unconscious simplicity of strength, it is surpassed by the English version, which is scarcely inferior to the original, while it remains to-day and will remain the noblest monument of English speech." It appeared just at the time when it was able to combine with unique felicity Saxon force and Latin melody. In the reign of James the First, "the glow and splendour of the Elizabethan era flung a robe before the advancing steps of Scripture more rare and splendid than that which Raleigh, in the story, laid at the feet of the Virgin Queen." John Richard Green, the historian, says that "as a mere literary monument, the English of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language." Dr. Faber, Roman Catholic though he was, paid this

exquisite tribute to our Protestant Bible :
“ The diction of the English Bible, with its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression, its general accuracy, the music of its cadences, and the felicities of its rhythm, is the consecrated diction of devotion and religious instruction for all denominations of English-speaking Christians, God’s greatest gift to the many millions of Britain and America. It lives on the ear like music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells which the convert hardly knows how to forego, and the felicities often seem to be almost things rather than words. It is part of the national mind and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its voices. The power of all the griefs and trials of man’s life are hid beneath its words. It is the representation of his best moments ; and all that there has been

about him of soft and pure and penitent and good speaks to him from out of his Protestant Bible. It is his sacred thing which doubt has never dimmed and controversy never soiled."¹

In view of these characteristics of content and form there is nothing surprising in Coleridge's remark that "to give the history of the Bible as a book would be little else than to relate the origin or first excitement of all the literature we possess. From this storehouse of literary materials our leading writers have most freely drawn." In all the long list of English and American writers whose names survive there is not one whose pages are not sprinkled with the words and figures of Holy Writ. Emerson, speaking of the Bible as the most original book in the world, and affirming that it came out of a

¹ See Faber's essay on "The Characteristics of the Lives of the Saints" prefixed to his "Life of St. Francis of Assisi."

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profounder depth of thought than any other, says that Shakespeare, the first literary genius of the world, leans on it. In thirty-seven of his plays there are allusions to the Bible. Prof. J. Scott Clark, in his "Study of English Prose Writers," says that "Bacon's acquaintance with Holy Writ is almost equal to that of Shakespeare, and the works of both unite with many modern masterpieces in testifying to the value of the English Bible as a literary model." Milton, as all know, is saturated with its thought and diction. "I have found," says Dr. Henry van Dyke, "more than four hundred direct references to the Bible in the poems of Tennyson." In Longfellow there are almost as many. Browning's "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," a poem of about twenty-five hundred lines, contains one hundred and thirty Scriptural allusions. They abound also in his other poems, even those whose subjects are not closely allied to Scriptural

themes. Macaulay's essays are full of them.¹ So too are the essays of Robert Louis Stevenson. Hawthorne, the greatest American writer of fiction, confesses that the Bible and the "Pilgrim's Progress" (itself a product of the Bible) were the main sources of his inspiration. To Wordsworth, "the grand storehouses of enthusiastic and meditative imagination . . . are the prophetic and lyrical parts of the Holy Scriptures." Coleridge declares concerning the vigour of the Biblical writers that "after reading Isaiah, or St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, Homer and Virgil are disgustingly tame to me, and Milton himself barely tolerable." Milton's own testimony is that "There are no songs to be compared to the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the prophets." Edmund Burke, the greatest philosophical

¹ See two articles on "Macaulay's Use of Scripture in his Essays," by R. De Witt Mallery in "The Old Testament Student," Vol. VII, pp. 212-216, 246-249.

statesman that the British people ever produced, made a habit of reading a chapter in Isaiah before going to speak in the House of Commons. "Isaiah," he says, "possesses both the blaze of eloquence and the light of truth." Of Daniel Webster also it is authoritatively stated that he did not think himself prepared to appear before the United States Senate in the delivery of his immortal orations "until he had taken as a tonic the eighth Psalm and the fortieth chapter of Isaiah;" and Webster himself said, "If there is aught of eloquence in me it is because I learned the Scripture at my mother's knee."¹ Professor Moulton of the University of Chicago, who has made the literary forms of Scripture his specialty, expresses a similar estimate of Biblical oratory, saying that he once read through on three successive days, each at a single sitting, an oration of Demosthenes,

¹ "The Fascination of the Book," Edgar Whitaker Work, p. 150.

one of Burke, and the book of Deuteronomy, and he had the feeling at the time that neither of the other two rose to the oratorical level of the speeches of Moses.

John Ruskin, the supreme master of English prose, tells us, like Webster, that whatever of merit or power there is in anything that he has written is due to the fact that when he was a child his mother made him thoroughly familiar with the English Bible. Of her requiring him to learn by heart certain chapters of it, he says, "I count it very confidently the most precious, and, on the whole, the one *essential* part of all my education." "The Cambridge History of English Literature" says that the creations of the greatest lyric poets of the Greeks, when placed beside the lyrics of the Hebrews, suffer in the comparison. Addison speaks of Horace and Pindar as showing, when compared with the Psalms, "an absurdity and confusion of style" and "a comparative

poverty of imagination." James Anthony Froude says it will be found at the last that the Book of Job towers above all the poetry of the world. Coleridge calls the Epistle to the Romans "the profoundest writing in existence." Renan pronounces the Gospel of Luke "the most beautiful book in the world." Charles Dickens, master of pathos, when asked to name the most touching story in the literature of the world, answered immediately, "The parable of the prodigal son." Coleridge, who ranged the whole province of letters, when asked to name the richest passage in all literature, answered, "The Beatitudes." Even Huxley testifies to the preëminence of the Bible in literary culture. "Consider," he says, "the great historical fact that, for three centuries, this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history ; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is as familiar to noble and simple, from John-o'-

Groat's house to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso once were to the Italians ; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of pure literary form ; and finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past stretching back to the furthest limits of the oldest civilizations of the world."¹

Sir Edwin Arnold, author of the "Light of Asia," says : " In response to the query, What do I owe to the Bible ? my short reply would be *everything* ; my long reply, to be sufficiently serious and comprehensive, would run to reams of paper. But, if I am addressed as a man of letters, I would simply say that I owe my education as a writer more to the Bible than to any other hundred books that could be named." " Its style," says Hallam, " is

¹ " Critiques and Addresses," Thomas Huxley, p. 51.

the perfection of our English language.”¹ Hence Coleridge’s remark that “intense study of the Bible will keep any writer from being vulgar in point of style.” Dr. Spofford of the Congressional Library, in a recent address at Richmond on “The World of Books,” said that “the Bible, considered merely as literature, without any regard to its doctrines, has more strong, nervous English, more pathos, more sublimity, more pith and power, than any other work in our language.” Professor Saintsbury says more broadly still that it is “the greatest prose work in any language.”

The study of the Bible is no less necessary for the mastery of the direct and practical style of the journalist than for the mastery of the more deliberate and elaborate style of the author. Charles A.

¹ See a valuable essay on “The Authorized Version and Its Influence,” by Prof. Albert S. Cook of Yale in “The Cambridge History of English Literature,” Vol. IV.

Dana, the veteran editor of the *New York Sun* and a master of his craft, addressing prospective journalists, used these words: "There are some books that are absolutely indispensable to the kind of education that we are contemplating and to the profession that we are considering; and of all these the most indispensable, the most useful, the one whose knowledge is most effective, is the Bible. There is no book from which more valuable lessons can be learned. I am considering it now, not as a religious book, but as a manual of utility, of professional preparation and professional use for a journalist. There is, perhaps, no book whose style is more suggestive and more instructive, from which you learn more directly that sublime simplicity which never exaggerates, which recounts the greatest events with solemnity, of course, but without sentimentality or affectation—none which you open with such confidence and lay down with such rever-

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ence: there is no book like the Bible." It is worthy of notice in this connection that in his "Principles of Success in Literature" George Henry Lewes commends to the student "the masterly plainness of Genesis," and that Dr. Charles Sears Baldwin, Assistant Professor of Rhetoric at Yale University, has given to a little volume recently published the significant title, "How to Write—a Handbook Based on the English Bible." Dr. William Osler, the eminent diagnostician, whose command of excellent English is no less remarkable than his skill in his own profession, is a good illustration of the influence of the Bible upon the speech of the best type of present day orators. His Harvard lecture on "Science and Immortality," though not concerned with the teaching of the Gospel in regard to the future life, is nevertheless full of the Bible. "Its forty-three small pages contain forty-one Biblical allusions and quotations," and on one of these pages

seven Scriptural expressions are made use of in close succession.¹

The Hon. Albert J. Beveridge, at present a United States Senator from Indiana, has recently published a little booklet, entitled "The Bible as Good Reading," in which he describes an expedition made by himself and a companion to the great woods of the North when they were both thoroughly tired by their year's work. Up the streams and over the lakes they went, he says, and "at last far out from the path of even canoe voyagers, on the shores of a lake whose name is Beauty, and in the depths of a forest whose name is Noble, by a mossy spring whose name is Delight, they swung their axes and built their camp." Nature began her work; they slept like pieces of iron and ate with the appetite of the primal man; but some-

¹ "Bible Study in Relation to Modern Literature," Mrs. Minnie G. Machen, in *The Union Seminary Magazine*, Vol. XVI, p. 123.

what to their surprise they discovered in a day or two that their minds also craved some pabulum, and his companion said, "I want something to read." "Well," replied Beveridge, "what's the matter with the magazines?" The answer was, "I have read them all." "Well, what's the matter with the Bible?" "Oh," said his companion, "I don't want anything dull!" "Why, man," replied the senator, "the Bible has more *good* reading in it than any book I know of. What will you have—poetry, adventure, politics, maxims, oratory? for they are all here." And he produced the Bible.

Thus occurred the first Bible reading in the woods. After it was over his companion said, "Why, I never knew that was in the Bible. Let's have some more of that to-morrow." And on the morrow they did have more of it. By chance, says the narrator, one of the guides was near and he sat down and listened. The next day all

the guides were there. The day after, the reading was delayed and Indian Charley modestly suggested: "Isn't it about time to have some more of that there Bible?" And more of it they had. This continued day in and day out through the long vacation in the woods and thus another group of men discovered that there is more good reading in the Bible than in all the volumes of fiction, poetry and philosophy put together. The writer proceeds to show that this conclusion is natural enough; that this book has not held its sway over the human mind for two thousand years without having engaging qualities, something which appeals to our "human interest." Surely the Old Testament, which is a story of the most masterful and persistent people who ever lived, cannot help overflowing with everything human; and surely "The New Testament, which is the account of the Man who dominates all Christendom to-day, the Man who is the

most powerful influence in civilization two thousand years after He has passed from earth; surely such an account could not be without a fascination compared with which our most thrilling novels and most passionate poems are vapid and tame."

For the detailed proof of his proposition which Senator Beveridge gives the reader must be referred to the booklet itself with its successive chapters on Old Testament Short Stories; New Testament Short Stories; The Bible and Common Sense; Moses the Lawgiver; Joseph the Dreamer; St. Paul, Orator and Missionary; and the rest.

Lord Macaulay, whose judgment on such a matter no informed man will lightly question, speaks of "that stupendous work, the English Bible,—a book which if everything else in our language should perish would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power."

Such testimonies and facts might be multiplied indefinitely. They are so numerous and so convincing that the supremacy of the Bible as literature and its unequalled power of inspiring and fertilizing the mind would scarcely need to be referred to further but for another set of facts represented by the disheartening statistics published not long ago by President Thwing in regard to the astounding ignorance of the Scriptures displayed by certain bodies of college students, in one of the most prosperous and progressive parts of our country, when examined as to the meaning of various allusions in the greatest and most popular of contemporary poets to some of the most familiar incidents of Biblical history. Twenty-two quotations from Tennyson's poems, containing references to the commonest passages of Scripture, were given to a body of young college men and a body of young college women, and they were asked to explain

these allusions. They evinced almost incredible ignorance. Out of the thirty-four men, nine failed to understand the quotation, "My sin was as a thorn among the thorns that girt Thy brow." Eleven had never heard, apparently, of the "manna in the wilderness," nor sixteen of the "rock whence issued water." Only two had ever heard of the shadow turning back on the dial for Hezekiah's lengthening life. Only eight had ever heard of "Joshua's moon." Twenty-two did not know who "Baal" was. Nineteen had never read the exquisite idyl of "Ruth," with which Franklin once charmed and surprised a company of learned Frenchmen. Eighteen did not know what "Pharaoh's darkness" meant, and twenty-eight knew nothing of "Jonah's gourd." Only nine could explain an allusion to "Lot's wife." Twenty-three could not understand who "Arimatheaean Joseph" was; and so on throughout the entire twenty-two questions.

With the men, only forty-three per cent. of the questions were answered correctly ; and with the women, forty-nine per cent. Some of the answers were positively startling. One young woman said that Joseph was called " Arimathean " because he had a coat of many colours before being sold by his brothers. Another, when asked to tell who Iscariot was, said that " Iscariot means the cross on which Christ was crucified." Yet this test was made with those lay people whose knowledge of the Bible would presumably be most ample. The investigator, in calling attention to the disheartening result of his experiment, says : " To the Christian, this fact is significant, for the Bible is the corner-stone of the Christian system. To the moralist, this presentation is significant as evidence that the most important treatise on ethics is not adequately known. To the scholar, it is significant as standing for the failure of the better class of people of scholarly en-

vironment to know the most important piece of literature.”

Similar experiments have been made by other investigators with equally discouraging results. “A professor of English literature in Amherst College stated several years ago that he had floored an entire Junior class by a reference in one of the poems of Dryden to the blind patriarch feeling after his son’s hands. In a large American university a professor of literature read two pages from an English classic containing several Biblical allusions. Very few in the large class were able to detect or explain such references as the Valley of Dry Bones, the Waters of Marah, and the Cave of Adullam. A professor of philosophy in Northwestern University made a test with one hundred students. He asked them nine simple questions, such as, ‘What is the Pentateuch?’ ‘Is the Book of Jude in the Old or New Testament?’ ‘Name one of the judges.’

'Give one of the Beatitudes.' Out of ninety-six papers returned only eight gave correct answers to all the questions. Over half could not locate the Book of Jude. Solomon, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Leviticus were named as judges. Matthew, Luke, and John were turned into prophets, while Herod, Ananias, and Nebuchadnezzar were transformed into Kings of Israel. One student said that the Pentateuch was the same as the Gospel."¹

Prof. William Lyon Phelps, who occupies a chair in English at Yale University, gives similar testimony. He says, "The ignorance of college students of Biblical literature is universal, profound and complete. The students at Harvard and Yale, different as they are in many respects from their brothers in small colleges, resemble them closely here. . . . It is certainly unfortunate that the best

¹ "The Fascination of the Book," Edgar Whitaker Work, p. 29.

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book ever printed should be so little known, and that the frequent references to it in practically every English author should be meaningless." Writing in the *Yale Alumni Weekly* he says: "If I were appointed a committee of one to regulate the much debated question of college examinations in English, I should erase every list of books that has thus far been tried or suggested, and I should confine the examination wholly to the authorized version of the Bible." Professor Phelps is mistaken in supposing that the students of all the other colleges are as ignorant of the Bible as he says those of Yale and Harvard are. When his statement was published, Prof. C. Alphonso Smith, then of the University of North Carolina, gave to his students such an examination as Professor Phelps proposed as a test of their knowledge of the factual contents of Scripture, and the answers he received proved that the

students of the Carolina institution did have a fair knowledge of them. Doubtless the same thing could be shown of the students in some other colleges. Nevertheless a man would be blind indeed who could not see that the old fashioned familiarity with Scripture is largely a thing of the past in nearly every part of our land.

How serious a loss this is to the intellectual life of the great masses of the people, those who do not enjoy the advantages of liberal culture in the usual sense, is recognized even by the more thoughtful unbelievers of our time. Thus Mr. F. J. Gould, a leading free-thinker of England, says that "Millions of church-going and chapel-going men and women are shut out from the rich resources of the classics, of general oriental legend, and from the varied treasures of Teutonic mythology, European folklore, and mediæval chronicles and poetry. They have no imaginative reservoir, so to speak, but

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the Bible." It is through the Bible only that such people attain a sympathetic insight into history. "The history they learned at school was too often lifeless and meaningless; but in the Bible they experience a combination of history and moral emotion. In its pages the peasant and the ill-educated housemother gain glimpses of a large past, of kings, judges, prophets, patriarchs, poets, heroes, and martyrs; and of glowing landscapes of the East, of pyramids and temples, of the tents of Shem, the rose of Sharon, and the cedars of Lebanon. I should profoundly distrust any rationalistic analysis which was so intent on liberating the proletarian soul from theological bonds that it carelessly left that soul without a popular and easily accessible treasury of poetic reminiscence and metaphor."¹

Charles Dudley Warner says that "Wholly apart from its religious or its

¹ *Literary Digest*, March 18, 1905.

ethical value, the Bible is the one book that no intelligent person, who wishes to come into contact with the world of thought and to share the ideas of the great minds of the Christian era, can afford to be ignorant of."

"Our Bible," says Dr. A. P. Peabody, "is still the key to the best English diction; and by conversance with it our children are made familiar with their own language in a purer form than any other which can be placed before them." Count Tolstoy says that "without the Bible the education of the child in the present state of society is impossible." President Schurman of Cornell University, who can hardly be accused of any partisan interest in the Scriptures, has this to say about the relation of this book to education: "The Bible is the most important document in the world's history. No man can be wholly uneducated who really knows the Bible, nor can any one be con-

sidered a truly educated man who is ignorant of it."

In view of these facts and testimonies the inference is inevitable: To shut such a book out of the schools where the children of the nation are educated is to perpetrate a palpable fraud upon the intellects of the rising generation.

III

THE BIBLE AND NATIONAL IDEALS

THE late Justice David J. Brewer has well said that "No nation is better than its sacred book. In that book are expressed its highest ideals of life, and no nation rises above those ideals. No nation has a sacred book to be compared with ours. This American nation from its first settlement at Jamestown to the present hour is based upon and permeated by the principles of the Bible. The more this Bible enters into our national life the grander and purer and better will that life become."

The noblest ideal ever set before a nation was that which God placed before the Israelites when He entered into covenant with them at Mt. Sinai. It was expressed in these words : "Ye shall be unto

Me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." This was no ideal of military glory or material wealth, such as most nations have striven to attain. It was an ideal of personal and national righteousness, of spiritual privilege and of helpful service to mankind. "Ye shall be unto Me an holy nation"—there was God's requirement of righteousness. "Ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests"—that is, as the construction really means, a dynasty of persons invested with royal rank and priestly functions—there was God's appointment of Israel to religious privilege and religious responsibility. A priest is a mediator and teacher of God's will.

This *Magna Charta* of Israel teaches that God's people are of the seed royal, all of them. It teaches not only that all are kings but also that all are priests. Every man may be face to face with God. This passage, then, contains the germ of civil

and religious liberty. With such a conception as this—"All kings and all priests"—fully worked out, there can be no despotism in church or state.

The oriental idea of government, with a single shining exception, has always been this—that the people existed for the glory of the ruler; the king was everything, the people nothing. Our idea of government is entirely different from this. We hold that, so far from the people existing for the glory of the ruler, the ruler exists for the good of the people. Where did we get that idea? We got it from the exceptional case just referred to, from the Hebrews, from the Bible, from God. It was He who first insisted upon a reversal of the oriental theory of despotism and gave to mankind the great ideal of a constitutional government by representatives of the people. It was He who first taught the dignity of man as man and gave to the world the conception of a commonwealth. No

student of comparative history can fail to be impressed with the world-wide difference between the pompous inscriptions of ancient Egypt and Babylon and that simple but matchless story of the common people which runs through the Old Testament Scriptures. On the one hand we have colossal egotism, high-sounding titles, boastful narrations of personal prowess, elaborate descriptions of royal wealth and splendour, kings, courts, wars, conquests, but not one word about the people, save indeed an occasional contemptuous reference to the "stinking multitude." On the other hand, we have not a favoured individual but a chosen people, not a pampered despot but a royal nation, not the intrigues of courts and the exploits of kings only, but also and chiefly the every-day life of plain people, and there is throughout an unmistakable respect for manhood as such, a disregard for the merely outward and accidental, a high estimate of the spiritual

and essential, a just appreciation of personal character and piety regardless of the circumstances of birth or wealth or station.

Observe the recurrence of that uplifting refrain throughout the Old Testament: "The Lord's portion is His people" (Deut. xxxii. 9). "The Lord taketh pleasure in His people" (Psa. cxlix. 4). "The Lord said unto Pharaoh, thou art exalting thyself against My people" (Ex. ix. 17). "Let My people go that they may serve Me" (Ex. v. 1). "If thou lend money to any of My people who are poor, thou shalt not exact interest of him" (Ex. xxii. 25). Little wonder that Principal Fairbairn in an address to working men should affirm that "no literature of antiquity is possessed with so deep a love of the poor, speaks so strong and generous words concerning them, surrounds them with so much dignity and so many rights as the Old Testament."

The form of government which God or-

dained for the Hebrews was not a monarchy but a republic. The wise suggestion of Jethro to Moses at Mt. Sinai, when he saw how the great leader was overburdened with administrative duties, was that he should "provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating unjust gain,¹ and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens;" but, in carrying out the suggestion, Moses required the people to elect these rulers themselves, saying, "*Take you* wise men, and understanding, and known, according to your tribes, and I will make them heads over you,"² giving them at the same time a body of statutes for their guidance. Here, then, a thousand years before Plato dreamed of his ideal republic, we find the essential principles of republi-

¹ Ex. xviii. 21: A perfect description of the model public man—able, pious, truthful, incorruptible.

² Deut. i. 13.

can government: The principle of representation—"Take you"; the principle of civil equality—"out of all the people"; and a written constitution, to which the whole people gave their public assent.

Algernon Sidney, who gave his life on the scaffold for the doctrine that a people had the right to depose an unworthy sovereign, and whose name is linked with that of the illustrious Hampden in the title of a Virginia college founded in the significant year 1776, wrote a work entitled "Discourses Concerning Government" which became the chief text-book of the founders of our republic,¹ and in which he says that the Hebrew commonwealth was composed of three organisms, besides the magistrates of the several tribes and cities: (1) a Chief Magistrate who was called a judge; (2) a Council composed of elders; and (3) the Great Congregation or Gen-

¹ "The Origin of Republican Form of Government in the United States of America," Oscar S. Straus, p. 113.

eral Assembly, which reflected the popular will. These were the germs of the three organisms of our American Constitution, the President, the Senate, and a popular Chamber.

When the Israelites in their folly insisted on having a king like the neighbouring nations, God permitted it, saying to Samuel, "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not rule over them."¹ But displeased though He was, He still sought to save them from the extreme penalty of their folly, viz., an enslaving and grinding despotism, by warning them of the probable character of their kings and the probable loss of their liberties;² and when they refused to hearken and still clamoured for a king, He made it clear in the anointing of Saul, that He wished him to be their servant and not

¹ 1 Sam. viii. 7.

² 1 Sam. viii. 9-18.

their oppressor, saying to Samuel, "Anoint him to be captain over My people, that he may save My people out of the hand of their enemies,"¹ instituting at the same time, as a further safeguard, that great order of the prophets, who were thenceforth the spokesmen for the people, against the tyranny both of kings and priests.

Dr. Lyman Abbot, expressing his dissatisfaction with the results of our present methods of Sunday-school teaching, says he would like to know how many children who have graduated from our Sunday-schools could tell anything comprehensively about the Bible. "How many of them have any comprehensive conception of its political teachings? How many of them know that the Hebrew commonwealth was the first government on the face of the globe to put restrictions upon the absolute power of a monarchy, the first to have a popular legislative assembly, the

¹ 1 Sam. ix. 16.

first to ask for the judgment of the people in general elections, the first to organize government in three departments—legislative, judicial and executive—the first to prohibit class or caste distinctions, the first to make any provision for popular instruction? How many of the children of our Sunday-schools know the simple facts of its political teaching? And yet this self-governing republic is anchored on those great fundamental principles.”¹

The late Professor Huxley, agnostic though he was, made a plea for the use of the Bible in schools in these words: “By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the intervals between two eternities; and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its effort to do good and hate evil, even as they

¹ *The Outlook*, July 30, 1910.

also are earning their payment for their work. The Bible has been the *Magna Charta* of the poor and the oppressed. Down to modern times no state has had a constitution in which the interests of the people are so largely taken into account, in which the duties so much more than the privileges of rulers are insisted on, as that drawn up for Israel. Nowhere is the fundamental truth that the welfare of the state in the long run depends on the welfare of the citizen, so strongly laid down.”¹ Andrew Jackson in his last illness declared this book to be “the rock on which our republic rests.” Ulysses Grant urged our people to “Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor of our liberties,” adding, “Write its precepts on your hearts and practice them in your lives. To the influence of this book we are indebted for the progress made in true civilization and to this we must look as our guide in the

¹ “Critiques and Addresses,” Thomas Huxley.

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future." Thomas Carlyle says: "The period of the Reformation was a judgment day for Europe, when all the nations were presented with an open Bible, and all the emancipation of heart and intellect which an open Bible involves. England, North Germany, and other powers accepted the boon, and they have been steadily growing in national greatness and moral influence ever since. France rejected it; and in its place has had the gospel of Voltaire, with all the anarchy, misery, and bloodshed of those ceaseless revolutions of which that gospel is the parent." There is a story that when an East Indian prince visited the late Queen Victoria on business of state and asked her to tell him the secret of England's greatness and glory, she simply handed him a copy of the Bible with the words: "This is the secret of England's greatness." To the same effect Garibaldi, the Italian liberator, said: "The best of allies you can procure for us is the

Bible. That will bring us the reality of freedom.”

As it is to the Bible we are indebted for the existence of our national ideals and republican institutions, so to the Bible we must look for their preservation throughout the future.

IV

THE BIBLE IN MORALS AND BENEVOLENCE

LORD BACON says : " There never was found in any age of the world either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible."

" That the truths of the Bible," says Dr. Wayland, late President of Brown University, " have the power of awakening an intense moral feeling in man under every variety of character, learned or ignorant, civilized or savage ; that they make bad men good, and send a pulse of healthful feeling through all the domestic, civil, and social relations ; that they teach men to love right, to hate wrong, and to seek each other's welfare, as the children of one common Parent ; that they control the baleful passions of the human heart, and

thus make men proficient in the science of self-government; and, finally, that they teach him to aspire after a conformity to a Being of infinite holiness, and fill him with hopes infinitely more purifying, more exalted, more suited to his nature, than any other which this world has ever known, are facts as incontrovertible as the laws of philosophy or the demonstrations of mathematics."

The Honourable William Jennings Bryan said at the World's Missionary Conference in Edinburgh that he would stake his belief in the Divinity of Christ on what had been accomplished in His name in the last 1,900 years. By the same token the Bible is a Divine Book. It has been incomparably the most potent of all influences in purifying and elevating the race and in promoting the general good of all classes of mankind. A summary of what it has accomplished in these ways may be seen in such works as Richard S. Storrs's Lec-

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tures on "The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by its Historical Effects," and Charles Loring Brace's "Gesta Christi, or A History of Humane Progress under Christianity." It tamed and transformed the savage and sensual life of the Roman empire. It softened and civilized the fierce barbarians who conquered Rome. It covered Europe with churches and schools and asylums and hospitals. It taught the necessity of temperance, the duty of personal purity, and the sacredness of marriage. It revolutionized the legal and social position of woman. It abolished the inhuman custom of abandoning unfortunate infants and set a new value on the person and well-being of children. It brought to an end innumerable forms of cruelty and oppression, and secured the humane treatment of the weak, the poor, the stranger, the prisoner, and even the brute. It taught the duty of the more fortunate classes to raise up the unfortunate.

It stimulated the demand for an equitable division of the profits of labour and the friendly coöperation of employers and employees. It taught that the injury of one nation is the injury of all. It mitigated the horrors of wars which it could not prevent. And it is to-day leading the van in the movement to substitute arbitration for the sword in the settlement of international disputes. One of the bishops of the English Church proposes this simple test: "I invite any honest-minded man to look at a map of the world and see what a story that map tells. Which are the countries on the face of the globe at this moment where there is the greatest amount of idolatry, or cruelty, or impurity, or misgovernment, or disregard of life, liberty, and truth? Precisely those countries where the Bible is not known. Which are the Christian countries, so called, where the greatest quantity of ignorance, superstition, and corruption is to be found at this

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moment? The countries in which the Bible is a forbidden or neglected book,—such countries as Spain and the South American States. Which are the countries where liberty and public and private morality have attained the highest pitch? The countries where the Bible is free to all, like England, Scotland, Germany, and the United States. Yes! when you know how a nation deals with the Bible you may know what that nation is.”

But, it may be objected, has not the Bible been the cause of much evil? Have not those who claimed to represent its teachings obstructed the path of progress, and hindered the advance of science, and kindled the fires of persecution? Yes, undoubtedly they have in some instances. But to infer the character of this Book from these perversions and abuses of its teachings would be to repeat the error of those who have “mistaken the gargoyles, the grinning stone caricatures

mounting their guard over cathedrals, for the gleaming statues of saints within." We must distinguish between the characteristic products of Christianity on the one hand and what is common to human wickedness or human infirmity on the other. We must separate the special effects of Christianity, the necessary fruits of its normal operation, from the blindness of the men and the alien and insolent temper of the organizations which at times have assumed to direct the propagation of it.¹ Its results are confessedly incomplete. It does not claim to have enlightened, restrained and subdued the whole of any one generation, nor even the whole of any one body of its professed adherents. But, considering the material it has had to work upon and the opposition it has had to encounter, its marvellous though partial success in the past is the strongest

¹"The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by its Historical Effects," R. S. Storrs, p. 27.

proof of its power; and in the results which it has already accomplished lies the sure prophecy of its ultimate universal triumph.

Would that the men who are fumbling around the fringes of divine revelation and standing aloof from the vast and beneficent work of Christianity because forsooth they do not know what to make of geology and the Book of Genesis, or astronomy and the Book of Joshua, or the composite structure of the Pentateuch, or the literary form of the Book of Jonah, or the authorship of the last twenty-seven chapters of Isaiah, or the dates of the synoptic Gospels—would that these men would lift their eyes from these details and take a clear and steady look at the broad, permanent effects of Christianity in the world! Would that the men of this sordid age who measure everything in dollars would picture to themselves the condition of a world in which the character and conduct

of *all* its inhabitants were moulded and controlled by the moral principles of this book! What an untold saving of wealth would result! We could at once do away with all the vast military and judicial and reformatory apparatus by which the nations now seek to keep themselves in existence and in order. We could dismiss our courts of law, pull down our jails and penitentiaries, and never spend another dollar in the erection of court-houses and prisons; there would be no violation of law. We could release the millions of capital invested in great plants for the making of heavy guns and armour plate, and cruisers and battle-ships, and all the costly up-keep of preparation for war, and use the money, not for maiming and murdering our fellow men, but for lifting the burden of pain from afflicted humanity, and easing the hard lot of the poor; the whole world would be at peace. Our hardware merchants would go out of the

business of selling locks and keys ; there would be no occasion for that kind of protection of property. Dishonesty in business and corruption in politics would be unknown and the hateful word "graft" would never be heard. The golden rule would regulate all domestic and social and business relations, and none would defraud or deprave or destroy in the whole wide world. God hasten the day !

There are some, however, who, while admitting that the Bible has done much to elevate human conduct, seem to think that human conduct may now be left to go on by itself in moral evolution without any further direct influence of the Bible at all. Does the ship go on when the fires in the engine-room are put out? No more will human conduct go on when the impulse of personal relationship to God is quenched. "When the fires in the engine-room are put out, the ship swings hither and thither in the trough of the sea, and it

is drifted by the tide, or it founders in the tempest ; and human conduct founders when the soul of man is bereft of God." ¹ Bismarck, "the strongest intellect of the nineteenth century in Germany," said : "How, without faith in a revealed religion, in a God who wills what is good, in a supreme Judge, and a future life, men can live harmoniously, each doing his duty, and letting every one else do his, I do not understand."

But, says the objector, are there not in fact thousands of good citizens, honest business men, charitable neighbours, faithful husbands, and loving parents who do not read the Bible and who do not profess to regulate their conduct by its teachings? Undoubtedly there are, but these cases are individual and partial. "Try your experiment on any large and general scale, and you will find that the loss of God means ruin to character and conduct."

¹ "The Threshold of Manhood," W. J. Dawson, p. 240.

Witness the French Revolution. Moreover, the men referred to are themselves the indirect products of a Biblical morality. These lives in which Christian virtues appear though Christian discipleship is denied are lived in a Christian atmosphere. As ex-Prime Minister Balfour says, they are like the parasite which lives upon the strength and in virtue of the life of some larger being; and if the life on which the parasite depends should cease then the parasite also will die.

Similar to this is the testimony of James Russell Lowell, in an after-dinner speech, following a noted infidel: "I fear that when we indulge ourselves in the amusement of going without a religion, we are not, perhaps, aware how much we are sustained at present by an enormous mass all about us of religious feeling and religious conviction, so that, whatever it may be safe for us to think, for us who have had great advantages, and have been brought

up in such a way that a certain moral direction has been given to our character, I do not know what would become of the less favoured classes of mankind if they undertook to play the same game.

“Whatever defects and imperfections may attach to a few points of the doctrinal system of Calvin—the bulk of which is simply what all Christians believe—it will be found that Calvinism, or any other ism which claims an open Bible and proclaims a crucified and risen Christ, is infinitely preferable to any form of polite and polished skepticism which gathers as its votaries the degenerate sons of heroic ancestors, who, having been trained in society and educated in schools, the foundations of which were laid by men of faith and piety, now turn and kick down the ladder by which they have climbed, and persuade men to live without God and leave them to die without hope.

“The worst kind of religion is no relig-

ion at all, and these men living in ease and luxury, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their carcasses like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution.

“ When the microscopic search of skepticism, which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet ten miles square where a decent man can live in decency, comfort and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted ; a place where age is revered, infancy protected, manhood respected, womanhood honoured, and human life held in due regard ; when skept-

tics can find such a place ten miles square on this globe, where the Gospel of Christ has not gone and cleared the way, and laid the foundations and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the skeptical literati to move thither and there ventilate their views. But so long as these very men are dependent upon the religion they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob the Christian of his hope and humanity of its Saviour, who alone has given to man that hope of life eternal which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom."

Even Thomas Jefferson, with all his skepticism and all his emasculation of Scripture, makes this emphatic statement, "I always have said and always will say that the studious perusal of the sacred volume will make better citizens, better fathers, and better husbands."

V

THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS

IN view of the fact that this Book is essential not only to the best mental culture of our children, and not only to their training in the truest national ideals, but also to the making of the best type of moral character, which is the real end and aim of all true education, one of the strangest and most discreditable facts of our time, as well as one of the most dangerous, is the persistent and largely successful effort of a hostile minority of the people of this country to exclude the Bible from the schools in which the great majority of our children are taught. In order to secure its exclusion from schools founded by individual benevolence, these enemies of the Bible have not hesitated to violate the most sacred trusts. Nearly half a

century ago John McDonogh left a large fortune to the cities of Baltimore and New Orleans for the purpose of instructing youth "in the knowledge of the Lord, and in reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, etc., under such regulations as the commissioners of said schools shall establish, always understood and provided, however, that the Holy Bible of the Old and New Testaments shall be at all times and forever made use of in those schools as one (and the principal one) of the reading or class books which shall be used by the pupils therein; as the first object of every school and all teaching should be to implant in their minds a knowledge of their duty to God and the relations of men to their divine Creator, and singing classes shall be established and forever supported, and singing taught as a regular branch of such schools, which means that each pupil shall acquire the rudiments of the art, and obtain a knowledge of singing sacred

music." While Baltimore is faithful to this trust and is using her part of the bequest as provided for by the founder, New Orleans has shamefully violated it by keeping the Bible out of the schools built with her benefactor's money. The rediscovery of the original will last year (1909) in the rubbish of the Cabildo, where it had lain hidden for forty years or more, accentuates the city's shame. The honour which New Orleans pays to McDonogh's memory once a year, when all her school children march around his monument and cover it with flowers, only deepens and proclaims her own dishonour.

But the master-stroke of this anti-Biblical minority for the accomplishment of its baleful purpose is its attempt to prevent the Protestant Christians of our country from providing any instruction in the Bible for their children in connection with their general education in the public schools. The interpretation it seeks to

force upon our principle of the separation of church and state and upon the decisions of the courts forbidding sectarian teaching in the public schools is that not only must the Bible not be taught in the regular curriculum of these schools to all the pupils regardless of the religious faith of their parents, which we readily grant, but that it must not be taught even in connection with such schools by any instructors, however and by whomsoever they may be appointed—that it must not be taught even to those children whose parents wish it done.

Now, we believe that it would be a violation of the American principle of religious liberty for the state to require the teaching of Christianity in the common schools and to compel the children of all its citizens to attend such teaching. It is indeed the right and duty of the state to teach morals and to give to all the children in its schools the fullest possible teaching

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concerning God as the creator and moral governor of mankind. But the state has no warrant to teach evangelical religion, to inculcate the doctrines of grace, to expound the plan of salvation. Therefore it has no right to prescribe the teaching of the whole Bible as a book of religion in the public schools. But neither has it the right to proscribe it in such a way as to prevent Christian parents from having the Bible taught to their children in connection with their general education, by teachers of their own appointment, even though some of these teachers might be instructors in the public schools. Yet it is claimed by the opponents of the Bible that this is the effect of the decisions recently made by some of our municipal and state courts, and one cannot doubt that it was the result aimed at by those who procured these decisions. For instance, on the petition of Roman Catholic residents of the town of Winchester, Illinois, the Supreme Court of

that state, in July, 1910, reversing the action of a lower court, declared religious exercises in the public schools unlawful, two of the justices dissenting from the decision. The exercises to be suppressed under the court's ruling are the reading of the Bible, the recitation of the Lord's Prayer, and the singing of hymns. By some, as already stated, this decision is interpreted to mean not only that the teaching of the Bible as a part of the required curriculum in the public schools of Illinois is forbidden, but also that any teaching of the Bible in any way in those schools during school hours is forbidden, even though such teaching be desired by Protestant parents for their children and be given by teachers designated by those parents.

This interpretation seems to us too broad. Protestant parents should not be forbidden to have their children instructed in the Bible in the public schools by teachers of their own selection. Of course

the children of Roman Catholic and Jewish parents should not be required to attend such teaching. On the contrary they should be left equally free to provide in the same way for whatever religious teaching they wish their children to have.

As the priests of the Roman Catholic Church have taken the leading part in securing the decisions referred to and in putting upon them the too broad interpretation above mentioned, it will not be amiss for the American people to recall the incontrovertible statement of Lord Macaulay in the first chapter of his "History of England" concerning the influence of the Church of Rome in this regard :

"From the time when the barbarians overran the Western Empire to the time of the revival of letters, the influence of the Church of Rome had been generally favourable to science, to civilization, to good government. But during the last three centuries, to stunt the growth of the

human mind has been her chief object. Throughout Christendom, whatever advance has been made in knowledge, in freedom, in wealth, and in the arts of life, has been made in spite of her, and has everywhere been in inverse proportion to her power. The loveliest and most fertile provinces of Europe have, under her rule, been sunk in poverty, in political servitude, and in intellectual torpor, while Protestant countries, once proverbial for sterility and barbarism, have been turned by skill and industry into gardens, and can boast of a long list of heroes and statesmen, philosophers and poets. Whoever, knowing what Italy and Scotland naturally are, and what, four hundred years ago, they actually were, shall now compare the country round Rome with the country round Edinburgh, will be able to form some judgment as to the tendency of papal domination. The descent of Spain, once the first among the monarchies, to

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the lowest depths of degradation, the elevation of Holland, in spite of many natural disadvantages, to a position such as no commonwealth so small has ever reached, teach the same lesson. Whoever passes in Germany from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant principality, in Switzerland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant canton, in Ireland from a Roman Catholic to a Protestant county, finds that he has passed from a lower to a higher grade of civilization. On the other side of the Atlantic the same law prevails. The Protestants of the United States have left far behind them the Roman Catholics of Mexico, Peru and Brazil. The Roman Catholics of Lower Canada remain inert, while the whole continent round them is in a ferment with Protestant activity and enterprise. The French have doubtless shown an energy and intelligence which, even when misdirected, have justly entitled them to be called a great people. But this

apparent exception, when examined, will be found to confirm the rule, for in no country that is called Roman Catholic has the Roman Catholic Church, during several generations, possessed so little authority as in France."

Happily many of the people whom the priests have heretofore dominated are beginning to observe for themselves the difference thus clearly pointed out by Macaulay—and not only by him, but by Gladstone, by Dickens, and by such Roman Catholic writers as Mr. Michael McCarthy—between the effects of Romanism and Protestantism respectively on human intelligence and civilization, and to draw the inevitable inference that there is something radically wrong with the system in which they have been reared, and that, as the very existence of our free institutions depends upon the intelligence and moral character of our citizens, it is nothing but national suicide

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to shut out from the training of our future citizens the one book which has shown itself to be the greatest of all promoters both of intelligence and moral character. There are not a few cheering signs that a steadily increasing number of our more intelligent Roman Catholic people in America will refuse to follow the priests in their antagonism to Bible teaching as a discipline for prospective citizens.

But the Roman Catholic priests and their followers are not the only opponents of religious training in connection with the common schools. The Jewish rabbis of America at their annual conference (1910) at Charlevoix, Michigan, protested against the use of the Bible in the public schools as a grievous wrong, declaring that this is not a Christian country. That it is a Christian country in a general sense is clearly shown by the fact that it has ever been a haven of refuge for the persecuted Jews. But the Jewish rabbis, though en-

joying in this Christian land full civil and religious liberty, have shut their eyes to the fact stated by the most illustrious modern member of their race, that "all nations that refuse the Cross wither" and have apparently joined forces with the infidels and the Roman Catholic priests in their war against any kind of Bible teaching in connection with our common schools.

As a matter of fact, however, the proposition to exclude the Bible from the schools absolutely is an impracticable one, for, even were all the courts of the land to forbid the direct use of it, there is a sense in which it would still remain. How can the writings which permeate all modern literature be excluded from a real education? How can the book which is interwoven with all the noblest prose and poetry in our language be torn out without destroying the whole fabric of our literature and with it the means of our best intellectual culture? To

a Jewish gentleman who remarked that he did not want his children to read the New Testament in the public schools a better informed citizen said with truth: "Then you must throw out Shakespeare, Milton and Carlyle, Wordsworth, Browning and Tennyson, Whittier, Longfellow and Holmes,—in short, all the greatest poets and essayists who have used the English tongue." And what can the schools do in the departments of art, fiction, philosophy, and ethics without giving their pupils a knowledge of the Bible? How can students without such knowledge understand the Biblical allusions, images and ideas with which the best treatises on all these subjects abound? It is not a question of sectarianism. It is a question of general intelligence.

An attempt was recently made to exclude instruction in the Bible from the University College of Toronto on the ground that the charter of the institution forbids the teach-

ing of theology and that any interpretation or discussion of Biblical passages in the class rooms was a violation of this charter. The governors of the University, after careful consideration of the complaint by a committee of their own number, made this answer: "Many of the subjects assigned to University College could not be fully and properly taught without the use of the Bible—notably Oriental languages, ethics, ancient history, and Greek require the assistance of the Bible for their full and proper appreciation. To exclude all discussion of the Bible and the literary, historical, linguistic and ethical sides thereof, whether in the Hebrew, Greek, English or other version, would be to exclude from the arts course of the college an important literary work, an important help to the study of languages, and the greatest code of ethics known to the world. Your committee begs further to report that, in its opinion, discussions of the

books and narratives of the Bible in the study of literature, ancient history, Oriental languages and Greek may take place without entering upon the domain of theology, contrary to the statute."

But this diffused and pervasive presence of the Bible in all our literature, which can never be got rid of—this general influence of it in liberal education—while of priceless value to culture, is not sufficient. In order that it may effectually mould the moral character of our future citizens, it must be studied directly, regularly, continuously, under the direction of sympathetic living teachers. The number of schools in which this is done has diminished rapidly in the last half century, and the result is seen in the enormous increase of crime in the same period. The Hon. Whitelaw Reid, our Ambassador to Great Britain, is quoted as saying that in 1850 there was in this country only one criminal to every 3,422 of the population, but that now there

is one criminal to every 300—surely one of the most startling and significant facts ever brought to the attention of a people. He adds that “in Austria, since religious teaching was abolished in the day-schools, crime has increased seventy-five per cent.” The best showing among all the nations seems to be made by Great Britain. Mr. Reid states the reason and also the lesson to be drawn by our own people: “The British schools turn out pupils well grounded in Christianity, and America might well follow her example.” Judge Grosscup of Chicago sees the same defect, utters the same warning, and gives the same counsel: “The only blot on the American public schools is the exclusion of spirituality as one of the great facts of the world. The law admits Darwin, admits science, and admits all facts except the supreme fact that religion is the fundamental influence in all movements of mankind. As long as America turns its back

on religion and the existence of God—the perfect message given by Jesus Christ—it is excluding the most powerful influence for good, both spiritual and civil, that the world has at its command.”

We have indicated above our own belief that we can teach the Bible in connection with the public schools without violating our national principle of religious liberty and the separation of church and state. Though Jews, Roman Catholics, and unbelievers object to the teaching of it to their children in the schools which are supported by taxes levied upon all the people, and though their objection must be sustained, we can without oppressing the consciences of this minority of our citizens teach it to the children of the evangelical Christian majority.

Some, indeed, despairing of any solution of the problem as to the public schools, insist that the only thing to do is to fall back on the old plan of private schools

and church schools which for so long a period and in so large a measure did yield the desired results in character and conduct, and to patronize them in preference to the public schools. We trust that, as things now stand, this will be done wherever possible. Happy the children whose parents can send them to schools in the curricula of which the Bible is taught freely and fully. But to establish, equip and maintain a sufficient number of such schools to meet the requirements of all the Protestant children of the country seems to us to be out of the question. Under present conditions they cannot hope to compete successfully with the public free schools on the scale required.

Others, therefore, claim that the Protestant majority, who brought the Bible to this land and under its teachings subdued the wilderness and developed our institutions and made our country what it is, have at least the same right to say what

their children shall be taught as the non-Protestant minority have to say what theirs shall be taught, and that to allow this minority of Jews, Roman Catholics and infidels, who have been freely admitted to all the privileges purchased by the blood of our Protestant sires, to dictate to us what shall or shall not be taught to Protestant children in connection with their general education is an intolerable travesty on liberty. This party therefore says—We will have the Bible taught to our children in connection with the day-schools, but we will oppress no man's conscience. The children of Jews, Roman Catholics and infidels shall not be required to attend the religious instruction provided for the children of the Protestant majority. These anti-Biblical elements of our population shall be free to provide whatever instruction in religion for their children they may desire and at the hands of whatever teachers they may choose. But they shall not

prevent our doing the same for our children and doing it in the most effective way, viz., in connection with our day-schools.

Why cannot the children of Protestants, Roman Catholics and Jews be gathered separately at the school for a half hour every day for religious instruction, to be given by such teachers or ministers as the parents may designate? An equally unobjectionable method, though one that would probably be less effective, is the one said to have been recently proposed by the Protestant ministers in Charleston, S. C., viz., that instead of any religious instruction at the school itself the pupils should gather at their several churches for two hours of their school time on specified days of the week, say from eleven o'clock till one, and there be taught by their own ministers or other teachers approved by their parents.

The special object of this discussion,

however, is not to solve the question as to the best method of reintroducing the Bible into our systems of education, but to remind our people of the necessity of doing it. When once they see that the inevitable result of its exclusion is the intellectual impoverishment of their children, the weakening of their attachment to our republican ideals, and the failure to develop a sound and controlling moral character, they will not be long in solving the mere problem of method.

Even Professor Huxley, bitterly prejudiced though he was against the Bible, said: "I have always been strongly in favour of secular education without theology, but I must confess that I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of moral conduct, is to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters without the use of the Bible."

VI

THE BIBLE AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

“**T**HIS collection of books,” says Theodore Parker, “has taken such a hold on the world as has no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book from a nation alike despised in ancient and modern times. In all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up, week by week. The sun never sets on its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and it colours the talk of the street. . . . It blesses us when we are born; gives names to half Christendom; rejoices with us; has sympathy for our mourning; tempers our

grief to finer issues. It is the better part of our sermons. It lifts man above himself; our best of uttered prayers are in its storied speech, wherewith our fathers and the patriarchs prayed. The timid man, about awaking from this dream of life, looks through the glass of Scripture, and his eye grows bright; he does not fear to stand alone, to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death-angel by the hand, and bid farewell to wife, and babes, and home. . . . Some thousand famous writers come up in this century, to be forgotten in the next. But the silver cord of the Bible is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken, as Time chronicles his tens of centuries passed by. Has the human race gone mad? . . . It is only a heart that can speak, deep and true, to a heart; a mind to a mind; a soul to a soul; wisdom to the wise, and religion to the pious. There must then be in the Bible mind, heart, and soul, wisdom and

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religion. Were it otherwise, how could millions find it their lawgiver, friend, and prophet?" The Bible, says Thomas Carlyle, is "the one Book wherein, for thousands of years, the spirit of man has found light and nourishment, and the response to whatever was deepest in his heart." William E. Gladstone says: "If I am asked to name the one comfort in sorrow, the safe rule of conduct, the true guide of life, I must point to what in the words of a popular hymn is called 'The old, old story,' told in an old, old Book, which is God's best and richest gift to mankind." Coleridge says, "I know the Bible is inspired because it finds me at greater depths of my being than any other book;" and Dwight L. Moody more succinctly, "I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me." We know that it is the Word of God because it speaks to our hearts. These statements bring us to our last point.

The Bible is necessary to our spiritual life. This is the most familiar of all the aspects of the Holy Scriptures, and therefore, though it is far the most important, it does not need to be fully stated here. We have seen, when speaking of the relation of the Bible to morals and benevolence, that it teaches men justice, honesty, truthfulness, purity, temperance, love, kindness and gentleness. But other books have done that in a measure ; yet they have not been able to give spiritual life. There is no vital power in mere moral precepts. They point out what is right but they do not give the ability to do it. A Japanese student, writing recently in the *Japan Weekly Mail*, says: "Of all our studies ethics is the most tedious. Our teachers tell us we must be honest, truthful and virtuous, all of which we know very well, but they impart to us no moral power to do these things." Now the religion of the Bible is more than a system of morals.

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The essential difference between it and other systems is that they have always lacked "the vitality of conscience touched by the Spirit of God." The Bible possesses the unique power of "enabling men to attain what it has taught them to prize and desire." For, in addition to the external rule, there is "the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts." Hence the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says¹ that "the word of God is quick and powerful," that is, living and active. It is not a dead book but a living word, operative, inworking, power-producing. "It is the glory of Christianity that it not only teaches what is good and right, but has a power in it to cause men to love and practice that good and right. The morality of Paganism was tentative, where Christianity is authoritative—dim where Christianity is bright—it gives only a rule where

¹ Heb. iv. 12.

Christianity supplies a principle. It lacked sanction, it wanted ardour, intensity; it could not furnish a faultless example; it gave no sufficient motive under temptation, no support under trials; above all, there was no causative power to make men love holiness or the very morality it taught. It could not impart the *new birth*." The Bible, on the other hand, "is alive," as Chinese Gordon said. It possesses and communicates life. Its ideas are not merely perceived but apperceived. "The Gospel is educative because its Teacher put its truth before men in a form to be apperceived, to become, not a part of a man's mental store, but a part of his mental life. The words of Plato are a priceless treasure, but the words of Jesus are spirit and life."¹

This is life eternal to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent;²

¹ "Educational Evangelism," Charles E. McKinley, p. 120.

² John xvii. 3.

and this knowledge the Bible alone gives. Prof. Wm. James, in his recent work on "The Varieties of Religious Experience," says that under all the discrepancies of creeds there is a common nucleus to which they bear their testimony unanimously; that, however widely the formulas of the various religions may differ, there is a certain uniform deliverance in which religions all appear to meet. "It consists of two parts: 1. An uneasiness; and 2. Its solution. 1. The uneasiness reduced to its simplest terms is a sense that there is *something wrong about us* as we naturally stand. 2. The solution is that *we are saved from the wrongness* by making proper connection with the higher powers." That is as far as other religions can take us. But is that a real "solution" which does not answer the question, *How* can we make proper connection with the higher powers? To that question the Bible, and the Bible alone, gives adequate answer.

It shows us that God loves us and that He has made provision for the pardon of our guilt through the atonement of His Son for sin, and it draws us to Him in penitence and faith. Here is the real secret of the power of this book. Not its incomparable wealth of literature, nor its incomparable wealth of moral teaching, but its Evangel—its revelation of a Redeemer—the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. That meets the deepest need of the human soul. “And I, *if I be lifted up*,” said Jesus, “will draw all men unto Me.” It is thus the means of our regeneration. The Apostle Peter says¹ we are “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.” And not only born, but also nourished; for the same apostle elsewhere² calls the word milk, and exhorts us, as new-born babes, to grow thereby. It is therefore not only

¹ I Peter i. 23.

² I Peter ii. 2.

the means of regeneration but of sanctification as well. The Apostle Paul commends the elders of Ephesus "to God and the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."¹ It substitutes for the cold principle of utility or expediency as a reason for right conduct the vital and effectual motive of gratitude and love to our Redeemer.

As W. E. H. Lecky says: "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love; has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short

¹ Acts xx. 32.

years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists." Hence the virile words of Browning :

" I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise."

And so in every age weary men who have traversed all the continents of philosophy and sounded all the seas of speculation come back

" To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read."

When Dean Stanley was visiting Heinrich Ewald, the greatest genius in the long line of German critics, Ewald took up a copy of the New Testament and said: "All the wisdom of the world is in this little book." The Bible alone can make

men "wise unto salvation."¹ When Sir Walter Scott lay dying at Abbotsford, he expressed a wish that his son-in-law should read to him; and when Lockhart asked from what book, he said: "Need you ask? There is but one." Lockhart read to him the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of John, and it cheered and comforted Scott as it has cheered and comforted thousands of others when approaching the end of earthly life. There is indeed "but one book" that can give to dying men eternal life.

For all these reasons the Bible is The Indispensable Book. Therefore, as we value the culture and character of our people, as we value their civil liberty and their material prosperity, as we value their deliverance from the guilt and power and pollution of sin, as we value their consecration to God in righteousness, as we value their peace in death and their blessedness

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 15.

in eternity, let us labour in season and out of season to saturate the minds and hearts of our whole people with the uplifting and refining and saving word of God.

THE END

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