

Sunday Reading.

A "BRECHES BIBLE."

Still in a Good State of Preservation Although 300 Years Old.

Lovers of the rare and unique in literature will be greatly interested in examining a volume which is found in the large collection which that enthusiastic book lover and collector, Charles E. Lauriat, has recently brought from Europe. This is nothing less than a copy of the famous "Breches Bible," in the edition of 1599. Although very near to the 300th birthday, the old book is in the most perfect condition. It is not only clean, unstained, and thoroughly legible, but not a leaf is mutilated or wanting. The volume has two title pages, the first, or general title, running thus:

"The Bible, that is, the Holy Scriptures, contained in the Old and New Testament, translated according to the Hebrew and Greeks, and conferred with the best translations in divers languages. With most profitable Annotations upon all hard places and other things of great importance, imprinted at London by the deputies of Christopher Barker, printer to the Queen's most excellent Majesty, 1599."

The title page is curiously engraved on wood, the title being surrounded by thirty compartments, containing the portraits of the apostles and the insignia of the leaders of the tribes of Israel. The title page of the New Testament is similar in design, the same block having been used, the text of the title only having been changed. The New Testament has copious marginal references, the manner of use of which is explained in a page most curiously worded and addressed: "The Printer to the Diligent Reader." After a careful description of his method of arrangement of these references the "printer" thus concludes:

"This have I faithfully done for thy commodity, reape thou the fruit and give the prayse to God. Farewell."

Each page throughout the book is neatly lined along the margin, top, bottom, and sides and through the centre, and the work having undoubtedly been done by hand in the most painstaking manner. Throughout the volume are scattered various curious illustrations on wood. One of these represents the hosts of Pharaoh pursuing the Israelites into the Red Sea; another is a birds-eye view of the region about the Garden of Eden. Still another is a remarkable map of the land of Palestine. This edition of the Bible, it will be understood, receives its curious name from the remarkable rendering of the seventh verse of the third chapter of Genesis: "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig tree leaves together and made themselves breeches."

This curious copy of the Bible, interesting as it is, does not comprise all that is rare and attractive in the volume. Inclosed in the same binding, of the same size and general style of publication, are four other books. The first of these is a copy of the Book of Common Prayer, "printed by Robert Barker, printer to the King's most excellent majesty, and by the assigns of John Bill, 1641." This is also red-lined throughout by hand, and is in an equally fine state of preservation. The second is a curious publication, the work of an expert genealogist. The title page reads thus:

"The genealogies recorded in the Sacred Scriptures, according to every Family and Tribe, with the Line of our Saviour Jesus Christ, observed from Adam to the Blessed Virgin Mary. By I. S. Cum. Privilegio. Anno Dom. 1638."

The title fully describes the contents of this interesting and curious work. This, too, is ornamented with woodcuts.

In the "make up" of the volume these two books described precede the "Breches Bible." Following it are two other works, the first of which is "A Brief Concordance or Table to the Bible of the Last Translation, serving for the more easy finding out of the most useful places therein contained. Carefully perused and enlarged by Dr. John Downame. B. in Divinity. Allowed by his Majesty's special privilege to be printed and bound with the Bible in all Volumes. London: Printed by William Du Gard for Nicolas Brown and are to be sold by Edward Dod and Nathaniel Ekins, at the Gun in Ivie-Lane, 1652."

The last of the books bound in this volume "The Book of Psalms, collected into English meter by Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins and others: conferred with the Hebrew; with apt notes to sing them withall. Set forth and allowed to be sung in all Churches, of the People together; before and after morning and evening Prayer, as also before and after Sermon; and moreover in private houses, for their godly solace and comfort laying apart all ungodly Songs and Ballads, which tend only to the nourishment of vice and corrupting of youth." This early example of the combined hymn and tune book curiously enough, is undated and the printer's imprint is also wanting. It is, however, undoubtedly of the seventeenth century, and of about the same date as the other hymn books contained in this volume. The style of notation is curious. The whole forms a volume nearly three inches in thickness substantially bound in leather, richly ornamented in gilt. Once,

evidently it was adorned with silver bosses and clasps, but these are missing. With this exception the volume is perfect.—Boston Transcript.

TOLD BY A TABLET.

A Discovery Which is Further Testimony of the Accuracy of the Bible.

In the year 1884 a large number of Babylonian tablets were acquired by the trustees of the British Museum, one of which, having recently been deciphered and published, deserves to be specially noticed, as it throws considerable light on many hitherto obscure passages in Scripture history. The tablet is of unbaked clay, measuring 6½ inches by 7¾ inches, and is inscribed on both sides in the Babylonian character with a complete chronicle of events immediately following upon the year 747 B. C.

This tablet begins with the reign of Nabonassar in 747 B. C., and ends with the accession of Shamash-sum-ukin, who was a foster brother of Assur-bani-pal, 667, the famous Sardanapalus of Greek writers. In the early years Nabonassar's reign a violent disturbance broke out in Borsippa, which was with great difficulty put down. During the revolt the statues of some of the gods were taken away, which led to further complications with the Babylonians. One Nadinu, who appears to have been the leader of the rebels, died, and peace was restored, but not for long, for we are informed in the next paragraph that the accession of Tiglath Pileser was the signal for another and more violent disturbance. Bands of Elamites, Moabites and nomads, began to flock in from all parts and overran the country. Moreover, as the spirit of rebellion had spread as far as Pilecia, there was great fear of the whole of Western Asia being drawn into a general war. At this point the tablet throws considerable light on a certain passage of Scripture. In 2 Kings xv. 19, we read: "And Pul, the King of Assyria, against the land, and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand." Now, there has been much controversy among historians as to the identity of this Assyrian Pul. No such king is known on the monuments, neither is a king of that name mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions. The recently discovered tablets completely clear up this historical enigma. It appears that Tiglath Pileser adopted a policy similar to that followed in later times by Sargon and Sennacherib. This, which may be called the policy of reconciliation, consisted of allowing the Court of Assyria to reside for six months of the year at Nineveh and six at Babylon. This would naturally give satisfaction to the Babylonian as well as to the Assyrian portion of the population. During the six months that the court resided at Babylon everything was carried out in the Babylonian style. Now we find, according to the new tablet, that Pul is given as a Babylonian abbreviated form of the native Assyrian Tukulti-Pal-Uzur, which, of course, has come to be called by its Tiglath Pileser. We have here, therefore, a solution of the Scriptural enigma; and we find that Tiglath Pileser and Pul are one and the same king.

The next important passage in the tablet is that concerning the death of Sennacherib and the accession of his son Esarhaddon. When Sennacherib ascended the throne we find that little by little the various foreign states which had become tributary to Assyria refused to send the annual gifts to Nineveh; and, moreover, Merodach Baladan, King of Babylon, attempted to free himself from Assyrian rule. Sennacherib, at the head of a large army, crossed the Euphrates and marched on to Babylon, leaving the administration of the home affairs to Esarhaddon. Merodach Baladan, on hearing of the approach of the Assyrians, fled to the marshes, thus leading Sennacherib master of the situation. Finding no further good could be done in Babylonia, Sennacherib invaded Elam, which was avenged by Hallusa, King of Elam, marching to Babylon and placing a certain Nergaluzer upon the Babylonian throne. The tablet next informs us concerning the death of Sennacherib, and as this will doubtless be of the greatest interest, we will examine it side by side with the Scriptural account of the same event. In 2 Kings xix. 37, we have the account of Sennacherib's death given thus: "And it came to pass as he (Sennacherib) was worshipping in the house of Nisrach his god that Adramelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword, and they escaped into Armenia. And Esarhaddon, his son, reigned in his stead." What says the tablet? Esarhaddon was the favorite son of Sennacherib, and when the king went out on his Babylonian campaign he left him as his vice-regent in Nineveh. Hardly had Sennacherib left the country when a revolt broke out headed by two of his sons, against his brother. In column iii., line 31, we have the exact date and month of the assassination of the king given. "The month Tisbat (January-February), the day 20, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, in a revolt his son killed him. The month Adar (March-April), the day 18, Esarhaddon, his son, in the land of Assyria, sat on the throne." It is needless to point out the close connection between the tablet and the Scriptural account. Enough has been said to show that in this new and interesting discovery we have one more testimony to the general accuracy of Biblical history.—Manchester Guardian.

Authority of Jesus.

His authority was that of the truth itself. It applied to the human heart; it satisfied the needs of men who were weary of ritual and dogma. It answered the cry of hearts whose experience had made them feel desolate and out-cast in the world. It had the authority and deep experience. The method of the divine instruction is the same for all of us—through the soul. The way to the deepest truth of the eternal must be trodden with bleeding feet.—R. v. M. D. Stutter.

SOWING AND REAPING.

The Story of a Lad who was Taught a Lesson to be Heeded by All.

Some little boys were playing behind the big barn on Mr. Thompson's farm, and, as to tell, they were using bad language; also two or three were trying to smoke cigarettes. Now it so chanced that Mr. Thompson himself was in the barn at this time, busy over the repairs needed by some of the farm implements; and, shocked by hearing such words, accompanied by the smell of tobacco smoke, he looked out cautiously to see who were the boys so misconducting themselves. In his grief at seeing his own son Willie with a cigarette between his teeth! And, alas! just as his father's eyes fell on him the roll of paper and stale tobacco was removed from the boy's lips, while he used some of those very words which had so shocked Mr. Thompson.

Grieved beyond measure, the loving father resolved upon teaching his son a lesson which he should never forget. Early upon the following morning he called Willie down stairs to prepare for a day's work in the field.

"We will plant the corn today, my son. Come with me and I will show you what seed to use."

To the boy's surprise, Mr. Thompson led the way to the ash heap, and began filling his sack with the rubbish there accumulated. When the bag was full he gave it to his son, and proceeded to fill up another for himself: this done they took up their hoes and passed on to the cornfield. When the rows were already for the seed, Willie said: "Shall I run back to the house father, and get some corn to plant?"

"Certainly not, my son; we have plenty of seed here in these sacks;" and forthwith he proceeded to drop bits of trash into the ground he had so carefully prepared. Seeing Willie struck dumb with amazement, he asked: "Why are you not planting? You have an abundance of seed."

"But, father, you surely don't think corn will come up if you plant nothing but rubbish?"

"N. I don't think so; but you seem to be of a different opinion, and I thought I would try your way for once, to see how it would work."

More astonished and mystified than ever, Willie said: "But, father, I never helped you to plant before, so I don't see how I could have a different opinion or way."

"My son, I was in the barn yesterday when you and your friends were playing behind it, and I saw you planting the seeds of bad habits—seeds which cannot fail of yielding a large crop one of these days." Willie hid his face in his hands, while his father talked kindly and earnestly concerning the harvest he must expect to reap by and by.

"Could I suppose you intended seriously to sow the seed of a bad character? No; I must infer that you expected to gather in a harvest of good things grown from the seeds of evil you were sowing, hence I am following your example. Now, my boy, let this thought sink deeply into your heart to-day; when you may reasonably hope to reap a crop of corn or wheat perfectly from seed taken from that heap of rubbish yonder, then—stop till then—may you expect to reap the harvest of a good character, an honored name, from the seed you were sowing yesterday—bad language and the use of vile tobacco. If you wish to be a good man you must be a good boy, for 'whatever a man sows that shall he also reap.'"

"Indeed, I won't sow any more rubbish seed, father; but the other boys were all talking slang, and some were smoking."

"Well, my son, whenever you start out to plant any kind of habit, good, just stop and ask yourself, 'What shall the harvest be?—wheat for the Master's garden or tares for Satan?' You will be safe then. Now, we will go back and get some corn."

BRIGHTER DAYS FOR JOB.

The Turning Point in His Career When His Trouble Came to an End.

"And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." (Job xlii., 10.)

In this book of Job is to be taken as a faithful picture of life when the world was young, it would seem that the world is pretty much what it has always been. Men love and hate, buy and sell, fawn before the wealthy, and forsake a man in the days of calamity, just as they always did. Thirty centuries ago and more, this Idumean Prince becomes a pauper in everything but honor and integrity. Three friends alone are left of all the crowds who thronged his path in the days of his wealth and prosperity. They came to comfort him, but so sadly did they blunder about the true condition of the suffering patriarch, and so strangely did they miss the mark at which they seemed to aim in all sincerity that they had become types through all the ages of men who aggravated where they should have soothed. It is wonderful how true to life this story is. As soon as the sun shines upon Job again, as soon as his health returns, when the day has come when he needs neither help nor comfort, then his friends and acquaintances came and bemoaned, and consoled with him over the evil the Lord had done to him, and every man gave him a piece of money—when he was no longer in need of it—and every one an earring of gold. Such was

life! Such is life! And such it will ever be! But there is one point of interest in this ancient story. It was when Job had cast out all hard feelings against his foolish friends that the Lord turned against his captivity, and the brighter days dawned. It is very hard to be patient and gentle under such provocation as Job endured, and yet there is no surer test of character than to be able to hear without a murmur the harsh and mistaken criticisms of those who call themselves our friends. But the good day came, when Job cast out all hard thoughts and unworthy feelings and bore up his friends in the arms of loving prayer. Then the darkness passed away and the end of Job's life was a sacred sunset of peace and rest.

SUNSHINE OF LIFE.

It Will be for Us if We Walk Steadfastly in the Light of God's Law.

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."—Ecclesiastes xii., 7.

The sunshine of life is not a luxury, which the Great Creator in the abundance and prodigality of his bounties has poured upon the path of man. That sunshine is a luxury, one dull morning, as a brief experience of clouded skies serves as sufficient proof. But sunshine is a necessity of life. Without light there could be no life. Where there is no sunshine there is no life, no joy, no beauty. Let us dream if we can of a world all darkness and gloom! What a nightmare that dream would be! The simple poetry of our days of childhood described the sun in grand and changeless meter, lighting the pathway of all the children of men. The rhyme was simple, the lesson was sublime:

My God, who makes the sun to know
It is proper now to rise
And to give light to all below
He sends him round the skies.

The more thoroughly we inform ourselves of the wonderful part the sun plays in our life, and joy, and delight, the more thoroughly shall we appreciate the bold song of the Psalmist, "God is a sun and a shield, he will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly," and still more shall we learn the deep and widespread meaning of the words of Jesus when he says: "I am the light of the world." But to come back to Solomon. "Three thousand years ago the Poet Prince of Israel, who had reached the sunset hours of a remarkable life, walked out into bright and cheerful sunshine and rejoiced in his old age that he could bathe mind as well as body in the sweet calm light of the morning, or gaze upon the sun as from east to west he marched along the sunny pastures of the firmament. It is indeed sweet to walk in the light. It is a pleasant thing to gaze upon the sun that every morning comes to 'make all things new,' and travels on till over the western hills he passes from our gaze. We do well to prize the sunshine of life, and if we are wise and walk in the light of God's law we shall make our lives full of that brightness that never sets, but shines on 'more and more,' unto the perfect day. And the more we walk in the light the brighter and the sunnier will be the path of all those who are journeying with us to the unclouded day."

The Chance to do Right.

Whatever God may deny us, he never denies us the opportunity to do the right thing. This thing may be our going forward or our holding back, our acquiescence of our refusal. He leaves it to us to decide, and this is our opportunity. Sometimes the opportunity is to become poor, sometimes it is to become rich. Sometimes it is to live, sometimes it is to die. But it rests with us to make the circumstances in which we are placed our opportunity to do the right thing, and to take it. God often shuts the door in our face in order that we may go through another one which he has opened. He knows that the closed door is the one that we want to go through. But sometimes he permits the opening of a door which he knows and we know we ought to enter. He thus puts us to the test by allowing us the opportunity of keeping out of it. And there are times when he closes all doors in order that we may have the opportunity of patiently waiting and persistently knocking until it is opened. No one can complain of this lack of opportunity, for he is pretty sure to be in one or another of these cases.—Dr. Peabody.

Infidels and Good Works.

Infidels sometimes say that the milk of human kindness runs through their veins, but no college has ever received an endowment from an infidel. Girard was not an infidel, and although he prohibited the entrance of preachers of the gospel into the college which he endowed, he desired the trustees of the college to have the students instructed from the best books of morals. The trustees unanimously decided upon the Bible as the best book of morals, and it is used in the college. The Bible was not mentioned in the will of Girard. No hospital, infant asylum or other charitable institutions were ever endowed by an infidel, but churches of all denominations have these institutions and care for them.—Rev. L. S. Ryder.

Society Liars.

The masses are disposed toward the belief that lies can make one rich, give one position in society, cover up irregularities which would bring him into distress. Men look about them and see these things helping to positions of preferment, positions secured by falsehoods. And so there is a growing disposition on the part of the young to feel in this age that honesty is not the best policy, that men must be false to truth in business to succeed.—Rev. W. A. Hunsberger.

The Field Is the World.

Go, then, young man, where glory awaits you. The field is the world. Go where the angels wander, and gather them into the fold of the sanctuary. Go to the lazaretto where the moral lepers herd, Go to the

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Music and Religion.

The one thing about music is its harmony, the blending of melodious tones in one harmonious whole, the bringing of its tones under the natural law. We are born for concord and for peace, to live, not in discord, but in perfect harmony. Before the sweet strains of Handel and Haydn were given to the world they were in their souls. You often hear it said that some men do not have an ear for music, but there are few who can listen to the real music that comes from the soul of genius without being moved. The single strain of an Easter anthem has saved a man from suicide.—Rev. R. F. Holway.

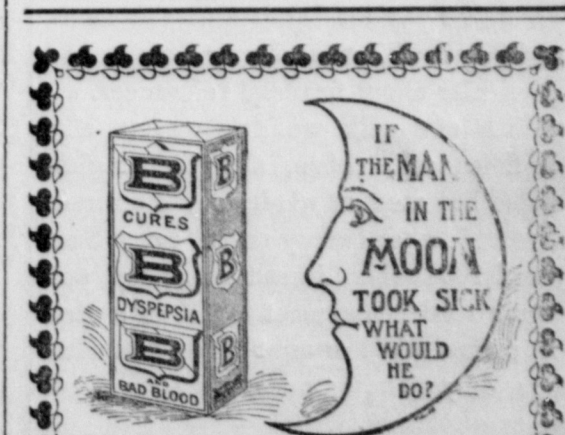
Value of the Present.

Life is a bundle of alternatives. Each tick of the clock calls us to choose. The alternatives come to us as independent propositions, invitations, demands. However they may seem to stand apart, the vital principle in the one projects itself forward into the next, and the choosing for one is, in some degree, the choosing for all. We may choose to day whom we will serve. In the face of temptations and trials we shall have to choose tomorrow also. But it is the part which the choice of the present moment plays in the choice of the next to make it easier or more difficult, that gives it a crowning value. The present is the

apex of importance. Now is the accepted time.—Sunday School Times.

Evil Companions.

The company that man keeps determines his character. No man dares undertake the religious life with honesty and earnestness without separating from evil associations. He draws off to the good, and the evil as naturally draws away from him. If evil associates of the past are near to him, they are no longer in sympathy with him; not because of his sanctimoniousness, but because there is something in the man on account of which they do not longer enjoy his society as they once did. The more earnestly he devotes himself to his God, the more they draw away from him. Rev. J. L. Withrow.



Just spend his Four Quarters for a bottle of Burdock Blood Bitter—as all sensible people do; because it cures Dyspepsia, Constipation, Bileousness, Sick Headache, Bad Blood, and all Diseases of the Stomach, Liver, Kidneys, Bowels and Blood from a common Pimple to the worst Scrofulous Sore.