OBTAINED AT A GREAT PRICE.

BY REV. T. E. BARTLETT, PROVIDENCE R I

What is well known will soon become but little known, if no care is taken to keep it in mind. Such apology, if any at all is needed, will be enough to justify some occasional reminder of a stormy age. In its passage from the classic tongues into English speech, the Bible encountered a storm.

Of the millions who now read the simple and impressive language of the Bible, few persons have in mind that they have before them, not the exact words of the sacred writers, but a translation of those words into a modern language. There are reminders enough of the original tongues, the plain statement on the title-page, the frequent references to Hebrew and Greek words in the margin, the foreign lands and the ancient times in which the scenes are laid. But these make little impression upon the reader, while the great thoughts of prophets and apostles come in upon the mind with direct and forceful words, giving no sign of the transformation they have undergone.

It is not at all strange that the translators are well out of mind. Of all the learned men who toiled over the Greek, Hebrew and Latin Bibles to make them speak to the English race, not one has his name on the title-page in preface or margin of our Bible. The singer is forgotten in his song. The translator is easily forgotten in the beauty and dignity of his work. But men to whom we are so deeply indebted are deserving of grateful remembrance, and a just view of the sacrifice offered, the cost of toil, of earthly losses, of exile, of reproach and burning faggot, which they incurred that Englishmen might have the Bible in their mother tongue, will do something to make the present generation prize what costs it so little because others paid the full price centuries ago.

The English Bible was not produced in a few years. It was not put forth complete like the German or the Burman as the product of a single mind. It was not wrought out amid general approbation, or hailed on the high places of power as a boon when it first appeared. It was the work of generations. Many minds, and these, too, among the ablest of their age wrought for its perfection and finish. The work was done largely in days of trouble, and its appearance in print was regarded with alarm by the great body of the clergy and the nobility of England.

Look around on the England of Henry the Eighth. Monasteries dot the landscape; not humble retreats for a few poor men whose thought clings no longer to this world, but palatial castles, magnificent piles built for ages, lordly abbeys with fabulous wealth and lands stretching twenty miles away. The endowment of monasteries had been a mania. Wealth flowed to them in a hundred channels.

Within these monastic establishments monks reveled in luxury, abbots reigned as princes. Subject only to the Roman pontiff, the monasteries served as outposts of the papal power and secured for Rome an English revenue far greater than that which reached the English king from his own realm. All the while priests and prelates were preaching to people pinched with poverty that the withholding of tithes from the wealthy clergy was mortal sin. But the light of learning was beginning to appear; it gave alarm to every lover of darkness. The tyranny of the ecclesiastical machine was strong to keep its hold; till the Bible should be in free circulation there was no power to throw it off. Men were not wanting who could foresee a brighter day for England, when the Scriptures should be freely read by the people; but to attempt to give to Englishmen an English Bible was certain to draw the fire of the hierarchy. Had not the bones of Wycliffe been unearthed from their forty years' burial by the decree of the council of Constance, and burned to ashes to show Rome's hate? What wonder that little was heard of lovers of the Bible in an age when a foreign power could violate an Englishman's grave and give his bones to the flames? There were readers of Wyclif's books still, but they were hidden. They loved the books that were sternly condemned by church and state.

The sixteenth century opened with many a terrible warning for those who loved the Bible. Men and women were arrested for reading or reciting or hearing fragments of the gospels. Christopher Shoemaker was accused of having read to John Say "out of a book, the words which Christ spake to His disciples"; for this offence he was burned at Newbury. Seven martyrs were consumed in one fire in the year 1519 "for having taught their children and servants the Lord's prayer and the Ten Commandments in English."

In such an atmosphere, made lurid with the fires of persecution, and in the full knowledge of the opposition likely to be met, William Tyndale laid out his great task. He would give to England her first New Testament in print, translated out of the Greek. How soon he found "there was no room in all England" for the work he had undertaken. He turns to exile, to finish his task beyond the sea. In the year 1525 six thousand copies of Tyndale's New Testament were smuggled into England. Swiftly but secretly they went on their way to college and hamlet. Had every copy been a breeder of the plague, the alarm of the Roman hierarchy could not have been greater. The great Cardinal Wolsey turned his thoughts from diplomacy to persecution that he might stamp out this domestic evil. He ordered a simultaneous search for the dreaded Testament in Oxford, Cambridge and London. The priests, with thoughts on the fires that would soon be kindled, had fervent zeal. They found an abundance of New Testaments in Oxford; they tore up the floors of students' rooms and found Testaments there; they seized every suspected student; they caught the curate who brought the books to Oxford; they kindled a great fire and marched the students and the curate around it to throw the dreaded books into the flames. There was another bonfire a week later at the gate of St. Paul's, London. Cardinals and other dignitaries of the church were present, giving their sanction to this new religious festival. Fitting close of a Sunday service in the cathedral, when baskets full of Tyndale's Testament were emptied upon the fire. Such was the reception England's first printed Testament received at the hands of the Roman church. These fires gave awful premonition of the larger burning piles, in which men and women were soon to die for having or selling or loving the Bible.

Great names belong to this age of the English Reformation, names great as the world counts greatness, others greater yet in the estimation of heaven, though some of them have no smallest memorial among men. The persecutors thought that they measured their task; they liittle knew that they had set themselves to resist the waves, the ocean currents, the conquering tides. There was a hunger for the Book which would not be withstood; the heart of England would not be content with a stone. In spite of threatening words and deeds, Bibles came steadily into England from foreign ports. They were bought up in Antwerp for London bonfires; merchants were put in prison, but men continued to risk their lives that England might have this hated book and elderly people learned to read, that even in the clouds of persecution they might peruse it, though their new acquisition might kindle the fire beneath their feet.

Tyndale on the continent was not beyond the reach of his enemies. Emissaries from London at length ensnared him and delivered him to the court of Brussels. Priests and monks controlled that court. The decision of that bar was known in advance of any trial. There was no longer suspense; for haste waits on malice and fanaticism. Then this ardent friend of the Bible, whose sentences we read whenever we turn to the New Testament, saw the instruments of death made ready. Strangling and burning was his recompense on earth. John Frith, the companion and helper of Tyndale, a young scholar who helped to give the New Testament its force and beauty, is less known. He is hidden in his Master's fame; but such heroism as his must not be forgotton. He came out of his retreat to visit the persecuted flocks in England. So great was the peril through which he passed that he was forced to change his clothing and name in every town. From place to place he went as a messenger of comfort to the imperiled ones, and he found such everywhere. He did not escape. Arrested, imprisoned, not accepting deliverance by stealth, brought to trial before judges instructed to condemn him, he too, was led to the stake. But the cause for which these men suffered took on abundant life. Two years after the martyrdom of Tyndale, an English Bible was not only allowed circulation, but was by law placed for general use in every church in England. In the year 1539 four editions of the entire Bible were printed under royal patronage.

The triumph appeared to be complete; but the time for full rejoicing had not come Four years later all Bibles were forbidden, and persecution relighted her fires. The terrible years of Queen Mary came; popery again grasped full power, and Cranmer, Ridley and Latimer, Hooper, Bradford and Rogers perished. In less than four years nearly four hundred persons died under persecution, in prison or under torture or at the stake. Taken from Bible reading and prayer, men and women were consumed in the flames, no longer one by one, but in groups of three, seven, or even thirteen in one great fire.

Thousands gathered around these fires to strengthen themselves by the martyrs' fortitude and to comfort those who were to suffer death. 'Let no man," cried the royal herald, "speak to or pray for the condemned, or once say, God help them." But pastor and flock were near when several of their number were bound at Smithfield. The fire was lighted, then the pastor said "We know they are the people of God and we cannot help wish well to them and say, God strengthen them." Then, in louder tones he added this prayer, "Almighty God, for Christ's sake, strengthen them." From the great throng arose the fervent "Amen, amen." That murmured prayer from the hearts of a thousand men told plainly enough to all England how helpless the persecutor's task had become and how certain a better day for England was soon to come.

Though centuries removed from those fires that raged around the English Bible and around those who labored to give it to the people, we may not, in our security turn our eyes away from that lurid glare. Four of the men who gave most earnest labor to make the translation clear and faithful and to secure for it a place in England, suffered death at the hands of the persecutor. Tyndale, Frith, Rogers and Cranmer perished in the fire. Thousands endured cruel mockings and perils, imprisonment and torture, for giving it welcome. Not a visable trace of all this suffering is found upon the book itself, except it be discovered in the eloquence with which the afflictions of the saints of past ages are depicted in the Epistle to the Hebrews and elsewhere, or in the majestic seriousness of the whole, or in the varied rhythm caught in perpetual communion with the heavenly world. As the translators wrought in peril, in exile, amid the scenes that kept the invisible world constantly before them, they seem to have been qualified by such experience to give their work what Froude calls a "preternatural grandeur, unequaled, unapproached, or finding the mingled simplicity and grandeur" put there by earlier workers, to have left it unaltered.

It will be good for us to remember the chief actors in the great conflict for the English Bible, the homes that were torn asunder, the martyrs' tears and prayers and ashes. And the cause of all this? It will not be amiss to keep in mind the cause of this manifold suffering, that despotism which has gladly wielded sword and fire to keep the Bible from the hands of men. It is well to read history with attention to learn the principles and the spirit of Rome. The civil power has proved too great a temptation to her temper. Too many lands have witnessed Christians tortured and burned while her priesthood watched the agony, for any one to be in doubt. Spain, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Italy and England, this is a formidable list, but in all these lands, martyrs, the full count kept only above, have fallen before Roman Catholic fury. It is vain to retort that Protestants have slain their victims. Protestants have made confession of the crime; they look upon that page in history with shame; long since they have renounced the right to persecute; but Rome is unchanged at heart and glories in her unchangeable principles. The history is within reach; shall Americans neglect to read it or read it in vain?—*Standard.*

For Immediate Relief after Eating Use K. D. C.

"CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR," OR ——?

I notice article entitled "Christian Endeavor" in the MESSENGER AND VISITOR of Nov. 21, signed P. W. Maskell. Perhaps a few lines from a Baptist in the U. S. may not be deemed impertinent, being written for sake of *principle*, not censoriously.

I heartily unite with your contributor in declaring that "we (Christians) should have no fellowship with the powers of darkness." I also was surprised when I read that the mentioned society "took every one in on equal footing whether Christian or not." Christian workers who place more value and stress upon *members* than upon *quality* will be led into methods that are framed more by policy than by principle. The admonition deserves repeating, "Let us be careful not to be led away by any desire to increase our numbers by sacrificing our distinctive Christian principles."

I wish your Young People could all read three articles that appeared in the *Pacific Baptist* (Portland, Ore., U. S. A.) last spring. A contributor protested against the custom of many Young People's societies in Baptist churches which took all professed Christians into active membership. In these words, your editorial in the issue of February 8th on active membership in Young People's societies is none too early, and might be more clearly stated as a real danger. That a department of the church at work should accord to "anyone calling himself a Christian" the powers and privileges which the church accords only to those walking orderly, yes obediently, is an anomaly. Yet I have found pastors who were unwilling to allow their Young People to confine active membership in their society to those who were members in a Baptist church." A brief extract from the editorial: "Anything which tends to obscure the lines between Christian and unchristian, between church members and non-church members is, in our humble opinion, plainly and positively mischievous. . . . Nor do we believe it is wise to put on an equality with the Young People who are members of the particular church of which the society is but a fraction, those who are members of other churches in other denominations. We speak frankly at the risk of displeasing some, but the more experience we have in this work the less do we sympathize with a mongrel membership in the Young People's societies. . . . To organize the young members of the church and associate them for more effective work is one thing, and in our opinion a very excellent thing, but to organize within the church a society of young people of miscellaneous relations, is quite another affair, and one with which we have little sympathy. . . . No one can serve two masters, and only as there is unity of organization, doctrine and spirit, as between young people's societies and the churches can there be singleness of service. Let us beware lest our good be evil spoken of and the light that is in us become darkness."

Another contributor wrote an article upon "A Mongrel Membership," in which these lines occur: "That it is none too soon to raise a 'danger' signal, is quite in line with our own convictions . . . Two fold are the sources of 'danger' along the lines pointed out in that editorial referred to. First, many young converts are enlisting with us who have never so much as heard whether Baptists have peculiar doctrines worth propogating, and who 'do not see why' we should be a peculiar people. Again, into the active membership of very many of our Young People's societies have been received those whose membership is not in a Baptist church. This 'anomaly' is becoming (we deem it has become) a more serious matter to our Young People's societies than the wholesale naturalization of immigrants is to our national welfare. Shall not the 'danger' sign be raised right here? One of the fundamental ideas of the Baptist Young People's movement is that the Young People's Society is a *part* of the local church in which it exists. The society is not simply connected with, nor does it merely belong to the church; it is a *part* of the church! Now, as your contributor says, 'to maintain its true independence and autonomy, the church needs must keep the standard of its membership where He placed it who knew the true value of faint praise.' Just so! Who gives a Young People's society in a Baptist church the privilege of having 'a mongrel membership?' What Baptist church has a right to permit a 'fraction, of its membership to do that which the church as an entirety has no authority to do?—cannot do and be a Baptist church! Brethren, as you keep the skaters away from the air hole by placing close to it the danger sign, so should we give the warning in due time, ere our young people have 'unwittingly' slid into liberalism, falsely so called."

I cannot but believe that the great, universal movement among Christian young people is God inspired and maintained by the power and guidance of His Holy Spirit; just as much as was and is the Sunday-school movement. For which reason I am the more pained to learn of any action upon the part of any society, connected with either branch of the movement, that tends to "lower the standard" or to offer any compromise whatever.

Two remarks of your contributor are not comprehended, possibly because I have no acquaintance with him or the position he takes concerning Young People's societies, either in general or in particular. I hope his remark, "if it is a B. Y. P. U. all right," contains no sarcasm or insinuation. Tried and true leaders of the Baptist hosts in Canada and in the United States, both south and north, and west and east, have clasped hands, and with united hearts are marching "shoulder to shoulder" in this branch of the movement known as the "B. Y. P. U." President J. B. Gambrell, D. D., of Mercer University, Macon, Ga., says in the *Texas Baptist Standard* of Nov. 22: "We have now a great movement as distinct as was the Sunday-school or the missionary movement when Bebee was in the zenith of his power. It is the Young People's movement. The principles of it (the B. Y. P. U.) have been adopted and approved by nearly every Baptist convention on the continent. They are sound. The work in had means much for the future of our churches, and at least a respectable lot of respectable brethren have had and do have connection with the movement. How has it been treated by some brethren, especially a few editors? Just as Bebee treated the missionary momement. They have belittled it just as he did. . . . It is well for us who are making history in these eventful years to lay some of the lessons of history to heart, and this most of all: That God is for the right, and to fight the right is not to fight men, but God, with the sure result of defeat. We are living in times of expression, of development and readjustments. God has not abandoned the world, and when we are called upon to consider great movements, we should cultivate a careful, fair and honest spirit."

The other remark, "Imagine a Christian Endeavor society that allows any moral person to join it," cannot be meant as it reads in cold type. For all the Christian Endeavorers, in this country at least, accept just such persons into associate membership. See C. E. Constitution.

I believe that no C. E. of any denomination should receive into its *active* membership those who are not members of the local church within which, and by authority of which, it exists; much less should a C. E. in a Baptist church become thus entangled.

With best wishes and prayers for the work of and by the Young People in your provinces,

Very sincerely,
F. E. HARRINGTON.

Denver, Col., Nov. 27, '94.

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE.

[Watchman.]

I wish to pay a tribute to the worth of my dear friend and brother, the late Rev. J. F. Burditt, of the Telugu Mission in India. Since the year 1881, when he joined the Mission, I have known him well, and the better I knew him the more I loved him and the more highly I esteemed him. He was a very faithful and conscientious man; as loyal to his Lord, to his conscience, to truth and to duty as any man I ever saw. All such things as time-serving, half-heartedness, compromise, 'trimming" to suit the occasion or the circumstances, found absolutely no place in him. Policy, expediency, scheming and wire-pulling, in religious matters, as in other things, he scorned as he would lying. He was clear, straightforward, sincere, true. He did his work for his Heavenly Master, and, therefore, whether his labor was performed before the face of his brethren or where no eye but God's beheld him, it was all one. He was conspicuous for faithfulness.

He was also the most self-sacrificing servant of Christ I ever saw. He never spared himself. He never sought for a "soft" place. He never shrank from difficult undertakings, or thankless tasks, or work in obscure places. He seemed never to have a thought of ease or comfort when duty was to be done. If duty pointed to the jungle instead of the city the jungle was his choice. He "endured hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Over how many of the rough cart roads and stony paths of the hard Udayagiri field has he trudged, even to the verge of exhaustion, as he went from village to village and hamlet to hamlet, visiting and confirming the Christians and preaching the gospel to all—Christian, Hindu, Mohammedan, high caste, low caste. Whether engaged in the labor which was required to transform the mission premises at Udayagiri from a rough stony waste, as it was when he began, to a well-ordered pleasant compound; or in superintending the erection of mission buildings, often standing on the walls throughout the day in the glaring heat, urging on and assisting in the work; or in patient, devoted evangelistic labors among the poorest and in the remotest parts of his field, it was always the same—hard, self-sacrificing toil, out of faithfulness to Christ, compassion for the people and love for the work. He did not seek "to be ministered unto, but to minister;" and in one sense he gave his life for the Telugu people.

He was a man of knowledge and excellent judgment. His knowledge of things was manifold and accurate. He had more or less intimate acquaintance with quite a number of arts and science. Hence he was able to do so many things and to do them so well, for instance, in the matter of building, without any aid from architects, engineers, or skilled workman. And thus he was able, also, in a variety of ways, to help the people, by teaching them industries, such as brick and tile making, brick-laying, carpentry, book binding, etc. His knowledge of medicine, also, for a non professional, was very full. But though, under the compulsion of circumstances, he had much of this kind of work to attend to, work that might be called secular, he was, at the same time and always, abundant in direct missionary labors; always preaching and teaching and doing good. The Udayagiri field will long bear the impress which he put upon it. It was clear that he loved God with deep devotion, and rejoiced to labor for the salvation of the Hindus. He was certainly one of the best, wisest, most conscientious, thorough workers in the mission field that I have known. He spent no time in "daubing with untempered mortar." To get up a fine sounding report and thereby secure praise from men was beneath him. Thoroughness and faithfulness were more than applause and notoriety. He remembered that when our work shall come before the Heavenly Master for final appraisement the word of commendation will not be "Well done, good and successful servant," but "Well done, good and faithful servant." He knew that true success is not gauged by thrilling reports, and he did not regard the statistical table as his great credential and recommendation. His death, in the Bowring Hospital at Bangalore, August 4th, was marked by resignation and peace, complete acquiescence in the Divine will, and a happy prospect of home and rest. He has left to his loved ones who remain, and to his fellow-laborers, a stainless record and a blessed memory.

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