

Religious Intelligence.

BIBLE SOCIETY, MISSIONARY, AND SABBATH SCHOOL ADVOCATE.

McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

TERMS.—ONE DOLLAR A YEAR, IN ADVANCE

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WHOLE NO. 157

Poetry

"THE DAY APPROACHING."

LINES FOR THE NEW-YEAR.

Seasons are rolling,
Years pass away;
Time's knells are tolling—
All things decay.

Empires are falling,
Nations despair;
Time's voice is calling—
"Men's sons, prepare."

Sins that are precious,
Guilty are still;
God, who is gracious,
Pardons who will.

Years past did bring us
Blessings untold,
This still dawn wing us
Gifts manifold.

We, these receiving
Day after day,
Should be believing
And God obey.

Death's hand was knocking!
God did us save,
When men were knocking
Down to the grave.

End we our slumbering!
Rouse us from sleep!
Fleeting days numbering!
Watching we keep!

Seasons are rolling,
Years pass away;
Time's knells are tolling—
Now comes the day!

What have I done?—What shall I do?

Dear Friend,—As this is the first month of the new year, I wish you to feel deeply the solemnity of such a time, and to learn wisdom by the revolutions of the seasons, and the unconscious passage of the swift-footed years! Look back over your past life—what have I done? Look forward, and say what shall be your condition if you are spared to the end of another year? Will you be holier at its close?—more like the gloriously pure and holy Son of God? How any will you have been instrumental in raising to the Lord? Will you fall away from following Jesus, or will you follow Him? Will your life be like the shining light, and will you point the way to Jesus, to heaven and glory, by a blameless walk in the world, or will you fall from your "first love," and lie helpless on the "broad way," so that sinners shall stumble over you, and go down to destruction?

Ah, how solemn, my beloved friend! weigh well my questions, for I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. Regard me as a friend, though I deal chiefly with you—an enemy never puts such questions as these. An enemy would say, "You are established with grace, and there is no fear of you." "Peace and safety." Ah! remember such flattery spreads a net for the feet, and if you have any confidence in our own Christian attainments, and think you can hold up your own going in the very best, you will certainly have fallen after fall, sorrow upon sorrow; but if your only eye is in Christ, our life and strength, then you shall never fall.

But if you would end the year well, begin well. Keep your heart ever active, pouring prayers to the throne of grace; when at your work, when in the meetings of the saints, when reading, when walking by the way, when you are conversing with others; at all times and in all circumstances. You should ever allow an interruption to communion with God. Serve Him without ceasing, and with all your heart. Be ever reminding Jesus to come in and abide with you. Be ever ready when He comes near to grant you greater discoveries of Himself, to rise up and open to Him, and when He speaks, either by His Spirit, by His Word, by His providence—have the ear of your heart so delicately sensitive, that you will hear Him at once, and cry in ecstasy, "The one of my Beloved!"

"Watch and pray!" Keep a strict watch over your heart, thoughts, lips, hands, and feet; and remember if you are to be for Christ at all, you must be wholly and always for Him, and present yourself to Him unreservedly, as "a living sacrifice." Christ save Himself for us, soul, body, and divinity, and I pray that you may live your remaining years "blameless and harmless," and be to the praise of the glory of His grace.

God will certainly reward His people at last; but I would not have you work for reward, but because "the love of Christ constraineth us," from love alone can true and happy service proceed. Beware of carrying the "burden" of the world into your service of Jesus; let all you do be the calm spontaneous outflow of a loving heart, ever in real fellowship with the Lord Jesus. "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." "To Him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, save he that receiveth it."

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. i. 13.)—*British Messenger.*

Effect of Sabbath Breaking on the Heart.

The great evil of transgressing the law of the Sabbath is on the heart. Man is a moral as well as an intellectual being.—His excellence, his usefulness, and his happiness, depend chiefly on his character. To the right formation and proper culture of this, the Sabbath is essential. Without it, all other means will, to a great extent, fail. You may send out Bibles as on the wings of the wind, scatter religious tracts like the leaves of the forest, and even preach the Gospel, not only in the house of God, but at the corner of every street; if men will not stop their worldly business, travelling and amusements, and attend to the voice that speaks to them from heaven, the care of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pride of life, will choke all these means, and render them unfruitful. Such men do not avail themselves of the institution which God has appointed to give efficacy to moral influence, and which He blesses by His Spirit for that purpose. On the other hand, men who keep the Sabbath, feel its benign effects. Even the external observance of it, is, to a great extent, connected with external morality; while its internal as well as external observance will promote purity of heart and life.

"The Secretary of a Prison Discipline Society, who has long been extensively conversant with prisoners, was asked how many persons he supposed there are in State Prisons, who observed the Sabbath, and habitually attended public worship, up to the time when they committed the crime for which they were imprisoned. He answered, 'I do not suppose there are any.' An inquiry into the facts, it is believed, would show, with few exceptions, this opinion to be correct. Men who keep the Sabbath, experience the restraining, if not the renewing and sanctifying grace of God. While they keep the Sabbath, God keeps them. When they reject the Sabbath, He rejects them; and thus suffers them to eat the fruit of their own way, and to be filled with their own devices."

"A father, whose son was addicted to riding out for pleasure on the Sabbath, was told that if he did not stop it his son would be ruined. He did not stop it, but sometimes sent the example of riding out for pleasure himself. His son became a man, was placed in a responsible situation, and entrusted with a large amount of property. Soon he was a defaulter, and absconded. In a different part of the country he obtained another responsible situation, and was again entrusted with a large amount of property. Of that he defrauded the owner, and fled again. He was apprehended, tried, convicted, and sent to the State Prison. After years spent in solitude and labor, he wrote a letter to his father, and, after recounting his course of crime, he added: 'That was the effect of breaking the Sabbath when I was a boy.'"

Should every convict who broke the Sabbath when a boy, and whose father set him the example, speak out from all the State Prisons of the country, they would tell a story which would cause the ears of every one that hears it to tingle.

"A distinguished merchant, long accustomed to extensive observation and experience, and who had gained an uncommon knowledge of men, said, 'When I see one of my apprentices or clerks riding out on the Sabbath; on Monday I dismiss him. Such a one cannot be trusted.'"

"Facts echo the declaration.—Such a one cannot be trusted." He is naturally no worse than others. But he casts off fear, lays himself open to the assaults of the adversary, and rejects the means of Divine protection. He ventures unarmed into the camp of the enemy, and is made a demonstration to the world of the great truth, that 'he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.' Not a man in Christendom, whatever his character or standing, can knowingly and presumptuously trample on the Sabbath, devoting it to worldly business, travelling, pleasure, or amusement, and not debase his character, increase his wickedness, and augment the danger that he will be abandoned of God, and given up to final destruction.

"Let every young man, especially he who has gone out from his father's counsel, and his mother's prayers, remember the Sabbath, and keep it holy, be found habitually in the house of God, and under the sound of that Gospel which is able to make him wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus.—Let him avoid worldly business and amusements on that day, as he would avoid the gate of hell."

"Even where they do not lead to abandonment in crime, they harden the heart, pollute the affections, sear the conscience, and prevent the efficacy of all means of grace. They carry the soul away from God, on the rapid stream of time, towards eternal perdition. Their language is, 'No God—no heaven—no hell! No human accountability for the things done in the body! Who is Jehovah, that I should serve him? I knew not Jehovah, neither will I obey his voice.'"

"In its progress, Sabbath-breaking sometimes seems to become a trial of strength between the Sabbath-breaker and his Maker. So besotted is he, that he acts as if he thought he could outwit or overcome the Almighty, and gain something valuable by opposing his will."

"A man in the State of New York, remarked, that he intended to cheat the Lord out of the next Sabbath, by going to a neighboring town to visit his friends. He could

not afford to take one of his own days and therefore resolved to cheat the Lord out of his. On Saturday, he went with his team into the forest, to get some wood. By the fall of a tree, he was placed in such a condition that he did not attempt to carry his intended freight into execution. He was willing to stay at home.

"But another man in the same State, who had spent the Sabbath in getting in his grain, said that he had fairly cheated the Almighty out of one day. He boasted of it as a mark of his superiority. On Tuesday, the lightning struck his barn. He gained nothing valuable by working on the Sabbath."

"Another man acted as if he thought all the evil of working on the Sabbath, consisted in its being seen. He went out of sight, behind the woods, and spent the day in gathering his grain, and putting it into a vacant building near his field. But the lightning struck the building, and with the grain, it was burned to ashes. He who made the eye, saw what this man did, and so ordered things in his providence, that he gained no real good by his transgression. Men are not apt, in the end, to gain in this way."

"Seven young men, in a town in Massachusetts, started in the same business nearly at the same time. Six of them had some property, or assistance from their friends, and followed their business seven days in the week. The other had less property than either of the six. He had less assistance from others, and worked in his business only six days in a week. He is now the only man who has property, and has not failed in his business."

"A distinguished merchant in a large city, said to the writer, 'It is about thirty years since I came to this city; and every man through this whole range, who came down to his store, or suffered his counting room to be opened on the Sabbath, has lost his property. There is no need of breaking the Sabbath, and no benefit from it. We have not had a vessel leave the harbor on the Sabbath for more than twenty years. It is altogether better to get them off on a week day than on the Sabbath.' It is better even in this world. And so with all kinds of secular business. Men may seem to gain for a time by the profanation of the Sabbath; but it does not end well. Their disappointment, even here, often comes suddenly."

"A distinguished mechanic, in a part of the country where the Sabbath was disregarded, had been accustomed for a time, to keep his men at work on that day. He was afterwards at work for a man who regarded the Sabbath, and who, on Saturday, was anxious to know what he intended to do; and therefore asked, 'What do you expect to do to-morrow?' He said, 'I expect to stop and keep the Sabbath. I used to work on the Sabbath, and often obtained higher wages than on other days. But so often lost during the week, more than all I could gain on the Sabbath, that I gave it up years ago. I have kept the Sabbath since, and I find it works better.'—*Beauty of Holiness.*

Extract from J. B. Gough.

We make the following extract showing the importance and power of early religious training—from a lecture on Habit delivered by Mr. Gough, the distinguished temperance lecturer before the Young Men's Christian Association of London:

"I hardly know how to begin this subject unless I bring before you, as an illustration, a young man coming from a religious home—coming from all the tender, hallowed, clustering associations of his early days—a young man, who has been taught to pray—a young man, whose heart has been warmed by his mother's knee, whose hand has been lifted in prayer his lips ever uttered. Take the young man from the Sabbath-school, and all the blessed influence which cluster around him in that nursery of piety, and bring him into this large, vast city, with so much of good and so much of evil. He is between the two—between evil influences and good influences. The young man coming from his home goes into one of your shops as a shopman, or a clerk, or in some other capacity. It may be that he has no particular religious principle, but religious truths have been taught him; and I say to you that the effect of early religious teaching is one that will, in a very great degree, prove permanent. I remember myself the days of Sabbath-school instruction. I remember the teachings of a praying, pious mother. That mother was very poor, but she was one of the Lord Jesus Christ's nobility, and she had a patient signed and sealed with his blood. She died a pauper, and was buried without a shroud, and without a prayer; but she left her children the legacy of a mother's prayer, and the Lord God Almighty was the executor of her last will and testament. That mother taught me to pray, and in early life I had acquired the habit of praying. She, with the assistance of teachers in the Sabbath-school, had helped to store my mind with passages of Scripture. And, young men, we do not forget that which we learn. It may be buried—it may be hid away in some obscure corner of the heart; but, by-and-by, circumstances will reveal to us the fact, that we know much more than we dreamed we ever knew. After that mother's death I went out into the world; exposed to temptations, I fell—I acquired bad habits; for seven years of my life I wandered over God's beautiful earth like an unblest spirit—wander-

ing, whipped, over a burning desert, digging deep wells to quench my thirst, and bringing up dry hot sand. The liveliest of my master had become to me a garment of burning poison, bound with the fetters of evil habit—evil habit like an iron net encircling me in its folds—fascinated with my bondage, and yet with a desire—oh, how fervent!—to stand where I had once hoped to stand.—Seven years of darkness, seven years of dissipation, seven years of sin! There I stood. 'Ah!' says one, 'what is the effect now of a mother's teaching, and of your good mother's prayers—of Sabbath-school instruction and of your good habits that you formed in early life?' Oh! I stood there—I remember it well—feeling my own weakness, feeling that 'the way of the transgressor is hard,' and that 'the wages of sin is death.'—feeling in my heart of hearts all the bitterness that arises from the consciousness of powers that God had given to me wasted, conscious that I had been chasing the bubble pleasure and finding nothing, gaining nothing by it,—there I stood; that mother had passed to heaven. I remember one night sitting with her in the garret, and we had no candle. She said to me, 'John, I am growing blind; I don't feel it much; but you are young—it is hard for you; but never mind. John there's no night there, there's no need of any candle there—the Lamb is the light thereof.' She has changed that hard, gloomy garret, to bask in the sunshine of her Saviour's smiles. But was her influence lost? No. As I stood, feeling my own weakness, knowing that I could not resist temptation, it seemed as if the very light she left as she passed had spanned the dark gap of seven years of sin and dissipation, and struck the heart and opened it. I felt utterly my own weakness, and the passages of Scripture that were stored away in my mind—buried, as it were, in the memory, came, as if whispered again by the loving lips of that mother, into my ear. 'He is able to save to the uttermost'—that is what I want. I want to be saved—I cannot save myself—saved to the uttermost.' 'He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' This was the force and influence of a mother's teaching. It was the force, as it were, of a good habit that had been utterly broken up and destroyed by the acquisition and the evil habits of sin."

The Absent Ones.

Who are they? Let us see if we can tell. The prayer meeting night has again come round. The pastor, for the last three days, has been anxiously looking forward to this evening, and hoping to see his flock together in the place of social prayer and Christian communication. He takes his seat in the lecture-room and waits to see who will come. The constant and faithful ones enter promptly and take their accustomed places. He is glad at their coming. They have cheered his heart and quickened his step to duty, by their presence and prayers, through many a long and weary month, when others had gone after their own and 'not the things of Christ.' He expected to see them, and he is not disappointed. But the flock are not all there. Who are the absent ones? He is pained to know that among them is one who, when he first expressed his hope in the Redeemer was all glorious with love and zeal—who confidently said, 'Henceforth will I trample the world under my feet, and give my life to Jesus.' But the glow of his affection has grown dim, and his zeal has burned itself out. He is usually in his place in the sanctuary on the Lord's day, but he has forgotten the way to the prayer meeting. Among these stray ones is another whose business engagements are never allowed to bend to his religious obligations, and so often has been prevented from visiting the prayer meeting by some 'pressing matter of business,' that he now uniformly forgets this weekly appointment. There is another who habitually absents himself through sheer modesty. This weakness has clipped the wings of his devotion. He is fearful that he might, if present, be called upon to lead the devotions of the people, and this fear quite overcomes him. There is also a very excellent female member who is very apt to have 'a few friends run in,' on the evening of the meeting, or feel obliged to make 'a few calls' to conform to the etiquette of her rank, and so among those 'calls' the prayer meeting is rarely included. She is 'sorry' when spoken to about her absence, 'that it so happened, but could see no way of avoiding it.' But besides all these there are still other absent ones. They are the sick and suffering children of God, whose hearts are stayed on Him who is their portion. Their thoughts go to the place of prayer, and they never weary in their desires for Zion's advancement.

The pastor would gladly see more of the unconvinced members of his flock in the place where Christians meet to 'praise and pray.' But he has reason to fear that they are not often invited by their Christian friends, and so come to feel that they are not wanted. Will not these stray ones think of these things? And will they not, with repentance, turn again their erring footsteps to the weekly prayer meetings? So many hearts will be made glad, and especially the heart of a pastor.

The first book ever printed was the Book of Psalms, by Faust & Shaffer, A. D. 1457. It was printed on one side only of the leaves, which were in the binding pasted back to back.

Correspondence

London Correspondence.

LONDON, DEC. 5th, 1856.

Beginning with the weather, which is on every one's tongue, especially when the weather is extraordinary in any of its characteristics, I can only report a fickleness which is proverbially ascribed to our climate, but which has of late been too remarkable for the most filial-hearted of Mr. Mill's progeny to deny or explain away. Damp and dryness first, and then rain and snow have succeeded each other with curious inconsistency, trying many people's tempers, and chiefly those of the weather-wise, who find their predictions tripped up at every turn. The prevailing cold has sensibly affected the mortality of London, which has increased about 200 weekly since the change. The Continent, according to report, is not better off than our little island, while the deficiency of fuel aggravates the sufferings of the lower classes.—This is strikingly the case in regard to several districts of France. The gaiety of our neighbors soon yields to the fall of the barometer, and it is well for both governed and governors if their sensibility to suffering does not take forms of riot and tragical assault. The British race is said to be most politically constant on a full stomach and in warm clothing, and with the French the axiom has greater breadth and compass. Bread-riots have been the precursors of the most dreadful scenes in their national history. The Emperor is bestirring himself, and not too soon. Some twenty Prefects of Departments (the Prefect is a sort of pro-consul or petty viceroy), have been dismissed, and the government is intent on preventing at the next elections the return of men who will use so much liberty of speech as to give the ruling powers a great mortification, if not expose them to degrading defeats. As the Ministers of State are not responsible to any one but the Emperor, on him falls the odium of their faults, and the faults of their inferiors. This is one of the pleasures of despotism,—the gall which the retribution of heaven mingles with the cup which the wish of power leads man to covet and gain,—the dregs which the drinker is compelled to swallow with the more palatable elements of the seductive poison. The Emperor of Austria is on a visit to his Steban dominions, and is garlanding his path with amenities to political offenders (?) and tariff relaxations. It is doubtful whether he will venture into some of his trans-Alpine territories: Lombardy crouches under the talons of the eagle, but is ever on the watch to rise and wring the eagle's neck. The idea of an Italian nationality is a vision, bright as one of Italy's own landscapes, but when was Italy ever under one single government since the Roman standard was swept away by the Gothic invasion? Other causes than foreign oppression keep the Italian people, I fear, from the attainment of that state in which the hearts of many noble patriots are warmly set. The political atmosphere of Europe is not calm or clear. Russia is keeping panic faith with the Allies, having resorted to one of the meanest tricks to save her footing near the line of the Danube. The tale of Serpents, at the principal mouth, is in English hands, but is not yet surrendered to the Court of St. Petersburg, and what is worse, Bolgrad is laid claim to a town on the banks of the Danube, altho' the only reason that can be alleged is the concessions that the Russian diplomatists at the Paris conference received off a false map upon the representations of the Allies. Our own government will not concede a single point, as it is the universal persuasion that England has been generous enough already where a crafty and unscrupulous despotism is concerned. Kossuth is blowing the fire his eloquence has kindled in the south of England and in Scotland, in relation to the tyranny which now spreads like a pall over nine-tenths of Europe.—Alas! that we have to witness the reflection of such a system on the American Continent, and that the State of Penn., which ought to have held the keys of liberty with a death-grasp, should have surrendered them to the 'domestic institutions' of the South. It is true, after all, that the progress of the world is a delusion, and that all that is secured is a see-saw motion which gives alternate advantage to the friends and foes of rectitude and love. The news of Mr. Buchanan's election was received here with unaffected regret by all parties, and tho' some of the depressing influence has subsided, it is with aught but a hopeful eye that we look upon the prospects of the United States. Union is strength—but not always, anymore than the union of a dead body with a living body would be strength; or than the union of the demon with the person of the 'possessed.'—Separation is strength also, and considering the evil of the world, is so almost as frequently as union itself.

The disease of the late Chief Justice Jervis, has been followed by the elevation of the Attorney General Sir J. E. Cockburn to the Bench. A coroner (as Lord Langford) is said to be beaming over the head of the new Chief Justice—a man of much forensic ability, and whose best friends wish that his official rise will correct these irregularities which are not seemly in an oracle of the law. The cultivation of the intellect, and that exercise of it which Themis affords, are apt to give a onesidedness to the character far out of proportion with the moral harmony of human nature. Even the late Judge

Talford, one of the most jovial and generous of men, and addicted to indulgences from which total abstinence is the only sure preservative.

Parliament is to meet on the 2nd of February, and rumors are afloat as to the preparation made by the leaders of parties to enter on the campaign of the Session. Lord Palmerston is reported to have a budget of Cabinet measures.

Lord John Russell is brooding over a plan of Reform, which is to make him popular again.—Some of the papers advocate his transference to the Upper House, and others fear that unless his Reform Bill is accepted by the Government he will enter into direct opposition, and form a coalition with the Peellites and others. His long association with office is said to have made him miserable in any other position than a Minister of State, or a Minister out of place and aiming to recover it. This is not attributable to ambition, but to habit, and to the consciousness of powers capable of being usefully employed in the public service.

Mr. D'Israeli is thought to be weaving a web of policy which is to catch in its meshes the chief of the administration. The general sentiment is that Mr. D'Israeli has had his day, and that the sunshine of office will no more fall upon his head. He has in more senses than one a twilight reputation which will probably remain with him to the end.

Mr. Bright is invalided, and doubts are spread of his ever being able to resume his seat in Parliament. He is a man of bulky frame, sonorous voice, and as a speaker has no superior in the House for giving expressive exposition of his views, and making them carry an appearance of strong common sense. In temper he is imperious and dogmatic, with a sufficiently high estimate of his own importance. His opinions are apt to be contracted by educational prejudices, and by a provincial rather than an imperial manner of treating questions of imperial range. Mr. Cobden is a more amiable man, also better informed on general subjects, and always heard with great respect but with less pleasure than Mr. Bright. The death of an only son last session detained him from public business, and the blow will long leave its mark upon the doating parent.

It is not a little strange that the leaders of the Anti Corn Law League have gained little if at all, in public repute since the time of their triumph. They have never applied the same vigour and ability to any other great question of the times, and it is not likely they ever will. The topic of national education is expected to have a conspicuous place in the debates of the coming Session. Sir John Pakington, one of the conservative chiefs, a semi-liberal conservative, has been to Manchester, the seat of two opposing projects, and a compromise is said to have been effected, which, if maintained, will make success more probable than at any previous time. Local taxation under local collection and distribution, with extra time for religious tuition, if desired, is the basis of the compact, and should the issue be reduced to *scams*, pure voluntarism, the former will undoubtedly carry the day.

The Duke of Cambridge is introducing various reforms into the organization of the army, which justify up to this time the expectations formed of his perspicuity and independence of red-tape formalism.

Another mad-cap of an expedition has set out from Bombay to dive the Persians from Herat, a kind of Berwick-in-the-Tweed; in the debatable ground of the Persians and Afghans. It is surmised that the East India Company mean to keep what they can get in this expedition, making Herat a sort of out-post of the Indian Empire to give warning of the Russian invasion—a standing bug-bear of Indian politicians.

A trial for libel, in which the Earl of Lucan was plaintiff, and the *Daily News* the defendant, has terminated in favour of the latter. The newspapers glory in the verdict, as vindicating the freedom of the press, and, indeed, one would have been sorry, apart from the legal points of the case, if the *libel* had gained anything in regard to comments on the Crimean business. Lord Lucan was the commander of the cavalry, but quarrelled with his brother-in-law, Lord Cardigan, and besides, perille grumbling, both noblemen seem to have been unfitted for the grave responsibilities resting upon them. The mismanagement in the late war was so outrageous that a plea of license might be put forth on the part of the press, in respect to all who were implicated in the disasters of the dreadful winter of 1854-5.

Yesterday Dr. Tait, the new Bishop of London, was enthroned in St. Paul's Cathedral, with a ceremonial, splendid and imposing, but which the Apostles would have looked upon with no admiring eye.

Lord Palmerston has won the golden compliments from the Low Church party by giving up the Bishopric of Ripon, to Rev. R. Bickersteth, a nephew of the Bickersteth now dead, whose religious works were widely circulated. Rev. R. Bickersteth was Rector of St. Giles, and a powerful preacher, and he goes northward to be again in the vicarage of his friend Hon. Dr. Villiers, the Bishop of Carlisle.

Of local matters I must make brief mention. We are still in doubt what means will be adopted to relieve the Thames in our quarter from the sewerage of the metropolis. You will rejoice to hear that the Temperance enterprise is not lost sight of. The National Temperance League have sent a deputation to Ireland with the bes