

The Family Circle.

Lectures on the Bible.

BY THE REV. S. G. GREEN, D. D.

No. 11.

The State of the World without the Bible.
Suppose, I had to speak to you to-day of the sky without the sun or stars! of the earth without its fruits and flowers! of ships without their compass and helm! or of man without his mind! I would not think I should have some very dismal story to tell! But I have something yet sadder to talk about, for my subject is, *the world without the Bible.*

For 2,500 years, there was no Bible; and then for 1,500 years more only the Jews possessed it; but then it was only in part; and more than 4,000 years had passed away from the days of Adam before God's Book was finished and given to the world. But how was this? and why did God leave man for so many hundreds and hundreds of years without the light and teachings of his word?

Perhaps you will understand it better if I give you a short parable. Once upon a time, then, a band of travellers were setting out upon a journey. The way was very long, the road was very wild, but at the end there was a glorious home. Their master stood by them at their setting out. "You will find the journey dark and dangerous," he said, "take a light from me." But the travellers were proud and foolish. "We know the way well enough," they said; "besides it is all light now, who talks of darkness?" They did not see that the light came from the lamp in the master's hand. And so they set out. For a little while they went on very well. The light of that lamp still shone around them and made the way plain. Then when that light grew dim, one and another of the company remembered what they had seen of the road, and so managed pretty well to keep the right course. But after a while the darkness became thick and heavy. Scarce one little ray was left of the master's glorious lamp. No one recollected or knew the way any longer. It was all guess-work for the anxious and unhappy pilgrims. Bye-and-bye, from one and another of the company, the cry was heard, "lost! lost! lost!" They had wandered into thick woods, or fallen into pits of mire, or tumbled headlong over rocks. What could they do? Some of the travellers now tried to strike a light. There was great noise of flint and steel, and here and there sparks flew out. But these were soon quenched again, or if a lantern was kindled, it showed lights of strange colours, pink, and yellow, and blue; making things seem often very different from what they really were, and deceiving the pilgrims with the appearance of a road where there was only a puff of air and a precipice. And so they wandered up mountain sides, and through tangled forests, down into deep valleys and along the banks of mighty rivers. They knew no longer whether they were going; they had almost forgotten their home. At last they sometimes caught sight of a little band who had found the true light again, and who were marching on beneath its faint, yet growing brightness. But they scarcely looked on these travellers, or asked how they came by the light; so busy were they now with their own matches, and tinder-boxes, and lanterns. "I have found the light," said one, "the way is here." "No," cried another, "any lantern shows the road, and it is there." A very favourite employment was blowing out one's candles; and as soon as one struck a spark, fifty were trying to quench it. All were lost. And even those afar off who had the true light became careless about it, and wandered so far from its shining, that their road too became dim. So that at last, from hill and valley, from forest and riverside, there rose one sad, wailing cry, "We cannot find the way, we cannot find the way! Who will tell us that we have a home, and show us the road to it, for we are sure that we can never discover it ourselves?" Then, suddenly, a faint but glorious light was seen shining far and wide; and every eye was fixed upon it as it grew nearer, brighter, and still. Then a sound as of distant music was heard. Softly, sweetly, it swelled around them, until the place was filled with melody; and the travellers knew it was the master's voice. Then they lifted up their eyes, and saw him standing there! The lamp was in his hand. "My children," said he, "I left you to yourselves that you might learn your weakness. You will believe me now, when I say that you cannot, by your own powers, find the way to truth and peace. See, I set the lamp on high. Walk in its brightness, and you will reach your home."

I think, you will make out my story. The lamp is the light of truth, life is the journey, the home is heaven. All men are the wanderers, in all lands and nations, as they lived in age after age. At first the light shone bright and clear. Adam and his children talked with God. But those who came after them forgot; and so the whole world became dark. The little company who still had some light were the Jews; but they, too, forgot, and so the truth shone forth for all men, and life and immortality were brought to light."

Now there are five things I wish you to remember. First, *How men came to lose the light of God's truth.* Here, I will give you a text to answer the question. Turn to Romans 1:28. "They did not like to retain God in their knowledge." If the world forgot God, it was the world's own fault. Men might have remembered him even before, and without the Bible. Old men, who lived after Adam's time, as you read in the fifth chapter of Genesis, for hundreds and hundreds of years reached such an age for the very purpose of telling, not only to their sons and sons' sons, but to their grandsons' grandsons, the wonderful works of God. Then to help them to think of him, there was what we may call a Bible written on the sky. Sun, moon and stars declared the glory of God. Men had within them, too, what you know about, to tell them right and wrong, I mean, CONSCIENCE. These were the lights by which they might have found the way. But they never did find it, because they did not choose. "They loved darkness better than light." So that if they were lost, they had only themselves to blame.

Secondly, Recollect that one reason why God permitted them to forget him and to re-

main so long without the Bible, was that they might find out whether they could teach themselves. There are people even now in the world who say that men could find out the way to be holy, and the path to heaven, without the Bible to show them. See, they say, how much we know; we do not want the scriptures to teach us; we are in the light already! I will tell you what such people are like. There was once a little boy who said, "Father, I wonder why the sun always shines in the day time. It's light then, and we don't want it. If it would shine in the night it would be of some use." "Foolish lad," he forgot that the sun makes it light. Until it rose, all was dark. Just so, the world was in ignorance until the Bible came. And God let it be so for a time, that men might learn to feel that no light of their own would do, but that God himself must teach them or they would never find the way to heaven.

Thirdly, You must not forget that in all lands men did really try very hard to find out the true way for themselves. I have said, God let them alone that they might do so. And so they did with all their might. As I said in my parable, they were ever surrounding themselves with sparks, and seeking to light up lanterns of their own. The world was full of teachers, and priests, and temples. Men learned to worship all kinds of gods, except the true and living One, and practised every sort of religion, but that which would make them good and happy forever. I could tell you much about the strange things they were taught to believe and do; but I will only speak of one place, the great, proud city of Athens. The people there thought themselves very wise. So wise, that they called the rest of the world "barbarians." Indeed, they said that their forefathers were not created like other people, but sprang up out of the ground, ready-made, the cleverest and best of men! For six hundred years they had been trying to find out about God and heaven, and the way to be good. Well, they had surely done their best; indeed, the city was full of schools and teachers. We read about two sets of these teachers here, in Acts xviii, "the Epicureans, and the Stoics." There were many other names. There were temples, also, and idols, and priests, in hundreds. Indeed, somebody once laughed at them, and said, "In Athens, it is easier to meet a god than a man!"

What, then, had all these idols, and priests and teachers, done for the people? This question leads me to the fourth thing I have to say, and it is, that after all the trying for so many ages, nothing had been rightly found out about God, or about goodness, or about the way to be happy forever! What, nothing? No, my children. Shall I tell you what the Stoics, and Epicureans, and the rest had agreed upon after very much disputing, and quarrelling and putting out each other's lights? It was that *everything was uncertain*; nobody could be quite sure of anything. Not that there was a God? No. Not that there was a world beyond the grave? No. Not that there was a goodness and wickedness that they themselves really lived! So that, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. There it stood, like the wild cry of the pilgrim, in the parable, "We cannot find the way." "We know nothing. O, who will come to teach us, and set us in the way of truth?"

And then God sent to him his Apostle Paul, who looked at him as his text, and preached the sermon as we find in this chapter. And what did he tell them—these wise, proud men—whose fathers had been toiling six hundred years to make out the truth? Why, dear children, he told them just the easiest and plainest things—as they seem to you—the very ABC of religion—things that the youngest babe in the infant school knows about, and that some of you learned to prattle over at your mother's knees before you could speak plain! "Can you tell me who made you?" The great God who made heaven and earth. And what does this great God do for you? He keeps me from harm by night and by day, and is always doing me good. And what should you do for this great God who is so good to you? I should learn to know him first, and then do everything I can to please him. That was the sermon, not in the same words, I know, but with exactly the same meaning. Poor wise men of Athens! Are little children in English Sunday schools wiser than you? And what is the reason? Only this—they have the Bible; and that book is light from heaven!

Then, fifthly, Men were very sinful as well as ignorant. I cannot tell you, of the wicked things they used to do, and to delight in. Missionaries sometimes give you dreadful accounts of what they have seen in heathen lands—lands without the Bible; and when *the world* was without the Bible, such shocking things were everywhere. Men had no thoughts of a holy God. Not one of their idols was ever called holy. The tales of their gods were full of all kinds of wickedness. People believed a god to be a thief or a liar, yet they worshipped him! Could we expect them to be better than their gods? "They that made them are like unto them, so is every one that trusteth in them."

Remember, then, these five things:—(1) men were proud, and would not walk by God's light; (2) God let them try to find out truth and wisdom by themselves; (3) they did try hard for thousands of years; (4) they found out nothing; and (5) all together became wicked and miserable. Truly the Bible was wanted to teach men to be wise and happy! And the Bible came, with its glorious words of truth, like God's voice, in gentle music, speaking to an unhappy world, how thankful we should be, that God has not left us to seek him by ourselves—"to feel after him, if haply we might find him"—but that we can read his name and learn his love from this most blessed book!

And will you not pity the heathen, to whom the Bible has never come? An old, white-haired South Sea islander, who in his old age had been turned from his idols to love the Scriptures and to seek the Saviour, was once seen by a missionary weeping bitterly. "What is the matter?" he was asked. "Oh, sir," he said, "to think that I was almost in my grave before I ever heard that Jesus said, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest!'" Ah, thousands go quite to their graves without hearing of the Redeemer, or knowing that God is love. You will help, you will

not, to send them the good news? And by-and-bye, the glorious time will come when all shall hear of Jesus, and not a land, not a city, not a house, not a heart, in all the wide world shall be any more WITHOUT THE BIBLE.

Poetry.

[From the morning Star.]

MATTHEW XXI. 41.

Shall Christians ever forget to love
Their Saviour, and their friend?
Shall holy feelings cease to move,
Their hopes not upward tend?

This world, with all its luring snares,
Would make us still delay;
Would rob our hopes, release our cares,
And lure us from the way.

When tempting snares, with luring wiles,
Entice us from the way,
And hopes would cheat, with witching smiles,
Then we should watch and pray.

When scorn, its withered lip has curled,
To drive us from the way,
Because we shun a pious world,
Then we should watch and pray.

When griefs o'erpower our feeble faith,
Half rob us of our stay;
Least we forget that holy path,
Then we should watch and pray.

And lest some cheating sin beguile,
And lure us from the way,
Our Saviour tells us that ere while
We still should watch and pray.

THE DOUBLE FLOT.

Three hungry travellers found a bag of gold;
One ran into the town where bread was sold.
He thought, I will poison the bread I buy,
And seize the treasure when my comrades die.
But they, too, thought, when back his feet have
He hid,
We will destroy him and the field device.
They killed him, and partaking of the bread,
In a few moments all were lying dead.
O world! behold what ill thy goods have done!
Thy gold has poisoned two, and murdered one.

NATURE AND FAITH.

Nature sees the body dead;
Faith beholds the spirit fled;
Nature stops at Jordan's tide;
Faith can see the other side;
That but hears farewell and sighs;
This, thy welcome in the skies;
Nature mourns the cruel blow;
Faith assures it is not so;
Nature never sees thee more;
Faith sees thee gone before;
Nature reads a dismal story;
Faith has visions full of glory;
Nature views the change with sadness;
Faith contemplates it with gladness;
Nature murmurs, "faith gives weakness";
"Strength is perfected in weakness";
Nature writhes and hates the rod;
Faith looks up and blesses God;
That looks downwards, this above;
That sees harshness, this love.

—Rev. Robert Peden.

A Chapter on Mistakes.

It is a mistake to suppose that persons are

thirsting after a knowledge of the truth of God, when they have money at interest, and

refuse to patronize a religious paper.

It is a mistake in the devotees of pride and

self-conceit, to suppose that their "costly

array" and lofty bearing will command the

respect of a sober, thinking community.

It is a mistake to suppose that learning or

talent will supply the place of vital piety.

It is a mistake in the worshippers of mam-

mon to suppose that they can drag them-

selves to heaven with the world on their

backs.

It is a mistake to suppose that we can

please God, and all men.

It is a mistake to suppose that if we do

not take care of our own characters, our neigh-

bors will do it for us.

It is a mistake in the envious, to suppose

that they can build themselves up by pulling

others down.

It is a mistake in contributors, to suppose

that editors have nothing to do but correct

their errors, decipher their crows tracks, or re-

write their articles.

It is a mistake that long articles without

either point or point, will be acceptable to

the readers of a paper.

It is a mistake to suppose that a Christian

does not know how to prefer his brethren in

honour, before himself.

It is a mistake in a minister to suppose

that his congregation will repose confi-

dence in him if his conduct contradicts his

preaching.

It is a mistake in church members to sup-

pose that their pastor will entertain a high

opinion of their love or respect for him, when

they have no other evidence than empty

words to prove it.

It is a mistake to suppose that a minister

likes to be scolded by his parishioners for not

preaching and visiting more, when necessity

requires that he should be at home, laboring

with his hands to supply their lack of service

towards him.

It would be a mistake in me to suppose

that this chapter will be generally read by

those for whom it is more especially intended,

unless good, benevolent subscribers will lend

their papers.

If I am not mistaken, this chapter is long

enough.—Gospel Herald.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S CHILDREN.—The

Queen's children are rapidly growing up.

The Princess Royal, who is about to be mar-

ried, is now aged 17; the Prince of Wales is

16; the Princess Alice, whose hand is to be

demand in marriage by the Prince of

Orange, is 14; and the Prince Alfred, whose

"residence at Alverbank" his mamma gra-

ciously visited, is 13. Besides these four el-

dest, the family includes Helena, 11; Louise,

9; Arthur, 7; and Leopold, 4.

CORN MEAL.—Just received and landing

this day (Friday), at South-wharf, per schr. Persia,

from New York.

A superior Kila Dried CORN MEAL fresh,

in good order. For sale by

JOHN J. WRIGHT,

24, South-wharf.

jan 29

Religious Intelligence.

CORYOTYPES! CORYOTYPES!!

Invented and Patented by the Subscriber.

THE CORYOTYPE is a picture taken on Leather; and while it equals the Ambrotype or Daguerotype in correctness, it far exceeds them in durability. The "Coryotype" has all the appearance, softness, and richness of an oil painting.

IT WILL NEVER WEAR OUT!
The Subscriber having recently fitted up his rooms, is now prepared to take likenesses on Leather, Glass, or in the common Daguerotype style. He has been honored with the patronage of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor and many other dignitaries, and he assures all who may favor him with their patronage that he will give them a picture which will last for ages. Call and examine specimens.

JOHN A. MACE,

Coryotype Artist,

King-street, Carleton

sept 30

A CARD.

A. GILMOUR begs to return his sincere thanks to his friends and the public generally for the liberal share of patronage received during the past fifteen years.

Having this day associated with him in Co-partnership Mr. Thos. Gilmour, of this City, he respectfully solicits for the new firm a continuance of that support which he has so long enjoyed.

He requests all parties who have claims against him to send in their bills for payment, and those who are indebted to him to call immediately to settle their accounts.

March 5

Hats, Caps, and Furs for Sale.

To be sold at lowest Cash Prices, the balance of

Winter Stock of HATS, CAPS, FURS, BUFFALO ROBES, &c.

24, King Street.

W. H. SMITH.

Cash and the highest Prices paid for Fur

Skins.

China Ornaments.

An excellent assortment of CHINA ORNA-

MENTS, consisting of Vases, Bells, Bottles,

Bowls, Candlesticks, Baskets and Toys, in great

variety.

Also, China Tea, Breakfast and Dinner SETS, now

open and for sale by

W. H. SMITH,

24, King Street.

EXTRA SUPERFINE Family FLOUR.

230 lbs. Extra Superfine Family Flour, just re-

ceived and landing this day per schr. "Volant," from

New York, and for sale by JOHN J. WRIGHT,

24 South-wharf.

185

THE Subscriber has on hand at his Tannery, No.

159 Union Street, in addition to Leather of various

kinds, (his own manufacture,) a quantity of Ameri-

can Sole Leather. Also, 18 br. of Sole and Tan-

ner, WM. PETERS,

P. S. Hides and Skins from the Country always

on hand, for which the highest Market prices will be

paid.

EXTRA FAMILY FLOUR.—150 Barrels

Extra and Double Extra Family Flour, just re-

ceived and landing this day per "Volant," from New

York, and for sale by JOHN J. WRIGHT,

24 South-wharf.

185

R. GOLDING'S

CHEAP BOOT AND SHOE STORE!

No. 51, Prince William Street.

THE Subscriber has received by Steamer "Europa,"

and Packet Ship "Middleton" from Europe, his

assortment of Boots, Shoes, and Slippers, of the

latest and most fashionable styles, and at

very low prices.

Carpet and Felt SLIPPERS of all kinds; Ladies',

Misses', and Children's CLOTH BOOTS; Sham-

rock Boots; and all kinds of Boots, Shoes, and

Slippers, which will be sold at the lowest possible price for

Cash.

HOME MANUFACTURE. BOOTS,

sewed and Peg, Pump and Double Sole. Boys' home

made Boots of all sizes. Constantly manufacturing

all kinds of Ladies' Cloth, Prunella and Cashmere,

Jongres, and Lace BOOTS. Ladies' would find it

to their advantage to leave their orders, as the sub-

scriber has constantly employed experienced Ladies' Boot

Makers.

Ladies', Gents', Misses' and Children's RUBBER

BOOTS and SHOES of every description, and will be

sold twenty-five per cent. less than last years prices,

and of a superior quality. A liberal discount made

to wholesale purchasers. (Nov. 20) R. G.

China, Earthenware, &c. &c.

The Subscriber having the last winter visited the va-

rious Earthenware Manufactories in Staffordshire, and

made such selections therefrom as will give satisfac-

tion both to City and Country, will receive by Packet

Ship "John Barbour."

40 C. RATES fancy and common Earthenware;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;

50 crates China Teapots;