

THE FRESHNESS OF THE BIBLE.

BY ALFRED NEVIN, D. D. "Father! that book, with those worn leaves the careless infant played, must be the Bible. Therein thy living eye meets a cheering light and silent words of mercy breathing from Heaven, will be exhaled from the best page into thy withered heart."

Queen Elizabeth, who spent much of her time in reading the best writings of her own and former ages, has left on record the following words: "I walk many times in the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I pluck the good smells of herbs of sentences by pruning, at times they grow up length in the high seat of memory by gathering them together, so that, having tasted their sweetness, I may less perceive the bitterness of life."

I ask attention to the name by which the Queen designated the venerable volume. She regarded it as a "pleasant field." There is an important significance in this descriptive phrase. It was certainly possible for God to make his revelation to the race in such a form that (according to the demand of the intellect) the words of his should be able to lay his finger upon a precept or a doctrine for each occurring need, and to find in "one place, and under one head, all which concern one matter: so might have been given to us as a systematic body of divinity, or as a statute-book, with a digest and index accompanying it, so that in a month, or a year, all that we had seen that it contains, touching any of its credenda and agenda or its articles of faith and its rules of practice."

It is not surprising, that a system of management had been adopted, which would have carried with it any advantage to us? Think for a moment. How much more pleasant is it to wander over a broad and beautiful landscape, with graceful undulations, its alternate lights and shades, and its freshly growing plants, with the dew upon their leaves and the world about their roots, than to sit down in the straight, hard, level and narrow path of a garden, which is entirely the product of constant labor and forced culture? How much less agreeable is it to be confined and stiff enclosures, all which falls under the eye at a single glance, leaving no variety to delight, and no discovery to be made, than to pass over an extended territory, on which the systematizing influence of art has not yet been brought to bear, with heights and valleys, forests and streams, and rights of the left of our path, and close about us, full of concealed wonders and choice treasures?

Now, this is the manner in which the Scriptures have been given to us, and it is impossible for us to have read the Bible, which it indicates. As thus before us, which holy oracles constitute an abiding stimulus to research, and an unending source of variety and interest. "I stand alone, says one, "when our energies are roused, and our attention awake, when we are acquiring, or correcting, or improving our knowledge, that we may have the requisite impression upon us. God has not made Scripture like a garden, "where the fruits are ripe, and the flowers bloom, and all things are made ready to our view, but like a field, where we have the ground, and seed of all precious things, but where nothing can be brought to view without our industry; not then, without the dew of heavenly grace."

"I find in the Bible," says Cecil, "a grand peculiarity, that seems to say to all who attempt to systematize, that great and central mind. I stand alone. The great and central mind shall never exhaust my treasures: by figures and parables I will come down to the feelings, and understandings of the ignorant. Leave me as I am, but study me incessantly."

This is a true view of the Bible. It is so constructed as to be constantly something new. It cannot be disposed of at one reading. It demands a vigorous exercise of the understanding. No man that has ever lived could be said to have read the Bible through. Many, indeed, have perused its pages from beginning to end, but these have always been the first to admit that it required, and would bear, perusal again and again, and that the more they studied it, the more they were amazed at its wonderful depths, and attracted by its magnificent beauties. The learned De Clerc tells us, that while he was compiling his Harmony, he was struck with admiration of the excellent discourses of Jesus, and so inflamed with the love of his most holy doctrine, that he had but just begun to acquire the Greek, when he was suddenly laid out of his hands from infancy. During the time that Dr. Kennicot was employed on his Polyglot Bible, it was the constant object of his inquiries in their daily sittings, to read to him those different portions to which his immediate attention was called. When preparing for their ride to the Holy Land, he read the Bible, and the first day that he read it he was so completely absorbed in its contents, that he would take time to read it, and he would exclaim, "Oh! what a book would take time to read it, and he would begin the Bible."

"The Bible," says an eminent divine, "remains an extensive garden, where there is a vast variety and profusion of fruits and flowers, some of which are the same, and some as splendid as others, but there is not a blade suffered to grow in it, which has not its use and beauty in the system. Salvation for sinners is the grand truth presented everywhere, in a point of light, but the pure in heart sees a thousand trails of the Divine character, of himself, and of the world, some striking and bold, and some as we were into the shade, and designed to be searched for and examined."

"A man's love of Scripture at the beginning of a religious life, which praise always sounds inadequate. Its glories seem so much more full than they seemed at first." "This experience of the inexhaustibleness of the Bible, that it is not confined to the persons just named. Thousands times ten thousand witnesses there have been, and there are, that the love of the sacred volume grows with the person, and that it affords to the student of its pages, ever-fresh delight. It is not so with other things. Interest in them is abated by repetition and familiarity. The sweetest song that minstrel ever sang upon earth, soon becomes hackneyed, and we get tired of it, the richest winds, by becoming common, lose their relish. The most beautiful landscape loses its power to inspire by being often surveyed. Most books we read, even those which are most intensely interesting and exciting, will not bear reading more than twice or thrice. This, however, is not true of the Bible. The more we read it the more we desire to read, and the more we find to read. It still has, after assiduous and repeated perusal,

INSURANCE STATEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE PROVIDENCE WASHINGTON INSURANCE CO. On the 31st of December, 1855. CAPITAL STOCK PAID IN, IN CASH, TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS.

INSURANCE STATEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE PROVIDENCE WASHINGTON INSURANCE CO. On the 31st of December, 1855. ASSETS: Real Estate held by the Company, \$127,300 00; Cash on hand, \$25,000 00; Cash in Bank, \$25,000 00; Loans, \$11,000 00; etc.

SABINE, DUJ & HOLLINSHEAD, AGENTS, NO. 230 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

FRANKLIN FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. Assets on January 1, 1866, \$2,506,851 96. Losses Paid Since 1829 Over \$5,000,000.

THE HOME INSURANCE COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. No. 150 South Fourth St., above Walnut Street. CHARTER PERPETUAL.

GIRARD FIRE AND MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY. OFFICE 415 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA. CAPITAL PAID IN, IN CASH, \$500,000.

THE RELIANCE INSURANCE COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. CHARTER PERPETUAL. CAPITAL, \$500,000. Insures against loss or damage by FIRE, on Houses, Stores, Warehouses, and Merchandise.

THE PHOENIX LIFE AND TRUST COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA. INCORPORATED IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA. CAPITAL PAID IN, IN CASH, \$1,000,000.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds. General Accidents include the Travelling Risk, and also all forms of Dislocations, Broken Bones, Sprains, etc.

SABINE, DUJ & HOLLINSHEAD, AGENTS, NO. 230 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA. STATE AGENTS FOR PENNSYLVANIA, NEW JERSEY, AND DELAWARE.

FINANCIAL. 5-20 7 3-10. Compound Interest Notes WANTED. DE HAVEN & BRO., 40 South Third Street.

P. S. PETERSON & CO., 39 South Third Street. Stocks, Bonds, &c., bought and sold at Board of Brokers.

SMITH, RANDOLPH & CO., BANKERS AND BROKERS, 16 South Third St., 3 Nassau Street, Philadelphia, N. York.

PAPER HANGINGS, CORNER FOURTH AND MARKET STS., PHILADELPHIA. MANUFACTURERS OF HOWELL & BURKE.

WATCHES AND JEWELRY. LEWIS LADOMUS, DIAMOND DEALER & JEWELER. 802 Chestnut St., Phila.

LADIES GOLD WATCHES. RIGGS & BROTHER, CHRONOMETER, CLOCK AND WATCHMAKERS. No. 24 South Front Street.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

INSURANCE COMPANY, PROVIDENCE, R. I. Cash Capital, \$300,000. Insures against Accidents of all Kinds.

NEW PUBLICATIONS. CHOICE ENGLISH BOOKS. Standard and Illustrated Editions, SUITABLE FOR FIRST-CLASS LIBRARIES. Selling off at Reduced Rates for Two Weeks Only.

C. J. PRICE, Importer of English and French Books, etc. 21 SOUTH SIXTH STREET, ABOVE CHESTNUT.

SABINE, DUJ & HOLLINSHEAD, AGENTS, NO. 230 WALNUT STREET, PHILADELPHIA.

THE PRINCE KASHA. Novel edited by Miss E. M. S. P. PETERSON & BROTHERS.

THE PRINCE KASHA. Novel edited by Miss E. M. S. P. PETERSON & BROTHERS.

THE PRINCE KASHA. Novel edited by Miss E. M. S. P. PETERSON & BROTHERS.

THE PRINCE KASHA. Novel edited by Miss E. M. S. P. PETERSON & BROTHERS.

THE PRINCE KASHA. Novel edited by Miss E. M. S. P. PETERSON & BROTHERS.