

This book can be made to uphold almost anything that man desires. It is the consolation of every vice and the barricade of every crime.

A few years ago American Christians looked upon that book as the foundation and defense of human slavery; yet slavery is a crime that includes all others, and in comparison with which most others are virtues. The Bible was the word of God, and for that reason man was under obligation to obey. Had it been considered simply as the work of man, it would not have been quoted to justify that which the intelligent men of the nineteenth century hold in abhorrence. Had the idea of inspiration been thrown away, all passages in conflict with liberty and science—with the recorded experience of the human race—would instantly have become harmless. The Bible would not have been considered as a guide for man, but simply as a collection of the opinions and mistakes of dead barbarians. The good passages not only would have remained, but their influence would have been increased, because they would have been relieved of a burden.

No one cares whether the truth is inspired or not. The truth is independent not only of man, but of all the gods. "And by truth I mean the place of man in nature—the relation he sustains to the all; the relation between things, and between thoughts and things; between acts and consequences, between conduct and condition. The perception of truth bears the same relation to the logical faculty in man that music does to some portion of the brain; it is a mental melody. This sublime strain has been heard by a lonely few, and yet I am enthusiastic enough to believe that it will be the music of the future.—[Bible Idolatry.]

Perseverance, the Friend of Man.

BY SUSAN H. WIXON.

There is to whom all things are easy;
his mind as a master key,
Can open, with intuitive address, the
treasures of art and science.
There is to whom all things are hard;
but industry giveth him a crowbar
To force with groaning labor
The stubborn lock of learning.

—[Tupper.]

The accomplishment of aims, the successes in life are due to concentration of effort, to energy and perseverance. We see persons plodding along day after day, not showing much for their work at first, but finally astonishing every one by their acquirements and prosperity. "They have genius!" it is said. But what is genius? Buffon said "genius is only patience."

It is work.

It is the power to start at work with an object in view, to never let that object out of sight, to keep

straight on, no matter what stumbling blocks are in the path.

It is the keeping steady at one employment till the work is complete.

It is the not being discouraged.

Success does not come by accident. It comes by utilization of time, by thought, by reason, by work. "Such an one is lucky," you say. But is there any such thing as luck? "Luck!" said the Duke of Wellington, "I made luck." Instead of luck, the force that wins is application. Kepler was a lifetime working out his three laws of the universe.

A busy lawyer mastered the French language by employing just fifteen minutes after dinner every day to its study. Elihu Burritt, called "the learned blacksmith," attributed his success to the persevering habit of utilizing "odd moments." He earned his daily bread at the blacksmith's forge, and at the same time learned eighteen ancient and modern languages and twenty-two European dialects. He said, "All that I have accomplished, or expect, or hope to accomplish, has been and will be by that plodding, patient and persevering process of accretion which builds the ant-heap, particle by particle, thought by thought, fact by fact. And if ever I was actuated by ambition, its highest and warmest aspiration reached no further than the hope to set before the young men of the country an example in employing those valuable fragments of time called 'odd moments.'"

He did make an example for you and for me, and for all.

He taught us a lesson of perseverance—how to keep right on in our work and not falter or faint.

If we sink under discouragement, or adverse circumstances, we are lost.

The thing to do is to sink discouragement, not ourselves.

It is to plunge into labor, if we mean to achieve an end.

To aim toward a high mark, and resolve by all fair means to reach it, is wisdom. To do a little at this and a little at that, is scattering energies, wasting time. Darwin was a man, as all admit, of great worth to the world. How did he become so? By perseverance, by putting all his force and energy into his work, and employing every moment of time, in spite of a poor state of health and many drawbacks.

"Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well;" and in whatever we undertake, we need to put health, strength, power, energy. For that purpose we should see that we live truly and morally, because right methods of living give us power, energy, force, pluck, perseverance.

The men and women most need-

ed in the world, which is a great industrial and moral school, a college to teach people how to live, are the men and women of energy and perseverance. Without such, the business of living would totter and reel backward.

Failure is not to be entertained as the final goal.

One attempt, two, three or four, may be fruitless.

Try again, and still again.

If you get thrown in an encounter with work, jump up, roll up your sleeves and start in again.

If you are trying to overcome evil with good, and it seems all uphill labor, call all your best forces, take a night's rest and start on with renewed vigor. Hopefulness and the will to do are what you want.

If others outrun you in the race, take a long breath and distance them by strength and perseverance.

Do not let the word "Fail" come into your mind as a possible result, but go straight toward the purpose in view, slowly, it may be, but surely, till the end sought is accomplished.

It was only by intense and thorough application for years, unceasing devotion to his cause, that Humboldt gave to the world his *Cosmos*. All men and women who bless the world by their successes have not done so by means of any special favoritism of fortune, but by hard labor and thorough application. The road their feet trod is open for you and for all.

The Genesis and Growth of Religions.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

A friend writes that the ignorance which preceded belief in supernaturalism was normal, but belief in supernaturalism appeared as a mental disease, as a morbid phenomenon.

According to my view, religion had its genesis and growth in experience. There was a time when conceptions of gods and belief in supernaturalism had not come into existence, were no part of the mind's furniture. If man were evolved from ape-like creatures, and they from still lower forms, all conceptions and beliefs are experimental; in other words, they have been acquired; they originated in observation and reflective thought. Thus fetichism, polytheism and monotheism appeared, and their origin and development were just as natural as was the evolution of the mind itself.

These religious ideas and beliefs were, it is true, founded on superficial observations and erroneous inferences, but this fact made them none the less natural. Primitive ideas are, for the most part, false. They are such ideas as naturally

form in the minds of those who see narrowly and imperfectly, and reason feebly. But such observations and reasonings, and the erroneous conclusions which result therefrom, are just as natural and normal with undeveloped minds as are the more comprehensive and discriminating observations and the more correct conclusions of highly evolved minds.

The primary fact of evolution is continuity. Every condition is the result of modifications of previous conditions. This is as true of man's religious conceptions as of anything else. The fact that they were originally acquired or that they were slowly evolved from simple to more complex ideas, makes them none the less natural.

Much that was slowly acquired by experience in the forgotten past comes to us, of today, by heredity as a birthright. Ancestral experiences are condensed and consolidated in us as intuitions, aptitudes, predispositions; as "a priori forms of thought." The mental power of reasoning, like the physical power of grasping with the hand, was acquired through many thousands, and hundreds of thousands of years. Our conceptions of morality, the moral sense or disposition, our musical taste, mathematical ability and power of imagination and of abstraction, as well as language, have been acquired; have come by a progress of integration and growth. They are products of the evolutionary process.

The same is true of religious beliefs and observances. They are natural results of man's mental and physical constitution, and of his environment. They are subject to modification by racial and climatic influences. Very different were the religions of Judea and of Greece, but both were natural outgrowths of the human mind. The religion of the Jews would have been abnormal for the Greeks; that of the Greeks would have been quite as abnormal for the Hebrews.

It would be as unreasonable to say that the belief, once universal, that the earth was flat was, because of its erroneousness, abnormal, as to say that religion, because one does not believe in supernaturalism, is abnormal, or a morbid phenomenon.

A Scotch parson once upbraided the blacksmith of the village for not paying his church rate. "But I never go to the kirk," said the blacksmith. "That is your fault," said the minister; "the kirk is always open." A few days later the blacksmith sent a bill to the minister for shoeing his horse. The minister indignantly protested that his horse had not been shod. "That's your fault," said the smith; "the forge is always open.—[New York Observer.]