

The Bible.

Stuart Robinson puts a deal of truth into this one paragraph:

The Bible alone, of all books in the world, instead of uttering the opinions of the successive ages that produced it, has been the antagonist of these opinions, and victor over them all. It maintained the unity of God amid all the darkness of the Western polytheism; the vivid personality of God against Eastern pantheism; the ineffable purity and holiness of God against the obscenities of Egyptian and Canaanitish idolatry; the omnipresence of God against the heathen theories of Gods many and lords many; teaching salvation by grace without works just when and where the great schools of the world's philosophy, were glorying in their schemes of human regeneration; teaching the resurrection of the body, and that this mortal must put on immortality, just when and where Socrates and Plato, on the one hand, had theorized for man in an immortality that excluded the mortal body, and Epicurus and his swinish herd, on the other, were teaching their practical atheism of the destruction of both soul and body together. In all these things the Bible was in advance of the ages in which it was written, and the antagonist of the false teachings of those ages, and in the end the victor over them all.—*Rural Home.*

Prayer.

Do not speculate and reason about prayer, but pray, and rest your case with God. He who moves you to pray has surely an answer provided in his own good way. Do not doubt him, do not question, do not hesitate, but pour out your heart in prayer. His eyes are over the righteous, his ear is open to their cry. The young birds in their nests cry, and he feedeth them; are ye not much better than they? The young lions roar and seek their meat from God, who provides for them in his own way. Shall he not care for you and me? Provision is made for the body; if it wants light, it has an eye with which to get it; if it wants knowledge, and food and clothing, it has a brain and hands and feet with which to acquire them. He has not made the body a prince and left the soul a beggar. The soul wants pardon and peace and comfort and bread from heaven, and has no way but to cry out for it. "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find." All

heaven is pledged to make that promise good. Whatever troubles come, whatever cares oppress, whatever fears give anxiety—pray. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name, thou art mine."—*Ec.*

BOOK TABLE.

[Under this head we will be pleased to give editorial reviews of all books and tracts of interest that may be sent to this office.]

A RELIGIOUS NEWSPAPER.—We desire to call the attention of our readers to one of the largest, ablest and most popular religious newspapers published—one that secures the best writers in this country and Europe, regardless of expense; has the best and fullest book reviews of any paper in the country; has able articles upon financial and commercial subjects; has departments edited by specialists and devoted to Fine Arts, Music, Science, Religious Missions, School and College, News of the Week, Hymn Notes, the Sunday-school, Legal Sanitary questions, Biblical Research (something that cannot be found in any other newspaper in the United States), Farm and Garden, Insurance, Weekly Market Reports, etc.—in fact, a newspaper which, with its twenty-two distinct departments, is suited to the requirements of every family, containing a fund of information which cannot be had in any other shape, and having a wide circulation all over the country and in Europe. We refer to **THE INDEPENDENT**, of New York, now called "The largest, the ablest, the best." See advertisement, in another column, and send a postal card for free specimen copy.

AN AGENTS DREAM.—*General Grant, Ex Prest. R. B. Hayes, and President Arthur Interested—A Canvassing Agent's Bonanza.*—On the afternoon of October 10th, last, Messrs. F. Myers & Co., of 658 Broadway, New York, presented to President Arthur, at his New York residence, 123 Lexington Avenue, a copy of a remarkable and magnificent engraving, entitled "Our Presidents, 1789-1881," (copyright, 1882 by F. Myers & Co.) After warmly commending the picture, the President bespoke a copy also for the White House, and the picture, elegantly framed, has accordingly been supplied—"with the compliments of the publishers." On November 22d General U. S. Grant, while present at his business office in the Equitable Building, Broadway, N. Y., purchased a copy from a canvassing agent and appeared much pleased. Said the General and ex-President, referring to the portrait of himself: "That is a very good likeness of me. It is just as I look now, and my hair is just about as gray, and

no grayer, than it appears there, and" added the General, "Garfield's is excellent—Yes, and there's Taylor—I served under him—that is a good one of him; Indeed your picture is a good one generally. I am quite familiar with all the faces I was so long at the White House, where good portraits of all the Presidents are found. It is a good idea, and I am quite pleased to have one." Saying this, General Grant, having paid the agent, left his office, en route for his up-town mansion, carrying his copy of "Our Presidents, 1789-1881," with him, under his arm. On the next day, ex-President R. B. Hayes, received a copy of the plate at his home, in Fremont, and he at once addressed a letter to the publishers expressive of his approval.

The high merit of this picture—the finest national portrait group ever published—is established in the beauty of its conception, which has there caused to be assembled, in figure, for the first time, our twenty-one Presidents giving audience to the great nation over which they have been honored to preside. It presents them in one of the saloons of the White House, artistically portrayed in natural attitudes, in full length figures, each one clad in the style peculiar to himself in his day. The portraits are telling and life-like, and recall the memories of all. A singular effect is produced by thirteen clean-shaven faces, the custom of their times, while but four of the twenty-one wear the now popular moustache. On the walls of the saloon hangs a well-executed picture of the surrender of Cornwallis, which in itself accurately illustrates that great historical event. It is taken from the original painting in the Rotunda of the National Capital. From the window of the room appears a fine view of the National Capital Building, surmounted by the goddess of liberty. The picture is 22x24 inches in size, and affords an elegant and admirable subject for the homes of the people. It may be well considered a standard American picture.

The day dream of canvassing agents may now be realized, for the sale of such a work will no doubt be a steady one, and something enormous. It is sold especially through canvassing agents and we understand that the publishers want agents in this locality and in other parts. This affords a timely business opportunity for some of our enterprising citizens who may find themselves at liberty to accept an agency. In order to more rapidly introduce this fine work, full particulars with an agent's outfit, including the engraving, circulars, and a brief history of the Lives of the Presidents—every one of them—will, we are informed, be forwarded, charges prepaid, to those who apply with a view to an agency, and who at the same time remit one dollar to pay costs. All communications must be addressed to the publishers, F. Myers & Co., Post Office Box 526, New York City. We advise those of our readers who become interested in the subject to send for an outfit at once for their own advantage, also that others may, through such agencies, possess themselves of copies of this happy production.

The Bag of Pearls.

An Arab once lost his way in a desert. His provisions were soon exhausted. For two days and two nights he had not a morsel to eat. He began to fear that he should die of hunger. He looked eagerly, but in vain, along the level sand for some caravan of travelers from whom he might beg some bread.

At last he came to a little place where there was a little water in a well, and around the well's mouth the marks of an encampment. Some people had lately pitched their tents there, and had gathered them up and gone away again. The starving Arab looked around in the hope of finding some food that the travelers might have left behind. After searching a while he came upon a little bag, tied at the mouth, and full of something that felt hard and round. He opened the bag with great joy, thinking it contained either dates or nuts, and expecting that with them he should be able to satisfy his hunger. But as soon as he saw what it contained he threw it on the ground and cried out in despair, "It is only pearls!" He lay down in the desert to die.

Pearls are very precious. If the man had been at home this bagful of pearls would have made his fortune. He would have received a large sum of money for them, and would have been a rich man. But pearls could not feed him when he was hungry. Although you had your house full of pearls, if you had no bread you would die. The Arab knew the value of the pearls, that he found, but he would have given them all at that moment for one morsel of bread—would have given them, but could not, for there was no bread within his reach. So although he was very rich, he was left to die of want.

Pearls and gold can not preserve the life of the body; far less can they satisfy the soul. Bread is more precious to a hungry man than pearls; and the bread of life is more precious still. Christ has expressly said, "I am the bread of life." How foolish it is to spend ourselves in gathering things that can not save us from our sin! "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," and keep other things in a lower place. The chief thing for each of us is to have Christ the life of our souls forever; and then we may gladly accept whatever good things in this life God may be pleased to give us. "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—*Sel.*