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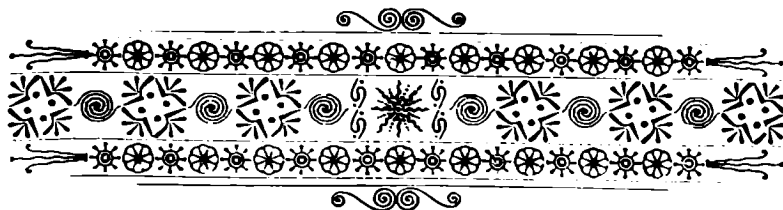
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THE

Sword and the Crowel.

JULY, 1896.

The Reality of Religion.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE CONFERENCE PUBLIC MEETING
AT DALSTON JUNCTION CHAPEL, ON MONDAY EVENING, MAY 6TH, 1889,
BY C. H. SPURGEON.



ANY years ago, dear friends, there was founded a Pastors' College, of which I was and still am the President. The Institution has grown until, to-day, I think I may say that we have sent out into the ministry exactly eight hundred men,—not a small number to have gone forth from our midst to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. These brethren have been greatly blessed in winning souls. Since the year 1865, when our statistics were first collected, 83,037 persons have been baptized, and there has been a clear increase of 68,784 church-members. That is a result for which we have great cause to praise the Lord.

I am very thankful that so many of our brethren who were educated in the Pastors' College still remain with me in our new Association, but I hope that none of them are with me merely because of their attachment to myself, but because of their attachment to the great truths which we hold in common. I have had to pass through sore trials, as you know; they have not been by any means small ones; but had I foreknown and foreseen everything that has happened, I would have done exactly as I did. Indeed, like Luther, I could "do no other;" I am not able to make a compromise concerning the truth of God. I am so constituted that I can only believe that "twice two are four," and I have not sufficient genius, or whatever other quality may be needful, to admit that it may be four

The Missionary Martyrs in North Africa.

SOME good friend in Canada has sent me a parcel of wordless books, and I beg to offer the donor my sincere thanks.

The flow of patients has been hindered during May by my visit to Sfax, and also by the great holidays of the Mohammedans; nevertheless, over 400 visits have been recorded, and the gospel seed has been sown in many attentive minds.

The arrangement about our *baraka* terminates to-day, and I am in treaty for the hire of a disused cottage, hard by, which will be, I hope, even more useful than the present shed has been for both sick folk and country patients. The need for some place was exemplified three days ago, when a little Arab boy of about ten was run over by a loaded stone-cart, just outside our door, and sustained a compound fracture of his left thigh. We have taken him into our own house, and he is doing well, but he must needs lie in bed for six weeks; he has no money, and his only friend here is his old father, a beggar, almost blind, whom he used to lead about to solicit alms. We were glad to replace the lad's dirty rags with two of the nice new garments which came from the Tabernacle Sunday-school.

This month will ever be remembered by us because of the murder of our friend, Dr. Leach, and his wife and child, at Sfax. Years ago, when resident in London, this medical missionary was a member of the Tabernacle Church, and was therefore specially our own. He was a very gentle, lovable, and holy man, and had only been in Sfax a few weeks, when, one night, his watch-dog was killed, his house broken into by several men, and he, his wife, and son all brutally murdered,—their baby girl of eighteen months alone being spared. The reason for the crime is still a mystery, and its sudden and unexpected character terrible. In a friend's birthday text-book, some time ago, Dr. Leach put against his own name, Matt. xxv. 6:—"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." How aptly his chosen text fitted in with his bitter going out, yet blessed meeting with his Lord!

On hearing of the murder, I went at once to Sfax, and reached it just as the triple funeral was leaving for the grave. I was allowed to see the victims, and my heart was strongly comforted as I marked the deep peace which seemed to rest on each face. He, who said, "Lo, I am with you always," had not forsaken His poor sheep in their hour of need.

Another almost prophetic text was found upon the doctor's desk, written by him in French:—"The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fall on me."

One aspect of this crime must not be forgotten. There is a strong opinion among French people that English missionaries are political agents; indeed, an attempt has been made quite lately, in Algeria, to fix upon them a charge of selling ammunition. Now here we have a test case; a missionary family is suddenly attacked and murdered, yet they are so completely unarmed that they do not possess even a revolver with which to defend their own lives. Again, all their effects are immediately taken possession of and carefully examined by the French authorities, yet not a trace of political work, it is safe to say, has been found among them all; and, as if God would make their witness on this point still more clear, Dr. Leach and his wife left, not only the letters which they had received, but also rough copies of the letters which they had written for many years past, even on the most private subjects. These, in the course of the investigation, have been subjected to rigid judicial examination; what more cogent and triumphant proof could be given of the pure and non-political character of our mission? May HE, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, make this great crime a great blessing, and the blood of His martyrs to be once more the seed of His Church!

Sousse, Tunisia.

T. GILLARD CHURCHER.