

THE WORLD'S BEST SELLER

HOW IT SPREADS BY MILLIONS

The Pedlar Among the Tigers and the Bandit Turned Pedlar

TALITHA CUMI

Outside a little house in Bohemia a man, with a travelling pack asked the woman in the doorway if she would buy one of his Bibles.

"Yes," she said, "if you can guarantee that my goat will give more milk afterwards. Someone has bewitched her, and they say the Bible is a talisman against bad luck."

The Bible seller was in the same fix as a comrade of his in Belgium to whom a woman said: "I am told that reading St Matthew will prevent whooping cough."

The Key to Happiness

That is how part of the world looks upon the Bible. There are others who believe that the Bible is nothing less than the key to happiness, and who devote their whole lives to finding it new readers. Some sit in native huts laboriously learning languages that have never before been written down. Others toil in city offices. Others risk their lives in peddling the Bible through regions haunted by wild beasts and bandits. The story of these campaigners is told in the annual report of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

There is one Bible seller, known to us only as K. K., whose work lies in a jungle-covered country where small villages lie far apart and people live in terror of a man-eating tiger. Already the tiger has taken 362 lives, 55 of them this year, but K. K. refuses to give up his lonely journeys.

Adventures in China

In China, where bandits are worse than tigers, the Bible pedlars carry on their work consistently as if there were no revolution. Last year one of them saved a captured missionary from a beating and was taken prisoner himself. Another conducted a missionary to safety and then returned to his work in the danger zone. Chang Hwei has three times been caught by bandits, and narrowly escaped with his life, but he goes on trudging from house to house with his Gospels, as daring in his goodness as he was in his badness—for this pedlar was once a bandit himself.

There are still men willing to die for the Bible and there are still men willing to live for it. Last year over 12 million copies were sold. No other book has been circulated in 800 languages. The Bible is the World's Best Seller.

That is the test. Bibles are sold, not given away, in order that purchasers may value the book more. If people are very poor the Bible seller will accept bread or eggs instead of money.

Tribute by Australian Blacks

Sometimes people who are grateful to the Society make a collection for it, as some Australian Aborigines did after the Society had translated St Luke into the Aranda language. They gave 30 poison bones, 15 spears, 23 yam sticks, 18 boomerangs, 3 shields, 2 stone knives, a stone axe, and many other things precious in savage eyes.

Surely this Report should cheer those who think ill of our Age. Our Age buys more Bibles than any other Age has done, and it is the first Age in which a Children's Bible has sold in immense numbers. We must be grateful to this Report for one exquisite passage. A scholar tells us that Christ's words to the daughter of Jairus, *Talitha cumi*, can only be truly rendered by the Scots version of the Aramaic, *Ma wee bil lassie, it's time to be risin'*.

Who would not be glad to have learned that?

AN OLD FLAG'S STORY

What Happened at Culloden

BANNER OF A FAITHLESS HOUSE

If ever there was a tragic bit of stuff it is the flag which has just been offered for sale to the Stewart Society.

Seventeen men died for it at Culloden. It was the flag under which the Stewarts of Appin fought; and one after the other gallant men made targets of themselves by lifting the fallen colours from dying men's hands. At last, in the retreat, a Highlander saw it lying by the body of the last standard-bearer. The battle was lost, but the man could not bear to think that the flag should be lost, and he found time to cut it from its staff and wrap it round his body before he escaped.

We know what followed Culloden. We can imagine this man had as many adventures as a hunted fox before he got to Stewart of Ballachulish and dared to show the flag. It has been carefully kept by that family ever since, and now it is expected that the Stewart Society will hang it beside the Scottish National War Memorial.

The Tragedy of 1745

Even after nearly two centuries Britain has no tale to surpass the sadness of Culloden, and not since then have so many brave men died for so had a cause. The tragedy of it is that most of the Scottish lords who took part in the rebellion of 1745 must have foreseen that the Pretender would never win the crown, and that his defeat would cost them everything worth living for. Charles Edward got away, to spend his life as a miserable drunkard, leaving his poor followers to be hanged and his rich ones to be beheaded.

Of too many of them Macaulay's epitaph of a Stewart follower is true:

O thou whom chance leads to this nameless stone
From that proud country which was once mine own,

By whose white cliffs I never more must see,
By that dear language which I speak like thee,
Forget all feuds, and shed one English tear
O'er English dust. A broken heart lies here.

It will not be easy to look at the Culloden flag, the banner of a faithless house, without a sigh for all the blood and tears that were shed in vain.

TWO QUEUES

A Story for a Film

THE OPERA HOUSE AND THE APPLE-SELLER

Outside the Stoll Picture House in Kingsway a queue often waits to go in and see the pictures.

Outside the soup depots in New York, the "bread lines" of people who await free meals are beginning to form.

They are forming earlier and longer than usual because of the swelling numbers of the unemployed. Among these unemployed are some ashamed to beg or take charity—and these, numbering thousands, are strung along the city's streets selling apples.

Among the apple-sellers a reporter found a woman once as well known in London as in New York. Her name is Mrs Oscar Hammerstein.

It was Oscar Hammerstein who built the Stoll Picture House in Kingsway as an Opera House for London. It failed, as did others of Hammerstein's ventures—and now his widow sells apples in a New York street.

What a contrast, the nightly crowds in Hammerstein's luxurious theatre, the poor woman who will thank the passer-by for twopenny for an apple!

And what a subject for a film at the Stoll Picture House!

A MINER'S DREAM COMES TRUE

THE GREAT STORY OF FINSBURY'S MAYOR

The Wife Who Knew What to Do and Did It

EVERYBODY'S OPEN DOOR

Finsbury has perhaps more reason than most of our boroughs to be proud of its Mayoress.

When she married her husband, Mr C. R. Simpson in 1904 he was a miner working in a Yorkshire colliery. Like many other miners he had a great longing for education. Just as men in a pit long to come up into the open air and sunshine so did he long to enter the wonderland of knowledge.

A man can do much by reading books at home, but he cannot do everything. One day the miner read in a local paper about a scholarship scheme which would take the winner to Oxford. It seemed as if the key to Wonderland might be found.

An Offer From Ruskin College

Alas! Mr Simpson failed to get it. The door which had opened a little swung to with a slam.

But hardly had Mr and Mrs Simpson recovered from their disappointment when Fate relented, as if to reward them for bearing the blow bravely. Ruskin College offered him a free scholarship.

Now the miner had his chance, but he could not have taken it if he had not had the right kind of wife. She entered domestic service, and for two years worked hard but happily as a nursemaid. Then her husband gained the university diploma for economics and political science, and soon after husband and wife started mission work together for the Society of Friends. He is now a member of the L.C.C. as well as Finsbury's Mayor.

This story has come to light following on Miss Margaret Bondfield's declaration that domestic service is not only a skilled occupation but an honourable calling. Finsbury will certainly honour its new Mayoress for her domestic service.

WILL YOU WALK INTO MY PARLOUR?

Said the Dummy to the Fly

Some things hunt by sight and some by scent. Luckily for Zululand the dreaded tsetse fly hunts by sight.

A Government entomologist, Mr Harris, has been studying the fly's hunting methods, and when he discovered that the dreaded insect trusted to the eye alone he saw his way to making a tsetse flytrap. It has just been demonstrated and has proved most successful.

As the tsetse fly, which carries a terrible cattle disease, nearly always attacks an animal's stomach Mr Harris made a roughly shaped dummy cow to tempt the insect. A piece of gauze is let into the top of the dummy, and the insect after entering from below flies up toward this patch of light, whereupon it enters an inner trap.

When Mr Harris demonstrated his method a herd of 18 dummy cows caught 1393 flies in a day. As the tsetse fly is not the parent of very large families it is believed that a real difference might be made to the fly population if these traps were widely used.

At the demonstration one of the fly-traps was emptied, and nearly all the released captives returned to the trap. So we know that the tsetse fly is as stupid as he is dangerous, and, unlike the fox in the fable, he will not ask why so many go in and none come out.

If we have really found a way of dealing with the tsetse fly at last we shall have conquered one more enemy of a healthier world.

SECRETS OF OLD DOCTORS

THE RED INDIAN AND THE BARK

The Indian and the Poison of the Cobra

KNOWLEDGE PERSISTING FOR AGES

The Royal College of Surgeons has bestowed its Honorary Fellowship on Dr Banting of Toronto. It is the highest honour the college can confer, and it is given to Dr Banting because he has discovered a cure for a melancholy and fatal disease.

It seems that Dr Banting has for a hobby the collecting of records of surgery among Red Indians. Some day he may have leisure to write the story of some of the interesting things he has discovered in this lore of the wise men and wizards of that ancient race.

One thing he has told us. His recipes show him that the Red Indians used the bark of a certain tree to place in an open wound, believing that an essence from the bark forced out the poison. That must surely be one of the earliest applications of antiseptics to an open wound.

From the Misty Past

Folklore gathered from the misty past reveals that ancient doctors, although they made terrible mistakes, as when they made holes in the skulls of patients to let out imaginary evil spirits, here and there did light upon truth, and must have effected marvellous cures.

One of the most extraordinary of these old discoveries has been given a modern application by that prince of Indian botanists Sir Jagadis Bose. He tells us that thousands of years ago Indian doctors discovered that a tiny amount of cobra venom in solution had the effect of reviving a dying patient. Throughout the ages that knowledge has been kept alive, and even today, he says, when an Indian dies from cobra bite he is not buried but sent downstream on a raft in case he should wake up.

The knowledge was kept alive by the natives; it remained for Sir Jagadis Bose to devise a new application of it. He discovered that plants can be drugged to sleep as human beings can. But when the plant has been thus put to sleep, how is it to be revived? It is here that the old secret of the Indian doctors comes in, for Dr Bose has shown that a sleeping plant can be revived by the stimulus of cobra poison in water.

THINGS SAID

Are we not all members one of another?
Maharajah of Bikaner
at the India Conference

One of the first casualties of war is truth.
Mr Thomas P. Tiplady

Every morning I consume less breakfast and more newspaper.

Mr St John Hornby

There are 100,000 people in London living in basements unfit for habitation.
Bishop of Southwark

Why not have the Lord Mayor's Show always on a Saturday, so that it interferes less with traffic?

Week-End Review

The young are dreaming new dreams, but they must not forget the visions which have come down through history.
Canon Vernon Storr

Is it too much to ask cinema editors to cut down their army estimates in favour of more peaceful programmes?
Mr Ernest Betts

... the gentleman who goes under the fantastical name of Lord Passfield,
Mrs Sidney Webb (his wife)