

Review of the Bibles

D. R. Coughlin

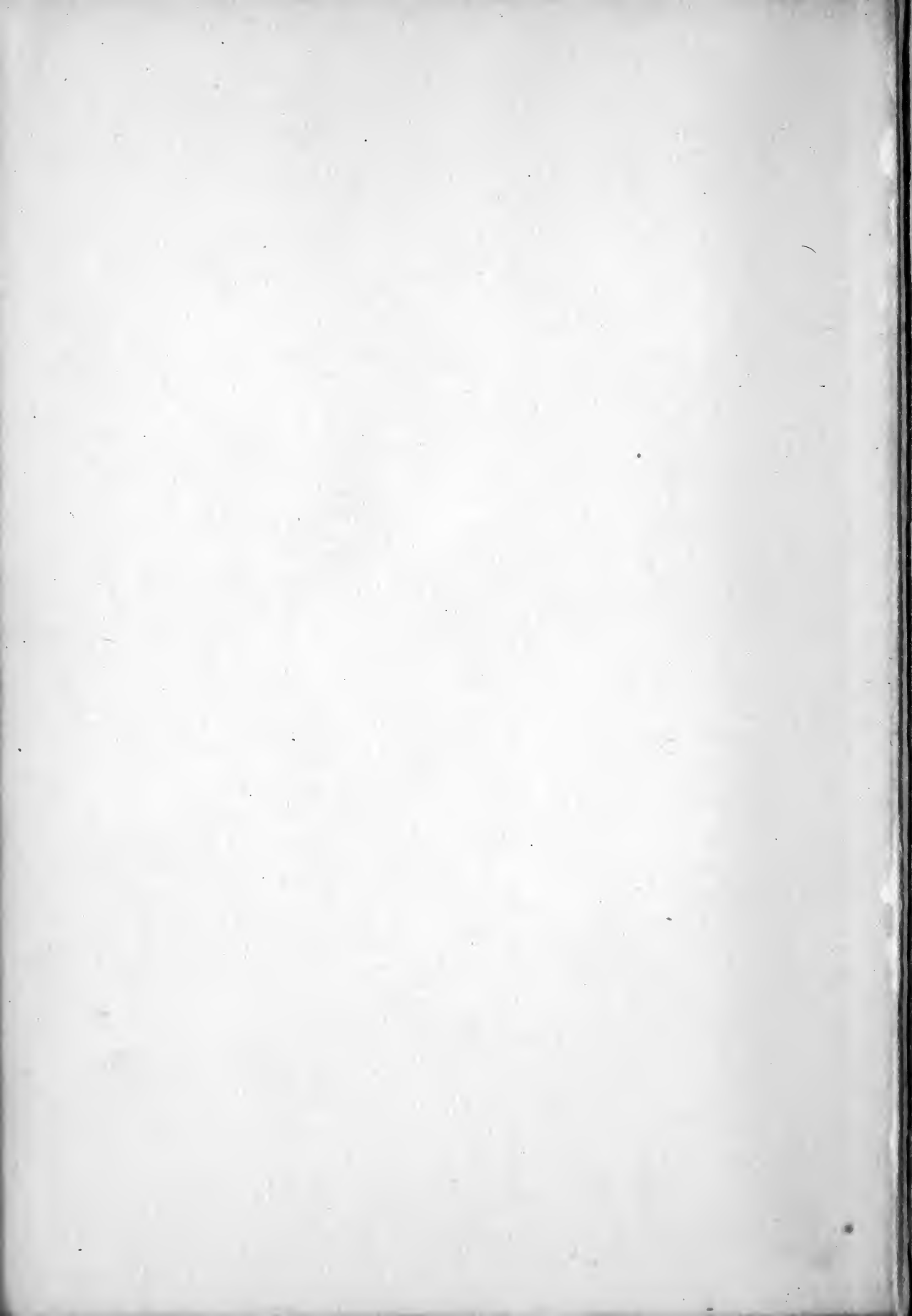


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Review of the Bibles

By DAVID R. COUGHLIN



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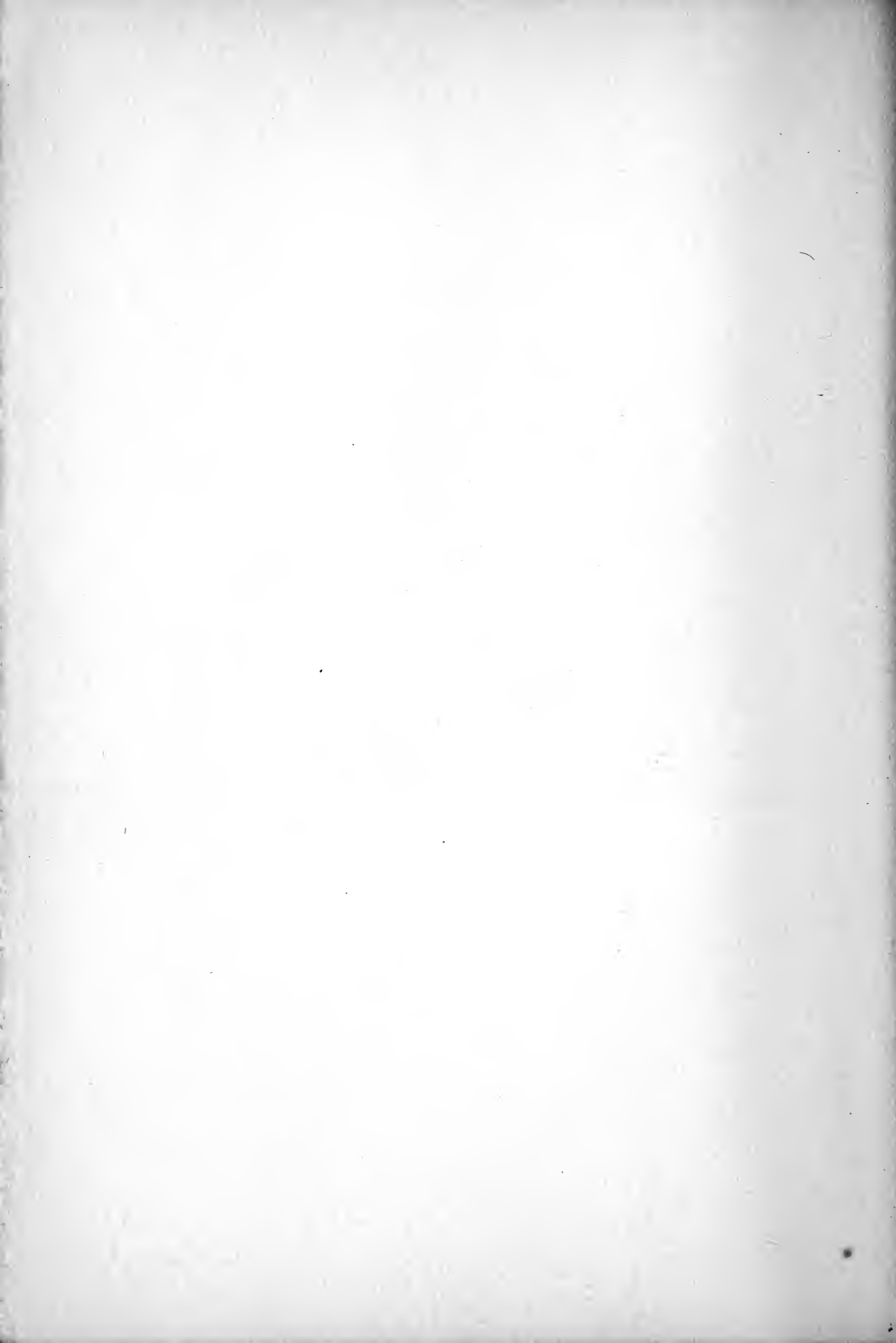
To
BELVA G. COUGHLIN,
My Wife,
my help and inspiration in all things,
this volume is lovingly
dedicated.



“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord” (Isa. I:18).

“Prove all things: hold fast to that which is good” (I Thess. V:21).

“All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness” (II Tim. III :16).



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REVIEW *of* THE BIBLES

THE THREE VERSIONS



IT is probable that at the present time there is no book that is so much talked of and so little read as is the Holy Bible. A great many people talk of it, but few read it with the intention of learning its true contents.

There are at present three accepted versions of the Bible. It is claimed for each of these versions that it is the true and correct word of God; but no two versions convey the same meaning or read alike in many corresponding texts.

There is in use at present one multiplication table. It is admitted by all who make use of it to be absolutely correct. There is but one version of this table, but in case there were three, it would render it useless, as it would be impossible to tell which was the correct version. It is impossible to conceive of two or more correct versions of this table. Could anything be more ridiculous than a Protestant, Roman Catholic or a Revised Version of the multiplication

table? It is just as impossible to conceive of two or more correct versions of the Bible.

The versions of the Holy Bible, considered in order of their antiquity, are the Douay Version, The King James or Authorized Version, and the Revised Version.

The Douay Version is the oldest and original version of Holy Writ. Fragments of this Bible were published as early as 1535 A. D. The New Testament was completed and published in 1582 A. D., and the complete Bible 1609 A. D. This information is gathered from the authorized statements of the Church of Rome.

This Bible contains seven books not included in the Authorized Version, viz.: Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, First Machabees, and Second Machabees. The canon of this version has been changed frequently, but this is the list as lastly decided upon as being the true and correct word of God. The Douay Version is at present the accepted and authentic version of the greatest and strongest organization that bears the name of a Christian Church, the Roman Catholic Church.

In the year 1603 King James ascended the throne of England. He was not pleased with the versions of the Bible extant. Accordingly, in the fourth year of his reign, he appointed a body of men, fifty-four in number, to prepare a translation of the Scriptures.

After making appointments for this purpose, he gave notice that if there were any other persons who might consider themselves competent to translate, he would be pleased to have them assist with the work. This commission, after a period of about three years, completed its work, and the translation then made, and now known as the Authorized Version, was published. This was, as claimed by some authorities, in the year 1610, while others place the date at 1611. This is the most popular version extant, as it is accepted by more Christians than any of the other versions.

The Revised Version was printed in May, 1881. The work was begun in 1870, in consequence of an action taken by the convocation of Canterbury (England). At the same time there was an American committee working in conjunction with the English committee. This committee has published a version of its own, thereby making two versions of the Revised Version.

The English committee, after deliberate balloting, chose a body of men to perform the task of revising the Old Testament, and a separate body for the work of revision of the New. The rules as adopted to govern these committees in their work of revision, were as follows :

1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the Authorized Version, consistently with faithfulness.

2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the Authorized and earlier English versions.

3. Each company to go twice over the portion revised, once provisionally, and the second time finally, and on principles of voting as hereinafter provided.

4. That the text adopted be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and that when the text so adopted differs from that from which the Authorized Version was made, the alteration be indicated in the margin.

5. To make or retain no change in the text on the second final revision by each company, except two-thirds of those present approve the same, but on first revision to decide by simple majorities.

6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to discussion, to defer the voting thereupon until the next meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice of the next meeting.

7. To revise the headings of chapters and pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.

8. To refer on the part of each company, when considered desirable, to Divines, Scholars, and Literary Men, whether at home or abroad.

The deliberations of this body were along the same lines as all other bodies of the same character. If

the Authorized Version was correct, why the revision? Had the world been without a correct version of the Scriptures until this body completed its work?

They admit their liability to err in the third rule, by requiring a second reading. In the fourth rule they are governed by evidence and not by text. In the fifth, they adopt the rule of previous councils' methods of deciding authenticity, by voting. The changing of the headings of chapters is of no consequence, as they are admittedly the work of the translators in all the versions. These headings were never a part of the text. They admit their weakness as to making correct translations, in the eighth rule, by referring to other authorities. These translators were of the same general class as those who made the translations for the former versions.

This body changed the form of verses and the headings of chapters to some extent. Considering that there was no division into chapters and verses until 1560 A. D., perhaps they were right in changing them.

They undoubtedly translated to the best of their ability, but failed to advance any proof of their competence to render a correct translation, but readily admit the translators of the former versions had erred. They advanced no claim to infallibility.

To illustrate the various readings to be found in the several versions, the texts here given are taken from the sixth verse, of the eighth chapter, of the Song of

Solomon, given in the Douay Version as the Cantic of Canticles. It would arouse the curiosity of the average reader to understand how so many readings could be derived from the same text by persons who considered themselves competent to translate correctly.

In the Douay Version the text is as follows: "Put me a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm, for love is strong as death, jealousy as hard as hell, the lamps thereof are fire and flames."

The Authorized text is as follows: "Set me a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."

The text from the American Revised:

"Set me a seal upon thy heart,
As a seal upon thine arm:
For love is strong as death;
Jealousy as strong as Sheol;
The flashes thereof are flashes of fire,
A very flame of Jehovah."

The English Revised translation is substantially the same as the above. It will be noted that the Douay and Authorized translators failed to find either Jehovah or the Lord mentioned. In fact, he is not mentioned in either book of these two versions, and in

this way the Song of Solomon was godless until the year of grace 1881. The Douay translators found some hell, but it seems to have escaped the notice of the other three.

It would be a natural conclusion that if Christians had preserved any part of their Bible free from corruption that it would be the Lord's Prayer, a little prayer consisting of a few lines. But they have not. The prayer is given differently in each of the so-called versions. Will some kind Christian tell us in which version it is quoted correctly?

The prayer in the Douay Version is as follows: "Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our supersubstantial bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen" (Matt. VI: 9 to 12).

The Authorized is as follows: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen."

The Revised is as follows: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Amen.”

But one conclusion can be reached concerning these various translations, and that is this: the translators were either incapable of translating correctly, or the texts were of an unintelligible nature and could not be translated intelligently.

THE CANON

THE books now contained in the Bible are not all the books that were originally credited with inspiration. The Roman Church has preserved all Christian tradition and Christian history through the Dark Ages.

The books were not considered canonical from a standpoint of authorship. The authorship of all the books of the Bible is shrouded in mystery. The number of authors claimed for the various books will compare favorably with the number of commentators engaged in guessing who they were.

It was maintained for a long time that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. That theory has been abandoned, since historians agree that the Hebrew alphabet was first used about 900 B. C., and as Moses died 1451 B. C., according to Bible chronologers, he would have been dead about five hundred and fifty years before the use of the Hebrew alphabet had been introduced.

There are books mentioned in the Bible that are not now in existence. The book of Jasher (Josh. X: 13), the book of The Wars of the Lord (Num. XXI: 14), the book of Nathan, the Prophet (I Chron. XXIX: 29 and II Chron. IX: 29), the book of Gad, the Seer

(I Chron. XXIX: 29), and Iddo, the Seer (II Chron. IX: 29).

The books above named are mentioned as of equal authority as those from which the references are taken. What has become of these books? Is it possible that they were lost by the Jews, as was the book of Law? If they would suffer an important work like the book of Law to become lost, how could they be expected to care for the less important books? So if the history contained in the other books is dependable, our present Bible is far from complete.

In the second book of Chronicles (XXXIV: 14) we read that Hilkiah found the book of Law after it had been lost for a period of approximately eight hundred years. The law seems to have constituted a most important portion of the Jewish sacred writings. This circumstance gives rise to some very strange conclusions. It would seem that the Lord's holy people had been without any law to govern them for a period of eight hundred years. Can we suppose that an Infinite Being could have written or dictated a law, and based all his people's happiness on it, and then suffered it to become lost?

Where could this book have been? It was surely not mislaid in any safe place or it would not have been lost. The account states that the king, Josiah, rent his clothes when the book of Law was read. These people spoke the Hebrew language. If they

read any language, they read the Hebrew. Historians agree that the Hebrew alphabet was first used about 900 B. C. This Law was found about 667 B. C., according to Bible chronologers. The book had been written approximately eight hundred years before, or about five hundred fifty years before the use of the Hebrew alphabet had been introduced. The Law must have been written in hieroglyphics, or picture writing, as the Hebrew is one of the first alphabets of which historians have a record. Therefore, how was it possible for these people to translate and read this law? If the Law that was found was written in Hebrew it was evidently a forgery, because it could not have been written by Moses.

The Jews have three divisions of their sacred writings, viz.: The Law, The Prophets, and The Hagiographa. The books of Law are as follows: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The books of the Prophets: (Major) Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations; (Minor) Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The books of the Hagiographa: Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, First Chronicles, Second Chronicles, and Song of Solomon.

The history of the formation of the Jewish canon

is very obscure. We are more fortunate in being able to procure data concerning the formation of the Christian canon. The Roman Church maintains, and always has, that the authority of tradition is equally as reliable as the authority of inspiration. It is a noticeable fact that there is very little, if any, reading of the Scriptures among the members of that church.

It was about fifteen hundred years after the death of Christ that some one discovered that a belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures is essential to salvation. Luther is generally accredited with being the one who first advanced this idea. It may be seen how the Roman Church advances the claim of tradition, and the Protestant Church the claim of inspiration. The Protestant Church could not consistently advance any other claim, as it was not in existence in time to receive and hand down tradition, hence it grabs at inspiration as a drowning man grabs at a straw. So in the history of the canon, tradition antedates inspiration at least twelve centuries. Belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures as being essential to salvation has been advanced for only about four hundred years.

The first history of the development of the Christian canon dates back to 325 A. D. The Nicene Council in that year considered and passed upon the authenticity of the writings then extant. There sat

in that council some three hundred bishops. There were at that time hundreds of manuscripts being read in the various churches. These were becoming so numerous that it became absolutely necessary that the church decide on the authenticity of these manuscripts.

We are told by historians that in deciding the authenticity of the manuscripts, all of them were placed under the table, and prayer being offered by that august body, the genuine manuscripts arose and settled themselves upon the top of the table, and the spurious ones remained beneath. This is one of the early accounts of the formation of the canon.

A portion of the Apocryphal books is published in two volumes, known as the Apocryphal New Testament and the Apocryphal Old Testament.

The bishops who sat in the Council of Nice were aided, perhaps, by the writings of Irenæus, who lived and wrote about 200 A. D., and who wrote that there should be four gospels, because there are four quarters of the earth, four universal winds, and quadrupeds require four legs to sustain their weight ; hence there should be four gospels.

Irenæus is the first writer to make mention of all four of the four gospels, that are included in the various versions of the present Bible. Irenæus also wrote a gospel, and Cardinal Gibbons lamented the fact that through some unfortunate circumstance it

had become lost. It would seem from Cardinal Gibbons' comment on the affair, that Irenæus' time was an appropriate time to write a gospel.

Justin Martyr, writing about 150 A. D., is the first of the early Christian Fathers to refer to written records. But in his writings no mention is made of the four gospels. His Bible was the Old Testament and he seemed to have no knowledge of the four gospels, or of a New Testament.

Papias, writing about 150 A. D., states: "And John, the presbyter, also said this: 'Mark being the interpreter of Peter, whatsoever he recorded he wrote with great accuracy, but not, however, in the order in which it was spoken or done by our Lord, for he neither heard nor followed our Lord, but, as before said, he was in company with Peter, who gave him such instruction as was necessary, but not to give history of our Lord's discourses; wherefore Mark has not erred in anything, by writing some things he has recorded them, for he was carefully attentive to one thing, not to pass anything he heard, or to state anything falsely in these accounts.'"

Papias' writings are not now extant, but the foregoing is taken from Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, and is, of course, good, sound, orthodox authority.

Suppose that Papias is referring to our present gospel of Mark; what testimony have we of the authenticity of Jesus' words it contains? Just this:

Eusebius states that Papias states that John, the presbyter, said that Mark said that Peter said that Jesus said thus and so. This is the historical authenticity of the gospel of Mark.

Papias states that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew. The manuscript from which our present translation was made was written in Greek. Jerome ventured the assertion that by whom the translation was made is uncertain. This is the extent of the theologians' knowledge.

The gospel of Luke is addressed to "The most excellent Theophilis." Theophilis lived, according to church history, and was bishop at Antioch about 180 A. D. The conclusion naturally drawn from these facts is, that the gospels were all written in the latter part of the second century.

The Roman Church claims date of authorship of gospels as follows: Matthew, six years after the death of Christ; Mark, ten years; Luke, twenty-four years; and John, sixty-three years.

Note here the difference in the origin of these sacred writings and the sacred writings of Mohammed. The Christian Scriptures were supplied at various times by writers whose identity was in some cases very uncertain. Mohammed, as Savior, dictated all his own Scriptures to his scribe as he received them from God, while Christ never dictated one word, never wrote one word, nor did he even look to the writing

of his words to the world during his life. No one thought for six years, according to church history, that the sayings of Christ were worth recording. How could the gospels be supposed to harmonize when men, writing them at different periods of time, depended entirely upon memory?

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS

THE early Christian Fathers were instrumental in establishing the theory that the books of the New Testament are inspired. The popular idea as established by all religious teachers is that they were learned men, worthy of the highest respect. One of the charges lodged against Servetus, at the time that he was burned to death by John Calvin, was that he had spoken disrespectfully of the Fathers. A citation of a few facts concerning the mental characteristics of the Fathers will show conclusively that they were ignorant and superstitious in the extreme.

Justin Martyr believed in demons. He said they were the offspring of angels who courted the daughters of men. Some of them were the souls of wicked people who had died in their sins. Insane people were possessed of demons, and these tortured them until they became insane; and this was proof conclusive of the immortality of the soul.

Origen advanced the theory that the sun, moon and stars were living creatures, possessed of reason and free-will, and at times committed sin; that these planets have free-will he proved by quoting from Job XXV: 5; he inferred that they were rational creatures because they moved.

Theophilis, "The Most Excellent," to whom Luke addressed his gospel, believed that the pain suffered by mothers in child-bearing was conclusive proof of the fall as related in Genesis.

Tertullian believed that the hyena changed its sex every year, and that volcanoes are openings into hell.

These are the ideas as advanced by the men who were instrumental in establishing the claim of inspiration for the books of the New Testament. Christian apologists have advanced the argument that although the Fathers may have been mistaken in some of their opinions, it did not necessarily detract from their spiritual insight.

CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE

JEHOVAH

THE fourth word of the Bible is "God." He is the first character mentioned: the book claims for him, the creator and preserver of the universe. As he is described as a personal God, it is well to inquire as to what his character really is, as chronicled by his inspired writers. As he is represented as having had numerous dealings with men, it will be well to note what these dealings were, and if they are in accordance with our sense of justice at the present time.

Any quotations here given will be found in the Authorized Version, as this is the popular version of the book. If reference is made to any other version, such reference will be noted.

In the first place the question naturally arises, "Has any man ever seen God?" In Exodus it is stated that, "Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel" all saw God (XXIV: 9); but John states that, "No man hath seen God at any time" (I: 18). In Genesis we read, "For I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved" (XXXII: 30). In Exodus we read, "Thou shalt not see my face; for there shall be no man see my face and live"

(XXXIII: 20). In Isaiah we read, "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne" (VI: 1); but John states, "Ye have neither heard his voice, at any time, nor seen his shape" (V: 37). Just what conclusion may be reached from reading these passages is hard to estimate. The wisest man in the world could not tell whether any one had seen God or not. Perhaps the best solution to the problem is in Jehovah's own words:

"And the Lord said, behold, there is a place by me, thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, and I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen" (Exod. XXXIII: 21-23).

But by reading further it would seem that some must have seen him, that they might give such descriptions of him as the following: "There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it" (II Sam. XXII: 9). "He had horns coming out on his hand" (Hab. III: 4). "His lips are full of indignation, and his tongue is a devouring fire" (Isa. XXX: 27). These descriptions do not bring to the mind a picture of Infinite Love and Wisdom. Yet we are supposed to believe that this is a portrayal of the character of the loving God.

Let us inquire farther of the inspired writers as to the character of their God. The narrator of Exodus states: "For thou shalt worship no other God: for the Lord whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God" (XXXIV: 14). This same jealous God is also known as Jehovah, Adonia, and Elohim, and when he was a tribal God, just making his debut in the god business, he was known as Yahweh.

"It was only gradually that the idea of the unity of God dawned upon the teachers of Israel: in the beginning the Hebrew Yahweh was a tribal God, in all essential respects like the gods of other nations" (Meyers Ancient History, Revised, Sec. 87).

Be it remembered, that this is the same God that the Mohammedans worship. They have a hell of their own, very similar to the Christian hell, to which they consign unbelievers as unceremoniously as do the Christians. Where they fall from Christian faith is, to quote from the Koran, "Say God is one God: the eternal God: he begetteth not, neither is he begotten; and there is not any one like unto him."

In what way did this God treat his people? We are told, "For the Lord will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: for it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people" (I Sam. XII: 22). But do other accounts bear out this statement? The Judges narrator states, "He gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek and went and smote Israel"

(III: 13). The account further states that the people of Israel served the king of Moab for eighteen years. This was not only desertion, but was also traitorous. He not only deserted his own people, but mustered a strange army and fought against them.

The same narrator also informs us that Jehovah sold his people into the hand of the king of Canaan and for twenty years he mightily oppressed them (IV: 2). It is therefore reasonable to conclude that they were sold into slavery. Had not Jehovah deserted his people when he sold them into slavery? On two other occasions it is recorded that he turned traitor to his people and delivered them into the hands of their enemies (II: 14 and VI: 1).

Jehovah acknowledges the existence of other gods (Deut. VI: 14), and the narrator of Exodus states that his name is Jealous, because he is jealous of other gods. This inspired narrator's language should be fumigated with a strong deodorant before it is allowed to be read in the young ladies' and young men's Sunday School class (XXXIV: 15).

This God is represented to the Sunday School student as a spirit. He is always represented to be a good spirit, and as being opposed to all evil. Let us see if his inspired narrators agree with the Sunday School teacher.

Instances of where he wrought evil are numerous. "This evil is of the Lord" (II Kings VI: 33). "Then

God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem" (Jud. IX: 23). The account states that it caused the men to deal treacherously with each other. "And it came to pass that when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, . . . and the evil spirit departed from him" (I Sam. XVI: 23). What must be the spirit of one who would issue a command like this to his general? "But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth" (Deut. XX: 16).

Does this breathe the spirit of love? "Cursed shalt thou be in the city and cursed shalt thou be in the field" (Deut. XXVIII: 16).

"And he said, I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end shall be; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities; I will move them to jealousy with those that are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell, and consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischief upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger and devoured with burning heat, and bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of the serpents of the dust. The sword without and the terror within, shall destroy both the

young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs" (Deut. XXXII: 20-25).

"And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, and the flesh of thy sons and daughters" (Deut. XXVIII: 53).

According to the narrator of Second Samuel, chapter twenty-four, God moved David to number Israel. The narrator of Chronicles, writing of the same event, states that the Devil caused David to do so (XXI: 1). The Samuel narrator states that when the census was completed it was found that the fighting men of Israel and Judea numbered one million three hundred thousand. The narrator of Chronicles gives the number one million five hundred seventy thousand. Here is a sample of inspired numbers. There is a difference in estimates of two hundred seventy thousand, or a sufficient number of persons to populate a city as large as Denver, Colorado.

God became angry at David after the census was taken, and sent his agent to confer with him concerning the act. David was given his choice of seven years' famine, three months' fleeing before his enemies, or a pestilence. David having faith in the mercy of Jehovah, chose the pestilence, with the result that God slew seventy thousand Jews, who had committed no other offense than to stand up and be counted. Would Satan have done any worse under the same circumstances?

It would have been a befitting task for Satan to bruise to death with hailstones innocent dumb beasts in order to inflict punishment upon their owners (Exod. IX: 6 and 25).

“I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things” (Isa. XLV: 7). Jehovah admits his inability to govern his people: “I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against me” (Isa. I: 2).

According to Ezekiel, after all the trials and tribulations, God admits his laws were bad and that his judgments were such that they should not be required to keep them. “Wherefore I gave them statutes *that were not good*, and judgments whereby they should not live” (Ezek. XX: 25).

This God advises his people to avoid eating the flesh of beasts that die of natural causes, but advises them to sell the same to strangers. Anyone with even a distorted sense of justice would realize that this is one law that is “not good and whereby they should not live” (Deut. XIV: 21).

But the most revolting characteristics ascribed to God is by Isaiah in the third chapter, seventeenth verse. It is of such a nature that it is better left in Holy Writ.

SATAN

SATAN is the necessary evil to the Christian scheme of redemption. As the necessary evil he made his appearance four thousand years prior to the appearance of the Redeemer. In his first appearance, Christianity gives him the credit of outwitting the Infinite God.

After Satan's first triumph over God, the Christians were willing to acknowledge his kingdom. He has been active ever since, except for the space of a thousand years, when, according to St. John, an angel came from heaven and bound him and cast him into the bottomless pit. Just when he was bound is uncertain, but, according to tradition, the thousand years have expired and he is free to roam and do as he pleases. When the heavenly hosts had him bound, why did they not keep him bound, thereby saving these tired and overworked clergymen the awful mental strain occasioned by their heroic efforts to save souls from his clutches?

His kingdom will be more densely populated than heaven. Those desiring to "follow the crowd" should make application to his kingdom. Christians have already allotted to him all the Jews, all the Mohammedans, all the Brahmins and Buddhists, to say noth-

ing of the army of freethinkers. There are at the present time more pagans than Christians and Mohammedans combined. It may be readily seen that Satan will have, according to the Christian forecast, the most populous kingdom in existence.

But the most unreasonable part of it all is, that, on account of Satan's first triumph over God, it became necessary that God send his son upon earth and allow him to be crucified that this first exploit of Satan's might be set right; that God might finally triumph.

THE JEWS

IT will not be amiss, having acquainted ourselves with Jehovah, to make a short inquiry as to the character of the Jews, or the people of his own choosing. They were to be living and moral examples for all mankind. It is probable that their own writers would overrate them rather than underrate them. We will examine Isaiah's testimony; we find his rating as follows: "Their hands are defiled with blood, their fingers with iniquity; and their lips speak lies; their tongues mutter perverseness. None of them call for justice; none of them plead for the truth. They trust in vanity and speak lies; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, they make haste to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are the thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths (Isa. LIX: 3, 4, 7). David corroborates these statements by declaring: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psa. XIV: 3).

Their moral status must have been very low, judging from the law given for their observance in the fifteenth and eighteenth chapters of Leviticus.

They were a locust- and grasshopper-eating tribe,

which shows more fully that they were barbarians: "Ye may eat the locust and the beetle and the grasshopper after his kind" (Lev. XI: 22). Is there at present any nation subsisting on grasshoppers, beetles and locusts that is considered a civilized nation?

Is it not strange that God chose such a tribe of barbarians with which to build a nation that for clean morals and surpassing wisdom would astonish the world? What success did he have according to his own history of the affair?

Jehovah tried for about sixteen hundred years, after being thwarted in his original plans by Satan, to civilize his people; he abandoned the plan as useless, and drowned them all but eight persons.

With such an object lesson as this fresh in their memories, he believed that he would have no trouble in bringing them into submission. But in this he was mistaken. They determined to build a tower to heaven and occupy the celestial realms. Jehovah was willing to own them as his people as long as they remained on earth, but he felt that when they wanted him to share heaven with them, they were imposing upon good nature. But as he had promised them never to use the water cure again, it devolved upon him to confuse their language.

Finding success in trying to govern all of them impossible, he chose Abraham and his descendants.

Then the Egyptians upset all his plans in capturing God's people, by enticing them into Egypt and placing them in bondage.

After four hundred years of captivity, Jehovah con-jured, cajoled and wheedled Pharaoh into releasing his people, and he started with them for Palestine. He kept them wandering until nearly all who came from Egypt died. On one occasion when they objected to the rations on which they were being fed, and incidentally hinted that a change of diet would be acceptable, God became enraged and released a herd of snakes, and the snakes bit the people, and "much people of Israel died."

Then he took them to Palestine and tried govern-ing them with judges. Here he scored another fail-ure.

Then he tried kings, but the most of the kings were idolaters or possessed a supreme fondness for fair women and Oriental finery.

Then the chosen people were taken captive into Babylon ; more bad luck for Jehovah!

Then they returned, and he tried the civilizing in-fluence of prophets, howlers and wailers ; but the people grew worse and worse.

As a last resort, Jehovah took upon himself flesh, and lived and taught among his chosen people ; but again they failed to appreciate his efforts. They failed to recognize in him the same Jehovah who turned loose

the herd of snakes upon them when they were in the wilderness. They charged him with being an infidel, and also with trying to destroy the true religion that he himself had established. They were even so unappreciative as to publicly hang him.

Now in the name of all that is good and holy, he threatens to damn to eternal punishment all his chosen people, whom he had spent thousands of years in trying to reform.

MOSES

MOSES, the great law-giver, was the leading character of Jewish history. His history is so closely connected with that of the Jews that a brief investigation of his character will not be amiss. It was claimed by him that he was on the most familiar terms with Jehovah.

All laws given by him for observance by the Jews were supposed to have been given to him by Jehovah. It made no difference how cruel, heartless or wicked they may have been, they were ascribed to Jehovah. If some of his characterizations of God are not blasphemous, the word should be stricken from the English language.

The law as it is given in Leviticus, twenty-first chapter, excluded from the congregation of the Lord all persons having a flat nose, crooked back, broken hand, cross-eyes, or who were blemished otherwise. It is considered by civilized people at the present time as an act of kindness to show courtesies to the unfortunate.

Moses established a precedent when he married a negress. This is the first case on record of the inter-marriage of races. The marriage seems to have met with God's most hearty approval. We are informed

that when Aaron, the priest, and Miriam, the sister of Moses, spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman he had married, the Lord spake suddenly to the three, Moses, Aaron and Miriam, and ordered them to appear outside the tabernacle, as was supposed, to receive sentence. But God simply told them that Moses was a righteous servant. The account states that God was very angry, and when he departed Miriam was stricken with leprosy and was shut out of the camp for seven days. Thus all proceedings were at a standstill among the Israelites, on account of one person voicing a just and righteous criticism (Num. XII).

Previous to this occurrence is recorded a murder, perpetrated by this "most holy" man. We are led to believe that the offense for which the Egyptian was slain was that of smiting a Hebrew. The account states that he, Moses, looked this way and that, and as he saw no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The account further states that on the second day, when Moses went out he found two Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, "Why smitest thou him?" And the man replied, "Intendest thou to kill me as thou didst the Egyptian?" And Moses said, "Surely this thing is known" (Exod. II). Moses knew that he had committed a murder, and his guilty conscience needed no accuser.

Another account, which gives to the reader an idea of the true character of Moses, is found in Numbers, thirty-first chapter, fifteenth to eighteenth verses. When Moses' army was returning from the fight with the Midianites, having slain all the men, Moses met the army with this inquiry: "Have you saved all the women alive?" And then he issued the order to the army to *kill* all the males among the little ones, save the maidens for themselves, and *kill* all the women who were not maidens. Nothing in barbarous warfare is hardly the equal of this brutal edict. Is this a lesson to teach the heathen? Or, Christian father and Christian mother, would you not hesitate before telling such a story to your children? Would you tell them that God's chieftain ever issued such an edict?

Moses is represented as having shown more intellectual development than was shown by his God. In the story concerning the golden calf which the people fell to worshiping while Moses and his God were legislating, it is related that God became very angry with the worshipers of the calf and threatened to exterminate the whole race, but through Moses' better judgment God was persuaded to desist from his original plans. This would place God on an inferior intellectual plane to that of Moses.

ABRAHAM

THE narrator of Genesis, thirteenth chapter, sixteenth verse, states that God promised Abraham his seed was to be as dust of the earth and sands of the sea, compared as to multitude. At present, after more than three thousand eight hundred years of replenishing and multiplying on earth, his whole tribe numbers about ten million souls. A few handfuls of dust would represent their number instead of the sands of the sea, as promised.

But what was the real character of Abraham? His conduct toward his servant girl, Hagar, would be at present considered as of a criminal nature. Men are in modern times shut safely behind the bars of state institutions for such conduct as is related concerning this "holy man" (Gen. XXI)—this man who was chosen by God to be of surpassing wisdom and to stand at the head of the moral regeneration of the human race.

We read in Genesis, twelfth chapter, of how Abraham lied to Pharaoh. He not only lied to him, but he told Sarai before they reached Egypt that he was going to lie about her, for that was the only way out, and in this way he could profit at the sacrifice of her honor. "And my soul shall live because of thee."

The account further states that Sarai was taken into Pharaoh's house and Pharaoh gave Abraham sheep, oxen, menservants, and maidservants. Then God sent a plague upon Pharaoh on account of Abraham's wife. The nineteenth verse explains why Pharaoh gave so much to Abraham and why God sent the plague. It is the kind of story that is peculiar to Holy Writ. Abraham also lied to Abimelech (Gen. XX). And after all this disgraceful conduct, God himself states that Abraham kept all his commands, his statutes, and his laws (Gen. XXVI : 5).

There is one thing, however, that is to the credit of Abraham. After God had decided to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham remonstrated with him and succeeded in getting a promise from him that if there were fifty righteous people in the city he would spare it for these fifty. Here is where Abraham's Jewish nature asserted itself. Abraham succeeded in getting God to reduce the saving number to forty-five, then to forty, then to thirty, then to twenty, then to ten; then God left, supposedly fearing that Abraham would talk him out of the idea of destroying them at all. Evidently Abraham was not successful in securing the coveted ten, for God sent the full allowance of brimstone, and destroyed all but the righteous Lot and family.

ISAAC

ISAAC followed the precept set by his father, practicing the same fraud and deception. When the men of the plains asked him concerning his wife, he said, "She is my sister." Why did not God deal with him as he did with Ananias and Sapphira? The narrator of Acts states that God killed them for lying.

JACOB

JACOB opened his performance by trying to steal from his brother all his earthly rights as regarded his heritage; added to this fact, he was also a monumental liar. When Isaac, old and blind, asked him, "Art thou my son Esau?" he replied, "I am" (Gen. XXVII: 24).

We are led to believe that both Jehovah and Isaac had intended that Esau should inherit the blessing; but Jacob, with the aid and connivance of his mother, outwitted both of them. At another time Jacob made an offer to God of one-tenth of all that God might permit him to raise. The account does not state if God accepted his generous offer.

Jacob met Rachael while she was caring for her father's sheep. He became infatuated with her, and made a contract with her father to work for him for seven years, and to receive Rachael as his wife in return for his labor. At the end of the seven years, Laban, Rachael's father, under the cover of darkness, substituted Leah for Rachael. Now Rachael was "winsome and well favored," and Leah was "blear-eyed," and as soon as Jacob discovered the substitution he was not contented; but Laban told him that if he wanted Rachael "to wife" he would be compelled

to labor another seven years. Jacob consented to labor another seven years, and at the end of that time Laban made good his word, and gave Rachael to Jacob for his wife.

This is where inspired polygamy was established. Here, with Jacob as father, and his two wives and the handmaid of each wife, as mothers, originated the twelve head tribesmen of the twelve tribes of Israel (Gen. XXIX and XXX).

Jacob's lying propensities were transmitted to his sons, as the account in Genesis states that the sons of Jacob answered the men of Shechem deceitfully (Gen. XXXIV: 13).

DAVID

WE come now to David, "The man after God's own heart." Unquestionably he was the prince of iniquity workers. His first act of moral delinquency was that of turning traitor to Achish, king of Gath. After he had received an appointment as ruler over Ziklag, he showed his ingratitude by waging an unprovoked war for plunder upon the king's friends and relatives (I Sam. XXVII). The account further states that David smote the land and left man nor woman alive. What had the women done to deserve this kind of treatment? David was a marauder and, unlike Moses, would rather kill the women than save them alive. On another occasion he committed a similar act of aggression and spoilation on the rights and property of Nabal (I Sam. XXV).

David's method of procuring Michal for his wife is revolting in the extreme to a just and sensitive mind. The conditions imposed upon David by Saul were most degrading in their nature. Should the history of David be dramatized and presented on the stage, the police authorities of any of our large cities would immediately put a ban upon its production.

But as to the conditions named by Saul, to which

David must comply to procure Michal for a wife, David proved himself equal to the occasion. He not only procured the required booty, but in his wild and zealous efforts to secure his prize he, wantonly and unprovoked, slew twice the number of men that he necessarily would have had to mistreat in order to have complied with the conditions imposed upon him to secure his prize (I Sam. XVIII).

The manner in which he secured his beautiful Bathsheba "to wife," is another instance which marks him as a depraved caitiff. It seems that David was a sort of "Jack the peeper," as the account states that he saw her at her bath, "and the woman was very fair to look upon." He then sent messengers and took her. The remainder of the account may be read in the Bible, eleventh chapter Second Samuel.

Then David ordered his commander-in-chief, Joab, to place Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, in the front rank of battle so that he might be slain. Joab executed the orders, and at the death of Uriah David took Bathsheba as his wife, thus making a polygamist of him again.

After the child was born, God sent a messenger to David and informed him that he was displeased on account of this affair. It is related that God struck the child and it was very sick. (Why did not God strike David?) This caused David to fast and lie all night upon the ground. But the child died, evidently

from the effects of the blow delivered by God. Then David took Bathsheba and comforted her, and she bore him another son, and this was the origin of the great and wise Solomon (II Sam. XII).

David danced in a nearly nude state before God. This very much displeased Michal, Saul's daughter, who said to him, "How glorious was the king of Israel today who uncovered himself in the eyes of his handmaids." David replied by saying, "I will be even more vile than this, and will be base in mine own sight" (II Sam. VI: 20-22).

David, in order to cause a famine to cease, sacrificed the sons of Saul. It was the order from Jehovah that when his subjects desired some special service, something must be sacrificed. In this instance it was the sons of Saul. A human sacrifice to appease the anger of Jehovah! Five of the group that were hanged were the sons of David's own wife, Michal. Two were sons of Rizpah, the concubine of Saul, who with motherly devotion sat and watched the bodies of her sons that the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air might not prey upon them. The narrator states that God was contented with the sacrifice, and the famine ceased (II Sam. II: 21).

Nothing short of a fiend would conceive of treating people as described in the following language: "And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and

under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln. . . . ” (II Sam. XII: 31).

His wicked prayer breathes hatred and revenge: “Let his children be fatherless and his wife a widow. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath” (Psa. CIX: 9 and 11).

His hopeless physical condition as set forth in his own language depicts the relics of a misspent life (Psa. XXXVIII).

His tolerant spirit toward his son, Absalom (II Sam. XVI: 22), his dying charge to his son Solomon, not to allow the hoar head of Joab to go down in peace to the grave (I Kings II: 6), and at last his death and the unique method of trying to revive him (I Kings I), are sufficient to disclose to the thinking individual his true character, instead of the righteous man he is represented as being in the usual Sunday School lesson.

SOLOMON

SOLOMON'S history shows him to have been the greatest libertine and polygamist on record. Many of his sayings are supposed by some to be the wisest in the world. True, his experience with seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines should qualify him to speak authoritatively on some subjects. He declared, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." His experience taught him that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast (Eccl. III : 19), and there is no future state of the soul ; his judgment in this is verified by Job, fourteenth chapter, tenth verse.

Solomon's Temple is believed by many to have been the finest and most gorgeous piece of architecture at the time it was built. Myers in his ancient history states that it was a poor imitation of the Babylonian temples then in existence. After taking the contradictory statements concerning it from the Bible history, few facts remain concerning the history of this wonderful piece of ancient architecture.

"Also he made two pillars of brass, of eighteen cubits high apiece" (I Kings VII : 15). "Also he made before the house two pillars of thirty and five cubits high" (II Chron. III : 15).

"Besides the chief of Solomon's officers which were

over the work, three thousand and three hundred, which ruled over the people that wrought in the work" (I Kings V: 16). ". . . And three thousand and six hundred overseers to see the people awork" (II Chron. II: 18).

"And he made a molten sea; . . . it contained two thousand baths" (I Kings VII: 23-26). "Also he made a molten sea . . . it held three thousand baths" (II Chron. IV: 2-5).

THE PROPHETS

THE prophecies are one of the great cornerstones of the foundations of faith. Let us examine the character of some of the leading prophets, and we will be in a better position to judge of the merits of their prophecies.

The leading prophet, Isaiah, states: "But they have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way: the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment" (Isa. XXVIII: 7). This is a sweeping accusation against all prophets, for when he states, "They err in vision," he certainly speaks of spiritual vision. Then what dependency can be placed in their prophecies?

He quotes them as follows: ". . . For we have placed our hope in lies, and by falsehood we are protected" (Douay Version, Isa. XXVIII: 15). What a grand slogan would Isaiah's words be for the church!

Jeremiah states of them: "I have seen also in the prophets of Jerusalem an horrible thing: they commit adultery and walk in lies: they strengthen also the hands of evil-doers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me as

Sodom, and the inhabitants of Gomorrah. Therefore sayeth the Lord of Hosts concerning the prophets: behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink of the water of gall; for from the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone forth unto all the land" (XXIII: 14-15).

He also represents God as saying, he will fill them with drunkenness: "And thou shalt say unto them, Thus sayeth the Lord, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunkenness" (XIII: 13). How is that for wholesale drunkenness?

". . . The prophet is a fool. . . . The prophet is a snare of a fowler in all his ways, and hatred is in the house of God" (Hos. IX: 7 and 8).

Zechariah states that the Lord will drive them out and they shall be ashamed of their prophecies: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied" (XIII: 4). ". . . And also I will cause the prophets . . . to pass out of the land" (XIII: 2).

Ezekiel states that if a prophet be deceived, that prophet was deceived by the Lord, and as a result of being deceived he will be destroyed from the midst of Israel: "And if a prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I, the Lord, have deceived that

prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel" (XIV: 9). Jeremiah corroborates with the statement, "O Lord, thou hast deceived me" (XX: 7). He gives more testimony by stating, "For both prophet and priest are profane" (XXIII: 11).

We are led to believe that Isaiah traveled through Egypt and Ethiopia for three years without raiment to cover his nakedness: "And the Lord said, Like as my servant, Isaiah, naked and barefoot for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and Ethiopia" (Isa. XX: 3). In the foregoing, the Lord states that it was for a sign and wonder upon Egypt. Would it not be a wonder to the average individual if the Lord's flock would attempt such a thing at the present time?

"So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt" (Isa. XX: 4). What a disgusting affair! Would it not occur to a right-thinking mind that it would be to the shame of God to permit such a parade?

Ezekiel poses as the world's greatest eater. His eating career began when God gave him a roll of parchment to eat. After consuming this parchment, which was filled with lamentations and woe, and after lying on his side for a period of three hundred ninety-four days, he qualified as a prophet. This was not

all that was included in his bill of fare, however. The details concerning this other diet and the method of preparing it, may be read in the fourth chapter of his book.

Ezekiel relates a story of being carried by the hand of the Lord to a valley, and there he was left in the midst of some old, dry bones. He stretched hides over the bones and invoked the winds to inflate them, when, lo! there stood upon their feet a great army (XXXVII). What a valuable addition would an Ezekiel be to the warring nations of Europe!

Hosea states that God commanded him to marry a woman of questionable character." . . . And the Lord said to Hosea, go, take thee a wife of . . . and children of . . . : for the land hath committed great . . . in departing from the Lord" (Hos. I: 2).

We are told by the narrator of Kings that Ahaziah, when he succeeded his father upon the throne, was crippled from the effects of a fall that he had received. Being anxious to receive relief, he decided to try the aid of the gods. Accordingly he sent his messengers to consult with the god of Ekron. Elijah hearing it, intercepted the messengers and returned them to Ahaziah, asking him why he did not consult the God of Israel first (II Kings I: 6).

Ahaziah, upon receiving Elijah's message, returned the messengers to Elijah with the request that Elijah

visit the king so that he might consult more freely with the prophet. The king's messengers paid all due respect to Elijah, addressing him as the man of God; but for some mysterious reason, and without provocation, Elijah replied, "If I be a man of God then let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." The account states that the fire appeared on time and satisfactorily consumed them. The king, holding Elijah's friendship in high esteem, sent another fifty with the same disastrous results. The king, being persistent, sent another body of thirty, and the fire immediately consumed this band, whereupon God took a hand in affairs and advised Elijah to go in person and see the king.

Acting upon the advice from God, Elijah arose and went and visited the king. He carried to him the most gratifying news, that because he had sent his messengers to consult with the god of Ekron first, he would never rise from his bed. The inspired narrator informs us that he died according to the word of the Lord. Is this story of a prophet a good story to teach children? Would it make them kind, loving, and merciful to teach them that God and his prophet were in the burning business to stamp out opposition?

Elijah's last astounding feat was his ascension to heaven in a chariot of fire, with horses of the same material. The horses and chariot seem to have been

a part of the equipment of heaven, as there is no account of their existence before or after this occurrence.

The probability of this miracle is disproved by other texts. St. Paul denies it: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" (I Cor. XV: 50). The narrator of John also denies it: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven" (John III: 13). Such stories as these are not calculated to convert any to lead a life of righteousness. They teach no lessons of any value.

Daniel avers that God carried Habakkuk by the hair of the head, when Daniel was in the lions' den, the second time, in Babylon. The angel of the Lord appeared to him, Habakkuk, and told him to take the dinner of boiled pottage, which he had prepared, and go to Daniel who was in the lions' den and feed him. Habakkuk replied that he did not know where the lions' den was, nor even where Babylon was. Thereupon the angel of the Lord seized him by the top of the head and carried him to the den of the lions, in Babylon, where Daniel was confined.

This story of Daniel and the lions far exceeds the other for thrills. On this occasion Daniel was in the den for six days, and during this space of time the lions had not been fed, yet they refused to eat Daniel. This is the story as related in the Douay Version.

The King James translators evidently thought that this was working the lion story overtime, hence they omitted it.

In the Douay Version of Daniel is given the account of the attempted defilement of Suzanna by two old judges. The story is racy and absolutely devoid of any good moral precepts. It would appear that the King James translators were very wise in omitting it.

From the foregoing it seems that the prophets' characters were of a questionable sort. They were dissipated and of a low type of morality. If their statements concerning each other are true, none of them is worthy of belief. It takes from their prophecies any claim to credence.

WOMEN CHARACTERS OF THE BIBLE

ARE the women whose characters are portrayed in the Bible worthy of imitation by the mothers and daughters of the present time? Mother Eve preferred the advice of Satan to that of God. Lot's daughters inebriated their father and committed incest with him while in this drunken stupor. Delilah turned traitor to her husband and tried repeatedly to deliver him to his enemies, and finally succeeded. Jael was a murderess. Tamar possessed all the cunning wiles of the average woman of the low type of morality that she represented. Ruth's conduct toward Boaz would at the present time call for adverse criticism. Rahab was the keeper of an immoral resort, but it did not prevent her from going to heaven (Heb. XI: 31 and Jas. II: 25). Suzanna habitually used her husband's orchard for a bath room.

WOMAN AND MARRIAGE

WOMAN is treated by all Bible writers as an inferior being to man. She is given the blame of being the first to bring sin into the world. The New Testament writers never missed an opportunity to remind their readers of this fact.

Moses sums up woman's sphere as follows: "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman and hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst have her to thy wife; then shalt thou bring her home to thine house; and she shall shave her head and pare her nails; and she shall put the raiment of her captivity off her, and shall remain in thine house, and bewail her father and mother a full month: after that thou shalt . . . and be her husband and she shall be thy wife. And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will: but thou shalt not sell her at all for money, thou shalt not make merchandise of her, because thou hast humbled her" (Deut. XXI: 10-14).

Under this law, woman is treated as a chattel pure and simple. She has nothing to say as to whom she

shall serve; no right to love or be loved; no right to be the happy equal in a happy home. This edict would populate a nation with a class of people who would have no respect for the sacredness of the marriage vow or home. If her lord and master found no delight in her, he should let her go whither she would; but he had no authority to sell or make merchandise of her because he had "humbled" her.

Compare this edict of barbarism with the marriage relation of the North American Indian in his savage state. There was enough justice in the heart of this savage to put to shame this law of Moses. To the Indian who "humbled" an Indian maiden, there was but one alternative, and that was to be branded by his own tribesmen, and cast adrift and not tolerated in any other tribe, on account of the brand of disgrace and dishonor he bore. And when the brave married the maiden of his choice, there was a ceremony, and it was considered sacred until death. He was not allowed to cast her adrift because he "found no delight in her."

In the twenty-ninth verse of the twenty-second chapter of Deuteronomy, we find a law for the regulation of the purchase of wives. For fifty shekels of silver, or about twenty-five dollars in money of the United States, a wife could be purchased. Anything at the present time that can be bought for twenty-five dollars is considered in law to be a chattel.

St. Paul teaches that a woman should not dress herself attractively, wear jewelry, or any wearing apparel that is intended to make a pleasing appearance. To quote him: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array" (I Tim. II: 9). To the Ephesians he states: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: as he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands, in everything" (V: 22-24). "And if they will learn anything let them ask their husbands at home" (I Cor. XIV: 35).

He recommends celibacy, for the reason that a married man tries to make home happy by pleasing his wife, and by so doing neglects church duty. "But he that is married careth more for the things of this world, how he may please his wife" (I Cor. VII: 33). He states that marriage may be tolerated as the lesser of two evils; that is, as a means of mitigating a burning lust. "But if they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn" (I Cor. VII: 9). Such was Paul's dream of woman's sphere, and such was his conception of the sacredness of the marriage vow.

Christ teaches: "If any man come to me and hate not . . . his wife, . . . he cannot be my dis-

ciple" (Luke XIV : 26). "The children of this world marry and are given in marriage : but they that shall be accounted worthy of that world, and the resurrection of the dead, shall neither be married, nor take wives" (Douay Version, Luke XX : 34 and 35). He offers eternal life to wife deserters : "And everyone that hath forsaken . . . wife . . . for my name's sake shall inherit eternal life" (Matt. XIX : 29).

But under the laws of the state of Kansas the wife deserter is confined in the state penitentiary until he feels that it is better to stay and provide for those dependent upon him. How grand are the decrees of civilization when compared with the bribes offered from the throne of heaven!

Upon the welfare of mother, wife and sweetheart hinges the destiny of our nation and of the world.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

THOU shalt not kill." This is a very indefinite law. It does not state thou shalt not kill thy fellow being. If it refers to the slaughter of animals, it is contradicted in numerous other passages. This law was so indefinite, that in the year 1870 the Convocation of Canterbury voted that God wanted it changed, and in the year 1881 the new version appeared with this law reading, "Thou shalt do no murder."

But the Convocation neglected to vote out the passages of Scripture that sanction the murder of brothers by brothers. ". . . Thus sayeth the Lord God of Israel, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor" (Exod. XXXII: 27). Here is the express command from the Lord God of Israel, authorizing brothers, neighbors, and companions to murder each other. The inspired narrator states that on account of this edict there fell of the sons of Levi three thousand men in one day. How is that for wholesale murder?

Another command represented to be direct from God is, "Thus sayeth the Lord of Hosts . . . now

go and smite Amalek and utterly destroy all they have and spare them not ; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (I Sam. XV : 2 and 3). What offense were the babes guilty of? What had the mothers and daughters done that God should issue such a decree against them? Is the Devil's record besmirched by such an edict? It is related that Saul put all the inhabitants to the sword as per Jehovah's orders and Samuel incidentally hewed Agag, the king of the Amalekites, in pieces while God looked on.

Again we read : "For thus sayeth the Lord, behold, I will make thee a terror to thyself, and all thy friends : and they shall fall by the sword of their enemies, and thine eyes shall behold it : and I will give all Judea into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall slay them with the sword" (Jer. XX : 4). Here we find the Lord threatening to deliver his own people to be slain. Jeremiah further adds : "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (XLVIII : 10).

Ezekiel gives evidence as follows : "And the Lord said unto him, . . . let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity : slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women" (IX : 4-6). Again : "For thus sayeth the Lord God : . . . he shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field : . . . and he shall set engines of war against thy walls"

(XXVI: 7-9). He further contributes to the catalogue of killings as follows: "For thus sayeth the Lord, I will bring a company upon them, . . . and the company shall stone them with stones, and despatch them with swords: they shall slay their sons and daughters, and burn up their houses with fire" (XXIII: 46 and 47).

WAR

WHAT does the book teach about war? Is it opposed to war? The God of the Old Testament is termed by the narrators, "A God of War," "A Man of War," and "The Lord of Hosts."

We read in Exodus: "For he said, because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have a war with Amalek from generation to generation" (XVII: 16). This brands the God of the Bible a continual fighter: fighting from generation to generation regardless of the outcome of conflicts. It is not reasonable, because at the end of any conflict all differences might have been adjusted, hence the continuation of the war would be unnecessary.

Another edict issued from on high: "When thou goest forth to war, against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hand" (Deut. XXI: 10), surely proves that the God of Israel took enough interest in the war to deliver the enemy. Is he not entitled to the appellation, "Man of War"? (Exod. XV: 3.)

In the book of Judges we find an account of a war waged between the Israelites and Benjamites. There can be no doubt of the Lord's personal conduct of this war (XX). Not only did he participate in wars,

but he also urged his generals to wage wars of extermination. "And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee: thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them" (Deut. VII: 2).

Again we are told that Joshua, one of God's generals, was attacked by the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perrizite, and the Jebusite. The account states that the consolidated army was as numerous as the sands of the sea. But God told Joshua to have no fear, for God would deliver them all slain on the morrow. The Lord delivered them as per schedule, but Joshua was compelled to participate in the killing. The narrator informs us that God hardened the hearts of these people that he might have the privilege of killing them (Josh. XI).

The same narrator records an instance where God threw great stones from heaven upon an enemy (X: 11). It is related that more people were slain by the stones thrown by God than by the opposing army. It might be observed that God has taken no interest in the European war up to the present time, and has thrown no stones for Czar or Kaiser.

In the book of Joshua is recorded the account of the sun and moon standing still to enable Joshua to complete his butcheries. God must have appreciated the war or he would not have extended daylight to the bloody Joshua.

Christ gives testimony on the subject of war, as

follows: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I am not come to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. X: 34). His admonition to the party who had no sword, to sell his garment and buy one (Luke XXII: 36), and his command to bring his enemies before him and slay them (Luke XIX: 27), are all contradictory to the sixth commandment.

What has Christianity done for bleeding Europe? Nearly every nation now engaged in this greatest of all world wars is a Christian nation. Those that do not acknowledge Christ imagine that they are in partnership with Jehovah. Were not these rulers reared in the Christian faith? Were not the soldiers taught in Christian schools and Christian churches? Then what has it profited Europe?

Is this the fruits of teaching, "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood;" "Slay every man his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor;" "Think not I am come to send peace on earth; I am not come to send peace but a sword;" "But those mine enemies that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me;" "He that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one?"

TEMPERANCE

AND thou shalt bestow that money . . . for strong drink or for whatsoever thy soul desireth, . . . and thou shalt rejoice, thou and thine household" (Deut. XIV: 26). "Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink and forget his poverty and remember his misery no more" (Prov. XXXI: 6 and 7). To quote St. Paul: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (I Tim. V: 23).

Examples of righteous men being drunk are numerous: Lot, the righteous man, whom God saved from Sodom, was made drunk by his daughters (Gen. XIX: 33), as was Noah, whose sons covered him with blankets to prevent him making an indecent display of himself (Gen. IX: 21-23).

"Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, drink thy wine with a merry heart: for God now accepteth thy works" (Eccl. IX: 7). "O Lord, my God, thou art very great, thou . . . maketh . . . wine that maketh glad the heart of man" (Psa. CIV: 1-15).

That the Bible has not taught temperance is demonstrated by the fact that a great many of the saloons of the large cities are owned and operated by Chris-

tians. To be sure these saloon-keepers are communicants of the Roman Catholic Church ; but it must be remembered that the Roman Church was the only church that taught the Christian religion for nearly fifteen hundred years after the time of Christ.

Facts are stubborn things. To prove that churches and church-membership influence is in favor of the liquor traffic, it is only necessary to consult census bulletin No. 103, issued by the Department of Commerce of the United States government. By referring to this bulletin we find that Kansas and Maine have a church membership of 28.4 and 28.9 per cent of the total population. Both are prohibition states, while Pennsylvania with a percentage of 43 is a land of distilleries and open saloons. There are 1200 vacant churches in prohibition Kansas.

POLYGAMY

THUS sayeth the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul: and I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom . . . and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things'' (II Sam. XII: 7 and 8). Here we find the sanction of polygamy from the Lord God of Israel. If it had not been agreeable in his sight, he would not have delivered to David the numerous wives of Saul. David being a man after God's own heart should have appreciated the favor, but on the contrary, it seems David wanted more wives, and God became angry at him on account of his greedy desire to monopolize the wife industry.

Many Bible characters other than David had numerous wives. Had polygamy been dealt with as harshly as idolatry there would be no Mormon church at the present time. St. John in his Apocalypse saw a hot of all hot places for the worshiper of images (Rev. XIV: 10).

There is also another phase of the polygamy question. A great many of the Bible polygamists kept an assortment of concubines. The narrator in

writing Solomon's history placed the number of his wives at seven hundred and the number of his concubines at three hundred. David had seven wives and ten concubines (II Sam. XX: 3 and III: 2-5). "And Rehoboam loved Maachah the daughter of Absalom above all his wives and concubines: (for he took eighteen wives and three score concubines); and begat twenty and eight sons and three score daughters" (II Chron. XI: 21). "But Abijah waxed mighty and married fourteen wives, and begat twenty and two sons and three score daughters" (II Chron. XIII: 21). "And Lamech took unto him two wives" (Gen. IV: 19). "And Gideon had three score and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives" (Jud. VIII: 30). "And Asher the father of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah" (I Chron. IV: 5). "And Shaharim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had sent them away; Huskim and Baara were his wives" (I Chron. VIII: 8). "And Jehoida took for him two wives" (II Chron. XXIV: 3).

Is it to the advantage of the rising generation to have such examples of polygamists with which to train their morals? Christian father, will you teach your boys that Rehoboam loved his concubines as he should love a wife, then tell him that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction in righteousness? Is it any wonder, after reading these accounts, that the Mormons felt in-

spired to perpetuate the institution of polygamy? If it was right in the sight of God then, why is it wrong now? Did God have to be regenerated before he knew that polygamy was wrong?

SLAVERY

THE Bible contains a warrant for the traffic in human flesh. The Old Testament contains laws governing the sale and conduct of slaves. The New Testament contains laws governing the conduct of slaves toward their masters. Both books recognize the institution.

“Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them for an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bondmen forever” (Lev. XXV: 45 and 46).

This passage constituted a strong bulwark in support of the institution of slavery, as preached from the pulpit in the Southern states prior to the Civil War. There are other passages similar to the above that unquestionably favor the inspired institution.

The God of Israel sold his own people into slavery. “And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers, that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, . . .” (Jud. II: 14). “And he sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of

Canaan, . . . and for twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel" (Jud. IV: 2 and 3). If it was right for God to sell his people, why was it not right for man to sell, as he considered it, his inferior fellowman? That was the way the pious slave-driver reasoned.

The law as given in Exodus was that if an individual should buy a Hebrew slave, he was not allowed to enslave him for life as he could the slave from the other tribes. At the end of seven years he was allowed to have his freedom. If the slave had a wife and family at the beginning of his servitude, he was allowed to take his family with him. If the master had given him a wife, the title to the wife and children remained in the master. If the slave refused to take his liberty on account of having to leave his family, then the master would take him to the door post and bore his ear with an awl, and he became a living chattel of the master's forever.

Should a father sell his daughter—think of it, sell his daughter!—there was another law governing this case (Exod. XXI: 1-8).

The slave owner was permitted to brutally beat his slave on any occasion when, in his judgment, it was necessary. If the flogging administered was of such a nature as to cause instant death, the law demanded that the slave-driver be punished; but if the slave continued in agony a day or two before death, there was no prescribed punishment, "for he is his money."

If a master became enraged and struck his slave in the eye, thereby destroying the vision, it would gain for the slave his freedom (Exod. XXI: 26).

If a man stole a slave, it meant capital punishment for the thief (Exod. XXI: 16). If a man had in his possession an ox that had gored another man's slave, then the owner of the ox was compelled to pay to the owner of the slave thirty shekels in silver, or about fifteen dollars in money of the United States.

Supposing that Satan had established a code of laws governing the conduct of slave toward master and of master toward slave, in what way could they be expected to differ from the foregoing? Is it not possible that these translators, in their numerous errors, have substituted the name Jehovah for that of Satan? Would not some of these passages read more consistently with these names transposed?

Hear the merciful admonition of St. Paul to the man whose back was bleeding: "Servants obey your masters" (I Col. III: 22). "Obey them that rule over you" (Heb. XIII: 17). "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed" (I Tim. VI: 1).

St. Peter adds testimony as follows: "Servants be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (I Pet. II: 18).

It is necessary to cite the history of only one church to show the attitude of the church on the question of slavery. The Methodist Church, the strongest organization in the Protestant world today, in the year 1836 went on record as opposed to the abolition of slavery, by a vote of 120 to 14. In the year 1845 the church divided, because Bishop Andrews held slaves and refused to liberate or sell them.

LYING

THERE are many of the leading characters of the Bible who practiced lying. Abraham and his wife (Gen. XX), Jacob and Isaac (Gen. XXXI) were all falsifiers; also Rachael, Jacob's wife (Gen. XXXI), Jacob's sons (Gen. XXXVII), Samson (Jud. XVI), together with four hundred prophets (I Kings XXII).

Jeremiah would have us believe that all the prophets were liars: "For from the least of them unto the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, everyone dealeth falsely" (VI: 13). He states *every one* dealeth falsely, which surely includes all.

St. Peter lied three times in about seventy-five minutes, and in the final outcome was given the keys of heaven (Luke XXII).

St. Paul justifies lying: "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory: why yet am I also judged as a sinner" (Rom. III: 7). It would seem from Paul's comment on the affair, that if he had lied for the glory of God, it was unfair to judge him a sinner.

How noble is the character as portrayed by the illustrious Ingersoll compared with the falsifiers of the

Bible. "Sacred are the lips from which have issued only truth. Over all wealth, above all station, above the noble, the robed and the crowned, rises the sincere man. Happy is the man who neither paints nor patches, veils nor veneers! Blessed is he who wears no mask."

WITCHCRAFT

THOU shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Deut. XXII: 18). This has been the watchword and authority for the slaughter of millions of human beings. In our own land, in the history of our colonies, we find the stain of witchcraft. When the trials for witchcraft began, the penalty for being adjudged a witch was death; this was the law in England, and Massachusetts followed the precept of the mother country, inflicting the death penalty on its witches. Cotton Mather posed at the trials of witches and wizards as a sort of bishop to decide when evidence was sufficient to condemn.

"Five women were hanged in one day. Between the tenth of June and the twenty-second of September, twenty victims were hurried to their doom. Fifty-five others had been tortured into abominable confessions. A hundred and fifty lay in prison awaiting their fate. Two hundred were either accused or suspected, and ruin seemed to impend over New England. But a reaction at last set in among the people; notwithstanding the vociferous clamor and denunciation of Mather, the witch tribunals were overthrown."—(Ridpath.)

The learned Sir Matthew Hale, one of England'

most enlightened jurists, sentenced a number of poor women to be hanged in 1664 for the crime of witchcraft; he gave as his opinion that the Bible leaves no doubt as to the existence of witches, and the duty of putting the subjects to death. Thus we have the evils that have grown from Bible superstition perpetrated by those who were so ignorant as to accept the book as authority. Witchcraft, which was believed by Bible Christians to be the work of devils, has long since sunk into oblivion, as Christianity has been civilized from year to year by the growth of rationalism.

THIEVERY

JEHOVAH gave the Israelites favor in the sight of the Egyptians that they might despoil them: "And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required; and they spoiled the Egyptians" (Exod. XII: 36).

Christ enjoined submission to robbery: "Of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again" (Luke VI: 30).

Petty larceny is commended: "Men do not despise a thief if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry" (Prov. VI: 30). "When thou comest into thy neighbor's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thy pleasure, but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn" (Deut. XXIII: 24, 25).

MOB RULE

AND if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance" (Deut. XXI : 22 and 23).

The Georgia mob that hanged Leo Frank complied with this law to the letter, except it failed to remove the body and bury it. This duty devolved upon the State whose fair name had been besmirched by mob rule.

Just as long as men worship a being in heaven, who advocates mob rule, just that long will mob violence exist on earth. Just as long as men imagine that they are inspired with a sense of justice superior to that of the courts of the land, just that long will society be menaced by mob rule.

OBSCENE PASSAGES OF THE BIBLE

WERE some of the obscene passages of the Bible to be published in any other work than the Bible the author would be liable to prosecution and incarceration, as there are strict laws in existence prohibiting the publication and circulation of obscene literature. To show the disgusting nature of some of these stories, a citation of a few of them will not be amiss.

The story of Noah, with his drunkenness and indecent conduct while under the influence of liquor, is not calculated to lead any one to adopt a cleaner code of morals. It is stated that his sons were ashamed of his conduct, and did all in their power to prevent his making such an indecent display of himself (Gen. IX).

The story of Abraham's conduct with his servant-maid, Hagar, and Sarah's gossip over the affair is anything but of an elevating nature (Gen. XVI). Lot's incest with his daughters (Gen. XIX); Jacob's conduct with both his wives' maids and the family talk regarding the same, is most disgusting (Gen. XXX). Leah's talk regarding Reuben's mandrakes (Gen. XXX: 14-16); Rachel's conduct in hiding her

father's images (Gen. XXXI: 34 and 35), are most glaring accounts of obscenity.

One of the most indecent stories in the Pentateuch (or in the world's catalogue of indecent literature) is recorded in the defilement of Dinah (Gen. XXXIV). Reuben's familiarity with his father's concubines is of a revolting nature (Gen. XXXV: 22).

The account of Judah, Onan, and Tamar is not fit literature to fall into the hands of children (Gen. XXXVIII). It surely should bring a blush of shame to the cheek of even a minister of the gospel to contend that this is the proper kind of literature to send to the heathen for his enlightenment. Its effect would be merely to produce mental and moral degradation.

In the nineteenth chapter of Judges is to be found a prize Bible story of debauchery and filth. What good can come from the reading of the filthy accounts of the conduct of such barbarians? The obscene nature of the story renders it repulsive in the extreme, but that is not the worst feature of it: "And when he was come into his own house, he took a knife and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her together with her bones into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel." The inspired narrator does not tell us whether she was dead or alive. Can any commentator tell us why this Scripture was given by

the inspiration of God? Is it profitable for instruction in righteousness?

In the fifteenth chapter, seventeenth verse of Leviticus is to be found a passage that may be of material use to priests and preachers, but is of little value to the ordinary citizen.

Amnon's treatment of his sister Tamar is not fit reading for a reading circle (II Sam. XIII). Job believes in equal rights for men and women, granting to his wife all the rights he claimed for himself (XXXI: 9 and 10). Men act as dogs (II Kings IX: 8). A passage fit only for the Bible (II Kings XVIII: 27, and Isa. XXXVI: 12). Isaiah offers advice to women (XXXII: 11). Ezekiel offers vivid descriptions (XVI: 20-26 and XXIII). Parents' barbarism is described (Deut. XXII: 15).

The above references are but a few of the dozens that might be cited in this much talked of but little studied book. Does the reading of this class of literature tend to teach morality? It is this class of passages that makes it necessary for the Christian to make excuses for the book.

You, Christian reader, may feed on this literary carrion and revel in the delights of it, but do you think it right to enforce the reading of such rot in the free and public schools of a secular government?

STORIES: FOOLISH AND OTHERWISE**CAIN**

THERE are numerous absurdities in the story of Cain. We are told that God set a mark upon Cain lest any one finding him should kill him. In the first place, there was no one to find and kill him, as he had slain all the human race excepting himself, father and mother. Granting that there were other people that might slay him, how would it be possible for them to know that the mark had been set there by God, and how would they know what the mark meant?

How could Cain find a wife in the land of Nod when he had slain all the human race but three? Why should he build a city when there was no one to inhabit it? Where did he find workmen to build this city? (Gen. IV.)

ARK OF THE COVENANT

PRIOR to the building of the Temple of Solomon, the Jews had no temple for their God to dwell in. It seems from reading the Scriptures (I Sam. IV: 4 and II Sam. VI: 2), that God had for his dwelling place the space between the wings of the cherubim, which constituted the adornments of the Ark of the Covenant.

When the Ark was brought into the camp of the Jews there went up such a shout that the "Earth rang again," and the Philistines "heard the noise of the shout," which precipitated a war between the Hebrews and the Philistines, with the result that thirty thousand Hebrews were slain and the Ark of God was captured and carried away by the Philistines, presumably with God in it.

The Philistines took the Ark to Ashdod and set it in the house of Dagon, their god. Two gods in one temple was one god too many. Here is where the real troubles of the Philistines began. The Ark caused the god Dagon to fall on his face the first night, and the next night when Dagon fell he broke his neck, and "the palms of his hands were cut off" also; there was nothing but "the stump of Dagon was left of him."

The problem of the Philistines was how to get rid

of this Ark which was working such destruction with their god. In addition to working damage of Dagon, it had caused the hand of Jehovah to be heavy upon them and smitten them with emerods. If any one ever had a peculiar idea of clean competition, it was Jehovah. In order to seek relief, the Philistines consulted their priests and diviners. Their advice was to make a new cart, place the Ark upon it, take two milch cows upon which there had come no yoke, take their calves home from them, and tie the cart to the cows.

The Philistines did as their diviners had advised, and the Ark was safely transported back to its original possessors. After its return some of the natives' curiosity got the better of their judgment, and they peeped into the box of God, which act of effrontery so incensed Jehovah that he killed fifty thousand innocent people! (I Sam. VI: 19.)

On another occasion, when David was transporting the Ark, under an armed guard of thirty thousand men, a man named Uzzah put forth his hand and took hold of the Ark, presumably to prevent it from falling, as the account states, "for the oxen shook it." This act of thoughtfulness so angered God that he struck Uzzah dead as a reward for it.

KORAH, DATHAN AND ABIRAM

THESE three men were of a revolutionary sort of disposition. They succeeded in obtaining about two hundred fifty followers, and were trying to succeed to the priesthood.

When Moses heard of this mutiny he at once reported the case to Jehovah and requested him not to accept their offering. Jehovah took Moses' advice and not only refused to accept their offering, but opened the ground under them and they fell in and were seen no more. Their followers, fearing that they might share the same fate, fled, but to no avail, for "a fire came out from the Lord" and consumed them. What kind of a fire could this have been to consume two hundred fifty people on the run?

It was rather a singular occurrence for God and Moses to become angered at the same time. Usually when God was angered, Moses would intercede in behalf of the object of his anger and the sentence would be modified; but in this particular incident, when Moses' individual rights had been infringed, he allowed God to have his own way, hence the awful penalty was inflicted.

When these mutineers' friends grieved for them, after their tragic death, the most merciful Jehovah

sent a plague that destroyed fourteen thousand people, for the only reason that they mourned their friends' death and complained of the course Moses had pursued (Num. XVI).

SAMSON

SAMSON was moved by the spirit of the Lord (Jud. XIII: 25). "Then went Samson to Gaza, and there he saw a . . ." (Jud. XVI: 1). Samson's triumphant entry into the city was a signal for the gathering of the Gazites. And they "compassed him in" and lay in wait for him at the gates of the city. They intended to have killed him when morning came. Samson did not wait until morning to take his leave, but arose at midnight, took the gates of the city and carried them away.

Another feat of his was the slaying of a thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of a Hebrew donkey. The jaw-bone not only served as military equipment, but also served as a fountain from which Samson had no trouble in quenching his thirst after accomplishing the Herculean task (Jud. XV).

THE QUAIL STORY

THE anger of the God of Israel was kindled, and he sent a wind from the sea and it took quails into the camp in great numbers. The quails fell in such quantity as to cover an area of one thousand nine hundred thirty-six square miles to a depth of three feet. The inhabitants of the camp set about gathering great quantities of the quail, preparatory to having a great feast, and the one who gathered least gathered more than one hundred bushels of quail. But God was angered again, and while the poor, hungry Israelites were feasting and the flesh was yet between their teeth, he smote them with a plague (Num. XI).

EHUD

ON one occasion when Israel had provoked God to anger, as a means of retaliation he had given a king by the name of Eglon power over them, and Eglon gathered an army of the children of Ammon and Amalek and smote the children of Israel.

When the Israelites cried to God for mercy, and he repented, he raised them up a deliverer in the person of Ehud, a Benjamite, and a left-handed person. So Ehud made preparation to properly equip himself to make the delivery that God had entrusted to him. Accordingly he made a two-edged dagger, eighteen inches in length. Then to gain access to the king's palace he procured a present for the king, and took the privilege of delivering it in person. After gaining access to the palace, he asked the king to dismiss his attendants from the room, stating to him that he had a message from God. Eglon, being upon such intimate terms with God so recently, and being elated to hear from him again, dismissed his attendants, leaving him alone with Ehud. Ehud approached him to deliver the message, and having the dagger secreted upon his person, took advantage of the king's confidence and plunged the dagger into his abdomen.

This graphic account is given by the narrator :
“And the haft also went in after the blade ; and the fat closed upon the blade ; so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly ; and the dirt came out” (Jud. III : 22).

Then Ehud locked the door of the king’s palace, on leaving, and the courtiers did not try to enter at once, so they did not discover the king’s death until Ehud had made good his escape.

This is a very fair sample of Bible stories of which so much is said. It is this class of stories to be found in the book of which The Gideon Society claims to have distributed in the hotels of America twenty-one carloads.

Jael

ANOTHER story which has the true Biblical ring to it is the story of Jael. After a big battle, in which the Lord figured prominently, Sisera was so badly worsted that he abandoned his army and fled for his life. He sought refuge in the tent of Jael, wife of Heber, who was supposed to be friendly to him.

According to the inspired narrator, Jael went out to meet Sisera, and told him to come in and have no fears. He did as requested, and she covered him with a mantle, as he was weary and had lain down to rest.

He asked for a drink of water, and she gave him a drink of milk, and he drank it and lay down to rest, and she covered him with the mantle again.

“Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a nail out of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary, so he died” (Jud. IV: 21). Did he not have a right to die? All Scripture being profitable for instruction in righteousness, would not this story make a first-class subject for a Sunday School lesson?

The warmest eulogy in the Bible is bestowed upon

this murderess, Jael. Deborah, God's favorite prophetess, in honor of this cruel assassination, sings, "Blessed above all women shall Jael, the wife of the Kenite, be" (Jud. V: 24).

JEZEBEL

THE interesting story of Jezebel may be read in the ninth chapter of the Second Kings, known in the Douay Version as Fourth Kings, in which we find this account: "And Jehu lifted up his face to the window, and said: Who is this? And two or three eunuchs bowed down to him. And he said to them: Throw her down headlong: and they threw her down, and the wall was sprinkled with her blood, and the hoofs of the horses trod upon her. And when he was come in, to eat, and to drink, he said: Go and see after that cursed woman, and bury her: because she is a king's daughter. And when they went to bury her, they found nothing but the skull, and the feet, and the extremities of her hands. And coming back they told him. And Jehu said: It is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elias the Thesbite, saying: In the field of Jezrahel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel, and the flesh of Jezebel shall be as . . . upon the face of the earth in the field of Jezrahel, so that they who pass by shall say: Is this the same Jezabel?"

ZIPPORAH

IT is related that Zipporah, the Ethiopian wife of Moses, was making a journey with her mulatto son ; that the Lord met them by the way of an inn and sought to kill the son. Zipporah seized a sharp rock and performed the rite of circumcision on the boy ; this seems to have saved his life, as there is no account of his being killed (Exod. IV : 24-26).

THE CANNIBALS

AT one time in Samaria there was a great famine. The head of a Hebrew donkey was sold, supposedly for food, for the sum of eighty pieces of silver, or about forty dollars in money of the United States. A fourth part of a cab of the cleanings of the dove cote sold for five pieces of silver, or about two dollars and fifty cents. Talk of the high cost of living, or the cost of high living; there is nothing in the present age that is the parallel of this case.

As the king of Israel was passing upon the wall, a woman said unto him, give thy son that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow. The account states that they boiled the king's son and ate him. On the following day when the king requested the woman to kill her son that they might eat him, it was discovered that she had hidden her son. The king was evidently disappointed at not being able to dine on boiled young man, for the account states he rent his clothes (II Kings VI).

THE SNAKES

IT devolved upon Aaron to demonstrate the extraordinary power of Jehovah's agents in turning ordinary sticks into snakes. The Egyptians showed some ability in transforming sticks into reptiles, but the snakes from the rods of Jehovah's agents were so superior to the inferior Egyptian variety of stick-snakes that one of the Jehovah variety could, and did, swallow all the snakes produced by the Egyptian magicians and sorcerers.

“And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers; now the magicians of Egypt also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod and they became serpents: but Aaron's rod swallowed up all their rods” (Exod. VII: 10-12).

CHRIST'S BIOGRAPHERS

THE canonical gospels, as published in the various versions of the Bible, give us very little information on some very important matters. None of them fix the date of Christ's birth. The date of his birth is shrouded in uncertainty. The majority of chronologers agree that he was born 4 B. C., or four years prior to the beginning of the Christian era. Every month in the year has been guessed as the probable month of his birth.

Two of the narrators attempt to give a genealogy of Christ to show that he was of the house of David. These genealogies are given of Joseph to show that he was of the house of David. If it was their intention to show that Christ was of the house of David, why did they not give the genealogy of Mary, and not of Joseph, who was no blood relative of Christ?

Matthew gives twenty-seven generations from David to Joseph; Luke gives forty-two. There are only two generations in the two genealogies that correspond. If one genealogy is correct, the other is incorrect. The probability is that they are both inaccurate.

According to these narrators and their genealogies, Christ's ancestors originated in the orgy described in

the nineteenth chapter of Genesis. They claim that he is of the house of David. Ruth, according to Bible tradition, was the great-grandmother of David (Matt. I: 5). The narrator of Ruth states that Ruth was a Moabitess (IV: 5). The particulars of the origin of the Moabites may be read in the nineteenth chapter of Genesis.

The narrators do not agree as to the particulars concerning the life and teachings of Christ. Matthew states when Christ was born his parents fled to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod, because the angel of the Lord had advised Joseph to do so (II: 13). Luke, describing the same event, states they stayed where he was born for forty-one days (II: 22). Details of purification under the Mosaic law may be read in the twelfth chapter of Leviticus.

Matthew states the anointment took place two days before the Passover (XXVI: 2), but John states it was six days after (XII: 1), and Luke makes it much later (VII: 36). Matthew states the anointment took place in the house of Simon, the leper (XXVI: 6), but Luke states it was in the house of a Pharisee (VII: 36), and John states it was in the house of Lazarus (XII: 1).

Mark states Christ was crucified in the third hour (XV: 25); John states it was after the sixth hour (XIX: 14).

Matthew states Christ was robed for the crucifixion

in a scarlet robe (XXVII: 28), but John states it was a purple robe (XIX: 2).

Three of the gospel narrators state that Simon of Cyrene carried Christ's cross to the scene of the crucifixion, but John states Christ carried it himself (XIX: 17).

Mark states the drink offered to Christ while he was on the cross was wine mingled with myrrh (XV: 23), but Matthew states it was vinegar mingled with gall, and was given to him before he was upon the cross (XXVII: 34), and Luke states it was only vinegar (XXIII: 36), while John ventures the information that it was vinegar and hyssop (XIX: 29). Matthew and John state that Christ tasted it; Mark states he refused to taste it.

Matthew states the graves of the saints opened, and many who slept arose at the time of the crucifixion. Mark, Luke and John never heard of it or did not think such a trivial affair worth mentioning.

Matthew states it was Mary Magdalene and Mary, mother of Jesus, who came to Christ's sepulcher (XXVIII: 1), but John states it was Mary Magdalene alone (XX: 1), and Luke states it was the two Marys and Joanna (XXIV: 10). John states they came while it was yet dark, but Mark states it was at the rising of the sun (XVI: 2).

Matthew would have us believe, when this reconnoitering party arrived at the sepulcher, that an

angel came from heaven, and with raiment as white as snow, and movements like lightning, rolled the stone from the door of the sepulcher (XXVIII: 2). Mark states when they entered the tomb they saw a young man therein clothed in long white garments (XVI: 5). Luke states there were two men clad in long shining garments (XXIV: 4). John, in order to maintain his record for exaggeration, comes forward with the information that there were two angels in the tomb, one sitting at the head and one at the foot of where Jesus' body had lain (XX: 12).

Mark and Luke record the ascension of Jesus to heaven. Matthew did not know of it or did not think it worth recording. John prefers to tell a good fish story, and let it suffice for the story of the ascension.

Each narrator has a version distinctly his own concerning the inscription on the cross on which Jesus was crucified. John, writing as he did sixty-three years after the affair was supposed to have taken place, had a better chance of being mistaken than any of them. He was in all probability the monumental liar of the quartet, as he states in concluding his gospel, that if all were written concerning the acts of Jesus, the whole world could not contain all that would be written.

The narrators also disagree as to the plans of salvation. Matthew makes salvation to depend entirely

upon good works. When the young man came to Christ and said, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Matthew quotes Christ as saying: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and follow me" (XIX: 21). Here is no admonition to believe or be baptized, nothing said as to faith.

Mark makes belief and baptism essential to salvation. Referring to Christ's last admonition he states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned" (XVI: 16).

Matthew refers to a prophecy: "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'" (II: 23). This prophecy is not contained in the present Bible, nor in any of the so-called versions can it be found. Where Matthew obtained his information concerning this prophecy, remains for preachers and theologians to explain.

John also bursts into the prophecy arena with, "For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, 'A bone of him shall not be broken'" (XIX: 36). The Scripture to which John refers, and the only possible texts that can be referred to, is found in Exodus, chapter twelve, verse forty-six, and Numbers, chapter nine, verse twelve, and refers to the Jewish feast of the Passover. The bone referred to

in these passages is the bone of the meat that was used in the feast, and in no way refers to the crucifixion. Both of these prophecies are clear impositions on the believer.

What do these biographers teach of the philosophy of Christ? Are there any believers who think Christ ever said: "But those mine enemies, who would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me" (Luke XIX: 27). "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you nay: but rather division: for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against his son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother: the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law" (Luke XII: 51-53). ". . . Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. XXI: 31). "Think not I am come to send peace on earth. I am not come to send peace, but a sword, for I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother;" ". . . He that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one?"

Does any one believe that Christ would teach us to love our enemies and then damn his own eternally? Is it possible that he was forgiving on earth and is

unforgiving in heaven? Are there any believers who practice, "Take no thought of the morrow?" Do any wealthy disciples part with this world's goods on account of, "If thou wilt be perfect go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor?"

To summarize what we may learn of the teachings of Christ: Why did he not write or cause to have written these gospels during his life? Then he could have corrected any errors that might have been made. Some of the writings show him to have been of a merciful disposition, and others show him to have been revengeful. All this would seem to prove that these narrators were ordinary writers of their time, and depended entirely upon memory for the facts concerning the man whose life they so unfitly portrayed.

ST. PETER

ST. PETER is the repeater liar, that is, he lied three times about the same circumstance, and the third time he gave emphasis to the lie with an oath, and *that* in the presence of a lady (Matt. XXVI); and after this record of hypocrisy and deceit, he was given the keys of heaven (Matt. XVI: 19).

One of the remarkable incidents in the life of Peter is the place occupied by him in connection with the fate of Ananias and Sapphira. It is remarkable that Peter, who was guilty of denying his Lord and Master three times, should be chosen to pronounce sentence upon them for lying. Their offense was not as great as that of Peter's, because they were only lying to save money, while Peter lied concerning Christ when Christ's life was at stake, and he was in need of all the friendship he could secure.

“Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets . . .” (I Kings XXII: 23). Why should God, who had put a lying spirit in the mouths of so many prophets, and had given to Peter the keys of heaven after he had established an unprecedented record for hypocrisy and lying, condemn to death these two people for lying?

It was for this reason: Ananias and Sapphira were lying to keep some money from the church, and the church, having charge of the manuscripts, made the penalty so severe that there would be no occasion for any one to repeat the offense.

ST. PAUL

ST. PAUL, standing at the head of the church in the apostolic age, and being authority on the doctrine of the New Covenant, his practical life and teachings would be regarded as constituting a part, if not a principal part, of the basis of the Christian religion. It is therefore well to examine his doctrines and character. The testimony here presented is gleaned from his own writings or from writings of persons who were friendly to his cause.

He states in his first epistle to Timothy (I: 13), he had previously been "a blasphemer and persecutor, and injurious." Yet in the Acts of the Apostles he declares, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (XXIII: 1). These statements are inconsistent.

There are three accounts of his miraculous conversion. The first, "The men stood still, speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man" (Acts IX: 7). In the second account we read, "They heard not the voice that spake to me" (Acts XXII: 9). In the third account Paul states, relating the experience to Agrippa, "We were all fallen to earth" (Acts XXVI: 14). It is evident they could not stand speechless, when they were all fallen to earth.

In First Corinthians, tenth chapter, thirty-third verse, he states, "I please men in all things," but in his epistle to the Galatians, first chapter, tenth verse, he states, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." Both of these statements may be true, but it is a case of inspiration not readily understood by the average reader.

To Timothy he states, "God will have all men to be saved" (I Tim. II: 4), but in Romans he speaks of the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction (IX: 22). In the same epistle he states, "A remnant shall be saved" (IX: 27).

"Nevertheless being crafty I caught you with guile" (II Cor. XII: 16). This is a very bad example to set forth, as it indicates a bad system of morals. Such doctrines can have but one effect upon youth, and that is to inculcate the practice of deceit. How much better to teach the youth: "Honesty is the oak around which all other virtues cling: without that they fall, and groveling, die in the weeds and dust."

"And for this cause God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they might all be damned . . ." (II Thess. II: 11 and 12). This is one of Paul's most unreasonable declarations. Does any one think God would cause people to believe a lie that he might get an opportunity to damn them?

Paul performed circumcision on Timotheus (Acts

XVI: 3), then contradicts himself by saying, "If ye be circumcised Christ will profit you nothing" (Gal. V: 2). "And he went through Cyria and Sicilia confirming the churches, *commanding them to keep the precepts of the ancients*" (Douay Version, Acts XV: 41). The first part of this verse is to be found in the Authorized Version, but the last part is omitted. It refers to the quarrel of Paul and Barnabas concerning the doctrine of circumcision. When the Protestants compiled their Bible it occurred to them that they did not want their records to show that Paul had taught circumcision was essential to salvation. In the Authorized Version the last portion of the verse was omitted. Paul evidently thought that as Christ was circumcised it was essential to salvation.

Paul set forth three plans of salvation: (1) By faith: "By faith ye are saved and not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. II: 8). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of law" (Rom. III: 28); (2) By works: "God will render to every man according to his deeds" (Rom. II: 6); "But the doers of the law shall be justified" (Rom. II: 13); (3) By divine predestination: "As many as were ordained to eternal life" (Acts XIII: 48). This is not given as Paul's language, but it is spoken with regard to his preaching. Paul has here shown us three roads to heaven.

He states that Christ alone hath immortality.

“Which in his time shall shew who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light that no man can approach unto . . . ” (I Tim. VI: 15 and 16).

HEAVEN AND HELL

BUT there is to be no forgiveness in heaven. God may create souls, but his pardoning power ceases as soon as the soul leaves its earthly abode. Depraved man may be regenerated on earth where temptation besets the way and where the Devil is ever alert, but there is no chance for regeneration or forgiveness in heaven. Once a soul passes from its earthly career, if that soul be condemned, according to Protestantism, its eternal abode will be in hell. No matter how forgiving Christ may have been on earth, there is no forgiveness in heaven.

The Roman Church is more lenient in this respect. According to its doctrine, a soul may pass from earth and not be doomed permanently to hell. A temporary abode is established by this church, from which under favorable circumstances a soul may take its flight to heaven. So when chances for heaven are considered, the Roman Church offers advantages *par excellent*. And all this goes to prove how much more a preacher or priest can do for a soul here than its creator can do hereafter.

From reading the New Testament it would seem that heaven and hell are in very close proximity. "The same shall drink of the wrath of God, which is

poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb" (Rev. XIV: 10). This is intended to make heaven attractive as an eternal abode for the orthodox. It should bring joy and content to the heavenly hosts and gratify the most revengeful spirit.

In this passage is the sum total of the Christian forecast for the eternal future: No forgiveness in heaven; no hope in hell; no mercy in the heart of God. And this is what they call "Tidings of great joy!"

THE ATONEMENT

WHILE the light holds out to burn, the vilest sinner may return." In the foregoing phrase is embodied the acme of stupidity. According to the plan of the atonement, the innocent not only become the victims of the cruel and murderous, but they also fall prey to the wrath of the God that made us all.

Let us make a practical application of the workings of the atonement. Take for example the case of Clarence Richeson, the Baptist minister, who was electrocuted in Boston in the year 1912 for the murder of his former sweetheart, Avis Linnell. He, through the agency of poison, pushed this unsuspecting and confiding girl, together with her unborn babe, into eternity. She was given no privilege to make her peace with God; no chance to repent and be saved. Nothing, if the doctrine of the atonement be true, but eternal pain and tears. No word of consolation spoken, no hand of mercy extended to her through the dark depths of hell.

But what of Richeson? Not until he was seized by the majesty of the law and his life demanded in return for the lives he had taken, did he repent. Invitations had been issued, announcing his approaching

marriage to another girl, which was to have taken place the same day that Avis Linnell's cold and lifeless body was found in her rooms in the Y. W. C. A. Building. Then under these circumstances he made another spectacular acceptance of Christ. When Richeson was settled in the electric chair, awaiting the click of the switch that would usher him into eternity, his spiritual adviser asked him if he was willing to die for Jesus' sake. He replied, "I am willing to die;" and if the doctrine of the atonement be true, heaven's pearly gates swung open for the soul of Clarence Richeson. Can stupid credulity reach beyond this? Christendom was willing to accept him as a heavenly recruit, but the commonwealth of Massachusetts would tolerate him in earthly society no longer.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

THREE of the gospel narrators state that any sin except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost may and will be forgiven. Richeson had stained his hands with human blood—not only the blood of the innocent, confiding girl, but also the blood of his unborn babe. He not only deceived and ruined the unsuspecting girl, but he murdered her as a reward for her trust. But heaven gave him his discharge from his sin and he entered into the heavenly joys of the blest. But had he denied the existence of the Holy Ghost, heaven's golden gates would have been shut against him; with no hope of pardon, he would have become an eternal outcast, consorting with the hellhounds of perdition. Thus we see the insignificance of the crime of murder and the enormity of the crime of denying the Holy Ghost.

IMMORTALITY

ALL wish for happiness beyond this life. All wish to meet again in some fair Elysium the loved and lost. In every heart of tenderness and love this wish is a cherished hope.

Many centuries before Christ walked the earth the doctrine of immortality was advanced and taught. The Egyptians taught this doctrine, as did the Babylonians. The North American Indian, when first known to the white man, held and clung to the belief in immortality. For the good Indian who died there awaited the "Great Spirit" to welcome him to the "Happy Hunting Grounds," and his immortal soul spent eternity in the pleasant pursuit of what to the brave was eternal bliss.

Thus, in all ages, men of all nations and races have interpreted their dream of immortality. The man who lives and labors for gold alone is content to spend his eternity in a city with streets of gold. The man who finds happiness in the possession of rare adornments is happy in a city with walls of jasper. The individual of revengeful disposition finds contentment and happiness in the thought that there is eternal punishment for all who differ from him on his pet theories of immortality.

To the man who lives and labors for the love of home, of wife, of child and friend, immortality is a dream of eternal love. To him the ever-present shadow of the parting makes more true and holy the love he bears his dear ones here. Streets of gold have no lure for him. Walls of jasper seem but worthless adornment. The imaginary shrieks and groans of the damned bring to him no sense of satisfaction. He lives to make a heaven on earth, hoping for immortality, hoping it will bring peace and joy to all.

I like to think when "Over the grave bends Love sobbing, by her side stands Hope, and whispers, 'We shall meet again.' Before all life is death, and after all death is life. The falling leaf, touched with the hectic flush that testifies of autumn's death, is in a subtler sense a prophecy of spring."

TRUE RELIGION

THE wise man relies upon evidence, upon demonstration, upon experience, and occupies himself with one world at a time. He perceives that there is a mental horizon that we cannot pierce, and beyond that is the unknown—possibly the unknowable.” He perceives that the finite mind cannot comprehend the Infinite. Having traveled by different means, he realizes something of the meaning of distance. Having some knowledge of distance, he may think of space, but his mind is powerless to conceive of the boundless expanse through which travel the thousands of celestial bodies which comprise the various groupings of stars, constellations and nebulae, known and unknown to the astronomical world. Having lived to see time pass, he may have some idea of the duration of a day, or the length of a year; but when ages to come are considered, he may think of them as an eternity, but he can have no conception of the limitless period of time.

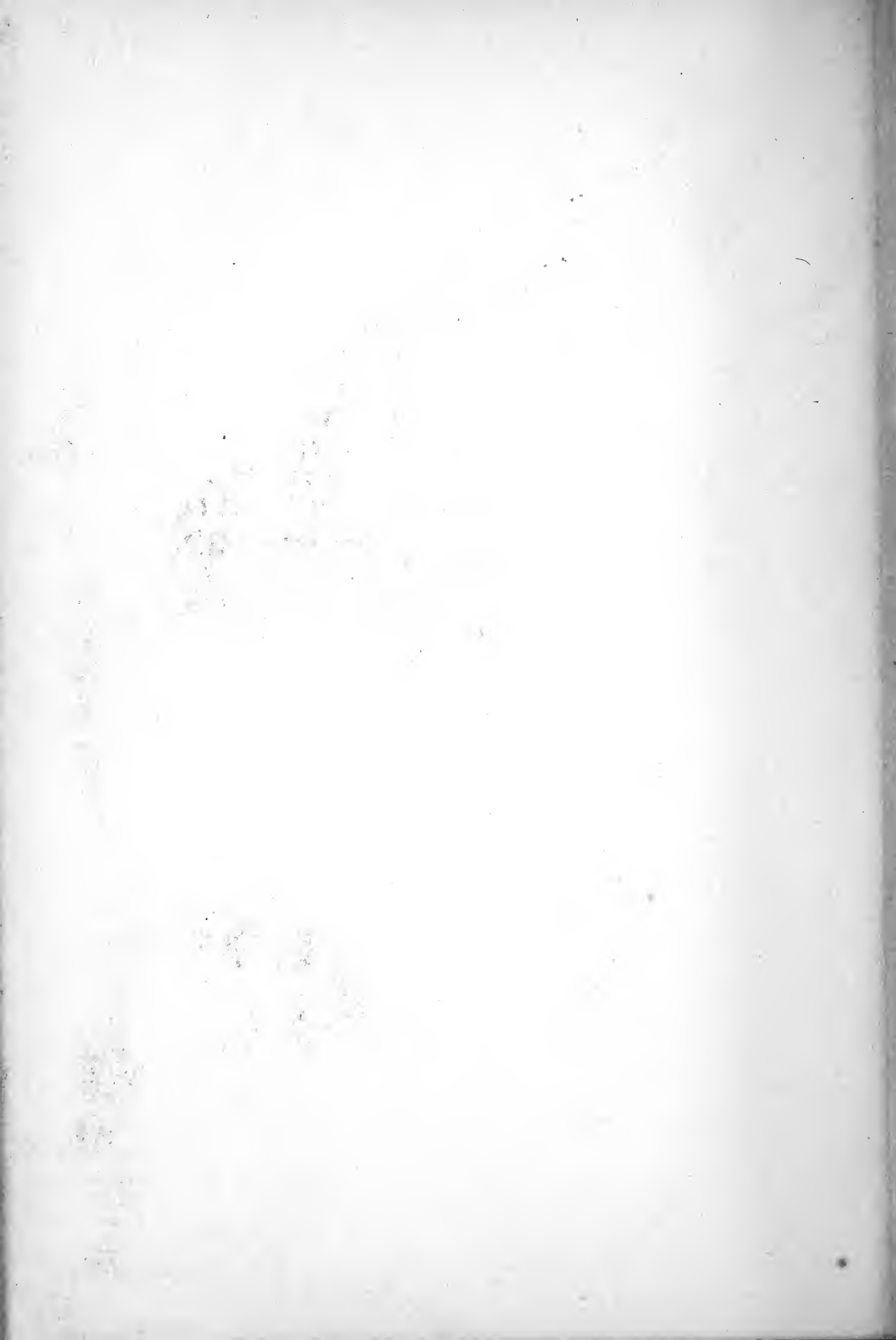
A belief without reason and in spite of reason in the miraculous, monstrous, absurd and immoral; in a God who sold his own people into slavery; who organized an army of strange people and fought against his own; who conducted a warfare by throw-

ing great stones from heaven; who rained hailstones on innocent cattle because of the sins of their owners; a creator of good and evil, whose anger burns to the lowest hell; who sanctions slavery and upholds polygamy; who killed seventy thousand people because their ruler had taken a census of which this God did not approve; who allowed his chieftain to deliver maidens to the ravages of the lust of soldiery; who ordered the ruthless slaughter of babes;—a belief in this is not religion.

True religion is founded upon truth, justice, integrity and charity; a religion that our moral sense does not condemn, and which reason will accept. It leaves no chasm between reason and revelation; it is a religion that does not require the reconstruction of man before he can become honest, truthful and reliable. It is a religion that will tolerate no wrong; a religion whose temple is the universe and whose creed is practical righteousness. True religion estimates men and women for what they are, not for what they believe concerning the Holy Ghost and the proper form of baptism. A religion that establishes man's moral worth by deed and not by creed. In the practice of this religion can all unrighteousness be banished from the earth, and the race elevated to a higher plane socially, morally and spiritually than they have ever been able to attain under the influence of their soul-cramping, creed-

bound religions. This religion will impart true satisfaction and pleasure in life, and afford sure comfort in a dying hour.

“Live for something. Do good and leave behind you a monument of virtue that the storms of time can never destroy. Write your name in kindness, love and mercy on the hearts of the thousands you come in contact with from year to year; you will never be forgotten. NO; your name, your deeds will be as legible on the hearts you leave behind as the stars on the brow of the evening. Good deeds will shine as the stars of heaven.”



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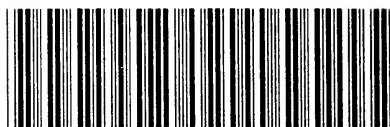
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