LITERARY ITEMS.

It will be seen by our advertising columns that the London publishing house of Macmillan & Co. have opened an agency in this city under the management of Mr. George E. Brett, at the shop in Bleecker-st. formerly occupied by Fields, Osgood, & Co. Messrs. Macmillan & Co. are distinguished for the high character and mechanical excellence of their books, and we shall be glad if this new arrangement enables them to secure a wider circulation for their publications than they have hitherto had in this country. They will be able to make a great reduction in prices at any rate.

A writer in *The Christian Intelligencer*, signing himself "Puritan," accuses Mr. Beecher of "Veiled Profanity" in one of his contributions to *The Ledger*, and draws from the reverend gentleman an effectual reply. We quote a part of it:

Henry Ward Beecher says: "The only way to exterminate the Canada thistle is to plant it for a crop, and propose to make money out of it. Then worms will gnaw it, hogs will bite it, beetles will bore it, aphides will suck it, birds will peck it, heat will scorch it, rains will drown it, and mildew and blight will cover it."

And now guess, if you can, what harm lies couched in these words. Put on your spectacles. Nothing wrong, do you say? Oh, but there is! *You*, a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian, and can't see heresy! Fie, for shame, to be beaten by a Dutchman! Now, let our *Intelligencer's* man express himself. The italics are his, not mine.

"These bugs, beetles, aphides, heat, rain, and mildew are the messengers of God. If they are sent—*they are on an errand for God!* Now, if the above extract has a point, it is that when mankind plant a crop of any kind of grain or seed, *God takes a malicious pleasure in defeating such schemes.*"

This is exquisite! If mildew attacks my grapevines, it *is on an errand for God*, and if I sprinkle it with sulphur as a remedy, I put brimstone into the very face of God's messenger! When it *rains*—is not rain, too, God's messenger?—does Puritan dare to open a blasphemous umbrella, and push it up in the very face of this divine messenger? When a child is attacked by one of "God's messengers"—measles, canker-rash, dysentery, scarlet-fever—would it be a very great sin to send for a doctor on purpose that he might resist these divine messengers? There are insects which attack men, against one of which we set up combs, and against another sulphur. "Nay," says *Puritan*. "If they are sent, *they are on an errand for God.*"

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