

GOD'S BEEN CIVILIZED.

BY I WARNER.

When I compare the preacher, a k With what the Scriptures say, And I perceive the churches' creeds Improving day by day, How superstition's dying out, That's why I make the claim, That either God's been civilized, Or else He's not the same.

He used to be a partial God, And full of angry ways; He used to be theascal's friend, That's what the Bible says, But now, for every crime and wrong The devil gets the blame, Which proves that God's been civilized, Or else he's not the same.

He used to get so fearful mad At what his children did, He'd curse and kill, to scare the folks To do as they were bid But now the preachers say He's good,

In payment of their claim, So surely God's been civilized, Or else He's not the same.

He used to sit on heaven's vault, His feet upon the world, They'd burn some meat until the smoke

Up in his nostrils curled. But now his agents take the cash, That's why I would proclaim That God was either civilized, Or else He's not the same.

He also had a fiery hell, To put his creatures in, Where they would roast forevermore And suffer for their sin But now the preachers are at work Extinguishing the flame Which shows that God's been civilized, Or else He's not the same.

Vera Cruz, Ind.

(Louisville Post)

NO ANSWER

Given Mr. Moore's Sacrilegious and Ironic Questions.

C. C. Moore, of Lexington, the rampant editor of the BLUE GRASS BLADE, has written to United States District Attorney Hill, requesting information of a peculiar character. Mr. Moore states that he is about to write a book which shall contain nothing but extracts from the Bible. No other words, he says, shall creep in, except on the title page, which shall read: "Extracts from the Bible; King James' Edition."

What Editor Moore desires to know is whether or not his book will be allowed to go through the mails.

There is a touch of sacrilegious sarcasm in the epistle, the veiled irony arising from the fact that Moore has had a taste of the penalties for sending obscene matter through the mails already.

He was sentenced to the penitentiary at Cincinnati by the United States Circuit Court about a year ago for the offense stated, but was pardoned by the President. Attorney Hill treated his communication with dignified silence.

EDITORIAL COMMENT.—The above, heading and all, is from the Evening Post of Louisville, Ky., of Jan. 22, 1900. Written on the margin of the extract, in the writing of the greatest woman, intellectually and morally, who now lives in America, is the following: "Broad confession that the Bible is 'obscene literature.' You have them on the run. Write to U. S. Attorney Griggs at Washington and to McKinley."

Not only does not the pious idiot who wrote that thus admit that the Bible is "obscene literature," but he says that even the suggestion to print parts of it in a newspaper, is "sacrilegious."

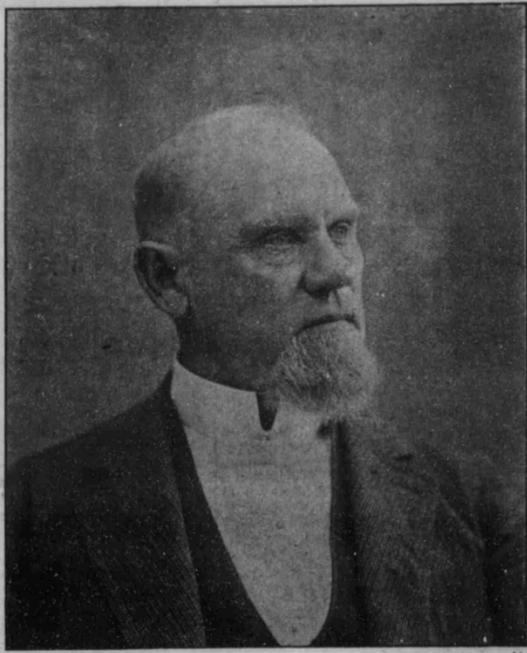
If there could be such a crime as sacrilege in this infidel government, the constitution of which was made by the three Infidels, Thomas Jefferson, Tom Paine and Benjamin Franklin, it would be sacrilege and blasphemy for any man to say that God had a son by a woman, and such a man would properly be put in the penitentiary.

I asked U. S. Judge Evans and U. S. Attorney Hill, in respectful letters, a perfectly reasonable and fair question, namely, whether or not I could print and send through the mails, a book that would have not a single word in it but passages from the canonic King James Bible upon which witnesses are sworn in our courts, and which each President has to kiss.

I believe the Bible is a bad book, and I want to quote passages from it to show that it is. Christians from all over the world, who believe that the Bible is a good book and they can quote and send through the mails any passages from the Bible to sustain their position.

J. B. Wise, of Olay Center, Kan., was put in jail and fined for writing on a postal card and sending through the mails, the passage found in Isaiah 35: 12, that prophet being the one most esteemed by the Christians.

The Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of Kentucky plainly teach that no man shall be put at any disadvantage because of his religious opinions,



WARDEN E. G. COFFIN.

Of the Columbus (Ohio) Penitentiary, who is to visit Editor Charles C. Moore, May 1, 1900, and address the May L. Collins Memorial meeting. See Warden Coffin's letter on fourth page.

and that no religion shall be shown any preference over any other.

The Bible that contains all the passages that I want to print is regularly sent through the mails.

This matter is one directly bearing on the rights for which my grandfather and father fought and which they gained from England.

I wanted to know if I had religious liberty, now that I am an infidel just as I did when I was a preacher. I went to the proper authorities, U. S. Judge Evans, and U. S. Attorney Hill to get such information.

Judge Evans evaded it, by telling me to "consult counsel," the question being one that he is paid to know about and instruct the people about.

Not only does it involve trouble and expense to "consult counsel," but, of course, I could have no assurance, in the event of a complaint against me by some religious bigot, like Rucker, who recently sent me to the penitentiary, that Judge Evans would be influenced by the advice that my counsel might give me.

Hill not only declines to give me any answer, but races off to a newspaper reporter, whose bigotry and narrow-mindedness are manifest, to exploit to the world his animus against the "rampant editor," who asked him a fair question, which it was his duty as an officer, to say nothing of his obligation as a civil gentleman, to answer.

Let this question come before the courts, and the Louisville Post is already committed to doing all it can to get me sent to the penitentiary again.

When this is printed I will send marked copies of it to the President, and to Attorney Griggs at Washington, with a letter to each asking instruction in the matter.

I want to know if it be true that a Christian has rights in the use of the United States mail that an infidel has not.

How Many of Us Go to Church.

In the recent discussion of church attendance which has been conducted by contributors to the Times-Star's department of Public Opinion various estimates have been given of the total number of church members in America. The Independent of this week publishes carefully compiled statistics of the American churches. The total membership including Jewish churches, Unitarians, etc., is 27,710,004, representing an increase for the year '99 of 1 per cent.

The principal gains were made in smaller sects. The Christian Scientists made a gain of 14 per cent, with a total membership 80,000. The Church of New Jerusalem, or Swedenborgian, increased 11 per cent. It is also significant that in general the greater the denomination the smaller the increase. The Roman Catholics and the Methodists showed only a fraction of one per cent increase; the Presbyterians 1.2 per cent, the Episcopalians 1.5 per cent, the Baptists 2 per cent and the Lutherans 2.6 per cent, the Congregationalists and Disciples of Christ 3 per cent. The Latter Day Saints, or Mormons, show a slight increase, while the Unitarians, despite the recent Biblical onslaughts in the Evangelical churches, show no gain at all; the Universalists fell off 3.7 per cent. The aggregate membership of the infidel societies is infinitesimal.—Times-Star.

Infidels are not inclined to organization. They are generally as well satisfied with their escape from superstition, that they are content. They are disposed to let others believe as they will, as long as they are not restricted in that belief. They have no desire to place the

burden of erecting and supporting great temples upon the people. They do not aim to establish a creed or policy. To scatter books of science is more to them than to erect a church on the corner. Their per cent of gain can only be estimated by the decline of church gain, and consequently it must, to great, infidelity is moving quietly, but ponderously on.

Thornburg, Iowa, Jan. 31, 300. C. C. Moore:

My Dear Sir:—I have just finished reading the BLADE of Jan. 28. It is fine. I am going to let some of those men, to whom that extra Dec. 10 issue was sent, read it in hopes of bringing them out of the woods to such a degree that they will subscribe. Your advice to Brother Richardson to demolish those two barrels of whisky is excellent. That is the kind of Prohibition work I would like to see. A man who has been convinced that it is for the best of all concerned if he deliberately and voluntarily takes an ax and knocks the heads out of his whisky barrels and leads the stuff run into the gutter, is in my estimation a much better citizen than one who does not drink whisky because he cannot get it.

Go on with your noble work, your advice is generally good. I will tell you confidentially of the only orthodox religious act I was ever guilty of in my life. It came about in this way: I was walking leisurely along the street in our town one day not long since when I noticed suddenly that there was some commotion around the large force pump on the town well. A number of men were pumping vigorously and a long hose attached to the pump disappeared among the buildings in the distance.

My first thought was that there was a fire somewhere, so without asking any questions I seized the bar and helped to work the pump. While thus engaged I asked about the cause of the excitement. You can imagine at what price I could have been bought when one of the deacons coolly informed me that the other end of the hose hung in the tank of that gospel shop, the owners and patrons of which think that the only correct route to the "happy hunting ground" is the water route. If you will not tell this on me I will help you tune your harp when we get to the New Jerusalem.

Now Mr. Moore if you have his address, I wish you would send the fool killer around to Des Moines. The State Register informed us last week that M. O. Waggoner had burned his "magnificent infidel library consisting of several thousand volumes on atheism." The editor told us that "single volumes in this (imaginary) collection were worth several hundred dollars." It seems to be an acute case and should have the prompt attention of the above named functionary.

Certain web-footed creatures who inhabit this part of the footstool were preparing to drive for the eternal city last Sunday with the mercury 10 or 15 below zero. They surely must have frozen their brains if they had any. Whether or not they found the guest in that direction I do not know for I stayed at home by a warm stove and studied my Bibles with the B. G. B. and T. S. Yours truly, E. D. NAUMAN.

Eugene V. Debs, another "jail bird," will lecture at the Opera House, Tuesday night, February 13, 1900. Subject: "Looking Forward."

TERMS OF THE BLADE. 1 issue for one year \$2.50. 5 " " " " \$12.50. 10 " " " " \$24.00. 20 " " " " \$47.00. 50 " " " " \$115.00.

DECAY OF RELIGION IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

BY FRANK W. ROLLINS, GOVERNOR OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.

I am exceedingly diffident in coming before this clerical body, for I feel more at home State street. Though a member of the Episcopal church, I make no pretensions to being a specially religious man. But I am sure that there is a deep need of Christianity. Without it our government must go the same way that other governments have gone, to gradual decay.

I am equally sure that Christianity is losing its hold over our people. I have been in every town in New Hampshire, I know a large percentage of the people, and I am sure of my ground. The Methodists, Baptists and Catholics largely approved of my fast day proclamations, but the Congregational pulpits denied the truth of my statements, and I have been fiercely attacked as untrue to my native state. But partly as a result of my proclamation, many districts have been improved, and the Episcopal church has undertaken a house to house canvass of the whole state.

The reason of this decline in religion, I attribute to a loosening of religious faith. Your ministers are no longer the guides of the people, who now follow the religions of the newspapers. The ark has been overturned; the Bible account of the creation denied; Jonah repudiated, and the anchor of the old faith pulled up before the sails are set for the new.

The best blood of the country towns of northern New England has for generations been going to Boston and New York, leaving in some places only the weaklings to do the work in the old country home. These less energetic ones have intermarried, till in one town I am acquainted with in Maine, there is an imbecile in almost every family, due to breeding in and in.

Denominational discord is another cause of religious decline in the country town where people carry their religious disputes into weekday business and thus weaken church influence.

From this decline in religion naturally arises a neglect of the Sabbath, the introduction of European Sunday customs. The playing of golf on Sunday is one of our problems in New Hampshire. Shops are open, and Sunday theaters will be the next step. You will see them in Boston within a few years.

The increase of foreign population is a gain rather than a loss to the country towns; for it brings in new blood, so greatly needed, and the people are usually strong Catholics, not irreligious, and their increase is a favorable element.

What is to be the remedy? Such organizations as yours, the meeting of ministers of all denominations to discuss religious problems is a good feature, as is the work of the Y. M. C. A. But the keenest and strongest men in every community now hold entirely aloof from church work, spend their Sundays in physical rest and are seldom or never seen in church which is now principally run by women.

The kind of men who go into the ministry is also a damage to the cause of religion. Young men who have no special call to anything else drift into the pulpit, where they seek a chance to get an easy living. Of course this does not apply to any of you gentlemen in this room, but the Protestant churches have much to learn from the Roman Catholics, who take care to select the brightest young men for the priesthood, not allowing any drones to go to the theological seminary.—Louisville Post.

Pages 150-155 in My Last Book.

I hear that persons on seeing my new book for the first time, have learned, from some popular report, to turn to page 150 and read the story beginning "The little story that I am going to tell you is one to which I suppose some prudes may object," and ending on page 155 with a story which starts "One day my French friend and I were out at Bois de Boulogne, in the suburbs of Paris."

It is, if any difference, better ground for putting me in the penitentiary again than that upon which they did imprison me, but the boomerang results of Rucker's experiment in that line I think will discourage a second effort. Another prosecution would be a good advertisement for the book, and I could send it by Adams Express Co.

PILCHER'S REVIEW

OF "BEHIND THE BARS"

WHAT THE HEATHEN SAYS.

The story of a remarkable life, against storm and stress, a story of a Titan who voluntarily shoulders a strange burden, and at every step beset by insurmountable barriers, inviting persecution, like a blind, infuriated giant, avoiding the line of the greatest traction and least resistance; one who would search himself and know himself and master himself and then—strange mission—reform the world.

One who believes that single individuals lead or turn the current, the doctrine of Carlyle rather than that of Spencer, will be found in perusing the book "Behind the Bars," by Charles C. Moore. It is a full and honest confession of a moral and intellectual being, a thinking machine of introspection, beginning with the Egoist and ending the Altruist. The reader sees laid bare the secret crypt of emotion and passion, for the story is free from bitterness that characterized the author's writings in The Blue Grass Blade, and it is simplicity and frankness. At times it is audacious. As a contribution to spiritual phenomena it will rank with Bishop Colenso and as a confession it will go as a companion to Jean Jacques Rousseau, but without the coarseness of the latter. It is a chaste book, pure in diction, and chaste and perspicuous. There is nothing suggestive but once in the book, and that is veiled in a literary style void of offense.

Mr. Moore is occasionally rugged and robust in invective, but the paw of the lion has been clipped of his claws and he goes so far as to omit names at certain places.

The style is familiar and the little stories are truly told; at times there is grim humor and even a play upon words; the wit is nimble and the by-plays very elephantine; the pen behind the bars, in the prison cell where the story was written, is guided by a philosophic calm that is refreshing to the student and will be a disappointment to those who are looking for a veritable hornet's nest. The story fascinates and will not soon perish from the memory.

The author's hobbies are there only to connect the thread of the story, but it will not serve as a text book on Infidelity or Prohibition. The lone infidel woman in the mountain fastnesses is weird and fantastic and one wishes that the author had used some of the arts of the writers of fiction in telling of Mrs. Lynx. This incident was during his ministry as a preacher in the Christian or Disciples' Church.

The story of the little old blind woman who was painfully generous in her ministrations to her neighbors in the way of sending her servants with loads of good things, characteristic of a type that is passing away in our commercial day, strikes the reader with unusual force.

"I know I am old and blind, but I hope I ain't a fool; you 'ten' to yo' business and I'll 'ten' to mine."

The story of Major Parker Craig Nicholson represents a type of post-bellum character, proud, mysterious; who lived on and on and who dies and goes out into the Great Beyond and makes no sign. One wishes that John Fox, Jr., had told of Majah Nicholson, sa!

There is a story that is not duplicated in fiction, told, the author by a convict. It is a story of love, arson, sacrifice of a life, and venture and revenge that fascinates like a tale by Poe and it is told in one brief page of the book. A page is given to pretty Fanny Castleman and her pink sun bonnet, a volume of sentiment in a page of space.

Mr. Moore was charged with attempting to put love on the free list, but the book refutes it. He is a monogamist, but he is philosopher enough to know that polyandry, promiscuity and polygamy are explained sociologically by habitat and environment in the struggle for existence and the unequal distribution—poverty and wealth.

The book stands for sanitation, not degeneracy, and of course it may be assailed and may provoke discussion or there may be a tacit conspiracy of silence upon the part of the priests and the preacher. He believes not less, but more, but in an inverse ratio.

The throbbing impact of the author's mental dynamics is heard beating against the intangible as well as the material bars of his prison cell and the struggle has a pathos in it that will touch some to tears—the letter of his faithful wife, for instance, where she tenderly calls him "Daddy," and says "The inhumanity of man to man and the infamy that is perpetrated in the name of religion are enough to make our blood boil." Then it was that he must have felt the utter futility of his effort to Dowietize the world—that is, run it without saloons or policemen a mundane zion—his first night in a convict's cell. He did not want for imag-

ination and soon fell asleep, saying "It's all right, or will be."

One is interested in the author's father, who had run the gauntlet at the River Raisin. A raconteur, he would stand in the company of ladies and tell stories, plating and unplating his bandana handkerchief as he rattled off his pleasantries. Moore's battle against that which lingers is not unlike those who would learnedly combat alchemy rather than teach chemistry, tant which he fights has been abandoned, but he goes over it all anew, despite Paine and Voltaire, a prodigy no less than the mathematical genius of Indiana, who thought out all the well known rules for herself—a waste of genius. He does not realize that the false will die of itself and truth will win by her own methods. That which today is heresy, tomorrow is in the school text books.

A thousand creeds have had their day on earth. Into a thousand sects have given birth. That now are food for wonder, scorn or mirth. A thousand gods have had their little day On earth and crumbled; their feet were made of clay, Like outworn toys they now are cast away. Religions, dreams and empires all have gone Like shapes of night that vanish from the dawn, While through the ages earth went rolling on.

The book and the man, however, are of inestimable value as standing for free speech and free press. A priceless privilege had better be misused than neglected, and martyrs to this cause will have halo's of glory to burn above their dust.

The book is a valuable contribution to literature as a sort of curio, and ought to have more than a local interest. His love scrapes are retailed with brutal frankness; Bettie Herndon and Virginia Campbell. He tells all—which is nothing—no more than the experiences of puppy-love sick folks and yet—and yet does he tell all? The blasé and the old stagers and the roue would say "Thou liest," and yet—his conscience is clear. Had he more to tell he doubtless would have told less in the story. A mad lover and yet he will escape the charge of entomology.

The book, too, aside from its idle yarns, ought to acquit him of the charge of incivism. He is not so bad after all.

The author affected a dress that marked him as an eccentric during his college days—a folly that seems to have been congenial. His fine physique coupled with an effeminate manner seems to have made him popular with girls who played with him as something amusing and harmless. He was a girly boy—neither man nor woman, neither brute nor human nor a general. An ascetic, after one girl asked to be released from her engagement he turned preacher to bury his dead hopes. The flies did not remain on him long. His ministry was effective, but brief, when he began his tramp to clear his mind—and, like the Wandering Jew, it is still on and on with no place to rest the sole of his foot. Strange being. Crazy as a loon among the Adirondacks say many; but they are not insanity experts and do not count. Enemies catch him and lock him up, but prisons fly open; mobs do not deter, and he goes on and on with his genius for blundering.

There is a lesson in his life, though the book seems to be purposeless.

LOUIS PILCHER.

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