

people with loving unselfish labour, but cannot explain how it is they come to love it. That is religion.

To the unprejudiced reader I offer this book, with the request that he will contemplate the narratives with honesty and common sense, considering within himself these simple reflections :

Men, radically bad, radically evil—a burden to the State, a scandal to civilization, and a disgrace to humanity—become, under the influence of religion, good, honest, industrious, and kind.

Homes where children suffer frightfully, where privation and tyranny obscure all the beauty and all the blessing of existence ; homes so base, vile, and cruel that they cannot be described, become, under the influence of religion, happy, virtuous, and glad.

Vices which degrade men lower than the brutes, which make them loathsome in the sight of respectable people, and fill our prisons and workhouses with an immense burden on the community, under the influence of religion lose every fibre of their power, and drop away from the strangled souls of their victims like dead ivy, like an outworn garment.

Sins and crimes which retard the progress of the race, which breed corruption, degeneration, and prosperous misery, under the influence of religion cease to have power over the minds of men, and