

Egyptian theories and customs, historical chronicles as dry as they are unreliable, and miscellaneous writings, amatory poems, Jewish national and patriotic poems, which are rarely distinguished by beauties of the highest order, but frequently by superfluity of expression, coarseness, bad taste and genuine Oriental sensuality. As a literary monument the Bible is of much later origin than the Vedas; as a work of literary value it is surpassed by everything written in the past two thousand years by authors even of the second rank; and to compare it seriously with the productions of Homer, Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, or Goethe, would require a fanaticized mind that had entirely lost its power of judgment.'

There is more of this stuff and worse, but the sample given is enough. It reveals Max Nordau, with all his odds and ends of information and devilish cleverness, as an utterly soulless man, void of all spiritual discernment, incapable of appreciating truth and beauty and goodness when he sees them. To call him a blasphemer would be too high a compliment. He is simply a pretentious, shallow-pated donkey, obtruding his ears and his bray upon a world, all the goodness and strength and true glory of which are owing to the revelation his brutal hoofs trample beneath them. If anything were wanted to make honest folk believe in the black side of human life he professes to depict, it is the fact that people speaking the sturdy English tongue can be found to buy Conventional Lies and pollute their minds with it. The only book I ever remember burning was Rousseau's *Confessions* in French, but, were Max Nordau's books and similar abominations my property, I would cremate them all, rather than make them causes of offence to innocent minds.

The companion volume is not much better morally. It is called *Napoleon and the Fair Sex*, and is translated from the French of Frédéric Masson. An aged apostle gave his son in the faith this counsel, 'Keep thyself pure.' It sometimes requires a great deal of prayerful effort to accomplish this, at