

sermon in my pocket, and this is the first I have ever had an opportunity of preaching it and earning my five pounds. There has never before been a soul come in to hear me!" To the surprise of the wardens, he handed them a £10 bank note. "The endowment," said he, "gives this to you—five pounds to the clergyman for his sermon, and ten pounds to be distributed among the congregation to drink the parson's health!"

Since the death of the rector—who, by the way, was a director of the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," and it was a standing joke in the parish that the parish of Bow was more "foreign" to him than most other "parts," for he was a great traveller—a more efficient man has succeeded him, and things are now somewhat improved. But the above is a fair sample of the church curiosities of London. There is nothing in this account which may not be matched in many other city parishes. What with the suburban residence of the city merchants, and the indolence of the rich rectors, the congregations in the ninety-seven parish churches belonging to the Establishment, within the city bounds, do not average above sixty or seventy persons, yet, when a proposal was lately made to transfer some of these church funds to other localities, where the baptized heathen—if indeed they were ever baptized—never see the inside of a place of worship, and live in crowding myriads without pastoral care, it was unsuccessful. Interest prevailed against reason and justice. The Established church in England is a great institution, with great excellencies and great blemishes; but she has little or no power to remedy the abuses which have crept into her sanctuaries.

W.

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CHRIST NO WRITER.

BY REV. I. D. WILLIAMSON.

One of the most remarkable facts in the history of Christ is, that he left no writings behind him, and the only record there is of his writing anything is in the case where "he stooped down and with his finger wrote upon the ground." What he wrote then and there, no one knows; though perhaps the most plausible conjecture is that he wrote the answer to the question, whether the woman taken in the act of adultery should be stoned? "He that is without sin among you, let him cast a stone at her." Hearer, did this strange fact ever occur to you,—that the greatest reformer that ever lived—professedly the divine teacher sent of God to reveal his truth to the world—whose teachings have survived the wreck of ages, and now command the credence, the respect, and the most profound admiration of the enlightened world; and who is claimed as the "author and finisher" of a great system of faith and practice, has left behind him no sentence of his writing, and those unknown characters written with his finger in the sand constitute the sum total of all his writings of which there is any account.

Is there, or has there ever been, since the invention of letters, or even rude hieroglyphics, any such thing as a system of religion, whose founder did not take special pains to reduce his teachings to writing, and thus give them the most exact and permanent form?

The Brahmins have their Vedas and Pouranas, their Ramayan, and their Laws and Institutes of Menu, and these are all written and preserved with the utmost care. The Chinese have their books of Fohi, their founder, as opened and expounded by

their great Confucius. The Persians have their Zendevesta attributed to their leader, Oroaster, containing the doctrine and laws of their religion. The Jews had their sacred books, and Moses and the prophets, and David and Solomon put their teachings in writing, that they might be preserved.

Plato and Pythagoras, and Cicero, and Demosthenes, wrote much. Mahomet wrote the Koran, and gave it to the faithful as their guide. The writings of Swedenborg are voluminous; and in our day even the Mormon impostor wrote his book of Mormon. But here comes one who claims precedence even to Moses and Abraham, and especially claims that a greater than Solomon is in his own person, and announcing himself as a herald of a new dispensation from God, which is to cast Moses and the prophets in the shade, and prevail over all other systems, and subdue our entire race, and yet this great teacher wrote never a word save only the characters in the sand, which the next breath of wind might obliterate. Who can account for this strange procedure? Will it comport at all with the idea that he was an impostor? Did ever an impostor pursue a course like this? Never! And it seems to us that in the single fact to which we have alluded, there is the impress of truth, and proof that his mission is all divine. He stands out before us as one who knows that his mission is from God, and that it can stand upon its own merits. So confident is he of its power, that he is content to breathe it out upon God's air, and leave it to live by its own inherent and self-perpetuating immortality, or live not at all. And so he goes about doing good, now teaching in the synagogue and temple, now talking to his disciples as he sits on Olivet, or by the sea of Galilee, and now dropping a word as he walks by the way. And there is not manifested the slightest apprehension that what he says will be lost. He writes it not on stone or parchment. Nay, he writes it not at all. He seeks only to give it a lodgment in the hearts of the few disciples that followed him—to make them comprehend it, and feel its power, and love it; and is willing to leave it there to produce its fruits, and to be written by the hand of affection, if it should be written at all. And on those hearts he did impress himself; and they, for the love they bore him, wrote the scarce sketch we have of his life and teachings.

JOHN BUNYAN.

At seventeen, Bunyan enlisted in the Parliamentary Army, and served during the campaign of 1645. Then it was that his imagination became stored with those impressions of the pomp and circumstance of war which furnished afterward so many of his illustrations, and supplied him with his Great-Heart, his Captain Boanerges, and his Captain Credence. The campaign over, he went home and married. He joined a Baptist society at Bedford, and after a time began to preach; yet we are told it was long before he ceased to be tormented with an impulse which urged him to utter words of horrible impiety in the pulpit.

With the Restoration there came persecution of Dissenters, and Bunyan's well-known imprisonment in Bedford jail lasted, with intervals, during twelve years. He was told that if he would give up preaching, he would be set free; but not even his strong domestic affections tempted him from the path that seemed to him the path of duty. He had several small children, and among them a blind daughter, whom he loved with peculiar tenderness. "He could not," he said "bear to let the wind blow on her;