

the fashion and the taste forty years ago. Now it was done in a far more insidious manner. Hundreds of persons read those works long before they saw their pernicious tendency, and many when they closed the books were not aware there had been anything detrimental to their moral condition until it was found out at last by the completely altered character of their views, their feelings, their principles, and subsequently of their life. It was this that made him fear for the future. No doubt there were many political considerations, but these could be surmounted so long as we had a moral and virtuous press. But if it should ever happen that the means of grace were so abundantly enjoyed were rejected, and we gave ourselves up to these baneful pursuits, there must come at last a judgment upon this country—the judgment of immorality, of the subversion of all domestic life; and that judgment which followed upon the French would also follow upon us, because we should have become godless, and would cease to be a Christian nation."

Elisha at Dothan.

BY ROBERT AWDE.

BENHADAD, King, was restless, weary, worn,
From morn to eve, from eve to blushing
morn;
Chafed and impatient o'er his fruitless toil,
Fervish with longing for unlawful spoil.
Thwarted and foiled at every effort made,
His gallant troops repulsed in every raid.
"What means all this?" wrathful Benhadad
cried,
And summoned quick his warriors to his
side.
"Will no man show me who is for the King
Of Israel? nor yet the traitor bring?
That we may wreak our vengeance on the
man
Who hears our counsel, then reports our
plan?"
Then spake a noble, "There is none, O
king,
Of all thy councillors would do this thing,
Nor one of all thy warriors would disclose
Thy secret counsels. But Elisha knows
The thing my lord would in his chamber
say,
And he reveals it to the king each day.
Hence every time that we would take a
place,
The King of Israel, privy to the case,
Is there prepared to meet us, or avoid;—
Else ere this time, no doubt, he'd been
destroyed."
"Where is this prophet? Go, spy out and
see,
Then quick return a message unto me."
Behold say they, "He is in Dothan now."
"Go with an host! But Naaman stay thou,
For since thy healing thou art not the same:
Thy heart is turned somewhat, tho' still I
claim
Thee as my own. Thy counsels and thy
might
Are not forgotten. But thou mayest not
fight
Against that man of God. Thy heart might
quail
Because of him. And this my project fail.
Nianthus, thou in this case take command,
And bring the prophet prisoner to my hand."
"Let not my lord the king at all suppose
That I'm in league with Israel, Syria's foes."
"I know thee true. Yet this much would
I say,
Thou canst not go. I need thee here to-day.
But do thou this, take oversight and see
The host equipped as Syrian host should be.
Then we ere long in council must debate
How best to conquer Israel; for I hate
To be thus thwarted by a power so small.
We must besiege until Samaria fall.
Take thought for this, and when again we
meet
Have all thy plans and stratagems complete."
The host prepared, at once their course
pursue,
Until at length, with Dothan full in view,
They pitch their tents in one vast circle
round
Until no way for their escape was found.
The morning dawned. The prophet's servant
rose;
Behold the place surrounded by their foes.

Quick to Elisha, bearing tidings ill,
"Alas! my master. See! on every hill
All round about our foes, the Syrians, lie.
What shall we do? We cannot fight nor fly."
"Fear not, for they that be with us are
more
Than they that be with them. O Lord God,
pour
Eyesight on this young man, that he may
see
The shining host—heaven's vast artillery—
And on our foes I pray confusion bring,
That I may lead them to Jehoram King."
And while he spake, behold! inverted law
Struck them with blindness, whilst the
young man saw
The flaming host careering through the air
In noiseless pomp, chariots and horsemen
thore.
Their flashing swords like forked lightnings
play,
And keep proud Syria's eager hosts at bay.
Amazed he views. How changed his lan-
guage now:
"O Lord of Hosts, how terrible art Thou."
Then went Elisha forth and found the men
Wandering about devoid of that keen ken
So all essential to their enterprise.
They saw, yet did not see, for their dim
eyes
Were hidden from that subtle inner sense
That gives to vision its pre-eminence.
Then spake Elisha: "This is not the way,
Neither is this the city. Come, I pray,
And I will take you to the man ye seek."
And they were all contented—so to speak—
And followed him not knowing where the
while,
Nor could they read his sweet, ironic smile,
But forward marched till in Samaria all
The Syrian host are halted, great and small.
The king and people quickly gather round
To see this host of captives, yet not bound,
No trace of fear, no demonstrations made,
Each warrior standing as if on parade.
The anxious king learns from Elisha's speech
How all these foes are brought within his
reach.
Then did Elisha ask God to restore
Their powers of vision. With amazement
sore
They look around, hemmed in on every hand,
Caught in a trap, appalled with fear they
stand;
Feel for their arms as if about to fight.
Jehoram cries, "My Father, shall I smite
Them? shall I smite them?" "What? and
would thou slay
Those taken captive in the battle? Nay!
Set food before them that they all may eat;
They are thy captives, and it is more meet
That thou refresh them than that they be
slain,
Then to their master send them back again."
The king prepared, and they did eat and
drink,
Humbled returned, not knowing what to
think.
And so we read concerning Syria's bands,
They came no more to raid in Israel's lands.
Toronto, October 8th, 1886.

The Fatal Quicksand.

IN certain places on the sea-shore of
Scotland and France there are danger-
ous quicksands. But they appear very
harmless looking to the traveller. The
beach seems perfectly dry. All the
sand is smooth and solid-looking. The
traveller walks along, not fearing much
danger. But somehow he feels as if
the weight of his feet increased every
step he takes. Suddenly he sinks in
two or three inches. He thinks he
will retrace his steps. He turns back.
He sinks in deeper. He pulls him-
self out and throws himself to the left.
The sand is half leg-deep. He throws
himself to the right. The sand comes
up to his shins. Then he discovers,
with unspeakable terror, that he is
already caught in the quicksand. He
throws off his load if he has one—
lightens himself as a ship in distress.
It is too late; the sand is above his
knees. He calls, he waves his hat or
his handkerchief; but the sand gains
on him more and more. If there is
nobody on the shore, or if the land is
too far off, it is all over with him.
He is condemned to that long, appal-
ling burial which lasts for hours; which
seizes you erect and in full health, and

draws you by the feet. Every effort
you make, every shout you utter, you
are dragged down a litt'le deeper, sink-
ing slowly into the earth, while you
look upon the sky, the sails of the
ships upon the sea, the birds flying
and singing, and the sunshine all
around you. The victim attempts to
sit-down, to lie down, to creep. Every
movement he makes sinks him deeper.
He howls, implores, cries to the clouds,
despairs. The sand reaches his breast.
He raises his arms, utters furious
groans, clutches the beach with his
nails, leans upon his elbows to pull
himself out, and sobs frenziedly. The
sand reaches his neck; the face alone
is visible. The mouth opens; the sand
fills it, and there is silence. The eyes
gaze still; the sand shuts them; it is
the night of death. A little hair flut-
ters above the sand, and soon that
is gone. The earth-drowned man has
disappeared forever. That is a picture
of the progress of drink, from the first
cup of wine a young man takes to the
last.—*Temperance Battle-field.*

In the "Black Belt."

BY THE EDITOR.

IN one of his recent lectures Joseph
Cook gives a striking example of the
dull apathy and lack of self-assertion
of the negro in the south. He saw an
able bodied coloured man kicked off a
steambot at the levee in New Orleans
by a white bully with a revolver in his
hand. The negro's leg was broken,
and Mr. Cook had him removed to the
hospital; but the injured man could
obtain no redress, and the white bully,
though arrested at the instance of Mr.
Cook, was promptly liberated, and no
one, either white or black, responded
in the least to the northern philanthro-
pist's indignation at the ruffianly out-
rage. I witnessed myself, in the month
of March, at Onattahoochee, in Florida
a still more striking instance of public
apathy toward a more tragical outrage
upon a negro. Not two rods from the
railway station lay upon the ground
the dead body of a coloured man, the
blood oozing in a slow stream from a
wound in his breast and forming a
clotted pool by his side. I was amazed
and horrified at the utter indiffer-
ence manifested at the tragic spectacle.
Negro hucksters, men and women, had
their stands within a few feet of the
dead body, and were selling hoe-cake,
oranges, and lemonade as if nothing
uncommon had happened. The only
exhibition of common humanity was
the placing of an umbrella over the
face of the corpse to protect it from
the rays of the noonday sun. I asked
some of the white men standing on the
railway platform how the tragedy oc-
curred, and was told that "the nigger
had been passing his box and got shot."
I asked the black men the same ques-
tion, and they said that the dead man
had been dismissed from his employ-
ment in a warehouse, and had come
back the next day and demanded his
pay. A dispute had arisen with his
employer, which was settled with the
ready use of the revolver. Neither
white men nor black seemed to expect
that any serious punishment, if any
punishment at all, would be meted out
to the murderer. The former exhibited
a callous indifference; the latter, a
dull and hopeless apathy.

In a few moments the train left, and
I could not inquire more particularly
into the circumstances of the case. An
intelligent Georgia gentleman, with

whom I conversed on the subject, said
that the negroes got even more than
fair play in the courts; "but then, you
know, a nigger is not worth as much
as a white man anyway"—from which
remark I inferred that his ideas of fair
play were somewhat biased. While
travelling in the South I was struck
with the conspicuous absence of self
assertion and manliness among the
negroes, of which Mr. Cook speaks.
The roustabouts and boat hands and
hotel porters accept meekly an amount
of abuse and bad language which most
white men would promptly resent.
The long dominance over a subject race
has ingrained into the whites, or into
many of them, an imperious and super-
cilious tone and manner toward the
blacks. The same result obtains in
the intercourse between the white and
dark races in India. In his published
journals that courteous Christian gen-
tleman, Lord Elgin, when Governor-
General of India, wrote that nothing
gave him more pain than the bullying
rudeness of the superior to the inferior
race in that country. The vice seems
inherent in the Anglo-Saxon blood
when brought into contact with a
subject people.

A Blessing or a Curse.

Two Scotchmen emigrated in the
early days to California. Each thought
to take with him some memorial of
their beloved country. The one of
them, an enthusiastic lover of Scotland,
took with him a thistle, the national
emblem. The other took a small swarm
of honey bees. Years have passed
away. The Pacific Coast is, on the
one hand, cursed with the Scotch
thistle, which the farmers find it im-
possible to exterminate; on the other
hand the forests and fields are fragrant
and laden with the sweetness of honey,
which has been and is still one of the
blessings of the Western slope of the
Rocky Mountains. Ever so does
every Christian carry with him some
thistle plucked from the old man, or
honey from the new man, with which
to bless or curse men, according as he
makes choice for God. How precious
is our influence; how we should watch
and guard it.—*Words and Weapons*

SPURGEON has now completed his
"life work," as he calls it, the *Treasury*
of *David*. This work is composed of
seven large octavo volumes of about
500 pages each. He has been engaged
for many years preparing this great
work. The sixth volume was pub-
lished four years ago. The completion
of the seventh volume has been much
delayed by the frequent sickness of the
author and his multifarious labours.
In a letter to his American publishers,
Messrs. Funk & Wagnalls, he says that
the delight he felt in completing the
work was beyond expression. Instead
of the stereotyped word "F. nis," Spur-
geon has had printed in large capitals
at the end of the seventh volume the
significant word "HALLELUJAH." It
is certainly a suggestive ending. There
are many thousands of admirers of
Mr. Spurgeon who will join in a halle-
lujah that he has been permitted to
live to complete the work.

MR. ALBERT EDWARD PEATE, a young
man of culture and earnest piety, has
just resigned Government civil service
in Australia to go and help Mr. and
Mrs. Cain, in their mission among the
Kois at Dummagudem, India.