

RANDOM READING.

HOW AN INFIDEL FOILED HIMSELF.

Some years since, a discussion had been held during the winter months between Christians and unbelievers, in a hall in Saint Luke's, London. At the last meeting of the season it was resolved that on that occasion any questions should be in order which had been discussed during any previous meeting.

Among other unbelievers who came forward was a young man who had often spoken there on various subjects, and who, as reported by one present, spoke thus:

"Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,—I have determined to show you to-night what the Bible really is; and in order to be fair, I will not take selected passages, but will allow the book to open where it will, and read you the first verse no which my eye rests. You will then see in what kind of a book the Christians believe."

He allowed the Bible to fall open in his hand, and read aloud,—

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i., 27.

Somewhat abashed, and amidst the joy of the Christians, and confusion of his own party, he opened the Bible again, and read:

"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" Isaiah lviii., 6.

Still more abashed, he read again as the book opened:

"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Isaiah i., 16.

He made one last attempt and read:

"Be hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah vi., 8.

Disappointed and chagrined, the skeptic left the platform, overwhelmed by the sneers of his companions, and the tumultuous joy of the Christians.

No Christian could desire a more favorable test than this. The Scriptures will bear to be taken at random, and read in the presence of their uttermost foes, for "every word of God is pure, as silver refined in a furnace of earth."

The Bible is a good book for random reading. Most who despise it have never carefully read it. It is especially the book for the poor. David says, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

Psa. xli., 1. "Oh God, thou hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor." Psa. lxxviii., 10.

"The Lord heareth the poor." Psa. lxxix., 33.

"He setteth the poor on high." Psa. cvii., 41.

"He shall stand at the right hand of the poor." Psa. cix., 31.

"I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor." Psa. cxl. 12.

Solomon says, "Whoso oppresseth the poor reproacheth his neighbor; whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he shall cry and shall not be heard." When Zacharias was converted he said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor," and James says,

"Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom? The whole book is full of blessings, on the poor and the needy, and the best thing a poor man can do is to read it and think how much better off he would be than he is now, if he lived in a country ruled by the law of God.

And what can induce men to make war on such a book? What but the wickedness of their own hearts, and their desire to live a life of sin and escape the condemnation that the Scriptures declare upon all ungodliness? Why not believe and live? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—H. L. Hastings.

THEY HAD NOT READ IT.

It is told of Franklin that at one time in Paris he was greatly ridiculed for his love of the Bible, and that he made up his mind to find out how many of the scoffers had read it. He informed one of the learned societies, of which he was a member, that he had come across a story in pastoral life in ancient times that appeared to him very beautiful, but he would like the judgment of the society upon it. On the evening appointed Franklin had a reader of finely modulated voice read to them the book of Ruth. They were in ecstasies over it, and one after another rose to express gratification and admiration, and the desire that the manuscript should be printed. "It is printed," said Franklin, "and is part of the Bible."

Most of those who laugh at the Bible to-day know very little about it. A skeptic may have a few passages of the Bible by heart, and on these he bases his objections to it, but how little he knows of it as a whole. Satan quoted Scripture to Christ. But Christ answered, "It is written AGAIN." The best way to meet the skeptic who quotes Scripture to scoff at it, is to do as Christ did with Satan, bring other Scripture, thus comparing Scripture with Scripture and explaining Scripture by Scripture.

THE DEPTHS OF THE BIBLE.

I am glad there is a depth in the Bible I know nothing about; that there is a height there I cannot climb to if I should live to be as old as Methuselah; I venture to say, if I should live for ages on the earth I would only have touched its surface.

I pity the man who knows all the Bible, for it is a pretty good sign he doesn't know himself. A man came to me with what he thought was a very difficult passage, and he said, "Mr. Moody, how do you explain it?"

I said, "I don't explain it."

"But how do you interpret it?"

"I don't interpret it."

"Well, how do you understand it?"

"I don't understand it."

"But what do you do with it?"

"I don't do anything with it."

"You don't believe it?"

"Yes, I believe it. There are lots of things that I believe that I do not understand. In the third chapter of John, Christ says to Nicodemus, 'If you do not understand earthly things how can you understand heavenly things?' There are a great many things about my own body I do not understand; I don't understand nature; it is filled with wonderful things I don't comprehend. Then why should I expect to know everything spiritually?"

But men ask, "How can you prove the book is inspired?" I answer, "because it inspires me." That is one of the best proofs. It does inspire us.—D. L. Moody.

Jesus Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister.

"The nobility of life is work. We live in a working world. The lazy and idle man does not count in the plan of campaign. My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Let that text be enough."