

to stop the war of the elements. The bed of every sea is covered with wrecks, and the skeletons of men and women who have gone down amid the hoarse thunder of the storm. Their requiem was chanted by the sad sea fowl, but no Christ has ever been known to say, "Peace, be still?" When the brave sailor leaves a widow and orphans, does Christ give them "dinners for nothing?" No. What becomes of them? The children are sent to a poor-house, the widow often becomes a prostitute or starves; and this in a country where people, with you, believe in Christ and in the "inspiration" of the Bible.

After the allegory of "old Jenkins' son" deceiving the people by passing himself off as a young English nobleman, you deliver this eloquent admonition: "Now, don't be fooled with this soft talk about the Bible being a good book."

It is difficult for me to understand how you could write such a sentence, when your whole lecture is little else than a mass of very soft talk about the Bible being a good book. Speaking for myself, I don't intend being "fooled" by any such "soft talk." I have, in the course of a not very long lifetime, heard and read a great deal of "soft talk," which was intended to prove what you have attempted to prove in your lecture, and I think you will agree with me that the tone of this letter is evidence of the fact that I have not yet been "fooled" by it.

But, however that may be, when any evidence is presented to me as authority upon any point, I want to know something about the source whence the information comes—about the character and credibility of my informant. For example, if I were to read a history of the civil war in your country in 1861-65, before I would attach very great weight to the work I would want to know whether the writer was a native born American or a foreigner; whether he was a Catholic or a Protestant, and whether he was a Northern or a Southern sympathizer. It would be an easy matter to determine these points, but with the Bible it is entirely different. I ask where, when, and by whom was it written, and what was the character and credibility of the writers, and you cannot tell me; and no other person can tell me; and I hope you will not be grieved when I tell you that you know perfectly well that what I say is true.

When you say, "There is not another book like it in the