

All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1998 Holiness Data Ministry

Duplication of this CD by any means is forbidden, and
copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4Ucopy.txt file on this CD.

* * * * *

ATHEISTS -- SAVED AND LOST
Compiled by Duane V. Maxey

Stories About Atheists and Atheism
From Publications in the
HDM Digital Library

* * * * *

Digital Edition 07/21/98
By Holiness Data Ministry

* * * * *

INTRODUCTION

This compilation was created from the HDM Digital Library using the "Search & Replace" utility, and includes stories about atheists and atheism. Some of the stories are about the conversion of one or more atheists, and some are about atheists who were lost. While technically speaking there are some differences of meaning in the names, I have included in this compilation material about those called atheists, agnostics, infidels, skeptics, and unbelievers.

The compilation was taken from among files hdm0001 through hdm0700, the files constituting our Volume I CD, and the selections have been left in quite the same random order in which they were pasted into the file, with no effort being made to arrange them into categories. I have given new titles to a number of the selections that were more to my liking. However, very little change has been made in the texts of the selections, and those wishing to find the selection in the source file will be able to do so quite easily using words or phrases from the story text. Finally, I have placed at the end of each selection only its source in the HDM Library. It will be necessary to view the selection in its HDM file to check for the authors' listings of primary sources. -- DVM

* * * * *

CONTENTS

An Atheist Converted Through Answered Prayer

2

The Great Soulwinning Success Of A Converted Atheist

3

Swift Judgment On A Daring Atheist!

4

The Hopeless End Of Atheists

5

The Horrible Death Of Francis Newport

6

Jernigan Deplored The Advance Of Atheism In 1925

7

He Sowed Infidelity And Reaped Snakes

8

The Society Of The Godless

9

Infidel City

10

It Was His Transformed Life That Won The Infidel

11

Fulfilled Prophecy Convinced This Former Atheist

12

Atheists Disregard Convincing Evidence Of Christ's Deity

13

Stalin's Daughter Could Not Live Without God

14

How C. A. McConnell Was Saved Out Of Atheism

15

An Atheist Converted After "Somebody" Answered Prayer

16

Pearl Poe Warned A Vile Atheist

- 17
The Death Of An Atheistic Friend Awakened Judson
- 18
How Musgrave Reid Turned From Atheism To Christ
- 19
An Atheist Converted Through A Slum Feast
- 20
A Christian And An Atheist Compared
- 21
He Was Saved From A Wasted Atheistic Life
- 22
An Atheist Won By Observing Christian Joy
- 23
How John Wesley Redfield Was Cured Of Atheism
- 24
Atheism Enters When The Standards Are Lowered
- 25
Christian Self-renunciation Vs. Atheistic Self-assertion
- 26
How An Old Atheistic Captain Cast Anchor In A Safe Harbor
- 27
An Atheist Who Was Slain By God
- 29
Atheism Proven False By A Meat-chopper
- 30
Atheism Proven False By Creation
- 31
Atheists Only At Night
- 32
How Moody Preached To The Atheists

33

Ingersoll Angered And Silenced

34

It Cost Ingersoll More Than That!

35

The Emptiness Of Atheism

36

The Hypocritical Infidel

37

His Faith In Atheism Became Bankrupt

38

Voltaire's Vain Boasting And Error

39

Atheism Brought Emptiness To Clarence Darrow

40

An Atheist Who Signed His Name To A Blank Note

41

The Infidel Heard What Christ Did For Stephen

42

Misplaced Faith In Ingersoll

43

Fenelon's Powerful Influence On An Atheist

44

Ingersoll's Challenge Did Not Exhaust God's Patience

45

The Prosperity Of Atheists Should Not Discourage Christians

46

The Atheist Tambring Converted By Answered Prayer

47

An Atheist Saved Through Kindness To His Grandson

48

A Well-known Hymn Inspired To A Converted Atheist

49

An Argument The Atheist Could Not Answer

50

How The Son Of Atheists Was Converted

51

Why The Infidel Did Not Burn The Bible

52

Why Her Infidel Husband Was Saved

53

A Mother's Faith That Her Infidel Son Would Live And Preach

54

Ingersoll's Misquotations Of The Bible Rebuked

55

An Infidel Who Was Deeply Moved By Carradine's Visit

56

The Sudden Death Of A Mocking, Defiant Infidel

57

A Death-bed, Converted Infidel Marvels Over Christ's Love

58

An Infidel Brand Plucked From The Burning

59

How Bud Robinson Won An Infidel To Christ

60

How Two Infidel Researchers Were Converted

61

The Awful Death Of An Infidel Neighbor

62

Infidels Have No Comfort At Death

63

When Two Agreed For The Salvation Of An Infidel

- 64
We Should Judge Infidelity By The Effects It Produces
- 65
Witnesses, Not Arguments, Win Infidels
- 66
Infidelity's Insidious Effect In Pulpits And Schools
- 67
Holiness In Heart And Life Convinces Infidels
- 68
An Infidel Who Became A Soulwinner Instead Of A Suicide
- 69
The New Birth Took The Infidelity Out Of Him
- 70
The Conversion Of An Infidel
- 71
The Conversion Of An Infidel Doctor
- 72
An Infidel Stricken With Derangement And Death
- 73
An Infidel Saved While Trying To Help A Drunk Get Saved
- 74
A Preacher's Life Spared -- An Infidel Saved
- 75
The Moralist Just As Lost As The Infidel
- 76
An Infidel Struck By A Lightning Bolt Of Conviction
- 77
Persistence Leads An Infidel To Salvation
- 78
Inskip True To God In Spite Of His Father's Infidelity

79

Why The Infidel Came To Church

80

How Hatfield Dispersed The Infidels' Crowd

81

How Bishop Hamline Once Silenced And Infidel

82

The Danger Of Reading Infidel Literature

83

God Can Save Infidels

84

Voltaire's Awful Death

85

An Infidel Club Broken Up

86

A Redeemed Infidel, Drunkard And Gambler

87

What It Was That Burned The Infidelity Out Of Him

88

How An Infidel Boxer Was Whipped By A Watermelon

89

How M. W. Knapp Led An Infidel To Faith In The Blood

90

Testing The Bible By Prayer, And Infidel Was Saved

91

How An Infidel And His Wife Were Saved

92

The Testimony Of A Converted Infidel

93

A Foretaste Of Damnation On His Death-bed

94

An Infidel Who Was Taken At His Word

95

Damned By And With An Infidel Preacher

96

The Death Of Saints And Sinners Contrasted

97

Voltaire And Paine Did Not Destroy The Bible

98

Atheism Does Not Bring Happiness

99

The Infidel Who "Put His Foot In His Mouth"

100

The Baptism Of The Holy Ghost Overcomes Infidelity

101

Friction That Makes Atheists Shine Also Destroys Them

102

His Praises Not Quenched By The Infidel

103

Knowing God, The Only Knowledge That Silences Infidels

105

The Glory Struck After A Converted Infidel's Testimony

106

Russell H. Conwell An Infidel Won By An Orderly

107

Answered Prayer Seen By An Incredulous Infidel

108

How Benoni Harris Won An Infidel

109

Bud Robinson's Encounter With A Highminded Infidel

110

An Infidel And Cramp Colic

111
Hiram Ackers Saved From Infidelity, Sanctified Wholly

112
How The Infidel, Captain Lowe, Was Converted

113
How A False Gift Of Tongues Led To Infidelity

114
How Darius Dunham Rebuked Distracting Infidel

115
An Infidel Killed By A Gnat

116
An Infidel's Invitation Used To Bring Conversions

117
An Infidel's Novel Lost Its Attraction

118
The Folly Of Infidels Proven

119
No Counterfeit Infidels

120
A Prescription On Tried By An Infidel Doctor

121
Knocking Infidelity Out

122
An Infidel Rebuked

123
An Infidel Ignorant Of What Christ Has Sent Down

124
Napoleon's Reproof Of Duroc's Infidelity

125
No Answer To The Dying Infidel's Prayer

- 126
The Death-bed Of The Atheist, Thomas Paine
- 127
How The Town Founded By Infidels Was Changed
- 128
An Infidel Who Took Cover As A Minister
- 129
Why The Infidel Would Not Leave The Bible Alone
- 130
Voltaire Knew The Bible Restrained Evil
- 131
The Biblical Ignorance Of Some Infidels Illustrated
- 132
Infidels Overcome By The Prayers Of A Boy
- 133
An Infidel Who Found A Town "Too Much Like Hell"
- 134
"sunshine Harris," A Converted Infidel
- 135
How "Mother's God" Saved An Infidel
- 136
An Infidel Saved Through A Silent, But Powerful Influence
- 137
He Faithfully Reproved His Infidel King
- 138
She Loved God More Than Her Infidel Father
- 139
An Infidel Whose Request Belied Her Belief
- 140
A Good Reply To A Chiding Infidel
- 141

How The Word Of God Was Used To Rout An Infidel

142

The Infidel Had Grounds For Worry

143

The Reply Of A Wise Child To A Foolish Infidel

144

How An Infidel's Advice Belied His Belief

145

An Infidel Damned By A Preacher's Inconsistency

146

Restitution Was The Key To A Second Infidel's Conversion

147

What Might Have Kept Ingersoll's Book From Being Written

148

An Infidel Ready To Have Christ Preached To Him

149

An Infidel With No Answer For A Sanctified Man

150

A Good Reply To An Infidel's Criticism

151

H. C. Morrison's Moving Words To Infidel Lawyer

152

Quotations From Sam Jones About Infidels

153

Atheism Stems From A "Bad Heart," And Not From A "Good Head"

154

No Virtue In Agnosticism

155

Agnostics Are "Blind In The Midst Of Light"

156

Atheists, Infidels, And Agnostics Are Not To Be Trusted

- 157
Agnosticism Is Untenable In An Intelligent Universe
- 158
Modernism Agrees With Atheism, Infidelity, Agnosticism
- 159
How The Bottom Fell Out Of His Agnosticism
- 160
Why She Gave A Positive Reply To The Agnostic
- 161
Agnostics Contradict Their Name
- 162
How A Fiji Native Reproved A Highminded Agnostic
- 163
Faith In Christ -- How The Agnostic Discovered "It Works"
- 164
The Encounter Of Lew Wallace With Robert Ingersoll
- 165
The Wesleyan Revival Preceded By Skeptics And Skepticism
- 166
The Influence Of Infidels Can Be Feared Too Much
- 167
Names Of Some Of The Infidel Deists
- 168
Wesley's Comments About Hobbes' Deism And His Death
- 169
Hume's Superficiality As An Historian Discovered By Adam Clarke
- 170
The Bible Has Survived The Attacks Of Puny Infidels
- 171
Ingersoll's Heroism A Myth -- None Benefited By Infidels

172

The Infidel Hume But A Proud, Self-inflated Worm

173

Wesley's Very Low Estimation Of The Infidel David Hume

174

Wesley Considered Hume's Religion To Be A Form Of Atheism

175

Gibbon, The Historian, Identified Clearly As An Infidel

176

William Law Married A Gibbon, Relative Of The Infidel Historian

177

Gibbons Pronounced William Law's Book Powerful

178

Gibbons' History The Product Of 26 Years

179

A General Fast Called As Paine's Evil Influence Spread

180

The Ill-effect Of Paine's "Age Of Reason" On Henry Brockett

181

The Influence Of Ingersoll And Paine Vs. That Of Wesley

182

He Took In An Infidel, And Lost His Soul

183

The Mania For Freedom Helped Further Paines Atheistic Ideas

184

Paine's Disciples Persecuted Christians On Hedding's Circuit

185

Paine's Doctrine Fostered The Hatred Of Christ Also

186

How One Was Delivered From Paine's Atheism

187

The Horrible Atrocities In France Inspired By Paine's Writings

188

Wesley As Eminent For Piety As Paine For Ribaldry

189

Paine's Atheism Spread Greatly During The American Revolution

190

Franklin Warned Paine About "Spitting In His Own Face"

191

Apostate Clergymen Promoted Paine's Hellish Theology

192

Wesley's Influence Greater Than That Of Voltaire

193

The Spread Of French Infidelity After The American Revolution

194

The Revolutions Of Wesley And Voltaire Compared

195

Voltaire Had No Seat In Heaven To Sell

196

The Smooth Stone That Killed His Skepticism

197

Comments By J. B. Chapman About The Skeptic, Rosseau

198

A Skeptic's Illogical Tract Against "Praying Through"

199

Saved From Skepticism And Atheism In Haney's Meeting

200

How One Skeptic Was Brought To His Knees

201

What It Took To Win Her Skeptical Husband To The Lord

202

How Two Skeptics Were Converted

203

How Beecher Challenged Ingersoll's Unbelief

204

Professor Tholuck, An Unbeliever Transformed

205

Convincing Evidence For An Unbeliever

206

An Unbeliever Who Was Gloriously Saved

207

How An Unbeliever In Christ's Divinity Was Converted

208

The Testimony Of Joseph Barker, Who "Was Indeed An Unbeliever"

209

How Pearl Poe Led An Unbelieving Jew To The Messiah

210

How Cuff Won His Cruel, Infidel Master To Christ

* * * * *

Part 1

AN ATHEIST CONVERTED THROUGH ANSWERED PRAYER

So today God often hears the cry of unbelievers for temporal mercies. One case well known to the writer may be given as an illustration. My friend told me that he had been an atheist many years. While an infidel, he had been singing for forty years in a church choir because he was fond of music. His aged father became seriously ill two or three years ago, and lay in great pain. The doctors were helpless to relieve the sufferer. In his distress for his father, the infidel choirman fell on his knees and cried, "O God, if there is a God, show Thy power by taking away, my father's pain!" God heard the man's piteous cry, and removed the pain immediately. The "atheist" praised God, and hurried off to his vicar to find out the way of salvation! Today he is out-and-out for Christ, giving his whole time to work for his newly-found Savior. Yes, God is greater than His promises, and is more willing to hear than we are to pray. -- "The Kneeling Christian," hdm0663, by Anonymous

* * * * *

Part 2

THE GREAT SOULWINNING SUCCESS OF A CONVERTED ATHEIST

"The author of 'Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation' gives an account of a man of his acquaintance, a notorious and profane atheist. By the persuasion of pious relatives, who had long prayed for his conversion, he was induced to attend a series of religious meetings, where he was brought to see his condition as a sinner, and to exercise saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 'Old things' having 'passed away, and all things become new,' the change was so strikingly great that it was obvious to all who knew him. He immediately sought reconciliation with his enemies, and asked their forgiveness, and tried to benefit them by leading them to Christ. He began to visit from house to house, laboring and praying with his neighbors, and inviting them to attend religious worship on the Sabbath. When converted, one of his first acts, although he had heard nothing of any such act in others, was to make out a list of all his own associates then living within reach of his influence. For the conversion of these he determined to labor as he had opportunity, and pray daily. On his list were one hundred and sixteen names, among whom were skeptics, drunkards, and other individuals as little likely to be reached by Christian influence as any other men in the region. Within two years of the period of the old man's conversion, one hundred of these individuals had made a profession of religion. This account is not exaggerated; the old man is living, and there are a thousand living witnesses to this testimony." -- "Pentecost, Its Scope, Power and Perpetuation," hdm0209, by W. G. Bennett

* * * * *

Part 3 SWIFT JUDGMENT ON A DARING ATHEIST!

Dr. Powers, a noble evangelist of Lincoln, Nebraska, told this in my presence. He said, "My father was an infidel. He wrote a great book on infidelity which never was published. My mother's brother's son imbibed the infidelity of my father, and he became, at the age of twenty-seven, a perfect demon, an infidel of the rankest kind. He used to laugh at me and my brother because we served the Lord. One day in the harvest field, to show his great atheistic daring, he dropped his cradle and rolled up his sleeves and challenged God. He said, 'I dare God the Father to come down and fight with me; I dare God the Son to come down and fight with me.' God the Father and God the Son took the insult; but the next day, with that awful daring, he laid down his cradle again, struck up his sleeves and said, 'I dare the Holy Ghost to come down and fight with me.' Quicker than a flash the fellow dropped, paralyzed from his arms down. They carried him to the house and sent hastily for two doctors, who came and examined him and declared they did not know what was the matter with him; they had never seen anything like it. In the early part of his sickness he began to groan, 'O eternity, eternity; how shall I spend eternity!' He had beautiful, long, curly hair, and for four days he pulled at it until he had pulled it all out. On the ninth day, just as the sun was going down, he groaned out, 'O eternity, eternity; how can I endure eternity?' and he was gone."-- "Dying to Live," hdm0099, by A. M. Hills

* * * * *

Part 4 THE HOPELESS END OF ATHEISTS

The noted infidel Edward Gibbon's last words were, "All is now lost; finally lost, irrevocably lost; all is dark and doubtful." All his expectation was lost, all his hope was lost, all his light was lost and lost forever. His sun was setting to rise no more. [It might be well to note here that while HDM has published Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," his atheistic beliefs are not thereby advocated.] The educated atheist Hobbes flaunted himself in his atheism and for years went unrestrained in his attacks on God, the Bible, and Christianity, but the day came when his candle was going out and his tabernacle was being clouded in utter darkness. As he drew near to death, he said, "I am about to take a leap into the dark. I would be glad to find a hole to creep out of this world through." He was entering the domain of darkness from which he has never found a door that leads to light and God. -- "Endless Retribution," hdm0232, by H. H. Hooker

* * * * *

Part 5 THE HORRIBLE DEATH OF FRANCIS NEWPORT

Sir Francis Newport was trained in early life to understand the great truths of the gospel, and while in early manhood it was hoped that he would become an ornament and a blessing to his family and the nation; but his course resulted far otherwise. He fell into company that corrupted his principles and morals. He became an avowed infidel, and a life of dissipation soon brought on disease which was incurable. When he felt that he must die, he threw himself upon his bed, and after a brief pause, he exclaimed as follows:

"Whence this war in my heart? What argument is there now to assist me against matters of fact? Do I assert there is no hell, while I feel one in my own bosom? Am I certain there is no after retribution, when I feel a present judgment? Do I affirm my soul to be as mortal as my body, when this languishes and that is as vigorous as ever? Oh, that anyone would restore unto me that ancient guard of piety and innocence! Wretch that I am, whither shall I flee from this breast? What shall become of me?"

An infidel companion tried to dispel his thoughts, to whom he replied, "That there is a God, I know, because I continually feel the effects of His wrath; that there is a hell, I am equally certain, having received an earnest of my inheritance there already in my breast; that there is a natural conscience, I now feel with amazement and horror, being continually upbraided by it with my impieties and iniquities, and all my sins brought to my remembrance. Why God has marked me out as an example of His vengeance rather than you, or any one of my acquaintances, I presume is because I have been more religiously educated, and have done greater despite to the Spirit of grace. Oh, that I was to lie upon the fire that is quenched a thousand years to purchase the favor of God and be reunited to Him again! But it is a fruitless wish. Millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer the end of my torments than one poor hour! Oh, Eternity I Eternity! WHO CAN DISCOVER THE ABYSS OF ETERNITY? Who can paraphrase upon these words: forever and ever?"

Lest his friends should think he was insane, he said, "You imagine me melancholy or distracted. I wish it were either; but it is part of my judgment that I am not. No; my apprehension of

persons and things is more quick and vigorous than when I was in perfect health; and it is my curse, because I am hereby more sensible of the condition I am fallen into. Would you be informed why I became a skeleton in three or four days? See, now then. I have despised my Maker and denied my Redeemer. I have joined myself to the atheist and profane, and continued this course under many convictions, till my iniquity was ripe for vengeance, and the judgment of God overtook me when my security was the greatest, and the checks of my conscience the least."

As his mental distress and bodily disease were hurrying him into eternity, he was asked if he would have prayer in his behalf. He turned his face and exclaimed, "Tigers and monsters! are ye also become devils to torment me? Would you give me a prospect of heaven to make my hell more intolerable?"

Soon after his voice failing, and uttering a groan of inexpressible horror, he cried out, "OH, THE INSUFFERABLE PANGS OF HELL!" and died at once. -- "Gospel Dynamite," hdm0628, by Oscar Hudson

* * * * *

Part 6

JERNIGAN DEPLORED THE ADVANCE OF ATHEISM IN 1925

This is what Modernism has done for the greatest city in the world. Read the following clipping from the New York Journal, October 21, 1925:

**SOCIETY FOR ATHEISM
IS REFUSED A CHARTER**
Petition, Filed Day After Coolidge Plea
for Religious Revival, Turned Down

Following closely on the plea of President Coolidge for a religious revival to obtain an enforcement of the law, the state Supreme Court yesterday received an application by the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism for a certificate of incorporation. It sets forth as its particular object "to abolish the belief in God, together with all forms of religion based upon that belief." It also sets forth that its work is to be "purely destructive."

Justice Richard H. Mitchell denied the application and directed that the original petition and a copy be impounded and made a part of court records and that the papers be not returned to the association or its attorney.

Since writing the above, I see from the following clipping from the Literary Digest, February 6, 1926. that the Atheist Society was allowed to incorporate in the State of New York. Oh, brother reader! We must plant some mighty centers of fire in New York State, or soon all things that are sacred will be destroyed. -- "From a Prairie Schooner to a City Flat," hdm0526, by C. B. Jernigan

ATHEISTS' LARGE CONTRACT

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." But the Psalmist finds deaf ears in the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, which, after failing once, has at length succeeded in obtaining a certificate of incorporation in New York. The papers received the approval of Supreme Court Justice John Ford. Some time before, as told in these pages November 14, Justice William H. Mitchell refused to incorporate the organization and ordered the papers impounded by the County Clerk and not returned. After declaring the purpose of the incorporation was to destroy belief in God and attack the Church, the original application for a charter stated that "in prosecuting its work, which shall be purely destructive, the society shall hold public meetings and erect radio stations for the delivery and broadcasting of lectures, debates and discussions on the subjects of science and religion, publish and distribute scientific and anti-religious literature, and conduct a general propaganda against the Church and clergy." The purpose of the association, as now set forth in the certificate, is to "advance atheism." -- "From a Prairie Schooner to a City Flat," hdm0526, by C. B. Jernigan

* * * * *

Part 7

HE SOWED INFIDELITY AND REAPED SNAKES

Ever and anon for some years we have heard of an infidel who lived years ago, to a ripe old age, and when he died, his grave was infested with a den of snakes. Some time ago I was holding a meeting, and this story was repeated to me, by a Nazarene preacher who had seen the grave and had killed snakes crawling over the grave. I, at once requested that I be carried out to see this notable grave. I spent half a day driving out to see the cemetery, and taking a Kodak along made the picture of the monument as you see it on the cover of this booklet.

We were told that this man especially delighted in ridiculing the Bible, calling it superstition, and ghost stories. He took special delight in deriding the story of Eve in the Garden of Eden, and the snake talking to her. He was often known to say that "any half-wit could write a more credible fairy tale than that given in the Bible. The idea of a dirty slimy snake crawling into the garden on its belly, and entering into a controversy with Eve. The most bungling blunder, of ancient Hebrew superstition, that an ugly snake could outwit a shrewd woman, and deceive her by his logic. Preposterous! Take a snake story like this to prove the authenticity of your Bible. The very first story in the book is ridiculous. I had rather have snakes crawl all over my dead body than to believe such rot." Such are the current stories about this man and his grave in the neighborhood where he lived.

Note the picture [see both hdm0553a.jpg, a drawing on the booklet cover, and hdm0553b.jpg, the picture to which C. B. Jernigan here refers] standing on a granite base fourteen feet high, with a life-size statue of the man, holding in his right hand, above his head a scroll, on which is inscribed: "UNIVERSAL MENTAL LIBERTY," lifted up. He has his left foot on the Bible, and the finger of his left hand pointed to it, on which is inscribed "SUPERSTITION." (Up with universal mental liberty, and down with the Bible.)

This monument with its statue was made by him, and erected before his death, overlooking the grave of some very devoted Christian people we are told. The picture with the snakes in it was taken by a minister, who had killed these snakes off the grave lot at the foot of this monument.

The grave lot is full of snake holes that undermine the monument, and other places on the grave lot. We saw a dead snake on the grave the cold winter day that we visited the place. The cemetery is more than one hundred years old, as we found tombs there where people were buried in 1817, and many before 1830. It is one of the most beautiful cemeteries that we have ever visited, covered with blue grass, which is kept closely mowed, and we did not find a single snake hole any where else in the whole graveyard except those on this grave.

It is currently reported that any summer day one may find snakes crawling over this grave. The snakes in the picture were all killed on the grave, on a sunny November day, and hanged on the stick leaning against the monument where the picture was made, by this minister.

Explain this strange phenomenon?

All that I know is what I have seen, and heard about it. He certainly sowed infidelity and reaped snakes.

Story of the Snake-Infested Grave Confirmed

In the month of March, 1930, I was assisted in a revival meeting in the great Church of the Nazarene, in East Liverpool, Ohio, by the Vaughan Radio quartet and one night in an audience of 800 I offered this book (A Snake Infested Grave) for sale, and while a member of the quartet was distributing the book through the congregation, he met a gentleman who told him that he had married the granddaughter of this noted infidel, and that he desired and interview with me.

After service, a fine looking man came up, introducing himself as Mr. B____, the manager of one of the great chain stores in the city. He said my first wife was the granddaughter of the man whose statue is on the monument on the cover page of this book. She is now dead, and is buried along side this monument. The infidel he said was a very noted character and very rich for his time, being worth at least five hundred thousand dollars. He was notorious in his hatred for the Bible; calling it a bundle of ignorance and superstition, publicly defying people to discuss the question with him. The grave lot where he was buried was on a hill side, and filled in with stones and other rubbish, and was literally a den of snakes.

The next day the Vaughan quartet drove out 40 miles to look at this monument, and the grave of this man's wife, and found it as he had said.

The next night Mr. B____ brought us a photograph of this noted character, and the next, night Mr. B____ was at the altar, and was gloriously converted.

Truth is stranger than fiction. -- "The Snake-Infested Grave," hdm0553, by C. B. Jernigan

* * * * *

Part 8

THE SOCIETY OF THE GODLESS

This society was organized for the purpose of propagating atheism, it has many members in the high schools and colleges of New York City, and Bible-scoffing meetings are held every two weeks. This society is affiliated with the national organization known as the Junior Atheist League. In Los Angeles they are called "The Devil's Angels." In Rochester they call themselves, "The Damned Souls." At some universities they call themselves, "The Legion of the Damned." They call the Bible, "The Jewish Scrapbook," and the general propaganda is in line with this blasphemy. Some of them have committed suicide. What an influence for some of our boys and girls to be under!

As to infidelity, Voltaire said he would utterly destroy the Bible, but he is now destroyed and almost forgotten, while the Bible is more alive today than anything else in the world. There is a report that the very building used by Voltaire to contain his printing press has been secured by the American Bible Society, and is now stocked with Bibles from the basement to the attic.

Bob Ingersoll, with his five hundred organized infidel clubs, said he would abolish the Bible in a few weeks, which took the disciples a lifetime to prepare. His infidel clubs have gone into oblivion, and today the increasing millions bow daily to the untiring study of the sacred shrine -- the Bible. -- "Gems of Truth," hdm0499, by W. G. Ketcheson

* * * * *

Part 9

INFIDEL CITY

Let us build an infidel city and see what it is like. Make it the size of Cleveland, Ohio, ten by twenty miles with a million people.

In the post offices every person is an infidel. Every one you meet on the streets is an infidel. In the stores, clerks, managers, and everybody you see is an infidel. In the day schools, all the teachers, principals, and the mass of pupils all of them, are infidels. The little children in the homes never see or hear anything religious, nothing but infidelity from one year's end to the other. In the hospitals some are very sick, others are dying, but all the doctors and nurses; yes, and all the sick people they are caring for, one and all, are infidels. If the Spirit of God moves upon a dying person and he becomes in trouble about his soul, he cannot ask for prayer, he's an infidel, and there is no one there or in the city to pray for him; they are all infidels. The dead have to be buried without a gospel sermon, without prayer and without a hymn being sung; these things cannot be done in the city; they are all infidels.

On Sunday, there are no church services nor Sunday Schools anywhere in the city, and business continues on the Sabbath the same as any other day; in fact, infidels have no Sabbath; it belongs to the believers, it is only Sunday to them. Not a child in the city has been baptized; they are all infidels. No sacraments are ever administered; infidels don't have such things. Buy a Bible

there if you can. There is not one to be had in the city. Not a religious book or paper to be seen, just infidel books and papers. Christmas comes, Thanksgiving comes, and Easter comes, but no attention is given to these by infidels.

What a place to live in, and what a place to raise a family! Christianity at its worst, is a thousand times better than the deceitfulness, blindness and ignorance of infidelity. -- "Gems of Truth," hdm0499, by W. G. Ketcheson

* * * * *

Part 10

IT WAS HIS TRANSFORMED LIFE THAT WON THE INFIDEL

A man of great wealth, prominence, and learning, who is the owner of extensive mining interests in Pennsylvania, had unfortunately become an infidel and almost a blaspheming atheist. He had in his employ a man of desperate character, -- a man whose profanity and wickedness was shocking even to him, infidel and atheist as he was; but such was his value as a workman that he disliked to give him up. At last this wicked, lost man was brought under religious influences, through a meeting held by a Methodist minister for the benefit of sinners. He was soon brought under conviction for sin, and after a fearful struggle was happily converted to God. His whole manner of life was at once reversed. His terribly passionate nature gave place to one as gentle as a child's. His fearful profanity was supplanted by a spirit of prayer and praise, and his insubordination gave place to fidelity of the strictest type. Soon after his conversion he became anxiously concerned about his employer, but could not gather up sufficient courage to go to his home and speak to him about his soul.

At last, some six months after his conversion, he became so deeply concerned upon the subject that he could not sleep; and one morning early, after spending a sleepless night, he determined to go to his employer in the name and strength of his divine Master, and speak to him about his soul. He started with trembling on his way. As he approached the house he saw that, early as it was, there was a light in a lower room. He knocked timidly at the door; his employer answered the summons in person, and by his appearance and manner showed that he had not retired during the night. No sooner was the door opened than the poor miner grasped his employer's hand and cried out, "I hope you will forgive me, but I am so concerned about your soul, I cannot sleep: so I thought I would come and speak to you." The man of wealth and culture pressed the hand of his poor ignorant employee, and in a voice choked with emotion said, "Come in, Thomas, come in; I am so glad you have come; God must have sent you. I am so unhappy. I have been trying all night to pray, but cannot. I want you to pray for me." They knelt down together, and the astonished miner poured out his soul in prayer for his distressed employer; and there they remained weeping and praying until the master was happily converted to God.

He then, in reply to the inquiries of Thomas as to how he came under conviction, made this statement: "I have long been an infidel. I did not see much difference between the lives of many Christians with whom I associated and my own, and that strengthened me in my infidelity. At last you professed to be converted. I knew what a terrible man you had been, and determined to watch you and see the result. I did so. I watched you when you were not aware of it, but I saw nothing

with which I could find fault. On the contrary, your consistent and marvelously changed life condemned me. I felt that if you, without education, and sunk to the very bottom of the pit of wickedness, could be so transformed, and lead so beautiful a life, there must be something in religion, and it was time for me, who had enjoyed so many advantages, to think about my soul. And as I thought about it, I found I was a sinner in the sight of God, and lost forever unless He would save me. It was your life, Thomas, that led me to Christ." -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 11

FULFILLED PROPHECY CONVINCED THIS FORMER ATHEIST

A very intelligent gentleman in Boston, years ago, requested me to visit him. During our interview he made this statement:-- "For fifty years of my life up to a few weeks since, I was a confirmed atheist. I had no idea that my belief could be shaken. As I lay upon my bed from a slight indisposition, the following reflections passed through my mind. There are in the Bible a vast number of predictions which no human foresight could have divined. Every one of these, when the time specified arrived, was fulfilled to the letter. The same Book foretells for the soul a future state of eternal retribution. These last predictions will come to pass just as all the others have done. All this came before my mind with such distinctness and force as to render doubt impossible; and I am here, a believer in Jesus." -- "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost," hdm0390, by Asa Mahan

* * * * *

Part 12

ATHEISTS DISREGARD CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF CHRIST'S DEITY

In the book Evidence That Demands a Verdict, Josh McDowell states, "The evidence proving the deity of Jesus Christ [and I would add, the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible as the Word of God], is overwhelmingly conclusive to any honest, objective seeker after truth. However, not all not even the majority -- of those to whom I have spoken have accepted Him as their Saviour and Lord. This is not because they were unable to believe -- they were simply unwilling to believe! For example, a brilliant but confused psychiatrist . . . frankly confessed to me that he had never been willing to honestly consider the claims of Christ in his own life for fear that he would be convinced and, as a result, would have to change his way of life. Other well-known professing atheists, including Aldous Huxley and Bertrand Russell, have refused to come to intellectual grips with basic historical facts concerning the birth, life, teachings, miracles, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Those who have, such as C. S. Lewis and C. E. M. Joad, have found the evidence so convincing that they have accepted the verdict that Jesus Christ is truly who He claimed to be and who others have believed Him to be the Son of God and their own Saviour and Lord." -- "Man's Ascent to God," hdm0127, by I. Parker Maxey

* * * * *

Part 13

STALIN'S DAUGHTER COULD NOT LIVE WITHOUT GOD

Joseph Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Aliluyeva, is a living illustration of God's universal faithfulness to every soul. Born in an atheist's home, she testifies to the fact that the reality of a living God cannot be obliterated from the conscience or consciousness of one raised apart from God's word and in a home where one is taught to be an atheist and materialist. In the book, Svetlana, the Story of Stalin's Daughter, by Martin Ebon, on page 163 Svetlana is quoted as saying "Since my childhood I have been taught communism, and I believed in it, as we all did, my generation . . . I was brought up in a family where there was never any talk about God. But when I became a grown-up person, I found that it was impossible to exist without God in one's heart. I came to that conclusion myself, without anybody's help or preaching. But that was a great change, because, since that moment, the main dogmas of communism lost their significance for me." In another statement in her book, Twenty Letters to a Friend, page 72 , she states, "I, who'd been taught from earliest childhood by society and my family to be an atheist and materialist, was already one of those who cannot live without God. I am glad that it is so." -- "The Cornerstone of Living," hdm0303, by I. Parker Maxey

* * * * *

Part 14

HOW C. A. MCCONNELL WAS SAVED OUT OF ATHEISM

Carrie had been reared as a High Church Episcopalian, and I was a confirmed atheist. We lived respectable, so-called moral lives, enjoying the pleasures of the world, having no contact with God. My nearly fourscore and ten years have dimmed my memory, and, too, the days about which I shall write were so filled with dark confusion, that possibly I may "fill in" to complete the story; but the essential truth will be told.

I do not remember, if ever I knew, how Carrie became a Christian; but that high courage she showed during our pioneer days was hers as she faced her atheist husband and confessed that she had become a follower of Jesus. Then she said, "Charlie, do you want your children to grow up to be atheists like you and your old father?" I had not been thinking of my children in relation to religion, and something struck me. "No," I replied, "There is no joy in atheism, no hope. I wish there were something else, but there is nothing else true." She said, "I want my children to become Christians." That was a blow to my attitude of years, but I managed to say, "Well, if that is what you want, I'll not put anything in your way." But Carrie had won only the first skirmish. "If the children are to become Christians, they must have a Christian home." "What do you mean," I replied, "by a Christian home?" "A Christian home has a family altar," she replied. That was the first time I had ever heard that expression. "I mean," she continued "the family gathers together everyday to read the Bible and pray." My anger (and perhaps fear) was stirred. "I don't believe in your Bible, and as far as what you call praying-talking up into the air to someone who isn't there that's all bunk." "You can read, can't you?" "Sure I can read." "Then you read, and I'll pray." She put the little ones on their chairs and brought me the Book, opened at the chapter I should read. Somehow that was the most difficult reading I had ever done. Then the mother had the little ones kneel at her side, with closed eyes, while she prayed-for the first time, so far as I had ever known.

She prayed that the children might become real Christians, and she prayed for her husband-not at him; there is a difference. By the time the children were on their feet, I had grabbed my hat and was out of the house. That was that! She had her family altar, and her children were Christians. No more bother for me! But the next day there was the same procedure, and the next day and the next. I got sick, though the doctor could find nothing the matter with me. I know now what was the trouble. I know what David meant when he said, "The sorrows of hell gat hold upon me." The Holy Spirit was striving to break through the granite hardness of my wicked heart. I do not know the number of days, or weeks, I struggled in that horrible darkness. But one day I said to myself, "This thing has got to end. If there be a God, and the Bible is His book, it will reveal itself as true. I will search through it honestly and come to my own conclusion."

I believe that no one who will study the Book as faithfully as I did at that time will fail, finally, to acknowledge as I did, "There is a God. He created me. I am responsible to Him, and I am a rebel against His holy law. I can in no wise free myself; but a Saviour is revealed in Jesus of Nazareth, who made ample proof of himself, as not only the Son of Man, but also as the Son of God." My reason was convinced, but I knew not the way of salvation. Finally, I said that I would take the Bible as my guide, and do everything a Christian should do, even if I should never find salvation. Of course it was not long before the light broke through, and I knew myself accepted with God. -- "The Potter's Vessel," hdm0191, by C. A. McConnell

* * * * *

Part 15

AN ATHEIST CONVERTED AFTER "SOMEBODY" ANSWERED PRAYER

How the devil fought in those early days, but God gave gracious victories! Miss Archer tells of one trial that turned to blessing. "We cooked on a little oil stove and used coal oil lamps. Fall was coming. We had to have heat for our buildings. A well driller was contacted to come to clean out an old gas well. He came with very little equipment and no faith in God. He worked a while, then told us there wasn't any gas left in the well. We prayed. God assured us we would get gas. The driller worked a while longer, then quit. Mr. Swauger begged him to let the bailer down one more time. Suddenly there was an explosion. The pressure blew all the remaining debris out of the well. We had gas. The atheistic driller said, 'I don't know if there is a God or not, but somebody is surely answering those people's prayers.' Later he became ill. He called for the Bible school men to come to pray with him. He was gloriously saved." -- "The Mountain Shall Be Thine," hdm0130, by Lela McConnell

* * * * *

Part 16

PEARL POE WARNED A VILE ATHEIST

A blinding blizzard blew up and our train came near being snowbound. They had to buck high drifts. When I got on the train, I met a professor from the State Teacher's College. He saw that I was a clergyman, and asked of what faith. I told him I was a fundamentalist. He laughed a devil-like laugh and said, "Ho, ho, we are going to make you fundamentalists lay your Bibles down

in twenty years." I said, "We who?" He said, "We, the Atheist Association of America." I said, "How?" He replied, "We are going to put teachers in the schools to do it. We will put in textbooks with no morals, take out the Bible, teach evolution, and promote games." He continued, "You church folk put on your meetings in the fall and winter. We will put on games and keep the students so busy they cannot attend your meetings. You teach modesty; we are going to teach the young folk not to think seriously on any thing, and that all the God there is, is in nature, and any part of nature they serve is God. When we get them to be immodest, nature will make its demands."

I asked, "Mister, am I hearing you right? Do you mean to say that your plans are to teach our young people that living a loose life sexually is God?" "Yes, sir," was his reply. Then I talked to him about Romans one and part of chapter two. He moved to another seat and I followed him. When he sat down, I sat down beside him. I said, "Mister, you started this, but I will finish now, and God will finish hereafter." God helped me to put it plain to him. Then I told him my experience. He said, "That I cannot argue with you." Then he said, "You know there are forty billion stars." I said, "No, and neither do you know it. In the first place, you can't count to twenty billion, and another thing, God fixed the stars and no one knows how many there are." Then I went back to my subject of warning him, and quoting Scripture until he was like Felix -- he trembled. -- "The Power of God in a Redeemed Life," hdm0319, by Pearl Poe

* * * * *

Part 17

THE DEATH OF AN ATHEISTIC FRIEND AWAKENED JUDSON

Adoniram Judson, the renowned missionary to India, Burma, etc., has an interesting story.

At the age of sixteen he formed an intimacy with a young man, E_____, a free-thinker, engaged in amusements of a questionable kind, and before deciding on his future course in life left home with the intention of making a tour through some of the northern states of his native land. Before setting out he had told his father of his infidel sentiments, and had been severely condemned by him.

His father's arguments he could repel, but his mother's tears and warnings, appealing to a nature, though proud, still tender and susceptible, made an impression which it was impossible to shake off.

"I am in no danger," he thought to himself. "I am only seeing the world -- the dark side of it, as well as the bright; and I have too much self-respect to do anything mean or vicious."

Happily for Judson, at this critical period he stopped at a country inn. The landlord mentioned, as he lighted him to his room, that he had been obliged to place him next door to a young man who was exceedingly ill, probably in a dying state, but he hoped that it would occasion him no uneasiness. Judson assured him that, beyond pity for the poor sick man, he should have no feeling whatever, and that now, having heard of the circumstance, his pity would not, of course, be increased by the nearness of the object. But it was, nevertheless, a very restless night. Sounds came from the sick chamber -- sometimes the movements of the watchers, sometimes the groans of

the sufferer; but it was not these which disturbed him. He thought of what the landlord had said -- the stranger was probably in a dying state; and was he prepared? Alone, and in the dead of night, he felt a blush of shame steal over him at the question, for it proved the shallowness of his philosophy. What would the clear-minded intellectual, witty E_____ (the talented, but deistical young man alluded to before) say to such weakness? But still his thoughts would revert to the sick man. Was he a Christian, calm and strong in the hope of a glorious immortality, or was he shuddering upon the brink of a dark, unknown future?

"Perhaps he was a 'free-thinker,' educated by Christian parents and prayed over by a Christian mother. The landlord had described him as a young man; and in imagination he was forced to place himself upon the dying bed, though he strove with all his might against it. As soon as he had risen he went in search of the landlord, and inquired for his fellow-lodger. 'He is dead,' was the reply. 'Dead!' 'Yes, he is gone, poor fellow!' 'Do you know who he was?' 'Oh, yes; it was a young man from Providence College -- a very fine fellow, his name was E_____.'"

Judson was completely stunned -- it was his atheistic friend! After hours had passed, he knew not how, he attempted to pursue his journey. But one single thought occupied his mind; and the words, 'Dead!' 'Lost!' 'Lost!' were continually ringing in his ears. He knew the religion of the Bible to be true; he felt its truth, and he was in despair. In this state of mind he resolved to abandon his scheme of traveling, and at once turned his horse's head towards Plymouth.

From that hour his life, outwardly and inwardly, became changed. All his plans for the future were reversed. The dreams of literary distinction were renounced, and the one great question which he put to himself now was, "How shall I so order my future being as best to please God?" -- "Twice-Born Men," hdm0617, by Hy Pickering

* * * * *

Part 18

HOW MUSGRAVE REID TURNED FROM ATHEISM TO CHRIST

Musgrave Reid, whose conversion is related in his booklet *From Atheism to Christ*, had been baptized and confirmed in the Anglican Church. Through the advent of a Ritualistic Clergyman to the Church he attended he became unsettled in his religious beliefs, and ultimately became a disciple of Charles Bradlaugh, the atheistical lecturer. Afterwards he became secretary of the "Manchester Fabian Society," secretary of the first "Socialist Association" in Lancashire, and General Secretary of the "Independent Labor Party." For twenty years he continued in the maze of unbelief.

The crisis of his life came about thus. His employers, Messrs. D. Ryland & Sons, Manchester, sent him on a business trip to the United States of America. He traveled 16,000 miles, and visited sixty-two cities and towns of the Republic, from Maine to California.

How he was led to renounce his infidelity is told as follows: "I was in the railway car, slowly climbing the wonderful Rocky Mountains. We had reached an altitude of 15,000 feet. We had left Colorado 90 degrees in the shade, and here we were passing through snow-capped

pinnacles, where eagles were sweeping past us as the train slowly labored up the heights. The panorama to a city man, brought up amidst the bricks and mortar of Manchester, was overwhelming. Here I beheld a wonderful cataclysm of nature. The 'Royal Gorge,' some three miles deep, lay on one side of the rails over which we were passing and we were now on the edge of a precipice, and again mounting up to another peak, until we reached the highest point. At this altitude the train climbed so slowly that all the passengers left the car, and I was alone. I sat in a reverie, gazing at the spectacle, whilst I began instinctively feeling about, so to speak, in my mind for an explanation of these wonders. The first definite thought was, Surely all this is not the result of fortuitous circumstances, blind chance, matter and force, or as we glibly say, 'a fortuitous concourse of atoms.' Something else than the atomic theory must account for all these wonders. Could 'evolution' explain it all? Evolution can give a plausible case for us while we are studying nature in our chamber amongst our books, but the immediate contact with nature herself in all her rugged beauty speaks to us of the existence of a higher power than ourselves.

"Insensibly I found my mind was undergoing a change, an irresistible feeling of wonder came, and reverence crept into my thoughts. I had ever been an honest seeker after truth, and the thought suddenly flashed into my mind, 'Might I, after all, have been mistaken?' I fell on my knees, and cried, 'Oh, God, if Thou dost exist, reveal Thyself.' I asked for light, and it came like a flood. The whole car seemed full of light. It was the veil torn off my mind by the Spirit of God. I felt I was in the presence of God, and I capitulated without a struggle. I who had so long resisted His gracious pleadings, who had rebelled against His authority so many years, was at last brought into submission. I arose from my knees filled with joy, saying, 'God is.' There had come to me the light which 'lighteth every man that cometh into the world' (John 1:9). There could be no 'association of ideas,' as some would say, to account for this, for as I fell on my knees I had in my hand one of Ingersoll's books which I had been reading. The sudden change simply meant that the Spirit of God had come into my life in spite of my resistance, without my seeking, and without the help of man or books, and I knew that I beheld the glory of God and all His wondrous works. Oh, what a revelation, what a revolution of ideas, what joy and peace to know the unfathomable love of God! Was I dreaming, or ill with the fever? Nay, neither, for I never felt better in health than at that moment. It was my first realization of the personal presence of God."

On reaching home he told his friends that he now believed in the existence of God. He spoke of his discovery that his old infidel friends left him severely alone. But it is one thing to believe in the existence of a Supreme Being, and it is another and a very different thing to know Him as He is revealed at the Cross of Calvary. Mr. Reid became awakened to an apprehension of his guilt and danger. His past life of sin and unbelief, of ingratitude and rebellion against God, made him tremble. The arch-enemy of souls suggested that he had been guilty of the "Unpardonable sin," and the thought so laid hold of him that he could not sleep. He bought a Bible, and night after night, when his wife was in bed, pored over the sacred page, longing to know if there was Salvation for such a sinner as he. He commenced at the first chapter of Genesis, and read the whole of the Old Testament without obtaining peace or comfort. Beginning at the New Testament, he read till he reached the marvelous words of John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." In that glorious Scripture he learned that God loved the "world," therefore He loved him; that He so loved it as to give the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to die for his crimson sins that he might not perish but have everlasting life. The word "WHOSOEVER"

included him, and by believing on the Saviour he had the assurance of Salvation, and could truthfully say:

"I do believe it, I will believe it,
I am saved through the blood of the Lamb;
My happy soul is free, for the Lord has pardoned me,
Hallelujah to Jesus' Name!"

Mr. Reid made known to others wherever he went what God had done for him. Yielding himself unreservedly to Christ, he devoted himself to making known God's way of peace. --
"Twice-Born Men," hdm0617, by Hy Pickering

* * * * *

Part 19

AN ATHEIST CONVERTED THROUGH A SLUM FEAST

A few years ago my attention was called to Luke 14:13, where Jesus was teaching the divine principles of New Testament salvation. Here I made the startling discovery that very few of us are practically "Bible Christians." Many years ago I had covenanted to be a Bible Christian, and to walk in all the light received. This seemed to me like a new revelation. "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they can not recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Here I was convicted to practice, literally, the contents of this Scripture. Christmas was approaching. Chicago was spending fourteen million dollars for gifts alone, and everybody who could were making preparations for Christmas turkey dinners. I said to my family, we will not have turkey this Christmas, we will defer our dinner and spend Christmas in the slums. We announced that at twelve o'clock on Christmas Day the Mission in the slums on lower State Street would be opened, and a free dinner would be furnished to all homeless men.

Long before twelve o'clock, the street was thronged. The bums, thugs, tramps, and red-nosed drunkards of every description, in tattered garments, rags, and vermin, waited in zero weather for the door to open. Many of them were college bred. Doctors, lawyers, merchants, mechanics, and some from the best of homes, and in fact they were there from almost every walk of life. When the door was opened, with uncovered heads they marched in as orderly as a congregation of Quakers or Presbyterians. When the Mission was filled to the utmost capacity, the doors were closed. When all were seated at the long, well-filled tables, they politely bowed their heads while we asked God's blessing upon the food.

While a dozen of our mission workers served them with hot coffee and a palatable dinner, we preached to them the gospel of Christ. Many were the touching and pathetic scenes as their eyes filled with tears on account of the kindness shown them by the Christian workers.

When all were satisfied, we were forced to turn them out in the cold, and filled the Mission a second time with those who had stood out in the wintry blast. This was done a third, fourth, and fifth time. Each Mission full were prayed with, and preached to, and satisfied with the good things of the table.

Strong men as well as boys were seen choking with vivid recollections of their mothers and sisters, as our young women so freely served them. Many eyes were wet with tears at the remembrance of other Christmas days, their well-filled stockings in the "old chimney corner," and the Sweet voices ringing out, "I wish you a Merry Christmas."

Most people say it is folly to feed such worthless wretches, but as a result of that one dinner, seven of those men were brought to God that day. That dinner proved a wonderful quickening to the spiritual life of the Mission, and a wonderful incentive to activity in service.

That dinner cost about thirty-five dollars out side of some donations of food. That was five dollars a head for the souls that were saved that day. You may say that a "Bum" is not worth five dollars, but if he should be standing inside the "Gates of Pearl" to greet us when we arrive in heaven, we will think then that he is worth it. It was the kindness that broke their hearts. They were accustomed to everything else. You could not phase them with a policeman's club, or subdue them with a seven shooter, but kind words and deeds melted and conquered the most hardened hearts.

One of the men who was converted that day was an atheist, said he never had believed in God or religion, but when he saw the kindness shown to fallen men that day, he said there must be something in it, and sought and found God.

Beloved, those fellows do not need to be told about the "fall of man," "original sin," or an endless hell," they have acres of hell in their own hearts. They need some one to love them, and tell them there is hope. -- "Miracles in The Slums," hdm0547, by Seth Cook Rees

* * * * *

Part 20

A CHRISTIAN AND AN ATHEIST COMPARED

Two great men were born almost at the same time. Both were far famed and nation named. Each died within a few months of the other and they died of the same disease. Their characters were diverse. One was a blessing and the other one became a curse. One was blessed by an abundance of grace and the other one was cursed with unbelief. Both appeared before the public and hundreds went to hear them. One believed in God, in Christ the Son of God, and the inspiration of the Bible; but the other one was an atheist, denying the Deity of Christ. One was the means of many being converted, of Bible Schools being established where many were trained for the ministry; while the other one lectured against Christianity, wrecking the faith of many. One was the servant of the Lord, helping the Lord to populate heaven; but the other one was the servant of Satan, helping him to populate hell. When the former was dying, some of his last words were: "This is my triumph; this is my coronation day! I have been looking forward to it for years." When the other one died, the Dobbs Ferry home was desolate and dark. The former was none other than

D. L. Moody and the latter one was Bob Ingersoll. Some time before Moody died he said, "One of these days you will read in big headlines that D. L. Moody, of Northfield, Massachusetts, is dead. Don't you believe a word of it because then I shall be more alive than ever." Some time before Bob Ingersoll died he said, "There is no God. I will prove it to you." He pulled out his watch and said, "If there is a God, I will give Him five minutes to strike me dead." The five minutes passed by and nothing happened. He said, "See, I have proven unto you there is no God." That did not prove the nonexistence of God, but rather proved the patience of God. Why should there be such a great difference between these two men? We understand both had Christian parents. One possessed the gift of salvation and a gift to evangelize, plus the measure of grace and the love of God to make him a holy man and well balanced in his gifts. Ingersoll, the infidel, rejected the Saviour and refused the grace of Christ. He was a dangerous person. All who are highly gifted should pray for sufficient grace and divine love in order to be well balanced in their heart life and ministry, to be holy so that God will be glorified, His cause honored, and self kept humble and usable in the sight of God and the people. -- "When He Is Come," hdm0370, by Joshua Stauffer

* * * * *

Part 21

HE WAS SAVED FROM A WASTED ATHEISTIC LIFE

He had made his boast that he would never attend church again, but one night I saw him come hobbling to the back seat. I talked to him after service and discovered he was a young university graduate. In a railroad accident he had lost both limbs above the knees. This loss, together with the fact that the railroad refused him any compensation, had soured him with life and people. For religion he had no use at all. He claimed to be an atheist. He was now filling a subordinate position in a local plant, burying his talents, and cursing man and God as he did so.

I invited him back, but he would not promise, yet, strangely enough, he returned the next Sunday evening, and also the next.

What could I say to this man who thought God and men were against him? Could I correct his false thinking and give him the proper outlook on life? I determined to try!

I prayed much for him. I tried to say something in each sermon to encourage him. Finally I decided to preach an entire message to him. I prayed about it, I studied hard for it, and I put my best into it. I went to church on the Sunday night I was to preach it greatly burdened for that young man.

As the service continued I commenced to be concerned. He had not come in. The song service was concluded; the announcements made; the special song ended, and still he had not made his appearance.

I stood up to preach; announced my subject and then my text. I thought God wanted me to preach that sermon and for the benefit of that one individual. But was I mistaken?

No, there the door opened, and he hobbled to a seat.

I repeated my text for his benefit: "To what purpose is this waste?" (Matt. 26:8).

That night, although the church was filled, I preached to one man. I told him that all waste is wickedness; that all lives were designed to have a divine ideal in them; that all wasting of life is traceable to absence of faith, to absence of love, or to indifference. And then I told him that all lives are reparable by redemption.

God got hold of the young man that night and he shook with conviction. But he would not come forward for prayer, although I extended the altar call. He made his way out before I concluded.

I went home feeling that I had failed. I wondered if anything would move him to an altar of prayer and to God. I was tormented with a doubt that he would ever get saved.

About an hour after I got home my phone rang. One of my good members who lived next to the church was calling.

"Say, Brother Strang," he exclaimed excitedly, "there is a young man here and he wants to see you. Hurry down for he is ready to pray."

Can you imagine my joy in finding it was the young man for whom I preached the message?

It did not take long to pray him through to glorious victory.

Here is his testimony, as I remember it:

"I left the church tonight fighting against God. I was determined I wouldn't yield, but God spoke so forcibly that when I got home I couldn't rest, so I came back to the church for prayer. Finding it closed I came next door seeking help. I believe there is a God, and I am through rebelling against Him. He can have my heart and life. I've wasted too much of it already."

I went back home rejoicing, and firmly convinced that God can meet the life situation of anyone. There are thousands like this young man who need someone to get interested in them. Will you help God meet their need? -- "Meeting Life Situations," hdm0160, by C. B. Strang

* * * * *

Part 22

AN ATHEIST WON BY OBSERVING CHRISTIAN JOY

In pre-Communist days, Chang Po-Ling was perhaps China's greatest educator. For years he was a Confucian atheist. Gradually he became so oppressed by the awful prevalence of evil and suffering, and by the seemingly insurmountable problems of China, that he was thoroughly despondent and pessimistic. Finally he opened his heart to one of the Christian professors at his great university, C. H. Robertson. "I notice," he confessed, "that you Christians seem to have some

hidden source of joy and peace and power. What is the secret?" The outcome of that and subsequent conferences was a glorious and radical conversion to Christ. From that moment he was a radiant, fearless witness and an uncompromising Christian leader.

But Chang Po-Ling was not won by the theological arguments of the Christians. He was not won by their splendid morality -- he could match that himself. He was not won by their dedication to their work, for he was just as dedicated to China's youth as they were. But he had discovered that they had theology and morality and dedication -- plus. That plus was joy. And it was the plus of joy that won this great Chinese soul. He sensed that a religion which could give its disciples the calm radiance of true inner joy even in the midst of chaos must be divine. If Jesus Christ could do that for them, he wanted Jesus to do it for him. And He did.

Once again we need to be reminded that "the joy of the Lord is your strength." For personal victory, yes, but for soul winning too. Let us therefore refuse to allow Satan to rob us of our joy and thereby blunt the "cutting edge of our witness. God can use our learning and eloquence, to be sure; He can use our labors and sacrifices; He can use our money and our talents: but it may be that sometimes He can use our simple joyousness to tip the scale in favor of victory when all else fails. Let us not deprive our Lord of one of His essential tools for the building of His kingdom. Let us not foredoom our evangelism by pouring into it everything but joy. Let us rather search and find the secret of joy so deep and steadfast that it cannot help but glow in our faces and shine through our lives. Then men will say, "Where is this fountain of life which you have found?" -- "Joy for Dark Days," hdm0245, by Richard S. Taylor

* * * * *

Part 23

HOW JOHN WESLEY REDFIELD WAS CURED OF ATHEISM

"This was too much for my sensitive conscience, and the devil took the advantage of it by setting me to reasoning thus: "Does this man believe the Bible? Did Jesus set such an example of trifling in the presence of a perishing world? Is it true that sinners are now passing away, every hour, to the judgment? Is this like Paul, who for the space of three years, night and day, with tears, labored for the salvation of sinners? Am I in a hallucination? Am I wild, or blind? Be it as it may be, all I can see from my standpoint is the Saviour of the world, staggering under a world's sin, while its masses in proud procession are on their way to eternal night. If the Bible is true, the world is on the eve of a terrible catastrophe, and about to pass into eternity unprepared. I can hardly stop to sleep lest men be lost while I am at rest. There must be a mistake somewhere, and it is quite probable I am the one that is mistaken. The elder is a man of years, and in all probability when young was as zealous and ardent as I am, but he has found that religion is a sham, and now continues to preach for the profit it is to him. I will never accept of a license until I settle the question for myself of the truth or falsity of the Christian religion."

He refused the license, and after the quarterly meeting went home to his father's house. In after years he could look back and see that here was the great mistake of his life. He says: "Little did I dream that I had undertaken one of the most absurd tasks imaginable. I might as well have attempted to solve a question in algebra, by the principles of music, or the science of astronomy by

the rules of grammar, as to attempt to solve the problems of religion by the light of reason. However, I began the attempt. But I again found myself beset with people who would urge upon me their impressions of my duty to go into the gospel field. To get rid of this annoyance, I again resolved to go where I was not known. My motives for going I kept a secret, lest I should involve others in my perplexity."

In the peculiar state of mind described in the foregoing chapter, young Redfield again left home, going about a hundred miles from where he was known. In less than a fortnight after his arrival at his new destination, however, he was questioned about the duty of preaching. This caused him to leave again. This time he chose a place where he felt sure he would not be annoyed by anything of that kind, but here he found old acquaintances who raised the question, within a week. Then he left again, resolved not to profess religion at the next place, nor to have anything to say on the subject, thinking in that way to avoid the annoyance. Soon after this he found himself beset with infidel notions; and at last his faith in Christianity utterly gave way. He could now get along comparatively well in the daytime, but his nights would be filled with dreams of preaching, and so overcome in his feelings would he be, that on waking he would find his pillow wet with tears. He now began to believe that he had been the dupe of deception through all his strange course. To end the matter once and for all he finally resolved to ask God to take away the conviction of duty, even if it was from him. He had heard of a man who did that, and who was instantly relieved, never to have the feeling come back. He now experienced the same relief. In after years, when looking back with horror upon this passage in his life, he could only account for the after return of the Spirit by referring it to the prayers and intercessions of his mother. He says:

"I felt the Holy Spirit leave me as plainly as I ever felt the taking off of my coat; and yet with no greater alarm than at the loss of a penny. To me, now, infidelity was a fact, and right in its wake came downright atheism. For as soon as I resolved to settle all theological questions by my external senses, a vague uncertainty came over everything. Nature's laws were all the God I could find, and the mere notion that a given system of religion might be true was the utmost my reason could conjecture. It now seemed to me that all the phenomena of religious emotion, of mental and moral changes, were due to laws within us, and beyond our control. Now, the funeral pall of annihilation settled down upon me, and I could see nothing but darkness and desolation. Man and earth seemed orphaned. I sought in anatomy, physiology, and philosophy for testimony to clear this up, and, if possible, give me a single fact to settle my distracted mind. One favorite haunt of mine during this period was an ancient Indian burying ground. Some of the graves were entirely gone, washed away by the high waters of an adjoining stream; others were partly gone, the dark sands of which gave traces of the bodies which had been laid there to rest several hundred years before. A few seashells, flint arrowheads and hatchets, and beads were all that bore testimony that these bodies had ever lived. In contemplation of these things my whole soul would cry out, while the suffocation of death seemed to be upon me, "O God, if there be a God, send me to the hell of the Bible, but don't annihilate me." It seemed to me at such times that I could have died a hundred deaths if that would have made the Christian doctrines true, and have run my chances of heaven or hell.

I now commenced the systematic study of anatomy, for the purpose of ascertaining whether man had a conscious, thinking, acting, soul, independent of the body, or whether a fortuitous combination of matter in conjunction with material laws might not produce the phenomena we

observe; and therefore these phenomena cease with the combination. Among other works, treating upon this subject, I met with Paley's Natural Theology Illustrated, which gave a sober, commonsense, bias to my mode of reasoning. As a result of this I was cured of atheism and infidelity. I now saw the fogs of doubt all clear away, and the doctrine of the nature, operations, independence, and perpetuity, of the human soul, redeemed from all doubt, and established upon solid foundations."

While he was passing through all this, his mother, hearing of his infidelity and abandonment of religion and all thought of entering the Christian ministry, became very sad and would not be comforted. Not only were her hopes, but her faith also was involved with his. In his failure, she saw all her hopes concerning him, from his infancy, dashed to the ground. She pined away, and nearly lost her mind in mourning over him. She became so weak, that she would stop strangers as they passed her door, and ask them in plaintive tones, "Have you seen my son, John? Where is he? and what is he about?" Only as a pious mother could, she kept his case before God, and quite likely it was in answer to her prayers that he was finally brought back not only to Christ, but into the work of soul-saving, for which he became so eminent. -- "The Life of John Wesley Redfield," hdm0163, by J. G. Terrill

* * * * *

Part 24

ATHEISM ENTERS WHEN THE STANDARDS ARE LOWERED

A great church which once had rulings against rings and ruled them out, not long since ruled out their restrictions against dancing by leaving it up to the individual conscience, -- another way of saying, "Dance all you please." When this church swept the world in revival power and glory, she permitted neither rings nor dancing. Now she is filled with infidelity and atheism. In fact, she was once a great holiness church. Let us take notice and take warning and precautions in definite rules before it is too late. When this great church was slipping, she used the same arguments for tolerance of vanity that our leaders are using today. Let us not remove, but mark well our "ancient and holy land marks" which separate the Church from the world. -- "The Loophole," hdm0587, by A. L. Vess

* * * * *

Part 25

CHRISTIAN SELF-RENUNCIATION VS. ATHEISTIC SELF-ASSERTION

In the third verse of the chapter under consideration, the inspired writer said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." E. Stanley Jones says of this scripture that it means renounced in spirit," or poor by choice."

This is quite different from Nietzsche's, the German atheist's, philosophy of life, which was, "Assert yourself -- be a superman -- the world is yours if you can get it." But Nietzsche's self-assertive philosophy drove him insane, and his German philosophic followers plunged their

nation into the most devastating war that the world had known. They caused them to suffer a humiliation and an infliction that will require generations to heal.

Christ's method to reach life's desired goal is directly opposite to that of the German philosopher. Christ exhorts us to practice self-renunciation. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." This strikes the deathblow to self-assertive aggression. -- "Sanctification, the Price of Heaven," hdm0310, by Fred M. Weatherford

* * * * *

Part 26

HOW AN OLD ATHEISTIC CAPTAIN CAST ANCHOR IN A SAFE HARBOR

I was in the Soldiers' Home at Eric, Pa. I had spoken to the old soldiers in the chapel. As I came down from the platform, the gentleman said to me:

"There is one room I want not to visit. We have had in this institution the captain of the old Merrimac. He came into this institution an atheist. He never would come into the services, and when he was asked to read the Bible, he just scorned the thought of it. When he was in his room here, before he died, I brought in a Bible and said, 'Captain, would you like to read this Bible?' and he scorned the proposition; it looked as though it was useless to say anything more to him. But I said: 'Suppose you read the Bible and see whether there is anything in it that you could believe, and if there is not, you tell me so. But as you read, whenever you find anything that you think you might receive, suppose you mark it with red ink.' He thought that was a good way to prove there was nothing in the Bible for him. I had him begin with the Gospel of John. He read two chapters without marking anything. He began on the third chapter and read fifteen verses without being moved. He began on the sixteenth verse, and then the old captain marked the verse red. He could receive a text like that."

By this time we had reached the room where the old captain had died a few weeks before and there was the pasteboard anchor the old man had cut out for himself, and the words were his own, printed in red ink, "I have cast anchor in a safe harbor." The very floor seemed to be like holy ground. They sent his Bible home, but they tell me you would have a hard time to find a page without red on it. He had come to receive the whole book. That is the work of the spirit. His work was just that. The old captain would have nothing to do with a minister, and he would have nothing to do with a person who spoke of Jesus Christ; he didn't want to have anything to do with Christ. It was the work of the Holy Ghost. -- "Modern Day Parables," hdm0072, by J. Wilbur Chapman

* * * * *

Part 27

AN ATHEIST WHO WAS SLAIN BY GOD

A notorious infidel had a considerable following in a certain town. He was one of the braggart stamp, and seemed to revel in his outpourings of blasphemy against God. One day, in the height of his folly, he challenged God, if such a Being existed, to fight him in a certain wood. The

day came, and he went defiantly to the wood, stayed a certain time, and returned home again apparently all right, and no doubt jubilant of his seeming success. But when in the wood there had alighted on his eyelid a tiny midge, which he brushed away, paying no attention to it. At night it swelled up, and blood poisoning setting in, he died. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." God sent one of His tiniest insects, and the boasting braggart fell before it. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 28

ATHEISM LEFT AN EMPTY PLACE IN HIS SOUL

Looking at a picture of the great scholar Bertrand Russell in his later years made me feel sad. Although his face reflected courage, it was grim and showed no sign of joy or hope. He was born into a Christian home and taught to believe in God, but he rejected his training and became an outspoken atheist. His daughter, Katherine Tait, said of him, "Somewhere at the bottom of his heart, in the depths of his soul, there was an empty space that once had been filled by God, and he never found anything else to put in it." -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 29

ATHEISM PROVEN FALSE BY A MEAT-CHOPPER

Some time ago there appeared in the American Magazine an article by a manufacturer, with the following paragraph: "It takes a girl in our factory about two days to learn to put the seventeen parts of a meat chopper together. It may be that these millions of worlds, all balanced so wonderfully in space just happened; it may be by a billion years of tumbling about they finally arranged themselves. I don't know. I am merely a plain manufacturer of cutlery. But this I do know: that you can shake the seventeen parts of a meat chopper around in a washtub for the next seventeen billion years and you'll never make a meat chopper!" -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 30

ATHEISM PROVEN FALSE BY CREATION

Sir Isaac Newton had among his acquaintances a philosopher who was an atheist. It is well known that the illustrious man, who takes the first rank as a mathematician, natural philosopher, and astronomer, was at the same time a Christian. He had in his study a celestial globe, on which was an excellent representation of the constellations and the stars which compose them. His atheist friend, having come to visit him one day, was struck with the beauty of the globe. He approached it, examined it, and, admiring the work, he turned to Newton and said to him, "Who made it?" "No one!" replied the celebrated philosopher." The atheist understood, and was silent. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 31

ATHEISTS ONLY AT NIGHT

St. Cyril speaks of a certain people That chose to worship the sun because he was a day god; for, believing that he was quenched every night in the sea or that he had no influence upon them that light up candles and lived by the light of fire, they were confident they might be atheists all night and live as they desired. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 32

HOW MOODY PREACHED TO THE ATHEISTS

In East London during the visit of Moody and Sankey a hall in the dense working population of that city had been reserved one evening for an address to atheists skeptics and freethinkers. Bradlaugh, champion of atheism, hearing of this meeting ordered all clubs he had formed to take possession of the hall. They obeyed and one thousand men marched in from all directions. The atheists laughed when Moody asked the men to choose their favorite hymns, for atheists do not sing hymns. Mr. Moody spoke from: "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." He poured in a broad side of telling incidents from his own experience of the deathbeds of Christians and atheists, and let the men be the judges as to who had the best foundation to rest their faith upon. He attacked them in their most vulnerable points their hearts of unbelief.

The sermon ended. Mr. Moody announced a hymn and gave opportunity for all to leave who did not want to stay for the inquiry meeting. Moody was astonished when not one man vacated his seat. After a few words Mr. Moody asked all who would receive Christ to say "I will." One person, the leading club man, shouted "I won't."

Moody said: "Men you have your champion here in the middle of the hall who said 'I won't.' I ask every man here who believes that man is right to rise and say, 'I won't.'" None arose. "Thank God" said Moody. "Now who'll say 'I will?'" The Holy Spirit seemed to have broken loose upon that great crowd and five hundred men sprang to their feet saying, "I will, I will," till the whole atmosphere was changed and the battle was won. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 33

INGERSOLL ANGERED AND SILENCED

Shortly after Ingersoll, the noted infidel, was defeated in his race for governorship of Illinois, he was one day proclaiming his infidelity on board a railroad train between Chicago and Peoria. After being for some time offensively voluble, he turned to a gentleman near him, and

defiantly demanded, "Tell me one great result that Christianity has ever accomplished." The gentleman, not wishing to open an argument with the boaster, hesitated to answer. The train had stopped and all was silent in the car. Just then, an old lady of eighty who sat just behind the infidel touched his arm with trembling hand, and said, "Sir, I do not know who you are, but I think I can tell you of one great and glorious thing which Christianity has done." "What is it, Madam?" asked Ingersoll. "It has kept Robert G. Ingersoll from being Governor of the State of Illinois."

If a stroke of lightning had flashed through the car the effect could not have been more marked. Ingersoll turned literally pale with rage, and remained silent. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 34
IT COST INGERSOLL MORE THAN THAT!

Nineteenth-century atheist Robert Ingersoll was famous for his public attacks on religion. He was also politically active, being appointed attorney general of Illinois. Ingersoll became a serious contender for the Democratic nomination for governor, but his determination to trumpet his anti-religious views scuttled his political hopes. Once asked by a reporter how much his extensive library had cost him, Ingersoll looked at the rows of shelves and replied, "These books cost me the governorship of Illinois, and maybe the presidency of the United States as well." Clearly, Robert Ingersoll's insistence on taking the wrong spiritual path also cost him dearly in other areas of life. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 35
THE EMPTINESS OF ATHEISM

An Illinois thief stole five hundred dollars worth of shoes, the entire stock of a store, (What year might that have been?) and in addition played a trick on the dealer by leaving all the empty boxes, putting them back just where they belonged. One after another the customers arrived the next day, and the dealer pulled out box after box, only to find that each was empty.

That was a unique theft, but something much like it takes place all the time in the spiritual world. For there are many thieves of faith, writers and speakers who make it their business to destroy belief in God, in Christ, in the Church, in religion. But they always leave the boxes. They always leave the shell of what they have taken, in order to fool people into thinking that they have taken nothing at all. But pull out the boxes, try to get any comfort and strength out of what they have left, and you will see that the theft has been complete. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 36

THE HYPOCRITICAL INFIDEL

An infidel lecturer addressed an audience with great earnestness, denying God and immortality and uttering the most horrid blasphemies. When he was done, a man of middle age arose and said: "My friends I have a word to speak to you tonight. I am not about to refute any of the arguments of the orator. I shall not criticize his style. I shall say nothing of what I believe to be the blasphemies he has uttered, but I shall simply relate to you a fact and after I have done that you shall draw your own conclusions.

Yesterday I walked by the side of yonder river. I saw on its floods a young man in a boat. The boat was unmanageable; it was going fast toward the rapids. He could not use the oars and I saw that he was not capable of bringing the boat to the shore. I saw that young man wring his hands in agony. By and by he gave up the attempt to save his life, kneeled down and cried with desperate earnestness, 'O God, save my soul. If my body can not be saved, save my soul!' I heard him confess he had been a blasphemer. I heard him vow that if his life were spared he would never be such again. I heard him implore the mercy of heaven for Jesus Christ's sake, and earnestly plead that he might be washed in his blood. These arms saved that young man from the flood. I plunged in, brought the boat to shore, and saved his life. That same young man has just now addressed you, and cursed his Maker. What say you to this, sirs?" The speaker sat down. A shudder ran through the young man himself, and the audience saw that while it was a fine thing to act the bravado against almighty God on dry land, when danger was distant, it was not the same near the edge of the grave.
-- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 37

HIS FAITH IN ATHEISM BECAME BANKRUPT

Writers H.G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw were brilliant men, yet they rejected the message of Scripture. They placed their trust in their own systems of belief, which were based on human reason. Yet they could not find lasting inner peace, and they slowly lost confidence in what they believed. Wells' final literary work, for example, has been aptly called "a scream of despair." And shortly before Shaw died in 1950, he wrote, "The science to which I pinned my faith is bankrupt. Its counsels, which should have established the millennium, have led directly to the suicide of Europe. I believed them once. In their name I helped to destroy the faith of millions. And now they look at me and witness the great tragedy of an atheist who has lost his faith." -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 38

VOLTAIRE'S VAIN BOASTING AND ERROR

One day Voltaire said to a friend, "It took twelve ignorant fishermen to establish Christianity; I will show the world how one Frenchman can destroy it." Setting to his task, he openly ridiculed Sir Isaac Newton. One day Newton made a prophecy based on Dan. 12:4 and

Nahum 2:4 when he said, "Man will some day be able to travel at the tremendous speed of 40 miles an hour." Voltaire replied with, "See what a fool Christianity makes of an otherwise brilliant man, such as Sir Isaac Newton! Doesn't he know that if man traveled 40 miles an hour, he would suffocate and his heart would stop?" Twenty-five years after Voltaire died, his home was purchased by the Geneva Bible Society and became a Bible storage building, and his printing press was used to print an entire edition of the Bible. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 39

ATHEISM BROUGHT EMPTINESS TO CLARENCE DARROW

Clarence Darrow, the great criminal lawyer of another day, had among his friends a young minister. This seems strange, because, as you remember, Darrow was usually thought of as an atheist, infidel, agnostic or what have you.

They were talking one day and Mr. Darrow became reminiscent. He talked of his career and some of the famous trials in which he had been the lawyer for the defense. He said, "This has been an exciting life." He made at least a comfortable fortune and he guessed he might be regarded as somewhat of a success.

Then Mr. Darrow asked, "Would you like to know my favorite Bible verse?" His friend said, "Indeed I would." Mr. Darrow said, "You will find it in Luke 5:5. 'We've toiled all the night and have taken nothing.'" He added, "In spite of my success that verse seems to sum up the way I feel about life."

No matter what one does in life, no matter what position he may obtain, no matter what he might come to own...if he leaves God out, the time will come when life itself will rise up and mock him with the word -- nothing -- nothing! "What shall a man profit if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 40

AN ATHEIST WHO SIGNED HIS NAME TO A BLANK NOTE

When D. L. Moody was conducting evangelistic meetings, he frequently faced hecklers who were in violent disagreement with him. In the final service of one campaign, an usher handed the famous preacher a note as he entered the auditorium. It was actually from an atheist who had been giving Mr. Moody a great deal of trouble. The evangelist, however, supposed that it was an announcement, so he quieted the large audience and prepared to read it. Opening the folded piece of paper he found scrawled in large print only one word: "Fool!" The colorful preacher was equal to the occasion. Said Moody, "I have just been handed a memo which contains the single word -- 'Fool'. This is most unusual. I've often heard of those who have written letters and forgotten to sign their names, but this is the first time I've ever heard of anyone who signed his name and then forgot

to write the letter!" Taking advantage of the unique situation, Moody promptly changed his sermon text to Psalm 14:1 "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God!" -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 41

THE INFIDEL HEARD WHAT CHRIST DID FOR STEPHEN

Joseph Parker, as a young man, used to debate in the mining fields of England, and on the town green, with infidels and atheists. An infidel once shouted at him, "What did Christ do for Stephen when he was stoned?" Parker said the answer that was given him was like an inspiration from heaven. "He gave him grace to pray for those who stoned him." Stephen had the mind of Christ; and hearing him pray for those who did him wrong at once recalls the prayer of Jesus Himself under like circumstances: "Father forgive them." -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 42

MISPLACED FAITH IN INGERSOLL

Some people who believe in the passages in the Bible about heaven, utterly reject the references to hell. Robert Ingersoll, a famous lawyer and atheist in the latter part of the nineteenth century, once delivered a blistering lecture on hell. He called hell "scarecrow of religion" and told his audience how unscientific it was, and how all intelligent people had decided there was no such place. A drunk in the audience came up to him afterward and said, "Bob, I liked your lecture; I liked what you said about hell. But, Bob, I want you to be sure about it, because I'm depending upon you." -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 43

FENELON'S POWERFUL INFLUENCE ON AN ATHEIST

The atheist who spent a few days with the saintly Fenelon said: "If I stay here much longer I shall become a Christian in spite of myself. Fenelon had used no word of controversy or even of solicitation. It was the quiet, convincing argument of a holy life that led to the remark. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 44

INGERSOLL'S CHALLENGE DID NOT EXHAUST GOD'S PATIENCE

When the infidel Robert G. Ingersoll was delivering his lectures against Christ and the Bible, his oratorical ability usually assured him of a large crowd. One night after an inflammatory speech in which he severely attacked man's faith in the Savior, he dramatically took out his watch and said, "I'll give God a chance to prove that He exists and is almighty. I challenge Him to strike me dead within 5 minutes!" First there was silence, then people became uneasy. Some left the hall, unable to take the nervous strain of the occasion, and one woman fainted. At the end of the allocated time, the atheist exclaimed derisively, "See! There is no God. I am still very much alive!"

After the lecture a young fellow said to a Christian lady, "Well, Ingersoll certainly proved something tonight!" Her reply was memorable. "Yes, he did," she said. "He demonstrated that even the most defiant sinner cannot exhaust the patience of the Lord in just 5 minutes!" Another man added, "As I was coming downtown today, a belligerent little fellow came running out of an alley, daring me to hit him. Do you suppose I actually struck him, just because he challenged me to do so? In the same way, our Lord will not strike everyone dead who defies Him. We should be thankful that in this age He is still operating in grace and desires to show His love rather than His wrath." (Romans 9:22) -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 45

THE PROSPERITY OF ATHEISTS SHOULD NOT DISCOURAGE CHRISTIANS

An Atheist farmer often ridiculed people who believed in God. He wrote the following letter to the editor of a local newspaper: "I plowed on Sunday, planted on Sunday, cultivated on Sunday, and hauled in my crops on Sunday; but I never went to church on Sunday. Yet I harvested more bushels per acre than anyone else, even those who are God-fearing and never miss a service." The editor printed the man's letter and then added this remark: "God doesn't always settle His accounts in October." That editor was right!

Sometimes even dedicated Christians are tempted to complain because of what they see in the world around them. Perplexed by the success and prosperity of the wicked, oftentimes at the expense of the righteous, they ask, why doesn't the Lord do something about it? Why doesn't He reward those who fear Him, and judge those who disregard Him? Be patient. He will! True, He doesn't always "settle His accounts in October," but He does settle His accounts!

So if you're trying to do the will of God and you become discouraged because unjust people are getting ahead, don't be shortsighted. Remember what the psalmist David advised: "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither like the green herb." He went on to say, "For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who wait upon the Lord shall inherit the earth." (Ps. 37:1,2,9) -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 46

THE ATHEIST TAMBRING CONVERTED BY ANSWERED PRAYER

Some years ago there was a man called Tambring, who lived in a little town on the border between Holland and Germany. He worked in a spinning mill and was a socialist and an atheist. One day his little niece fell ill. His sister, who wanted to fetch a doctor, asked Tambring to stay with the child. While she was tossing feverishly, the little one said, "Uncle, pray that I may get well again." He could not pray, "Uncle, pray!" the child begged. Much embarrassed, he tried to calm her, but in vain. "Uncle, if you don't pray I shall have to die." Then, strong man that he was, he fell down beside the little bed and cried, "O God, if there is a God, hear me and heal the child."

The little one smiled, and laid her head on the pillows. She fell asleep, and her breathing grew more regular. A profuse perspiration broke out, and when her mother returned some hours later with the doctor he said in astonishment, "The child is saved." Tambring went quietly into his room and locked the door. He prayed again, and the God who heard his prayer for the child likewise answered his cry for salvation. He came out of the room a new man. -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 47

AN ATHEIST SAVED THROUGH KINDNESS TO HIS GRANDSON

During an evangelistic campaign, a mentally impaired boy came faithfully each night to sing in the choir. "Joey was not very bright," said Homer Rodeheaver, the well-known song leader, "but he never missed any of our meetings and wouldn't leave until he shook my hand. Sometimes I was embarrassed by the way he constantly tailed me, and I secretly wished he'd go away."

Then one evening a man came to Rodeheaver and said, "Thank you for being kind to my son Joey. He's not right mentally, but never has he enjoyed anything so much as singing in the choir. He worked hard doing simple chores for people so he could contribute to the collection. Through his pleadings my wife and five other children came to this evangelistic campaign and have now received Christ. Last night his 75-year-old grandfather, who has been an atheist all his life, was saved, and tonight his grandmother also came forward. Now our entire family is converted!" -- 2700-plus Illustrations, hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 48

A WELL-KNOWN HYMN INSPIRED TO A CONVERTED ATHEIST

One night the widowed mother of William P. Mackey spent the night in prayer for her son. He was a medical student in the University of Edinburgh, and the president of an atheistic group called the "Hell Club." That very night he was assisting in a mock celebration of the Lord's Supper. He took a glass of wine, held it up, and jeeringly said, "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But something came over him. He turned pale and began to tremble, took his hat, and fled the place. The wine had seemed to him to turn to literal blood. He walked aimlessly the rest of the night. At dawn he went to his room and started praying. His mother heard him and joined him, and soon he found pardon in Christ. He went to his classes, and asked permission to tell his experience to the students.

One day at a meeting he was called on to lead in prayer and began with these striking words, the outflow of his newly saved heart: "We praise thee, O God, for the Son of Thy love; for Jesus, who died and is now gone above." Thus was given to us one of our hymns that will never die. -- "Choice Illustrations," hdm0233, by W. W. Clay

* * * * *

Part 49
AN ARGUMENT THE ATHEIST COULD NOT ANSWER

In one of my earlier pastorates there was a man who claimed to be an infidel. There seemed no way to change him, now eighty years of age. He had a fine appearance and seemed to be an intelligent man. He never came to church, but one day I felt the urge to go to his house and talk to him about God and salvation. He had all the scoffer's arguments at the tip of his tongue, and I did not have the skill to meet all of them. But when I rose to leave he said, "There is one argument, my minister friend, that you have not yet presented, and which I cannot answer. Across the road lives a man who never misses a service at your church." Yes, I knew Brother Ervin, a good-living, sanctified, loyal saint. Said the atheist, "I have watched that man live, and he has something that I do not have and I cannot explain it. His life is an argument in favor of your religion that I cannot answer." -- "Choice Illustrations," hdm0233, by W. W. Clay

* * * * *

Part 50
HOW THE SON OF ATHEISTS WAS CONVERTED

One of the presiding elders of a conference down in middle Georgia was at a love feast -- that is, something like a Baptist experience meeting -- and he got up and related his experience. He said: "I am thankful to God that I had a Christian mother and that I was raised in the lap of purity." Then a bright-eyed young man, a licentiate preacher, got up and said he was sorry to say that he did not have a pious father and mother. "My father," said he, "was an atheist, and my mother was an infidel. I had nine brothers and sisters, and all of them were atheists and infidels. Two years ago I went over into an adjoining county to attend a camp meeting, for fun, as I usually did. At the first service I was leaning against a post of all arbor, when all at once it seemed as if the words of the preacher were like fire in my soul. I was transfixed; I wanted to leave, but couldn't, and after the sermon, when he called for penitents, I went forward and knelt down and prayed, and from that hour I was a Christian." -- "Sam Jones' Anecdotes and Illustrations," hdm0523

* * * * *

Part 51

WHY THE INFIDEL DID NOT BURN THE BIBLE

When the club of infidels of which he was a member called upon Lord Lyttleton to burn the Bible, he took the Book and approached the fire, then turned and laid it upon the stand, saying, "We will not burn this Book until we have found a better one." That better one, and a more popular one, has never been written. -- "If Christ Had Not Come" by Jarrett Aycock

Another Version of the Same Story

A society of gentlemen, most of whom had enjoyed a liberal education, and were persons of polished manners, but had unhappily imbibed infidel principles, used to assemble at each other's house for the purpose of ridiculing the Scriptures, and of hardening one another in their unbelief. At last they unanimously formed a resolution solemnly to burn the Bible, and so to be troubled no more with a book which was so hostile to their principles and disquieting to their consciences.

The day fixed upon arrived; a large fire was prepared, a Bible was laid on the table, and a flowing bowl ready to drink its dirge. For the execution of their plan they fixed upon a young gentleman of high birth, brilliant vivacity, and elegance of manners. He undertook the task, and after a few enlivening glasses, amidst the applause of his jovial compeers, he approached the table, took up the Bible, and was walking leisurely forward to put it into the fire; but, happening to give it a look, he was seized with trembling, paleness overspread his countenance, and he seemed convulsed.

He returned to the table, and, laying down the Bible said, with a strong assertion, "We will not burn that book till we get a better." Soon after this, the same lively young gentleman died, and on his deathbed was led to true repentance, deriving unshaken hopes of forgiveness and of future blessedness from that book which he was once going to burn. He found it, indeed, the best book not only for a living but a dying hour. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 52

WHY HER INFIDEL HUSBAND WAS SAVED

In an address at Cambridge some time ago (reported in "The Life of Faith," April 3rd, 1912), Mr. S.D. Gordon told in his own inimitable way the story of a man in his own country, to illustrate from real life the fact of the reality of prayer, and that it is not mere talking.

"This man," said Mr. Gordon, came of an old New England family, a bit farther back an English family. He was a giant in size, and a keen man mentally, and a university-trained man. He had gone out west to live, and represented a prominent district in our House of Congress, answering to your House of Commons. He was a prominent leader there. He was reared in a Christian family, but he was a skeptic, and used to lecture against Christianity. He told me he was

fond, in his lectures, of proving, as he thought, conclusively, that there was no God. That was the type of his infidelity.

One day he told me he was sitting in the Lower House of Congress. It was at the time of a presidential election, and when party feeling ran high. One would have thought that was the last place where a man would be likely to think about spiritual things. He said: "I was sitting in my seat in that crowded House and that heated atmosphere, when a feeling came to me that the God, whose existence I thought I could successfully disprove, was just there above me, looking down on me, and that he was displeased with me, and with the way I was doing. I said to myself, 'This is ridiculous, I guess I've been working too hard. I'll go and get a good meal and take a long walk and shake myself, and see if that will take this feeling away.'" He got his extra meal, took a walk, and came back to his seat, but the impression would not be shaken off that God was there and was displeased with him. He went for a walk, day after day, but could never shake the feeling off. Then he went back to his constituency in his state, he said, to arrange matters there. He had the ambition to be the governor of his state, and his party was the dominant party in the state, and, as far as such things could be judged, he was in the line to become Governor there, in one of the most dominant States of our central west. He said: "I went home to fix that thing up as far as I could, and to get ready for it. But I had hardly reached home and exchanged greetings, when my wife, who was an earnest Christian woman, said to me that a few of them had made a little covenant of prayer that I might become a Christian." He did not want her to know the experience that he had just been going through, and so he said as carelessly as he could, "When did this thing begin, this praying of yours?" She named the date. Then he did some very quick thinking, and he knew, as he thought back, that it was the day on the calendar when that strange impression came to him for the first time.

He said to me: "I was tremendously shaken. I wanted to be honest. I was perfectly honest in not believing in God, and I thought I was right. But if what she said was true, then merely as a lawyer sifting his evidence in a case, it would be good evidence that there was really something in their prayer. I was terrifically shaken, and wanted to be honest, and did not know what to do. That same night I went to a little Methodist chapel, and if somebody had known how to talk with me, I think I should have accepted Christ that night." Then he said that the next night he went back again to that chapel, where meetings were being held each night, and there he kneeled at the altar, and yielded his great strong will to the will of God. Then he said, "I knew I was to preach," and he is preaching still in a western state. That is half of the story. I also talked with his wife -- I wanted to put the two halves together, so as to get the bit of teaching in it all -- and she told me this. She had been a Christian -- what you call a nominal Christian -- a strange confusion of terms. Then there came a time when she was led into a full surrender of her life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then she said, "At once there came a great intensifying of desire that my husband might be a Christian, and we made that little compact to pray for him each day until he became a Christian. That night I was kneeling at my bedside before going to rest, praying for my husband, praying very earnestly and then a voice said to me, 'Are you willing for the results that will come if your husband is converted?'" The little message was so very distinct that she said she was frightened; she had never had such an experience. But she went on praying still more earnestly, and again there came the quiet voice, "Are you willing for the consequences?" And again there was a sense of being startled, frightened. But she still went on praying, and wondering what this meant, and a third time

the quiet voice came more quietly than ever as she described it, "Are you willing for the consequences?"

Then she told me she said with great earnestness, "O God, I am willing for anything thou dost think good, if only my husband may know thee, and become a true Christian man." She said that instantly, when that prayer came from her lips, there came into her heart a wonderful sense of peace, a great peace that she could not explain, a "peace that passeth understanding," and from that moment -- it was the very night of the covenant, the night when her husband had that first strange experience -- the assurance never left her that he would accept Christ. But all those weeks she prayed with the firm assurance that the result was coming. What were the consequences? They were of a kind that I think no one would think small. She was the wife of a man in a very prominent political position; she was the wife of a man who was in the line of becoming the first official of his state, and she officially the first lady socially of that state, with all the honor that that social standing would imply. Now she is the wife of a Methodist preacher, with her home changed every two or three years, she going from this place to that, a very different social position, and having a very different income than she would otherwise have had. Yet I never met a woman who had more of the wonderful peace of God in her heart, and of the light of God in her face, than that woman.

And Mr. Gordon's comment on that incident is this: "Now, you can see at once that there was no change in the purpose of God through that prayer. The prayer worked out his purpose; it did not change it. But the woman's surrender gave the opportunity of working out the will that God wanted to work out. If we might give ourselves to him and learn his will, and use all our strength in learning his will and bending to his will, then we would begin to pray, and there is simply nothing that could resist the tremendous power of the prayer. Oh, for more men who will be simple enough to get in touch with God, and give him the mastery of the whole life, and learn his will, and then give themselves, as Jesus gave himself, to the sacred service of intercession!" -- "Purpose in Prayer" by Edward McKendree Bounds

* * * * *

Part 53

A MOTHER'S FAITH THAT HER INFIDEL SON WOULD LIVE AND PREACH

The glory of motherhood is the glory of unwavering faith and undying hope. A mother dedicated her baby to God, and in prayer felt a conviction and assurance that he would preach the Gospel. But instead of giving his heart to God, he fell into sin, and instead of preaching, he became a drunken infidel lawyer, mouthing infidelity. But the mother still prayed and believed and hoped on. One day she was sent for and told that he was dying of delirium tremens. She went quietly to his home, saying, 'He is not dying. He will live and yet preach the Gospel.' And live he did and preach the Gospel he did like a living flame of fire; and years after his sweet granddaughter, too, preached the Gospel in The Salvation Army. -- "Ancient Prophets," hdm0398, by S. L. Brengle

* * * * *

Part 54

INGERSOLL'S MISQUOTATIONS OF THE BIBLE REBUKED

When Mr. Ingersoll was on the Pacific coast lecturing against the Bible, some twenty years since, he encountered at the close of one of his addresses a Methodist preacher of a clear head, quick wit and forcible speech.

This minister was stationed on the coast then, and is still living, though now superannuated. He attended the infidel's lecture in order to get his points, and at its close was introduced. Mr. Ingersoll asked him how he liked his address. The preacher begged to be excused, saying that his reply would certainly not please the speaker. But the skeptic insisted, saying that he really wanted to know what people thought of what he said, and he desired especially to be informed in this instance.

The preacher looked steadily upon the degenerate son of a Presbyterian pastor and replied:

"As I heard your garbled and incorrect quotations of the Bible, I was, and still am, undecided, whether to put you down as a knave or fool."

Mr. Ingersoll was both nettled and discomposed, and quite a heated controversy followed.

Finally the preacher asked the privilege of relating an incident of his own personal knowledge, which he said would throw more light on Mr. Ingersoll's position.

He said that at one of his protracted meetings held when he was a presiding elder, a woman arose during the testimony service and said, "I have a great many trials and tribulations as I am journeying home. But through all my trials and sorrows along the way I have had for my strength and comfort this blessed verse of Scripture, "Grin and bear it!"

After the laughter of the surrounding group had died away, the preacher solemnly shaking his finger at the infidel said:

"Mr. Ingersoll, you show as profound ignorance of the Bible as did this woman, and yet have not one-millionth part of her piety." -- "Living Illustrations," hdm0043, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 55

AN INFIDEL WHO WAS DEEPLY MOVED BY CARRADINE'S VISIT

["The preacher" in the following paragraphs was Beverly Carradine himself.]

There had come a sudden change of weather early that morning; the sun shone brightly and warmly and there was a great thaw. Through the soft snow and slush and mud he pulled his way along, going from house to house with his half-hour visits, which he invariably terminated with the Word of God and prayer. He reserved the home of a noted infidel for his last call, as a kind of dessert to the varied meal of which he had been partaking.

The man lived two miles from town, had not been to church for many years, and was given up as a hard case. The preacher knew this, but undaunted knocked at the door at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The man, like all the rest who had been visited, was astonished. He was surprised in the first place that a preacher should come to see him, and marvelled to behold him on foot and in such a day. He was evidently taken aback, when he asked,

"What brings you out on such a day and so far from town?" the preacher replied, "To see you, Brother Scott." The voice was full of kindness and he had called him Brother Scott, an old, hardened, profane sinner!

The man's well-known boldness and confidence were now all gone, and with a nervous, embarrassed air and a husky voice he asked the minister to come in. Maybe he felt the warm, loving spirit which filled his guest; perhaps the kindness and interest showed in him by walking so far to see him touched his heart. Anyhow the preacher saw with a quick glance that the lines of the man's face were softened, and so turning to him he said,

"Brother Scott, I have called on you because I love your soul and because I was once far off from God and no one came to help me."

He then with heaven-anointed tongue told the silent man how once he was living in sin, and going to ruin, that he had not been to church in years and no one seemed to care for his soul, that right in the midst of that kind of life God touched his heart and he found his soul longing for peace and pardon and yet not knowing how to get it, how he wrote to his mother about his determination to do better, and she wrote him in reply to commence praying; how he did it in ignorance and discouragement, with all kinds of difficulties in his way, and how one morning while praying, all humbled and looking to Christ, the blessing of salvation came, and God filled his soul with a blessed sense of pardon and such peace, joy and love that he cried out and wept aloud in the presence of his wife.

He had proceeded thus far when, happening to look at the infidel, he saw the tears running down his cheeks. The man seemed ashamed of his emotion and stepping quickly to the door, went out on the gallery and began to halloo loudly to some person in the field. The fact was that there was no one there, but the whole procedure was a ruse to get away from the speaker, break the strange spell that was upon him and recover his self-control in the cold, fresh air outside.

On his return from calling the imaginary individual, his face had become stone-like again. But nothing daunted, the preacher begged him to kneel down with him in prayer, and down he went, while God filled the room with His holy presence. In parting the man of God asked the infidel if he would come to church, and he said he would. -- "Pen Pictures," hdm0045, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 56

THE SUDDEN DEATH OF A MOCKING, DEFIANT INFIDEL

We give it as related by a Methodist preacher.

There lived in a town where he was stationed as pastor a physician who was a moral blight to the community by reason of his skeptical views and sinful life. His influence was especially baneful among the young men, some of whom he led to embrace infidelity, and a greater number to become openly and shamelessly wicked.

One Sabbath morning the preacher felt deeply impressed to preach from Proverbs 29:1: "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." His subject was the swift and terrible judgments of God upon those who resisted His calls and warnings.

While opening up his discourse and in the act of glancing over the audience he was profoundly surprised to see the infidel doctor sitting in the congregation. No one had ever beheld him, or even heard of his attending a church before. So there was not only genuine wonder with the pastor, but among the people at the man's presence among them.

When first observed he was about two-thirds of the way back towards the door, and in the following peculiar position: His body was bent forward with his chin resting on his hands that were folded one on top of the other, and laid on the edge of the bench immediately in front of him. He had raven hair, a heavy mustache of the same color, and coal black eyes which he fixed steadily upon the minister in the pulpit. As the preacher proceeded with his discourse, enlarging upon the calamities that befell men who strove with and against God, the big mustache would curl and the teeth gleam for a moment under the incredulous smile of the infidel. The whole mocking face seemed to say, "Do you think you can frighten me with that kind of talk? Do you imagine for a moment that I believe what you are saying?"

The preacher said that he could scarcely go on with his sermon, the man's appearance was so infernal, and his presence so paralyzing. He added that he never looked into a countenance that seemed so Satanic. The horrible thought took possession of him and could not be shaken off that the Devil was in the man and looking at him through his eyes, and mocking him through his hell-surrendered countenance.

To all appearance the preacher was the more troubled of the two, and the skeptic was having the best of the situation so far as mental burden and spiritual distress were concerned. And yet at the same time, and all unconscious of the fact, the doctor was hearing his last warning; and he was receiving it from the lips of the very man whom he was jeering at in his heart, and scorning with every line of his sinister face and position of the defiant body.

When the sermon was finished, the doctor walked out of the church, mounted his horse and rode away. Meantime the congregation scattered to their homes, while a few of the stewards remained standing by the door conversing with the pastor.

While thus engaged, suddenly the sharp report of a rifle or pistol rang out on the air from some point several hundred yards distant down the road. All were surprised at the sound and commented on its unusualness on a Sabbath morning and near a quiet country town like their own.

They had, however, dismissed the thought, and were speaking of some church matter of common interest, when they saw a man running up the road towards them and crying out, "The Doctor's killed! The Doctor's killed!"

Hurrying back with him they found the physician's horse browsing on the grass, and close by, lying stone dead on the ground was the doctor with his face upturned to the sky, his black eyes wide open and staring aloft, as if he was watching the flight of his lost soul as it sped on its way to the Judgment Bar of that God whom he had resisted and grieved and insulted up to the last hour of his life.

A bullet shot from a thicket had entered the back of the skull and came out through the forehead, producing instant death. The victim evidently did not see his murderer, nor is he known until this day.

The man led a wicked life, and died as he lived, just as most people do, according to the Bible and history, and our own observation. What possessed him to visit the church that Sabbath no one ever knew. His contemptuous face and manner showed that it was for no good.

The last passage from the Bible ever read and repeated in his presence, was, "He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." His death warrant and doom were read in his hearing and he did not know it. He crossed the Dead line and did not realize it. The last warning had come, been delivered, tarried and gone; and he to whom it was sent, was oblivious of its arrival and ignorant of its departure. The bell which had sounded nine times in his youth, and three times in his manhood, now tolled its final melancholy note of one, and the man arose, and went forth according to the words of the Book he despised, to a death that was sudden and to a destruction without remedy. -- "Remarkable Occurrences," hdm0047, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 57

A DEATH-BED, CONVERTED INFIDEL MARVELS OVER CHRIST'S LOVE

When the thought obtains entrance in the mind of the sinner that Jesus loves him, even him, then salvation is begun. When in the Christian life the Holy Spirit repeatedly impresses the same fact upon the believer's soul, that soul becomes conscious of an increasing strength, and closer walk with God as the result.

The great burden of the gospel message and ministry is to declare this wonderful truth to men; that in spite of ingratitude, unworthiness, sinfulness, backsliding and every form of faithlessness, Jesus loves them. It is this that breaks the heart at last, and draws men to Him.

We once sat by the deathbed of a man who had been an infidel all his life. At the age of sixty, and after a sickness of months, and only a few days before his death, God forgave his sins. His sorrow over his misspent life was something most affecting to witness. One sentence, however, above all others, he kept repeating with floods of tears. He did not seem to be saying it

to be heard, but it was the expression of an inward thought which continually pressed upon him. "Oh," he said, "to think that the Saviour loved such a sinner as I have been." -- "Soul Help," hdm0052, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 58

AN INFIDEL BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE BURNING

A great infidel was struck under conviction the other night; but made out to totter to his lodgings very miserable. But, finding no rest, he ventured back, and at length cried for mercy, wrestling Jacob-like till he found it, and a changed nature within. He has written a long letter to my friend Dr. Booth, giving an account of the matter, thus:

"My name is T. S., thirty-three years of age, a native of Yorkshire: was a Roman Catholic till fifteen years of age; but soon after became a Deist, and well-read, too, in the works of Voltaire, Paine, etc. I left my wife in Nottingham last October, with oaths and curses, more like a devil than a man. In November I was prostrated by sickness, and was brought to the brink of the grave, but was fearless of death. I recovered. Walking down street, saw a placard on the wall, announcing Rev. Mr. Caughey to preach. 'Money again!' I exclaimed to one by my side. 'I tell you it is money they are after. They must be hard up, to get this man all the way from America to get a full house, theater-like, for money. It is all priestcraft.' Sabbath came; took tea with a friend at Newtown, to kill time. But conversation fell short; so talked of this Mr. C_____. Asked my friend to go and hear him; would have asked him to a public house, but, as he had taken the pledge lately, thought I would not tempt him. We came to Queen Street Chapel, and sat in the furthest part of the gallery, -- a bad place for hearing. Mr. C_____ introduced the question: 'Is man immortal, or is he not?' I did not believe it. But he introduced the testimony of Cicero. I instantly listened to what the Roman senator could say on the subject, when these words pealed in my ears: 'if I am wrong in supposing that the souls of men are immortal, I please myself in my mistake. Nor while I live will I ever choose that this opinion, with which I am so delighted, should be wrested from me. But, if at death I am to be annihilated, as some minute philosophers suppose, I am not afraid those wise men, when extinct too, shall laugh at my mistake. When I consider the wonderful activity of the mind, its great memory of the past, its vast capacity of penetrating the future, -- when I behold such a multitude of discoveries thence arising, -- I believe, and I am firmly persuaded, that a nature which contains so many things within itself cannot be mortal.' The preacher then appealed to us Englishmen, with the Bible in our hands, doubting the immortality of the soul, when Cicero, without any Bible, came to such just and clear convictions on the subject. His appeals marched into me, and knocked Tom Paine out of me. To clench the nail, he shouted, 'Where is that Infidel? I know he denies the immortality of the soul, -- and he is here.' He then went on to describe me. My head dropped; I said, 'That's me.' The tears gushed from my eyes. The preacher even went on to detail my late attack of sickness. That God had raised me up from the margin of the grave and why? That I might hear the stranger and repent, believe and be saved! Yes, I have been sick indeed; and here I am out of hell. The sermon closed; I desired to stay for prayer meeting, but my companion said 'No.' So, failing in courage, we left when they were singing. During three days thoughts on the immortality of the soul were

ever present, -- could not disengage my mind from them. On Wednesday I nearly yielded to resolve to venture to hear him again; but decided not, and spent the evening in reading a newspaper. Next morning, too late for work; employer out of humor. It was well; it was the means of my salvation. Read the Bible; resolved upon hearing Mr. C_____. Started for meeting, planning in my mind to sit near the door, so as to make my exit soon as sermon was over. But, on entering, was led on and on, till right in front of the communion-rail I found a seat. The text was on Satan's devices. -- 2 Cor. 2:11. After sermon, I said to myself, 'Go away! -- have served the devil long enough; led by him into all manner of wickedness. However, let me pause, and see results.' A few women only went forward for prayer. 'Go away,' something seemed to say. But I could not; a strong power rested on me, -- held on to me, till Mr. C_____ passed by me, when I trembled, and my knees smote together. I shook as with an ague-fit; cheeks wet; tears flowed; my sins, a burden, oppressed my soul; felt my legs would not bear me out of the chapel; thought I might be able to reach the altar; tried; found myself there on knees, but prayerless. One said, 'Cry to God; say, God be merciful to me a sinner! Lord have mercy on me.' I replied, 'What! I pray? I, who have scoffed at religion, and persecuted its teachers! I! a play-actor, -- an Infidel of the vilest kind! -- I pray!' But I did pray, compelled from a feeling within and yet, to my apprehension, without any feeling. But I did believe then and there Jesus died for ALL, and he can save me, -- even me, who once called him 'The carpenter's son!' -- me, the vile wretch, who has ridiculed the Saviour in many companies, -- defaming his character. His blood was now my plea; his atoning, cleansing blood, so often despised. I believed, wrestled on in mighty prayer; but neither pardon nor love to God visited my heart. At length they began to sing something like this:

'He will save you; He will save you,
He will save you just now!
I believe it, I believe it,
I believe it just now!
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
I believe it just now!'

I saw, by faith, my Lord Jesus Christ seated upon his throne; felt he was reconciled to me, -- had pardoned me. The load was all gone off my mind, off my heart; taken off just then, quite away! I shouted, Glory! glory! -- hallelujah! Praise ye the Lord!" My tongue was unloosed to tell what a great sinner I had been, and what a great Saviour I had found. Went to my lodgings, knelt in prayer; went to bed; could not sleep for joy and gladness. Arose for prayer and praise in the night, and again at five in the morning still feeling perfectly happy. Told my companions what the Lord had done for me. They said nothing, nor do they persecute. Explained to them what a slave of the devil I had been, which they knew very well. Declared I would now be a valiant soldier of Jesus Christ."

Dr. Booth, our beloved physician, who sent me this letter, exclaims at the bottom, "Glory be to God! Is not this another brand plucked from the fire of hell?" To which my soul replies, Yea! Amen. Praise the Lord!

But how curious that one pagan idea should weigh more with some men than a hundred declarations of the Bible! Well, we must take sinful men as we find them, and find out "the joints of the harness," where they may be pierced!

David picked up the smooth stone out of a babbling brook, that slew Goliath. "Breakers ahead, sir!" once gave me a soul! It was a cry from the pulpit; it entered a sinners ears, swept over his conscience. There was no rest for that sinner till he found mercy; till the hand of Jesus reached him, as it did sinking Peter. He is now preaching the Gospel, I believe, or preparing to do so.

The Holy Ghost has many arrows in his quiver. Cicero's arrow, shot at "the minute philosophers," pierced an English infidel two thousand years afterwards. These are words which never die, but have a sort of vitality about them which is imperishable.

Well, Ahab was not the last man who was wounded between the joints of the harness by a bow drawn at a venture. Besides, the soul sometimes outgrows its infidel panoply, and renders itself assailable. Nor was Achilles the only hero invulnerable in every part except his heel; -- a classic fable, but it has a moral. His mother, while dipping him in the river Styx when an infant, held him by the heel; that part was not dipped; there he was vulnerable, -- he might be wounded mortally there.

The devil dips his children in the Styx of infidelity, to render them proof against the arrows of the Gospel; but, in doing so, he must hold on to them by some part, like the mother of Achilles, -- and that cannot be dipped conveniently; there they are assailable. Satan's hold upon this Huddersfield infidel was a denial of the soul's immortality; there the arrow of Cicero pierced him. -- "Earnest Christianity Illustrated," hdm0258, by James Caughey

* * * * *

Part 59

HOW BUD ROBINSON WON AN INFIDEL TO CHRIST

Mr._____ had distinguished himself as an avowed infidel. His library shelves were filled with books written by unbelievers and skeptics. This blatant defier of God and rejecter of the Bible, with his elegant home and the broad acres beyond it, was the dominant figure in his community. Into this neighborhood a stuttering, stammering, ignorant young Irishman came to hold a brush-arbor meeting. At the close of a service, an elegantly gowned young woman stepped forward and said, "Brother Robinson, will you grant me a favor?"

Looking at her earnestly, Bud Robinson replied, "If it ith in my power, thister, I will."

She said, "It is something you can do. I want you to talk to my father about his soul."

Bud said when he thought of the great man and his elegant home, he almost fell upon the ground. But he had given his promise and he could not draw back. The following morning he arose very early, had a long season of prayer, and visited in a number of homes to get his courage up, then rang the bell on the door of the infidel's mansion. While standing there thinking what he would say when a servant opened the door, it suddenly swung ajar and the big infidel confronted him. Bud was so dumfounded he stood there in confusion unable to open his mouth until the man said, "Good morning," to which Bud stammered out, "Good morning, thir," and went no farther.

The man looked amused as he asked, "I believe your name is Robinson, isn't it?"

Bud said, "Yeth, thir, that's my name," and stopped.

The man interrogated, "Aren't you conducting a meeting down in the brush arbor?"

"Yeth, thir, that's what I'm doin'," replied Bud.

"Won't you come in and have a seat?"

"Yeth, thir, if you please." Bud entered the elegantly furnished home, sank into a chair and was so abashed he had no idea what to do with his hands or his feet. He sat there confused and bewildered. The man endeavored to engage him in conversation and asked, "What do you think of Demosthenes?"

Bud looked up earnestly and said, "Who wuth he?"

The man explained and then asked him, "What is your opinion of the Darwin Theory?"

"Whath that? I never heard of it." When the man explained, Bud replied, "I don't know, but I think Mr. Darwin wath wrong, because I can remember as fur back as my grandmother, and she never looked like a monkey." Then it was Bud's turn. Looking the big infidel right in the eye, he asked him, "Brother, what do you think of Jesuth Christ?"

It was the infidel's time to stammer, but before he could reply, Bud said, "Leth pray," and down on his knees he went. His stammering tongue became a flame of fire that scorched that infidel's soul like molten lava. When Bud arose from his knees wiping the tears out of his eyes with his coat sleeve, he extended his hand and said, "Brother, come to the meeting," and walked out.

That night when he arose to preach, he was amazed to see the infidel on the front seat. But he stammered through his sermon, gave an altar call, and down went the infidel in the straw and prayed through to God.

Later this man wrote his experience for the public press and declared that he had never had any trouble in confusing any person who discussed religion with him; "But," said he, "when I opened the door that morning and looked at that poor, ignorant Irishman, something struck my heart that I could neither gainsay nor throw off." I thought, 'Surely God does not think more of that ignorant crippled Irishman than He thinks of me.' So I decided to find God or die in the effort, and that is why I am a Christian today." -- "Bud Robinson, A Brother Beloved," hdm0525, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

HOW TWO INFIDEL RESEARCHERS WERE CONVERTED

Two infidels said of two things in the Bible, if they were gone, infidelity would have full sway. One was the crucifixion of Christ and the other was the conversion of Saul. They said, "These are the worst -- if we could do away with those things?" These two men agreed to stay away from each other for six months and do research work and try to find a solution to the problem of doing away with these two things. At the end of six months they met to go over their conclusions. They both came smiling, and this was their testimony. One said, "You know I had never read the Bible. I knew nothing about it. I had to read the Bible to learn about Christ. I went back in the Major Prophets and I came on down and I read about His life and His death." He said, "As I read on I became convinced that there was a profound meaning to it all. Conviction seized my soul. It was that Man Christ that walked the roads of Galilee. I came to this and I got on my knees. I prayed and He had mercy upon my soul. He is my Saviour and I love Him. Now, how did you come out?" "West, I studied the Bible as you did, and I found a man by the name of Saul. At first he was a man of a terrible reputation and did everything that he could against the Christians, but God saved him and he became a great soul-winner. I am a Christian now." -- "A Life That Counted," hdm0079, by J. E. Cook

* * * * *

Part 61

THE AWFUL DEATH OF AN INFIDEL NEIGHBOR

Thirty years ago, on a cold December day, I left my home in Lincoln for Butler County, where I was to hold quarterly-meeting. About three o'clock in the afternoon, when on the high divide between David City and Oak Creek, a heavy storm came on. The wind began to blow, and it blew harder and harder; the snow began to fall, and it fell faster and faster; and the weather rapidly grew colder and colder. I saw the road was filling with snow, and in a little while would be entirely lost to view; and I knew very well that, to be caught out overnight on that high divide in such a storm as was then raging, would be hazardous in the extreme. Silently I lifted my heart to God in prayer. A few minutes afterwards I saw a dim road leading to the right. I took that road. It led down a deep ravine, and, following it about a mile and a half, I came to a log-cabin standing on the bank of Oak Creek. I drove up to the barn, where the man of the house was unloading hay, and said to him, "Can I stay all night with you tonight?" "Yes, sir. Get out, get out, and go into the fire, and I will take care of your team." I found the man and his wife to be devoted Christians, and members of the Baptist Church, and I never was more royally entertained than in their humble home. I had hardly got warm when the good woman said:

"We have just returned from the grave of one of our neighbors."

"Was he a Christian?" I asked.

"O no; anything but a Christian. He was the wickedest man in all this region of the country. He professed to be an infidel; worked on the Sabbath just as on any other day, and seemed determined to be a rich man. All he thought of was making money. He would not allow his family to go to Church or Sunday-school."

"Well," said I, "how did he die?"

"Awful," said she. "It was the most terrible death that was ever witnessed by any of those that were present. When the doctor told him that he could not live, he said: 'Doctor, I can't die; I am not ready to die. You must not let me die.' The doctor said to him: 'If you have any business to transact, do it at once, for you can only live a little while. You are almost gone now.' Then he called his wife and children to his bedside and said to them: 'O, if I only had my life to live over again, how differently would I live! Don't live as I have lived. Go to Church and the Sunday-school every Sabbath, and don't throw your lives away as I have done,' and died."

It was the old, old story, -- the story that will go on repeating itself, we fear, as long as the world stands, a life of sin and a death of despair. "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" -- "Coals From The Altar," hdm0358, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 62

INFIDELS HAVE NO COMFORT AT DEATH

Rev. E. Davies, of Illinois, gives an account of an infidel who had spent his life in disseminating his infidel doctrines. Wherever he could influence a young man to doubt the Bible he did so. He took in shaking men's faith in the inspiration of the Scriptures. He would sneer at the Bible, sneer at ministers, sneer at Christians, sneer at the Church. This was the kind of seed that he sowed while living. What was the harvest? Mr. Davies tells us. When that man lay on his dying bed he said to friends who stood by his bedside: "I am damned, infinitely damned. I feel as if I were in a globe of fire, and that it is pressing upon me on every side. To live is hell; to die is a thousand times worse. It is too late to pray. My doom is sealed." In this awful state he died. He sowed the wind; he reaped the whirlwind.

David Hume had a most excellent Christian mother, and he determined to overthrow her religion. He succeeded. One day a postman handed him a letter. He opened it. It was from his mother. She said: "I am dying, and your philosophy gives me no comfort. I am in great sorrow. Come to me and comfort me, my son David." David Hume can never undo the wrong done his mother. His awful deeds will echo in eternity, and his guilty conscience, with its scorpion stings, will lash him forever. -- "Coals From The Altar," hdm0358, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 63

WHEN TWO AGREED FOR THE SALVATION OF AN INFIDEL

Some forty years ago there lived in Omaha a noted infidel. His wife was a devoted Christian. This infidel took sick. He grew worse and worse. His wife became alarmed, especially about his soul. She was impressed that he would not live, and she knew that he was unprepared to die. She sent for two laymen, Robert Lang and J. W. Tousley, to come and talk with and pray for

him. I have this incident from Brother Lang's own lips. When they reached the door Brother Lang said: "Brother Tousley, God says, Where two agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done a for them of My Father which is in heaven. Are we agreed that this man shall be converted?" "Yes," said Brother Tousley; and they went in. The sick man received them coldly. They spoke to him about his soul. "How do you know man has a soul?" said he. Then they spoke of God's infinite love. "How do you know there is a God? I don't believe there is," said he. They sang a number of hymns, and then asked him if he would like to have them pray for him. "If you want to pray I shall not object, but you need not pray for me." They prayed, and then they sang again, and when they were about to leave they asked him if he would like to have them come back and see him again. He replied: "I am not particular. Do just as you please about it." As they walked away from the house, Brother Tousley said, "Brother Lang, my faith has slipped." Mine has not," said Brother Lang. "I believe that man will be converted."

The next day they went back, and found him just as indifferent as ever. They sang a number of hymns, then prayed; then they sang again, and talked with him for a long time, and were about to leave, when all at once he broke down and wept like a child. "Why," said he, "I am a sinner. I am an awful sinner. I never a saw it as I now see it. Pray for me. Ask God to have mercy upon me, a sinner." They kneeled down and prayed, and while they were praying the man was powerfully converted. In a few days afterwards he died triumphant -- and went shouting home to glory. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven."

About thirty years ago I became intimately acquainted with a devoted Christian family living in Butler County, Nebraska. The husband was a local preacher, and one of the excellent men of the earth. His wife was one of the royal line, and wholly consecrated to God. They had a son who was one of the first graduates from the University of Nebraska. He was a brilliant young man, and graduated with great honor. During his university course he imbibed the doctrines of infidelity, and went home a confirmed infidel. This almost broke the hearts of the fond parents. A few months after Commencement, the mother went East to attend a national holiness camp-meeting, held at Ocean Grove. While there she met Amanda Smith, the colored evangelist. She told Mrs. Smith all about her son; how he had graduated with honor from the university, but had come home an infidel. "Now," said she, "Sister Smith, I want you to join me in prayer for his conversion, and I want you to agree with me that he shall be converted." "O yes," said Sister Smith, "I will." So they agreed that the son should be saved. What was the result? In a few weeks afterwards that son was a penitent at the altar, and was clearly converted, and for thirty years has been one of the most successful soul-winners in the State of Nebraska. Only a few months ago I met that son, and heard him sing and talk and pray. Glory be to God for ever and ever! -- "Coals From The Altar," hdm0358, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 64

WE SHOULD JUDGE INFIDELITY BY THE EFFECTS IT PRODUCES

We judge a system from the effect it produces. Its utility is determined by its results. This is a correct criterion to go by. And for thus judging we have Christ's authority. If the effect is good,

the cause which produced it must be good; and vice versa. This is the best possible way to reach correct conclusions touching any system. Take the various systems a of infidelity. What has been their effect? Has not the effect invariably been evil? Infidelity takes, but never gives value received for what it takes. It takes away a peace, a and gives sorrow; it takes away rest, and gives unrest; it takes away certainty, and gives uncertainty; it takes away hope, and gives despair. Infidelity is not a benefactor; it is a destroyer. It destroys all that is dear and precious to humanity. Desolation and woe and despair follow in the wake of infidelity. -- "Coals From The Altar," hdm0358, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 65

WITNESSES, NOT ARGUMENTS, WIN INFIDELS

In the early history of Nebraska there lived, just west of Omaha, a man by the name of Harrison Johnson. He was a great politician, very intelligent, well read, and abreast with the great questions of the age, but an avowed infidel. He had read all the infidel books extant, and all that Mr. Ingersoll had written up to that time, and he had their arguments against the Christian religion on the end of his tongue, and he loved to advocate his infidelity. His wife and mother were both Christians and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Some twenty-five years ago, or more, Mrs. Van Cott held revival meetings in the Methodist church in Omaha. During these meetings this man Johnson was clearly and powerfully converted, and then he became just as strong an advocate of the Christian religion as he had previously been of infidelity. When I was presiding elder of the Omaha District I became intimately acquainted with him. He often went with me to my quarterly-meetings, in order that he might have an opportunity of talking privately to persons on the subject of religion. He loved to get hold of and talk with hardened infidels. This was his delight. And when he got hold of one of these he almost invariably succeeded in leading him to Christ. The only argument he ever used in favor of the truth of the Christian religion, was his own experience. The following I had from his own lips:

He had a neighbor who lived on an adjoining farm. They were fast friends. They loved each other as did David and Jonathan. They came to the Territory in an early day, and settled just west of Omaha. His neighbor, as he himself had been, was an infidel. When Johnson was converted, his friend and neighbor was very much surprised. Some time afterward they met, and his neighbor said to him: "Harrison, I want you and your wife to come over next Wednesday and take dinner with us, and after dinner I want to spend the afternoon arguing with you on the subject of Christianity. You may talk a half an hour and I will talk half an hour, and we will spend the afternoon in this way." "All right," said Brother Johnson, "we shall be delighted to accept your kind invitation."

The next Wednesday they went over, and, after a pleasant social chat and a splendid dinner, Brother Johnson said: "Well, Charlie, I think we had better begin our argument. You may have the first half hour, and I will take the second." And during that first half hour Charlie brought forward the strongest arguments Brother Johnson said he had ever heard or read against the Christian religion. It was a magnificent talk. "Now," said he, "Harrison, it is your turn." "Charlie," said Brother Johnson, "when Mrs. Van Cott came to Omaha a few weeks ago I was converted.

When I heard there was a woman preaching in the Methodist church I was anxious to meet her. I had a great curiosity to see a woman in the pulpit, and to hear what she had to say, and so, out of mere curiosity, I went to hear her. When I reached the church every seat was taken, the church was packed to its utmost capacity, and I was compelled to stand up by the door during the entire service. Two or three times during the sermon Mrs. Van Cott caught my eye. After she had preached, and invited persons who desired religion to come to the altar, she left the pulpit, and made straight for me. I saw her pressing her way down through the crowded aisle, and she never stopped until she came to where I was standing. Taking me by the hand, she said:

" 'Are you a Christian?'

" 'No.'

" 'Would you like to be a Christian?'

" 'If I thought there was such a thing as religion, I don't know but I would.'

" 'Won't you go to the altar?'

" 'No.'

" 'May I pray for you?'

" 'If you desire to do so, I shall not object.'

"She knelt right down by my side, still holding my hand. Men were standing all around us; and such a prayer as she made, Charlie, I never heard in all my life before. It was the most powerful prayer I ever listened to; and while she prayed, a very peculiar feeling came all over me, such as I had never before experienced. When she finished her prayer she arose and said:

" 'Won't you go to the altar and seek religion?'

" 'Not tonight.'

" 'Will you go tomorrow night?'

" 'Yes.'

" 'All right. I shall expect you tomorrow night,' and back she went to the pulpit.

" 'Five minutes after I had made the promise I was sorry. I thought about it all the next day, and time and again said to myself, 'What a fool you are for making such a promise as that to Mrs. Van Cott!' But, you know, Charlie, I never go back on my word. I always do as I promise. I went back the next night. The house was crowded. Every available seat was occupied, and again I was compelled to stand up by the door. Mrs. Van Cott preached a sermon of marvelous power. Every sentence went like a shaft to my heart. When she had finished she called for persons who wanted

religion to come to the altar; and, Charlie, if the Missouri River had been running between me and that altar, I should have plunged in and gone through. I got to the altar just as quick as I could. I knelt down, and for a little while I never felt so bad in my life. The darkest cloud I ever witnessed settled down upon my soul. It was more dense than Egyptian night. It seemed to me that I was sinking into the bottomless pit. And, Charlie, I just offered this simple prayer, 'O God, have mercy upon me, a sinner, for Jesus' sake. Amen.' The dark cloud lifted, passed away, and there came into my soul a wonderfully sweet peace. It seemed to go all through my body and soul. I said to myself: 'This is strange. I never had such a feeling as this before. What does it mean? I wonder if this is religion. Yes. This is religion, and I have got it. I have got religion!' I said nothing to any one. I wanted the meeting to close; and just as quick as the benediction was pronounced I rushed out of the house, got on horse, and hurried home. I went into the room my wife was sitting, and I said to her, 'Wife, I have got religion.' She arose, embraced me, and gave me the sweetest kiss she ever gave me in her life. Then I went in to where my mother was, and I said to her, 'Mother, I have got religion.' 'O, my son!' said she, and, throwing her arms around my neck, she gave me the sweetest kiss she had ever given me. And now, Charlie, I have no doubts, no fears, no anxiety. My soul is at perfect rest. I expect to live forever with my mother, my wife, and my children. But, Charlie, my time is up. Now it is your turn."

A tear was in Charlie's eye, and he said: "Harrison, you have beat me. I would not be such a fool as to try and answer your argument. I have known you from a boy, and I know you to be a man of integrity. I know you would not say anything that is not strictly true. And, Harrison, the fact is, I would like to have just what you have."

In a few weeks Charlie was just as clearly converted as Harrison himself had been, and then he became as warm an advocate of the Christian religion as Brother Johnson himself. No argument that Harrison Johnson could have possibly brought to bear in favor of the truth of the Christian religion would have been half so powerful as the simple story of his own personal experience. What we want today is not more defenders of the Christian religion, not more advocates of our holy Christianity, but more witnesses to Christ's power to save from all sin. It is not the advocate that carries conviction to the jury, but the witnesses. -- "Coals From The Altar," hdm0358, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 66

INFIDELITY'S INSIDIOUS EFFECT IN PULPITS AND SCHOOLS

In 1899, Dr. Munhall delivered an address before the New York Preachers' Meeting on "The Inspired Authority of the Bible." That address contains the following:

"Nearly every objection raised against the integrity of the Bible by the 'higher critics' (he said) could be found in Voltaire's works and Paine's 'Age of Reason.' The enemy (he continued) used to be outside the breastworks. He is now inside -- in our pulpits, in our educational institutions, and our editorial chairs. But it is the same battle, and the weapons used against the Book are the very same the infidels have always used. When Ingersoll was asked by a friend why he no longer gave his lecture against the Bible, he replied, 'The professors and preachers are doing

that work much better than I possibly can, and their influence is much greater than mine.' I do know that in two of our theological schools the Old Testament professors are giving their students all the objections against the integrity of the record, and making no attempt whatever to answer these objections. And these students are going out to fill pulpits, with little or no knowledge of the Bible, their minds filled with objections to the Book which the church commissions them to preach. Can any one reasonably expect spiritual results from the ministry of such men? I know of one of these young men who, within four years of his ordination, left the Methodist Episcopal Church, became pastor of a Congregational church, then pastor of a Unitarian church, and then a blatant infidel, all in the same town. A wealthy member of our church, a delegate to the last General Conference, told me: 'I sent my oldest son to a Methodist educational institution not five hundred miles from New York City. Before he left home he was considered by all who knew him to be a model Christian young man. He would conduct family worship, lead the church prayer-meeting, was a teacher in the Sunday-school, and would speak and exhort in the meetings of the church. While at school, he came under the influence of a certain professor, who is a higher critic. He came home an infidel, and has not been inside a church since.' "

A few years ago a brilliant young lawyer in the State of Nebraska, with a fine practice and a bright future before him as a lawyer, felt called to preach. He sold his law-books, went to Evanston, intending to enter the theological seminary, and prepare himself for the ministry. He reached Evanston Saturday night. On Sunday he heard one of the professors and acting president deliver a lecture to the students. During his lecture, the professor called in question the inspiration of some parts of the prophecy of Isaiah. After the lecture was over, the young man said: "That's enough. I have always had doubts touching the inspiration of the Bible. This man has spent his life studying up this question. He has had advantages on this line that I never have had, and tells us that some parts of the Bible are not inspired; and if some parts are not inspired, who knows that any of the Bible is inspired?"

On Monday morning he left the city without saying a word to any of the professors. He went into Chicago, entered again the practice of the law, and is today an unsaved man, drifting farther and farther out on the broad sea of doubt and uncertainty. I am personally acquainted with this man, and know him as intimately as any man in Nebraska. -- "The Shining Way," hdm0366, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 67

HOLINESS IN HEART AND LIFE CONVINCES INFIDELS

The most powerful meetings we have ever attended have been holiness camp-meetings. At the Bennett Camp-meeting a few years ago an infidel came upon the ground. He remained only a few hours. He came and stood near the pulpit, looked into the faces of the saved men and women that were there, and as he listened to their burning testimonies his face became pale, he turned away and left the ground, and as he passed out the gate he was overheard to say to a friend, "My God, I wish I were a Christian!" What he saw and heard during the few hours he was there was an argument in favor of the truth of the Christian religion mightier than he had ever heard from any pulpit or read in any book. Another infidel came on the ground, and he had not been there

twenty-four hours until he was gloriously converted. Over the entrance to the ground was a large canvas, on which were the words, "Holiness unto the Lord." When that converted infidel arose to give in his testimony, he said: "When I passed under that canvas on which were the words, 'Holiness unto the Lord,' I was convicted as never before. I felt that unless I was saved soon I would be lost forever. O, how glad I am that I came to this holiness camp-meeting!"

If every member of every church were holy in heart and life, then the world would believe. Atheists would believe, infidels would believe, skeptics would believe; all classes would believe. They would come by the tens and the hundreds and the thousands to the altars of our churches for salvation.

The hindrances that are in the way of the speedy conquest of this world to Christ are not on the outside of the church. It is not atheism, it is not infidelity, it is not skepticism that stands in the way of the world's conversion.

If every member of Christ's militant church were holy in heart, word, and act, then every clog in the wheels of our Zion would be removed, and the church would move out on her grand mission of evangelizing the world as the lightning express-train sweeps from ocean to ocean. -- "The Shining Way," hdm0366, by H. T. Davis

* * * * *

Part 68

AN INFIDEL WHO BECAME A SOULWINNER INSTEAD OF A SUICIDE

The meetings began in that part called East Abington. The congregation at first was very small. It was at a thinly attended afternoon meeting that the few praying ones seemed to "get hold of God," as it were, with a feeling that their prayers had been heard, and the power of God was about to be felt in the town. During the progress of this afternoon meeting, a scoffing infidel, in his store, was so wrought upon by the Spirit of God, -- had such a sense of his sinfulness, and felt so certain that he must spend eternity in the world of despair, -- that he thought he would go out and end his present miseries by taking his own life. But his second thought was, that there would be no use in that; he recollected to have heard Christians say that the worst of sinners might find pardon and peace in Christ, and he said, "I will accept Christ as my Savior, and devote myself to his service." God heard the prayer which followed that resolution; and at our meeting in the evening we were much surprised and rejoiced, when he stood before us, a witness of God's pardoning grace.

A wealthy business man in the place had left his office for a game of billiards. With the game unfinished he went home to dine, and before leaving his house went into the cellar to arrange his furnace; and while there was so stricken down under the power of God, that he felt hardly able to leave the house, but thought he must go and finish his game. As he went out, he met at the gate the converted infidel, spoken of above, who said to him, "come with me to meeting." He replied, "I will;" and went, and became a follower of Jesus. He is today a strong pillar in the Congregational church. -- "Bringing in Sheaves," hdm0636, by A. B. Earle

* * * * *

Part 69

THE NEW BIRTH TOOK THE INFIDELITY OUT OF HIM

I shall never forget the faithfulness of the Holy Ghost in those six weeks that we held meetings. People began to come from all parts of the country until the house was filled.

The fifth night of the meeting an infidel, who lived near the church, came, and God got hold of his heart. He came out to the altar, and began to seek God with all his heart, and prayed through until the witness came to his soul that he was a child of God. It was wonderful how God took the infidelity out of that man and made him as meek as a lamb. It is wonderful how God can melt the hard heart of stone, and change it to a heart of flesh. Truly, it is a marvelous change, and so it was with this man. He could cry out with Paul of old, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new." -- "The Voice of God," hdm0551, by P. F. Elliott

* * * * *

Part 70

THE CONVERSION OF AN INFIDEL

When we were traveling the Cross Creek circuit, in the year 1814, one of the most wonderful manifestations of divine grace, in the awakening and conversion of an infidel, occurred that we were ever permitted to witness during our whole itinerant career. There lived in the bounds of the circuit, not far from Steubenville, an infidel of wealth and distinction. He belonged to the French school of infidelity, which, in the Reign of Terror in France, had, in consequence of its disgust at the crimes and corruptions, and mummeries of Romanism, renounced all religion, vetoing Christianity, deifying reason, and writing over the cemeteries, "Death an eternal sleep." He was a devoted student of Voltaire, and Rosseau, and D'Alembert, and being educated and talented but few were able or felt disposed to meet him in argument on the subject of religion. Indeed, he was a terror to all Christians in the neighborhood, and he never lost an opportunity to instill his infidel principles into the minds of all who would listen to his deceptive and dangerous philosophy -- falsely so called. He was a man of great influence in the county, and all that influence was thrown into the scale of infidelity. His principles were not only destructive of the general morals of the community, but were insidiously working their way into the impressible minds of the young and rising generation, poisoning them with infidelity. When he met with one equally well skilled in argument, and capable of showing the sophistry of his reasoning, and of tearing off the vail from the hideous form of the monster infidelity, he never would fail to fly to that last resort of infidels as their test of truth, ridicule, well knowing how potent such a weapon is in skillful hands. Where few can reason all can laugh, and as the depraved human heart is always on the infidel's side, often has the multitude, which usually collected in those days around disputants, been excited to laughter at the sallies of wit and ridicule the infidel would bring to bear upon his antagonist.

Where the majority were irreligious it was easy to see how fearful would be the odds against the Christian, though armed with the panoply of truth. What men wish to be true they require but little evidence to convince them of its truth; and, on the other hand, what they do not wish to be true no amount of evidence is sufficient to convince them of its falsehood. The sinner would gladly believe, though there is a God, that the terrible denunciations which he has made against sin are the mere product of priestcraft, gotten up to frighten people into a belief of Christianity, and any denial of that fact, supported by the merest semblance of an argument, would be seized with the greatest avidity, even as a drowning man would catch at a straw.

As an illustration of this, we once heard a public speaker, in a courthouse, haranguing a large crowd on the subject of religion. He had much to say about the priestcraft of orthodox preachers, and labored hard, and, as he thought, successfully, to prove that there was no hell; that it was all a mere bugbear to frighten the weak and credulous. One of his audience, a wealthy planter, on a visit from the far south, seemed to be in ecstasies at the preaching, and could scarcely restrain himself from shouting aloud his approbation. Good news from a far country, or cold water to a thirsty soul, could not have been more refreshing to the southerner than the glad tidings of this discourse. At length the speaker closed, and came down from the judge's bench, where he had been standing. The crowd gathered around him, but none were so eager to grasp his hand as the planter. "God bless your dear soul," said he, "I thank you a thousand times for that sermon. It's all true, every word of it, and commends itself to the reason of man." But, as he was turning to go away, a new thought seemed to strike him, and returning to the preacher, he said, "Your sermon is true -- true, no doubt of it in the least, sir; but, I'll give you a hogs head of tobacco if you will insure it." There is the difficulty. Infidels fear that religion is true. With the best of them, in their brightest, happiest hours, there is "a fearful looking-for of judgment."

But we must resume our narrative. This infidel would not attend any religious meetings, and paid a total disregard to all the institutions of religion. Strange as it may seem, with all his avowed infidelity and unblushing opposition to religion, he was chosen to represent the county in the Legislature of the state. God save us when our liberties and rights are intrusted to the hands of those who neither fear God nor regard man; for, though we could not make religion a test of qualification nor require a profession thereof as indispensable to a legislator, we would, nevertheless, require in the candidate for public favor, a decent respect for the opinions and rights of others. If it may be argued that men of infidel sentiments have been good statesmen and patriots, and have served their country with fidelity, we reply, their statesmanship and patriotism were not the result of their infidelity, but they existed in spite of it.

The family of the subject of our narrative consisted of a wife and one child -- a lovely daughter, beautiful and accomplished, having received what is termed a polite and fashionable education. The mother was alike infidel in sentiment with the father, and, of course, as it was with the father and mother, so it was with the daughter. Her youthful mind was made to take into its first impressions the blank and cheerless doctrines of infidelity. One has said, "Of all the melancholy sights that meet the gaze of mortals, nothing is half so drear and desolate as that of an infidel mother. For her there is no God and Savior; no bright and cheering hopes of immortality and eternal life beyond the grave. Home, with its endearments and angel faces, was designed to remind us constantly of the family of God in heaven; but where the cold night of infidelity reigns, and no voices of prayer and praise are heard, life is a dull, leaden dream, and death an eternal sleep."

This lovely girl, notwithstanding the cold and dreary sphere in which she had taken her existence and moved, was, nevertheless, of an amiable disposition. She was the infidel's daughter, and the child of a prayerless mother; but yet she possessed a genial mind and a trusting heart. We have heard it said of some, "they are naturally religious," and if it were possible for any to have a native religious character such might be ascribed to her. But, like the young ruler whom Jesus loved for his amiability of disposition and morality of conduct, she lacked one thing, and that was the regenerating grace of God, without which all natural graces will prove unavailing as requisites for heaven.

Not a very great distance from her father's residence there was a preaching-place, where the Methodist itinerants held meeting regularly every two weeks. A special meeting had been appointed to continue several days, and as the father was absent at the Legislature, she went to the meeting without the knowledge of her mother. Dressed, as she was, in fashionable style, when she entered the rude cabin, and took her seat among the old-fashioned Methodists, she became an object of general attention, quite as much so as an old-fashioned Methodist now would be if she were to come into one of our fashionable congregations with her plain gown and Quaker bonnet. But she did not come out of mere idle curiosity; she was strangely drawn to the house of worship, and there was a power at work, in regard to the nature of which she was unconscious. She had, as we have already seen, been reared in utter ignorance of religion, and all that she was taught concerning it was, that it was a system of priestcraft; and though there might be some honest, deluded professors of religion, the most of them were arrant hypocrites. She never read the Bible; for her father considered it too immoral a book to put in his daughter's hands, preferring the writings of French infidels, and even the blasphemous scurrility of Paine himself, to that book. Beside this, she never heard a Gospel sermon, being prevented from attending all religious meetings. Of course to her every thing was new; and though she could appear with ease and grace in the drawing-room or gilded saloon, she felt embarrassed in the midst of a worshipping assembly. She composed herself, however, as well as she was able; and when the preacher rose, and with solemn voice announced the text, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," her attention was absorbed. This was the first and all of the Gospel she had ever heard, and it sounded strangely in her ears. She had read Rosseau's opinion of Jesus Christ, and was disposed to look on him as an innocent, upright man, and she coincided with him in opposition to other infidel writers who had asserted that he was an impostor. When the preacher fully opened his theme, representing God's love in sending his Son into the world to die for us, and the love of Christ in coming and taking upon himself our load of guilt and shame, illustrated by scenes drawn from real life, and enforced and applied to the listening audience, the heart of the young girl was broken up, and she wept aloud. Every eye was suffused in tears, and many were the warm and ardent prayers that went up to heaven in behalf of that weeping one.

When the meeting was ended she returned home; but so deeply was she affected by what she had heard that it was impossible for her to conceal her feelings from her mother, who, in a stern voice, asked her where she had been, almost as soon as she entered the sitting-room. On being informed that she had been to meeting, she became very much excited, and said, in an angry tone, "If you go again those ignorant fanatics will ruin you forever; and if it comes to your father's ears that you have been to Methodist meeting, he will banish you from the house; besides, you

ought to know better. The instructions you have received should guard you against all such improprieties, and I hope hereafter I shall never hear of your being at such a place."

Night came, and with it came the hour for meeting. Now commenced a conflict in the mind of the daughter. She had never disobeyed her mother, nor did she ever feel disposed to set contrary to her wishes in any respect; but her heart longed for the place of prayer, and she felt strongly drawn to it by a secret, invisible agency she could not resist. "Shall I," said she to herself, "disobey my mother, and incur the displeasure of my father, and perhaps banishment from home? But the preacher said that the Savior of the world declared that "whosoever loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whosoever will not forsake father and mother for my sake and the Gospel's, shall not enter heaven." "I will forsake all for Christ." The crisis had come; the gate was passed; and her joyous destiny was sealed forever. She left her home and went to meeting. An inviting sermon was preached, at the close of which seekers of religion were invited to kneel at the mourner's bench, and pray for pardon. No sooner was the invitation given than she pressed her way through the crowd, and fell upon the bench, crying for mercy. Her full heart now poured forth its griefs in sobs and fervent prayers. The whole congregation was taken by surprise, and filled with utter astonishment at the scene, knowing, as the most of them did, the utter contempt in which her father and mother held religion and all religious exercises. Surely, thought they, this must be the special interposition of God, and every heart was lifted up in fervent prayer in her behalf. There, at that mourner's bench, she struggled in agonizing prayer for two hours. It was apparently the noon of night, and yet she was not converted. Never was mourner more deeply engaged. She had made the last resolve. One after another of the faithful had poured out their hearts at the mercy seat in her behalf; hymn after hymn was sung, as only those can sing who sing with the spirit; but still she came not through the dark valley. Faith began to flag, and some thought the penitent must disrobe herself of her hat, and plume, and flowers, and ruffles, ere the Lord could bless. But God looks at the heart, and he saw, down deep in its own recesses, a soul absorbed in grief, conscious of nothing but its guilt and sin. At length the last hymn was rolling up from swelling hearts and tuneful voices to heaven. The last stanza was reached,

"Yet save a trembling sinner, Lord,
Whose hopes, still hovering round thy word,
Would light on some sweet promise there,
Some sure support against despair;"

and as the last strain sounded in the ear of the penitent she gently threw back her head, and opened her calm blue eyes, yet sparkling with tears; but they were the tears that told of sins forgiven. She had emerged from the darkness and the light of heaven was beaming upon her happy countenance, and an unearthly radiance gleamed like a glory on her brow. If before she was beautiful, now that she was adorned with heavenly grace one might think she could claim kindred with the skies. She arose, and embraced in her arms the sisters who had prayed with her, and pointed her to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. She had passed the noon of many a night in scenes of guilty mirth and revelry, where she was the foremost of the band, the fairest of the fair; but never did such joy and gladness come to her soul as she experienced on that occasion. She returned home, feeling now that she could gladly bear any thing for the sake of her Lord and Master. When she arrived she related to her mother what had occurred, and exclaimed, "O, how precious is the Savior!" She would have embraced her mother in her arms; but she repulsed her and reproached

her, telling her that if she did not cease her nonsense she would drive her away from the house, and that she had disgraced the family and ruined herself forever. She retired to her room, and spent the remainder of the night in prayer and praise to God.

Soon it was noised abroad that the infidel's daughter was converted; and some of his friends, supposing, doubtless, that they would render him great service, wrote to him on the subject, giving him the most absurd and ridiculous accounts of her exercises while at the mourner's bench, and after she was converted. When Mr. P. received this intelligence he was greatly enraged, and swore that he would banish his daughter from his house, and she should be entirely disinherited and disowned. All this moved not the converted daughter; for she realized the truth of the Divine declaration, "When my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." The day was at length fixed for his return home, and Eliza -- for that was the daughter's name -- placed herself at the window to watch his arrival. In the afternoon he was seen approaching on horseback, and Eliza hastened out to the gate to meet her father. When, with a pale, sweet countenance, she stepped up to her father to embrace and kiss him, he rudely seized her by the arm, and, with his horsewhip, whipped her out of the gate, telling her to begone, and, with many curses, forbidding her return. Sadly she went weeping down the lane; but she thought of what her Savior had suffered for her, and her heart was staid up under the mighty load which oppressed it. She realized then, to its fullest extent, what it was to love the Lord Jesus more than all else besides. Though she had lost natural friends she had found spiritual friends. That "manifold more in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting," is what only religion can give.

"Like snows that fall where waters glide,
Earth's pleasures fade away;
They rest in time's resistless tide,
And cold are while they stay.
But joys that from religion flow,
Like stars that gild the night,
Amid the deepest gloom of woe,
Shine forth with sweetest light."

Not far from her father's residence lived a pious Methodist -- a poor widow -- and she was apprised of the state of things at the house of Mr. P. When she saw Eliza coming to her house one evening, she was not at a loss to conjecture the cause. The poor widow gave her a cordial reception, and spoke to her words of kindness and comfort. Eliza asked permission to go into the little room, and be allowed to remain there undisturbed, No sooner was she alone than she fell upon her knees, and commenced pouring out her soul to God in prayer for her wicked father and mother.

But we must return to the father. As he gazed after Eliza, who went sobbing down the lane, it seemed as though a thousand fiends of darkness had taken possession of his soul. He went to the house, and met his wife; but she was equally wretched, having witnessed what was done. He sat down. They spoke not, except in monosyllables. The supper-hour arrived, but he refused to eat, though he had been riding all day. Now and then a groan would escape his lips. He went to his library, and turned over his books and papers; but it was in a hurried manner, and with a vacant look. At length he retired to his chamber, but not to rest. Sleep had forsaken his eyelids, and if he

did close them, the sweet, angel face of his banished Eliza would send daggers to his soul. Thus he spent a sleepless night. Next day he wandered about over the farm, and through the woods, like one seeking, with the greatest anxiety, for something that was lost. It was evident to all that there was something resting upon his mind that greatly troubled him. The cause of that trouble his proud, infidel heart would not allow him to disclose, even if the human heart were disposed to lift the veil from the secret sanctuary of its bitterness.

Unable to find rest he again sought his chamber; but, alas! his anguish increased, and he began to see the shallowness of his infidelity, and also its dark, horrid nature, in that it could prompt him to drive his lovely, and otherwise obedient daughter from his house, simply because she had become a Christian. From that moment he was a changed man -- not that he was converted; but from a hard, impenitent sinner he was brought to relent and pray. There he prayed for hours; but not one ray of hope penetrated his darkness. His abused and banished Eliza would rise before him, and his convictions increased, till he raved like the demoniac among the tombs of Gadara. It seemed as if he would not be able much longer to support the mountain weight that was crushing him; for the sorrows of hell got hold upon him, and he anticipated the pain of the second death.

Flying from his room, he called his servant-boy, and ordering him to saddle Eliza's horse and mount another, he directed him to go to every house in the neighborhood in quest of his daughter, and if he found her to bring her home. Seeing that his orders were immediately obeyed, he returned to his chamber; but the load that pressed upon his heart was removed, and the anguish that drank up his spirits was gone. He was comforted, but not converted. The raging deep was calmed, but the sun shone not upon its dark waters. He walked out into the garden, and there, beneath Eliza's favorite bower, he kneeled down, and again lifted up his heart and commended himself to God. Scarcely had his knees touched the ground till the Sun of righteousness arose, with healing in its beams, upon him, and pervading all the great deep of his mind, lighted it up with the peace and calm of heaven.

For twenty-four hours, without eating or sleeping, Eliza remained in that widow's room, engaged in earnest supplication for her father. The pious mother in Israel, in looking out of her window, as the day was drawing to a close, saw the servant coming with two horses, and she ran immediately into the little room, exclaiming, "Eliza, arise, your father has sent for you. I see John coming with your horse and saddle." The happy child arose, and burst out in rapturous exclamations of praise to God for his goodness and mercy in touching her father's heart. She was soon in her saddle, and the faithful charger bore her fleetly to her home as if proud of his burden. When in sight of home she saw her weeping father, standing at the same gate from whence, on the evening before, he had driven her a fugitive abroad. She sprang from her horse into his arms, and embracing his child with a love he never experienced before, he exclaimed, "My angel of mercy, I give you my heart and my hand to travel with you to the heavenly inheritance." It was a happy family; for the mother was soon converted, and joined with the father and daughter in the service of God, and they all continued faithful disciples of Christ till they were called from the Church militant to the Church triumphant in heaven. -- "Sketches of Western Methodism," hdm0230, by James B. Finley

* * * * *

THE CONVERSION OF AN INFIDEL DOCTOR

Daniel, while at the conference, received a letter from his devoted wife, giving a thrilling account, among other things, of the conversion of an infidel, and, also, a description of his death. The editor of the Ladies' Repository, Rev. L. L. Hamline, requested it for publication; and while brother Poe was on his return home on the steamer, he wrote out the account of the awakening, conversion, and death of this infidel, but from some cause or other it was never sent, and consequently never published. It was entitled, "The power of the Gospel in Texas," and we give it to our readers

I made my residence in the beautiful village of Milam, Sabine county, Texas, where there had been recently formed a small society of Methodists. Here, as well as all around the San Augustine circuit, I found the Church in a feeble and lukewarm condition, and so continued till the first of May last.. We had appointed a two days' meeting in Milam, and prayed much and earnestly that a work of divine grace might there commence. The time came, and on Saturday the congregation was small, and a death-like stupor and coldness seemed to pervade almost every heart.

"There lived, adjoining the village, a Dr. W_____, who was said to be a very wicked man, a Universalist, and a great enemy to the Methodist Church. It was said, too, that he had a very worthy, pious wife, who desired to attend meeting and unite with the Church; but it was said that the Doctor would not permit her to do so. While meeting was in progress on Saturday, the Doctor was at the tavern across the way, uttering bitter curses against the Methodists.

"The Sabbath came, and the congregation was unusually large. I was preaching on the doctrine of rewards and punishments, when my eye fell on the Doctor, who was seated in the very rear of the congregation. He seemed much excited; sometimes his face would redden, and then an almost deathly paleness would pass over it. He seemed very restless, too, and kept constantly turning on his seat. I knew not whether he was enraged or whether conscience was doing its office, awakened and enlightened by the holy Spirit. I thought, however, that I would talk fearlessly and plainly, and leave the result with God. I spoke, in conclusion, of the fearful account that that man will have to render on the day of judgment who keeps his wife and children away from the house of God, and bids them follow him in the way to hell. An appointment was made for the afternoon, and the congregation dismissed.

"As I was returning to the afternoon service, I saw the Doctor standing at the corner of the court-house, where the meeting was held. When I was yet a few rods distant, he started out to meet me. I had heard that the Doctor possessed considerable personal courage, and that he had been through a number of bowie-knife and pistol fights. Whether he came in peace or came armed for a deadly encounter I knew not, nor was it my business to know; my business was to meet him. We met, when he gave his trembling hand, and said in accents broken with sighs and accompanied with tears, 'Mr. Poe, I wish you to open the door of the Church this afternoon for my wife to join.' I said, 'Thank you, Doctor, but what are you going to do? you are a sinner, and must have religion, or be lost eternally.' He answered, 'I feel as I never felt in all my life -- is there, can there be mercy for such wretched sinner as I have been?' I told them that there was mercy, free and full, and exhorted

him to look to Jesus, as we walked together into the congregation. After an excellent sermon was preached by my colleague, I stated that I was requested to open the doors of the Church, and went on to give an invitation. The Doctor's wife immediately came forward, together with a number of others. I then invited all who desired to seek their soul's salvation, to come to the mourner's bench. The Doctor and many others came trembling and weeping, and kneeled in prayer.

"A glorious revival commenced that afternoon. God's people were heard shouting for joy, and sinners were heard weeping and crying aloud for mercy. The meeting lasted some two weeks, during which the many sinners were awakened and converted. The Doctor came forward at every invitation, and seemed powerfully awakened and deeply engaged, and yet he found no relief. I visited him often, and talked and prayed with the family. He did not attempt to conceal or extenuate, but acknowledged that he had been the greatest of sinners -- that he had long hindered his wife from going to meeting and joining the Church -- that he had set an awful example before his children. Mercy was his only plea. Sometimes he said, 'I am just entering the kingdom, when my sins rise up and shut me out.' He said he was determined to seek on, and if he went to hell he would go a praying penitent. I left him in this state of mind about the first of July last, well satisfied that if he persevered, his dungeon would yet shake, and his chains fall off, and his soul be set at liberty.

"I received a letter from my wife, saying that the Doctor was very sick and in great distress of mind -- that he had sent for her very often to sing and pray for him. I have just received another letter from my wife, saying that the Doctor is no more.

"I have just returned from the funeral of Doctor W____, he sent for me both by night and day, to sing and pray with him, and about two days before his death he found peace and died very happy. Just before he left the world, he called me to his bedside and said, "Tell brother Poe, of all the men I ever saw, I loved him the most; I would be glad to have him now about my dying bed, but that can not be. Tell him to go on and keep preaching Jesus, and I will meet him in heaven."

"To be made the humble instrument in the hand of the blessed Savior, of plucking that brand from eternal burnings, more than compensates for all the sacrifices we have made, in leaving our native land and friends and all. But that is not all; the revival that commenced at that meeting, spread all around the circuit, and hundreds have been added to the Church." -- "Sketches of Western Methodism," hdm0230, by James B. Finley

* * * * *

Part 72

AN INFIDEL STRICKEN WITH DERANGEMENT AND DEATH

Another alarming judgment occurred in the case of M____ P____ about this time. He had embraced infidelity, and was a boasting disciple of Tom Paine. On a public occasion he was heard to say that he was a deliberate enemy of Jesus Christ, and would only live to oppose him and his religion; confirming the declaration by several awful oaths and imprecations. The following week he became suddenly deranged, and became such a furious madman that it was necessary to put him in close confinement. His haggard features and demon-like scowl were truly terrific, and his

language was horrible and blasphemous beyond expression. He raved as though torn by a thousand furies, gnashed his teeth, and gnawed his blasphemous tongue, till exhausted nature yielded, and he gave up the ghost.

I was invited to preach his funeral; and, in the fear of God, I endeavored to make what improvement I could of so awful a scene. It is not strange that those who abuse their reason in denying the existence of a God, should lose its proper exercise, any more than that those who abuse any physical organ should lose its use. -- "Autobiography of James B. Finley," hdm0683

* * * * *

Part 73

AN INFIDEL SAVED WHILE TRYING TO HELP A DRUNK GET SAVED

Brother Gavit was also converted at this meeting, and still lives to bear witness to the power of Divine grace in changing the heart. He resided in the town of Granville, which had been settled by a company from New England, of the old stock of Calvinistic Puritans. He was a confirmed Deist, and had been rooted and grounded in infidelity for many years. In this town resided an old sea captain with his wife and two daughters. The captain was a confirmed drunkard, and was spending all his property in the gratification of this monster appetite. At a townmeeting, Mr. Gavit was appointed his guardian -- a most wholesome arrangement. Every conceivable means was used by the guardian to break up the habit of the captain, and every inducement was offered to get him restored to sobriety. All, however, proved in vain. As a last resort, he took him to campmeeting; for, although he had no faith in religion, and cared not for any of its exercises, he believed, from what he had seen and heard, that the Methodists had some process by which they could transform a drunkard into a sober man.

The time at length arrived, and, with much moral suasion and physical force, he succeeded in getting Mr. B____ into the carriage, in company with himself, Mrs. Gavit, and their eldest son. On Saturday they arrived on the ground, and pitched their tent that evening. In the meantime the captain stole away from their observation, and became intoxicated. Mr. Gavit went and brought him into the tent. A strict watch was now kept over him, lest he should again run away. The Sabbath passed away, and B____ became perfectly sober. In the evening God opened heaven, and let down glory on the encampment. A praying circle was formed; and Mr. Gavit, taking the captain by the arm, said, "Let us go into the circle, for I have brought you here to get you converted, and now is the time."

I saw them coming; and as they approached, he asked me if they could get in. I made a way for them in the crowd, and they passed in. After succeeding in getting as close as possible to those who were engaged in leading the exercises, Mr. Gavit said to the captain,

"Who will you have to pray for you?"

"I don't want any one to pray for me," he replied.

"But you must get down on your knees, and have the prayers of this people."

Seeing he was resolved, and knowing the determined character of the man, he said,

Well, if I must have prayer, I would just as soon have Mr. C____, the classleader, pray for me, as any one.

The leader was soon brought, and Mr. Gavit said to the captain,

"Now get down on your knees."

He replied, "I don't like to do that, unless you will kneel with me."

In an instant both were on their knees, and the classleader began to pray, with all the faith and fervency of his soul, for the salvation of both. The power of God came down, and, in less than two minutes, Gavit fell prostrate on the ground, and screamed for mercy, like one in despair. This frightened the captain, and, springing from his knees, he fled through the crowd, and made his escape. We carried Gavit out of the crowd, and brought his wife and son, but could not get the captain to move a step from the tent. We prayed with Gavit all night, during which time his wife and son were powerfully convicted. They all continued to pray and seek religion, but did not find peace.

The time arrived for the meeting to close, and Mr. Gavit and family made their departure for home. A heavy load was at his heart, and he was loath to leave the ground. While on the way, so insupportable did his burden of sin become, that he ordered his son to stop the carriage, and they all got out and held a prayermeeting by the roadside. During this meeting, the son was converted, and the captain became powerfully convicted, and began to cry for mercy. They again resumed their journey, the son shouting, the father and mother praying, and the captain weeping. On their journey they were stopped at Newark, and invited to prayermeeting, at which Mr. Gavit and his wife both found peace in believing. And went on their way home, giving glory to God. Shortly after this the captain was happily converted. When I came round I formed a class, consisting of these four persons; and this was the introduction of Methodism into Granville. All these lived happy Christians. Mr. Gavit had two younger sons that embraced religion, and became efficient and useful traveling preachers. -- "Autobiography of James B. Finley," hdm0683

* * * * *

Part 74

A PREACHER'S LIFE SPARED -- AN INFIDEL SAVED

I know a preacher who was a good man, a praying man, who held a meeting in North Carolina one night and the next morning he was to get out of there at four o'clock. He dressed and went to the station and boarded the train for Washington, D. C. He rode one hundred miles and a station was called out. The Spirit said, "Get off here." He said, "Lord, what does this mean? I have got my ticket bought for the trip and my trunk is in the baggage car?" But the Spirit said, "Get off!" He reached for his grip and got off the train, some people got on and the train pulled out. He walked into the depot and the old devil said, "That is a pretty way to do; that is a nice way to

spend your money." He said, "Lord, help me, you put me off, I do not know why." He walked into the ticket office, bought a ticket to Washington, D. C. Then he had quite a battle. He had paid for two tickets. He prayed and walked around in front of the depot. Directly the operator came out, but he looked like a corpse. The preacher was the only man out there. The operator said, "Look, what I got!" The preacher read the message that was handed to him and, after reading it, said, "Thank God!" The operator said, "Thank God for what? What do you mean? Thanking God for a railroad wreck, when people have been killed and others have been wounded!" The preacher said, "I am not thanking God for the wreck, but I am thanking Him because He spoke to me and got me off that train." "Who spoke to you?" the operator said. "I am an Ingersol man; I do not believe in anything." "I cannot help what you are, I am telling you facts." He said, "What do you mean? Who are you?" He saw that the man was a nice, clean-looking fellow and not insane. He said, "I left North Carolina this morning at four o'clock; that conductor has my ticket on that train now, and my trunk is on that train. The Holy Ghost told me to get off that train. I just walked into this depot and bought another ticket for Washington, D. C." The operator said, "I am an infidel, but you have my curiosity aroused; come on inside." The preacher went inside and took a chair. As the preacher sat down and told him the story, he said, "I want to hear it." He went back and told him how he met the Lord Jesus Christ in the corn field; how the Lord saved him from sin and a few months afterward He baptized him with the Holy Ghost and fire and sanctified him wholly. He told how that the Spirit that lived in him and guided him into all truth and in things that are right. Directly the tears started down the cheeks of the young operator and he said, "Do you reckon I could find your Christ?" "Why," he said, "sure, you can; let us pray!" The man knelt, calling on the Lord, and in three or four minutes the Lord wonderfully saved that young operator. The Lord had a twofold purpose in that. He knew that young man who was an infidel would never go to church anywhere, and He knew that no preacher would have a chance at him; so God wanted to bring him in touch with a sanctified man that the Spirit had killed, filled and was guiding. And the young man said, "I have often thought since I heard you, how my old mother prayed for me. She prayed for me long before she went to heaven, that God would save her boy at any cost, at any loss, at any cross." You may not agree with me, but I believe that thousands of prayers will be answered after people are in glory. This mother prayed for God to save her son at any cost. It cost the preacher double fare, but what did the Lord care about making the preacher pay double fare to get the young man the Gospel and get him saved? -- "Truth on Fire," hdm0088, by John and Bona Fleming

* * * * *

Part 75

THE MORALIST JUST AS LOST AS THE INFIDEL

Quite awhile ago, responsive to a campmeeting call, I went to North Carolina. At the opening I was introduced to my comrade in labor, Sam Page, a former notorious infidel and drunken saloonkeeper, whose profligacy and wickedness had been proverbial in all the land. Having been wonderfully converted and gloriously sanctified, responsive to his heavenly calling he was then a flaming evangelist, shaking that country with the Pentecostal power, which, in the mercy of God, characterized his ministry. The power descended on us and waves of salvation began to roll over the audience, revealing Him who is mighty to save. Simultaneously with the rolling billows, Sam would leap on a bench and shout aloud, "Look here, all ye drunkards, gamblers, blasphemers, thieves, murderers, and adulterers, and see me. Do you not know that I am

Sam Page, the saloonkeeper, drunkard, blasphemer, gambler and infidel? See what God will do for you if you will repent of your sins and seek Him with all your heart as I did. Oh, He will wonderfully save and gloriously sanctify you!" Then I would leap up by his side, throw my arms around him and shout to the people: "Look at me, O ye good Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Campbellites, who keep the moral law and walk irreproachably before the world, but have never been born from above, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and know not what it is to receive a new heart. I was once where you are and as surely on my way to Hell as Sam Page in his saloon. God loves you as dearly as the drunkards, gamblers, swearers, and debauchees; and if you do not seek and find the Lord, get your sins forgiven and receive intelligent salvation, you are as sure of hell as the poor reprobates who plunge headlong into the vulgar vices." -- "Autobiography of W. B. Godbey"

* * * * *

Part 76

AN INFIDEL STRUCK BY A LIGHTNING BOLT OF CONVICTION

Meanwhile a very bright, smart infidel came to town and gained a notoriety by cursing our meeting, saying he had heard that "that man Godbey was running a converting machine in that town and that he had come up to get him to turn loose his batteries on him," at the same time challenging him to try it, and boasting that he would find hard material if he did. After we had prayed and testified for an hour by day of introductory to the night meeting, which we generally held from four to five hours and frequently running much longer, I, as a confirmation of the appalling wickedness prevailing in that country, told them what I had heard, and at the same time ejaculated a prayer that God, for Christ's sake, would, send His Holy Spirit that moment to open that man's eyes and give him a look into the Hell which was coming to meet him, before he took the awful plunge. As the house was packed to overflowing and the man was a stranger, I had no idea that he was within hearing distance, but he was in the rear of the audience and afterward said that while I was personating him, a lightening bolt struck his heart and he saw Hell open and the devils coming for him. He never ceased to cry to God till he was gloriously saved-became a bright, able preacher of the Gospel. -- "Autobiography of W. B. Godbey"

* * * * *

Part 77

PERSISTENCE LEADS AN INFIDEL TO SALVATION

I always carried with me one or two red hot young Kentuckians, not to do the preaching, for I did all of that, day and night, but to turn them loose like cyclones of fire to run the devil out of the community.

During that meeting the wonderful sensation brought out all sorts of people who are not in the habit of going to meeting at all. That is the great argument in favor of a mighty sweeping revival; it will reach so many people who are utterly inaccessible to the ordinary means of grace. While the fire baptized people were running all over the house during the altar service, one of these flaming Jesus, led by the Spirit, ran on a hard infidel and appealed to him about his soul. He

repelled him abruptly, notifying him that he was an infidel and did not believe anything that those people were preaching and professing, and had not been to meeting in fifteen years; but having heard so many strange things about this meeting, he had come through sheer curiosity which he had already satisfied and therefore would come no money. The young man continued his burning appeal, saying the Bible is just as true if you don't believe it as you do, and you are going to be eternally damned because you don't believe it." Then he poured on him a fresh volley of red-hot Bible shot. The infidel responded, "Go and find somebody that believes what you say, for I am an infidel and don't believe any of it, and you are losing your time on me. But the young man gave him another tremendous volley, letting loose on him a regular gattling gun. Again he tried to repulse him, saying, "I am an infidel and don't believe anything you are telling me." Then he said, 'I have nothing to do with your infidelity; my business is to tell you what God says in this Bible, which is just as true if you don't believe it as if you do. You are going to be eternally damned in hell because you don't believe it, for the Word says, he that believeth not shall be damned.' " Then conviction struck the infidel like lightning, and breaking down he came to the altar and had an awful hard struggle praying to God an hour and a half, when, arising with shouts, he said, "You must excuse me to run home and bring my wife, for she has wanted to get religion a long time and I would not let her." So he went after her and in due time she found the Lord and shouted with him in the kingdom of God. I mention this confirmatory of the conclusion that we are not to be discouraged, but to preach the flaming truth of God whether people hear; or forbear, trusting the blessed Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of His own good pleasure. --
"Autobiography of W. B. Godbey"

* * * * *

Part 78

INSKIP TRUE TO GOD IN SPITE OF HIS FATHER'S INFIDELITY

A hundred years ago the pioneer Methodists in Yankee land were running a rousing Holy Ghost meeting in Cooper Shop, when a bright boy of sixteen happened in, the lightning which was in the air struck him down and he fell in the shavings and they prayed him through and he went home shouting like an angel, found his infidel father still up reading Paine's, "Age of Reason," a favorite with all infidels. He saw at once that he had been captured by those despised fanatical Methodists and gave him an awful scolding and told him if he didn't just drop it all and behave himself he would drive him from home and gave him his choice, then whether he would drop his religion or give up his home, and he told him at once that he would never give up his religion. Then he told him to go to bed, and next morning to take his clothes and leave and never come back. Spending the night in prayer he arose, gathered up his clothes and bade them a loving adieu; his mother almost dying of grief but the father utterly inflexible. He went at once to the home of the class leader, and told him that his father had run him off for getting religion, and he told him his house was his home for life and for him to make himself easy.

Soon they were all called to breakfast. While eating, the servant man from the home of the boy rushes in, calling his name and saying, run home your father is dying and wants you. So he found him prostrate on the floor and crying aloud to God for mercy, saying the devil was after him and pulling him into hell; they sent for all the Methodists who gathered in and prayed night and day

till the poor old infidel passed triumphantly into life with triumphant shout of victory; joined the Methodists Church, and shouted on till the angels came for him.

This boy was none other than John Inskip, whom God raised to launch the present Holiness movement, now enveloping the globe, the greatest ever known; in magnitude far eclipsing that of the Apostolic age. -- "Family Government," hdm0456, by W. B. Godbey

* * * * *

Part 79

WHY THE INFIDEL CAME TO CHURCH

Has the Gospel failed? Never! Let Pentecost with its heavenly flame strike a church nowadays and the crowds will come to see the heavenly glory. A big church caught fire sometime ago, and an infidel of the town came and made himself very free in fighting the fire. As the crowds were leaving, a lady approached him and said, "This is the first time I have seen you in our church." He said, "This is the first time the church has ever been on fire." Fire has always attracted, and when it falls on the pulpit and pew, we will not have to resort to worldly methods to reach the people, but they will come from far and near to get to a devil-driving, sin-killing, blood-and-fire revival. -- "Christ Enthroned Within," hdm0094, by J. M. Hames

* * * * *

Part 80

HOW HATFIELD DISPERSED THE INFIDELS' CROWD

I had a cousin who ran a men's furnishing store. There were a couple of infidels who would loaf around the store and pour out their infidelity and ridicule of the churches and professors of religion. My cousin told them one day that he had a cousin who was a preacher and if he ever got hold of them he would shut them up. One day I happened to step into the store and the infidels were there and were pouring out their poisonous doctrine upon the crowd that was sitting around the stove. My cousin called to me from the back part of the house where they were all sitting to come back there and take some of the conceit out of those infidels. At once the Lord showed me what to do with that crowd, and, to their surprise, instead of my paying any attention to their old threadbare arguments, I began to shout and praise God and holler "Glory!" and "Hallelujah!" and "Bless the Lord!" and in less than five minutes I was monarch of all I surveyed. The field was vacated, the enemy vanquished. The infidels and the others as well had slipped away to parts unknown and soon my cousin had suddenly become very busy tapping on a windowpane in the front part of the room. Bless God! "The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth." -- "Thirty-Three Years a Live Wire," hdm0097, by John T. Hatfield

* * * * *

Part 81

HOW BISHOP HAMLINE ONCE SILENCED AND INFIDEL

"Once when he was passing up the Ohio River the company in the gentlemen's saloon on the steamboat were engrossed for an hour or two by a noisy infidel, who had gathered a crowd around him, and was entertaining them with jeers at the Christian religion. Mr. Hamline was walking back and forth through the saloon, not seeming to notice what was passing, though he observed that the speaker was eyeing him, and evidently wished to attract his attention. As he turned from time to time he drew nearer the scene of discourse. At length the boaster said, 'When I die there will be no more of me than of my old white horse. Can you prove otherwise, stranger?' appealing to Mr. Hamline, who turned quickly, and said, 'If, when your old white horse is reposing under the shade in a hot Summer day; I should approach and whisper in his ear arguments to prove that he is immortal, would you not deem me a fool?' The company broke up in a roar of laughter, leaving the chagrined boaster to hide himself as best he could." -- "The Biography of L. L. Hamline," by F. G. Hibbard

* * * * *

Part 82

THE DANGER OF READING INFIDEL LITERATURE

The Spirit is grieved by courting infidelity and defending errors and false positions in morals. The abuse of the intellect has a subtle attraction for some minds. They delight to be on the contrary side, and to argue against "whatsoever things are lovely and of good report," and defend everything that is off-shade in thinking and morals and religion. Of choice, they read infidel books rather than the books written by reverent and devout minds. Start any question or subject, and they will at once, by their speech, show their hostility to truth and Christian morality and their friendliness to error and wrong. They will argue against the sacredness of the Sabbath, and the divine inspiration of Scriptures, and the divinity of Christ, and everything that looks like practical Christian living will be sneered at as Puritanical, while everything loose in thinking and lax in morals is persistently advocated and defended. The writer had a college classmate and two seminary classmates who swung themselves out into infidelity by this very mental process. Two years ago a man in Massachusetts was converted in one of my meetings, who stood up and testified that thirty years before he read an infidel life of Christ, which had made him an unbeliever, and cost him thirty years of sin and sorrow and shame. Six months ago a young man knelt at the altar to come back to Christ. He afterward told the writer that he lost his religion by reading a single book of Robert Ingersoll. He said: "The Holy Spirit warned me at the time not to read it, but I disobeyed, and it cost me years of backsliding." -- "Pentecostal Light," hdm0101, by A. M. Hills

* * * * *

Part 83

GOD CAN SAVE INFIDELS

He can save infidels, and has saved hundreds of them. We have seen some of them who were rare trophies of grace. We knew one, Elijah P. Brown, who of all the infidels in the United States was chosen to deliver an address in honor of Tom Paine before a convention of infidels. When he was an editor of a paper in Cincinnati he would print all the names of God with a small letter to insult his Maker. He built a mansion, and filled the niches on his walls with the busts of

famous infidels. The bust of Robert Ingersoll had the place of honor, and he pointed to it proudly as his "pastor." He took a dreadful oath that no preacher should ever darken his door. Out of curiosity he went to hear Moody preach, and Was converted after the second sermon. He at once founded and published the Ram's Horn, one of the most aggressive Christian papers. Jesus had conquered and saved the proud infidel. -- "The Uttermost Salvation," hdm0494, by A. M. Hills

* * * * *

Part 84

VOLATAIRE'S AWFUL DEATH

When Voltaire felt the stroke that was to bring him to death, he was overpowered with remorse. He sent for a minister and wanted to be reconciled to the Church. His infidel friends hastened to his bedside to prevent this, but it was only to witness his agony and to be cursed by him. He said, "Be gone! It is you that have brought me to this condition. Leave me, I say, be gone! What a wretched glory is this that you have produced for me." His infidel associates had promised him great wealth, honor, and glory to champion their cause. His hope, honor, wealth, and glory had perished and he was face to face with the God whose name he had blasphemed. Now, a mere fancy would not do away with the facts. Hoping to allay his fears by a written recantation, he had it prepared and signed it before witnesses, but to no avail. He had given his life to destroy the Bible and the hope of heaven, and God would not accept the last smoke of his life after he had burned the candle out in opposition to Him. For two months before he died he endured such agony that at times he would rage on God and man. At other times he would plead, "O Christ! O Lord Jesus!" Then turning he would scream, "I must die abandoned by God and man." His condition was such that his infidel associates were afraid to approach his bedside, however they guarded the door to keep others from knowing how an infidel dies. His nurse said, "For all the wealth of Europe, I would not see another infidel die." He had a master mind, excellent education, great wealth, and much earthly honor, but they had vanished and his frightened soul went unprepared to meet God. -- "Endless Retribution," hdm0232, by H. H. Hooker

* * * * *

Part 85

AN INFIDEL CLUB BROKEN UP

There is one very peculiar incident worth recording here: There was an infidel club in Dallas that defied all supernatural power, and especially laughed at these holiness people with their demonstrations. Many of them attended the revival for sport. One night, after a great service where the power of God was especially present, the leader of the infidel club challenged the preachers to a test like Elijah, to which some of them had referred in a sermon. He said, "We do not believe in God nor your Bible. There is no change of heart, as you say, and your God does not answer prayer. To prove this we will pick out a member of our club and send him to the altar and let your workers get around him and pray, and If you can get him converted then we will all abandon our teachings and go to the altar and get religion. This was agreed upon, if the man who came to the altar would pray as the leaders of the meeting asked him to. The next night the most profane and rank infidel of the club volunteered to go to the altar. All day the holiness people had

fasted and prayed that God would answer by fire as in olden times and smash that infidel club to atoms, that had damned so many young men in Dallas. The man came in the midst of the altar service, the infidels gathered around, like Ahab's false prophets, to see the outcome. Old Father Hickey, that Elijah of prayer, took him in hands, while other faithful preachers and workers gathered and kneeled in fervent prayer. Father Hickey told the infidel to say, "O God, if there is a God, reveal Thyself to me that I may know that there is a God, and I will quit my folly and give my heart to Thee." The man followed, repeating the words as Father Hickey led the prayer. There was a stillness that was supernatural, and a divine glory that all felt while they prayed on. Soon the infidel began to weep and tremble, while the saints of God prayed as only holiness people can pray when the crisis comes. He now needed no one to tell him what to say, for he was praying with all his might from the depth of a powerfully convicted heart. He confessed his sins, and acknowledged his folly, and promised to make amends as far as possible, and renounce infidelity forever. The glory struck his soul, and he began to praise God, just as the others who had been converted in the meeting. His companions, like the Pharisees who brought the adulterous woman to Jesus, began to slip out one by one until no man was left to deny the power of God. This broke up the infidel club, and gave the meeting an advertisement 'that brought hundreds to the services, and scores were converted. -- "Pioneer Days," hdm0527, by C. B. Jernigan

* * * * *

Part 86

A REDEEMED INFIDEL, DRUNKARD AND GAMBLER

You asked me to write my experience, to be published for the glory of God to show how God can saved a poor drunkard, so here it is:

I was raised by Christian parents who were old-time Methodists, that knew how to pray. Our house was the preacher's home from my earliest recollection. I was converted when a boy and tried to live a Christian life for a short time but soon began to look at the inconsistent lives of the church members around me and that got my eyes off of Christ and I found myself in sin as bad as ever. A short time after I was grown, I was deputy United States Marshall for two terms in North Georgia; hunting wild cat whiskey makers in the mountains near my home. I stood well with my home people and the officers of the law; but it was here that I learned the ways of sin as never before. I learned to drink, gamble, and that with officers of the law who were church members. I often heard them swear; I drank whiskey with them, and some times I would gamble with them; and sometimes visit houses of shame with them, and some of them were officers in the church at that.

This sort of association soon drove me into infidelity, and I became an avowed skeptic. I said there are no true Christians, as I had had a chance to see their best ones, and they all proved to be frauds, and would tell a lie in a trade as quick as I would, for I had a chance to try them. I said there was no God, and I went from bad to worse, till I was a confirmed drunkard and a gambler, and so profane that my wife was ashamed of me. I had not been to church for twelve years; had spent most of my life in trading horses and drinking whiskey. I often told my wife that I never wanted to hear another song sung, or another sermon preached, as I was already damned if there was a hell; and that I would make the best of this world that I could.

Four years ago I heard of a holiness meeting at VanAlstyne, and I decided to go just for amusement, and see what kind of people they were, as I had heard so much about them.

On Saturday I promised my wife and children that if they would get a certain piece of work done, that I would let them go to the holiness meeting. I did not want to hear the preaching myself; but thought that I would get my wife and children in the meeting, and then I would have a big time up town with the boys. But praise the dear Lord, when I got there they were singing such songs as I had never heard before in all my life; and they all looked like they felt every word they sang. Then they all turned preachers and commenced to testify, and I had never heard such before. This seemed like the very gate of heaven to me. I heard all old man testify that nearly killed me. He said, "Bless God, I have still got the blessing this morning, and I am saved and sanctified now." While he talked the big tears rolled down his cheeks, while his face shone like heaven. Then they sang:

"Jesus saves day by day,
Sweetly keeps all the way;
All my burdens He bears -- every care;
Soon I'll lay my armour down,
And at Jesus' feet sit down.
And receive a starry crown over there."

Somehow this made me think of my mother, and the songs she used to sing when I was a boy, and the prayers that she so often prayed for me. I soon forgot my infidelity, and thought that I had met some people who really knew God. Then the preacher said he wanted to add his testimony: and told how God could save and sanctify a wood hauler, and call him to preach a full salvation; that was the power of God to save the worst of men, and all that would come to Him. He then read his text, and preached a red hot sermon on repentance; and the Holy Spirit burnt the message in on my heart, until I felt like I hung over hell on a hair, and my doom was sealed if I did not repent.

My sins stood before me like mountains; every old debt that I had sworn that I would not pay, and had outlawed, looked me in the face, and every sharp bargain that I had ever drove stood before me like a hissing viper; and every old doctor's bill that I had sworn that I would not pay, demanded a settlement, and all the lies that I had told in mule trades rang out in my ears, and even the chickens that I had stolen in drunken sprees began to crow at me until I felt like hell was caving in under my feet. I was the most miserable man alive that day. As the preacher went on he said it was restitution or hell: that to repent meant to straighten up all the past life and to make all your wrongs right so far as it was possible for you to do it.

The devil came up to me and said, "If it means that, you can never get religion, as you have gone too far." As I sat there on that bench I could almost hear the screams of the damned that night. I heaved a sigh and said, "Lord help me." I went back to church the next day and sister Jernigan preached, and told how God had actually saved a poor fallen girl, and made a preacher out of her. She told how God could save a fallen man as easy as he could save a fallen woman, and how she had worked with the fallen in the dives of deepest sin, and God had blessed her work.

I looked around and all the congregation was in tears, and I found myself crying like my heart would break for the first time in years. I said I would give the world for a religion like that. As we drove along the road home my wife said, "Harve, what do you think of those people? Do you think we could live without sin as they tell us we must?"

I said, "If we don't we will all go to hell."

She said, "Harve, you have always talked that way when you would talk about religion at all; why don't you get it then, and show people that you can live it."

I replied, "If I was to get that kind of religion I would have to quit trading like I do, and you and the children would starve to death or go naked; it would break up a rich man to pay back all that I would have to pay."

Then tears came into her eyes as she looked at me and said, "I had rather go in rags and live on bread and water than for you to be lost."

I tried to quit studying about the meeting, and was up early the next morning ready for work, but I could not pick cotton; and all that I could hear was that song: "Jesus saves day by day." It kept ringing in my ears till I sent one of the boys to the house to ask their mother if she wanted to go to church; and she said yes. So I hitched up the mules and off we went to meeting again.

When we reached the tent the meeting had begun and the people were singing and shouting, and that same old fat man was on his feet testifying again, and as I came in he looked at me with tears all over his face; this made me more miserable than ever. When they called mourners my wife went to the altar; and I was glad of it, for I had heard them say that if she got sanctified it would keep her from getting mad, and I wanted her to get it; and thank God, she did get reclaimed that night and never did stop till she got sanctified.

The meeting closed and left me at the altar still unsaved. I went home determined never to give up till God did save me. I would read the lesson in the Bible and my wife would lead the prayer at home from the first night that she got saved. I went to every meeting that I could hear of, and prayed all the time, until one day all alone in the cotton field, as I prayed between two cotton rows the Lord seemed to whisper into my soul: "What about all those old debts that you owe; will you pay them? and what about those men that you have beat in mule trades; will you make that good?"

I fell on my face and cried to God, and promised to pay back as fast as I could. Then the Spirit began to talk to me about the whiskey and tobacco that I was using, and said, "Will you quit that too?" I sent the children to the house, and began to clean up right. I threw away a box of snuff and a piece of tobacco, and kneeled by the wagon tongue and prayed though, till I knew that God had forgiven all the black past. Praise His holy name.

I confessed and promised God to straighten up all; and thank God, the fire fell and heaven was turned loose in my soul. I went to the house rejoicing, and from that hour I have not touched whiskey or tasted tobacco, or sworn an oath. Instead of the bottle, we have the Bible. Instead of

growls we have prayers, instead of tobacco, we have testimonies; instead of rows, we have song; instead of going to gambling hells, I have gone to prayer-meetings; and instead of going to saloons, we have all got into the wagon and gone to prayer-meeting and church. Thank God for a salvation that will clean a man up and make him straighten up all the past, and pay back and sign notes till all is clear. This salvation cost me \$800.

When I got converted my wife said, "Harve, you ought to get sanctified before you stop." I told her that what I had was good enough for field hands. But it was not long till I found the uprisings still in my heart of the old carnal nature, that disturbed my peace, and one night at a prayer-meeting the Lord sanctified me wholly. Praise God!

Then I wanted to go to my old home and tell all my old associates what the Lord had done for me. How He could save an old tough like I had been, and then sanctify him, and so completely destroy all the desires for former things out of my heart; and stop me from fusses and quarrels, and make a decent man out of me. I wanted to go back to Georgia, my old home, and tell my old mother what great things the Lord had done for me, and tell her how God had answered her prayer at last, and saved her drunken boy. I started, but the day before I got there the Lord called her home to live with him.

It seems like I can almost see my Savior meet her, and say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, I have good news to tell you;" and as he sat down with the redeemed saints above, he pointed to earth and said, "Look! that drunken boy of yours has been redeemed at last." Then I can almost hear her shout as she joins the white-robed choir, while they sing, "Redeemed through the blood."

Four years have passed since God saved me. I have had some hard testings, and trials have been hard, but by the grace of God I mean to go through with Him at any cost. May the Lord bless this testimony to the good of some poor struggling soul as I was, and help him to find a Savior that can save, sanctify and keep.

Look up, brother! If Jesus can save a wretch like me, he can save all that come to Him. Let all who read these lines pray at least one earnest prayer to God that I may be saved in heaven at last, where I want to meet Jesus who redeemed me, and mother who prayed for me in childhood days, and while I was in sin, and Bro. Lewis, whose testimony convicted me, and Bro. Jernigan, who so faithfully preached repentance to me, and Sister Jernigan, who first told me that Christ could save the worst of men. A. H. Tipton, VanAlstyne, Texas, December 16, 1904 -- "Redeemed Through The Blood," hdm0530, Jonnie Jernigan

* * * * *

Part 87

WHAT IT WAS THAT BURNED THE INFIDELITY OUT OF HIM

There was a young man who had become infatuated with the deceits of Ingersollism. He thought he had come to a full acceptance of its errors, and had about concluded that the Church was nothing to be respected, the Bible a human invention, and religion a mere fancy. Just about this time he went to write at the same desk in an office where there stood opposite him a devoted young

man, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. There they stood facing each other, pushing busily their pens for several months. Occasionally the young skeptic would flaunt out his reproaches upon Christianity, and his infidel objections. His godly associate refrained from any sharp retorts, and declined all controversy, but kept his soul so full of faith that he wore a bright face, carried a good spirit, and maintained an irreproachable life. One evening this skeptical young man fell in with the pastor of the Church to which his religious business companion belonged. As they walked together this disciple of Ingersoll said very abruptly: "I have made up my mind to join your Church." The pastor, much surprised, said: "I am glad of it. Come next Sabbath and I will receive you; and now tell me what has changed your mind." "O," said he, "I have been writing for several months at a desk with a young man, a member of your Church. He never gets out of humor; he always seems so happy, and he is so kind that he has burned all my infidelity out of me, and I want just what he has, and I believe he has religion." The next Sabbath he united with the Church, and is now a happy and useful Christian. -- "Faith Papers," hdm0109, by S. A. Keen

* * * * *

Part 88

HOW AN INFIDEL BOXER WAS WHIPPED BY A WATERMELON

Mr. Scobie was a very outstanding evangelist in Canada, during part of his life -- but he was a remarkable character before his conversion. He was a rank infidel and very able in argument; physically, he was a big able pugilist and at one time conducted two boxing schools in Ottawa, one on Bank Street, and one on Sparks Street. Once he was third man from the world's heavy weight championship. Sullivan and Killrain were the only ones ahead of him and he used to box on exhibition with John L. Sullivan. He also was a high class blacksmith and was paid double wages for his work. At one time he was a policeman. He also had a license to run railroad engines. In the early rough days, he would go to the poll to knock down certain men if they did not vote right, and later he was an ordained Methodist Minister.

In his rough life he hated religion, and had a special hatred for an old easy going saint, a man who had a little garden and daily came down a certain street with an old horse and wagon selling his garden stuff. Mr. Scobie had a blacksmith shop on that street, and one day the old saint stopped his rig in front of the shop, but across the street, and while he was in a house selling his products, Mr. Scobie ran over to his wagon and took a watermelon, then hid it in the shop, thinking the old saint would come to the shop and accuse him of stealing the watermelon. Then he would have the satisfaction of knocking the old fellow down. When the old man came out of the house to his wagon, he missed the watermelon; he stood for a moment and looked every direction, and then took a good look at the blacksmith shop. With this he got into the rig and went on. The next day the old Christian man came along and stopped his rig in the same place, and went into a house. Mr. Scobie, supposed the old man was watching him, so he did not go near the rig that day. The old man came out of the house, went to his wagon, and picking up a fine big watermelon, carried it into Mr. Scobie's shop. He set it down on the floor and said, "There, Mr. Scobie, is another watermelon." This was the first time in Mr. Scobie's life that he was really whipped, and it had much to do with bringing about his conversion which was accomplished not long after. -- "Gems of Truth," hdm0499, by W. G. Ketcheson

* * * * *

Part 89

HOW M. W. KNAPP LED AN INFIDEL TO FAITH IN THE BLOOD

Many have said to me: "I don't see why the shedding of blood should be essential to salvation." A very intelligent man at the close of one of our meetings remained to make some honest inquiries. He had been educated an infidel, but the fact, which he confessed, that Christianity does more for man than infidelity, had led him to stop and candidly investigate its claims and foundations. I said to him in the outset: "If you can have your objections answered and difficulties explained, will you become a Christian at once?" He answered, decidedly: "I will!" God's Spirit wonderfully assisted his servant, and it was only a brief time before he confessed all other difficulties to have vanished, and we were face to face with the question of the "shedding of blood essential to salvation." Our conversation was in substance as follows:

"Do you see the need of a Savior?"

"I do not; it seems to me that if I do right from this time on, that that is all that ought to be required."

"But what about your past sins?"

"I had not thought of them."

"Would it be safe for the State to make the only punishment of law-breakers the promise that they will cease to commit crime, make their wrongs as near right as possible, and henceforth do right?"

"No; the safety of her citizens and the deserts of the criminal both demand that penalties shall be pronounced and executed."

"If that is true of human government, have we not every reason to suppose it is of the divine?"

"We surely have."

"Can you not see, then, that it would not be safe or right for God to remit the penalty because you promise to do better?"

"I never looked at it in this light before, but it does seem so."

"Would it be safe for the State to pardon an offender and restore him to citizenship if he would reform and live right, and in addition to this a substitute could be provided that would have an equal or greater influence in restraining crime as the punishment of the criminal?"

"It seems to me that a pardon might be safely given on such a condition, but on no other."

"Now, do you not see that this is just the sinner's condition?"

"He has broken the laws of the divine government, and in God's sight is a criminal. He has exposed himself to the righteous punishment due to such an offender. For God to indiscriminately pardon such without any substitute for the punishment that would carry equal restraint with its execution, would be to create contempt for his laws, and place a premium on their violation. Imagine a man on trial for some crime. He is proved guilty, but pleads that the sentence shall not be pronounced against him. He gives as his reasons: 1st. That he is sorry that he committed the crime; 2d. That he will do all he can to undo the harm he has done; 3d. That he has not committed many crimes, and has done a great many good deeds; 4th. That he is resolved never to break the law again. What depraved wretch is there that would not profess all of these things if he might clear himself by so doing? But no; the law has been broken, guilt is clearly proved, and the sentence must be served. Justice demands it, and you say, 'Yes, that is right.' Now, if the prisoner is to be saved the penalty of his crime, does he not need a redeemer?"

"It certainly seems so."

"The sinner's case is equally as needy. He has broken divine law. Both himself and his Maker are witness to the fact. He has exposed himself to the sinner's awful penalty, and justice says it must fall. Mercy in the Savior's guise appears, and provides a substitute at infinite cost that will have on thinking beings as strong an influence to deter from sin as the execution of the penalty, and so procures the coming of the Holy Spirit into the soul to assist in living right. The sinner is utterly powerless to procure either the pardon or the Spirit's power; without both he is lost forever. They both are proffered through the blood of Christ, and 'whosoever will' may thus accept them. Do you not see your need of such a Savior?"

"I do."

"Then, will you not here and now accept him?"

"I see no reason why I should not."

After explaining the conditions upon which Christ saves, we kneeled in prayer, and he there and then seemed to fully yield and accept salvation "through the blood." -- "Out of Egypt Into Canaan," hdm0362, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 90

TESTING THE BIBLE BY PRAYER, AND INFIDEL WAS SAVED

There were a good many remarkable conversions. We recollect one -- that of E. B. Andrews. He had been wounded and disabled in the army. His father was a preacher, but he was a pronounced infidel. I went into his room to get some matches, in order to get a chance to talk to him. He told me he did not believe a thing in the Bible; it was all contradictions. I challenged him

to test it by prayer, and told him if God did not answer him I would saw wood and put him through college. I said he was like a boy looking for contradictions in the exceptions to the rules in the back part of the Greek grammar instead of beginning with the alphabet.

About a week after I had prayed for this infidel, who was doing bad work by his infidel teaching in the school, I called into his room about the time we were to go up to our class. While he was getting ready to go, I said to him, "Andrews, what do you think about this matter of religion?"

"Well, Ellis," said he, "I have been thinking about the matter in the common sense light you put it, and I have made up my mind to test it and see what there is in it."

I took out my watch -- it was ten minutes to the class; it began at three. "If you mean it, Andrews, you have plenty of time to test it before we go to class," said I.

"I am ready," said he.

"Kneel right down where you are and ask God for the Spirit, and He will give it to you," said I.

Down he got upon his knees, and, lifting up his head, with closed eyes and his countenance set in a determined way, prayed, "O God, whoever Thou art, and whatever are Thy functions, we know that Thou art almighty, because Thou hast created the universe. I pray Thee, whatever there is in the religion of Jesus Christ, to reveal it unto me by Thy Holy Spirit. O Lord, I give myself to Thee, to follow and be led by Thee as long as I live." At this point the Spirit of God in power, sensibly, to me, fell upon him. The next breath of prayer was the prayer of a Christian: "O God, let this work go on in the school, and let not a single sinner escape. For Christ's sake. Amen."

He arose from his knees, and I said, "How is it, Andrews?"

"It is all right; I have the witness of the Spirit," said he.

That night, and ever after, he was a good worker in the school, much to the surprise of many who had considered him an incorrigible infidel. -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 91

HOW AND INFIDEL AND HIS WIFE WERE SAVED

Among the attendants of the revival meetings at E____ was Mr. B____ and wife, both of them persons of influence. Mr. B____ had been an infidel. The death of a precious child had made him want an eternity in which to meet again his loved one. He was seriously investigating the claims of Christianity, and came to the meeting a serious and honest inquirer. As is always true of such persons, he was not left long in the dark. He was soon under conviction. Many were burdened

for him. Conviction kept deepening. They went home, feeling so deeply that neither spoke to the other. They retired in silence. There followed then a silent struggle between each one and the old life. Finally Christ conquered, and the wife broke the solemn silence by saying, "Husband, I have made up my mind that I must be a Christian whether you are or not."

"Why, I had just reached that conclusion myself, that I must be one whether you were or not," was his surprised reply. They kneeled in prayer, were happily converted, and came to the next afternoon meeting and confessed their new-found joy.

I have met with them a number of times since, always firm in the faith and abounding in the work of the Lord. -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 92

THE TESTIMONY OF A CONVERTED INFIDEL

At the request of Bro. Knapp, and for the glory of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I write the following brief account of my early life and experiences.

I was born into an unchristian family. Father, grandfather and great-grandfather were avowed infidels, and the rest skeptical.

I remember of father reading the Bible once, for the purpose of ridiculing it. He had taken me many times with him to saloons and bought us both some beer. Young people used to gather at our house to dance and make sport of religion, while cider was always kept in the cellar. We never attended church.

When about fourteen years of age, I attended a dance given by the Universalists at M____. At the close, the preacher took the proceeds, fifty dollars, and kindly thanked them for it. From that time I began to laugh at Christianity, and became disgusted with religion as I saw it in most of those who professed it.

After moving to Odessa, Ionia County, they got me to play the organ at church, and attend Sunday School some. One of the church members used to stop at father's and drink hard cider, and also use tobacco so much that he would go often to the door and spit. After he would leave the house, father would laugh and say ironically, "There goes a sample of Christianity."

I kept thinking still less of Christianity, and finally .resolved to join some circus and practice a year, but agreed if I could go to the commercial college in Grand Rapids I would give it up. After coming from school, I began work in a store and kept company with a Christian young lady.

One day she told me her experience at conversion, which made me feel afterwards that I really would like to find out if there was any truth in religion or not. In August, 1886, I thought for sport and rest I would go to the Ionia Camp Meeting. I tented with acquaintances from Odessa,

among whom was Mrs. Hutchins, whom I sincerely believed was a Christian. I had confidence in her.

I did not idle about so much in the woods as I intended to, but was drawn to attend the meetings. They got me into the choir to sing and play the organ. One night Rev. Levi Masters preached. The invitation to sinners was then given.

O. E. Whitman moved along the bench, and putting his arm about me said, "Burnie, won't you go?" I burst into tears and went; they prayed for me and gave instructions, but I received no light. It kept getting darker. The next day I could scarcely eat or smile, but attended the meetings as usual, feeling still more miserable than the night previous.

I was continually annoyed by the less wise ones who would persist in talking to me, but their words gave no comfort. I believe if some one who really knew Christ had taken me alone, they could have led me quickly to Him.

The next day I felt still worse. It was the last day of camp meeting. I resolved never to go home feeling as I did, but if not converted that night, to take the train at Ionia and go -- I cared not where.

About 1 o'clock P.M. despair seized me. Unknown to others I left the ground and went down the road a mile. I was sick of hearing. Anywhere to get away from all sound. I could not run away from a smitten conscience.

As I look back now I realize how full of evil to me were the words spoken for my comfort. They tried to make me believe I was saved, but only doubting, and tried to cheer me up. I knew I was not saved. Had I listened to them and believed them, my soul would have been lost, for it seemed as though life and death had been set before me and the question asked, Which do you choose?

Oh, how thankful I am that Jesus kept wounding my proud, self-righteous heart all the more! I had shed a few tears, got down on my knees, stood up and said I wanted to be a Christian, and had God not led me they would have made me believe that I was a Christian. I wanted to know, to feel different, to become a new creature, and no amount of false comfort could make me believe a change had come. I learned this, that when a sinner has been made a new creature in Christ Jesus he'll know it sooner than you do.

For more than two hours I wept, prayed, and sought for light, but my soul found it not. I went back to the grounds and went to the young people's meeting. Again they prayed for me. I thought, surely God will end all this agony and suspense now; but the burden of sin grew heavier. It was intolerable.

Finally two young men led me into the woods and prayed for me until words failed. I tried to pray but failed, and said, "Boys, it is no use; I'm going to give it up.

I cared not what came next. We sat down on a log in silence. Unknowingly we obeyed His command, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." We did not wait long. A strange, restful sensation was felt; the lines of despair in my face changed to lines of joy. A sweet wave of salvation gently washed me; then others; so gently, so sweetly, until my whole being seemed enveloped in something. I felt God about me and in my heart. I sprang to my feet. Oh, "joy unspeakable and full of glory"! I praised God and wept and shouted.

Back we went to tell the glad news. I did not have to use words, or say I had raised my hand, and have the pastor put my name down on the church record. As soon as they saw me they knew I had found the Saviour.

Oh, such a sweet peace! I felt I was resting in Jesus' arms, and wanted to lie perfectly still. How I love Him, for I am "kept by the power of God"! -- Rev. Morris E. Townsend, Freeport, Mich.

We are glad to be able to give the above from the pen of Bro. Townsend. He is now a preacher' of righteousness and doing true and valiant service for the truths

The gospel is more than a match for even "hereditary" infidelity. -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 93

A FORETASTE OF DAMNATION ON HIS DEATH-BED

The following scene is described by Evangelist Caughey: Upon the bed of his last sickness lay a dying infidel. He was asked a question, to which his countenance replied, before he had uttered a word: "Are your principles sufficient to sustain you in this trying hour?" He answered sternly, "No;" and after a pause, unable to restrain his feeling, he exclaimed, "Surely I am the greatest fool in the world to have become the dupe of wicked and designing men; I am justly consigned to that hell, the idea of which I once laughed at." Offers of pardon through the blood of the Lamb were freely presented and sadly and sullenly put away. He heard the exhortation with patience, till "penitent sinner" was mentioned; when he cried, "Penitent sinner! I am not penitent. It is the fear of eternal damnation that is at work upon my guilty soul; this is nothing else but a pledge and foretaste of the misery of the damned. Eternal fire! eternal fire! who can dwell with everlasting burnings? My body cannot live and my soul dare not die. Oh, that I had another day! but this would be of no use; I must perish, and reconcile myself to my lot as I can; I am dying! I am dying!" A second attempt was made to turn his despairing conscience to the cross which he heard with more than usual patience. When the individual ceased, he became very restless, and at last shrieked fearfully, crying, "See! see! do you not see them? They are come for me, I must go to my own place." The horror on his countenance was infernal. His last words were, "Damned, damned, forever damned!" -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 94

AN INFIDEL WHO WAS TAKEN AT HIS WORD

Mr. L_____ was a confirmed infidel. He was also a slave to tobacco. This habit he hated. Many times he had struggled to be free from it. His struggles were fruitless. His slavery grew more rigorous. In desperation he finally said: "If God will destroy the appetite I have for tobacco, I will believe in Him, give up my infidelity and become a Christian." In an instant the appetite vanished. Instead of loving, he now loathed it. He at once was converted and became a firm Christian. He since has gone home to heaven triumphant. -- "Revival Kindlings," hdm0412, by M. W. Knapp

* * * * *

Part 95

DAMNED BY AND WITH AN INFIDEL PREACHER

A young woman in the state of Pennsylvania, reared by an infidel father who paved her way to hell by teaching her the contents of the Age of Reason, was at last, after her father's death, brought under the influence of the Gospel by an earnest minister whose services she attended. She gave her heart to God, and for some years lived an humble Christian life. In the course of time the minister was removed by the calendar; a new preacher came; one of a different type, who had been trained under the new regime, with a new "Course of Study," an evolutionist, a higher critic of the destructive type, and in his sermons he gave vent to the things which this young woman had heard her father say, many years ago. How strange it seems that men can and do preach things in orthodox pulpits today, that if they had preached them forty years ago, they would have been expelled. Her faith was weakened; she lost her experience, and soon after died. During her last illness the preacher came to see her. When she told him what his destructive criticism had done for her, and said to him, "You are preaching what my infidel father once said, you are rehashing the things Paine taught, from an orthodox pulpit, I have lost all the faith I ever had. I am going to hell, and you will come after me. I am damned and you did it." -- "The Departed Lord," hdm0511, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 96

THE DEATH OF SAINTS AND SINNERS CONTRASTED

[Some of the "sinners" in this selection were "atheists," or "infidels".]

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate, is privileged beyond the common walks of life, quite on the verge of Heaven," while the candle of the wicked is snuffed out. A short comparison of the testimonies of dying saints and sinners prove this to be true. Balaam, the mad prophet who loved the wages of sin, said, "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh. Let me die the death of the righteous." The Emperor Julian, the apostate, who, to falsify the Savior's word attempted to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, died in despair, shouting, "O Nazarene, thou has conquered;" "I shall go to Hell, and you shall go with me," said Voltaire to his doctor. Paine, on his death-bed, alternated between blasphemous oaths and his piteous cries to the

Lord for mercy. "Remorse, remorse!" were the last words of Randolph. "It is the last of earth; I die content," said John Quincy Adams, as he passed away. "This unworthy right hand," said Cranmer, as he thrust it into the flames. "Welcome this chain, for Jesus' sake; welcome, life everlasting," said Saunders, as he was bound to the stake. "Be of good cheer, Master Ridley," said Bishop Latimer, as he was burning in the flames. "I am dying," were the closing words of Whitfield. "Death can never take me by surprise," said Judson, as he was dying. "The best of all is, God is with us," said John Wesley. His brother's testimony was, "I shall be satisfied with Thy likeness." "The victory is won," said Payson. "I will now go to sleep," said Neander. Mozart wrote his requiem under the conviction that it was for himself. "I shall be saved as a pardoned sinner," said John Howe. "I am abundantly satisfied," said Calvin. Baxter said, 'I have peace, I have peace.' Humboldt exclaimed, "These rays beckon earth to Heaven." "Die a man, die a man, Paine!" said one of his hardened associates, who saw the infidel shivering in his bed. Lord Byron said, "Come, come! no weakness! let's be a man to the last." It was Hobbe's wish that he might find a hole to creep out of the world at. The death to come is more bitter than this; the life to come more sweet. Polycarp, on the edge of martyrdom, said, "O Father of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, I bless thee that thou has counted me worthy of this day, to receive my portion in the number of the martyrs in the cup of Christ!" -- "The Callused Knees," hdm0513, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 97

VOLTAIRE AND PAINE DID NOT DESTROY THE BIBLE

The enemies of the Bible have not been able to destroy the Bible, to say nothing of producing a better one. It has been the most hated book in the world. But this itself is strong evidence or argument in favor of its divine origin.

Voltaire boasted that he would destroy in a few years what it took Christ and His apostles 1800 years to establish, but he did not do it. The old printing press on which he printed his infidel literature has been used since to print copies of the Word of God, and the old log cabin in which he lived has been packed to the roof with Bibles.

Tom Paine said he had cut down the trees of paradise and so thoroughly uprooted them that no power could make them grow; but Thomas was mistaken, for since he gave utterance to that saying 882 millions of Bibles have been sold. The Bible has survived every effort of the past to destroy it. What other book possesses such vitality? -- "Enemies of The Home," hdm0440, by Forman Lincicome

* * * * *

Part 98

ATHEISM DOES NOT BRING HAPPINESS

Where is happiness? It is not in unbelief. Voltaire, the noted French infidel had plenty of that, and he said, "I wish I had never been born." -- "The World's Greatest," by Forman Lincicome

* * * * *

Part 99

THE INFIDEL WHO "PUT HIS FOOT IN HIS MOUTH"

Whenever I meet a fellow who says he does not believe in the Bible it makes me think of the infidel and the Quaker lady. The infidel met the Quaker lady on her way to church with a Bible under her arm.

He said, "Good morning, lady. I see you have a Bible. You don't believe the Bible?"

"Yes, I do, don't thee?"

"No, and half the preachers today do not believe it at all. Do you believe that story about Jonah and the whale?"

"Certainly I do. Don't thee?"

"Tell me if you can, how any man could live in the belly of a fish three days and three nights."

"I don't know," said the old lady, "but when I get to heaven I will ask Jonah."

"Suppose Jonah did not get to heaven?"

"Then," said the lady, "you can ask him." -- "The Soul," hdm0521, by Forman Lincicome

* * * * *

Part 100

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST OVERCOMES INFIDELITY

We must recur here to a case which came under our observation years ago, "among the annals of the poor." A woman in poor health, poor in this world's goods, pressed down with the care of a large family, With the merest "name to live" in the Church, when moving about amid her domestic cares, had these specific reflections one day pass with wonderful impressiveness through her mind: "I shall die soon and stand in the presence of God. I do not desire to meet my God there on a short or slight acquaintance. I desire to know Him fully before that time. From this moment it shall be my supreme object 'to know God, understand His way, and find grace in His sight.'" Without relaxation of fidelity in family duty, she set her whole heart upon knowing and walking with God. When about her daily cares, she would have her Bible open upon a shelf, so that as she passed around she could stop a moment and read a passage, and then make it the subject of meditation and prayer. With the same diligence she read the most spiritual works that she could obtain. In prayer her importunity would admit of no denial. In a short time the baptism came, and visions of God filled her whole soul. She beheld "with open face the glory of the Lord, and truly her "fellowship was with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." As a consequence, her

character became mildly and gloriously radiant through that whole community. Even infidels, and there were numbers of them in the place, confessed that there was Christian character in its genuineness and perfection of beauty. In the revival of religion which followed, none had such power with the people as she. The sisters of the Church came together and did her fall and winter sewing, that she might visit from house to house. All the cavils of infidels, Universalists, and worldlings were silenced under the power of her appeals and the Divine radiance of her character. Her pastor, who was a man of superior education, talents, and piety, said to us, that whenever he came into the presence of that woman, he felt that he, and not she, was the learner. At the same time he never saw an individual more humble and teachable than she was. In everything which pertains to "the life of God in the soul of man," he was conscious that her vision and experience far transcended his. Our object in giving the above illustrations has been to impress this fact on the reader, that all who receive this Divine baptism do so in consequence of a previous compliance with the conditions on which God had promised the blessing; and that without it none can fulfill his life-mission, or be duly prepared for the kingdom of glory. -- "The Baptism of The Holy Ghost," hdm0390, by Asa Mahan

* * * * *

Part 101

FRICION THAT MAKES ATHEISTS SHINE ALSO DESTROYS THEM

Where is Voltaire, the scoffing French infidel? Voltaire said the name of Christ would be extinct within one hundred years. But is it so? Where is Tom Paine, who wrote THE AGE OF REASON? Where is Robert Ingersoll? These men shone largely because of their friction with Christ and truth. You look up to the heavens on a starry night, and you see a meteor dart across the heavens and disappear. What made that meteor shine? Not its inherent light, for it has none. But its friction with the atmosphere of the earth caused it to shine. It shines because it is rushing toward destruction. These men shine largely because of their friction with Christ and the truth, and that friction means their own destruction. "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." -- "The Unchanging Christ," hdm0202, by I. C. Mathis

* * * * *

Part 102

HIS PRAISES NOT QUENCHED BY THE INFIDEL

There was a young man, who was not very bright, but bright enough to get converted good, who always could see something in everything for which to praise the Lord. He was an astonishment to the people. An old infidel invited him to take dinner with him. He said, that he would give him something in which he would not find anything to praise the Lord for. So when the young man was seated in his nice home, the old gentleman said to him, "You will have to excuse me for a short time. Here is a book with which you can entertain yourself until I return. The young man took the book and thanked him. The book was purely a scientific production; it did not mention God, Jesus Christ, or religion, and the infidel said, "He will not find a thing in that book to praise the Lord for, so he will be silenced one time." But to his surprise, when he returned, he

found the young man laughing and praising the Lord. The old gentleman said, "Now, what have you found to praise the Lord for?" He said, "Sir, I was just reading in this most beautiful book that you gave me, where this scientist says that the sea is five miles deep, and I remembered that the Lord said in the Bible that He put my sins in the bottom of the sea. I was just shouting over the fact that they are buried five miles deep." -- "Knowing God," hdm0341, by J. B. McBride

* * * * *

Part 103

KNOWING GOD, THE ONLY KNOWLEDGE THAT SILENCES INFIDELS

Once there was a young man who educated himself for the ministry, and after several years in school he graduated with honors and returned to his home, and while a crowd had gathered around him and were extending congratulations, an old infidel came up and congratulated the young man on his achievements in school, but denied his Christ whom he was to represent, and an argument was the result. In the heat of the discussion the old infidel said, "Young man, I want to ask you a positive question, and I demand of you a positive answer: "Do you know that there is a personal Jesus Christ?" The young man said, "I have read so-and-so." "To the question! Give me an answer. Your evidence would not be accepted in any court. Reading and hearing of a person would be rejected. The court wants men who know something." The young man, whipped from the field, turned away enraged, the infidel laughing in his face; but no sooner was the field cleared than a young man came upon the scene and threw his hat down and said, "Gentlemen, I know that there is a personal Jesus Christ." The infidel demanded proof, and the young said: "One day I got under awful conviction and thought I would drop into hell unless I found my Savior. I went out into the brush to pray, and while there on my knees I met Jesus Christ and got acquainted with Him, and He regenerated my soul and forgave all my sins, and I know that there is a personal Jesus Christ." The old infidel said, "My young man, if you have met Him and know Him, then I am ready to take off my hat to you." And the young man went off a conqueror, with angels attending his pathway. One had an education, but no knowledge of Christ; the other had no education, but knew Christ. -- "Entire Sanctification," hdm0486, by J. B. McBride

* * * * *

Part 104

HOW INSKIP LED AN INFIDEL INTO SALVATION

Among those converted was the most noted infidel in the place. It was generally conceded that this is the best time we have had since the work commenced. And to me it seems perfectly wonderful."

The infidel, to whom reference is here made, was attracted to Mr. Inskip, and often came to hear him preach. In private conversation he remarked, "I wish I was as happy as you are, Mr. Inskip. I would give the world if I were." "You can be as happy as I am," said Mr. Inskip. "How?" asked the skeptic. "By believing as I do," was the ready response. "That is impossible, Mr. Inskip, I cannot, I am an infidel." Mr. Inskip had never suspected this of his friend.

On the evening referred to, Mr. Inskip exhorted the people with great force to seek God. Pausing, he said, "Perhaps there is a man present who says, 'I do not believe in a God.' Well," shouted Mr. I., "come and trust in the God in whom I believe, and I pledge my faith that He will save you." The infidel listened with a heart full of desire, and at such an invitation, arose and bowed at the altar. As he saw him coming up the aisle, Mr. Inskip felt almost alarmed at his own statement. But his skeptical friend was there, and he must meet the issue. He exhorted the people to pray to God, and they earnestly prayed. Presently his friend beckoned to him to come to him. As he knelt before him, he said, "I have found it! I have found it!" "found what?" inquired the greatly excited preacher. "I have found that there is a God, and that the Scriptures are a revelation from God, and that Jesus Christ is the Son of God!" "And," shouted Mr. Inskip, "He is your Saviour." And instantly the infidel arose, saved by faith in Jesus Christ. -- "The Life of John S. Inskip," by McDonald & Searles

* * * * *

Part 105

THE GLORY STRUCK AFTER A CONVERTED INFIDEL'S TESTIMONY

[See also #208]

Another scene occurred, which was, in many respects, the most thrilling we ever witnessed at a National Camp-meeting. Mr. Joseph Barker, a converted infidel, gave a most graphic account of his falling away from the faith of Christ, and his recovery and salvation. While describing his purpose and effort to examine anew the claims of Christianity, to seek to ascertain the true nature and real value of the teachings and spirit of its founder, his words very deeply moved all hearts. But when he got a sight of Jesus of Nazareth, that view, he said, "melted my soul, and my tears moistened the book I was reading." He had no thought of getting to Jesus, but as he looked upon Him, he appeared "the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely." "Then," said he, "He reached out His hands and took hold of me, and I took hold of Him. In the grapple for life, he saved me."

The people listened to this narration of experience with almost breathless interest, and with hearts well nigh to bursting with emotion. No sooner had Mr. Barker closed, than Mr. Inskip, full of excitement, arose and said: "'All hail the power of Jesus' name!' Sing!" The vast audience sprang to their feet, and sang, it seemed, as never before. The first verse was followed by the second -- -

"Let every kindred, every tribe," etc.

This done, he said: "What might appear extravagant at ordinary times, became proper at others." He, for once, appreciated the wish of the poet, expressed in the verse of the hymn, --

"O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Redeemer's praise!" etc.

The congregation almost took the words from his lips, and such a volume of song as burst forth from that enraptured throng has seldom been heard on earth. "It was," says one who was present, "rapture -- bliss -- heaven, -- a joy unspeakable and full of glory." Rev. Dr. F. Hodgson, who had been present from the beginning of the meeting, as a earnest seeker of entire sanctification, could not longer contain himself, so deep were his emotions. With a face all aglow, he leaped to the front of the stand, shouting at the top of his voice: "Shout! SHOUT! this is the time for hallelujahs! What are hallelujahs for, if not for an occasion like this!" His attitude, voice, and expression of countenance, all combined to greatly intensify the already almost uncontrollable excitement of the people. They shouted, they wept, they laughed with joy; while Messrs. Inskip, Hodgson, and Barker were in each other's embrace, in joyful exultation over the glory of the Lamb slain to redeem us to God with His own blood, which cleanses us from all unrighteousness. -- "The Life of John S. Inskip," by McDonald & Searles

* * * * *

Part 106

RUSSELL H. CONWELL AN INFIDEL WON BY AN ORDERLY

He was a stalwart captain in the army during the Civil War. His avowal was that of infidelity and atheism. None of God would he allow in his life. When he told his father, a pious Methodist, that in Yale he had changed his belief, the old man said, "Son, I would rather see you in your coffin, or live in ignorance, than for you to forsake the God of your father and mother." During the war it was his (misfortune to be attended by one John Ring as an orderly.

Noble John did not know much so far as the theories of the world were concerned, but he did know enough to want to read the Bible while in the tent. But the captain would not permit this.

During a battle in North Carolina, Pickett's brigade surprised the Union Army and drove them across the river. During the turmoil, Conwell forgot to carry with him a gold-mounted sword which he prized very highly. When Ring remembered that the captain had left the sword in the tent, at once he ran through the Confederate lines to the tent, and with the sword in his hand, he started back across the burning bridge.

The Confederate officer ordered firing to cease, and commanded, "Tell the boy to jump into the river and we will save him." John did not heed; with clothing ablaze he ran on until he fell. He was rolled into the water but it was too late. He died in the hospital, leaving the words for his captain, "I wanted to give him his sword, and then he would know how I loved him."

Touched by this turn in affairs, Conwell became a changed man. Six months later he was left for dead on the battlefield. When he was finally rescued he said, "I am going to die and meet John Ring and his Master whom I have spurned." Crying day and night to God, finally peace came to his soul. He was never able to return to the field of service again. But he kept the sword, which Ring had retrieved, hanging over his bed, and daily in prayer he would say, "O Lord, help me to do my work and the work of my dear heroic soldier boy also." He felt that upon him rested the life labors of two men.

Ring's work at last was to be rewarded. Conwell started to preach. From fame to fame he soared. He builded Temple University, from which thousands have gone into the ministry. He personally assisted ten thousand young people to secure an education; several hundred thousand were trained in the university. which he founded. He baptized over six thousand converts. He founded three hospitals in connection with his church.

He delivered his famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds" more than six thousand times, and made more than eight million dollars from it, all of which he gave to educate the poor. Many books flowed from his pen. When he died in 1925 at the age of eighty-two the nations of the world mourned his home going.

With him was buried the sword, which through his life had been a constant reminder of John Ring, faithful orderly of a captain in the war, and faithful servant of the King of kings! John Ring died having touched but one man! But John Ring, when the corridors of heaven ring with the call for Conwell to receive his crown, will also be called. For he bore the torch from the Master, as a faithful servant, that lighted the great man's soul.

Friend, are there other Conwells around you, for whom you may be a John Ring? It is glorious to be heralded as a Conwell, famed and honored, which but few can attain. But all of us can race back for the sword! -- "How They Were Won," hdm0626, by Basil Miller

* * * * *

Part 107

ANSWERED PRAYER SEEN BY AN INCREDULOUS INFIDEL

Major Malan relates an unusual experience which took place when he was doing missionary work among the Kaffirs in Africa.

A storm came on at late sunset which was accompanied by thunder and lightning. It appeared evident that the major's journey, which he was making to a distant point for gospel services, would be ended. The major prayed the Lord definitely to open a way onward. At two o'clock the next morning he was awakened to the roar of thunder and the flashing of lightning.

"Nevertheless, I knelt in my bed and prayed, 'Lord Jesus, Lord of the thunder, lightning and rain, I pray Thee drive it away that I may go on my journey in Thy Gospel today.' The storm ceased almost instantly. In half an hour the moon came out. I got up at 3:30, called Solomon, my native assistant, and prepared to start."

The major faced another serious difficulty from the muddy roads. But he prayed again, and the Lord sent "an exceeding strong wind," and soon the storm ceased, and shortly thereafter the road dried. An infidel asked if the major supposed this to be an answer to his prayers, to which the missionary answered quietly in confident faith, "Yes, God sent the wind to dry the road."

Later, on the same journey, the traveling missionary met a lady engaged in gospel work, who said, "I hope we shall soon have rain." For there had been a long drought in the Transkei.

Replied Major Malan, "I believe the Lord is holding off the rain until I have passed the Orange River."

The lady laughed when Major Malan said this, but the major's faith was verified. He crossed the Orange River at about 11:00 a.m. that day. After another hour it began to rain, and by night the river was impassable for the first time that entire summer. -- "Answered Prayer in Missionary Service," hdm0691, by Basil Miller

* * * * *

Part 108
HOW BENONI HARRIS WON AN INFIDEL

In justice to the memory of Benoni Harris, it ought to be said that, notwithstanding his shabby appearance and his oddities, he sometimes made a successful dash into the enemy's camp. He once called upon a vile opposer, and asked the privilege of praying in his house. At first he received abuse, and was peremptorily ordered to leave the house. But he kindly and earnestly expostulated with the enraged man, when, perhaps, his smallness of stature and his childlike simplicity were his only protection from personal violence. He knelt and prayed while the fellow swore. His prayer concluded, he asked him to go that evening and hear him preach. The proposition was rejected with cursing and bitterness. Nothing daunted, the little meek poverty-stricken saint says: "You will go, I know you will, and you will be converted." The enraged infidel was utterly surprised that any human being could hear such abuse with such patience, and half dumb with astonishment, and from a desire to get rid of his unwelcome visitor, he promised to attend meeting, and Benoni left. His friend was at meeting in good time, and received extra attention from the preacher. The result was that before the meeting closed the infidel was on his knees. He was soundly converted and became a strong and influential Methodist. -- "Early Methodism/Old Genesee Conference," hdm0213, by George Peck

* * * * *

Part 109
BUD ROBINSON'S ENCOUNTER WITH A HIGHMINDED INFIDEL

When I was in New England an infidel attacked me for preaching that there was a hell. He told me Lyman Abbott had proved there was no hell. I said to him: "Now, my friend, who on earth did he prove that by? He didn't prove it by me; he never even consulted me about it." He looked at me perfectly surprised and said: "Are you the cowboy preacher from Texas?" I said: "Yes, I came from Texas and I have seen cows out there." He said: "We don't need such preachers as you here. You ought to go to Chicago. Don't you know we have the brainiest men and women in the world here? I can produce fifty thousand of the brainiest men and women of the City of Boston for my faith." I said to him: "Yes, you have more brains and less manhood than any gang I ever saw -- fifty thousand of you going in a solid platoon to a yawning, gaping, burning hell, where the devil will pour salty damnation down you. He will set you in a corner for a slop tub. You will be a laughing stock for the devil and his imps throughout an endless eternity." He answered: "Why, young man, if

you could convince me there was a hell I would cancel my engagements to lecture against Christianity." I said: "My brother, I can't convince you. The Bible says, 'The fool hath said in his heart there is no God.' The probabilities are that you will never get your eyes open until, like the rich man the Scripture mentions, you lift up your eyes in hell, being in torment, and you will want to send missionaries back to preach to your Bostonians, but God won't let you." -- "Sunshine and Smiles," hdm0677, by Bud Robinson

* * * * *

Part 110

AN INFIDEL AND CRAMP COLIC

I lived by an infidel once. He was the most foul mouthed man and had the sweetest little Christian wife I ever saw. He would make fun of religion most every day, when we met at the end of our rows at the field, but he was subject to the cramp colic. His wife would come over about once a month in great haste and say: "Bud, I believe Bill will die this time. He's got the worst spell of cramp colic he ever did have. You must come over and pray for him." I'd go over and find him rolling from one side of the bed to the other, holding his stomach and saying: "Oh, Lord, if there be a Lord, have mercy on me, if there is any such thing as mercy." I'd get on one side of the bed and Mary on the other, and pray for him and hold him on the bed. Along toward midnight he would get so bad he would leave out all the "ifs" and say: "Oh, Lord Jesus, you just must do something." He would finally get easy and go of to sleep. For the next few days when we would meet in the fields he would have nothing to say against religion. Toward the end of the week, when the soreness began to get out of his stomach, he would begin making fun of religion again. I would say: "All right, old boy, the Lord knows where you live, and he'll be around with another spell of cramp colic before long." He'd grin, clean of his plow and drive off, whistling through the field, saying: "Hit don't amount to nothin'." But inside of two years the cramp colic had brought him where we couldn't -- to the altar -- where I saw him stretched out in the straw one night, praying. You could have heard him a quarter of a mile away, and calling on his wife to have Brother Bud pray for him or he would be dead and in hell in a minute. I got down again on one side with Mary on the other. In a few minutes he was gloriously converted. He picked me up and hugged me and said: "Old boy, I always knew there was something in it," and went shouting all over the camp ground. -- "Sunshine and Smiles," hdm0677, by Bud Robinson

* * * * *

Part 111

HIRAM ACKERS SAVED FROM INFIDELITY, SANCTIFIED WHOLLY

It gives me great pleasure to narrate the experience of Hiram Ackers, of Bucyrus, Ohio, spoken of on a previous page. He was educated for the profession of law, but never practiced in the legal profession. He had a Christian wife, but he himself was a confirmed infidel, and badly given to strong drink. He had a small dry goods store in Bucyrus. The pastor of the Methodist Church in Bucyrus was a devout man, and was being assisted in his revival meeting by a holiness evangelist. Mrs. A. had sought to have Mr. A. accompany her to the church where the meeting was in progress, and he frankly told her he would go with her to the meeting if the preacher would

preach from a text he might choose, and told her what it was. His trouble was in regard to "election," as told in the ninth chapter of Romans, where the apostle is speaking of the calling of the Gentiles. Mrs. Ackers spoke to the preacher about it, and he consented to take that for his text at the following service in the evening.

However, when it was near the time for starting to church, Mr. A. declared he would not go; but Mrs. A. urged him to, reminding him of his promise, and he put on his hat and went with his wife to church that evening, a very unusual thing for him to do; and now, as I have many times heard him declare, "Before the preacher was half way through his sermon, the props were all knocked out from under me, and I was in the kingdom!" When the altar-call was made, to the surprise of everybody, Hiram Ackers, in company with others, humbly knelt at the altar, whereupon a brother knelt by him and inquired if he had come seeking the forgiveness of his sins, to which he promptly replied, "No, sir, God has forgiven my sins." Following the altar service, an opportunity was given for personal testimonies, and again, to the utter surprise of the Christian people, Brother Ackers then and there testified to the saving power of Christ.

Early in the morning the preacher determined to visit the little store, to have a conference with its proprietor, Hiram Ackers, to ascertain if it was really a fact that he had given his heart to the Savior, and the preacher was there at that early hour, when, to the delight of his soul, he found it was gloriously true! Hiram Ackers, though once with the bad record of a confirmed infidel, and in the abject bondage of strong drink, and so wicked generally that preachers and Christian people seldom ventured to speak to him personally upon the subject of religion, was now an avowed disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. In one week after his wonderful conversion, Brother Ackers sought a pure heart, and complete emancipation from the bondage of abnormal appetites, including that of tobacco. To the eternal praise of God be it here stated that, in one week's time, Hiram Ackers was justified freely, and sanctified wholly, realizing the glorious fulfillment of the wondrous statement in Romans 5:20, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." God intended him for the Christian ministry, and he "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," and the Lord made him a mighty champion in the field of holy evangelism, for he became a great preacher of Full Salvation, and was successful in winning many souls to Christ. In his reading, he was decidedly "a man of one book," paying but little attention to any book but the Bible, and studied it constantly, reading it "by course," going through the entire Book doubtless as many as one hundred times, at least, and, it may be, twice that many times. I never have seen any one so constantly and carefully given to the study of the Holy Scriptures as Brother Ackers. -- "Apples of Gold," hdm0672, by C. E. Rowley

* * * * *

Part 112

HOW THE INFIDEL, CAPTAIN LOWE, WAS CONVERTED

Some two miles from the village of C____. on a road that wound in among the hills stood a great white house. It was beautifully situated upon a gentle slope facing the south, and overlooking a most charming landscape. Away in the distance, a mountain lifted itself against the clear blue sky. At its base rolled a broad, deep river. Nestling down in a valley that intervened, reposed the charming little village with its neat cottages, white church, little red school house and one or two

mansions that told of wealth. Here and there in the distance a pond was visible; while farm houses and humbler dwellings dotted the picture in every direction.

Such was the home of three promising children, who for the last three months had been constant members of the village Sunday School. The eldest was a girl of some fourteen years. John, the second, was a bright, amiable lad of eleven. The other the little rosy-cheeked, laughing Ella, with her golden curls and sunny smile had just gathered the roses of her ninth summer.

The father of these interesting children was the rich Captain Lowe. He was a man of mark, such, in many respects as are often found in rural districts. Strictly moral, intelligent and well read, kind-hearted and naturally benevolent, he attracted all classes of community to himself and wielded great influence in his town.

But, notwithstanding all these excellences, Mr. Lowe was an infidel. He ridiculed in his good natured way, the idea of prayer, looked upon conversion as a solemn farce, and believed the most of professing Christians were well-meaning but deluded people. He was well versed in all the subtle arguments of infidel writers, had studied the Bible quite carefully, and could argue against it in the most plausible manner. Courteous and kind to all, few could be offended at his frank avowal of infidel principles, or resent his keen, half-jovial sarcasms upon the peculiarities of some weak-minded, though sincere members of the church.

But Mr. Lowe saw and acknowledged the saving influence of the morality of Christianity. He had especially, good sense enough to confess that the Sunday School was a noble moral enterprise. He was not blind to the fact, abundantly proved by all our criminal records, that few children trained under her influences ever grow up to vice and crime. Hence his permission for his children to attend the Sunday School.

Among the many children who kneeled as penitents at the altar in the little vestry, one bright beautiful Lord's Day, were Sarah Lowe and her brother and sister. It was a moving sight to see that gentle girl, with a mature thoughtfulness far beyond her years, take that younger brother and sister by the hand, and kneel with them at the mercy-seat -- a sight to heighten the joy of angels.

When the children had told their mother what they had done and expressed a determination to try to be Christians; she, too, was greatly moved. She had been early trained in the principles and belief of Christianity, and had never renounced her early faith. Naturally confiding, with a yielding, conciliatory spirit, she had never obtruded her sentiments upon the notice of her husband, nor openly opposed any of his peculiar views. But now, when her little ones gathered around her and spoke of their new love for the Saviour, their joy and peace and hope, she wept. All the holy influences of her own childhood and youth seemed breathing upon her heart. She remembered the faithful sermons of the old pastor whose hands had baptized her. She remembered, too, the family altar, and the prayers which were offered morning and evening by her sainted father. She remembered the counsels of her good mother now in heaven. All these memories came crowding back upon her and under their softening influences she almost felt her self a child again.

When Mr. Lowe first became aware of the change in his children, he was sorely puzzled to know what to do. He had given his consent for them to attend the Sunday School, and should he

now be offended because they had yielded to its influence? Ought he not rather to have expected this? And after all, would what they called religion make them any worse children? Though at first quite disturbed in his feelings, he finally concluded upon second thought to say nothing to them upon the subject, but to let things go on as usual.

But not so those happy young converts. They could not long hold their peace. They must tell their father also what they had experienced. Mr. Lowe heard them, but he made no attempt to ridicule their simple faith, as had been his usual course with others. They were his children, and none could boast of better. Still, he professed to see in their present state of mind nothing but youthful feeling, excited by the peculiar circumstances of the last few weeks. But when they began in their childish ardor to exhort him also to seek the Lord, he checked their simple earnestness with a peculiar sternness which said to them: "The act must not be repeated."

The next Sunday the father could not prevent a feeling of loneliness as he saw his household leave for church. The three children, with their mother and Joseph, the hired boy, to drive and take care of the horse; all packed into the old commodious carriage and started off. Never before had he such peculiar feelings as when he watched them slowly descending the hill.

To dissipate these emotions he took a dish of salt and started up the hill to a "mountain pasture" where his young cattle were enclosed for the season. It was a beautiful day in October, that queen month of the year. A soft melancholy breathed in the mild air of the mellow "Indian summer," and the varying hues of the surrounding forests, and the signs of decay seen upon every side, all combined to deepen the emotions which the circumstances of the morning had awakened.

His sadness increased; and as his path opened out into a bright, sunny spot far up on the steep hillside, he seated himself upon a mossy knoll and thought. Before him lay the beautiful valley guarded on either side by its lofty hills, and watered by its placid river. It was a lovely picture; and as his eye rested upon the village, nestling down among its now gorgeous shade-trees and scarlet shrubbery, he could not help thinking of that company who were then gathered in the little church, with its spire pointing heavenward nor of asking himself the question: "Why are they there?"

While thus engaged, his attention was attracted by the peculiar chirping of a ground sparrow near by. He turned, and but a few feet from him he saw a large black snake, with its head raised about a foot above its body, which lay coiled upon the ground. Its jaws were distended, its forked tongue played around its open mouth, flashing in the sunlight like a small lambent flame, while its eyes were intently fixed upon the bird. There was a clear, sparkling light about those eyes that was fearful to behold -- they fairly flashed with their peculiar bending fascination. The poor sparrow was fluttering around a circle of some few feet in diameter, the circle becoming smaller at each gyration of the infatuated bird. She appeared conscious of her danger, yet unable to break the spell that bound her. Nearer and still nearer she fluttered her little wings to those open jaws; smaller and smaller grew the circle, till at last, with a quick convulsive cry; she fell into the mouth of the snake.

As Mr. Lowe watched the bird he became deeply interested in her fate. He started a number of times to destroy the reptile and thus liberate the sparrow from her danger, but an

unconquerable curiosity to see the end restrained him. All day long the scene just described was before him. He could not forget it nor dismiss it from his mind. The last cry of that poor little bird sinking into the jaws of death was constantly ringing in his ears, and the sadness of the morning increased.

Returning to his house, he seated himself in his library and attempted to read. What could be the matter? Usually he could command his thoughts at will, but now he could think of nothing but the scene on the mountain, or the little company in the house of God. Slowly passed the hours, and many times did he find himself, in spite of his resolution not to do so, looking down the road for the head of his dapple gray to emerge from the valley. It seemed a long time before the rumbling of the wheels was at length heard upon the bridge which crossed the mountain stream, followed shortly by the old carry-all creeping slowly up the hill.

The return of the family somewhat changed the course of his thoughts. They did not say any thing to him about the good meeting they had enjoyed, and who had been converted since the last Lord's day; but they talked it all over among themselves, and how could he help hearing? He learned all about "how good farmer Haskell talked," and "how humble and devoted Esquire Wiseman appeared," and "how happy Benjamin and Samuel were;" though he seemed busy with his book and pretended to take no notice of what was said.

It was, indeed, true then that the old lawyer had become pious. He had heard the news before, but did not believe it. Now he had learned it as a fact. That strong-minded man who had been a skeptic all his days, had ridiculed and opposed religion, was now a subject of "the children's revival." What could it mean? Was there something in religion after all? Could it be that what these poor fanatics, as he had always called them, said about the future world was correct? Was there a heaven, and a hell, and a God of justice? Were his darling children right, and was he alone wrong? Such were the thoughts of the boasted infidel, as he sat there listening to the half-whispered conversation of his happy children.

Little Ella came and climbed to her long accustomed place upon her father's knee, and throwing her arms around his neck, laid her glowing cheek, half-hidden by the clustering curls, against his own. He knew by her appearance she had something to say but did not dare to say it. To remove this fear, he began to question her about Sunday School. He inquired after her teacher and who were her classmates, what she learned, etc. Gradually the shyness wore away, and the heart of the innocent praying child came gushing forth. She told him all that had been done that day -- what her teacher had said of the prayer meeting at noon, and who spoke, and how many went forward for prayers. Then folding her arms more closely around his neck, and kissing him tenderly, she added:

"Oh, father, I do wish you had been there!"

"Why do you wish I had been there, Ella?"

"Oh, just to see how happy Nellie Winslow looked while her grandfather was telling us children how much he loved the Saviour, and how sorry he was that he did not give his heart to his heavenly Father when he was young. Then he laid his hand on Nellie's head, who was sitting by his

side, and said: 'I thank God that he ever gave me a little praying granddaughter to lead me to the Savior.' And, father, I never in all my life saw anyone look so happy as Nellie did."

Mr. Lowe made no reply -- how could he? Could he not see where the heart of his darling Ella was? Could he not see that by what she had told him about Esquire Wiseman and his pet Nellie, she meant he should understand how happy she should be if her father was a Christian? Ella had not said so in words -- that was a forbidden subject -- but the language of her earnest loving look and manner was not to be mistaken; and the heart of the infidel father was deeply stirred. He kissed the rosy cheeks of the lovely girl, and taking his hat, left the house. He walked out into the field. He felt strangely. Before he was aware of the fact he found his infidelity leaving him, and the simple, artless religion of childhood winning its way to his heart. Try as hard as he might he could not help believing that his little Ella was a Christian. There was a reality about her simple faith and ardent love that was truly "the evidence of things not seen." What should he do? Should he yield to thin influence and be led by his children to Christ? What! Captain Lowe, the boasted infidel overcome by the weakness of excited childhood! The thought roused his PRIDE and with an exclamation of impatience at his folly, he suddenly wheeled about, and retracing his steps, with altered appearance, he re-entered his house.

His wife was alone with an open Bible before her. As he entered he saw her hastily wipe away a tear. In passing her he glanced upon the open page, and his eye caught the words "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN!" They went like an arrow to his heart. "TRUTH," said a voice within, with such fearful distinctness that he started at the fancied sound; and the influence which he had just supposed banished from his heart returned with ten-fold power. The strong man trembled. Leaving the sitting-room, he ascended the stairs to his chamber. Passing Sarah's room, a voice attracted his attention. It was the voice of prayer. He heard his own name pronounced, and he paused to listen.

"Oh, Lord, save my dear father. Lead him to the Saviour. Let him see that he MUST BE BORN AGAIN. Oh let not the SERPENT CHARM HIM!" Save, oh, save my dear father!"

He could listen no longer, "Let not the serpent charm him!" Was he then like that helpless little bird, who fluttering around the head of the serpent, fell at last into the jaws of death? The thought shot a wild torrent of newly awakened terror through his throbbing heart.

Hastening to his chamber he threw himself into a chair. He started! The voice of prayer again fell upon his ear. He listened. Yes, it was the clear, sweet accents of his little pet. Ella was praying -- WAS PRAYING FOR HIM!

"O Lord, bless my dear father. Make him a Christian, and may he and dear mother be prepared for heaven!"

Deeply moved, the father left the house and hastened to the barn. He would fain escape from those words of piercing power. They were like daggers in his heart. He entered the barn. Again he hears a voice. It comes from the hay-loft, in the rich silvery tones of his own noble boy. John had climbed up the ladder, and kneeling down upon the hay WAS PRAYING FOR HIS FATHER.

"O Lord, save my father!"

It was too much for the poor convicted man, and, rushing to the house he fell, sobbing upon his knees by the side of his wife and cried:

"O Mary, I am a poor, lost sinner! Our children are going to heaven, and I -- I -- AM GOING DOWN TO HELL! O Wife, is there mercy for a wretch like me?"

Poor Mrs. Lowe was completely overcome. She wept for joy. That her husband would ever be her companion in the way of holiness, she had never dared to hope. Yes, there was mercy for even them. "Come unto me, and find rest." Christ had said it, and her heart told her it was true. Together they would go to this loving Saviour, and their little ones should show them the way.

The children were called in. They came from their places of prayer, where they had lifted up their hearts to that God who had said "WHATSOEVER YE SHALL ASK THE FATHER IN MY NAME HE WILL GIVE IT YOU." They had asked the Spirit's influence upon the hearts of their parents, and it had been granted. They gathered around their weeping, broken-hearted father and penitent mother, and pointed them to the cross of Jesus. Long and earnestly they prayed, and wept and agonized. "With undoubting trust in the promises, they waited at the mercy-seat, and their prayers were heard. Faith conquered. The Spirit came and touched these penitent hearts with the finger of love; and then sorrow was turned to joy; their night, dark and cheerless and gloomy, was changed to blessed day.

They arose from their knees, and Ella sprang to the arms of her father, and together they rejoiced in God. -- "Touching Incidents," hdm0304, by S. B. Shaw

* * * * *

Part 113

HOW A FALSE GIFT OF TONGUES LED TO INFIDELITY

Years ago we conducted a good campmeeting in Oregon. Among others, the leader of the camp got under conviction and began seeking a real experience. The meeting closed and he was still digging. Not being able to get much encouragement from his brethren, he concluded he might get help at the tongues meeting. He attended, received "His baptism" and declared God gave him the Japanese language. His wife also professed and said she could write seventeen different dialects. They rallied around them fifteen missionaries and all went to Japan.

But upon arriving, to their dismay, the Japanese did not understand their gibberish. This discouraged them and after returning home some became infidels, others temporarily insane, and the leader and his wife separated. When I was in Japan I looked him up, for all had deserted him and he was there alone -- no, not exactly alone -- he was living with a Japanese woman. Anything that will bring such havoc in its trail is not of God. -- "Five Reasons Why I Don't Seek Tongues," hdm0593, by E. E. Shelhamer

* * * * *

Part 114

HOW DARIUS DUNHAM REBUKED DISTRACTING INFIDEL

A person of my acquaintance informed me that he saw an infidel, who was a fallen Lutheran clergyman, endeavoring one night, while Dunham was preaching, to destroy the effect of the sermon on those around him by turning the whole into ridicule. The preacher affected not to notice him for a length of time, but went on extolling the excellency of Christianity, and showing the formidable opposition it had overcome, when all at once he turned to the spot where the scoffer sat, and, fixing his eyes upon him, the old man continued, 'Shall Christianity and her votaries, after having passed through fire and water, after vanquishing the opposition of philosophers and priests and kings, after all this, I say, shall the servants of God, at this time of day, allow themselves to be frightened by the braying of an ass?' The infidel, who had begun to show signs of uneasiness from the time the fearless servant of God fixed his terribly searching eye upon him, when he came to the climax of the interrogation was completely broken down, and dropped his head in evident confusion." -- "Stevens M. E. History, Vol. III," hdm0226, by Abel Stevens

* * * * *

Part 115

AN INFIDEL KILLED BY A GNAT

It is said an infidel defied God during a fearful storm, by baring his bosom and looking upward, shaking his fist at God, cursing and saying, "If there is a God, I dare Him to strike me!" Did God do it? Oh, no! He would not waste His lightning on a fellow like that. When he ceased his blasphemous ravings and started into the house, he sucked a little black gnat down his windpipe and choked to death. Just a gnat to care for him. He was just an independent, blasphemous fool. -- "Dressed Up Sin," hdm0237, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 116

AN INFIDEL'S INVITATION USED TO BRING CONVERSIONS

During the an evangelistic campaign in Bristol, England, an infidel lecturer from London visited this family, in order to get one of the young men to go with him to Coulston Hall to secure material for jest and sport. When he called everyone was out except the daughter. She accompanied him to the meeting. It was the first time she had ever attended a gospel service. What she heard so deeply impressed her that she went again alone, and was converted. It was a bold step for her, but a bolder one was to follow. She returned home and told her brothers of her decision. They were indignant, but she held her ground. Finally she persuaded one of them to go with her to another service. The result was that he too flung his infidelity to the wind and was converted, and soon three other members of the same family were also converted.

* * * * *

Part 117

AN INFIDEL'S NOVEL LOST ITS ATTRACTION

An infidel girl went into an evangelistic meeting in the Strand Hall, London determining to show her defiance by reading a novel during the service. Her attention was caught by the singer, who stopping the singing of the song, "His Grace is Sufficient for Me," to ask a party of blind people if God's grace was sufficient for them in their affliction. The happy "Yes" from the sightless people profoundly impressed her. She followed the evangelist's sermon closely, was deeply convicted of sin and turned to Christ. -- "Stories With A Message," hdm0144, by Duane V. Maxey

* * * * *

Part 118

THE FOLLY OF INFIDELS PROVEN

Recently the evangelist, E. L. Hyde, was conducting a revival meeting at B___, in New Jersey, and in the course of his remarks said "he could prove to the satisfaction of any infidel within ten minutes, that he was a fool." little thinking that he would have occasion or opportunity of doing so. The next morning while walking, a gentleman accosted him very abruptly by saying, "Aren't you the evangelist preaching up here at the church?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I supposed you were a gentleman."

"I claim to be one."

"Well, I don't think you are one. Didn't you say last night that you could prove to the satisfaction of anyone within ten minutes that all infidels are fools? If you don't prove it to my satisfaction I will publish you in all the city papers as the most consummate liar that ever struck the city."

Seeing there was no possibility of reasoning with the man, Mr. Hyde said:

"Where is your infidel?"

"I claim to be one," was the reply, "and I want you to know I am no fool, either."

"You don't mean to say there is no reality in Christianity?"

"I do, sir. I have studied all phases of the subject and have traveled and delivered lectures against Christianity for more than twelve years, and I am prepared to say there is nothing in it."

"You are certain there is nothing in it?"

"Yes, sir, there is nothing in it."

"Will you please tell me," said Mr. Hyde, "if a man who will lecture twelve years against nothing is not a fool, what, in your judgment, would constitute a fool?"

He turned away in a rage. Mr. Hyde, drawing out his watch, insisted he still had six minutes; but the infidel would not hear him, nor was Mr. Hyde published in the city papers. --
"Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 119

NO COUNTERFEIT INFIDELS

"Did you ever see a counterfeit ten-dollar bill?"

"Yes."

"Why was it counterfeited?"

"Because the genuine bill was worth counterfeiting."

"Did you ever see a scrap of brown paper counterfeited?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because it was not worth counterfeiting."

"Did you ever see a counterfeit Christian?"

"Yes."

"Why was he counterfeited?"

"Because he was worth counterfeiting." "Was he to blame for the counterfeit?" "Of course not."

"Did you ever see a counterfeit infidel?" "Why, no."

"Why not?"

"Ahem."

We pass the above catechism along. -- "Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp.

* * * * *

Part 120

A PRESCRIPTION ON TRIED BY AN INFIDEL DOCTOR

It is related that Bishop Kavanaugh was one day walking when he met a prominent physician, who offered him a seat in his carriage. The physician was an infidel, and the conversation turned upon religion.

"I am surprised," said the doctor, "that such an intelligent man as you should believe such a fable as that."

The bishop said, "Doctor, suppose years ago someone had recommended to you a prescription for pulmonary consumption, and you had procured the prescription and taken it according to order, and had been cured of that terrible disease, what would you say of the man who would not try your prescription?"

"I should say he was a fool.

"Twenty-five years ago," said Kavanaugh, "I tried the power of God's grace. It made a different man of me. All these years I have preached salvation, and wherever accepted have never known it to fail."

What could the doctor say to such a testimony as that? And such testimonies are what men need to turn them from the error of their ways, to the personal experience of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ. -- "Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 121

KNOCKING INFIDELITY OUT

An English paper says that, after concluding a lecture, Mr. Bradlaugh called upon any one present to reply to his arguments. A collier arose, and spoke somewhat as follows: "Maister Bradlaugh, me and my mate Jim were both Methodist till one day one of these infidel chaps came this way. Jim turned infidel, and used to badger me about attending prayermeetings; but one day in the pit a large cob of coal came down upon Jim's head. Jim thought he was killed, and, ah! mon, but he did holler and cry to God." Then turning to Mr. Bradlaugh with a knowing look, he said, "Young man, there's now't like cobs of coal for knocking infidelity out of a man." It need scarcely be said that the collier carried the audience with him. -- "Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 122

AN INFIDEL REBUKED

There was an infidel blacksmith who was always carping at professors of religion, especially when he could get a Christian to talk to, or knew there was one near enough to overhear him. Some choice morsel of scandal was sure to be served up about an erring minister, or a sinful deacon, or a Sabbath School superintendent who had fallen from grace. One day he was dilating with uncommon relish on his favorite theme to a venerable elder, who stopped to have his horse shod. The old man bore it quietly for awhile, and then he said:

Did you ever hear the story of the rich man and Lazarus?"

"Yes, of course I have."

"Remember about the dogs -- at the gate there -- how they licked Lazarus' sores?"

"Yes; why?"

"Well, you remind me of those dogs -- always licking the sores. All you notice in Christians is their faults." -- "Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 123

AN INFIDEL IGNORANT OF WHAT CHRIST HAS SENT DOWN

"How; do you know that Jesus went up into Heaven?" sneeringly asked an infidel of a Christian. "By what He sent down," was the unanswerable reply. -- "Nuggets of Gold, hdm0524, by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 124

NAPOLEON'S REPROOF OF DUROC'S INFIDELITY

It is related of Napoleon, that When Marshal Duroc, an avowed infidel, was once telling a very improbable story, giving his opinion that it was true, the Emperor remarked: "There are some men capable of believing everything but the Bible."

This remark finds abundant illustrations in every age. There are men all about us, at the present day, who tell us they cannot believe the Bible; but their capabilities for believing everything which opposes the Word of God are enormous. The most fanciful speculations that bear against the Bible, pass with them for demonstrated facts. The greediness with which they devour the most far-fetched stories -- the flimsiest arguments, if they only appear to militate against the Word of God, is astonishing.

* * * * *

Part 125

NO ANSWER TO THE DYING INFIDEL'S PRAYER

The Rev. S. C. Dickey, D.D., of the Winona Assembly, going out one Saturday night to an Indiana town to preach the following Sunday, was walking along the streets from the station to the house where he was to be entertained, by the side of his host. Suddenly they came within hearing of the most awful cries, and his friend said, "Listen, the most bitter infidel in our town is dying in that house, and for all the afternoon he has been crying as you hear him now," and over and over he heard the cry "O, Jesus, can't you help me?" "O, Jesus, can't you help me?" Before the morning came the cry was no more, for the man had gone into the presence of him whose mercy he had spurned, and whose love he had trampled under foot. "And their rock is not as our rock, their enemies themselves being judges." -- "Present Day Parables," hdm0072, by J. Wilbur Chapman

* * * * *

Part 126

THE DEATH-BED OF THE ATHEIST, THOMAS PAINE

Editor The Ram's Horn:

I recently noticed in The Ram's Horn, among the answers, a doubt expressed in regard to there being any proof that Tom Paine recanted on his death-bed. I have not now at hand nearly all the evidence I have had, but there lies before me a volume entitled, "The Life and Gospel Labors of Stephen Grellet, containing a reference to Paine that I wish to offer for publication in your excellent paper. Grellet was a remarkable man; a minister of the gospel among "The Friends," who several times traveled all over Europe preaching a pure gospel to princes, kings and emperors, as well as to the common people, and finally declared the plain truth to the Pope at Rome, calling his attention to the unchristian acts committed in his name.

His saintly character forbids the thought that what he says of Paine should be anything but the simple truth. I quote from "Grellet's Life:"

"On account of his wife's health, they had resided for some time previous to his last journey, out of the city, at the village of Greenwich. At the same place lived the notorious Thomas Paine."

"An authentic account of the death of such a man may have some historical value and interest, and S. G. thus notices his decease:

"I may not omit recording here the death of Thomas Paine. A few days previous to my leaving home on my last religious visit, on hearing that he was ill, and in a very destitute condition, I went to see him, and found him in a wretched state; for he had been so neglected and forsaken by his pretended friends, that the common attentions to a sick man had been withheld from him. The skin of his body was in some places worn off, which greatly increased his sufferings. A nurse was provided for him, and some needful comforts were supplied. He was mostly in a state of stupor,

but something that had passed between us made such an impression on him that he sent for me, and on being told that I was gone from home, he sent for another friend. This induced a valuable young friend (Mary Rascoe) who had resided in my family, frequently to go and take him some little nourishment. Once when she was there, three of his atheistical companions came to the door, and in a loud unfeeling manner, said: 'Tom Paine, it is said you are turning Christian, but we hope you will die as you have lived,' and then went away. On which, turning to Mary Rascoe, he said: 'You see what miserable comforters they are.' Once he asked her if she had ever read any of his writings. And on being told that she had read but very little of them, he inquired what she thought of them, adding: 'From such as you I expect a correct answer.'

"She told him that when very young his 'Age of Reason' was put in her hands, but that the more she read in it, the more dark and distressed she felt, and she threw the book into the fire.

"I wish all had done as you,' he replied, 'for if the devil has ever had any agency in any work, he has had it in my writing that book.'

"When going to carry him some refreshments she repeatedly heard him uttering the language, 'Oh, Lord! Lord God! or Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me.' " -- "Present Day Parables," hdm0072, by J. Wilbur Chapman

* * * * *

Part 127

HOW THE TOWN FOUNDED BY INFIDELS WAS CHANGED

Who would want to live in any city if you took the Christians out of it? Some infidels founded a town in Minnesota a few years ago, in order to have a town in which the name of God or Christ should never be mentioned except in terms of profanity and vulgarity. They hung Jesus Christ in the streets in effigy, and the place was full of blasphemy. I had to stay there all night some years ago in passing through that region, and I trembled for my life while I stayed in the best hotel in the place. The town was destroyed by fire, and they tried to build it up again. Then came an Indian massacre, with an awful retribution of bloodshed, and they tried to build it up again. It was again partially destroyed by fire; and at last, after there had been a lot and bloodshed and anything but purity and peace for years, the citizens of that town sent to the American Home Missionary Society and said, "Can you send us a minister of Jesus Christ?" And if you were to go there today you would not know that community with its church spires pointing heavenward, and its children going to Sunday-school and learning about Christ. It is almost as orderly there today as in any town in the land, because of the influence of the church. -- "Present Day Parables," hdm0072, by J. Wilbur Chapman

* * * * *

Part 128

AN INFIDEL WHO TOOK COVER AS A MINISTER

I once read an incident that illustrates this. An avowed infidel, a real scoffer at religion, a native of Sweden, had occasion to go from one port to another in the Baltic Sea. On reaching a certain point, the vessel on which he expected to sail had left, so he took passage on a fishing boat going the same way. These fishermen took him to a small island, which was the headquarters of a company of pirates.

He had told the fishermen, through fear of being murdered, that he was a minister. As they reached the island, it was agreed that he should preach a sermon Sunday. This was a great trial to the infidel, as he knew but little of the Scriptures, and did not believe in their inspiration. But as he had told them he was a minister, he now feared they would kill him if he did not preach. So preach he must, and do the best he could, and appear sincere. He spent a sleepless night. What could he say?

When the hour came for preaching, he found these wicked men assembled. A seat was arranged for him, a table with a Bible on it. He feared death if he refused, but how could he preach when he did not believe the Bible? They all sat in silence for some time. At length these words came to his mind: "Verily there is a reward for the righteous, and verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth." As he delivered these words, other passages came to his mind. He spoke of the rewards of the righteous, the judgments of the wicked; the necessity of repentance, and the great importance of a change of life.

The matchless love of God, although it was spoken by an infidel, through fear of being killed if he did not, had such an effect upon the minds of these wretched men, that they were melted into tears. This melted him so that he became like a little child.

The next day these pirates fitted out a vessel, and carried him to the place he wished to reach.

He did not preach Christ from envy, but from fear. But Christ was preached, and the Holy Spirit used his own sword, and produced this wonderful effect. Not because the preacher was good, or intended to do good. Many an unconverted man has had a good deal of success in the ministry without any good motive in preaching. Success in the ministry does not necessarily prove the minister a Christian man, but that the "Word" is the "Spirit's sword." -- "Selected Sermon Illustrations," hdm0104, by A. B. Earle

* * * * *

Part 129

WHY THE INFIDEL WOULD NOT LEAVE THE BIBLE ALONE

An infidel lecturer in England was once asked, "Why can't you let the Bible alone, if you don't believe it?" The honest reply was at once made, "Because the Bible won't let me alone!" This is the fact. Either in its own pages or in the lives of its faithful followers it meets man and speaks with an authoritative voice. It gets a grip on the conscience, testifying of sin, of penalty, of judgment. The Holy Ghost works with the written Word of God. God's Word will never let men

alone until they yield to obey, and love their Savior. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 130

VOLTAIRE KNEW THE BIBLE RESTRAINED EVIL

Wherever God's law is supreme, life and property are safe. Wherever the Bible is despised or discarded, neither life nor property is secure, When infidel friends were discussing their theories around the dining table one day, Voltaire said: "Hush, gentlemen, till the servants are gone. If they believed as we do, none of our lives would be safe." The influence of the Bible in restraining sin and promoting righteousness is one of the evidences that it is a supernatural and divine revelation. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 131

THE BIBLICAL IGNORANCE OF SOME INFIDELS ILLUSTRATED

When Franklin was in Paris among the infidels and scoffers of that day, he was ridiculed for loving the Bible. He determined to find out how many had read the Book at which they scoffed. 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, to 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 it is part of the Bible." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 132

INFIDELS OVERCOME BY THE PRAYERS OF A BOY

"What will you have?" asked a saloon keeper of Moody. "These children for my Sunday school," Moody replied. Said the saloon keeper, "If you come down here next Thursday night, and meet the boys in the infidel club, which meets here, you may have the children." Said Moody, "Agreed! I'll be here!" Moody was there. He opened the meeting by saying, "Gentlemen, it is our custom to open our meeting with prayer. Tommy, jump on that barrel and pray." Tommy perched himself on the barrel, turned his little face up toward Heaven, and how he did pray! As the tears stole down his cheeks the more tenderhearted beat a retreat, and finally those more rocklike, subdued by the pathos and spiritual power of the occasion slowly retired, until there was none left except the barkeeper, Moody and the praying boy.

"That will do, Tommy," exclaimed the evangelist. "I claim the children," said he, turning to the father. "They are yours according to contract," replied the father, "but it is a queer way to fight." "It is the way I win my battle," said Moody. He had instructed the boy not to cease praying until he had prayed them all out. It was a piece of strategy full of tactfulness. The reality, the venturesomeness, the tact of such a man is worth emulating. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 133

AN INFIDEL WHO FOUND A TOWN "TOO MUCH LIKE HELL"

Like spiritual salt, the Church of Christ preserves society from the advance of moral decay. Where this salt is lacking, the social environment becomes more and more like the population of hell.

A young lawyer, an infidel, boasted that he was going West to locate some place where there were no churches, no Sunday schools, no Bibles. Before the year was over, he wrote to a classmate, a young minister, begging him to come out where he was and start a Sunday school and preach, and "be sure to bring plenty of Bibles," closing his letter with these words, "I have become convinced that a place without Christians and Sundays and churches and Bibles is too much like hell for any living man to stay in." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 134

"SUNSHINE HARRIS," A CONVERTED INFIDEL

Here is one of the many stories from the Pacific Garden Mission of the marvels of God's saving grace:

"Sunshine Harris," was steeped in sin for seventy-one years and most of that time an infidel. Leaving home because he was such a disgrace to his family, he wandered around in the country. He never went to church except for a funeral, unless to ridicule what took place. For fifty long years he smoked and drank, then became such a slave of tobacco that he picked up stubs in the street to satisfy the craving. Filthy with sin, he wandered often into the Pacific Garden Mission, usually drunk, each time resisting the pleadings of Colonel and Mrs. Clarke with scorn and mockery, and determining never to return.

On August 4, 1899, he bought a New Testament, hardly knowing why. When his eyes fell upon the frank words, "Thou fool, this night thy soul is required of thee," he became furious and closed the book. Later he wanted to reread the passage but he was not able to find the verse. That made him more furious.

In vexation, he began with Matthew's genealogy and kept reading until the words were located. A few nights later he said, "God, tonight I am going to the mission. If you help me, I'll raise my hand for prayer." It was a "never to be forgotten" night for "Sunshine Harris."

"When the invitation was given, I looked at one hand and it was so black and sinful, and then at the other and that was just as bad, so I raised both hands and was assisted by a Christian lady to the altar," he wrote, "and when I called upon the Lord He heard my cry, and the load of sin, mountain high, rolled off, and I rose to my feet and exclaimed: 'Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift and for Pacific Garden Mission.'"

Harris sponsored an unscheduled housecleaning in his own filthy little room that night. Whiskey and beer bottles, old pipes and tobacco, disgusting pictures, cards and other habiliments of sin went into the furnace, and on the table by his favorite chair he placed instead the New Testament with a slip of paper marking the verse, "Thou fool, this night thy soul is required of thee." Somebody named him "the miracle of the mission."

He served God with such spiritual fervor and delight that the mission workers called him "Sunshine Harris." He loved everybody and everybody loved him, with just one note of exception: During the first weeks of his Christian experience he kept waking during the night and shouting "Glory!" until some of the nearby roomers complained. He moved to other quarters.

Night after night he continued to testify at the mission, eager to tell how the Lord had cleaned his life. When he died, June 10, 1907, he said in his cheerful optimism, "Tell them at the mission I am going home to glory in the good, old-fashioned way."

So clearly had his testimony rung out on Van Buren Street among the drink and tobacco addicts that once were his companions, that when Harris' body was buried at Elburn, Illinois, all the hoboos on the levee knew his soul had gone to God.

* * * * *

Part 135

HOW "MOTHER'S GOD" SAVED AN INFIDEL

Sometimes, ofttimes, God's messenger is home influence. Did you ever hear Mr. T____, the evangelist, tell what an awful unbeliever he was when he was a young man--how he went to the deepest depths of infidelity and scorned everything, the Bible, Christ, God, heaven, hell, immortality, everything like that? And his dear mother yearned after him and loved him, and pleaded with him and prayed for him, and after a while he said to his mother: "I am tired of it all and I am going to leave and not bother you any more, and you will not see me any more; I am tired of it all."

She followed him to the door, and followed him to the gate, pleading and praying and loving and weeping, and then at last she said as her final word: "Son when you come to the darkest hour of all and everything seems lost and gone, if you will honestly call on your mother's God you will get help." He went his way in his darksome and terrible infidelity.

Deeper down he went, day in and out, month in and out. The months went by, and he was four hundred and twenty-seven miles from his mother's home in a hotel in a certain town, unable to sleep, wearied with his sins and wearied with life, and he at last rose up in the early morning and said: "I will get out of this bed and I will take the gun there from my valise and I will put it to my temple and I will end this farce called human life." As he got out of bed to do that dreadful thing, the last words that his mother had said came back to him: "Son when your darkest hour of all comes and everything seems lost, call in sincerity on your mother's God and you will get help."

T_____ said he fell beside his bed and said: "Oh, God of my mother, if there is such a Being, I want light, and if Thou wilt give it, no matter how, I will follow it." He had light within a few moments, and hastened back home. To follow the story just a moment more, he said that when he got back home, thinking he would surprise his mother and come upon her unexpectedly she came down the walk to the gate laughing and crying with uncontrollable joy and said: "Oh my boy I know why you are coming back, and I know what you have to tell. You have found the Lord. God has told me so."

Oh, the power of a mother's prayer! Oh, the power of a father's prayer, the power of a brother's prayer, a sister's prayer! Oh, the power of a wife's prayer, when she links herself with God! Many a time, God's good angel to bring one back from the darksome and downward way, is somebody's prayer who says: "Lord, spare this soul a little longer. Give this soul a little more respite, a little more time." Prayer, how mighty it is before God when it is sincerely offered. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 136

AN INFIDEL SAVED THROUGH A SILENT, BUT POWERFUL INFLUENCE

Perhaps some of you may have heard of that old man, who was a deacon of the church. It is said an infidel miller came to tell his experience to the church, and some one said to him, "How can this be?" He was a man who had denied his God' denied the Gospel, and denied every thing that was good. But said he; "When I used to run my mill on Sunday, the deacon used to go down regularly to church every Sunday, passing by at a certain hour, and I saw him go. He never said a word to me, but some how his influence seemed to take hold of me, so that I said, ' I am not going to trample on that man's good sense and Christianity any more by running this mill when he goes by; and so, when I thought it was about time for the deacon to go by, I would shut the mill down, and wait till he got past, half an hour or so, and then start it up again. By and by that process of action let me to think there was something in religion, some power in it, and I gave myself up to Christ, just under that influence; and here I am today with my heart right before God." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 137

HE FAITHFULLY REPROVED HIS INFIDEL KING

One of Frederick the Great's best generals was Hans Joachim von Zietan. He was never ashamed of his faith. Once he declined an invitation to come to his royal master's table because on that day he wished to present himself at the table of his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ. It was sacrament day. The next time he appeared at the palace, the king, whose infidel tendencies were well known, made use of some profane expressions about the Lord's Supper, and the other guests laughed at the remarks made on the occasion.

Zietan shook his gray beard solemnly, stood up, saluted the king, and then said with a firm voice: "Your Majesty knows well that in war I have never feared any danger, and everywhere have boldly risked my life for you and my country. But there is One above us Who is greater than you and me, greater than all men. He is the Saviour and Redeemer, Who has died also for your Majesty and has dearly bought us all with his own blood. This holy One, I can never allow to be mocked or insulted, for on Him repose my faith, my comfort, and my hope in life and death. In the power of this faith, your brave army has courageously fought and conquered. If your Majesty undermines this faith, you undermine at the same time the welfare of your state. I salute your Majesty."

This open confession of his Saviour by Zietan, made a powerful impression on the king, who felt that he had been wrong in his attack on the faith of his general, and he was not ashamed to own it to his brave old general before all his other guests. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 138

SHE LOVED GOD MORE THAN HER INFIDEL FATHER

"When My father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." A year ago, when I was in Michigan, Dr. E__ said that twenty-five years ago, in the State of New York, a minister gave him this incident:

There was, in his church, a very pious and wealthy lady. Her husband was an infidel. They lived in a large mansion with everything at their command that wealth could give. They had an only daughter, a beautiful little girl. This mother had a Bible that she used to always carry to meetings with her. Soon she took sick and died. Before she died she called her little daughter to her bed and said: "My child, I am going to leave you. "You will be alone now, with only Jesus to help you, and I want to give you this Bible with my dying blessing. It has been such a comfort and blessing to me all through my life."

Some time after, she carried her Bible to meeting. The Spirit of God arrested her attention, and she was brought to the light and the happiness of the Gospel. Her father heard her singing at home. His ire was aroused. He, in his heart, hated God, and ministers, and Jesus, and the Bible, and religion. That night he said, "My daughter, I heard you singing, perhaps you think you have become a Christian." "Yes, papa; I am so happy; I think I have been converted." I don't suppose he would have spoken an unkind word to that child for anything but religion. "My child, " said he, "I

hate God, and I hate the Bible, and I will provide your needs, and money to give you as good a home as your heart can wish; but, if you are going to have religion you must leave your home. You can take your choice. Let me know tomorrow morning whether you will give up religion or your home; one or the other you must do."

She went up into her chamber and knelt down and opened her Bible, and her eye rested on the passage: "When your father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." In a moment, it seemed as if God helped her to a decision. She said, "I will go with my Lord." She came down in the morning. "Well, my daughter, what is the decision?" "Papa, I love you, and I love my home, but I love Jesus more, and I have concluded to go." He opened the door angrily. "There is the way." The darling child dropped her head and went out, not knowing whither she was going.

She walked down the street some distance, and by and by inadvertently, turned in toward the bushes. In a little space she found a log, and there she bowed in prayer to God for that hardhearted infidel father. By and by seeing what he had done, his heart began to relent. I have no doubt God was in it, for in His Word He says, "...a little child shall lead them;" and He has a great many ways for little children to lead them. He soon followed her. As he passed down by the wood he heard the sweet voice of his daughter. He followed it, and found her praying. He stepped over the log, got down by her side put his arm around her neck and kissed her in the midst of her prayer. That was her Gethsemane. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 139

AN INFIDEL WHOSE REQUEST BELIED HER BELIEF

A lady who had forsaken God and the Bible for the gloom and darkness of infidelity, was crossing the Atlantic, and asked a sailor, one morning, how long they should be out " In fourteen days, if it is God's will, we shall be in Liverpool," answered the sailor "If it is God's will!" said the lady; "what a senseless expression! Don't you know that all comes by chance?"

In a few days, a terrible storm arose, and the lady stood clinging to the side of the cabin door in an agony of terror. " What do you think," she said to the same sailor, "will the storm soon be over?" "It seems likely to last some time, madam." " Oh!" she cried, " pray that we may not be lost!" His reply was, "Madam, shall I pray to chance?" -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 140

A GOOD REPLY TO A CHIDING INFIDEL

I remember hearing of a young convert who got up to say something for Christ in the open air. Not being accustomed to speak, he stammered a good deal at first, when an infidel came right along and shouted out, "Young man, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, standing and talking like

that." "Well," the young man replied, "I'm ashamed of myself, but I am not ashamed of Christ." That was a good answer. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 141

HOW THE WORD OF GOD WAS USED TO ROUT AN INFIDEL

An infidel, talking to a circle of young men, said "Look at David, a man after God's own heart; we would have him in the penitentiary these days." A humble Christian said, "Sir, do you know you have proved God's word to these young men?" "No, I don't." "When the prophet came to David and opened his eyes to his sin, he said, 'Thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.' 2 Sam. 12:14. You are blaspheming God's word when you say David's sin was pleasing to God." The man went out. The humblest believer who knows how to use the sword of the Spirit can rout any infidel. -- "Illustrations by Abbie C. Morrow," hdm0207

* * * * *

Part 142

THE INFIDEL HAD GROUNDS FOR WORRY

It is said that two infidels were talking, and one said to the other, "There is just one thing that worries me. If it were not for that, I would be profoundly happy. But that one thing stands before me and haunts me day and night." "Pray," said the other infidel, "what is that one thing?" He replied, "I am afraid the Bible might be true." Yes, he had grounds for worry. The thing that worried him makes the Christian shouting happy. He knows the Book is true. -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 143

THE REPLY OF A WISE CHILD TO A FOOLISH INFIDEL

An infidel said to a little Christian girl, "If you will tell me where God is, I will give you an orange." To which she replied, "If you will tell me where God is not, I will give you two." He did not get the oranges. -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 144

HOW AN INFIDEL'S ADVICE BELIED HIS BELIEF

Colonel Ethan Allen, leader of the Green Mountain Boys, was a notorious infidel. His wife was a pious woman, and taught her daughter the gospel. This daughter sickened, and her father was sent for to hear her dying words. "Father," she said, "I am about to die. Shall I believe the principles which you have taught me, or shall I believe what my mother has taught me?" After

waiting a few moments to calm his extreme agitation, he answered, "Believe what your mother has taught you." -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 145

AN INFIDEL DAMNED BY A PREACHER'S INCONSISTENCY

It is related that a young minister preached a very earnest sermon, and during the service a young man was deeply impressed and convicted. After the service the minister, in company with the young man and others, walked to a home where they spent some time. The young man, under conviction, hoped he would have an opportunity of expressing his feelings to the minister and obtaining more information as to how to be saved. But instead the young minister and others spent the time in telling such singular tales, amid roars of laughter, that the convicted young man was discouraged and went away perplexed, wondering if there was really anything to it. Some years later the same minister was invited to the bedside of a dying man. He sat down and the sick, dying man looked up, regarded him closely, and said to him, "Do you remember preaching at such a place?" "I do," said the minister. "Well, I was one of your hearers and was deeply impressed with your sermon." "Thank God for that," said the minister. "But wait a minute," said the dying man. "Don't thank God until you hear it all. You may change your tone before I am done." Then he said, "Sir, do you remember after the service I, with others, walked home with you? Do you remember the coarse jokes you told? Well, I went out of that building and stamped my foot on the ground and said that you were a liar and a hypocrite; that, if you could talk that way in the pulpit and then act as you did, Christianity was a sham. And I have been an infidel from that day to this, and now I am dying and damned, and at the bar of God I will charge my damnation to you. My blood is upon your head." And with a dreadful shriek he died. -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 146

RESTITUTION WAS THE KEY TO A SECOND INFIDEL'S CONVERSION

It is related that there were two infidel neighbors. One of them was gloriously saved. He went to his neighbor and said, "I have been converted." "Yes," said the other, "I heard you had gone forward for prayers. I was surprised at you." "Well," said the other, "there is a little matter I want to speak to you about. It is this: Two years ago four of your sheep came with mine. They had your mark on them, but I changed it and put my mark on them. They are in my field now, and I want to pay you for them." "No," said the other, "you just go away and keep the sheep." He realized something had happened. "No," said the converted man, "I have not slept for several nights for thinking about those sheep and I must pay for them." "Then, if you must, pay what they were worth when they came with 6 per cent interest; but please go away and let me alone." The man paid and left the neighbor. But the neighbor was convinced that something had happened that was real, and he soon found his way to the house of God, where he was saved. Yes, the real thing works. -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 147

WHAT MIGHT HAVE KEPT INGERSOLL'S BOOK FROM BEING WRITTEN

A relative of America's outstanding infidel, Robert Ingersoll, known in the family as Aunt Sarah, was a devout Bible student and a beautiful Christian. One day she received by mail a package which proved to be a copy of one of R. G. Ingersoll's books, an attack on the Bible. On the flyleaf were written these words over Ingersoll's signature: "If all Christians had lived like Aunt Sarah, perhaps this book would never have been written." Aunt Sarah alone was proof enough. -- "Pointed Illustrations," hdm0231, by W. M. Tidwell

* * * * *

Part 148

AN INFIDEL READY TO HAVE CHRIST PREACHED TO HIM

The story is told of a man who scoffed at the idea of God or salvation, who became very ill and was soon to die. He was poor, and during his long illness a godly minister had sent gifts again and again to relieve this man's need. One day near the end, he sent for the minister, and said, "I have not sent for you to talk about religion, but to thank you for your great kindness." Mr. Birch, the minister, said, "Will you answer me one question?" "Yes," said he, "provided it is not about religion." The minister said, "You know I have to preach tonight. Many will be there to hear me; some who, like you, will soon have to face death. I ask you, 'What shall I preach about?'"

There was a long silence. Then with tear-dimmed eye and trembling voice the dying infidel said, "Mr. Birch, preach Christ unto them, preach Christ." And he was then ready to let the minister preach Christ unto him, and he found Him to be real and a Saviour from sin.-- "Choice Illustrations," hdm0233, by Earl C. Wolfe

* * * * *

Part 149

AN INFIDEL WITH NO ANSWER FOR A SANCTIFIED MAN

In one of my earlier pastorates there was a man who claimed to be an infidel. There seemed no way to change him, now eighty years of age. He had a fine appearance and seemed to be an intelligent man. He never came to church, but one day I felt the urge to go to his house and talk to him about God and salvation. He had all the scoffer's arguments at the tip of his tongue, and I did not have the skill to meet all of them. But when I rose to leave he said, "There is one argument, my minister friend, that you have not yet presented, and which I cannot answer. Across the road lives a man who never misses a service at your church." Yes, I knew Brother Ervin, a good-living, sanctified, loyal saint. Said the atheist, "I have watched that man live, and he has something that I do not have and I cannot explain it. His life is an argument in favor of your religion that I cannot answer."-- "Choice Illustrations," hdm0233, by Earl C. Wolfe

* * * * *

Part 150

A GOOD REPLY TO AN INFIDEL'S CRITICISM

An infidel landowner, proprietor of a big estate in England, was one day talking with an uneducated miller who now and then preached to the people in his neighborhood. The landowner criticized him for it and expressed his opinion that one so ignorant should not presume to pose as a religious leader. They were in the nobleman's office, and on the wall hung a map of the owner's vast estate. The squire, pointing to the map, said: "Squire, is not that a map of your possessions?" "Yes," replied he, "I suppose you know all the roads and trails on this land very well." "Yes," said the owner. "I know them perfectly." "Well," said the miller, "do you remember how one day you could not locate the trail through the dense woods, and my little girl directed you?" "Yes, I remember it very well"; and he graciously added, "she led me through nicely to where I wanted to go." Said the miller, "You knew the road on the map, but my little girl knew it from walking in it. And I too know the way to heaven from walking in it. That is why I dare to tell others the way.--" "Choice Illustrations," hdm0233, by Earl C. Wolfe

* * * * *

Part 151

H. C. MORRISON'S MOVING WORDS TO INFIDEL LAWYER

Some three months afterward, I spent a few days in the same town. I met the pastor in front of his church and after a cordial greeting, he insisted that I should preach in the church on Wednesday evening, which I promised to do. He then said, "Step across the street to that grocery; there is a man there who would like to see you." I went over. A big, handsome, well dressed man rushed from behind the counter, grabbed my hand and squeezed it until the bones ached. He expressed his great joy at seeing me. I confessed that I did not know him. I said he, "I am the fellow that had the snakes in my boots and the monkeys on my bedposts when you were here in your revival meeting. Don't you remember I was converted the last night of the meeting." I did remember at once and we rejoiced together. He said, "I have not had the slightest appetite or desire for whiskey from that night to this time." He said, "You must take supper with me Thursday evening. My wife will be delighted to see you." I was glad to accept his invitation. After preaching in the church on Wednesday evening, many friends came up to greet me, among them a beautiful woman, tastefully dressed, with roses in her cheeks, laughter in her mouth, and tears in her eyes. She said, "I want you to take supper with us Thursday evening." I thanked her, but said to her, "I promised to take supper with my friend, Frank," naming this remarkable convert. She answered in laughter, "I am Frank's wife." I was greatly surprised and a bit displeased. I hardly thought it the proper thing for this new convert to bury the poor wretched looking creature of a wife he had just three months ago and marry this beautiful young woman in so short a time. But on inquiry, I found it was the same woman. The difference was when I saw her the first time, she was the wife of a miserable lost drunkard, jabbering about with delirium tremens. When I saw her three months later, she was the wife of a wonderfully saved man, filled with the joy of the Lord, prosperous and happy in his business.

You may be sure I went up to their house for supper the next evening. The gate was on its hinges, the fence had been repaired, the yard was in good order, the cottage had been mended and painted white as snow. When I entered the house, there was a carpet on the floor, well-arranged furniture, books on the shelves and pictures on the wall. When supper came, there was T-bone steak in plenty and a fat rosy-cheek baby sitting in a high chair without a fly on him. I was profoundly impressed. I renewed my faith and purpose to preach a Christ who is so mighty and so gracious to save.

Back yonder three months ago, at a late hour in the evening, at the altar of the Methodist Church, there had been a new birth. It was the beginning of a new life. Old things had passed away; all things had become new. This new birth and new life is a powerful and irrefutable evidence of the Godhead and saving power of the Lord Jesus. This is an argument that cannot be answered.

Shortly after this visit to old Virginia, I met with one of the distinguished lawyers of old Kentucky, a friend of mine, who was an infidel. We got into a discussion about the inspiration of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ and His power to save sinners. When I got opportunity I related to him the above incident and he became deeply interested. At the close, I said, "Colonel, all skepticism in all the world has never taken the snakes out of a man's boots, the monkeys off his bedposts, put into him the power of a new life, planted roses in the cheeks of his wife and frightened the flies off of his baby." I said, "Colonel, if I have a lie and you have the truth, my falsehood is worth a million times more to the human race in its sorrow and sin than your truth, for this Gospel that I preach is winning multitudes of lost sinners to Christ, to pardon and peace, to salvation and victory, to happy hearts and joyful homes, while your infidelity is only destroying faith, blighting hope and sending sinners adrift into darkness." I said, "Colonel, I have the truth and you have the falsehood."

He said, "Brother Morrison, if I believed the Bible as you believe it and could preach what you claim to be the Gospel with the faith and joy that you have, I would rather preach the Gospel than to be President of the United States." We took a long walk together. He was one of the handsomest and most eloquent men I ever saw or heard. I said, "Colonel, I love you. You have a great soul, but you are in error and you are in darkness. I am going to pray for you and I hope, through the mercy of God, that sometime in the future, somewhere in the grand galleries of God's universe, I may meet you graciously saved and rejoicing in Jesus."

The great lawyer wept, he pressed my hand and said, "I want you to pray for me." Soon afterward, he died, and in his dying hour, he cried aloud and most earnestly to God for mercy. Who knows but the Christ, whose mighty arms of mercy caught the thief away from the cross to Paradise, may have reached out in answer to prayer and caught this poor man away from the verge of the pit to eternal blessedness? -- "Remarkable Conversions," hdm0387, by H. C. Morrison

* * * * *

Part 152

QUOTATIONS FROM SAM JONES ABOUT INFIDELS

When a man tells me he is an infidel I only want to ask him three questions. I want to ask him whether he believes Christ will forgive sins; whether he will try and find out, and, if he answers in the negative, whether he acknowledges himself to be a fool? If the man refuses to answer these questions I just leave him alone. He won't admit anything, and there is no chance for an argument with him.

* * *

While Bob Ingersoll is a sort of theoretical infidel, that gets \$1,500 a night for being one, and you back here, like a fool, are one for nothing and board yourself.

* * *

If I wanted to make my boy an infidel I would join some big Methodist church, and be a big man, go to conferences, etc.

* * *

If I could understand all of the Bible I would know it was written by a man like myself, and that, therefore, it was not divine. Ingersoll once said, while delivering a lecture, that he could write a better book than the Bible. An old lady in the audience of the infidel said, "then you had better get at it as soon as you can for there is money in it." [Perhaps insinuating that Ingersoll's books on Atheism were written so he could make money. -- DVM]

* * *

Not long ago, an infidel of our town sent for me to come to see him; he was awful sick; I went of course, but when he asked me to pray for him to get well, I just told him that God knew me to be an honest man, and I couldn't fool with God by asking him to spare his life. I told him that I didn't believe he had ever done any good in his life; he never gave anything to anybody; he was never kind to anybody, and I did not believe his life was worth praying for; I didn't know but what the world would be just as well off without him as with him. He asked me if my orphans could use some corn, and I said yes, and when he promised to send me some for them, I felt like I could pray a little then, and I did pray for him. He got well, and was a useful man afterward -- and my orphans got the corn, too.

* * *

Whenever a man gets up before a community and proclaims his infidelity, then I have just one question to ask another party and one to ask him. I say: "Infidel, what are you doing in this world?" And the infidel steps up and says: "I am fighting Christianity. That's what I'm doing." "Christianity, what are you doing?" And Christianity says: "I am rescuing the perishing and saving the fallen; I am building alms-houses; I am founding churches; I am speaking words of cheer to the racer, I am lifting up the fallen; I am blessing the world; I am saving men from hell; I am saving them in heaven." Why, infidel, are you fighting almshouses, orphans' homes, and churches, and happy death-beds, and pardon, and peace, and heaven? Oh, get out of my presence, thou great

beast! Don't you tell me you are fighting such things as these! -- "Sam Jones' Anecdotes and Illustrations," hdm0523

* * * * *

Part 153

ATHEISM STEMS FROM A "BAD HEART," AND NOT FROM A "GOOD HEAD"

[Phineas F. Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene, discovered for himself the fact that doubt and unbelief have their source in a carnal heart. Atheism, then, stems not from a "good head," but from a "bad heart." -- DVM]

A Peculiar Temptation

During all the time that Brother Bresee was Presiding Elder of the Winterset District, he was passing through an awful experience along the line of doubt. To use his own words: "I had a big load of carnality on hand always, but it had taken the form of anger, and pride, and worldly ambition. At last, however, it took the form of doubt. It seemed as though I doubted everything. I thought it was intellectual, and undertook to answer it. I thought that probably I had gone into the ministry so early in life, that I had never answered the great questions of being, and of God, and of destiny and sin and the atonement, and I undertook to answer these great questions. I studied hard to so answer them as to settle the problems which filled my mind with doubt. Over and over again, I suppose a thousand times, I built and rebuilt the system of faith, and laid the foundation of revelation, the atonement, the new birth, destiny, and all that, and tried to assure myself of their truth; I would build a pyramid, and walk a bout it and say: 'It is so. I know it is so. It is in accord with revelation. It is in accord with my intuitions. It is in accord with history and human experience. It is so, and I do not question it.' And I would not get through the assertions of my certainty, before the Devil or something else, would say, 'Suppose it isn't so, after all?' And my doubts would not be any nearer settled than they were before."

Is Sanctified

Winter came on and they were in the midst of a protracted meeting, but the terrible doubt which tortured Brother Bresee during his Presiding Eldership, continued to plague him. To again quote his words: "There came one of those awful, snowy, windy nights, such as blow across the Western plains occasionally, with the thermometer twenty degrees below zero. Not many were out to church that night. I tried to preach a little, the best I could. I tried to rally the people to the altar, the few that were there, and went back to the stove, and tried to get somebody to the Lord. I did not find any one. I turned toward the altar; in some way it seemed to me that this was my time, and I threw myself down across the altar and began to pray for myself. I had come to the point where I seemingly could not go on. My religion did not meet my needs. It seemed as though I could not continue to preach with this awful question of doubt on me, and I prayed and cried to the Lord. I was ignorant of my own condition. I did not understand in reference to carnality. I did not understand in reference to the provisions of the atonement. I neither knew what was the matter with me, nor what would help me. But, in my ignorance, the Lord helped me, drew me and impelled me, and, as I cried to Him that night, He seemed to open heaven on me, and gave me, as I believe, the

baptism with the Holy Ghost, though I did not know either what I needed, or what I prayed for. But it not only took away my tendencies to worldliness, anger and pride, but it also removed the doubt. For the first time, I apprehended that the conditions of doubt were moral instead of intellectual, and that doubt was a part of carnality that could only be removed as the other works of the flesh are removed." -- "P. F. Bresee, A Prince in Israel," hdm0091, by E. A. Girvin

* * * * *

Part 154

NO VIRTUE IN AGNOSTICISM

There is a fearfully prevailing agnosticism in the church at this time. We greatly fear that a vast majority of our church members are now in this school of spiritual agnosticism, and really deem it to be a virtue to be there. God's Word gives no encouragement whatever to a shadowy religion and a vague religious experience. It calls us definitely into the realm of knowledge. It crowns religion with the crown of "I know." It passes us from the darkness of sin, doubt, and inward misgiving into the marvelous light, where we see clearly and know fully our personal relations to God. -- "The Reality of Prayer," hdm0426, by E. M. Bounds

* * * * *

Part 155

AGNOSTICS ARE "BLIND IN THE MIDST OF LIGHT"

Our Lord spoke of the Spirit as the Spirit of Truth, and promised that He would guide His people into all Truth. He spake by the Prophets. There were many writers, but He is the Author, and the Bible can neither be accounted for nor interpreted but by His guidance, He holds the key; He is the Key. Revealed Truth can be known only through the Revealer. Ignoring this, scholars and historians, grammarians and antiquarians, critics and agnostics, are blind in the midst of light. -- "The Only Way to Victory," hdm0496, by Samuel Chadwick

* * * * *

Part 156

ATHEISTS, INFIDELS, AND AGNOSTICS ARE NOT TO BE TRUSTED

The atheist becomes hard like the heart of the flinty, unyielding fate which he, in reality, worships. The agnostic applies his system of doubt to himself and to his friends and becomes fickle and faithless. The infidel has truly departed from his fidelity (as the word implies), and is unworthy of trust by his fellow-beings. The old Frenchman, descendant from the Huguenots, who was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, went to Paris from his home in the Pyrenees mountains. He rented a suite of rooms and paid the first month's rent. The landlord inquired whether he would require a receipt. "No," said the plain man of simple faith and simple virtues, "A receipt is not necessary. I know I have paid you, you know I have paid you, and God is witness between us." The proud Parisian curled his lip and said derisively, "So you still believe in God, do you?" "Why, yes," said the Christian, "don't you?" "No, not any more," replied the Parisian. "Then, in that

case," said the Christian, thoughtfully, "I will take a receipt." -- "Some Estimates of Life," hdm0067, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 157

AGNOSTICISM IS UNTENABLE IN AN INTELLIGENT UNIVERSE

To the genuine Christian God is a conscious as well as a speculative reality. The Christian experience, summed up as to its essence, as "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," is a conscious fact beyond the sphere of controversy, and the Christian's pathway is luminous and vital. This does not do away with mystery, but it does affirm the facts which to deny is to make the Christian religion a merely human thing to which there is no certain divine response, and in reality there is no middle ground between the fact of Christian experience and unlimited agnosticism.

We would not make a play of words, but there is genuine content in the testimony of Job, "I know my redeemer liveth," in the assertion of Paul, "I know whom I have believed," and in the observation of John, "We know we have passed from death unto life." To be inwardly sure that God lives, that we are in the right relationship to Him, and in proper state before Him is to ascend to an eminence from which we can gain a dependable perspective of all things besides. Right perspective is obtained by right emphasis -- by the true appraisal of things eternal, and not from any conscious effort to minify things of lesser importance. Knowledge of God is the key to all knowledge.

Agnosticism is untenable in an intelligible universe. Just as light is involved in the existence of the eye, so knowledge is involved in the existence of the intellect. And one cannot be classed as of sound mind who has come to the conclusion that truth does not exist or cannot be found. But if it exists and can be found, then the sound mind sets off in pursuit and will not be embarrassed to confess its find if once it truly overtakes its object. -- "Christian Living in a Modern World," hdm0657, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 158

MODERNISM AGREES WITH ATHEISM, INFIDELITY, AGNOSTICISM

It is not easy to define modernism as the modernists are not sufficiently organized to have an authoritative statement in their belief or accepted formulated creed, and as they do not acknowledge the authority of the Bible, it will be difficult for them to ever collect their diversified notions from the various churches among which they are scattered into specified articles of belief. In general they do not believe in the inspiration of the Bible, but only accept it as any book, valuable to the extent that it teaches morality and gives historical facts. They arrive at this, and many other wild and erroneous opinions; many of which would be in harmony with those of any atheist or agnostic. Modernism is a polite name for church infidelity.

In less than a lifetime back, skepticism was never heard of within the realms of the church. It was at a remote distance from church society, and they were strongly antagonistic to each other -- but today, some of the old and popular churches, and the theological seminaries (or shall we say zoological cemeteries) are the hotbeds of modernism. -- "Gems of Truth," hdm0499, by W. G. Ketcheson

* * * * *

Part 159

HOW THE BOTTOM FELL OUT OF HIS AGNOSTICISM

Dr. M____ was once crossing the Atlantic. The captain asked him to preach in the saloon on Sunday morning. He spoke on "answered prayer" and gave a number of illustrations. An agnostic was present, to whom some one said: "What do you think of M____'s sermon?"

"Oh," he said, "I don't believe a word of it."

Dr. M____ was speaking that afternoon to the steerage passengers. The agnostic picked up two oranges and put them in his pocket, and walked over to the steerage meeting.

As he threaded his way in and out amongst the steerage folk, he came across an old woman with silvery hair and a white face, her eyes closed in sleep, her head back and her hands open in her lap. He took the two oranges out of his pocket, and placed them in her hands, and went on to the meeting.

When he came back the old woman was munching one of the oranges. He said to her:

"You seem to be enjoying your orange!"

"Yes," she said, "My Father is very good."

"Your what? Your father can't be living."

"Oh," she said, "He is very much alive."

He said, "What do you mean?"

"Well," she replied, "I have been seasick for five days. This morning longed for an orange. I knew there were some in the saloon, but I wondered how we could get them in the steerage. As I sat here I asked the Lord to send me an orange. I suppose I must have off to sleep, and would you believe it, sir, when I opened my eyes, He not only had sent me one but He sent me two!"

"Why," he said, "is that true?"

"Absolutely true," she said.

The bottom fell out of his agnosticism on the spot. God does answer prayer, and sometimes uses infidels to carry the answer. -- "Thrilling Stories," hdm0463, by Julia A. Shelhamer

* * * * *

Part 160

WHY SHE GAVE A POSITIVE REPLY TO THE AGNOSTIC

The Free Methodist tells of an agnostic who, being present in a refined circle, was surprised when told that a certain noted lady believed firmly in sacred Scriptures. He ventured to ask her, "Do you believe the Bible?" "Most certainly I do," was her reply. "Why do you believe in it?" he queried again. "Because I am acquainted with the Author," she answered confidently. Poor souls, that know not God in Christ as their Savior, think, like Spencer, that He is "unknowable," and so reject His Word. But true believers have a blessed acquaintance with both, and their faith in the Word has a sure foundation in their acquaintance with its Author. -- "Nuggets of Gold," by George B. Kulp

* * * * *

Part 161

AGNOSTICS CONTRADICT THEIR NAME

A keen student of human nature gives this definition of an agnostic: "An agnostic is a man who loudly declares that he knows nothing, and gets mad and abuses you if you tell him that you believe him. He says that he doesn't know anything, but really believes he knows everything." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 162

HOW A FIJI NATIVE REPROVED A HIGHMINDED AGNOSTIC

The story is told of a college professor who visited the Fiji Islands. Being agnostic, he critically remarked to an elderly chief, "You're a great leader, but it's a pity you've been taken in by those foreign missionaries. They only want to get rich through you. No one believes the Bible anymore. People are tired of the threadbare story of Christ dying on a cross for the sins of mankind. They know better now. I'm sorry you've been so foolish as to accept their story." The old chief's eyes flashed as he answered, "See that great rock over there? On it we smashed the heads of our victims. Notice the furnace next to it? In that oven we formerly roasted the bodies of our enemies. If it hadn't been for those good missionaries and the love of Jesus that changed us from cannibals into Christians, you'd never leave this place alive! You'd better thank the Lord for the Gospel; otherwise we'd already be feasting on you. If it weren't for the Bible, you'd now be our supper!" -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

[A certain preacher wrote: The most interesting story I ever heard was told me years ago by a man over eighty years of age. We were sitting together on a projecting rock of a mountainside in Arkansas. Here's the story]:

I was down in this country during the Civil War. Across on the other side yonder there were hundreds of tents where our soldiers were encamped. Measles broke out and many of our brave lads died. The epidemic got so bad we stretched some tents farther down the valley and moved all the measles patients into these tents. This, of course, was done to protect as far as possible the health of the well soldiers. I was wardmaster in charge of the tents where the measles were located.

One night while I was on the ward I passed a bunk where there was a very sick soldier lad not more than seventeen years of age. The boy looked at me with a pathetic expression and said, "Wardmaster, I believe I am going to die. I am not a Christian. My mother isn't a Christian. My father isn't a Christian. I never had any Christian training. I never did attend church. I did go with a boy friend to Sunday School just once. A woman taught the Sunday School class. She seemed to be such a good woman. She read us something out of the Bible about a man--I think his name was Nicodemus. Anyway, it was about a man who went to see Jesus one night. Jesus told this man he must be born again in order to go to heaven when he dies. I have never been born again, and I don't want to die like this. Won't you please get the chaplain so he can tell me how to be born again?"

In those days I was an agnostic -- at least, that is what I called myself. As a matter of fact, I wasn't anything but an old sinner. So I told the boy, "You don't need a chaplain. Just be quiet now. Don't worry, you'll be all right." I went on around the ward, and in about an hour I came back to the boy's bed. He looked at me out of such sad staring eyes as he said, "Wardmaster, if you won't get me the chaplain, please get me the doctor, I am choking to death."

"All right, my son, I'll get you the doctor," I said. So I went off and found the doctor and he came, mopped out the throat of the lad so he could breathe just a little easier. I knew the boy was going to die. I had seen many other cases just like his. The boy was so sweet he literally climbed into my heart. He thanked me for my kindness. He thanked the doctor for being so good to him. The doctor and I went away from the bed.

In about an hour I came back expecting to find the boy dead, but he was still struggling. He looked up out of his eyes of death and said, "There is no use, Wardmaster. I have got to die, and I haven't been born again. Whether you believe in it or not, won't you find the chaplain and let him tell me how to be born again?" I looked at him for a moment and thought about how helpless he was in the grip of death. So I said, "All right, my son, I will get you the chaplain." I walked away a few paces and then turned and went back to the boy's bedside.

I said, "My boy, I am not going to get you the chaplain. I am going to tell you what to do myself. Now, understand, I am an agnostic. I don't know whether there is any God. I don't know whether there is any heaven. I do not know whether there is any hell. I don't know anything. Yes, I

do. I know one thing. I know my mother was a good woman. I know, if there is a God, my mother knew Him. If there is a heaven I know she is there. So, I will tell you what my mother told me. You can try it and see if it works. Now I am going to teach you a verse of Scripture. The verse is John 3:16, 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' My mother said that I can not save myself, but if I will believe in Jesus He will save me."

I asked the boy to say the verse with me. I started and he followed with a weak and trembling voice. I referred the lad to another verse my mother taught me, but he closed his eyes, stretched his hands across his breast and in a whisper he quoted slowly, repeating some of the words of John 3:16 several times: "For God so loved the world... He gave His only begotten Son... that whosoever, whosoever... whosoever believeth, believeth in Him, believeth in Him."

Then, he stopped and said with a dear voice, "Praise God, Wardmaster, it works! I believe in Him! I shall not perish! I have everlasting life! I have been born again! Wardmaster, your mother was right. Why don't you try it? Do what your mother said. It works, Wardmaster! This thing works! Wardmaster, before I go, I want to ask you to do something for me. Take a kiss to my mother and tell her what you told me, and tell her that her dying son said, 'It works.'"

I leaned over and kissed him and, then as he drew his last breath he said, "It works."

[The old man, wiping tears out of his eyes and tears out of the wrinkles of his face, said, "The lad was right. It does work. Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but has now everlasting life. It works! I know it works!"] -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 164

THE ENCOUNTER OF LEW WALLACE WITH ROBERT INGERSOLL

It is said that General Lew Wallace, of Civil War fame, was traveling to New Mexico, where he had just been appointed as governor of the territory by that name. He discovered on the train as a fellow traveler the great agnostic Robert Ingersoll, with whom he was acquainted. After a time of conversation, Wallace said, "Ingersoll, I wish you would talk to me about religion." Said Ingersoll, "What do you want me to talk about?" "Is there a God?" said Wallace. "I don't know; do you?" was the reply. "Is there a hereafter?" Again the reply, "I don't know; do you?" And again Wallace asked, "Was Christ divine?" To which Ingersoll gave the same reply. Wallace said, "There's your text -- go ahead." For over an hour, until he left the train, Ingersoll poured out his arguments against the Christian religion.

After Robert Ingersoll left the train, Wallace kept thinking. He was silenced and questioning in the wake of the other's brilliant tirade. But he was stirred to look for himself and see what grounds there were for belief in the Bible. He read books, talked with others, and made special trips in his investigation of Christ and the Bible. The result was that he became convinced of the truth of God's Word, and he declared his verdict that Jesus was indeed the divine Son of God by writing Ben-Hur.

Wallace left his personal testimony as follows: "After six years given to the impartial investigation of Christianity as to its truth or falsity, I have come to the deliberate conclusion that Christ Jesus was the Messiah of the Jews, the Saviour of the world, and my personal Saviour." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

[In the paragraph above, Lew Wallace says: "I have come to the deliberate conclusion that Christ Jesus was ... my personal Saviour." However, true salvation is not received by coming to a "deliberate conclusion mentally," but rather by receiving a "transforming conversion spiritually." -- DVM]

* * * * *

Part 165

THE WESLEYAN REVIVAL PRECEDED BY SKEPTICS AND SKEPTICISM

The state of religion previous to the Wesleyan revival was deplorable. Even of professed theologians but few were faithful to their sacred trust, and these bemoaned, with a feeling akin to that of Nehemiah and the exiled Jews, that the house of the Lord was laid waste. One of these, the venerable Archbishop Leighton, of pious memory, in pathetic terms laments over the national Church as "a fair carcass without spirit." A sneering skepticism pervaded the writings of Bolingbroke and Hobbes, of Hume and Gibbon. The principles of French philosophy were affecting English thought. In the universities a medieval scholasticism prevailed. Even the candidates for holy orders were ignorant of the Gospels. A hireling priesthood often dispensed the ordinances of the Church, attaching more importance to mere forms than to the spirit of the Gospel -- To the wearing of a surplice than to the adorning of the inner man. Some of them were more at home at the races, at a cockpit, at a hunting or a drinking party, than in their study or their closet ... Lord St. John became a convert from the fashionable skepticism of the times to the faith of Christ. His brother, the witty Bolingbroke, complimented the [Methodist] preacher, but despised his message. -- "The Makers of Methodism," hdm0688, by W. H. Withrow

* * * * *

Part 166

THE INFLUENCE OF INFIDELS CAN BE FEARED TOO MUCH

Then we glance at prominent infidels. Suppose you segregate them and examining them thus one by one, your fear is certain to go down and your hope and confidence to rise.

You have heard of Tom Paine. To get your eyes thoroughly opened to the utter moral weakness of the man, read Richard Watson's description of his life in his Apology for the Bible. Read there how he defrauded the English government, betrayed a trust when he was a secretary in one of the committees of our Congress, and broke the hearts of two women who had the misfortune to be his wives. Read of his drunkenness for years, and see why it was this man fought Christ and why we need not be alarmed at his writings.

In like manner take up Gibbons, Hobbes, Hume and others, and the life and last sayings of these men will show us that they will never be able to keep the Gospel from filling the earth. Many have been alarmed over the influence of Ingersoll. But if God had the least fear of him He would kill him and take him out of the way. He came several years ago to St. Louis, and some of us hardly knew when he arrived or when he left. There was not a Bible given up nor a prayer less prayed. The crowd who went out to listen to him were those who desired to hear him prove that that world did not exist to which they had every reason to suppose they were going. I could but contrast his resultless visit with the work of an Evangelist who went to a town in Kentucky and in a week's time, playing cards were seen torn up in every direction while the receipts of the saloons fell from five hundred dollars a day to eighteen. -- "Revival Sermons," hdm0049, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 167

NAMES OF SOME OF THE INFIDEL DEISTS

Such men as Herbert, Hobbes, Tindal, Bolinbroke and Newport are among the front ranks of the protagonists of deism. Their works culminated in the universal skepticism of Hume and Gibbon .. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, who may be regarded as the founder of English deism ... A later form of deism had its origin with Hobbes ... This skepticism reached its full growth in the system of Hume (1776). His is a system of universal doubt ... English deism was answered by men who were well able to meet the onslaughts of skepticism. -- "Nazarene Preacher's Magazine, "Doctrinal Historical Studies in Christian Dogma" by Basil W. Miller

* * * * *

Part 168

WESLEY'S COMMENTS ABOUT HOBBS' DEISM AND HIS DEATH

How was the case with that great admirer of reason ... I mean the famous Mr. Hobbes. None will deny that he had a strong understanding. But did it produce in him a full and satisfactory conviction of an invisible world? Did it open the eyes of his understanding, to see "beyond the bounds of this diurnal sphere?" O no! far from it! His dying words ought never to be forgotten. "Where are you going, Sir?" said one of his friends. He answered, "I am taking a leap in the dark!" and died. Just such an evidence of the invisible world can bare reason give to the wisest of men! -- "Wesley's Sermons," hdm0175

* * * * *

Part 169

HUME'S SUPERFICIALITY AS AN HISTORIAN DISCOVERED BY ADAM CLARKE

[The paragraph below seems to indicate that David Hume's History of England was written without his having consulted the official government historical records -- an omission discovered by Adam Clarke when Clarke was hired by the government to set those records in order. Obviously, the superficiality of David Hume's work was true also in relation to his deistic notions,

which, from what I have read, were far amiss of the deep truths of God's word known, plumbed, and commented upon by Adam Clarke. -- DVM]

The studies connected with the discharge of these official duties gave Dr. Clarke a more thorough insight into English history than was possessed by some men who have become famous as historians. Compared with his attainments in this kind of knowledge, those of Hume, for example, were, superficial. That elegant but plausible writer had, as Dr. Clarke learned, the privilege of consulting the Records, but did not take the trouble to avail himself of it. A man of genius, it seems, can write history without much research: like M. Vertot, who finished his narrative of the siege of Malta before getting the authentic documents; and, when they arrived, threw them on the sofa behind him, with, "My siege is done." -- "The Life of Adam Clarke," hdm0085, by J. W. Etheridge

* * * * *

Part 170

THE BIBLE HAS SURVIVED THE ATTACKS OF PUNY INFIDELS

Voltaire said he could and would destroy in a few brief years what it took Jesus Christ and his apostles 1,800 years to establish, but since he made that declaration the old printing press he used to print his infernal literature has been used to print copies of the Word of God, and the old log cabin he lived in is now owned by one of the Bible societies and has been crammed to the roof with Bibles Hume said he had discovered an instrument by which any reasonable mind could extricate himself from the superstition and bondage of its teaching.

Tom Paine said he had cut down the trees of paradise and so effectually uprooted them that no power could make them grow, but Thomas lied about it. Since he gave expression to that utterance millions of Bibles have been printed and disseminated throughout the world.

Every once in a while someone comes along and upsets the Bible, but it is like a solid cube -- no matter which way they turn it over, it is always right side up. Now and then some smart-aleck blows it up, but every time it has been blown up it has come down and lit on its feet and has run faster than it ever did before.

"Emperors have decreed its extermination, atheists have railed at it, agnostics have smiled cynically upon it, higher critics have carped at it, modernists have moved heaven and earth to disprove it, radicals have ranted and raved over it, scoffers have scorned its promises, freethinkers have derided it, devotees of folly have denounced it." But as Dr. Robert Lee has said, "All of its enemies have not torn one hole in its vesture, nor diluted one drop of honey from its abundant hive, nor broken one string on its 10,000 stringed harp, nor drowned one sweet word in infidel ink, nor made dim one ray of its perpetual light, nor stayed its triumphal progress by so much as one brief hour." -- "The World's Greatest," hdm0516, by Forman Lincicome

* * * * *

Part 171

INGERSOLL'S HEROISM A MYTH -- NONE BENEFITED BY INFIDELS

Mr. Ingersoll's friends, to prove that he was a man of infinite jest, liked to tell of his war record, which consisted in marching down south and marching home again. Mr. Ingersoll was captured by some southern soldiers in a hog pen, and Gen. Forrest, whose sarcasm was as keen as his sword, exchanged him for a mule, and Col. Ingersoll hastened back to the north where he found more money, and less danger in ridiculing the Bible, than in meeting a brave rebel soldier with a gun in his hand. If Gen. Grant, and the boys in blue who followed him to war, had have had as little fear of God, and as much fear of rebel soldiers as Col. Ingersoll had, there would now be six million slaves in the United States."

This put me to thinking about the leading infidels in whom I had been interested, and whom I had believed were such great men, and I asked myself what good these men had done with their teachings, which had destroyed the faith of multitudes of people. Who had been made better, or more hopeful and happy by giving up his faith in Jesus Christ, the immortality of the soul, and a happy hereafter? Who in the wide world could say that he was a better and happier man because of the writings of Hume, Voltaire, Tom Paine, or Robert Ingersoll?

As I lay awake at night on my little bed these thoughts rambled through my mind for many hours. I asked myself What skeptic, from the college professor who had first shaken my faith in the Bible, and genuineness of the Christian religion, down to the poorest, most degraded sot I had ever heard swearing over a glass of whiskey in a bar-room, who of all these doubters had brought any help or strength or light into my life. Not one of them and as I thought over the matter I was forced to believe that not one of these men was himself a happy man. -- "Confessions of a Backslider," hdm0430, by H. C. Morrison

* * * * *

Part 172

THE INFIDEL HUME BUT A PROUD, SELF-INFLATED WORM

A celebrated Infidel, Mr. Hume, boasted that he had discovered an argument that would shame the gospel from the earth. The mountain at length brought forth -- the sophism against Miracles: but the inflated worm had the mortification to see the mouse crushed to pieces under the foot of Dr. Campbell. But God's demonstration stands; and has in all ages stopped the mouths of the exalters of creaturely science. When men glory in these decorations of their filthy nature, and have pretended, that by searching they could find out God; it is enough to reply, Look at Egypt, Greece, and Rome. What people ever equaled them? Do they not still so shine in our eyes that the brilliancy oppresses us? But did they know God? Behold their filthy idolatry, and be humble. And you that have learned a better system from the Bible, acknowledge the source of your purer worship; while those of you who indeed "know Him," according to "the foolishness of preaching," as being "merciful to your unrighteousness, and remembering your sins no more," -- to whom "Christ is made, of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," -- glory in the Lord," and weep over the idolatries which still pollute the world. -- "The Wesleyan Magazine," (1823), hdm0294, from a sermon by Henry Moore preached at City-Road Chapel, London, Friday, April 26, 1822

* * * * *

Part 173

WESLEY'S VERY LOW ESTIMATION OF THE INFIDEL DAVID HUME

Did that right honourable wretch, compared to whom Sir R[obert] was a saint, know the heart of man, -- he that so earnestly advised his own son, "never to speak the truth, to lie or dissemble as often as he speaks, to wear a mask continually?" that earnestly counselled him, "not to debauch single women," (because some inconveniences might follow,) "but always married women?" Would one imagine this grovelling animal ever had a wife or a married daughter of his own? O rare Lord C[hesterfield]! Did ever man so well deserve, though he was a Peer of the realm, to die by the side of Newgate? Or did ever book so well deserve to be burned by the common hangman, as his Letters? Did Mr. David Hume, lower, if possible, than either of the former, know the heart of man? No more than a worm or a beetle does. -- "Wesley's Sermons," hdm0174

* * * * *

Part 174

WESLEY CONSIDERED HUME'S RELIGION TO BE A FORM OF ATHEISM

But how little is this religion experienced, or even thought of, in the Christian world! On the contrary, what reason have we to take up the lamentation of a dying saint, (Mr. Haliburton, of St. Andrew's in Scotland,) "O Sirs, I am afraid a kind of rational religion is more and more prevailing amongst us; a religion that has nothing of Christ belonging to it; nay, that has not only nothing of Christ, but nothing of God in it!" And indeed how generally does this prevail, not only among professed infidels, but also among those who call themselves Christians; who profess to believe the Bible to be the word of God! Thus our own countryman, Mr. Wollaston, in that elaborate work, "The Religion of Nature Delineated," presents us with a complete system of religion, without anything of God about it; without being beholden, in any degree, to either the Jewish or Christian revelation. Thus Monsieur Burlomachi, of Geneva, in his curious "Treatise on the Law of Nature," does not make any more use of the Bible than if he had never seen it. And thus the late Professor Hutcheson, of Glasgow, (a stranger writer than either of the other,) is so far from grounding virtue on either the fear or the love of God, that he quite shuts God out of the question; not scrupling to declare, in express terms, that a regard to God is inconsistent with virtue; insomuch that, if in doing a beneficent action you expect God to reward it, the virtue of the action is lost: It is then not a virtuous but a selfish action.

Perhaps, indeed, there are not many who carry the matter to so great a length. But how great is the number of those who, allowing religion to consist of two branches, -- our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbour, -- entirely forget the first part, and put the second part for the whole, -- for the entire duty of man! Thus almost all men of letters, both in England, France, Germany, yea, and all the civilized countries of Europe, extol humanity to the skies, as the very essence of religion. To this the great triumvirate, Rousseau, Voltaire, and David Hume, have contributed all their labours, sparing no pains to establish a religion which should stand on its own foundation, independent on any revelation whatever; yea, not supposing even the being of a God. So leaving

Him, if he has any being, to himself, they have found out both a religion and a happiness which have no relation at all to God, nor any dependence upon him.

It is no wonder that this religion should grow fashionable, and spread far and wide in the world. But call it humanity, virtue, morality, or what you please, it is neither better nor worse than Atheism... -- "Wesley's Sermons," hdm0176

* * * * *

Part 175

GIBBON, THE HISTORIAN, IDENTIFIED CLEARLY AS AN INFIDEL

Even Gibbon, an infidel historian, attributes the remarkable success of primitive Christianity quite as much to the moral character and mutual love of the early believers as to the influence of their doctrine and their aggressive zeal. -- "Scriptural Sanctification," hdm0274, by Peter Wiseman

* * * * *

Part 176

WILLIAM LAW MARRIED A GIBBON, RELATIVE OF THE INFIDEL HISTORIAN

In 1726 appeared the first of Law's devotional works, the Practical Treatise upon Christian Perfection. It is significant that Law uses "perfection" here, not, as the old fathers, of love, but of obedience. One result of the book was probably that connection with the Gibbon family which shaped the whole of Law's after-life. About this time Mr Edward Gibbon, the grandfather of the historian, was seeking a tutor for his only son. Law was selected for this office, attended the younger Gibbon to Cambridge, and in 1730, when his pupil went abroad to make the grand tour, found a home in that "spacious house with gardens and land at Putney," where his patron resided, "in decent hospitality." Here he lived, "as the much honoured friend and spiritual director of the whole family," till the establishment was broken up some little time after Mr Gibbon's death in 1736.

In 1729 the publication of the Serious Call had set the seal on Law's reputation, and he was visited and consulted at Putney by a little circle of disciples. Chief among them were Dr Cheyne, the two Wesleys, and Byrom. The Wesleys drifted away from him; but the good and flighty John Byrom, squire of Kersall, near Manchester - poet, mystic, Jacobite, physician - remained his faithful friend and worshipper through life. But Law was one of those men who have many admirers and few friends, and whose friends are markedly inferior to themselves. They are men who cannot bear contradiction.

In 1737, according to Mr Moreton, in 1740, according to other authorities, we find Law settled at King's Cliffe, his birthplace, in a good house known as King John's Palace, or the Hall Yard. Here, in 1744, he was joined by Miss Hester Gibbon, the daughter of his old patron, and Mrs Elizabeth Hutcheson, the widow of a wealthy country gentleman; and here he died in 1761.

Law's life at King's Cliffe was wholly uneventful. The only dates that emerge are those of the writings which he sent to the Press from time to time, down to the very year of his death. It cannot have been a wholesome existence for so able a man to have been thus immured as domestic chaplain with two women of limited understanding and eccentric character. He seems to have had scarcely any contact with the outside world. Certainly he suffered through the absence of larger duties and converse with his equals. The little household was strictly ordered. The Bible and books of theology were the only literature admitted; nor was any form of recreation tolerated beyond conversation, a little music, and an occasional drive or ride. The historian Gibbon, who is oddly divided between dislike of Law's ways and pride in having been, in a sense, the proprietor of so famous a man, speaks of the house at King's Cliffe as "a hermitage," and the term is not inappropriate.

The Christian duty most insisted upon by Law was charity. He himself was the soul of munificence. He built and endowed a girls' school at King's Cliffe, possibly with the thousand pounds which had been sent to him anonymously by some person who was grateful for spiritual profit received from the Christian Perfection. In 1745 the foundation was increased by Mrs Hutcheson, till it included also a school for boys, almshouses, and a library, which still exist.

Such wise generosity could bear none but good fruits. But the rule of the house was that all surplus income should be given away in alms. As Mrs Hutcheson enjoyed two thousand a year, while Miss Gibbon had inherited half her father's large property, and Law himself possessed some means, the sums thus disposed of must have been very considerable. The natural result was the demoralisation of the whole countryside. King's Cliffe was crowded with undeserving mendicants, and the evil became so serious that the rector preached against it, and the parish made representations to the magistrates. Here, too, there is a characteristic feature. Law lived just before the iron age of Political Economy set in. Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared in 1776. Perhaps the rector of King's Cliffe was a magistrate. But Law's heart was fixed on the letter of the Gospel, and what he thought to be - though it by no means was - the practice of primitive Christianity. Here also, as in his politics, he stood at the parting of the ways, and failed to see that the old road had come to an end. It was an age of giving. Kings gave pensions; ministers bestowed sinecures; noblemen rained showers of guineas on troops of gaping dependants; and so the ideal country priest, as he is painted in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*, gave all he could to all who asked.

Pleased with his guests the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe.

Law would never suffer his portrait to be taken; but Mr Tighe, who visited King's Cliffe some time before 1813, and received information from "a kind person" there, tells us that he "was in stature rather over than under the middle size; not corpulent, but stout made, with broad shoulders; his visage was round, his eyes grey, his features well-proportioned and not large; his complexion ruddy, and his countenance open and agreeable. He was naturally more inclined to be merry than sad ... He chose to eat his food from a wooden platter, not from an idea of the unnecessary luxury of a plate, but because it appeared to him that a plate spoiled the knives."

He was a thorough Englishman in person and mind, with the English touch of whimsy about him. Yet he is a noble figure. In all his numerous controversies he never used a discourteous word

or used a disingenuous argument. He never fought for trifles, nor for any cause that did not lie very near to the heart of religion. He made great sacrifices, and made them in vain. He found himself condemned to a life of isolation, yet he never lost heart or temper, or showed the least trace of bitterness, though he was naturally of a masterful and positive disposition; indeed, he grew in sweetness and largeness of view to the very end. And certainly no one could be more consistent or thorough. "He left," says Gibbon the historian, "the reputation of a worthy and a pious man, who believed all that he professed and practised all that he enjoined," and these words are just. -- "A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life," hdm0116, by William Law

* * * * *

Part 177

GIBBONS PRONOUNCED WILLIAM LAW'S BOOK POWERFUL

[As seen in the selection above, the infidel historian, Edward Gibbon was related to William Law's wife. But, Gibbons apparently had mixed feelings about Law, not approving of all of his ways, but still esteeming him as a good and upright Christian man. -- DVM]

William Law was a divine of the Church of England, and his "Serious Call to a Holy Life" was pronounced by Drs. Johnson and Gibbons as one of the most powerful works on devotion in the English language. The great soul of Wesley communed with these eminent men of God, and their writings had much to do in moulding his remarkable character. "In 1729," he says, "I began not only to read, but to study the Bible, as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion." -- "Perfect Love," hdm0181, by J. A. Wood

* * * * *

Part 178

GIBBONS' HISTORY THE PRODUCT OF 26 YEARS

[Apparently unlike David Hume, though he was an infidel, Edward Gibbon was a much more thorough historian. -- DVM]

"Gibbon labored 26 years on his Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 179

A GENERAL FAST CALLED AS PAINE'S EVIL INFLUENCE SPREAD

About this time the minds of many people were corrupted by the deistical writings of Thomas Paine, whose effusions against the Bible were received with greater avidity by Americans on account of the eminent services he had rendered to his country during the war of the Revolution. But Thomas Paine as a politician and Thomas Paine as a theologian were very different men. His book, however, against the Bible, was published by the booksellers; which, together with others of

a kindred character, were widely circulated, and they were exerting a most deleterious influence upon the minds of many of our citizens, and threatened to poison the fountains of knowledge with their pestiferous contents. It could hardly be otherwise, under these circumstances, than that immorality should abound, and the "love of many wax cold." And the unrestrained freedom of the press, together with the laxity with which the laws against vice were administered, threatened to deluge the country with ungodliness. To impress upon all, and more especially upon the members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the necessity of a more thorough and extensive reformation among all orders of people, a "GENERAL FAST" was recommended by the several annual conferences, in the following address to the people of their charge:--

"It is recommended by the general traveling ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the first Friday in March, 1796, should be held as a most solemn day of fasting, humiliation, prayer, and supplication. -- "Bangs M. E. History, Vol. II," hdm0009

* * * * *

Part 180

THE ILL-EFFECT OF PAINE'S "AGE OF REASON" ON HENRY BROCKETT

I read Darwin's Origin of Species and Descent of Man, Huxley's and Haeckel's works, Herbert Spencer's Synthetic Philosophy, Colenso on the Pentateuch, Tom Paine's Age of Reason, and other writings on Biblical criticism and evolution. I was about eighteen or nineteen at the time and, of course, my faith in the Bible was undermined and I ceased to read it as before. I argued about the Bible and tried to show that it contained contradictions.

When I was in this state of soul, a Christian once warned me and said to me "Young man, if you go on as you are, it will lead to the destruction of your soul." I paid no heed, however, to this warning. I was not going to accept even the Bible merely because I had been brought up to believe it was all the Word of God. I was going to think for myself. I now was acquainted with modern thought and had superior knowledge, so I imagined. Little did I realize that my unbelieving, critical attitude to the Bible was the result of the corrupt workings of my natural mind, carnality, the "mind of the flesh," which is enmity against God. This so-called "modern thought" puffed me up and my heart was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. This was the sad, dark state of soul I had fallen into; and yet six years before I had, as a young boy, boldly witnessed for Christ. The filling of my mind with evolutionary literature and Biblical criticism had brought me into spiritual darkness. But it is with a heart full of adoring gratitude to the God of infinite grace that I can testify that I was not left by Him to remain in this state of darkness. -- "The Riches of Holiness," hdm0025, by Henry Brockett

* * * * *

Part 181

THE INFLUENCE OF INGERSOLL AND PAINE VS. THAT OF WESLEY

Just so, through influence, we make impressions on the lives and character of others. We may pass away into distant parts of the world, or into eternity, but our handiwork is left. Those whom we affected may also move away or be buried--but they bear the mark we gave them.

Because of this we shall give account at the judgment day of Christ.

Ingersoll gave a lecture on the Pacific coast in which he convinced a number that they had a right to take their own lives. Sixty suicides followed in the course of a few weeks in that locality because of the potent influence of the lecturer. God will make him answerable at the last day for those souls whom he persuaded into sin and everlasting destruction.

Tom Paine, in his writings, shipwrecked the faith and damned the souls of many men who admired his genius. He will have a dreadful reckoning to give for the movements of his blasphemous pen. And it is an ever growing account, for the influence of his books is still going on in the land.

John Wesley found the blessing of holiness in the Bible, and wrote a little book called "Christian Perfection," and preached a number of sermons on the subject. The result was a tidal wave of salvation that rolled around the world, gladdened countless thousands of homes, quickened the churches, and brought millions of souls into heaven. Moreover, the blessed influence of the man is still sweeping on. He had gone, but his mark is left. The singer is dead, but the song he sung remains echoing not only in the hearts of individuals, but arising in steady, increasing volume from multiplied thousands of churches and camp grounds.

Because of this, the man John Wesley will stand before the judgment bar of the Son of God and give an account. Very glorious will be that divine interview and inquiry and most marvelous and blessed will be the reward that will come upon him.

We cannot fly from the fact; we not only must give account to God for what we are, but for what we have done. We shall not only be judged for our character, but for our influence. --
"Beulah Land," hdm0034, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 182

HE TOOK IN AN INFIDEL, AND LOST HIS SOUL

[Beverly Carradine's title for this chapter was "The Warmed Serpent."]

In one of our Southern States there lived a prosperous farmer. He had a pleasant cottage home, with orchard, garden, yards, and barns, while stretching beyond these possessions were twenty-five acres of cotton and corn.

He was a married man with one little girl. He had professed religion at some protracted or camp meeting, and joined the Methodist Church. The life he lived was a quiet and simple one, but

he had the necessaries of life, with comforts besides, had his church associations and privileges, with pleasant neighbors, was fairly prosperous and a contented man.

One night he heard a knock at his front door. On going to the steps he found a tramp standing in the dark, who asked for his supper and a night's lodging. Mr. K. told him to come in. The man did so, and instead of spending one night, he stayed thirty-three years. He passed the rest of his life in that home, and only left it as a corpse a generation of years later. He not only did this, but, fearful to relate, stole away the Christian faith of his entertainer; morally and spiritually ruined him, and landed his soul in perdition.

The man was a tramp, but no ordinary one. He was bright, brainy and well-read, but without the inclination to make his own living; a character that is not infrequently met with in society, where the shiftless individual is smart and entertaining, but reluctant to work with hands or brain for daily bread. Such men become hangers on of families, spongers upon friends, making themselves agreeable and even desirable by their quick wits, and only requiring in pay that they get their bed and board. Many of these persons are not harmful, but are simply barnacles clinging to those who will allow them to be such social attachments.

In the case mentioned in this sketch, the man who knocked at the door and stayed thirty-three years was a bad man. He was a skeptic dyed in the wool, and had the writings of Paine and Voltaire at his fingers' ends.

It took some time, but he accomplished his infernal work at last, and utterly destroyed the Christian faith and experience of the man who bade him come in out of the night. He was the serpent warmed at the hearth that returned the kindness of his benefactor by stinging him to spiritual death. He made a horrible return for the kindness shown him in his need.

Mr. K. gave up the church, worked about his farm on the Sabbath, became a tobacco worm, and developed into a gloomy-faced, sour-spirited, bitter-tongued man. Many of his acquaintances and friends fell away from him, and he was thrown mainly, and finally almost entirely, upon the infidel for company.

At last the skeptic died, and the gray-haired man in the coffin in the wagon was followed by a gray-haired man on horseback as the solitary mourner.

After this Mr. K. became still more morose and bitter, hardly ever leaving his farm and so almost literally dropped out of public sight and notice.

Four years after the death of the tramp who had ruined him, he himself was taken down with a desperate sickness. He lingered in great suffering for several weeks. The writer arriving at that time as the pastor of a church in a neighboring town, was sent for to visit him. The summons came on the day of the old man's death. Not having a horse, and unable to borrow one, and realizing the urgency of the case, we trudged on foot four miles along a muddy road to the house of death.

The sick, or, rather, dying man, was conscious, but refused to talk. We knelt and prayed for him, and the prayer seemed driven back in our face. Arising from our knees, we begged him to accept Christ, and he with a black and horrible look rejected him. In a few minutes more he was a corpse. Two days later he was buried in a country graveyard, and near the church which he had attended in his happier days.

It was the custom of the neighborhood to remove the coffin lid at the graveyard and let the people pass in a kind of procession by the casket and take a farewell look at the deceased. On that day there happened to be two burials, and both occurring at the same hour. One was that of Mr. K., and the other the funeral of a saintly lady aged about eighty.

Separated by about twenty yards, the two coffins were placed on the ground and the lids removed. Several hundred people looked at the two silent forms and will never forget as long as eternity rolls the striking and even fearful difference between the two death-touched countenances. The glory actually lingered on the face of that Mother in Israel who had walked with God without a break for over sixty years.

Scarcely a soul that day looked upon the calm, sweet and all but smiling face without tears springing to the eyes. God's seal was on His own, even in death.

The crowd, after the burial of this Daughter of the King, went over to Mr. R.'s grave lot, where the casket lay upon the grass with its silent tenant inside. The cover was removed, and the people marched by its side and, glancing in, instantly averted their eyes with looks of pain and distress, and some even with low exclamation of horror. The face had on it the very same black scowl that we saw a few minutes before death. It was an expression so dark and hopeless and hard that we do not believe a single one doubted that the man was lost. The soul in quitting the body seemed to have left its own terror and despair upon the face as it fled away into eternal night.

The question asked by some would be, why did God allow such a being to come to that house and forever ruin the man who was kind to him?

The Bible plainly answers all such questions, while life is full of similar instances, and the word Probation contains in itself a perfect explanation to any thoughtful and sensible man.

... And God allows all this, because it is a part of our probation. We are on trial. We are being tested in many ways. If we cannot stand temptation, we ought to know it. If we cannot rise superior to wrong influences, how can we be rewarded, much less saved? If people have to be killed, or we must be caught up into the skies from the presence of every man or woman who comes along, how can we be tried and tested, how find out what is in us, and how develop the spiritual powers that lie all dormant and unknown within us.

So the mistakes in marriage, business, and other momentous matters are permitted. The man or woman who is to injure or ruin us is allowed to knock at the door of the life. And this is partly to test us, but also because there is no need for us to stagger and fall. He that is for us is greater than the person who knocks at the door and comes into the life. If we look to Christ, no one can pluck us from His hand. -- "Remarkable Occurrences," hdm0047, by Beverly Carradine

* * * * *

Part 183

THE MANIA FOR FREEDOM HELPED FURTHER PAINES ATHEISTIC IDEAS

[The Revolutions in America and France for human liberty and freedom, created an atmosphere and attitude in people's minds that was conducive to the spread of Thomas Paines humanistic, atheistic writings. The clamor of freedom from human tyranny metamorphosed into a clamor for freedom from the restraints of God and the Bible. See also #183 below. -- DVM]

Manchester, 1791-2 -- About this time the French revolution seemed to interest the whole of Europe ... Even religious people caught the general mania, greatly accelerated by the publications of Thomas Paine, particularly his Rights of Man, insomuch that the pulpits of all parties, resounded with the pro and con politics of the day, to the utter neglect of the pastoral duty; so that "the hungry sheep looked up and were not fed." -- "Autobiography of Adam Clarke," hdm0074

* * * * *

Part 184

PAINE'S DISCIPLES PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS ON HEDDING'S CIRCUIT

The infidel works of Thomas Paine were just then taking the world by storm. They were circulated and read, and multitudes professed to believe their calumnies against God and the Bible. Mr. Hedding says: "When I first went to St. Albans, which was then included in this circuit, in 1799, though it was a considerable village, I could find but two individuals who professed experimental Christianity in the whole village. A large number of the inhabitants -- both men and women, young and old -- unblushingly professed to be the disciples of Paine. Many of them violently opposed Christianity. They would blackguard the preachers in the streets, and insult them even in their religious meetings. On one occasion a lawyer struck Elijah Sabin with the butt of his whip, and knocked him down. At another time, another wrung the nose of Lorenzo Dow. No general revival had taken place at St. Albans previous to this year; but during the year we had a great revival. Infidelity was compelled to flee; and many of the disciples of Paine renounced their infidelity, and became the disciples of Christ." The seed that had been sown amid persecutions and privations then only began to take root. From that time forward the harvest has been growing more and still more abundant. Not only St. Albans, but all the region round about, has witnessed revival after revival, and many a glorious harvest has gladdened the heritage of God. The place where once only two persons professing godliness could be found, now holds a respectable position for its religious and benevolent institutions, while infidelity is scarcely known. -- "The Life and Times of Elijah Hedding," hdm0616, by Davis W. Clark

* * * * *

Part 185

PAINE'S DOCTRINE FOSTERED THE HATRED OF CHRIST ALSO

[By this selection we can see how Paine's teachings made his disciples want to throw of the restraints of the Heavenly Sovereign, Christ, as well as the restraints of earthly kings. -- DVM]

On the other hand, Mr. Benson found himself moving in a population among which infidelity and republicanism were making victims of the same men in increasing numbers every week. Paine and Voltaire had indoctrinated them not only with hatred to King George, but with hatred to Jesus Christ. -- "The Life of Adam Clarke," hdm0085, by J. W. Etheridge

* * * * *

Part 186
HOW ONE WAS DELIVERED FROM PAINE'S ATHEISM

To the Rev. Father Abbott

The author of this extract was one who had denied the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; but having been previously convinced about his soul, he came to our quarterly meeting, and the Lord struck him with such a sense of his sin, and with such power that he fell to the floor, and lay as one dead for near or quite the space of one hour; and when he came to, he praised God for his deliverance. Next morning he burnt all his romantic books, and among them Paine's Age of Reason; and sent for a barber and had his hair cut short, having formerly worn it long; he joined class, and now stands in a fair way for the kingdom of God. -- "The Life of Benjamin Abbott," hdm0361, by John Ffirth

* * * * *

Part 187
THE HORRIBLE ATROCITIES IN FRANCE INSPIRED BY PAINE'S WRITINGS

During the French Revolution, which broke out in 1789, and finally terminated in Napoleon's conquest, when the infidels got the political power and became the sole custodians of the imperial government, actuated by the writings and personal influence of Tom Paine, Voltaire, and Rousseau, they repudiated the Bible, interdicted all religions service, closed all the Churches against the worshipping congregations, and used them for club-meetings and other secular purposes; abolished the Sabbath, and proclaimed every tenth day for recreation and rest; sent men throughout the empire to superscribe over the gate leading into every graveyard, "Death is an eternal sleep." This audacious infidel government swiftly culminated in the "Reign of Terror." Men, women, and children, on the merest suspicion, were beheaded by the guillotine. The land flowed with innocent blood. A million of the best people were brutally murdered. Danton, Murat, and Robespierre, the terrorists, became absolutely intolerable. The people arose en masse, slew the tyrants, threw off the infidel government, reinstated the royal family, restored the Bible to the people, reopened the Churches, called back the surviving clergy from an exile of three years and a half, and restored the Sabbath, with all the institutions of the Christian religion. -- "Godbey's Commentary," Vol. I, hdm0642

* * * * *

Part 188

WESLEY AS EMINENT FOR PIETY AS PAINE FOR RIBALDRY

As a man of fervent piety, no person has been more preeminent in modern times, than the subject of this sketch. To doubt the piety of Wesley, would be to deny the existence of piety on earth, a species of skepticism equaled only by the profane ribaldry of a Paine, or the unblushing sophistries of a Voltaire. -- "Lives of Eminent Methodist Ministers," hdm0093, by P. Douglass Gorrie

* * * * *

Part 189

PAINE'S ATHEISM SPREAD GREATLY DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Thus considered, the American Revolution bore a moral character to which the American Methodists could not be indifferent. Neither they nor their native preachers were opposed to it, though the presence and controlling authority of their English missionaries held them somewhat in check and provoked against them public suspicion. War is always a crime on one side or the other of the contestants, and a crime of such contagious enormity that it is always demoralizing, temporarily, at least, to the communities which suffer from it, as well as to those who inflict it. The contemporaneous influence of the Revolution on the religious condition of the colonies was generally bad. Political and military events absorbed the public attention. Infidelity, especially through the influence of Thomas Paine, a conspicuous leader of the revolt, spread rapidly. -- "Stevens' M. E. Hist., Vol. I," hdm0216

* * * * *

Part 190

FRANKLIN WARNED PAINE ABOUT "SPITTING IN HIS OWN FACE"

In dealing with false philosophies of life, Benjamin Franklin refuted them in the following terms, when he wrote to Tom Paine, after he had been invited to read his manuscript, "The Age of Reason": "I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument that it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the belief of a Providence, that takes cognizance of, guards and guides, and may favor particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear His displeasure or to pray for His protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that, though your reasonings are subtle, and may prevail to some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will be a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face." -- "Sanctification, The Price of Heaven," hdm0310, by Fred M. Weatherford

* * * * *

Part 191

APOSTATE CLERGYMEN PROMOTED PAINE'S HELLISH THEOLOGY

The Free Thinkers' Magazine recently had this to say: "Tom Paine's work is now carried on by the descendants of his persecutors; all he said about the Bible is being said in substance by orthodox divines, and from chairs of theology." Another writer observes: "No need of Bridlaughs and Ingersols wasting time preaching against the early chapters of Genesis, sneering at the story of temptation, cavilling at the record of long lives, denying the confusion of tongues, doubting if not denying the deluge, when Christian ministers, on account of their official position, are doing the same work more effectually."

"Freedom of thought in religion," said an orthodox preacher at Tom Paine's one hundredth anniversary, "just what he stood for, is what most of us have come to. -- "Is The Devil A Myth?," hdm0318, by C. F. Wimberly

* * * * *

Part 192

WESLEY'S INFLUENCE GREATER THAN THAT OF VOLTAIRE

The poet Southey, who wrote one of the earliest biographies of Wesley, draws an interesting comparison between him and his French contemporary Voltaire. "While the one [Voltaire]," says he, "was scattering, with pestilential activity, the seeds of immorality and unbelief, the other, with equally unweariable zeal, labored in the cause of religious enthusiasm. The works of Voltaire have found their way wherever the French language is read; the disciples of Wesley wherever the English is spoken. The principles of the arch-infidel were more rapid in their operation: he who aimed at no such evil as that which he contributed so greatly to bring about was himself startled at their progress: in his latter days he trembled at the consequences which he then foresaw; and indeed his remains had scarcely moldered in the grave, before those consequences brought down the whole fabric of government in France, overturned her altars, subverted her throne, carried guilt, devastation, and misery into every part of his own country, and shook the rest of Europe like an earthquake. Wesley's doctrines, meantime, were slowly and gradually winning their way; but they advanced every succeeding year with accelerated force, and their effect must ultimately be more extensive, more powerful, and more permanent, for he has set mightier principles at work."

Southey wrote those words more than a century ago; and the influence of the opposing thought of these two men -- Voltaire and Wesley -- has followed the course he predicted. Voltaire has become something of an intellectual curiosity, a relic of an era fortunately ended, his influence today, it is to be hoped, practically negligible. But the influence of Wesley is more potent than ever before, if one may judge by the number of books turning about his life and teaching which appear year after year. Lord Macaulay credits him with "a genius for government not inferior to that of Richelieu," and wonders how anyone can write a history of England which omits the determining influence of the rise of Methodism. It is significant, moreover, especially in view of Southey's tracing of the French Revolution to the teachings of Voltaire, that Lecky, the historian of European

morals, holds that Wesley was "one of the chief forces that saved England from a revolution such as France knew." -- "The Whole Counsel of God," hdm0678, by J. Glenn Gould

* * * * *

Part 193

THE SPREAD OF FRENCH INFIDELITY AFTER THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

At a very early day, moreover, French infidelity became widely spread throughout the trans-Allegheny settlements. At the close of our Revolutionary War everything French was popular in America. It became a sort of fad among the hunters and trappers of the West to profess admiration for Voltaire and Rousseau, and contempt for all the tenets and usages of religion. Just how this spirit of skepticism managed to propagate itself, it would be difficult to say. But somehow or other it got into the air, percolated through all classes of society, and made converts in every quarter. It was a strange spectacle, that of the uncultured and self-assertive descendants of Scotch Covenanters and English Puritans following the lead of teachers whose delight it was to deny and denounce all the beliefs that the ages had consecrated. -- "William McKendree, A Biographical Study," hdm0575, by E. E. Hoss

* * * * *

Part 194

THE REVOLUTIONS OF WESLEY AND VOLTAIRE COMPARED

Mr. Chairman, -- In the year 1735 two most extraordinary personages appeared in the two most enlightened cities of the old world. In talents and activity they were nearly equal, but in project directly opposed. Destined to accomplish two amazing moral revolutions, they appeared on the great theater of public life as mighty antagonists; and the object for which they were about to grapple was no ordinary one, -- it was no mere question of politics or literature, but it was a decisive struggle upon the awful alternative -- whether error should triumph over truth, whether Atheism or Christianity should exist.

Sir, I refer to Voltaire and John Wesley. The world stood by to behold the contest. Here was the apostle of Heaven -- there, the emissary of hell. Each champion exhibited an entire devotedness to his cause; each was a perfect master of his weapons; each knew the arts of popular address; each had the advantage of protracted life to accomplish his purposes.

Voltaire, like his father, the devil, cloaked his designs under the most insidious hypocrisy. In open, outside profession, he was friendly to virtue and religion; while the secret watchword of his party was, "Strike, but conceal the hand." Crafty, bold, and designing, he employed every artifice to accomplish his diabolical purpose. He tumbled down the bulwarks of virtue, and advocated the unrestrained indulgence of the passions: he flattered the vanity of human nature, and exalted reason into a goddess; A system so congenial to our fallen nature was sure to have its followers, especially when that system was adorned with the attractions of learning and of genius.

Accordingly, the philosophers of France crowded to the side of Voltaire; forty thousand infidel clubs were established in that country; wealth and nobility patronized this arch infidel: in Paris he was honored with a public triumph, and royalty itself was ranked among his disciples. In short, sir, a blind infatuation possessed the people. Religion, morality, and order, were laughed out of countenance. The majesty of God was insulted in his own temples, while the prophets of infidelity confidently predicted the glorious era of reason and liberty. That era arrived. The principle of infidelity had a fair trial upon an extensive scale. The cup of God's vengeance was full, and tremendous was the comment read to a trembling world. The kingdom was torn up to its foundations -- the throne overturned -- nobility banished -- priesthood overwhelmed -- king murdered -- virtue proscribed -- all the bonds of civil society burst asunder -- and France, like a huge volcano, from the conflict of its boiling and heterogeneous elements, belched forth fire and flame, while from its deep-mouthed crater rose aloft the gigantic demon of infidelity, the dark magician, the ruling spirit of the whirlwind and the storm, smiting with his withering rod "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report."

Here, sir, let us pause and mark the finger of God. While Voltaire was fostering the elements of that fearful tragedy, a counter revolution was in operation, and, under the blessing of almighty God, a deep and extensive revival of primitive religion commenced in England, which continues to this day [October 31, 1832].

The great instrument of that revival was John Wesley. Wesley, by education a high churchman, and by profession a scholar, was a staunch asserter of church order and literary formula; and had it been foretold to him, in early life, that he should hereafter not only preach without book in the streets himself, but actually send forth others also -- it is probable that he would have replied in the language of Hazael, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Indeed, he seems to have entertained no preconceived design, but calculated on ending his days amid the pious and fascinating seclusion of a college life. But God's ways are not as our ways, and he was led by a way that he knew not of. Behold this child of Providence going forth to convert the Indians of America, and then returning home with the conviction that he himself was unconverted. And when, through the instrumentality of the pious Moravians, it pleased God to reveal his Son in him -- immediately he conferred not with flesh and blood, but boldly preached to others that saving truth he had himself experienced. His was not the crooked and serpentine policy of Voltaire, but, as an honest man, he declared with faithful vehemence the uncompromising, unfashionable precepts of the gospel. He appealed not to the vanity or pride of man, but smote them to the dust. He rested not his cause in the attractions of his genius, or the variety of his learning -- all these things he renounced; in this respect he became "a fool for Christ's sake," humbling himself to the simplicity of a little child, that he might save some, and bring glory to God.

And, sir, at a period of time when vital Christianity was almost extinct, Wesley, in the name of his divine Master, boldly stepped forth, and firmly withstood the rolling tide of corruption, proclaiming the powerful, regenerating doctrines of Christ's religion. The fashionable jeered, the learned despised, the vulgar persecuted. The churches were closed against him -- he stood almost alone -- the butt of public scorn. But was he ashamed of the gospel of Christ? No, sir, he set his face as a flint. The wide world is before him, and the world becomes his parish: to the poor the gospel is preached, and to the poor he makes his appeal. He goes forth, and on the

highways and by the hedges -- in fields and market-places -- at all seasons, in all weathers, amid hootings, peltings, and outrages, he proclaims free salvation to a lost world. And, sir, was his preaching in vain? Let the colliers [coal-miners] of Kingswood and Newcastle -- let the miners of Cornwall -- let the tens of thousands of departed saints, in glory -- let the eight hundred and fifty thousand living witnesses in the old and the new world answer the question.

Glory to God! the Spirit has been poured forth, and we witness a revival of vital Christianity, which in purity, depth, energy, and rationality, has no parallel since the days of the apostles. Almighty God has raised up a great missionary people to cooperate vigorously in the approaching salvation of the world.

And will it be said, sir, that Methodism so called has exercised no salutary influence upon the social and political condition of the nations? What, sir, has the salt of divine grace, thus freely scattered, and faithfully applied, had no healing virtue upon the festering ulcers of the body politic? or in quenching the raging fires of anarchy and infidelity?

The principles of Voltaire stand identified on the historic page with treason, persecution, and murder. The principles of John Wesley will stand identified with patriotism, toleration, and human security. We triumphantly challenge the world on this subject. When has Methodism ever stood connected with rebellion or political combination? What act of bloody persecution has ever disfigured the annals of our church? Nay, sir, we go farther; we affirm that if Britain and America out-rode that tremendous revolutionary storm, which scattered far and wide the wrecks of continental nations, we fearlessly attribute such salvation to the exclusive influence of Christian principles, and the blessing of God upon Christian nations. -- "Alfred Cookman's Father," hdm0680, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 195 VOLTAIRE HAD NO SEAT IN HEAVEN TO SELL

At one time Frederick the Great held a banquet at which Voltaire, the French philosopher and skeptic, was present. When dinner was served, the noted unbeliever began to ridicule the Christians who were there. Finally he said, "Why, I would sell my seat in heaven for a Prussian dollar!"

There was a pause. Then one of the guests quietly rose from his chair and said, "Sir, you are in Prussia, where we have a law which requires that one who wishes to sell anything must first prove ownership. Are you prepared to establish the fact that you have a seat in heaven?" Surprised and embarrassed, Voltaire, the normally quick-witted scoffer, had nothing more to say for the rest of the evening. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 196 THE SMOOTH STONE THAT KILLED HIS SKEPTICISM

I read of an educated minister who had a skeptical lawyer in his congregation, whom he wanted very much to see converted and united with the church, and for whose benefit he prepared some very learned and labored sermons. One day, to the minister's delight, the lawyer came to his study with the glad news that he was converted, and wished to join the church. After some conversation, the pastor rather blushing inquired, 'May I ask you which one of my sermons it was led you to Christ?

Then the lawyer, with some little confusion, replied, 'Well, to tell you the truth, pastor, it was not one of your sermons that led me to Christ at all. It was this way. A few Sundays ago, as we were leaving the church, the steps were very slippery, and old colored Auntie Blank was trying to descend them. She was crippled and feeble and in danger of falling, when I took hold of her arm and assisted her to the sidewalk. She looked up into my eyes and thanked me, and, with a bright smile on her old black face, asked, "Do you love my Jesus?" and that led me to Christ.' Ah, that was the smooth stone, that killed the giant when Saul's armor and sword had failed! -- "Heart Talks on Holiness," hdm0253, by S. L. Brengle

* * * * *

Part 197

COMMENTS BY J. B. CHAPMAN ABOUT THE SKEPTIC, ROSSEAU

Rousseau, the skeptic, was a devotee of sentimentalism. He opposed corporal punishment in the training of children, and then allowed his own children to become wards in an orphanage. He was so sensitive that his critics said he had stripped himself of his skin. Nevertheless, he did not find God. -- "The Divine Response," hdm0697, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 198

A SKEPTIC'S ILLOGICAL TRACT AGAINST "PRAYING THROUGH"

Years ago a southern city was visited with a genuine and far-reaching revival. There was in that city a group of blatant skeptics who could not take passively so faith-inspiring an affair as this. So one of the group, urged on by his godless companions, prepared and distributed a tract attacking the revival, and holding its leaders up to ridicule. Doubters have never been very original -- theirs is but a philosophy of negations. This man lifted out an expression he had frequently heard in the revival, and used it for the title of his tract. And there appeared an infidel tract under the title, "Praying Through." But the substance of the tract, and all that the skeptic could actually do, was a confession on the part of the skeptic that he had never prayed through, and that he did not believe anyone had done so. This instrument was confusing to the unthinking, but had no force with the thinking people. It has no more validity than an argument regarding some geographical position on the earth which I might argue does not exist and I can prove it does not exist by reason of the fact that I have never been there. -- "The Divine Response," hdm0697, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 199

SAVED FROM SKEPTICISM AND ATHEISM IN HANEY'S MEETING

August 5th and 6th Brother I. G. Martin, and myself, spent in a brief service in Fairhaven, on the Sound. The fire of the Lyndon Camp has extended here and we had a blessed time. The Whatcome County Holiness Association was organized here with Brother C. W. Jones as its President, and he has led the Association to wider victories during the year than any other in my knowledge. Coming down Puget Sound to Seattle, we had ten days of glorious service in that city. Many were saved and among them a business man who had broken down with strong drink and was in utter darkness as a skeptic. He had not been in a church for ten years. A friend of his excited him about the wonderful preaching in the tabernacle and he came from curiosity and to please his friend, and was wonderfully saved. A fallen Methodist minister who had been tampering with so-called "Christian Science" till the darkness of bald Atheism had gathered round him, broke down in the meeting, and, after three days of indescribable agony, got back to God. The wail of his soul was among the most piercing of all cries I ever listened to. He would look into my eyes and repeat with soul bitterness, "Oh! the darkness of these years!! Oh!! the terrible darkness of my soul!!!" His agonizing cry brought people from two blocks away to listen to his wail. It was the agony of hell begun in that torn breast. The cry of a lost soul, with its back turned on God. Why will God's people with open eyes tamper with that subtle and devilish delusion. Not one case can be given who has gone with Christian Science, who has not lost God. We appended this note at the close of that meeting: "A meeting of great grace from God. A few desperate cases saved--saved gloriously. O the depth of the riches of our wonderful Christ!" -- "Pentecostal Possibilities," hdm0095, by M. L. Haney

* * * * *

Part 200

HOW ONE SKEPTIC WAS BROUGHT TO HIS KNEES

Three gamblers sat about a table in the underworld and followed the fortunes of the game until after the midnight hour. In their conversation, religion was mentioned. One of them remarked that he did not believe in religion. He said, "I have never met a person yet whose life showed he had religion. If there was anything to it, I would find some one who possessed it."

"I can show you one little woman who has it," remarked his companion.

"I would cross the continent to see her," he answered.

"Stack your cards and cash your chips; go with me and I will demonstrate to you that there is such a thing as religion."

They caught an elevated train and ran across the city, debarked and walked several blocks, halting before a little, unimposing cottage. When he had rapped a gentle voice from within said, "Whose there?"

In a rough, harsh, commanding tone, he said, "It's John. Get up quick and prepare us some supper! I have brought two of my friends home with me and we are hungry. Be in a hurry and prepare us something to eat!"

"All right," she answered, and in a remarkably short time a neatly attired, smiling faced woman had turned on the lights, and unlocked the door. He shoved his rough companions in and without even introducing them repeated sternly his command. "Get supper and be quick about it!"

She walked to the couch where lay the week's laundry. Bringing it from the line late, and not having time to pack it away, she had laid it on the couch. She pulled it to one side that her husband's friends might have a place to rest, pulled the cover over a sleeping babe and disappeared through a back door. They dragged a table from the corner and were soon lost in the game. They had about forgotten the test they had come to watch, when their attention was arrested by a soprano voice as in adoration to her Lord and Master she began to sing:

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me."

The skeptic dropped his cards and was about to speak, but before he could find his voice, those earnest tones rose again:

"A consecrated cross I'll bear
'Till death shall set me free:
And then go home, my crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me."

By this time the skeptic was on his knees saying, "Gentlemen, if there is something in religion that will make a woman sing that way under conditions of this kind, by the grace of God, I'll never get off of my knees until I possess it in my soul." -- "Gospel Dynamite," hdm0628, by Oscar Hudson

* * * * *

Part 201

WHAT IT TOOK TO WIN HER SKEPTICAL HUSBAND TO THE LORD

An incident occurred in one of our meetings near Boston, that taught me a great lesson in leading souls to Christ. I can never lose sight of it.

A lady connected with one of the city churches, but residing in that place, found she was not the humble, happy Christian she once was. She came to me, asking how she might obtain anew the joy of salvation; she felt she loved Jesus, but so faintly that the warmth and power of that love were gone. The conflict was long and severe. On one occasion, she said to me:

"My husband has become skeptical. He rejects the Bible. It is of no use to speak to him. I have scarcely any hope of his being converted. But, oh, that I could enjoy the Saviour's love as I used to!"

At length the desire of her heart was granted, and all the joy of her first love to Jesus was restored to her.

And now, though she had been a Christian, and a kind, careful wife and mother, she seemed almost like another person. The false representations of religion were ended. Its sweetness and happiness shone in every feature of her face, gave melody to the tones of her voice, and added a new charm to all she did.

She went about the house singing the songs of Zion. Anything that was not sinful, that would make her husband happier and her home pleasanter, she cheerfully performed, saying but little, however, about the change in her feelings; she did not need to, it was so apparent. Her husband saw it, and compared her present state with her past. Somehow this led him to look into his own heart. The conviction was forced upon him that religion was a reality, and one he could not do without.

Some four days after this change in his wife, I called on him, to learn why he rejected the Bible and religion. I asked him to be frank with me, and tell me if he had no desire to be a Christian.

He replied:

"Mr. Earle, I have said nothing about it to my wife; but, sir, I feel I am a lost sinner, and if you will pray for me, I will kneel down with you right here."

And, pointing to his wife, who was at that moment passing through the room, with the tears on her bright face, he continued:

"That woman, my own dear wife, has had more power over me for a few days past than everything else put together. She has been a professor of religion for years, but I knew she did not enjoy religion, and I said if that was all there was in religion, I did not want it. But for the last few days she has looked and acted almost like an angel; and, sir, I cannot stand it; there is a power in her sweet, happy face that melts my heart I cannot withstand the attraction of such a religion."

And all this because the joy of salvation was restored to the heart of that Christian wife! Oh, the power of Christ's love when it burns and glows in the heart! -- "Selected Sermon Illustrations," hdm0104, by A. B. Earle

* * * * *

Part 202

HOW TWO SKEPTICS WERE CONVERTED

Some time ago, two of the world's most prominent skeptics were West and Littleton, and they were two of the most brilliant intellects of their own or any age. They made fun of Christianity whenever they met. By and by they said: "There are two things we must explode and then we will have the Christian religion all tumbled into the ditch and nothing will be left." These were the two things: They said they would have to explain away the doctrine that Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day as the Scriptures teach, and they would have to explain that wonderful man, the Apostle Paul whose influence was so powerful in the world eighteen centuries even after he died. West said: I will explode the resurrection of Christ and blow it up," and Littleton said, "I will explain Paul."

They went their ways, and after weeks and weeks, by appointment they came together again, and Littleton said: "West, what have you to say?" West replied: "Oh, Littleton, I have something wonderful to tell you. When I came to explode the doctrine that Jesus of Nazareth rose from the dead on the third day, I had to be candid; I had to be sincere; I had to be honest; I had to search for my evidence. You may laugh at me Littleton, if you will, but when I looked into it honestly my mind and my deepest soul were convinced that Jesus did rise from the dead, and I prayed to Him and He saved me, and I am His friend."

Then Littleton answered: "Thank God, West! I have some thing just as wonderful to tell you. When I came to explain that man Paul and get rid of him, I too had to be thorough and candid; I had to search; I had to be true. You will rejoice with me, West, when I tell you that after I had searched and studied about Paul, by and by I found myself down on my knees just as Paul got down on his knees on that Damascus road, and my cry was his: 'Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?' And I am a Christian also West."

These two outstanding skeptics became two of the world's most noted Christians, and have written two of the noblest apologies of the Christian religion that have ever been penned. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 203

HOW BEECHER CHALLENGED INGERSOLL'S UNBELIEF

The 19th-century minister, Henry Ward Beecher owned a magnificent globe depicting the various constellations and stars. The well-known skeptic Robert Ingersoll, visiting Beecher one day, admired the globe and asked who made it. "Who made it?" Beecher replied, seizing an opportunity to challenge Ingersoll's unbelief. "Why, nobody made it; it just happened." A point well made! The universe did not just happen; it bears the fingerprints of its Creator on every star, cloud, mountain, and river. -- "2700-plus Illustrations," hdm0186, by DVM

* * * * *

Part 204

PROFESSOR THOLUCK, AN UNBELIEVER TRANSFORMED

The well-known Professor Tholuck has been called "The Spiritual Primate of the Established Church of Germany." We are told that "to his influence, more than to any other cause, must be assigned the reintroduction into the German universities, and into the German mind, of the principles and spirit of the evangelical faith." The following from a writer in the New York Christian Advocate, published a few years ago, gives the secret of his wonderful success in this most important work:

"It was not simply in the lecture room, the pulpit, and the printed page that he won victories for the Master. Personal intercourse with the student was his marked characteristic. His house was the home of the undergraduates. He was not satisfied unless some were at his table. But how came he to have such a passion for the souls of the young men that he was called the 'Student Professor,' the 'soul-loving Professor Tholuck'? How came he to have a spirit so rare? He began his manhood as an unbeliever, and wrote his oration on leaving the high school on 'The Superiority of Mohammedanism over Christianity.' Under the influence of Neander he was converted. He afterwards received what he called 'a baptism of fire' (the baptism with the Holy Ghost). When he had been a professor fifty years, he said: 'Nothing fills me with more adoring wonder than to think how the "Spirit of Fire" has ever been with me since I received the baptism of fire from above.'

"When he went to the University of Halle, only five out of nine hundred students believed in the divinity of Christ. They had been converted by the influence of a Christian craftsman, and they were called by the other students 'the idiotic orthodox.' Hegel, who had imbibed some Christian principles, gave Tholuck this parting charge: 'Deal a deathblow to the bold rationalism prevalent at Halle.' It was a mighty task, as the whole faculty was against him, and, with the whole body of the students, had petitioned against his appointment at Halle. But he had earnestly prayed to be sent there, and went with the 'baptism of fire' upon him. God enabled him by his sermons and personal influence to revolutionize the university, to convert the faculty to his side, and lead thousands of students to Christ, and become a mighty power in the spiritual life of Germany.

"It was his custom to walk for his health two hours a day, and he would select a student to walk with him and talk about Christ. A great number of the pupils date their new life from these never-to-be-forgotten walks with the ardent, holy professor. -- "Scriptural Sanctification," hdm0376, by J. R. Brooks

* * * * *

Part 205

CONVINCING EVIDENCE FOR AN UNBELIEVER

Once when he told of his healing, a physician in the audience, an unbeliever, approached Bud saying, "I don't believe your arms are out of place as you say, and I would like to satisfy my mind on the subject." Bud took the doctor into a small room and removed his coat. The doctor found the situation just as Bud had described it. Then the doctor inquired, "If God healed you, as you say, why did He not put your arms back into place as they normally should be?" Bud replied, "I can't answer that question, doctor, unless, perhaps, He left me this way so as to convince men like you that there really was something the matter with me once." That his healing was permanent

is proved by the fact that he worked harder than almost any man of his day and yet lived to be almost eighty-three years of age. -- "Bud Robinson, A Brother Beloved," hdm0525, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 206

AN UNBELIEVER WHO WAS GLORIOUSLY SAVED

Once a highly educated man came to Uncle Bud's room, after hearing him preach. He began the conversation by saying, "I don't believe in the Bible. I don't believe God created man. In fact, I don't believe in God himself. I am an evolutionist. Man came from nothing into something. This is the teaching of science, which I believe, and I have no use for the Bible."

Uncle Bud heard the man's story, and then replied, "You are the most brilliant, the most cultured, the best informed man I ever met. You know more about science and philosophy in a minute than I could learn in a lifetime. But there is one thing I know, Doctor, that you don't know. I was once a sinner, a slave to drink and tobacco, physically diseased, having had both my arms out of place many times from epileptic convulsions. One day I met Jesus. He healed my body. My epileptic spells passed forever. He forgave my sins, sanctified me wholly, and for many years has been my constant companion, and has never left me alone." The man looked at Uncle Bud and said, "I know nothing about the things of which you speak. I am utterly ignorant of such experiences; and, after all, perhaps you are as well informed in your line as I am in mine." Uncle Bud requested the man to kneel in prayer, and then prayed the heavens open, and this unbeliever was gloriously saved. -- "Bud Robinson, A Brother Beloved," hdm0525, by J. B. Chapman

* * * * *

Part 207

HOW AN UNBELIEVER IN CHRIST'S DIVINITY WAS CONVERTED

A prominent teacher, an unbeliever in the divinity of Christ and in portions of the Bible, came to my room, at the request of his friends, with no apparent concern for himself.

Courteously, but firmly, he spoke of his views. We did not argue much; but before leaving he promised he would not knowingly grieve the Spirit, by disobeying his voice. He felt safe in making such a promise, as he was not aware of being the subject of the Spirit's operations; but in the course of three days he rose in the meeting, and acknowledged that the Spirit was striving with him, and had shown him he was a sinner, and might find pardon through an almighty Savior, and therefore, his promise as well as his burdened heart, constrained him to ask for prayer.

A few days more and he again spoke in the public assembly, but no longer in doubt of the divinity of Christ; all was peace, as with a heart overflowing with love to his Savior, he told how he had found Him, and been pardoned through His blood. -- "Bringing in Sheaves," hdm0636, by A. B. Earle

* * * * *

Part 208

THE TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH BARKER, WHO "WAS INDEED AN UNBELIEVER"

[See also #105]

At this point, Rev. Joseph Barker rising to speak, was introduced as the man who, until a few years ago was a champion of infidelity and challenged every minister in Philadelphia to debate the existence of God, and the truth of the Bible; and who held a great discussion with one distinguished divine. He said: "I was indeed an unbeliever; a desperate case. I fought hard, but I am here today to say that I believe in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ. However strong the things that I said before I was converted, they were all vanity and lies. I am happy in God, and he saves me. I cannot give you the substance of my experience, but I will say I have passed from death unto life; from the power of Satan unto God. Jesus is everywhere with me. I have not to turn aside to find Jesus. When I am in the cars, I have only to turn my head aside, and I am alone with God. I cannot tell when I was justified or sanctified, but I know that I am fully saved. I love God with all my heart, and my neighbor as myself I have said many hard things against the Bible and against God; but I began to examine everything in the Gospel that was lovely or beautiful, and I found much more than I expected. I went through the Old Testament, and then I got into the New, and that revealed Jesus to me, and the sight of Jesus killed the devil in me. I saw how he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. I saw them nail him to the cross on Calvary; he drew me to himself. He got hold of me and I got hold of him, and we have grappled and held each other fast ever since. I have got salvation and I know it.

Infidelity is an awful calamity and a terrible evil of head and heart. There is one thing that is worse than infidelity, and that is lukewarmness. God will take pains to draw an infidel to himself, but he will spew the lukewarm out of his mouth." -- "A Modern Pentecost," hdm0325, by Adam Wallace

* * * * *

Part 209

HOW PEARL POE LED AN UNBELIEVING JEW TO THE MESSIAH

Another time I was leaving Seattle, Washington, for Minneapolis, Minnesota. While at the station I felt the sacred nearness of the Lord, the presence of His great love. I would shed tears, get up, and walk around the room. Once, while I was walking, I saw two U. S. Police come in with a man to the ticket window. They had him to buy a ticket to New York to see a certain rabbi. This man was a Jew and had come to this country without a passport. He had been a lawyer in Germany, and when so many Jews were put to death there, he left his wife and daughter and hid out, going to different countries to get to the U. S. A. The police were sending him to this rabbi to secure papers for his stay in the States. On the train he sat just in front of me.

God had me greatly charged with His Spirit. At once I entered into conversation with this Jew. I told him the only hope for the Jew was Jesus Christ. He said, "I am a lawyer from Germany

and because of what I have seen, I am an unbeliever." I said, "Impossible. You cannot be. You are too smart a man to be so stupid as to not be a believer in the Lord." I began with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses, the prophets, then Jesus and the saying of the Jews "Let his blood be upon us and our children."

Two hours passed All in the coach were spellbound. Then I spoke of Paul, the veil of Moses that still is over the eyes of the Jews, and that veil of unbelief in the Messiah, God's Son, Jesus Christ; and for another hour I talked about Jesus and Him crucified. Then he broke in, saying "This is extremely interesting." I said, "Here is a new Bible; just read it and believe. I will make you a present of it." It was now late, and they turned the lights out.

The next morning, the man was reading, and now and then he would ask a question as to what this and that meant. God helped me to explain it, sometimes taking a half hour on one subject. I felt under the power of God all the way on that trip. In that coach were two rabbis from Czechoslovakia, a Catholic priest, and a Catholic woman, who was a missionary. These sat in separate seats across from me. Just behind me sat a River Brethren preacher, and across from him, a Nazarene preacher. I kept much in prayer in my heart that God would use me. I noticed that one time the Catholic priest had his paper upside down for over an hour, not reading, surely!

While I was explaining to that Jew what Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again," I felt God helped me especially. I pressed the point hard. No works of our own, no matter how good, could ever save us. Joining churches, learning catechisms, or creeds, or mode of baptism -- none of these can save us. I said, "Mister, you are not far from the kingdom. If you will repent, confess your sins to God, tell him you are sorry, and accept Jesus as your sacrifice for your sins, accept Him as your Saviour, the true Messiah, you will be saved." Tears were in his eyes. He said, "I do believe He was the Messiah." I said, "If you fully repent and accept Him as your personal Saviour, He will save you, and I believe He will work for you that you may see your wife and daughter also." He stood and gave me his hand, and said, "I do," and hugged me. He had gone to the lounge room and was there a while. I felt he had prayed.

When we arrived in St. Paul, he received a message from Seattle. The message said, "Your wife and daughter are in New York. Arrived last night." If you ever saw a happy man, he was one. He hugged me, and said, "Oh, I thank God, I found the Messiah. Now, my wife and daughter. I can never thank you enough." Most of the folk in the coach were in tears. The Catholic woman shook hands and said, "I never learned so much about the Bible in all my life. I have enjoyed this trip." The priest looked rather annoyed when she said that. But to God be all the glory.

Most of the people on the coach shook hands with me before I left. One man and woman said, "When you walked past us in the depot, we asked each other, 'What is different about that man? There is a look on his face as if he were very happy.' " I said, "It was God."

That incident happened when I was in the thickest of thorns. God did encourage me now and then. Oh, He never left me, but I had to go through those thorns without many great overflows; however, there were experiences rich and deep. -- "The Power of God in a Redeemed Life," hdm0319, by Pearl Poe

* * * * *

Part 210

HOW CUFF WON HIS CRUEL, INFIDEL MASTER TO CHRIST

Among the number of the servants who had obtained religion and joined the Church, was one noted for his piety. This servant, whose name was "Cuff," was not particularly remarkable for any loud profession, though he was always ready, in the spirit of meekness, to be a witness for Jesus; but for unbending integrity and open, straightforward consistency of conduct, he had few superiors anywhere. For one who enjoyed no greater advantages, he possessed an order of intellect superior to most of his colored brethren. All having the most unwavering faith in his piety, he was unanimously selected by his brethren to lead in religious exercises at the meetings when no preacher was present.

Everything went on pleasantly and happily in this religious family for years. The religion of Jesus, which is adapted to all, and designed to bring the highest blessings to mankind in general, proves of especial benefit to the slaves; and that Church which is the most actively engaged in preaching the Gospel to this portion of our fellow beings most certainly gives the strongest evidence of being the true Church of Him who said, "The poor have the Gospel preached to them."

A Church having been established on this plantation, through the influence of Methodist preachers, meetings were kept up regularly, and when the intervening Sabbaths would come, at which time the preacher was absent at another appointment, the voice of praise and prayer would ascend from the humble chapel, and Cuff would pour out his full heart in exhortations, with an eloquence and power none could resist. Often have the hearts of proud and wicked masters, from adjoining plantations, who had been attracted out of mere curiosity to attend the meetings, been made to tremble, while the falling tear from proud and haughty mistresses, who would wonder at Cuff's exhortations, would betray the emotions his eloquence had produced. Many a conscience had thus been smitten by burning words which had been proof against the Gospel in the fashionable Churches of the city.

The happy seasons enjoyed at the little plantation Church were fearfully broken in upon by a most melancholy event. The old master was called to pronounce upon his faithful servants his parting blessing, and then to pass away to that world where such relations are unknown. Death came to the aged patriarch, and he was followed by his weeping family and friends to his silent home. This event, as is often the case, broke up the family, and the servants were divided among the children. Cuff fell into the hands of one of the sons. This young man commenced the world as many do in similar circumstances, whose parents are affluent. Having formed no habits of industry, and wholly unfitted for business, improvident and careless, believing that tomorrow would be as today, and much more abundant of blessing, he was not long in squandering the estate left him by his father; and becoming hopelessly involved, an attachment was sued out by his creditors on all his property, and the servants, with the rest of the estate, were advertised at public sale.

In that neighborhood there lived a young man, who had recently married, and was making preparations for keeping house. To complete these preparations it was necessary for him to purchase a good servant; and having knowledge of the sale, he accordingly attended. He was by

profession an infidel, and carefully avoided going to any religious meetings, though his wife, previous to her marriage, had often attended, and had listened with unusual interest to the eloquent Cuff.

Having gone round and inspected the slaves, as was customary among buyers, he was struck most favorably with the appearance of Cuff and believing he would suit him, he began to question his master in regard to his good and bad qualities. The young master informed the infidel that Cuff was the most honest and upright slave he ever knew, and he could only think of one fault which he had that might make him objectionable to the purchaser, and that was, that "he would pray and go to meeting."

"Ah," said the infidel, "is that all you have against him? I can soon whip that out of him."

He made the purchase and took him home. Cuff, with a sad heart, left the old homestead, and his brethren, and the little chapel, where he had enjoyed so much religious comfort. When he had performed the duties of the day enjoined by his new master, he started out to seek a place for private prayer. Adjoining the garden was a nursery, and it being a secluded spot, he retired amid the thicket of young trees with which it was filled, and there alone he kneeled and poured out his burdened spirit to God. While engaged in his devotions his young mistress, who was walking in the garden, overheard him, and, drawing nigh to listen, she soon recognized the eloquent voice that had thrilled her at the Woodland Chapel. She was chained to the spot, as the low and melancholy tones of the supplicant were breathed into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth; and when, with fervor, he prayed for the blessing of God to come down upon his new master and mistress, the unsealed fountain of her heart poured forth its tears.

On the ensuing Sabbath Cuff went to meeting, and also at night, but returned so as to be ready for duty early on Monday morning. He was not aware of the infidel character of his master, though, from what he had seen and heard during the short time he had been with him, he knew that he was a stranger to grace. Knowing, also, that there are many irreligious people, who, nevertheless, have a great respect for religion and its institutions, when Cuff was asked the next morning by his master where he had been, he said, "I have been to meeting; and, bless the Lord, it was a good time, master."

"Cuff," said the master, in a gruff, angry voice, "you must quit praying; I will have none of it about the place."

"Master, I will do any thing you tell me, that I can do; but I can't quit praying. My Master in heaven commands me to pray."

"But you shall quit it, and promise to do so or I will whip you."

"I can not do one or the other, master."

"Follow me, then, you obstinate slave," said the master, greatly excited, "and we shall see whose authority is to be obeyed in this matter."

The slave was led out, and, after being stripped of the few tattered garments that covered his person, he was tied to a tree in the yard. With a rawhide the master inflicted twenty-five strokes upon his bare back. The master then said, "Now, Cuff, will you quit praying?"

"No, master," was the reply, "I will pray to Jesus as long as I live."

He then gave Cuff twenty-five more lashes, and the blood ran down to the ground. At the close of this horrid scene in the brutal tragedy, the master exclaimed, "You will quit now, won't you?"

Meekly as his divine Master bore the cruel scourge before him, he replied, "No, my master, I will pray to my blessed God while I live."

This so enraged the infuriated fiend, that he flew at him with all the rage of a tiger thirsting for blood, and plying the bloody weapon with all his remaining strength, he stopped not till he was obliged to give over from sheer exhaustion.

"Will you stop your praying now, you infernal slave, you?"

The same meek voice replied, "No, master, you may kill me, but while I live I must pray."

"Then you shall be whipped this much every time you pray or go to meeting."

He was untied, ordered to put on his clothes, and go about his work. When out of sight and hearing of his master, he sang, in a low and plaintive tone,

"My suffering time will soon be o'er,
Then shall I sigh and weep no more;
My ransomed soul shall soar away
To sing God's praise in endless day."

While this cruel scene was transpiring, the young mistress was looking through the window weeping, and when S_____ M_____ came into the house, she said, "My dear husband, why did you whip that poor slave so, just for praying? I am sure there can be no harm in that."

"Silence," shouted the enraged husband; "not another word on the subject, or I will give you as much as I gave him."

All that day S_____ M_____ raved like a madman, cursing the slave and all his race, and cursing God for having created them. Night came. He retired to his chamber, and fell upon his couch to rest. In vain he courted sleep, if for nothing else than to shut out the horrid visions of his tempest-tossed mind. He turned from side to side with unutterable groanings. Just before day he exclaimed, "I feel that I shall be damned! O, God, have mercy on me!" he then said to his wife -- the first word he had spoken to her since his threat -- "Is there any one about the house that can or will pray for me?"

"None," said she, "that I know of but the poor slave you whipped yesterday."

"O, I am sure he will not, he can not pray for me!"

"Yes," said the weeping wife, "I think he will."

"Then, send some one to call him!"

A servant was soon dispatched; and when Cuff heard that his master wanted him, expecting a renewal of the scenes of yesterday -- for he had been praying all night. He went from his low, dingy cabin into the chamber of his master. What was his astonishment, when he entered, to find his master prostrate on the floor, crying for mercy

"O," said he, at sight of his injured slave, "will you, can you pray for me? I feel that I shall be damned before morning unless God have mercy upon me."

"Yes, master, I bless God, I have been praying for you and mistress all the night."

He then fell upon his knees, beside his prostrate master and kneeling wife, and, with a fervor and a faith that opened heaven, he wrestled hard with God for the guilty man. Thus he continued in prayer and exhortation, pointing the guilty to the guiltless one, till morning light, when God, in mercy, stooped to answer prayer, and set the dark, sin-chained soul of the infidel at liberty, and wrote a pardon on his heart. Soon as the love of God was shed abroad in the master's soul, he embraced his servant in his arms, exclaiming, "Cuff, my dear brother in Christ, from this moment you are a free man."

Great was the joy and rejoicing in that house on that day. The wife had also found the pearl of great price, and now one in Christ, as they were before one in flesh, their souls were dissolved in the bliss of heaven. The slave was freed, and employed by his master as chaplain at a good salary, and Cuff went everywhere among his scattered brethren preaching the word. The master himself became a zealous and successful minister of the Gospel, and lived many years to preach that Jesus whose name he had blasphemed, and whose disciple he had scourged. -- "Sketches of Western Methodism," hdm0230, by James B. Finley

* * * * *

THE END