

### "SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURE."

Two old gentlemen farmers, Isaac Gerald and Billy Hodge, remarkable for their mutual friendship and social habits, were sitting one day on a bench in the piazza of a retail grocery, with a couple of silver dollars on the seat between them. Both had on their spectacles, and were busily engaged in turning with great care and scrutiny the leaves of a small Bible they had just procured from the office of the Clerk of the Circuit or Superior Court, as it is called in Georgia.

The lids of the sacred volume had been worn or torn off, occasioning many dog-eared at both ends, showing evidently long and hard usage.

Each gentleman seemed anxious to have the book for the time being, while each seemed determined that the other should not be so exclusive. After a most unsatisfactory examination, both participating, Gerald jerked the book from Hodge, with evident signs of impatience, saying:

"I can find it if you will just hands off and let me alone. I read all about it many a time when I went to school. I tell you it's in the Psalms of Moses, who writ and sung all about the old dispensation."

"I'll double the bet," Hodge replied, "it's neither in the Psalms nor in your old dispensation, as you call it. It is under the new constitution, and if ever found 'twill be in Revelations.—What did Moses know about the Apostle Paul and his family arrangements? I allow he was a right sharp old gentleman, and could look into circumstances about to crowd him as far as any one in his day. But the dark ages, which, they say, was as black as a night without stars, meteors, or lightning-bugs, come between him and Paul; and he had no specks, magnifying-glass, or telegraph to see through or work in them times. I tell you, Gerald, you ain't nowhar with me in Bible larning."

The person thus taunted had been anxiously searching the Psalms, and had paid very little attention to his companion; had an indistinct idea something had been said about dark ages or dark nights; but distinctly comprehended the invidious comparison instituted between his biblical knowledge and Hodge's. Raising his eyes from the pages he had been so closely scanning, and showing his spectacles to the top of his head, he looked piercingly into the face of the other.

"Whar was you brung up, Billy Hodge?—Whar eddycated? Ah! I recollect now the evening you went through college! You staggered into one end drunk, and the boys kicked you out the other! I s'pose you thought that was grad-yating! I could have taken the same course the same time, but declined. But that is neither here nor thar. What about the time you said they had them dark nights? I wouldn't be surprised if they did make a power of fine wheat then. You know they say, wheat sowed in the dark nights of October always does well. I never could account for it; have looked plum thru the almanick several times to see how it was! But this ain't settling our bet. I want to handle the rhino; I know I've got you! Yonder is Bob Logan, the Clerk; I reckon he mout take this book and look up the passage."

Hodge heard nothing Gerald had just said, except his allusion to the Clerk, etc.; for as soon as the latter had ceased his search among the Psalms, he seized the Bible, and commenced looking through Revelations.

"Halloa, Logan!" continued Gerald, "come here." When this official approached, he proceeded: "I and Hodge has made a bet. He stands me a silver dollar it was Paul's and not Lot's wife which was turned to a pillow of salt."

We've been ransacking this old Bible, principally Psalms and Revelations, and can't find the place what treats on that toppack. Now, old fellow, just be kind enough to take your own Bible and settle this matter atwixt us."

"It is no use to take the Bible," said Logan.—"I thought every Sunday-school boy and girl knew it was Lot's wife they rubbed the brine into so extensively. They used the article so freely in the operation, it has preserved her safe and sound through all seasons, years, and ages.—Captain Lynch reports it was but the other day he saw her standing in the suburbs of Sodom or Gomorrah—one, he could not tell exactly which; but she was there, salty as ever, with the smell of fire and brimstone around her! As for the Apostle Paul, if ever he was married, it was a clandestine affair; his biography and autobiography are silent on that subject; and I reckon that is an event a man would never forget, whether fortunate or unfortunate, though his friends might."

"It's my money," shouted Gerald, and he was about taking the silver, when Hodge caught his hand.

"Not so fast, if you please; I have seen sicker children live! Bob Logan don't know every thing—he is like me and you; if all he did not know had to be put into books, printing-paper would rise, certain. What he and them school children may say, with your Captain Lynch flung into boot, can't move them deposits" (pointing to the money). "Here is the dockyment, gentlemen" (holding up the Bible). "must settle this game. Nice idea indeed! I must give up my money on the say so of a man which never reads his Bible, and wouldn't keep one, if the Judge didn't make him, to swear people in Court on! and what children which gits all thar larnin' from little red primers may say! and what the great Captain Lynch may say! It was a good thing he wa'n't sent into Utah, Brigham Young's diggin's, whar salt and wives are so plenty, and whar I hope there will be no lack of fire and brimstone soon! Nice idea, I say again, I must knock under to all this rigmarole, with the Word of Truth here in my hand, though right hard to sift out! Here, take the book,

Logan; straten up the corners, and look closely. I am afraid it ain't in here; some two or three of the leaves near the end is missin'; you will certainly find it in the last book, Revelations, if not torn out."

After a long and tiresome search by the Clerk, he found it in the 19th Chapter 26th verse of Genesis, and read as follows: "But his (Lot's) wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

"Let's see her," said Hodge, taking the book from the Clerk. After reading enough to satisfy himself he was mistaken, he remarked, "It's your money, Mr. Gerald, and I reckon it is the first time your Bible larnin' ever brung you the needful."

"I've lost nothing on it yet," retorted Gerald, as he placed the money in his pocket.

"I'll be drot, gentlemen," Hodge continued, "if I am entirely satisfied yet. There has been so much hard swearin' on that book" (pointing to Logan's Bible) "I wouldn't be surprised if the truth was not pretty considerable ramshackled outen it. I have seen men could swear a mink outen his den take their corporate oath on that!"

"I sha'n't arguey any more pints with you, but whenever you feel like staking your judgement on Scriptur, just let me know. I'll take stock," said Gerald.

"I wouldn't be surprised if you wa'n't vain arter this. Some of these days you'll meet up with a man who knows something, and get the starch taken outen you properly. Come, treat arter your good luck," said Hodge.—There was a unanimous and simultaneous movement for the lick-log.

**MARRIAGE BY PROXY.**—Rev. D. Gregory pronounced, at De Vaux College, Suspension Bridge, N. Y., the marriage ceremony between parties who were not, at the time, within 6,000 miles of each other. It was done by proxy, the lady's father acting as proxy for the bridegroom. The affair took place on the opening of the new year, under the following circumstances:

The bride, for seven years a resident of California, after the death of a former husband, became engaged to a gentleman residing in that State, but having a large landed property in Mexico. By some arrangement between the parties, the lady returned to her paternal home, at St. Catherine's, Canada West, where her intended was to meet her about this time, and claim her as his bride.

The recent troubles in Mexico, however, being in the vicinity of his plantations, demanded his immediate presence in that country, and forbade his coming north to fulfill his engagement. He, therefore, frankly wrote her of the circumstances which detained him, and enclosed a regularly executed power of attorney, which authorized the lady's father to stand instead of the bridegroom, and, for him, enter matrimonial vows. The paper being executed in the United States, it was thought necessary to have the ceremony performed on this side of the Niagara, and father and daughter came over to the De Vaux College, and the lady became the legal wife of her California lord.

She was to sail for her Pacific home about the 5th of January, and there join her proxy husband, or seek him in the wilds of Mexico.

**CURIOUSITIES OF HUMAN FOOD.**—Mankind has been wonderfully ingenious from its infancy, in the concoction of edible varieties.

Apart from baked human thighs in Fejee, and boiled fingers in Sumatra, there are sundry culinary fashions still extant, which must be marvelously unintelligible to a conventionalized appetite. Not that it appears strange to eat duck's tongues in China, kangaroos in Australia, or the loose covering of the great elk's nose in New Brunswick.

Not even that it is startling to see an Esquimaux eating his daily rations, twenty pounds in weight of fish and oil, or a Yakut competing in voracity with a boa constrictor; but who would relish a stew of red ants in Burmah, a half-hatched egg in China, monkey cutlets and parrot pies at Rio Janeiro, and bats in Malabar, or polecats and prairie wolves in North America?—Yet there can be little doubt that these are unwarrantable prejudices. Dr. Shaw enjoyed lion; Mr. Darwin had a passion for puma; Dr. Brooke makes affidavit that melted bears' grease is the most refreshing potion.

And how can we disbelieve, after the testimony of Hypocrites, as to the flavor of boiled dog? If squirrels are edible in the East, and rats in the West Indies—if a sloth be good on the Amazon, and elephants' paws in South Africa, why should we compassionate such races as have little beef or mutton? for we may be quite sure that if, as Montesquieu affirms, there are valid reasons for not eating pork, there are reasons quite as unimpeachable for eating giraffe, alpaca, me-maid's tails, bustard and anaconda.

**DYING FOR HIS COUNTRY BY PROXY.**—When Col. L.—was a candidate for Congress in one of the Northwestern States, he was opposed to a gentleman who had distinguished himself in the war of 1812. Discovering, in the course of the canvass, that his opponent's military reputation was operating strongly to his prejudice, he concluded to let the people know that he was not unknown to fame as a soldier himself; and accordingly, in his next speech, he expatiated on his achievements in the tented field as follows:

My competitor has told you of the services he rendered the last war. Let me tell you that I, too, acted a humble part in that memorable contest. When the tocsin of war summoned the chivalry of the West to rally to the defence of the national honor, I, fellow citizens, animated by that patriotic spirit that glows in every American bosom, hired a substitute for that war, and the bones of that man now lie bleaching on the banks of the Raisin!

He was elected.

### Use of Profane Language.

It is impossible to pass through the streets of Philadelphia, or country towns, without hearing profane language. And this, too, very frequently from the lips of mere children. The vice is at once immoral and irreligious, and it appears on the increase. Can nothing be done to check and restrain it? A law exists against it, but it is rarely enforced. Would it not be well for the authorities to make one or two examples? We are told by foreigners, that in no civilized country on the habitable globe is this odious vice practiced to so fearful an extent. The case is sufficiently deplorable in the Northern cities, but it is worse in the Southern and Western. In the former, the ignorant and the illiterate are the chief offenders, but in the South and West, even individuals of high character and polished minds, are frequently found to forget themselves, and employ language every way discreditable. Nay, they are astonished when told of the vice, for they are unconscious when they practice it. The habit has grown upon them from year to year, until at last, they find it difficult to converse, even upon an ordinary subject, without the introduction of an oath or an imprecation. If reminded of this infirmity, they either get into a passion, or deny that they employed so offensive language; and thus, of course it becomes painful to converse with them upon the subject.

We honestly believe that two-thirds of the personal difficulties, rencounters and murders that take place in the South and West, should be attributed to the improprieties of speech. In the first place, sharp words are employed, then violent epithets, and these are often followed by blows and bloodshed. The individual who cannot control and command his tongue, is very apt to lose his temper, and then to raise his hand for the purpose of striking a blow. It is impossible to imagine the result. The profane in speech cannot be pure in heart. The crime, moreover, is altogether fruitless and unnecessary. It cannot do good and it may do harm. The parent, who is in the habit of employing improper language in his household and before his children, not only sets a shocking example, but absolutely invites his offspring into the ways of wrong-doing. What, to the properly regulated mind, can be more shocking and startling than an oath from the lips of a youth? The idea is at once formed, either that the morals of the young blasphemer have been sadly neglected, or that he must be naturally wicked and perverse. And yet, in this refined and intelligent community, it is no rare occurrence to hear half a dozen young men conversing together, and interspersing their conversation with oaths and imprecations. Some, who of course, are sadly deficient in intelligence, imagine that they thus manifest extraordinary valor; others, strangely enough, appear to fancy that the listeners on look on with admiration. Others, again, are so lost to the decencies of life, that they know no better, and mistake profanity for polish.

The difference between a gentleman and a ruffian, is frequently recognized by the tone of conversation. The former may be attired in the coarsest habits, yet courtesy and good breeding will be detected the moment he opens his mouth. The latter, on the other hand, may be a perfect model in dress, but if regardless of the proprieties of language, his true character will be seen in an instant. Language is, indeed, to the mind and the heart, what dress is to the person. And this will apply, not only to blasphemy, but to the coarse and vulgar tone that is so often indulged at the expense of taste, feelings and good sense. What good purpose is secured? What object is attained? Why should profane language be used at all on any occasion? It is not only specially forbidden, but it is in violation of all the proprieties of life, and it is frequently attended with the most serious consequences.

Again, therefore, we cherish a hope that some effort will be made by those who feel an interest in the morals of the community, to check and restrain a habit by which we are already sadly disgraced, and which appears to be increasing so rapidly. —[Baltimore Sun.]

**LYING.**—The following passage from a lecture delivered in Boston, last week, by Henry Giles, Esq., has an Erian ardor combined with terseness (says the Boston Courier) which cannot fail to strike the reader, even if he be not prepared to admit the application to any one hereabouts:—

Mr. Giles said:—"But then the Irish tell such lies—especially the needy Irish, and above all, the servant girls. What sinners and exceptions they must be in the midst of surrounding truth! How guilty they must be, with such brilliant examples always and everywhere before them of simplicity, sincerity, veracity and integrity!—What severe conscientiousness in our parties and their leaders! How scrupulous our press! How full of probity our statesmen! How rigorously verity rules our orators! How genuine is all mercantile commodity, and how abhorrent of falsehood is the word of seller unto buyer! O what unbending rectitude are all our moneyed corporations; how honorable and how like Caesar's wife are all their agents! And none of them ever run away with all the capital in their pocket. The man-servants and maid-servants that could be capable of a lie in such an age of truth are surely the most hardened of transgressors! Yet, occasionally, untruth is noticeable in their betters, at least what simple people might consider untruth. Joseph Surface Goliathian, Esquire, has no respect for the sanctities of his own home; he has no respect for the sanctities of other men's homes; but he burns with a sense of indignant virtue on finding out that Biddy went to meet her lover, when she said she went to see her aunt. Yet Joseph Surface Goliathian, Esquire, thinks lies, breathes lies, sleeps lies, dreams lies, buys lies, sells lies, pays lies, eats lies, drinks lies, and has lies paid to him; is himself a conglomerated lie—will die in falsehood—

and his ashes, after death, will be consecrated by a lying epitaph. For much and many, Joseph Surface Goliathian, Esq., is a representative."

### Marriage on Short Acquaintance.

There is not a city, there is not a town, that does not number among its inhabitants women who have married on very short acquaintance, only to be abused, deserted, and left a burden and a life-long sorrow to their families in which they were born and reared, and which they most improperly and imprudently deserted, to share the fortunes of relative strangers. If ladies could realize how grossly indecent as well as culpably reckless such marriages appear in the eyes of the observing, they surely would forbear. A year's thorough acquaintance, with the most circumstantial accounts, from disinterested and reliable witnesses, of the antecedents from childhood, are the very least guaranties which any woman who realizes what marriage is, will require of a stranger. Even then, if her parents are not fully satisfied, as well as herself, she should still hesitate.

We clip the foregoing from an exchange, thinking, perhaps, that it might apply, to some extent, in this part of the world, where, occasionally, women marry strangers on a very short acquaintance, nine times out of ten, to be deserted by the unprincipled, worthless characters, who thus succeed in winning the affections of their unsuspecting victims. When women or men, either, get caught in a matrimonial snare in that way, no one should ever sympathize with them in their misfortunes, in any way whatever.

**ERROR ABOUT GENIUS.**—Francis Jeffery has thus finely expressed his dissent from a vulgar error, that even Byron condescends to sanction, namely, that genius is a source of peculiar unhappiness to its possessors:—

"Men of truly great powers of mind have generally been cheerful, social and indulgent; while a tendency to sentimental whining or fierce intolerance may be ranked among the surest symptoms of little souls and inferior intellects. In the whole list of our English poets we can only remember Shensone and Savage—two certainly of the lowest, who were querulous and discontented. Cowley, indeed, used to call himself melancholy; but he was not in earnest, and at any rate was full of conceits and affectations, and has nothing to make us proud of him. Shakspeare, the greatest of them all, was evidently of a free and joyous temperament; and so was Chaucer, their common master. The same disposition appears to have predominated in Fletcher, Johnson, and their great contemporaries. The genius of Milton partook something of the austerity of the party to which he belonged, and of the controversies in which he was involved; even when fallen on evil days and evil tongues, his spirit seems to have retained its serenity as well as its dignity; and in his private life, as well as in his poetry, the majesty of a high character is tempered with great sweetness, genial indulgences, and practical wisdom. In the succeeding age, our poets were but too gay; and though we forbear to speak of living authors, we know enough of them to say with confidence, that to be miserable or to be hated is not now, any more than heretofore, the common lot of those who excel.

**METHODICAL HABITS OF PRESCOTT.**—The following extract from a lecture upon the noted Historian's life, recently given by Mr. Bancroft, well illustrates the important advantages of system and method in the accomplishment of great undertakings. By these, a patient author, suffering from almost blindness, so impaired was his eyesight, won his way through difficulties and trials sufficient to discourage ordinary men, to the front rank of the World's Historians.

His habits were methodically exact; retiring early and ever at the same hour, he arose early alike in winter or in summer at the appointed moment, rousing himself instantly, though in the soundest sleep, at the first note of his alarm bell; never giving indulgence to lassitude or delay.—To the hours which he gave to his pursuits, he adhered as scrupulously as possible, never lightly suffering them to be interfered with; now listening to his reader; now dictating what was to be written; now using his own eyes sparingly for reading; now writing by the aid of simple machinery, devised for those who are in darkness; now passing time in thoughtfully revolving his great theme.

For this reason, at the period of his life when he rode much on horseback—and he was an excellent and fearless rider—it was his choice and his habit to go out alone; and in his stated exercises on foot, you might be sure that, when by himself, his mind was shaping out work for the rest of the day. In this way, systematic in his mode of life, he proceeded onward, and still onward till the eyes of the world were turned with admiration on the genial scholar, who, with placid calmness courageously trampled appalling difficulty under foot, and gained the first place among his countrymen as the historic instructor of mankind.

**DANIEL WEBSTER** married the woman he loved, and the twenty years which he lived with her brought him to the meridian of his greatness.—An anecdote is current on this subject which is not recorded in the books. Mr. Webster was becoming intimate with Miss Grace Fletcher, when a skein of silk getting in a knot, Mr. Webster assisted in unraveling the snarl; then looking up to Miss Grace he said, "We have untied a knot, don't you think we could tie one?" Grace was a little embarrassed, said not a word, but in the course of a few minutes, she tied a knot in a piece of tape, and handed it to Mr. W. This tape, the thread of his domestic joys, was found after the death of Mr. Webster, preserved as one of the most precious of relics.