

pictures of Christians are generally caricatures, and consequently worthless as helps to a correct understanding of the questions discussed. Here and there truths may be found stated, but they are so far between that they are no more worth looking for than a few grains of wheat in a large pile of chaff.

His hero is the son of a Methodist preacher, whose bodily and mental development is stunted on account of the father's religious ideas. He grows up among Christians, all of whom are more or less idiots, but at last chance throws him among Unitarians and infidels, all of whom are pure, healthy and good and great. He studies ecclesiastical history and finds out that his parents were know-nothings, because they believed in creeds composed by the fanatics of the first centuries. He also discovers that biblical history is a myth, that there probably is no God, and that human reason is the highest authority. His life now runs in a smoother channel, until death prematurely cuts him off from activity—death administered, it seems, by his own hand, or that of the attending physician, to end life's agony.

Authors generally aim to exalt virtue and paint vice in colors so as to make it abhorrent, repulsive. In the volume before us, a marked departure from this rule has taken place. The efforts of men and women for conformity to moral laws are ridiculed, while the opposite is held up in a rosy light, as attractive as a delicately pointed pen can make it. Has the world, then, at last come to this, that vice no longer need to hide her visage under a mask of virtue, but can walk about bare-faced without danger of being hunted back to her own dark hole? Is the taste at length so degraded that sin can be swallowed without being sugared over first? If so, the condition of society is deplorable.

The present tendency of scientific opinion is back to the original philosophy which pervades Christian religion. Ever since the labors of astronomers and geologists resulted in the establishment of the human mind, of an inseparable connection between the earth below and the innumerable worlds above, revealing to some extent the union, harmony and magnitude of the universe, advanced philosophers have sought the great Source of all with renewed fervor. Ideas about evolution have retarded some in their search, but now, at the close of this century, it is safe to say that the signs clearly indicate that when the errors in human speculation are fully discovered and only that which is true remains, be it in the theories of Darwin, Spencer or any other philosopher, God will appear in the pages of nature, as in the annals of history—not indeed the Being depicted in creeds, but the God of all both ancient and modern revelations. At present it may to some appear impossible to harmonize the teachings of holy writ on the subject of creation, for instance, with what undoubtedly is true in the dynamic conception of the world, but there is no contradiction whatever, and the harmony would be easily perceived, were it equally evident what part of the new mode of thinking needs no modification.

In the meantime, it must be consid-

ered the height of folly to attack Christians or the Christian religion, either in novels or otherwise, for faults and errors that are not traceable to that source. The Reason Why is such an attack, altogether unwarranted. True Christianity, however, can stand it, even if it were of a more formidable nature.

### THE PRIZE FIGHT HORROR.

By what some of its spectators call "an unfortunate accident," a prize-fighter named Carter lies dead today as a result of a ring battle had last night in this city. The tone of regret with which people on the street speak of the affair is startling in its gentleness; even among officials there appears but little of that stern indignation, that desire for swift punishment for outraged and violated law, which ought to and does characterize the larger element of this community. The expressions most frequently heard, to the time of this writing, are those of sympathy with the club or parties who arranged the fight, the spectators who beheld it, and the surviving participant and his aide; whilst there is a sort of disappointment that "the sport" itself in this city has sustained a blow from which it will not recover for a long time to come; as for the poor dead darkey, his quietus came altogether unexpectedly, but, say the snivelling "fancy"—it is the fortune of war.

We want to call the minds of the authorities and of the community away from such nonsense, and to concentrate them once and for all upon the tardy determination that prize-fighting forevermore shall be prohibited within this fair State. The dreadful event which has just happened ought to be a warning that shall last for all time. It is a blot upon the city's name which the feeblest conception of the community's instincts would never have permitted. No future euphemism can be allowed, under the name of a glove contest, to cover the brutality evinced in pitting a pair of trained sluggers against each other for the paltry purse which they have the strength, but not the industry, to earn in the reputable ways of life. Our recent fame as an inviting haunt for broken-down or second rate bruteers must be rescued; our officials must be compelled to cease winking at violations of law and decency; our people must be impressed with the naked hideousness and brutality that mark every step in the preliminaries, progress and conclusion of a prize fight. The "squared circle" as a means of livelihood for toughened bullies and as a place of entertainment for hardly less depraved spectators, must go.

Whatever the law can do to vindicate itself in the present case it must be encouraged and assisted to do. As fighting goes, the people who managed this affair have attempted in the past to conduct their entertainments as decently as the business would permit—and they have been favored with the presence not only of municipal officials but also of otherwise pretty good citizens. As bruteers go, Bob Thompson is perhaps as clean and square a little slugger as ever sat in a roped corner.

But all this avails nothing in the dreadful occurrence under discussion. A man has been killed, and no amount of regret can excuse the promoters of the fight and the dead man's antagonist for their share in the crime. Furthermore, since in all probability there would have been no fight had there been no paying spectators, the latter cannot be acquitted of the grave moral blame of being accessory to the result.

### OUTRAGEOUS JOURNALISM.

Recurring to the subject of "Despicable Journalism" which the News treated at some length last evening, we quote the following from the Springfield (Mass.) Republican, one of the cleanest and most honorable newspapers in the United States, and certainly an authorized mentor in journalism wherever the profession may be found:

The story published in a New York paper yesterday morning of domestic complications which are alleged to have caused the sudden illness of Cornelius Vanderbilt, was an invasion of the rights of a family to privacy in its own particular affairs, which was outrageous in the extreme. Mr. Vanderbilt's opposition to a son's projected marriage may or may not have caused his stroke of paralysis, and in any case it is a matter which concerns the family alone and in which the public could have no legitimate interest. The very fact of the prominence of Mr. Vanderbilt, because of his great wealth, makes the offense the more inexcusable. However, the entire transaction is a logical working out of the theory that news is what the people want to read, with little or no attention paid to the probable effects upon general morality. It is impossible to overestimate the harm which may be done by this sort of journalism when carried to the extent it is today.

### PREHISTORIC EARTH.

An interesting page of the history of nature has been revealed through the discovery of prehistoric forests in a coal district in Niederlausitz in Prussia.

It is well known that long before the flora of the earth assumed the form it now has, the surface was covered with plants of a different kind. The great quantities of coal found are supposed to be formed through the slow combustion in the depths of earth of the immense forests of earth's early days. In the German coal district mentioned a large forest has now been found, in which the trees are well preserved and not carbonized. They are very large and the supposition is that every winter, not only the leaves but also the branches fell off.

It is of course impossible to assign anything near a correct date for the period of earth's history when this giant forest flourished in the dense, warm atmosphere that then surrounded our globe, but it must have been ages, compared to which history's epochs are but moments. The discovery is one of a great interest to geologists. It would seem to furnish another evidence for the prevalent view that the same kind of physical processes now going on in nature have been at work from the first, producing the changes which appear as geological periods.