

Go Bury Religion.

BY JOHN PRESCOTT GUILD.

GO bury religion! go bury it quick,
No longer above ground allow it
to kick.

Too long it has lived and encumbered
the earth,
A curse it has been ever since it had
birth.
On the high and the low it has fastened
its fang,
And poisoned the people with terrible
tang.
Religion has finished its fallacious sway,
Consign it to coffin and cart it away.

Go bury religion! that clog on the mind,
Concocted by rogues and believed by the
blind:

A fable the foolish took down for the
truth,
Crooned over by aged and stammered by
youth;

A compound of ignorance, fancy and
fraud,
Defaming mankind in devotion to God.
Religion has finished its fallacious sway,
Consign it to coffin and cart it away.

Go bury religion! that delusion dire
Which threatened the wisdomed with
eternal fire,
But blest the most stupid with endless
delight

For shutting their eyes and denying
their sight!
The world has outgrown its old, childish
ideas,

And gim-cracks and god-stacks no longer
reveres.

Religion has finished its fallacious sway,
Consign it to coffin and cart it away.

Go bury religion! go bury it where
The bats have their dwelling, the moles
dig their lair,

In volcanic cavern, in Antarctic ice,
There cover religion's polluting device;
Then science shall light all the world
with its beam,

And morals shall make all humanity
gleam.

Religion has finished its fallacious sway,
Consign it to coffin and cart it away.

Sam Rice's Romance.

A WESTERN STORY IN THREE CHAPTERS

CHAPTER I.

THE coach of Wells, Fargo & Co. stood before the door of Piney-woods Station, and Sam Rice, the driver, was drawing on his lemon-colored gloves with an air, for Sam was the pink of stage drivers, from his high white hat to his faultless French boots. Sad will it be when his profession shall have been altogether superseded, and the coach-and-six, with its gracious and graceful "whip" shall have been supplanted, on all the principal lines of travel, by the iron horse with its grimy "driver" and train of thundering carriages.

The passengers had taken their seats—the one lady on the box—and Sam Rice stood, chronometer held daintily between thumb and finger, waiting for the second hand to come round the quarter of a minute, while the grooms slipped the last strap of the harness into its buckle. At the expiration of a quarter of a minute, as Sam stuck an unlighted cigar between his lips and took hold of the box to pull himself up to his seat, the good-natured landlady of Piney-woods Station called out, with some officiousness:

"Mr. Rice, don't you want a match?"

"That's just what I've been look-

ing for these ten years," responded Sam; and at that instant his eyes were on a level with the lady's on the box, so that he could not help seeing the roguish glint of them, which so far disconcerted the usually self-possessed professor of the whip that he heard not the landlady's laugh, but gathered up the reins in such a hasty and careless manner as to cause Demon, the nigh leader, to go off with a bound that nearly threw the owner of the eyes out of her place. The little flurry gave opportunity for Mrs. Dolly Page—that was the lady's name—to drop her veil over her face, and for Sam Rice to show his genteel handling of the ribbons, and conquer the unaccountable disturbance of his pulses.

Sam had looked at the way-bill, not ten minutes before, to ascertain the name of the pretty black-eyed woman seated at his left hand; and the consciousness of so great a curiosity gratified, may have augmented his unaccustomed embarrassment. Certain it is, Sam had driven six horses, on a ticklish mountain road, for four years, without missing a trip, and had more than once encountered the "road agents" without ever yet delivering them an express box; had had old and young ladies, plain and beautiful ones, to sit beside him, hundreds of times, yet this was the first time he had consulted the way-bill, on his own account, to find a lady's name. This one time, too, it had a Mrs. before it, which prefix gave him a pang he was very unwilling to own. On the other hand, Mrs. Dolly Page was clad in extremely deep black. Could she be in mourning for Mr. Page? If Demon had an unusual number of starting fits that afternoon, his driver was not altogether guiltless in the matter; for what horse so sensitive as he would not have felt the magnetism of something wrong behind him?

But as the mocking eyes kept hidden behind the veil, and the rich, musical voice uttered not a word through a whole half hour, which seemed an age to Sam, he finally recovered himself so far as to say he believed he would not smoke, after all; and thereupon returned the cigar, still unlighted, to his pocket.

"I hope you do not deprive yourself of a luxury on my account," murmured the soft voice.

"I guess that dust and sunshine is enough for a lady to stand, without my smokin' in her face," returned Sam, politely, and glancing at the veil.

"Still, I beg you will smoke if you are accustomed," persisted the cooing voice behind it.

But Sam, to his praise be it spoken, refused to add anything to the discomfort of a summer day's ride across the mountains. His chivalry had its reward; for the

lady thus favored, feeling constrained to make some return for such consideration, began to talk, in a vein that delighted her auditor, about horses—their points and their traits—and, lastly, about their drivers.

"I have always fancied," said Mrs. Dolly Page, "that if I were a man I should take to stage driving as a profession. It seems to me a free and manly calling, one that develops some of the best qualities of a man. Of course it has its drawbacks. One can not always choose one's society on a stage, and there are temptations to bad habits. Besides, there are storms, and upsets, and all that sort of thing. I've often thought," continued Mrs. Dolly, "that we do not consider enough the hardships of drivers, nor what we owe them. You've read that poem—the Post-boy's Song:

'Like a shuttle thrown by the hand of
Fate,
Forward and back I go.'

Well, it is just so. They do bring us our letters, full of good and ill news, helping to weave the web of Fate for us; yet not to blame for what tidings they bring, and always faithful to their duties, in storm or shine."

"I shall like my profession better after what you have said of it," said Sam, giving his whip a curl to make it touch the off leader's right ear. "I've done my duty mostly, and not complained of the hardships, though once or twice I've been too beat out to get off the box at the end of my drive; but that was in a long spell of bad weather, when the roads was just awful, and the rain as cold as snow."

"Would you mind letting me hold the lines awhile?" asked the cooing voice at last. "I've driven a six-in-hand before."

Though decidedly startled, and averse to trusting his team to such a pair of hands, Sam was compelled, by the psychic force of the little woman, to yield up the reins. It was with fear and trembling that he watched her handling of them for the first mile; but, as she really seemed to know what she was about, his confidence increased, and he watched her with admiration. Her veil was now up, her eyes were sparkling and cheeks glowing. She did not speak often, but when she did it was something piquant and graceful that she uttered. At last, just as the station was in sight, she yielded up the lines, with a deep-drawn sigh of satisfaction, apologizing for it by saying that her hands, not being used to it, were tired.

"I'm not sure," she added, "but I shall take to the box, at last, as a steady thing."

"If you do," responded Sam, gallantly, "I hope you will drive on my line."

"Thanks. I shall apply to you

for a reference when I ask for the situation."

Then there was a halt, a supply of fresh horses and a prompt, lively start. But the afternoon was intensely hot and the team soon sobered down. Mrs. Page did not offer again to take the reins. She was overwarm and weary, perhaps; quiet and a little sad, at any rate. Mr. Rice was quiet, too, and thoughtful. The passengers inside were asleep. The coach rattled along at a steady pace, with the dust so deep under the wheels as to still their rumble. At intervals a freight wagon was passed, drawn to one side at a "turn-out", or a rabbit skipped across the road, or a solitary horseman suggested alternately a "road agent" or one of James's heroes. Grand views presented themselves of wooded cliffs and wild ravines. Tall pines threw lengthening shadows across the open spaces on the mountain-sides. And so the afternoon wore away; and, when the sun was setting, the passengers alighted for their supper at the principal hotel of Lucky-dog—a mining camp pretty well up in the Sierras.

"We both stop here," said Sam, as he helped the lady down from her high position; letting her know by this remark that her destination was known to him.

"I'm rather glad of that," she answered, frankly, with a little smile; and considering all that had transpired on that long drive, Sam was certainly pardonable if he felt almost sure that her reason for being glad was identical with his own.

Lucky-dog was one of those shambling, new camps, where one street serves for a string on which two or three dozen ill-assorted tenements are strung, every fifth one being a place intended for the relief of the universal American thirst, though the liquids dispensed at these beneficent institutions were observed rather to provoke than to abate the dryness of their patrons. Eating-houses were even more frequent than those which dispensed moisture to parched throats; so that taking a cursory view of the windows fronting on the street, the impression was inevitably conveyed of the expected rush of famished armies, whose wants this charitable community was only too willing to supply for a sufficient consideration. The houses that were not eating and drinking-houses were hotels, if we except occasional grocery and general merchandise establishments. Into what out-of-the-way corners the inhabitants were stowed, it was impossible to conjecture, until it was discovered that the men lived at the places already inventoried, and that women abode not at all in Lucky-dog—or if there were any, not more than half a dozen of them, and they liv-