

of than the officer who uses great opportunities for self-glorification or aggrandisement.

Four children, a girl and three boys, were born to Mr. and Mrs. Priestley only one of whom, Schuyler, lived to reach maturity. Mr. Priestley talks little of himself or family, but to an intimate friend he spoke as follows of his dead son Elam: "Elam lived until he was thirteen. He was maturer in mind than nine out of ten persons ever get to be. I never felt that any one ever understood me as he did. His loss was the most crushing blow I ever received; and to add to it, I had to listen to an orthodox preacher at his funeral. If I had believed in hell, it would have had no terror for me after that."

Intellectually, Mr. Priestley is a combination of poet and critic, and while the latter quality is dominant, it is no doubt due to greater cultivation. He has written considerable verse, some of which, in my opinion, is of no mean rank. In his later years, intellectual activity has taken the form, largely, of criticism of the dominant superstitions. But his Muse did not entirely forsake him even in this work. He rendered in verse some humorous parts of the Bible—for instance the meeting of Jesus and Zacheus, where, in the crowd that had gathered,

"... Zacheus, being short, you know,
To see him stood not half a show.
So he just scrambled on before
And climbed into a sycamore."

Another instance is a part of the book of Job. To thoroughly qualify himself for the work of the critic, he has acquainted himself with a wide range of subjects. I have met few men more conversant with the works of the eminent scientists. From these and from the great poets he appears to be able to quote at will from memory.

And here I am reminded of delightful occasions in Portland in the early nineties, when a small group of mutual friends, with Mr. Priestley as its center, sat in a dingy room or walked the less frequented streets in conversation. The "conversation", I may remark, was just sufficient to keep Friend Priestley "wound up", then we quietly enjoyed a feast of wit, wisdom and song. Not only his own opinion and criticism, bright and incisive as these always are, but Tyndall, Huxley and Spencer, Tennyson, Whittier and Ingersoll, we enjoyed. This was a veritable Liberal education to me, who, though classing myself with the "Infidels", was little acquainted with the ground I was trying to occupy.

One of Mr. Priestley's great delights is in free discussion—"free pitch-in", as he often calls it. When he lived in Portland, he was always to be seen (and heard) at meetings where questions and criticism were allowed. He has little use for those speakers, upon whatever subject,

who make of the rostrum a "coward's castle". In this respect the Spiritualists won his admiration, as they nearly always gave him an opportunity to propound to them knotty questions, which have not, I believe, up to this time, been satisfactorily answered. The Theosophists, also, had frequently to wrestle with his quaint queries, and equally unsuccessfully.

Though an unobtrusive and even diffident man, Mr. Priestley always courts and challenges discussion of subjects supernatural, and has on several occasions drawn the enemy's fire. He never indulges in personality, nor in anything that could be called abuse. To an opponent who does indulge in that sort of "argument", as most theologians do, such a course is particularly exasperating.

One of Mr. Priestley's ambitions has been to write a "Life of Jesus". He thinks no writer has yet done thorough justice to this Bible character. He told me a few months ago that he intended to devote the present winter to this subject, even if he didn't "hit anything higher than the 'Star of Bethlehem', which is the only star with a Christian name, and Science has not yet discovered it!"

Mr. Priestley is a student of sociology, as of theology, and has lent his pen and voice to discussions of many social and political questions. A poor man and all his life a hard-working man himself, his sympathies are naturally with "the under-dog in the fight", and is interested in any proposition for the betterment of the condition of the common people. He says the uncertain feature of the sociologic problem is the human animal himself; that he could construct an ideal social system if he could have men made to order.

At the age of 64, our friend is settled on a little farm near Newburg, on the Willamette, where the good wishes of many friends attend him, and let us hope that here he may find some measure of rest from a hitherto severe life, and that he may live long to wield his humanitarian pen.

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