

Selections and Comments.

A PRACTICAL MAN ON PROTOPLASM.—Professor Huxley made but a short stay in New York, but his arrival was the cause of conversation between one of the city's amateur scientists and a matter-of-fact friend. The amateur was an enthusiastic admirer of Huxley, and he spoke so extravagantly about him, that his friends finally became curious, and asked, "Who in thunder is Huxley, anyway?" "You don't mean to say you have not heard about Professor Huxley, the great scientist?" "Yes, I do though; what has he done?" "Why, man, Huxley made the important discovery about protoplasm." "About what?" "Protoplasm." "And what the dickens is protoplasm?" "Now, look here, you don't mean to sit there and tell me you don't know what protoplasm is?" "That's just it. Nary protoplasm?" "Well, protoplasm is what we may call the life principle." "Anything to do with insurance?" "Oh nonsense! The life principle in nature; the starting point of vital action, so to speak." "He discovered that, did he?" "Yes, a few years ago, in England." "And what good is it going to do?" "Good! a great deal of good. It expands the circle of human knowledge, and is valuable in bearing out the theory of evolution. It is a noble contribution to science, and it has made Huxley one of the few immortal names that was not born to die." "So Huxley knows all about the life principle, does he?" "Yes—all about it." "And the starting point of vital action?" "Exactly." "Well, see here now; can he take some of that protoplasm and go and make a man, or a horse, or an elephant with it?" "Oh, no, he couldn't." "Can he take it and make anything at all of it—even a gnat or a fly?" "I guess not." "Well, then he may just go to thunder with his protoplasm; I don't believe it's worth ten cents a pound anyhow. 'Pears to me these scientific fellows put on a big lot of airs about very little. Protoplasm, eh! Shouldn't wonder if Huxley came over to get up a company to work it. Did you say the mine is in England?" "It is almost needless to say that the scientist gave up his friend in despair.—*Selected.*

A THOUGHT FOR CHURCHES.—In an exchange we find the following paragraph copied from the *Religious Herald*, of Richmond, Va. No

doubt it tells the truth—a truth which is a serious one, and which churches would do well to ponder:

"When a pastor is so popular that he fills the house without any special effort on the part of his people, the latter suffer great loss, and though the congregation grows larger, the vital powers of the church as steadily weaken. And thus it is that we have known a church to *die* (almost) while apparently on the flood tide of prosperity. In a Northern city, as we turned away from a crowded church, we asked a deacon: 'If your pastor were to leave, how many of those people would you hold?' 'Not one in twenty,' was his prompt reply. It is work—earnest, prayerful work—that saves souls and builds up the churches."—*Christian Commonwealth.*

NO GOOD THING WITHHELD.—This, then, is the promise unto those that walk uprightly. It is the providence of God, the special provision vouchsafed to those who, by His grace, are living consistently. But we must be taught to remember that it will be the great Giver who will decide what things are good for us. We have our own ideas of what is best, or rather, of what we should like; but it may be that the wisdom which cannot err will judge very differently. We might ask wealth, a very questionable good to any man, and He gives us poverty, or the anxieties of winning the daily bread; we may wish for reputation, and humiliation is our lot, for high service in the Church, and a lowly position is assigned. But it matters not. He doeth all things well; and with that assurance we may safely say, in the sincerity of a humble heart, "Thy will be done."—*Ex.*

"WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME DO?"—This was the question of the awakened conscience of St. Paul; it has been the earnest cry of many a heart since then. When under the impulse of the new born love, the full heart has ardently, in these words, sought the will of God. In the deep perplexity of some trying hour, standing as it were at the crossing of the roads, the petition has been uplifted for guidance and light. Let us, in spirit of faith and reverent submission, wait the divine reply, and which ever direction the divine finger points, may we with willing feet and thankful hearts pursue our course, and thus fulfill his blessed will.—*C. W.*

LIVING IT.—Ay, there's the rub. When you have come from your mountain of quiet communion, when beatific vision ended, the claims of daily practical working life meet you. When instead of a divine converse you have to face hearts and natures hard and repellant, when you have to exchange Tabor for the market-place and the shining of angels for the din of trafficking, then do we need to cry for supporting grace and the spiritual power. And yet this is the true sphere for the display of the Christian graces; here in the thick of the fight, in the heaviest labor of the vineyard we are fulfilling the divine purpose. When he cometh may he find us not listlessly waiting but watching and working.—*Christian Commonwealth.*

DRAW A LINE SOMEWHERE.—Perhaps it is a natural revulsion from the narrowness of a past age, but it is evident that among many people, especially young men, there is a tendency to cut out all trace and discard all limits and function. To slightly change the reason for wearing the yellow ribbon, it is the fashion now-a-days for a man to boast that he may believe what he likes, go where he likes, and agree with as much and as little as he likes. If human nature was utterly irresponsible, save to itself, this kind of doctrine might be counted other than pure foolishness, but surely in the next world, if not in this, men will discover that they cannot, save to their eternal hurt, do as they like with what belongs to God.—*Ex.*

Original Contributions.BIBLE TALKS.

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"The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works" "Say unto them, As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." "For he doth not afflict willingly."

It has been already stated that when the Lord brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, the land promised them—Canaan—was possessed by seven nations greater than themselves; and that these nations were all destroyed to make room for the Israelites, and that their land—their fields and crops,

vineyards and houses ready furnished, were given to Israel. If God is the God the above quoted Scriptures affirm, why were not these nations permitted to live? Why this wholesale slaughter of nations—of men, women and children? Where the justice of such an act? Infidels have much to say about a God that could do this—his barbarity, injustice, cruelty, etc., and it is well to be able to defend the character of God against the assaults of such ignorant presumptuous men. The same Book that tells us that these nations were thus treated, also gives a justifying reason for it—a reason which must be entirely satisfactory to all intelligent, thinking people. Listen to Moses. Hear, O Israel: Thou art to pass over Jordan this day to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven; a people great and tall, the children of the Anakins, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak? Understand therefore this day that the Lord thy God goeth before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and bring them down before thy face; so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee: Not for thy righteousness or for the uprightness of thy heart, dost thou go to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out before thee, and that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham Isaac and Jacob." (Deut. 9: 1-5.) Then their destruction was but the penalty incurred by their crimes.

Before Abraham was a father, the Lord told him that his posterity should be very numerous, literally innumerable, and that he would give them the land of Caanan for a possession; but before getting possession, they would be strangers in a land not their own, and be afflicted by a nation which the Lord would judge; afterward they were to come out with great substance. "In the fourth generation they shall come hither again; for the iniquity is not yet full." The Amorites was one of the seven nations inhabiting Caanan, and perhaps the greatest. The expression, The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full, is very significant; they had not yet become wholly corrupt. So more time was to be granted