

LUCIFER'S LANTERN.

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BITS OF PESSIMISM.

THOSE happy blinkards who know nothing of how "the other half" live, and don't want to know, need occasionally to have their optimistic illusions smashed to smithereens. Such people move about in their little cocoons, always carrying with them a fine tooth comb and a microscope with which to discover crumblets of happiness. If, in a world of trials and troubles they succeed in finding a few wayward joys, such are carefully listed and gleefully proclaimed as an excuse for annual thanksgiving festivals.

The optimist would be envied his illusion, were it not that through his want of knowledge and consequent want of proper appreciation of the multitudes' woes, many a tear which might be wiped away, is left to drown some little joy. A little insight into the hollowness of their supposed pleasure, may rob the pessimist of some selfish enjoyment of an agreeable illusion, yet the sum total of human happiness will be increased if he can be convinced that to most people life is not worth living, and that he should spend part of his time in making it more endurable for those, in whose everyday life there comes scarcely a suggestion for pleasant dreams.

Among the many high priests of pessimism, the popular Heinrich Heine has exposed the hollowness of even the highest earthly joy, in a matchless combination of pathos and irony. I cannot resist quoting a bit of his pessimism. He said:

"What avails it me that enthusiastic youths and maidens crown my marble bust with laurels, when the

With Compliments of

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as the result of religious duty is but a sanctified lust, and tends to obliterate all that distinguishes man from brute, while marriage as the result of a union of high hopes intellectually, and worthy ambitions ethically, must ennoble man in all that elevates him above the brute.

Any woman who for heavenly reward submits herself to the embraces of a man she does not *truly love*, is guilty of the same crime as the one who renders her paramour a like service for a five dollar bill. The essence is the same, though the price demanded is different, and in spite of the fact that in one case the "Boss of Jehovah's Bucklers" has performed a "sealing" in a place miscalled a "Temple of the Lord."

I must not be understood as advocating asceticism. Far from it, I am a very human part of humanity, but insist that the stench of an unbridled lust has not been made "an amber scent of odorous perfume" by the hollow mockery of priestly sanctification.

I demand that our passions instead of being made our masters in a life of debasement, should be made so far as possible our servants during an effort toward a higher earthly existence.

The theologically bedizened sensualism of mormondom finds further manifestation in its conception of heaven. If I can get any intelligent idea of the after life of mormons by the study of their inane sermons it is something like this: There are two resurrections one of the spirit, the other of the flesh. After the second resurrection the spirit and body are united and transplanted to some place in the universe where they gather up enough raw planetary material out of which to "organize a world."

To this world the resurrected man now hies himself and by virtue of the "sealing power" of the Mor-

mon priesthood all the women who have been "sealed" to him for eternity are attracted or transplanted to this same planet. Here they set up housekeeping as Adam did in the Garden of Eden, and they will live eternal lives unless some walking or talking snake should put up a job on them as it did on Eve.

To this world of his own creation the man will be the God, even as Adam in Mormon theology is the God of this world. He is the King and his wives queens. Their kingdom will consist of their own "eternal progeny." Hence polygamy is essential because the extent and glory of every man's kingdom in the hereafter must depend on the number of wives sealed to him for eternity.

Such a conception of heaven is debasing because its highest pleasure consists only in the voluptuousness furnished by the Grecian hetæra, its only rewards are sensual, and the greatest means of exaltation is a fecundity that would make the jack-rabbit envious.

If this exposure and protest is disgusting then I can only say in my own defense that it was quite unavoidable because in opening an ulcer, if it is well done it must expose a nauseating mass and in this particular it makes no difference whether the instrument used is a meat axe or a stiletto.



When our vanity is tickled by flattery we are always grateful to the tickler even though we know him to be falsifying. Under such circumstances we are still thankful that the flatterer should take the trouble to lie for our pleasure.