The danger that such a system will seriously diminish industrial efficiency is, however, much less than one might, at first thought, anticipate. The change would be less fundamental than it seems, because the old system is not so different from the new as we commonly take it to be. In the traditional system there is for many laborers no certainty that great efficiency will be commensurately repaid. The hope of the efficient man is in promotion to a totally different and higher kind of labor. This possibility is not diminished by the new system.

So far as the old arrangement has offered to an energetic man the hope of corresponding gains, one may well fear that few men have actively responded to this incentive. The attainment of ordinary comfort, by merely ordinary exertion, is for most men the limit of aspiration. There is some evidence that in shops where unions have not entered a man who finds that he is doing more than the usual amount of work indolently slackens his speed.

But if a degree of loss is after all supposed to attend the transition — if here and there men relax their efforts because the union rate means uniform wages — there are compensations so marked that it cannot, on the whole, be regarded as less fit than its predecessor to stimulate ambition. That industrial system is best in which each man most readily finds his proper place, and is influenced most actively by the hope of rising, or the dread of sinking lower. In the certainty with which the "unfit" are rejected and cast down to less responsible positions, the new arrangement evidently surpasses the old as it results in the dismissal of the inferior men. The minimum rate is in this respect far from being "socialistic" in the sense of shielding the weak. It is, on the contrary, cruelly individualistic. On the other hand, in its tendency to impel the better men upward, it is at least not clearly less effective. The approximate equalizing of wages within a trade may at times somewhat weaken effort, yet the desirability of this motive is not beyond question. It may have an important purpose in the vanishing age of rigid social and industrial stratification, but since men now more readily win promotion to an industrial position distinctly higher, the ambition merely to increase earnings has, at least, lost its importance; it may possibly be thought even harmful if it withdraws attention from that other ambition, not merely to thrive at the old level, but to rise.

Thus since the new régime does not cease to stimulate the capable, but does more certainly eliminate the incompetent, it seems on the whole more favorable to the relative advancement of the better men. At the same time, the modern organization of the Great Industry, with its numerous gradations (in contrast with the earlier organization of widely distinct crafts), largely facilitates the process by which men pass upward or downward to their proper places.

Ambrose P. Winston.

WHY I AM A PAGAN.

When the spirit swells my breast I love to roam leisurely among the green hills; or sometimes, sitting on the brink of the murmuring Missouri, I marvel at the great blue overhead. With half closed eyes I watch the huge cloud shadows in their noiseless play upon the high bluffs opposite me, while into my ear ripple the sweet, soft cadences of the river's song. Folded hands lie in my
Why I am a Pagan.

lap, for the time forgot. My heart and
I lie small upon the earth like a grain
of throbbing sand. Drifting clouds and
tinkling waters, together with the
warmth of a genial summer day, bespeak
with eloquence the loving Mystery round
about us. During the idle while I sat
upon the sunny river brink, I grew
somewhat, though my response be not so
clearly manifest as in the green grass
fringing the edge of the high bluff back
of me.

At length retracing the uncertain foot­
path scaling the precipitous embank­
ment, I seek the level lands where grow
the wild prairie flowers. And they, the
lovely little folk, soothe my soul with
their perfumed breath.

Their quaint round faces of varied
hue convince the heart which leaps with
glad surprise that they, too, are living
symbols of omnipotent thought. With
a child’s eager eye I drink in the my­
riad star shapes wrought in luxuriant
color upon the green. Beautiful is the
spiritual essence they embody.

I leave them nodding in the breeze,
but take along with me their impress
upon my heart. I pause to rest me upon
a rock embedded on the side of a foot­
hill facing the low river bottom. Here
the Stone-Boy, of whom the Ameri­
can aborigine tells, frolics about, shoot­
ing his baby arrows and shouting aloud
with glee at the tiny shafts of lightning
that flash from the flying arrow-beaks.
What an ideal warrior he became, baf­
fling the siege of the pests of all the
land till he triumphed over their united
attack. And here he lay, — Inyan our
great-great-grandfather, older than the
hill he rested on, older than the race of
men who love to tell of his wonderful
career.

Interwoven with the thread of this
Indian legend of the rock, I fain would
trace a subtle knowledge of the native
t很有 knowledge of the native
folk which enabled them to recognize a
kinship to any and all parts of this vast
universe. By the leading of an ancient
trail I move toward the Indian village.

With the strong, happy sense that
both great and small are so surely en­
folded in His magnitude that, without
a miss, each has his allotted individual
ground of opportunities, I am buoyant
with good nature.

Yellow Breast, swaying upon the slen­
der stem of a wild sunflower, warbles a
sweet assurance of this as I pass near
by. Breaking off the clear crystal song,
he turns his wee head from side to side
eying me wisely as slowly I plod with
moccasined feet. Then again he yields
himself to his song of joy. Flit, flit
hither and yon, he fills the summer sky
with his swift, sweet melody. And truly
does it seem his vigorous freedom lies
more in his little spirit than in his wing.

With these thoughts I reach the log
cabin whither I am strongly drawn by
the tie of a child to an aged mother.
Out bounds my four-footed friend to
meet me, frisking about my path with
unmistakable delight. Chan is a black
shaggy dog, “a thorough bred little mon­
grel” of whom I am very fond. Chan
seems to understand many words in
Sioux, and will go to her mat even when
I whisper the word, though generally I
think she is guided by the tone of the
voice. Often she tries to imitate the
sliding inflection and long drawn out
voice to the amusement of our guests,
but her articulation is quite beyond my
ear. In both my hands I hold her shag­
y head and gaze into her large brown
eyes. At once the dilated pupils con­
tract into tiny black dots, as if the
roguish spirit within would evade my
questioning.

Finally resuming the chair at my
desk I feel in keen sympathy with my
fellow creatures, for I seem to see clearly
again that all are akin.

The racial lines, which once were bit­
terly real, now serve nothing more than
marking out a living mosaic of human
beings. And even here men of the same
color are like the ivory keys of one in­
strument where each resembles all the
rest, yet varies from them in pitch and
quality of voice. And those creatures who are for a time mere echoes of another's note are not unlike the fable of the thin sick man whose distorted shadow, dressed like a real creature, came to the old master to make him follow as a shadow. Thus with a compassion for all echoes in human guise, I greet the solemn-faced "native preacher" whom I find awaiting me. I listen with respect for God's creature, though he mouth most strangely the jangling phrases of a bigoted creed.

As our tribe is one large family, where every person is related to all the others, he addressed me: —

"Cousin, I came from the morning church service to talk with you."

"Yes?" I said interrogatively, as he paused for some word from me.

Shifting uneasily about in the straight-backed chair he sat upon, he began: "Every holy day (Sunday) I look about our little God's house, and not seeing you there, I am disappointed. This is why I come to-day. Cousin, as I watch you from afar, I see no unbecoming behavior and hear only good reports of you, which all the more burns me with the wish that you were a church member. Cousin, I was taught long years ago by kind missionaries to read the holy book. These godly men taught me also the folly of our old beliefs.

"There is one God who gives reward or punishment to the race of dead men. In the upper region the Christian dead are gathered in unceasing song and prayer. In the deep pit below, the sinful ones dance in torturing flames."

"Think upon these things, my cousin, and choose now to avoid the after-doom of hell fire!" Then followed a long silence in which he clasped tighter and unclasped again his interlocked fingers.

Like instantaneous lightning flashes came pictures of my own mother's making, for she, too, is now a follower of the new superstition.

"Knocking out the chinking of our log cabin, some evil hand thrust in a burning taper of braided dry grass, but failed of his intent, for the fire died out and the half burned brand fell inward to the floor. Directly above it, on a shelf, lay the holy book. This is what we found after our return from a several days' visit. Surely some great power is hid in the sacred book?"

Brushing away from my eyes many like pictures, I offered midday meal to the converted Indian sitting wordless and with downcast face. No sooner had he risen from the table with "Cousin, I have relished it," than the church bell rang.

Thither he hurried forth with his afternoon sermon. I watched him as he hastened along, his eyes bent fast upon the dusty road till he disappeared at the end of a quarter of a mile. The little incident recalled to mind the copy of a missionary paper brought to my notice a few days ago, in which a "Christian" pugilist commented upon a recent article of mine, grossly perverting the spirit of my pen. Still I would not forget that the pale-faced missionary and the hoodooed aborigine are both God's creatures, though small indeed their own conceptions of Infinite Love. A wee child toddling in a wonder world, I prefer to their dogma my excursions into the natural gardens where the voice of the Great Spirit is heard in the twittering of birds, the rippling of mighty waters, and the sweet breathing of flowers. If this is Paganism, then at present, at least, I am a Pagan.

Zitkala-Ša.
Edward Eggleston.

Edward Eggleston.

EDWARD EGGLESTON.

The safest appeal of the defender of realism in fiction continues to be to geography. The old inquiry for the great American novel ignored the persistent expansion by which the American states were multiplying. If the question had not ceased to be a burning issue, the earnest seeker might now be given pause by the recent appearance upon our maps of far-lying islands which must, in due course, add to the perplexity of any who wish to view American life steadily or whole. If we should suddenly vanish, leaving only a solitary Homer to chant us, we might possibly be celebrated adequately in a single epic; but so long as we continue malleable and flexible we shall hardly be "begun, continued, and ended" in a single novel, drama, or poem. He were a much enduring Ulysses who could touch once at all our ports. Even Walt Whitman, from the top of his omnibus, could not see over the roofs of Manila; and yet we shall doubtless have, within a decade, bulletins from the dialect society with notes on colonial influences in American speech. Thus it is fair to assume that in the nature of things we shall rely more and more on realistic fiction for a federation of the scattered states of this decentralized and diverse land of ours in a literature which shall be our most vivid social history. We cannot be condensed into one or a dozen finished panoramas; he who would know us hereafter must read us in the flashes of the kinetoscope.

Important testimony to the efficacy of an honest and trustworthy realism has passed into the record in the work of Edward Eggleston, our pioneer provincial realist. Eggleston saw early the value of a local literature, and demonstrated that where it may be referred to general judgments, where it interprets the universal heart and conscience, an attentive audience may be found for it. It was his unusual fortune to have combined a personal experience at once varied and novel with a self-acquired education to which he gave the range and breadth of true cultivation, and, in special directions, the precision of scholarship. The primary facts of life as he knew them in the Indiana of his boyhood took deep hold upon his imagination, and the experiences of that period did much to shape his career. He knew the life of the Ohio valley at an interesting period of transition. He was not merely a spectator of striking social phenomena, but he might have said, with a degree of truth, quorum pars magna fui; for he was a representative of the saving remnant which stood for enlightenment in a dark day in a new land. Literature had not lacked servants in the years of his youth in the Ohio valley. Many knew in those days the laurel madness; but they went "searching with song the whole world through" with no appreciation of the material that lay ready to their hands at home. Their work drew no strength from the Western soil, but was the savorless fungus of a flabby sentimentalism. It was left for Eggleston, with characteristic independence, to abandon fancy for reality. He never became a great novelist, and yet his homely stories of the early Hoosiers, giving as they do the acrid bite of the persimmon and the mellow flavor of the papaw, strengthen the whole case for a discerning and faithful treatment of local life. What he saw will not be seen again, and when The Hoosier Schoolmaster and Roxy cease to entertain as fiction they will teach as history.

An assumption in many quarters that The Hoosier Schoolmaster was in some measure autobiographical was always very distasteful to Dr. Eggleston, and he entered his denial forcibly whenever
occasion offered. His own life was sheltered, and he experienced none of the traditional hardships of the self-made man. He knew at once the companionship of cultivated people and good books. His father, Joseph Cary Eggleston, who removed to Vevay, Ind., from Virginia, in 1832, was an alumnus of William and Mary College, and his mother’s family, the Craigs, were well known in southern Indiana, where they were established so early as 1799. Joseph Cary Eggleston was a member of both houses of the Indiana legislature, and was defeated for Congress in the election of 1844. His cousin, Miles Cary Eggleston, was a prominent Indiana lawyer, and a judge, in the early days, riding the long White-water circuit, which then extended through eastern Indiana from the Ohio to the Michigan border. Edward Eggleston was born at Vevay, December 10, 1837. His boyhood horizons were widened by the removal of his family to New Albany and Madison, by a sojourn in the backwoods of Decatur County, and by thirteen months spent in Amelia County, Va., his father’s former home. There he saw slavery practiced, and he ever afterward held anti-slavery opinions. There was much to interest an intelligent boy in the Ohio valley of those years. Reminiscences of the frontiersmen who had redeemed the valley from savagery seasoned fireside talk with the spice of adventure; Clark’s conquest had enrolled Vincennes in the list of battles of the Revolution; the battle of Tippecanoe was recent history, and the long rifle was still the inevitable accompaniment of the axe throughout a vast area of Hoosier wilderness. There was, however, in all the towns — Vevay, Brookville, Madison, Vincennes — a cultivated society, and before Edward Eggleston was born a remarkable group of scholars and adventurers had gathered about Robert Owen at New Harmony, on the lower Wabash, and while their experiment in socialism was a dismal failure, they left nevertheless an impression which is still plainly traceable in that region. Abraham Lincoln lived for fourteen years (1816-30) in Spencer County, Ind., and witnessed there the same procession of the Ohio’s argosies which Eggleston watched later in Switzerland County.

Edward Eggleston attended school for not more than eighteen months after his tenth year, and owing to ill health he never entered college, though his father, who died at thirty-four, had provided a scholarship for him. But he knew in his youth a woman of unusual gifts, Mrs. Julia Dumont, who conducted at Vevay a dame school. Mrs. Dumont is the most charming figure of early Indiana history, and Dr. Eggleston’s own portrait of her is at once a tribute and an acknowledgment. She wrote much in prose and verse, so that young Eggleston, besides the stimulating atmosphere of his own home, had before him in his formative years a writer of somewhat more than local reputation for his intimate counselor and teacher. His schooling continued to be desultory, but his curiosity was insatiable, and there was, indeed, no period in which he was not an eager student. His life was rich in those minor felicities of fortune which disclose pure gold to seeing eyes in any soil. He wrote once of the happy chance which brought him to a copy of Milton in a little house where he lodged for a night on the St. Croix River. His account of his first reading of L’Allegro is characteristic: — "I read it in the freshness of the early morning, and in the freshness of early manhood, sitting in a window em­owered in honeysuckles dripping with dew, and overlooking the deep trap-rock dalles through which the dark, pine-stained waters of the St. Croix run swiftly. Just abreast of the little village the river opened for a space, and there were islands; and a raft, manned by two or three red-shirted men, was emerging from the gorge into the open water. Alternately reading L’Allegro..."
and looking off at the poetic landscape, I was lifted out of the sordid world into a region of imagination and creation. When, two or three hours later, I galloped along the road, here and there overlooking the dalles and the river, the glory of a nature above nature penetrated my being, and Milton’s song of joy reverberated still in my thoughts. He was, it may be said, a natural etymologist, and by the time he reached manhood he had acquired a reading knowledge of half a dozen languages. We have glimpses of him as chain-bearer for a surveying party in Minnesota; as walking across country toward Kansas, with an ambition to take a hand in the border troubles; and then once more in Indiana, in his nineteenth year, as an itinerant Methodist minister. He rode a four week circuit with ten preaching places along the Ohio, his theological training being explained by his statement that in those days “Methodist preachers were educated by the old ones telling the young ones all they knew.” He turned again to Minnesota to escape malaria, preached in remote villages to frontiersmen and Indians, and later ministered to churches in St. Paul and elsewhere. He held, first at Chicago and later at New York, a number of editorial positions, and he occasionally contributed to juvenile periodicals; but these early writings were in no sense remarkable.

The Hoosier Schoolmaster appeared serially in Hearth and Home in 1871. It was written at intervals of editorial work on the paper, and was a tour de force for which the author expected so little publicity that he gave his characters the names of persons then living in Switzerland and Decatur counties, Ind., with no thought that the story would ever penetrate to its habitat. But the homely little tale, with all its crudities and imperfections, made a wide appeal. It was pirated at once in England; it was translated into French by “Madame Blanck,” and was published in condensed form in the Revue des Deux Mondes; and later, with one of Mr. Aldrich’s tales and other stories by Eggleston, in book form. It was translated into German and Danish also. Le Maître d’Ecole de Flat Creek was the title as set over into French, and the Hoosier dialect suffered a sea change into something rich and strange by its cruise into French waters. The story depicts Indiana in its darkest days. The state’s illiteracy as shown by the census of 1840 was 14.32 per cent as against 5.54 in the neighboring state of Ohio. The “no lickin’, no larnin’” period which Eggleston describes is thus a matter of statistics; but even before he wrote the old order had changed, and Caleb Mills, an alumnus of Dartmouth, had come from New England to lead the Hoosier out of darkness into the light of free schools. The story escaped the oblivion which overtakes most books for the young by reason of its freshness and novelty. It was, indeed, something more than a story for boys, though, like Tom Sawyer and The Story of a Bad Boy, it is listed among books of permanent interest to youth. It shows no unusual gift of invention; its incidents are simple and commonplace; but it daringly essayed a record of local life in a new field, with the aid of the dialect of the people described, and thus became a humble but important pioneer in the history of American fiction. It is true that Bret Harte and Mark Twain had already widened the borders of our literary domain westward; and others, like Longstreet, had turned a few spadefuls of the rich Southern soil; but Harte was of the order of romancers, and Mark Twain was a humorist, while Longstreet, in his Georgia Scenes, gives only the eccentric and fantastic. Eggleston introduced the Hoosier at the bar of American literature in advance of the Creole of Mr. Cable or Mrs. Chopin, or the negro of Mr. Page or Mr. Harris, or the mountaineer of Miss Murfree, or the shore-folk of Miss Jewett.
Several of Eggleston’s later Hoosier stories are a valuable testimony to the spiritual unrest of the Ohio valley pioneers. The early Hoosiers were a peculiarly isolated people, shut in by great woodlands. The news of the world reached them tardily; but they were thrilled by new versions of the gospel brought to them by adventurous evangelists, who made Jerusalem seem much nearer than their own national capital. Heated discussions between the sects supplied in those days an intellectual stimulus greater than that of politics. Questions shook the land which were unknown at Westminster and Rome; they are now well-nigh forgotten in the valley where they were once debated so fiercely. The Rev. Mr. Bosaw and his monotonously sung sermon in The Hoosier Schoolmaster are vouched for, and preaching of the same sort has been heard in Indiana at a much later period than that of which Eggleston wrote. The End of the World (1872) treats vividly the extravagant belief of the Millerites, who, in 1842-43, found positive proof in the Book of Daniel that the world’s doom was at hand. This tale shows little if any gain in constructive power over the first Hoosier story, and the same must be said of The Circuit Rider, which portrays the devotion and sacrifice of the hardy evangelists of the Southwest among whom Eggleston had served. Roxy (1878) marks a gain; the story flows more easily, and the scrutiny of life is steadier. The scene is Vevay, and he contrasts pleasantly the Swiss and Hoosier villagers, and touches intimately the currents of local religious and political life. Eggleston shows here for the first time a real capacity for handling a long story. The characters are of firmer fibre; the note of human passion is deeper, and he communicates to his pages charmingly the atmosphere of his native village,—its quiet streets and pretty gardens, the sunny hills and the great river. Vevay is again the scene in The Hoosier Schoolboy (1883), which is no worthy successor to the Schoolmaster. The workmanship is infinitely superior to that of his first Hoosier tale, but he had lost touch, either with the soil (he had been away from Indiana for more than a decade), or with youth, or with both, and the story is flat and tame. After another long absence he returned to the Western field in which he had been a pioneer, and wrote The Graysons (1888), a capital story of Illinois, in which Lincoln is a character. Here and in The Faith Doctor, a novel of metropolitan life which followed three years later, the surer stroke of maturity is perceptible; and the short stories collected in Duffels include Sister Tabea, a thoroughly artistic bit of work.

A fault of all of Eggleston’s earlier stories is their too serious insistence on the moral they carried,—a resort to the Dickens method of including Divine Providence among the dramatis personae; but this is not surprising in one in whom there was, by his own confession, a lifelong struggle “between the lover of literary art and the religionist, the reformer, the philanthropist, the man with a mission.” There is little humor in these stories, there was doubtless little humor in the life itself, but there is abundant good nature. In all he maintains consistently the point of view of the realist, his lapses being chiefly where the moralist has betrayed him. There are many pictures which denote his understanding of the illuminative value of homely incident in the life he then knew best; there are the spelling school, the stirring religious debates, the barbecue, the charivari, the infare, glimpses of Tippecanoe and Tyler too, and the hard cider campaign. Those times rapidly receded; Indiana is one of the older states now, and but for Eggleston’s tales there would be no trustworthy record of the period he describes. Lowell had made American dialect respectable, and had used it as the vehi-
Edward Eggleston

Edward Eggleston employed the Hoosier lingua rustica to aid in the portrayal of a type. He did not, however, employ dialect with the minuteness of subsequent writers, notably Mr. Riley; but Southwestern idiom impressed him, and his preface and notes in the later editions of the Schoolmaster are invaluable to the student. Dialect remains in Indiana, as elsewhere, largely a matter of experience and opinion. There has never been a uniform folk speech peculiar to the people living within the borders of the state. The Hoosier dialect, so called, consisting more of elisions and vulgarized pronunciations than of true idiom, is spoken wherever the Scotch-Irish influence is perceptible in the west central states, notably in the southern counties of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. It is not to be confounded with the cruder speech of the "poor whitey," whose wild strain in the Hoosier blood was believed by Eggleston to be an inheritance of the English bondslave; and there are other vague and baffling elements in the Ohio valley speech. Mr. Riley’s Hoosier is more sophisticated than Eggleston’s, and thirty years of change lie between them,—years which wholly transformed the state, physically and socially. It is diverting to have Eggleston’s own statement that the Hoosiers he knew in his youth were wary of New England provincialisms, and that his Virginia father threatened to inflict corporal punishment on his children “if they should ever give the peculiar vowel sound heard in some parts of New England in such words as ‘roof’ and ‘root.’”

While Eggleston grew to manhood on a frontier which had been a great battleground, the mere adventurous aspects of this life did not attract him when he sought subjects for his pen; but the culture-history of the people among whom his life fell interested him greatly, and he viewed events habitually with a critical eye. He found, however, that the evolution of society could not be treated best in fiction, so he began, in 1880, while abroad, the researches in history which were to occupy him thereafter to the end of his life. His training as a student of social forces had been superior to any that he could have obtained in the colleges accessible to him, for he had seen life in the raw; he had known on the one hand the vanishing frontiersmen who founded commonwealths in the ashes of their camp-fires, and he had, on the other, witnessed the dawn of a new era which brought order and enlightenment. He thus became a deliver in libraries only after he had scratched under the crust of life itself. While he turned first to the old seaboard colonies in pursuit of his new purpose, he brought to his research an actual knowledge of the beginnings of young states which he had gained in the open. He planned a history of life in the United States on new lines, his main purpose being to trace influences and movements to remotest sources. He collected and studied his material for sixteen years before he published any result of his labors beyond a few magazine papers. The Beginnings of a Nation (1896) and The Transit of Civilization (1901) are only parts of the scheme as originally outlined, but they are complete so far as they go, and are of permanent interest and value. History was not to him a dusty lumber room, but a sunny street where people come and go in their habits as they lived; and thus, in a sense, he applied to history the realism of fiction. He pursued his task with scientific ardor and accuracy, but without fussiness or dullness. His occupations as novelist and editor had been a preparation for this later work, for it was the story quality that he sought in history, and he wrote with an editorial eye to what is salient and interesting. It is doubtful whether equal care has ever been given to the preparation of any other historical work in this country. The plan of the books is in itself admirable, and the exhaustive character of his researches is
The Court Bible.

emphasized by his copious notes, which are hardly less attractive than the text that they amplify and strengthen. He expressed himself with simple adequacy, without flourish and with a nice economy of words; but he could, when he chose, throw grace and charm into his writing. He was, in the best sense, a scholar. He knew the use of books, but he vitalized them from a broad knowledge of life. He had been a minister, preaching a simple gospel, for he was never a theologian as we understand the term; but he enlisted in movements for the bettering of mankind, and his influence was wholesome and stimulating.

His robust spirit was held in thrall by an invalid body, and throughout his life his work was constantly interrupted by serious illnesses; but there was about him a certain blitheness; his outlook on life was cheerful and amiable. He accomplished first and last an immense amount of work, — preacher, author, editor, and laborious student, his industry was ceaseless. He had, in marked degree, that self-reliance which Higginson calls the first requisite of a new literature, and through the possession of this he earned for himself a place of dignity and honor in American letters.

Meredith Nicholson.

THE COURT BIBLE.

When the Judge brought in the new Bible wrapped in his morning paper, I begged for possession of the old one. The Judge looked at me narrowly, as he looked on the day when I hunted the passage from Isaiah for the defendant's counsel in the larceny case, and remarked that I was quite welcome.

And now the venerable book lies before me, cum privilegio, its soiled and tattered dignity illuminated by the softening light of reminiscence, a fat little book, born at Blackfriars, its leather coat shining like a smith's apron, its "full gilt" dulled to a mellow bronze. I estimated that it had been kissed fifty thousand times.

For ten years I had watched them salute it, — petitioners and paupers, criminals, children propped to the bar, bent old men, women who winced and interposed their gloved fingers, clergymen who raised it solemnly, gamblers who grinned and shifted their tobacco to the other side, Polish peddlers who made a revolting noise.

In the first place it had seemed by precedent to be kissed on the flat of the cover. I fancy this was the form in the days when, as in the phrase of Scott's jailer, they "smacked calf-skin" at the old Scottish courts, and were bidden "the truth to tell, and no truth to conceal... in the name of God, and as the witness should answer to God on the great day of judgment," —"an awful adjuration," says the chronicler of Effie Deans' trial, "which seldom fails to make impression even on the most hardened characters, and to strike with fear even the most upright." In those days the witness was called upon to repeat the words of the oath, a form which must greatly have increased its solemnity, and have deepened the difficulty of maintaining those mental reservations more readily associated with an often flippant nod of the head and a perfunctory touch.

Doubtless it was some sense, aesthetic or sanitary, of the accretions of time which led the court officers who controlled the fortunes of my Bible to form a practice of holding to the witnesses' lips the gilded edge of the volume, and in the latter days of its service the officer, if the witness were a woman, and