

fraternities. From abstraction of fraternities in this institution we find that they foster class distinction and tend to create an aristocracy founded upon wealth and snobbishness; they are ruinous to literary societies and no literary society to which they are allowed to belong can survive their influence for any considerable length of time. These are a few of our reasons for opposing fraternities. Does any person deny the charge? Do fraternities offer advantage that off-set those disadvantages? In reply to those questions we would like to hear something more convincing than "crank" or "sore-head."

LITERARY.

One of the greatest of living philanthropists, is General Booth, of the Salvation Army. The mention of this peculiar organization, or of any one in any way connected with it, will bring a smile of contempt to many faces. But in spite of all its shortcomings, the Salvation Army has set itself to a task, the thought of which is offensive to many complacent Christians, but one, nevertheless, that is of vital importance not only to the poor but to the well to do. Hitherto the Army has neglected too much the material welfare of those whom it sought to better, and has labored only to secure their salvation. Accordingly, those who believe that the Army has a great work to perform, will look with approval upon the change of program implied in the recent enunciation of General Booth's plan for the relief of the helpless poor. His scheme may perhaps be impossible of realization, but the mere broaching of it shows that the organization of which he is the head is ready to work on more practical lines than it has in the past.

The plan which he outlines for the relief of the poor he does not declare to be a cure-all for all social evils. It is, in brief, as follows: (1) The hungry, helpless individual is to be sent to a food and shelter depot, several of which places of refuge are already established. Here he would be offered work in the Army's factory, at first receiving only food and shelter; later, wages in addition. (2) Other men more fitted would be sent to work in the Army's Labor Bureau, already in successful operation. Moreover, believing that from the waste of the richer houses all the helpless poor could be fed, Booth proposes "The Waste Not, Want Not Brigade," by which cumbersome title those now of the idler class are to be designated to whom the duty is to be assigned of gathering food now wasted. (3) Men who prove their willingness to labor by undergoing the discipline of the first two stages already discussed, are to be transferred in due time to rural communities, some agricultural, some industrial, managed on the co-operative plan. (4) The next step in this elaborate plan is the emigration scheme. Those who in the first three stages succeed in mastering a trade, and are proved worthy of confidence, are put into the hands of an Emigration Bureau, and transferred to colonies over the sea, where the Bureau is to care for them. In these colonies co-operation and common ownership of land are to be adhered to with strictness. Such is a bare outline of the plan he proposes.

It is obvious from the comprehensive nature of his scheme that vast wealth will be necessary to carry it out. And since the practical application of it would necessitate, up to the uncertain date when it would prove self-supporting, so considerable an outlay of money, it will be with great caution that

most people will give their assent to it. But it is a suggestion worthy of consideration. Everyone can see the wrongs that have existed in the social system of ages gone by. It is not to see, indeed one is often indisposed to find defects in present social arrangements. But oppressed classes are here to-day as truly as they ever existed under Mediaeval despotism or anarchy, and to that one be the greatest honor who strives to relieve them. Therefore the name of Booth will be treasured by coming generations for his continuous and indefatigable labors to help those who could not help themselves.

"Wonders will never cease." To those who have never thought of Phineas T. Barnum except as the veteran showman, it will be surprising to witness his appearance in a role hitherto unheard of by them, — namely, that of a writer on religious topics. In a recent number of the *Christain World*, published in London, he answers the question, "Why am I a Universalist." There is something in his unique way of stating and justifying his beliefs that is refreshing, suggestive not of musty theological lore, but of the experiences of his own busy life, and of fearless individual interpretation of Scripture. He was raised in the orthodox faith — "attended prayer meetings where I could almost feel the burning waves and smell the sulphurous fumes" and thus was driven, largely from hatred for the teachings of his youth, into more liberal channels of thought.

He declares by way of preface his contempt for texts without contexts. "The preacher against absurd fashions in headgear who took for his text 'top not come down' (Matthew 24:17) made a use of Scripture I can hardly endorse." And he concludes the preface of his remarks by the assertion: "The Word of God did not cease when the New Testament canon closed. Still is the best thought of the best men in all lands the ever-speaking Word of God." This last statement alone suffices to place him apart from the masses of orthodoxy.

He combats the deplorable tendency which reached its height in the psychological helplessness of Mediaeval times, and has not yet ceased, — toward making abstractions concrete; the tendency one sees operating in the old time desire for the possession of the true cross and other sacred relics. The writer does not conceive of heaven as locality, nor of salvation as getting into a good place. It is rather absurd to suppose saints and sinners shut up all together within four jeweled walls and playing on harps whether they like it or not." The enunciation of such sentiments as this can have none other than a healthful effect on popular opinion, since it serves to check the tendency toward the "localization" of Christianity.

His conception of future punishment is worthy of remark. It is one that should recommend itself to those who see in divine punishment not external chastisement — fire and brimstone — but the logical evolution of unrighteous tendencies: the sentiment expressed by Milton —

The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven. Against the statement, "death ends probation," he asserts that, as the word "probation" is not found in the Bible, nor the thing itself in its popular sense, the burden of proof rests on the one who sets up this artificial date, and not on the one denying it. His belief is that "the call to repentance is not issued good for thirty days or till death, but good until used. The present life is not a probation, but discipline." Thus it is seen, from the writer's arguments above outlined, that he is in touch on vital questions of religion with the church of his choice. Not alone is this apparent, but it must be noted by everyone that the general trend of his teaching is elevating; that while