

FAULT FINDERS WITH THE WORD OF GOD.

The Alleged Uncleanliness of the Bible Only the Uncleanliness of the Hearts and Minds of the Would-Be Expurgators.

In his sermon Sunday Rev. Dr. Talmage deals with a subject that is agitating the entire Christian church at the present moment, viz., "Expurgation of the Scriptures." The text chosen was, "Let God be true, but every man a liar," Romans iii., 4.

The Bible needs reconstruction according to some inside and outside the pulpit. It is no surprise that the world bombards the Scriptures, but it is amazing to find Christian ministers picking at this in the Bible and denying that until many good people are left in the fog about what parts of the Bible they ought to believe, and what parts reject.

The heinousness of finding fault with the Bible at this time is most evident. In our day the Bible is assailed by scurrility, by misrepresentation, by infidel scientists, by all the vice of earth and all the venom of perdition, and at this particular time even preachers of the Gospel fall into line of criticism of the word of God.

Why, it makes me think of a ship in a September equinox, the waves dashing to the top of the smoke stack, and the hatches fastened down, and many prophesying the foundering of the steamer, and at that time some of the crew with axes and saws go down into the hold of the ship, and they try to saw off some of the planks and pry out some of the timbers because the timber did not come from the right forest!

It does not seem to me a commendable business for the crew to be helping the winds and storms outside with their axes and saws inside. Now, this old Gospel ship, with the roaring of earth and hell around the stem and stern, and mutiny on deck, is having a very rough voyage, but I have noticed that not one of the timbers has started, and the captain says he will see it through. And I have noticed that keelson and counter-timber-keel are built of Lebanon cedar, and she is going to weather the gale, but no credit to those who make mutiny on deck.

When I see professed Christians in this particular day finding fault with the Scriptures it makes me think of a fortress terrifically bombarded, and the men on the ramparts, instead of swabbing out and loading the guns, and helping fetch up the ammunition from the magazine, are trying with crow-bars to pry out from the wall certain blocks of stone, because they did not come from the right quarry. Oh, men on the ramparts, better fight back, and fight down the common enemy, instead of trying to make breaches in the wall.

While I oppose this expurgation of the Scriptures, I shall give you my reasons for such opposition. "What!" say some of the theological evolutionists, whose brains have been added by too long brooding over them by Darwin and Spencer, "you don't now really believe all the story of the Garden of Eden, do you?" Yes, as much as I believe there were roses in my garden last summer. "But," say they, "you don't really believe that the sun and moon stood still?" Yes, and if I had strength enough to create a sun and moon I could make them stand still, or cause the refraction of the sun's rays so it would appear to stand still.

"But," they say, "you don't believe that the whale swallowed Jonah?" Yes, and if I were strong enough to make a whale I could have made very easy ingress for the refractory prophet, leaving to evolution to eject him. If he were an unworthy tenant! "But," say they, "you don't really believe that the water was turned into wine?" Yes, just as easily as water now is often turned into wine with an admixture of strychnine and logwood! "But," they say, "you don't really believe that Sampson slew a thousand with the jawbone of an ass?" Yes, and I think that the man who in this day assaults the Bible is wielding the same weapon!

Do you not know that the catalogue of the books of the Old and New Testaments as we have it, is the same catalogue that has been coming on down through the ages? Thirty-nine books of the Old Testament thousands of years ago. Thirty-nine now. Twenty-seven books of the New Testament sixteen hundred years ago. Twenty-seven books of the New Testament now. Marcion, for wickedness, was turned out of the church in the second century, and in his assault on the Bible and Christianity he incidentally gave a catalogue of the books of the Bible—that catalogue corresponding exactly with ours—testimony given by the enemy of the Bible and the enemy of Christianity. The catalogue is now just like the catalogue then. Assaulted and spit on and torn to pieces and burned, yet adhering. The book today, in three hundred languages, confronting four-fifths of the human race in their own tongue. Four hundred million copies of it in existence. Does not that look as if this book had been divinely protected, as if God had guarded it all through the centuries?

Nearly all the other old books are mummified and are lying in the tombs of old libraries, and perhaps once in 20 years some man comes along and picks up one of them and blows the dust off, and opens it, and finds it the book he does not want. But this old book, much of it forty centuries old, stands today more discussed than any other book, and it challenges the admiration of all the good and the spite and the venom and the animosity and the hyper-criticism of earth and hell. I appeal to your common sense, if a book so divinely guarded and protected in its present shape, must not be in just the way that God wants it to come to us, and if it pleases God, ought it not to please us?

Not only have all the attempts to detract from the book failed, but all the attempts to add to it. Many attempts were made to add the apocryphal books to the Old Testament. The Council of Trent, the Synod of Jerusalem, the bishops of Hippo, all decided that the apocryphal books must be added to the Old Testament. "They must stay in," said those learned men; but they stayed out. There is not an intelligent Christian man that today will put the Book of Maccabees or the Book of Judith beside the Book of Isaiah or Romans. Then a great many said: "We must have books added to the New Testament," and there were epistles and gospels and apocalypses written and added to the New Testament, but they have all fallen out. You cannot add anything. You cannot subtract anything from the divinely protected book in the present shape. Let no man dare to lay his hands on it with the intention of detracting from the book, or casting out any of these holy pages.

I am also opposed to this proposed expurgation of the Scriptures for the fact that in proportion as people become self-sacrificing and good and holy and consecrated, they like the book as it is. I have yet to find a man or a woman distinguished for self-sacrifice, for consecration to God, for holiness of life, who wants the Bible changed. Many of us have inherited family Bibles. Those Bibles were in use twenty, forty, fifty, perhaps a hundred years in the generation. Today take down these family Bibles, and find out if there are any chapters which have been erased by lead pencil or pen, and if in any margins you can find the words, "This chapter not fit to read." There has been plenty of opportunity during the last half century privately to expurgate the Bible. Do you know any case of such expurgation? Did not your grandfather give it to your father, and did not your father give it to you?

Beside that, I am opposed to the expurgation of the Scriptures because the so-called indelicacies and cruelties of the Bible have demonstrated no evil result. A cruel book will produce cruelty—an unclean book will produce uncleanness. Fetch me a victim. Out of all Christendom and out of all the ages, fetch me a victim whose heart has been hardened to cruelty, or whose life has been made impure by this book. Show me one. One of the best families I ever knew, for thirty or forty years, morning and evening, had all the members gathered together, and the servants of the household, and the strangers that happened to be within the gates—twice a day, and without leaving out a chapter or a verse, they read this holy book, morning by morning, night by night. Not only the elder children, but the little child who could just spell her way through the verse while her mother helped her. The father beginning and reading one verse, then all the members of the family in turn reading a verse. The father maintained his integrity, the mother maintained her integrity, the sons grew up and entered professions and commercial life, adorning every sphere in the life in which they lived, and the daughters went into families where Christ was honored, and all that was good and pure and righteous reigned perpetually. For thirty years that family endured the Scriptures. Not one of them ruined by them.

Now, if you will tell me of a family where the Bible has been read twice a day for thirty years, and the children have been brought up in that habit, and the father went to ruin, and the mother went to ruin, and the sons and daughters were destroyed by it—if you will tell me of one such incident, I will throw away my Bible, or I will doubt your veracity. I tell you, if a man is shocked with what he calls the indelicacies of the Word of God, he is prurient in his taste and imagination. If a man cannot read Solomon's Song, without impure suggestion, he is either in his heart or in his life, a libertine. The Old Testament description of

wickedness, uncleanness of all sorts, is purposely and righteously a disgusting account, instead of the Byronic and the Parisian vernacular which makes sin attractive instead of appalling. When these old prophets point you to a lazaretto you understand it is a lazaretto. When a man having begun to do right falls back into wickedness and gives up his integrity, the Bible does not say he is overcome by the fascinations of the festive board, or that he surrendered to convivialities, or that he became a little fast in his habits. I will tell you what the Bible says: "The dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." No gilding of iniquity. No garlands on a death's-head. No pounding away with a silver mallet at iniquity when it needs an iron sledge hammer.

I can easily understand how people, brooding over the description of uncleanness in the Bible, may get morbid in mind until they are as full of it as the wings and beak and the nostril and the claw of a buzzard are full of the odors of a carcass; but what is wanted is not that the Bible be disinfected, but that you, the critic, have your mind and heart washed with carbolic acid!

I tell you at this point in my discourse that a man who does not like this book and who is critical as to its contents, and who is shocked and outraged with its descriptions, has never been soundly converted. The laying on of the hands of Presbytery or Episcopacy does not always change a man's head, and men sometimes get into the pulpit as well as into the pew, never having been changed radically by the sovereign grace of God. Get your heart right and the Bible will be right. The trouble is men's natures are not brought into harmony with the Word of God. Ah! my friends, expurgation of the heart is what is wanted.

You cannot make me believe that the Scriptures, which this moment lie on the table of the purest and best men and women of the age, and which were the dying solace of your kindred passed into the skies, have in them a taint which the strongest microscope of honest criticism could make visible. If men are uncontrollable in their indignation when the integrity of wife or child is assailed, and judges and jurors as far as possible excuse violence under such provocation, what ought to be the overwhelming and long resounding thunders of condemnation for any man who will stand in a Christian pulpit and assail the more than virgin purity of inspiration, the well beloved daughter of God?

Expurgate the Bible! You might as well go to the old picture galleries in Dresden and in Venice and in Rome and expurgate the old paintings. Perhaps you could find a foot of Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment" that might be improved. Perhaps you could throw more expression into Raphael's "Madonna." Perhaps you could put more pathos in Rubens' "Descent from the Cross." Perhaps you could change the crests of the waves in Turner's "Slave Ship." Perhaps you might go into the old galleries of sculpture and change the forms and the posture of the statues of Phidias and Praxiteles. Such an iconoclast would very soon find himself in the penitentiary. But it is worse vandalism when a man proposes to refashion these masterpieces of inspiration, and to remodel the moral giants of this gallery of God.

Of all the works of Dore, the great artist, there was nothing so impressive as his Illustrated Bible. What scene of Abraham's faith, or Edenic beauty, or dominion Davidic, or Solomonic, of miracle, or parable, of nativity or of crucifixion, or of last judgment but the thought leaped from the great brain to the skillful pencil, and from the skillful pencil to immortal canvas. The Louvre, the Luxembourg, the National Gallery of London compressed within two volumes of Dore's Illustrated Bible. But the Bible will come to better illustration than that, my friends, when all the deserts have become gardens, and all the armories have become academies, and all the lakes have become Gennesarets with Christ walking them, and all the cities have become Jerusalems with hovering Shekinah; and the two hemispheres will be clapping symbols of divine praise, and the round earth a footlight to Emanuel's throne—that, to all lands, and all ages, and all centuries, and all cycles will be the best specimen of Bible illustrated.

Vagaries of Mrs. MacCormick. The vagaries of Mrs. MacCormick, as disclosed the other day to the Divorce Court at Dublin, Ireland—the Queen's Proctor intervening—are remarkable. In 1896 the lady left her husband suddenly, and disappeared. The next year Mr. MacCormick went through a form of marriage with a young woman, whose brother later on prosecuted him for bigamy. Mr. Justice Phillimore heard the case, and Mr. MacCormick was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. But in the meantime the lady, as it turned out afterward, had married and became a widow, and drawn her husband's insurance money. Not satisfied with her position even then, the widow brought an action for divorce against her imprisoned husband, and secured a decree. It is a bewildering story, and it is not surprising that the decree has been rescinded.

From the Detroit Journal: Romance and chivalry are not what they were, alas! Once, the hero, having rescued the maiden from the tower, paused in his flight to exclaim: "Hark! The hoof-beats of pursuers!" But now—"Smell! The odor of thy father's automobile!" It is terrible, this sordid utilitarianism!

THE GREAT POET'S PITY FOR A SONG GIRL.

She Would Not Marry Him, However, and He Went Away to Embrace a Better Fate—She Has Just Died the Usual Song Girl Death.

(San Francisco Letter.) The San Francisco dive girl whom Kipling openly owned to having loved; who had, he said, "a Greek head and eyes that seemed to speak all good and beautiful things," died in this city recently.

When Mr. Kipling's tender confession was made, woman, to the genius of the century's end, seemed to have been something other than "a rag and a bone and a hank of hair"; but that was ten years ago, on the occasion of the word-wizard's passage from the orient through San Francisco, when to him the world was young, his fame unwon; when a halo hung about every pretty face and vampires were out of sight. It is generally known that the credited staff correspondent of the Allahabad Pioneer did not, when here, confine his visits to Nob Hill and the newspaper offices. He went where all, or nearly all, bohemian tourists, globe trotters, sailors, soldiers, reformers, and close students of humanity go. He went to the theaters, music halls, vaudevilles, the dens and dives of what is called the under world. In one of those places he made the acquaintance of one billed on the boards as Corinne. Whether it was the incongruity of the mention of Mme. de Staël's masterpiece in such a place, or the girl who had adopted the name, that attracted the bespectacled scribe from Bombay, is not recorded; but, certain it is, he was attracted, and to such an extent that not a day, nor a half-day, hardly, passed after their meeting without the passage of some token of tenderness from him to her. "If I looked from my window I was sure to meet his eyes in the street below, and when I went out, the first to salute me was this swarthy 'Joss,' as I used to call him; for he talked so much about Buddhas, idols, shrines, Shintooos and other things with strange long names that I concluded he must be a heathen joss." These are Corinne's own words. And who was Corinne? At the baptismal font she was given the name of Jessie McFarland. Her home had been with the "children of the heather and the wind," but her footsteps like those of many another, had strayed far, far from the straight and narrow paths which abound in the "North Country."

There had been a husband, who left her (whether by death or desertion is unknown, and it certainly concerns us not) in extreme youth and poverty. It was the pathetic grief imprinted upon her face, the mother-love in her eyes, that made her noticeably like the Madonna in the Greek church. At least, Kipling told her so. After her baby died the poor, little, lonely mother sat white and mute in a sad, still chamber day after day, with folded hands upon an aching heart, and wept and wept. It would have been so sweet to lie down with the tiny waxen one out there in Lone mountain, where they laid it—but—life and youth must assert itself, and Jessie had been taught, back in the Scottish kirk, that it was wrong to kill one's self. She had, too, been taught to do work, of the sort done by women of her own kin and class, which consisted, for the most part, in tidying her own room, keeping her clothing in order and making herself clean and wholesome and sweet. Would she, in a country new, get leave to live by the performance of such simple tasks? Time and much persistent effort gave the agonizing answer. She found that knowledge, commendable though it was, availed nothing in the great, selfish, hurrying, bewildering world in which she found herself alone; for no one wanted a little lady to work. Sometimes, when in desolation and despair, people are



JESSIE MCFARLAND. comforted by music. By it the mind may, at least, be momentarily diverted. The little, lone mother knew songs which the Highlanders sing in their native heaths, and she sang from sheer relief to her tense soul, there in that silent chamber, little dreaming she would be heard; but some one listened, and once, after she had finished her song, when passing out over the shadowy staircase into the sun, a voice arrested her.

"You sing?" said the voice, addressing itself to her. "A little." "I hear you. I live in the house. You want to earn money?" "I must earn money," was the answer. "Go see my boss; he give you a job." concluded the short-syllabled Italian, as he thrust a card into her hand—a

card which bore the address of his boss. The little mother followed the directions. She repeated the song to listeners of seeming appreciation. When she had finished the head seker after nocturnal attractions said:

"Come here every night. I furnish costumes which you are to wear while you sing. At the end of each week I will give you \$15."

The little song-mother went, for she must live, and in that place, where nightly men assembled to be what they called amused, Rudyard Kipling found her, clad in her kilt, her barred blouse, shoulder sash, buckles and tasseled turban, singing her little song, "doing the fling," as they say in haunts of the half-world. And the word-wizard, not content with "the fling," the fumes, the smiles, the glances, the sounds and scenes, the glare and glare that contribute to the male entertainment in that haunt of the under world, found speedy means



THE MEETING. to conciliate the little singer, and with that conciliation went such hackneyed phrases as:

"You are far too nice a lassie, Corinne, to do this sort of thing. Can't you better yourself, now, little girl?" No, really, the little girl couldn't. Furthermore, she was grateful to get that to do; for didn't it keep a roof over her head, shoes on her feet and food under her plaid? There were so many who had not nearly so much.

It is a habit men of the world have, belittling a work-woman's position. It is always: "You are too nice for that. You ought to do better."

Who helps them to do better? Again, the author of "Plain Tales from the Hills" took his shallow soundings thus: "I say, lassie, if some fellow—like me, for instance—wanted to lift you out of this hole, could you stick by him? Would you be true to him?" She gave him no satisfactory reply. "After we got better acquainted," related Jessie reminiscently, "and I told him about Roy, he called me 'Little Mother,' and when he wished to express sympathy he would say, 'Poor Little Mother, Roy was my baby.'"

"When we were alone he used to ask me if he couldn't let my hair down. Then he would tell me of life in India; the strange men of the jungles, the caravans of the plains, the children, the animals, the birds, the rites of marriage and death. The cow, he said, was considered there a sacred creature, nearly always introduced in religious ceremonies. When a couple wish to get married they present themselves before a priest, standing on either side of a queen of the stalls. After sprinkling them with water and reciting a ritual, the priest bids them mount the cow. They then ride away, imbued with the comfortable belief that they have done what they could to merit marital felicity. He asked me to marry him Indian way. Now men do not often speak of marriage to us, and I was afraid he didn't mean it; but he said and did so many things. How was I to know what he meant and that he didn't mean? At any rate, as we had no cow, and there wasn't any East Indian priest here, we didn't get married. And then he went away."

Then there came a time when the kilted figure failed to confront a sea of approving faces, and so few cared for her song that she omitted singing it altogether. Finally the fogs crept into her lungs, and a ghostly, graveyard cough made her presence unwelcome to dive impresarios. In humble lodgings she languished alone, unsought and unremembered, until a Scottish Samaritan in the city, learning her sad story, placed her in a private hospital, kept by one of her own sex, and there she died. And now she sleeps at Lone Mountain, beside the grave of her little boy.

From "American Notes," Rudyard Kipling's book: A girl in a "dive," blessed with a Greek head and eyes that seem to speak all that is best and sweetest in the world. But who is she? She has no ideas in this world or the next beyond the consumption of beer (a commission on each bottle), and protests that she sings the songs allotted to her nightly without more than the vaguest notion of their meaning.

EUGENIA KELLOGG HOLMES.

[Might Have Been More Independent. From the Boston Evening Transcript: A Dorchester inward bound car was recently stopped to allow a woman of middle age and with a severe cast of features to get on board. As the electric started, with the usual jerk, the courteous conductor put his open palm against the woman's back to support her, when she abruptly turned and snapped out: "What are you doing? I can enter this car without your assistance!" The astonished conductor was nearly staggered, but instantly retorted: "Well, madam, you came mighty near leaving the car without my assistance."

LESSON XII, DECEMBER 17: MALACHI 3; 13 TO 4: 6.

Fruits of Right Doing and of Wrong Doing Compared—Text For the Day: "Whoever a Man Soweth, So Also Shall He Reap"—Gal. 6: 7.

13. "Your words have been stout." That is, hard, presumptuous, impudent. (See Jude xv.) "What light was spoken so much." Omit so much. The Hebrew conjugation expresses reciprocal action, "spoken together," "one with another" (so Cambridge Bible). It was the blasphemy of those who "sat in the seat of the scornful" (Psa. i: 1). It is wonderful how unconscious sinners are of their sins. So in the 25th of Matthew, those who were charged with neglect of duty ask, When did we neglect these things?

14. The prophet replies, "Ye have said, It is vain to serve God." Note their bargaining spirit here and in "what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?" The services God required for his temple and worship. They had so little conception of true religion, that they imagined that God asked so many prayers and so many sacrifices, and so many tithes, and would pay for them in a certain amount of prosperity. They tried to cheat God by offering the cheapest things they could find, polluted bread, blind and sick and useless animals for sacrifice; and then thought that God had not fulfilled his promises made to sincere and loving service. "Walked mournfully." With outward signs of sorrow and repentance for their sins, in sackcloth and ashes, and frequent national fasts. (See Zech. vii: 5, 6; viii: 19.)

17. "And they shall be mine," etc. Father. And they shall be to me, saith Jehovah of Hosts, in the day that I am preparing a peculiar treasure; compare the expression, "a peculiar people" in Tit. ii: 14; and in 1 Peter ii: 9. See also Ex. xix: 5; Deut. xiv: 6; Psa. cxxxv: 4.—Cook. They shall be my jewels, my peculiar treasure. "I will spare them," keep them from harm, preserve them, treat them tenderly and carefully, let only those trials come upon them which are for their good. "As a man spareth his own son that serveth him." That is, an obedient and true son, whom it is possible and safe to do much more for than for the disobedient son, no matter how much he loves him.

18. "Then shall ye return and discern." Look again, and then ye shall see a broad distinction, a marked contrast, between the destiny of the righteous and the destiny of the wicked. The problems that troubled them (vs. 13-15) shall all be solved.

1. "For" connects this verse with the previous one. They should see the contrast between the destinies of the righteous and the wicked, because the scenes of the judgment day would be before them. "The day cometh that shall burn as an oven," or furnace. A fire burns more fiercely in a furnace than in the open air.—Hengstenberg. The wicked are as the dross of the old Testament as well as the New, to be destroyed by fire (Psa. xi: 6). "The proud," who are unwilling to repent and forsake their sins and accept God's law, but are self-willed and defiant. "Be stubble."

2. "Shall the Sun of righteousness arise." Righteousness is here the not uncommon sense of deliverance, salvation, blessedness.—Cowley. The sun which God in his righteousness—his love of right, his goodness—sends, and sends to produce in his people, righteousness, and the blessedness which comes only with righteousness. "With healing." Healing from trouble and from sin, and all the miseries with which they are surrounded. "In his wings." His swift rays flying from the sun to us. This doubtless refers to the Messiah. "And ye shall go forth," from your difficulties, from your prison-house of trouble and misfortune. "And grow up as calves of the stall." Rather, leap or gambol as stall-fed calves, which, when let out to the fields, caper and frolic in the exuberance of healthy life.—Marcus Dods.

3. "And ye shall tread down the wicked." Righteousness shall be victorious over evil. The wicked shall no longer triumph, and oppress the people, and lead them astray, but they shall be in subjection. All false ideas, all boasting irreligion, all vices and crimes, all oppressions, all wrong fashions and customs, shall be like ashes under the feet of the righteous. All who are not willing shall be overcome by being transformed into good, while the incorrigible shall no longer live to oppose and destroy the good. "In the day that I shall do this." At the time when Messiah shall come and shall have set up his reign. This has already begun. It is going on till Jesus shall be King of kings.

4. "Remember," so as to obey, "the law of Moses." The ten commandments, and all the other laws, which were the constitution and laws of the Jews (even the statutes and judgments, "Which I commanded unto him," i. e., which I entrusted to him to deliver, which I gave in charge to him. 2d. By forerunners, like Elijah, who preceded the coming of the Messiah to escape, and prepared the way for the coming of the kingdom of righteousness.

5. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet." Viz., one who should be a second Elijah, who should come with a spirit and power like his, sternly rebuking sin, and earnestly calling all men to repentance. Our Lord on two occasions (Matt. xi: 14 and Mark ix: 11, 12) interpreted this of John the Baptist. The call to repentance, the vision of the fruits of sin, the terrors of the law, the reproofs of conscience, the stern and awful rebukes of sin, are still the Elijah who comes before the Messiah to prepare the way for him in the individual heart and in the nation. "Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." In the original, this is taken verbatim from Joel ii: 31. It must refer to "the day that shall burn as an oven (Malachi iv: 1). The day of the Lord is the time when he appears on earth. To was in mercy before he smites in judgment is evermore the order of God's throne. Hence, the second Elijah should come before the Jewish people and polity should be smitten down by the stern Roman arm.

6. "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children." This may have either of all four interpretations. "Let I come and smite the earth with a curse." Unless there should be a new development of religion, and the people turn to the Lord, the world would soon be ruined by its own wickedness—there must be a turn in the disease, or death would soon come. It is deeply suggestive that the last utterance from heaven for 60 years before Messiah's first word on the mount was "blessed" (Matt. v: 3). The law speaks wrath; the gospel, blessing.—J. F., and B.

Wood Pigeons in London. Has the wood pigeon, which has invaded London in considerable numbers during the past season, come to stay? Two specimens of the variety have for the past day or two been noticed in the neighborhood of Westminster abbey, pecking in company with kindred columbarians of the same breed, apparently in perfect amity. Perhaps the strangers have been hatched this year in the metropolitan area, and thus have been acclimated to the bustle of traffic.—London Telegraph.