

PROFESSOR PEARSON ON THE BIBLE.

BY THE EDITOR.

A GREAT stir has been created in the press all over the country by an essay of Charles W. Pearson, Professor of English Literature in the pious Northwestern University at Evanston, Ill. The remarkable feature of his essay is not that the Bible is conceded to contain errors, but that he expects the Churches openly to acknowledge the truth which at present is an open secret. The Professor speaks boldly and fearlessly, but with modesty; and his sole motive is love of truth. He follows the dictates of his conscience and unburdens his soul of the oppressive idea that he should remain guilty of dishonesty and cowardice by conniving at a lie. Professor Pearson has been forced to resign his position. At Evanston his is still a voice crying in the wilderness; but there are other universities where the boards of directors are more truly religious so as to respect the man that gives utterance to the thought that moves him.

Mr. Pearson's views are shared by thousands of his colleagues and by members of the clergy themselves. No better sign that our theologians do not mean to refuse the truth and are willing to accept it could be given than the encouragement which Professor Pearson received from his own pastor, the Rev. Dr. William Macafee, whom he consulted before publishing his article. Dr. Macafee did not try to induce the Professor to keep his peace and though by no means in full agreement with his views, bade him Godspeed.

Professor Pearson's article is a significant symptom of the times. It indicates that a reformation of our churches is near at hand which will be accomplished by their doors' being opened to the truth wherever it may be found and allowing a rich harvest to ripen in the light of intellectuality and scientific comprehension.¹

¹The papers have made many comments upon Professor Pearson's essay, but the text of it has remained practically unknown. We therefore reprint it in full on pp. 175-181 of the present number of *The Open Court* as it appeared in the *Evanston Index* of Jan. 18, 1902.