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(Alice Cremin)

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Forgotten Books, United States, 2015. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 229 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Excerpt from Satires and Profanities Believing as I do that James Thomson is, since Shelley, the most brilliant genius who has wielded a pen in the service of Freethought, I take a natural pride and pleasure in rescuing the following articles from burial in the great mausoleum of the periodical press. There will doubtless be a diversity of opinion as to their value. One critic, for instance, has called The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm a witless squib; but, on the other hand, the late Professor Clifford considered it a piece of exquisite mordant satire worthy of Swift. Such differences are inevitable from the very nature of the subject. Satire, more than any other form of composition, rouses antipathy where it does not command applause; and the greater the satire, the more intense are the feelings it excites. But which side, it may be inquired, is likely to be the best judge? Surely the friendly one. Sympathy is requisite to insight, as Carlyle says; while hostility blinds us to a thousand virtues and beauties. I am aware that many will take objection to the employment of satire at all, whether good or bad, on religious topics; but this seems to me preposterous, and I should readily answer it, if Thomson had not done so himself in the most vigorous and triumphant manner. Nearly all the pieces in this volume appeared originally in the National Reformer or the Secularist. I have attempted no arrangement of them, not even a chronological one; the compositor has shuffled them at his own sweet will. All I have done, besides collecting them and carefully reading the proofs, is to indicate...

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