

The Coming Day.

OCTOBER, 1892.

A GLIMPSE.

I WANT to thank many friends for very helpful words of consolation and hopefulness at a somewhat trying hour. To several of these I have not been able to reply—in some instances because no name was given. All that can be said by me has been already said, unless, indeed, I attempted to give details as to the particular enterprise that I must try to carry through. At present, details cannot be given,—and it is not necessary. It may, however, be useful if I said now that I shall be glad to receive from any part of London offers of help—as, for instance, to serve as steward at meetings, to undertake to visit perplexed and lonely people, to sing, to play, to give away literature, to address envelopes, to act as custodian of hymn books, or to subscribe towards expenses of literature and meetings.

I am very much tempted to lay before my friends, the readers of *The Coming Day*, some of the letters which I know they would enjoy. But few of us are, as yet, simple-minded enough for such confidences. Here, however, is one which, for its simplicity, tenderness, and real suggestiveness, may be useful:—

Aug. 22, 1892.

DEAR MR. HOPPS,—In face of so much that is hostile and opposed to the first principles of the religion of Jesus, I cannot help saying how glad I am to have been allowed to listen to you. I thank God for it. I cannot feel sure about some things, but believe obedience to Christ to be far more pleasing to Him than any opinions about Him. As He says, "He that doeth the will shall know." May He help us to do that, and forgive all our miserable failures.

My one aim in writing is that it may be some comfort to you to know that one life at least is gladder, Christ more real, the earth more lovely, for you. If some are quick to hurt, why should not others be quick to tell of their appreciation and thankfulness?

A GRATEFUL HEARER.

The unknown writers of such letters may be sure that they do not reveal their affectionate regard or tell their experiences in vain. The path of the reformer is not a sunny one, and he may not be quite as self-reliant and as indifferent to results as he may seem to be. The world is, indeed, "quick" enough "to hurt," but even disciples are not always as quick to heal.

J. PAGE HOPPS.

P.S.—On and after September 22nd, my NEW ADDRESS will be Oak tree house, South Norwood Hill, London, S.E.

THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD IN THE DWELLING PLACE OF MAN.

"LET THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD OUR GOD BE UPON US."—*Ps. xc. 17.*

As we pass from the glooms and desolations of Winter to the delicate new life of Spring, with all its comforting suggestions, and on to the consummations of Summer, it is the easiest thing in the world for a believer in God to say, with dear old George Herbert,

"How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
Are Thy returns ; e'en as the flowers in Spring !"

A beautiful faith ! Is it difficult ? Then admit the larger hope. It can never do you harm, and it might do you infinite good, to stand before Nature's "fresh" and "sweet and clean returns"—and say, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us."

But now, in our study of "the beauty of God in the dwelling place of man," pause for a moment to ask what Beauty is. Surely it is not as hopeless an enterprise to define it as some say. I am content to find the mystery of beauty in the open secrets of freshness, harmony, health and truth. Where these meet, beauty smiles. And the element of truth is vital. All truth is not beautiful ; but no falsehood is.

So, then, when we ask that the beauty of God may be upon us, we ask, at least for truth : and the ideal faith is that which so rests in God as to convince us that if ever God seems unlovely and cruel, it is so only because we do not understand. The ideal believer says, "If I ever think God is unjust and hard, it is because, in my ignorance and infirmity, I cannot see far enough, or because I project upon the dark cloud of my fear the image of my unbelief." God is "the altogether beautiful of the Universe," as Theodore Parker said ; and, if He ever comes as destroyer and as consuming fire, it is only that He may burn up the stagnant and decaying things, and lead us out and on from base to glorious things—from lower to higher forms of life ; for, everywhere in nature, we see the whole creation struggling on towards nobler and happier things ; and it seems to be the law of all life that deformity and imperfection shall cease with sin and ignorance ; and that, out of the base and the imperfect,—ay ! out of the consuming fire, shall come, through long laborious processes, the beautiful and the good.

So we come to perceive that the truest and deepest beauty is not the outward but the inward, of which the outward is but the symbol or the sign. Everywhere the spirit moulds the flesh, the body is dominated by the soul. Love and kindness beam in the eyes, and, in time, write their dear initials on the plainest face ; or the poor hard-worked brain and harassed mind leave their pathetic records there. But the beauty that is most beautiful is not that which the instruments can detect or the artists describe :—that is the subtle thing which can never be comprehended—the wonderful thing we call "expression."

And so I love to think it is with the Lord of nature. The beautiful things of earth are "the outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace." They are like the smiles that play about the lips and eyes of a gracious mother. They are the signs of grace; not the grace itself. So, behind the beauty of the lily and the rose, the violet and the primrose, there is a deeper beauty which is the subtle cause of the beauty that comes into the sphere of the visible. The lily and the rose, the violet and the primrose, will die, but the laws of their life, the causes of their beauty, will remain, and these belong to the spiritual sphere whose subtle laws of beauty determine the translucent or glowing colours and lovely lines of crystals and precious stones, the geometrical grace and accuracy of snow flakes, the radiant hues and exquisite forms of petals and leaves, the glory and stately grandeur of the clouds, the texture and infinite ingenuity of a bird's plumage, the touching beauty of a child's face. All are signs. They come from the invisible, and, when they vanish, the source of their beauty will no more perish than the mother's love perishes when the light and the smile withdraw: for the face of the good mother may be grave to-morrow, though it be radiant to-day, but the love will not die out of her heart when the smile withdraws from her face. So the face of Nature may, to-morrow, be desolate and scarred, but the heart of her is ever full of light and beauty; and the Lord and King of nature, away there behind the garment of the flesh, is still at the source of all harmony and loveliness: and, in the end, He will win, and lead all discords and harshnesses into willing captivity, and make even the wrath of man to praise Him. Our Father, then, is revealed in all things—ay! in yourself—in your right thinking, restless longing, and pure loving, — for these in you correspond to the bright and beautiful things in the material sphere. Here we may find the profound meaning of that fine old saying, "In the beginning was the word" or manifested Thought. What a luminous truth that is! Go back as far as you can. Go back, in the great drama of creation till the mind is baffled and even imagination is blind, and the last thing you can think of is an Intelligence elaborating a purpose or struggling into manifested life—an Intelligence with a Thought or Word. The keenest men who deny that design in Nature proves a designer are also fond of saying that the designer, even when inferred, would only afresh prove a designer too. That may only be meant as an *argumentum ad hominem*, and yet they also seem mentally compelled to regard harmony as intellectual in its very essence, and to think of beauty as the product of intention and the love of it. They do not know it, but they also see that the things which are seen are temporal, while it is the things which are unseen that are eternal.

Beyond that primal Thought or Word, then, we cannot go: we have no faculty for it. The great secret beyond is only a great inference. But what an inference! —based on an absolute mystery yet an absolute intellectual necessity: so that, as a picture is the painted thought of an artist, as a sonata is the recorded thought of a musician, as a solved problem, fully set forth, demonstrates the existence of a mathematician, so does the beauty of the earth manifest, demonstrate, and necessitate God, its artist, musician, mathematician and king. Who He is we do not know: what is the secret of His being, we can never hope to discover: what is the mode of His personality, we have none of the faculties for comprehending. But He is, and He is here, and "in Him we live and move and have our being"; and, of all

necessities, visible or only inferred, He is the great, the supreme necessity of the Universe:—"In the beginning was the word."

God speaks to me: that is the first discovery in the higher life,—the life of the awakened soul:—and in no mere mystic's sense is it true that God speaks to me. He speaks from everything, because He is the deep life of everything. I exclude nothing. God's beautiful ideal is everywhere,—in the orchard and the laboratory, in the market and the church, in the garden and the mine, in the peasant's cabin and the House of Commons. Pass just laws, you reveal God: grow the best corn, and you best reveal God: be good to your old mother, and you reveal God: make the little child laugh through its tears, and you reveal God: beat down the oppressor and pluck the spoil out of his teeth, and you reveal God: put out the fear of the fire of hell, and you reveal God: and this is, for me, the meaning of the beauty of God in the dwelling place of man.

Now contrast these thoughts with those which Christendom has inherited from the dark ages, and to which, for the most part, it so strangely clings;—such unlovely thoughts of God, full of terror, not trust, and far more likely to make us shrink from Him in dismay than win us to Him with delight. And perhaps it is really given to us to be the Father's messengers, to take the ugly painted masks from His glorious face, to teach the world to pray the mighty prayer, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." If so, we ourselves must truly pray that prayer—that we may have only beautiful thoughts of Thee, O Father, until we can pass beyond all the dismal clouds, born of our ignorance, fear and sin, and in Thy light see light.

We must go down to the depths if we would teach and lead others. We must see that there is more in this than mere sentiment or delight in pleasant things. I have not been talking about esthetic sensibility, I have been talking about spirituality and piety. Love of beauty is not necessarily love of God. A beautiful picture may delight you, but do not imagine that a thrill of sentiment is a means of grace. You may weep at church without being really religious, just as you may cry over a novel without being really compassionate. So then this prayer goes deeper than all that—deeper than sentiment, or taste, or poetry, or art: it is sublimer than sensibility and diviner than sense: it mounts aloft on the finite to the infinite: it gives the senses to the earth, but it sends on the soaring soul to heaven, for it is inspired by the assurance that to know God is to know the eternally beautiful because the eternally good and true.

So we arrive at the greatest suggestion of all—that though we may never know God in Himself, we may know what He loves and approves; for there is a profound correspondence between the order and beauty of the outer world and the justice and the purity of the inner world. It is in this way that through physical harmony and beauty we get a glimpse of moral and spiritual beauty, and perceive that the ideal beauty is the beauty of holiness, the beauty of justice, the beauty of purity, but above all, the beauty of love. It is here that we pass into the inner temple—ay, into the holy of holies. The heavenly secret is there. Religion itself is only consecrated love. We may reason and speculate, we may pile up criticism and argument, we may deny and affirm, beating down one system of Theology and

setting up another, and yet never once come near to the heavenly secret, the divine significance of this prayer. He was a keen thinker who said, "If you disengage pure love, there remain reason and will which can give you geometricians but not artists." And, in like manner, if you exclude love, you may have admirable theologians, clever masters of casuistry, excellent upbuilders of systems, but, in no wise, really religious souls. And do we not here come upon the cause of the dryness and sterility of much that passes for rational religion?—that the critical faculty has been petted until, like a naughty child, it has ceased to know its place, and now needs to be told to speak only when it is spoken to: and men become agnostics because they cannot get all their questions answered, and poor faith and hope and love go for next to nothing. The result is that we have geometricians in Religion where we ought to have had artists, logicians where we ought to have had lovers, creed-makers or creed-believers where we ought to have had psalmists and singers, and agnostics where we ought to have had aspiring worshipers who would at least have given God the benefit of the doubt.

Does not all this reveal the supreme importance of cultivating the spiritual sense which alone can appreciate spiritual things? Paul was perfectly right;—"The animal man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, for they are spiritually discerned."

So then, this prayer is an intensely personal one. It asks not only for delight in beholding, but for transformation in possession. It is the soul's cry of recognition. It is the child's appeal to the Father. It does not only say, Let me see Thy beauty—but "Let Thy beauty be upon me":—"I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness."

And, after all, there is nothing mysterious in this. We come here upon a perfectly familiar law of life;—that all true lovers of the beautiful assimilate the beauty they admire. Make your choice of books and friends and modes of life, and you make your choice of your future self. In time, you will learn to walk in step with the friend who becomes your constant companion; and even the little tricks of manner of those you admire or love will find their echo or reflection in you. Blessed imitation! do not be ashamed of it: you have only been praying, on a lower level—"Let Thy beauty be upon us."

By these slight steps, rise up to the great ideal, the transformation of a living soul; as Paul said,—“We all, with unveiled faces, reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord”:—a perfectly heavenly thought:—the inner spiritual-self a mirror; not like the mirror which reflects and loses, but like the sensitive plate which retains, so that, from glory to glory, we may be transformed, and made like Him.

It is hard to see it, believe it, and act up to it, but it is possible, and, in the blessed life, if we could but live it, we should all understand it, and see everywhere the transforming beauty of the Lord: and then we should not be far from the sphere of those who behold that beauty from beyond the veil: and there would not be such a difference as there is now between those who see that beauty there and here.

PRAYERS.

CHIEFLY FOR A SUNDAY SCHOOL.

God remembers and waits.

EVER present God, whom we often forget, but by whom we are never forgotten, make us glad to remember Thee, and happy in the thought that we are asking Thee to bless us. We know that Thou art ever waiting to be gracious,—never unmindful, never unforgiving,—waiting for our better moods, our purer desires, our earnest thoughts, our quiet moments. Give us Thy help and blessing now.

Father, we cry to Thee against our easily besetting sins. Give us that which is deeper than forgiveness,—a mind to understand our sins, a will to shun them, a life made free from them.

Far above us all art Thou, O God ; but Thou makest Thine abode with us, and hast promised never to leave, never to forsake us. How wonderful art Thou in Thy mighty worlds—in the heavens above and in the earth beneath ! but very tender and gracious art Thou in our little world within—the world of our thoughts, our affections, and our desires.

Help us to find Thee there and everywhere ; to listen for Thy word, to love Thy law, to choose Thy ways, and to know that, if we will but incline our hearts to know and serve Thee, we shall walk in the light at all times, and be at peace. Amen.

God is seeking for us.

OUR Father, we feel that it must be a good thing to come for a moment's thoughtful communion with Thee. May we know that Thou art very near, and that we are always in Thy presence, spirit to spirit, life to life. May we be made very serious by the thought that so much depends upon ourselves,—upon our willingness to hear and obey,—upon our readiness to see and to follow.

We come to Thee, but help us to remember that our Heavenly Father comes first to us,—that Thou art always seeking us, calling to us, loving us, and that our prayer is only the answer to Thy call.

Quicken in us the precious germs of good ; awake our drowsy wills, fill and refresh our spirits with good desires and thoughts, as the sweet morning air fills and refreshes all Nature.

Our Heavenly Light, by whom alone the earthly wayfarers can know where they are and whither they are going, may the unseen radiance reach us, and be, to some hard and wintry spirits, what the glory of the sunshine is to the day—rich with the promise of a summer in the soul.

Thou hast made us for Thyself ; and we are lost, as in a wilderness, until we find Thee. O that we may long to find Thee, and be cheered by the delightful thought that to long for God is to know Him, and that to seek Him is always to find. Amen.

God helps.

O THOU who knowest us all—approving the teachable and obedient, pitying the sinful, waiting for the forgetful, and blessing us all, come and bring us into communion with Thy gracious spirit, and gather us into Thy fold.

What is our life, our Father, but a hurried journey? nothing abiding, nothing long the same,—childhood fast fading into maturity, and old age hastening to close the doors of life on earth for us all. May the thought of it make us considerate, watchful and sympathetic, and lead us to look beyond it all to Thee. May we desire to begin, continue, and end all things in Thee,—to meet and bear and enjoy all things in the light of Thy countenance. Thou knowest we have our moments of shame and longing,—of shame for neglect and unworthiness, and of longing for the higher life. Deepen in us both, that we may feel our urgent need of Thee, and be consoled by the deep heart-faith that we need never feel alone.

Befriend us in our deep necessity, and, when we try to take the side of our better selves, make us strong in our weakness, wise in our foolishness, steadfast in our wavering, and victorious in our hour of bitterest need; that we may know the joy of feeling that we are always with Thee. Amen.

Life in God.

GOD of our fathers, to Thee the children come. They sought and found: O that we may seek and find, and make the place whereon we stand holy ground. May we see Thee in all things, and chiefly see Thee in all things beautiful and sweet and good.

When Thy children are unselfish and strong for goodness, when they do what is just, and love what is pure, may we there see the shining presence of God: and, if we are called to work in lonely ways, or to do what seems only the poor work of the world, may we make even that beautiful because of our faithfulness, patience, and courage; and so fit ourselves for better things.

In all things, O Father, Thou hast planted the longing for home and the need of it. Thy small wild flowers know their place, and love their home, and seem to grow heavenward with joy and patience in their appointed time, and make beautiful the uncared-for places, with God to understand. O that we could be as patient and as faithful, and find our true home wherever we may be beneath the light of Heaven, and grow from our home, loyal and beautiful in our Father's sight, and in the sight of His angels to whom He giveth charge concerning us. Amen.

Drawn to God.

MOST loving Lord, by many things we are drawn to Thee; by that which is highest in us, proclaiming us Thine own, and by that which is lowest, revealing our need; by thoughts of gratitude and the need of help; by the sense of dependence and the hunger of the heart for hope. Incline us all to make the great surrender of ourselves to Thee, by choosing the way of righteousness and the life-work that will make us co-workers with God.

Teach us all to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name," to say it from the heart, and then to live it, by giving all that we have and are to Thy dear service.

May we discern the good hand of our God in all the familiar mercies of life,—in the blessings of home, in the love of friends, in the persuasions of the wise and the examples of the good. May we learn to look for Thee in the heavens above and in the earth beneath,—in the work of the world, in the discoveries of science, in the desire to educate the young, and to improve the homes and work-places of the people.

May we all try to be willing instruments in Thy hands, in helping to make earth more like heaven, that we may be Thy children, in thought, and love, and word, and deed. Amen.

WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE DONE FOR RELIGION.

BY CHARLES STRONG.

HAS Criticism affected Religion? it may be asked. Undoubtedly it has. How could Religion hope to escape the fire into which physics, philosophy, literature, history, morals, politics, social economics, have been cast in this century? And it cannot be said that it has emerged like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from Nebuchadnezzar's fiery furnace, on whose bodies "the fire had no power, nor was the hair of their head singed, neither were their hosen changed nor had the smell of fire passed on them." Criticism *has* affected Religion, or, rather, our idea of Religion; and the sooner this fact is fully and frankly acknowledged by religious people, the better. Our Religion has come to us bound up with certain stories of events said to have happened over a period of several thousand years, and many of these recorded events belong to an order of things outside of all ordinary experience. It has come to us bound up with certain views of the rise of language, the date and manner of man's first appearance upon the earth, the creation of the physical universe, the history and literature of the Hebrew nation, and the literature of the first and second Christian centuries. It has come to us bound up with all manner of traditional theology and forms of pious expression. Criticism, it must be confessed, has rent and torn to shreds these old garments, which have no doubt done good service in their time, but which cannot any longer keep out the cold and rain from their wearers.

But Criticism, while performing this ungracious or ungrateful part, has at the same time pointed out with greater clearness than belonged to any other age, the real nature of Religion and its independence of the wood, hay, and stubble with which it has been bound up. It has analysed Religion, and, in doing so, has shown what Religion is in its essence, as distinguished from physical science, philosophy, history, and literature. Criticism has thus a constructive as well as a destructive aspect.

And what is the Religion which emerges from the fire? What is the spirit shown to be of which "the religions" and theologies of the world are but the temporary forms, the childish attempts at expression, or the perversion and

caricature? The answer seems to be:—Simple trust in a Being akin to ourselves, in whom all live and move and have their being, as the source and end of all power, wisdom, and goodness; unfailing hope, luring man on to higher and higher heights; calm, steadfast love, casting out passion, fear, and hatred, the flower and fruit of such trust and hope in God as Reason, in the power of truth, and the divinity of goodness.

Religion is not belief in a hypothesis as to the earth's formation, or the age of the Pentateuch, or the origin of the Gospels, or how far miracles were literal facts of history, or allegorical embodiments of spiritual truth, or how many natures there were in Christ. Religion is not fear of hell, or selfish craving for a crown and a harp. Religion is not observance of rites, bible-reading, prayers, or alms. Religion is the rest of the reason and the heart in God as their origin and their home. And out of this "simple faith" grow the fruits of a strong and manly life, prayer, philanthropy, universal charity. This seems to us to be the very soul of Religion. It was the soul of Jesus' piety. It was the childlike, though not childish, mind, without which, Jesus said, "The Kingdom" could not be entered. It is the Religion of "Spirit and Truth" which Jesus revealed, and which alone can be the *universal* religion for learned and ignorant, for all classes, all nations, and all time. If Criticism has, by stripping off "old clothes," helped us to see this soul of Religion, and if the result of having our crutches broken is to lead us to walk on our own legs more firmly and steadily in "the narrow way"; if it not only has delivered us from enthralling superstition and soul-destroying dread, but has pointed out to us the true path of a noble human life, we have reason to be thankful. The cry of the religious soul is for God, the living God. If Criticism has cleared the way to a deeper and larger sense of His presence, and driven us out of the dark corners of sect, creed, caste, and nationalism, into the broad unifying light of God, it has done good work.

SPIRITUALISM AND THE BIBLE.

BY PETER DEAN.

ARE believers in everything the Bible teaches consistent in opposing spiritualism? The one only essential thing constituting spiritualism is belief that the spirits of the so-called dead can and do communicate with the living—everything else is accidental and open. Now I say that if the Bible teaches anything, it teaches this essential part of spiritualism; it teaches that the spirits of the "dead" return and manifest themselves to the living; it teaches seeing things in trances; it teaches spirit-healing, and it teaches spirit-materialization. I will not say, as some spiritualist is reported to have said, that the Bible is full of spiritualism, and that if you took it all out you would have nothing left but the backs; but I do say that the Bible has in it a vast amount of spiritualism, and if I believed the Bible to be all God's word, as the orthodox profess to do, I should feel compelled to be a spiritualist. I do not say that an orthodox believer in the Bible is logically called upon to believe all the nonsense that may be taught in connection with spiritualism, but I do say he is

logically called upon to be a spiritualist, believing that there is communion going on between the "dead" and the living.

First of all, take the Old Testament. Look what an amount of spiritualism you have in it. Look what a prominent part angels coming down to men play in it. Angels come to Adam and Eve; angels come to Lot and his wife to lead them out of Sodom; and Jacob actually has a wrestling match with an angel, and has his thigh put out of joint by him. Then how can you get over the case of the woman of Endor calling up the spirit of Samuel in order that Saul might have a séance with him? There is no getting out of this case by attempts to explain it away, for the original Hebrew of the passage distinctly says it was Samuel himself who appeared and spoke. If the Bible had nothing else in it than this passage, the spiritualists would be able to quote it as on their side. But, all through, it has divinations—some favoured and some condemned—the casting of lots, oracles, visions, prophetic dreams and the like, in abundance.

Then, when you come to the New Testament, I think the spiritualists have it even more on their side. In Hebrews we are told that angels are "all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation." If you believe that this verse is God's word, how can you deny spiritualism? Listen to what Christ commissioned his disciples to do—"Heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils." Again, "And when Jesus had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power over unclean spirits to cast them out." In Mark we read that in the synagogue at Capernaum there was a man with an unclean spirit, that Jesus said to it, "Hold thy peace and come out of him"; and when the unclean spirit had torn the man and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And in Acts we read that the people brought those vexed with unclean spirits, and the disciples cast them out. I think, again, if you look into the meaning of what is meant by the disciples having spiritual gifts, you will find that it was all a sort of spiritualism. Then look at the accounts of men having "trances" and "visions," which you have in the New Testament. Paul saw Jesus in this way when he was going to Damascus; Paul, again, in this way was caught up to paradise and the third heaven—"whether in the body or out of the body," he could not tell; and Paul also in this way saw Ananias and the man of Macedonia, saying "Come over and help us." Peter had a vision of unclean beasts, and Stephen had one, in which he looked into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. But there are hundreds of such awake-visions given in the New Testament:—the Book of Revelation is one mass of them. I think, therefore, nothing can be clearer than that, in the New Testament days, people were spiritualists, and were believers in the kind of things spiritualists are believing in now.

ON THE OPEN ROAD.

ROWDYISM.

WHAT is Rowdyism? It is not easy to define, but its chief characteristic is excessive self-assertion manifested in an excess of shove: and it hovers all the way from the nursery to Palace-yard, and manifests itself in actions as various as pitching a doll out of the window in a pet, and swaggering to the House of Commons in a brake.

The hobbledehos whose highest idea of bliss is to go, three abreast, along the High street, on Sunday evenings, in the hope that they may just sufficiently shunt ladies off the pavement without actual violence, are essentially rowdies. To be sure, "it's all fun," but the spirit which makes it possible and which makes it fun is precisely the spirit which, under other conditions, would lead to throwing a brick through a plate-glass window, or cheyving a frightened girl across Hampstead Heath.

The rowdy temperament has but little to do with rank or wealth. The "gentleman" who first set the example of going from dinner to the drawing-room to smoke, and suggested cigarettes to ladies, was as much of a rowdy as the bank clerk who smokes a big pipe, loaded with the usual horribly smelling compound, and makes for the front seat of the omnibus where his nasty cloud must annoy other people. The rowdy is, as often as not, a good enough fellow in his way. His one great lack is the sense of proportion. Mr. Keir Hardie, for instance, with his brake and his band, his chums and his cheering, his rosettes and his mason's cap, are really innocent enough, and only provoke the usual smile accorded to child's play, but they were simply rowdy all the same. If everybody who had won a seat for "Labour" and Radicalism had demonstrated in a similar way, the result would have been, not rowdyism childish, but rowdyism rampant; and the gentlemen, whether rich or poor, that is to say, the men with a sense of the fitness of things and of what is due to one another, would have felt uncomfortable; and, if the thing went on, would be rowdied out: for the worst of it is that rowdyism is apt to win. The men with taste and nice feeling do not, except on emergencies, care to contest matters with the rowdy. They prefer to look out for another way home.

People who still reel out the old phrases about the working-classes being "drunken, disorderly, and venal," either do not know what has happened or do not take the trouble to be exact. In point of fact, the working-classes were never so very exceptionally "drunken, disorderly, and venal." There have always been cads of all classes and drunkards of all degrees. But, of late years, the working-classes have made enormous strides in self-culture and self-control; and, considering their numbers, it is really very doubtful whether they supply England with more rowdies than the class from which the old offensive cry usually comes. But, for all that, it is still true that the working-classes are exposed to special disadvantages and temptations as to this particular vice of rowdyism. Their closely-packed homes, their unbroken struggle for food and rent, their entirely necessary Unions always calling

for protest and pressure, their lower-grade education and their fewer opportunities of comparison and of acquiring the feeling of delicacy and taste, all put them at a disadvantage. But native humour and natural good-nature are doing wonders for them, and, already, Whitechapel and Shoreditch compare favourably, at midnight, with Piccadilly and the Strand.

All that is now wanted is that working men should measure their strength and know how to use it. When they do that, they will know that rowdyism spells weakness, not strength, and that, as a matter of economy, they can more than afford to be, not in any cant sense, but in a very real sense, gentlemen.

PROGRESSIVE JEWS.

THE time-spirit has entered into the Synagogue; and Rationalism, speaking by the mouth of Jews, has challenged Judaism to defend its "Oracles of God." *The Jewish World*, complaining of the "Progressives," says,—

"The Conservative Jew believes, as a fundamental article of his creed, in the verbal inspiration of the Bible. Whatever is written in it is for him strictly true. The accounts of the Creation, the Origin of Man, the Deluge, the History of the Patriarchs, of the Exodus, the Revelation, the Wanderings in the Wilderness, the Conquest of Canaan, the Settlement of the Jews in the Holy Land, their migration and subsequent return, in fine, everything related in the Bible as history, the Conservative Jew fully and unreservedly accepts as the Infallible Oracle of God. These accounts may have a symbolic significance, or may contain mystical allusions, but these additional interpretations do not do away with the literal meaning of the Scriptures. The Progressive Jew, on the other hand, reserves to himself the right of picking and choosing among the Biblical Accounts, and discriminating between history and fable. The Bible, according to him, is an entirely human Work, a religious Anthology, which has somewhat more authority to inspiration than Shakespeare's dramas or Milton's poems. The Pentateuch he does not regard as authentic. It professes to have been written by Moses, whereas, in truth, so says the Progressive, that leader and lawgiver only left a nucleus behind him which grew in time into what we mistakenly or conventionally call the five books of Moses. As for the genuineness of the other books of Holy Writ, suffice it to say that one of the leaders of Progressive Judaism laboured a few years ago to show that the Book of Esther was from beginning to end a pure myth.

The Conservative Jew believes that with the written law an inspired amplificatory exposition was orally revealed to Moses, and by him taught to the people. The first paragraph in Ethics of the Fathers teaches this doctrine, "Moses received the Law from Sinai (God), and handed it down (orally) to Joshua; Joshua to the elders; the elders to the prophets; the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue." This Oral Law is contained in the Mishna and Talmud, and has been continued by the Tanaim, the Amoraim, the Saboraim, the Geonim, the Mediæval Rabbis, by an unbroken chain of tradition, to the Jews of the present day. . . . The Progressive Jew who looks upon the Written Law as nothing but a series of traditions, of course denies the binding character of the Oral Law altogether.

The ideals and aims of the two parties naturally vary with their beliefs. The Conservative Jew's purpose is to preserve traditional Judaism, to hand down its institutions, rites and practices intact to his children as he has received them from his parents. . . . The ideal of the Progressive Jew is to disintegrate tradition, and to build on its ruins a new Judaism in accordance with the supposed needs of the present day."

GAMBLING AND POLITICS.

THE Newcastle election was, after all, somewhat puzzling. Can that sturdy population be, really, a little hysterical? It is said that Mr. Cowen's paper had a good deal to do with Mr. Hamond's unexpected success. Possibly, and perhaps it has had something to do with the apparently slushy condition of the political mind in the town. "The Newcastle Chronicle" used to be an enjoyable paper, unusually strong on its social and intellectual side; but it has sadly deteriorated. "The trail of the serpent is over it all," and it has for some time smelt badly of the public house and the betting ring. Its gambling intelligence does not occupy the conventional column, but a huge page—or more. It seems, in fact, to have become a sporting journal. The link between that and the queer elections in the place may not be difficult to find. There is, of course, in Newcastle, a fine solid nucleus of Liberalism just as there is a fine solid nucleus of Conservatism, but it is often the more or less fluid surface that determines an election; and that fluid surface at Newcastle seems to be unduly large. An exceedingly well-informed teacher in the neighbourhood declares that betting and gambling in a dozen forms are the curse of the place. "You can interest thousands of them in nothing else," he says. These thousands are just the men to respond to the cry of "Good old Swagger," and to vote for him: but they are almost equally open to the cry of "Let the man alone." In other words, your sporting man is a man in a mentally and morally fluid condition—unreliable, emotional, even hysterical in a way: and Newcastle seems to have him badly, thanks, perhaps, to its "Chronicle" and its 600 militant publicans. It is a warning to England.

LIGHT ON THE PATH.

THE NEW BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER is nearly ready. We have special reasons for commending it to the very serious consideration of all our readers. The Book has had the advantage of three revisions by some of the keenest and most experienced ministers in the country, and we cannot but think that it deserves the attention for which we ask. A book of musical responses and special tunes will be ready at the same time. The price of each book will be one shilling.

WHAT IS LIFE?—M. F., Crieff, writes;—"What is Life? The growing nearer to perfection, and, by whatever means, to reach this end:—by joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, to rise, by each experience, to higher thoughts and finer efforts. Life is to carry out God's thoughts concerning us: and, by the way in

which we meet each messenger from Him, we live or die,—maybe live *and* die. Ours is the choice,—to live to God and good, or to live the death in life, and daily die to all our nobler efforts. To live by God, with God, for God, and know but this,—'Thy will be done.' This is to live."

THE SPIRIT-WORLD.—A long time ago, the *Standard* said, on the subject of Spiritualism; "Perhaps the most common mistake made by people who have no strong belief in connection with this subject, is that of saying vaguely that they do not believe in Spiritualism, but that there may be something in it. If there is anything whatever in it beyond imposture and imbecility, there is the whole of another world in it."

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.—"J. J." calls our attention to some particulars in the gospel narrative which contradict the hypothesis that what the disciples saw was only the spirit-Jesus, and not his body: for instance, Jesus expressly denies being only a spirit, and appeals to his "flesh and bones." We had not forgotten this, but included all in our reference to the story as inconsistent, and not entirely comprehended by those who told it. We have to make our choice, and, in the discourse on the resurrection of Jesus, the choice was made in favour of a spirit-appearance. How the earthly touches, such as "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have," crept in, we, of course, cannot tell.

THE ETERNAL TRUTH.—No one can say his notions shall stand. But we may all say the truth, as it is in Jesus, shall never pass away. Yet there are always some, even religious men, who do not see the permanent element, so they rely on the fleeting, and, what is also an evil, condemn others for not doing the same. They mistake a defence of the truth for an attack upon the holy of holies; the removal of a theological error for the destruction of all religion. Already men of the same sect eye one another with suspicion and lowering brows that indicate a storm, and, like children who have fallen out in their play, call hard names. Now, as always, there is a collision between these two elements. The question puts itself to each man, "Will you cling to what is perishing or embrace what is eternal?" This question each must answer for himself.—*Theodore Parker.*

THE TRINITY.—With the disappearance of the old pagan idea of the personality of God, the old arithmetical puzzle connected with the doctrine of The Trinity will go. It is difficult, indeed, to know why it is preached—or attacked. We have good reasons for believing that the following story is true:—A popular and witty minister was asked what was his present view of The Trinity. He smiled and whispered,—“I reverence it for its antiquity. I adore it for its absurdity. I preach it because it is expected”:—a reply which was as breezy with truth as it was witty and frank.

THE PRURIENT PRESS.—An American review speaks out:—"We heard a distinguished scientist say the other day: 'It seems to me the daily newspaper press of this country is

about as near clean gone to the devil as is possible. I scarcely know of a great daily in America that is fit to go into a home or to be read by decent people. And where is there any outlook for anything better? I confess I can see none.' This is very strong. But dare any thoughtful person say it is too strong? And who can see any prospect of improvement? It is not just to class all our dailies together as equally bad. Here and there one makes some effort to keep clean and wholesome. But it is putting the case mildly to say that a large proportion of our daily papers are a disgrace to the country, and to us all. Seemingly, there is no degrading sentiment or degraded class that is not eagerly paupered to, if thereby editions can be sold and money be made. Will intelligent and respectable people submit to this condition of things forever? How is the problem of getting a decent daily paper to be solved?" This is nearly as applicable to England.

ANTHEMS.—The time has fully come for seriously facing the question of anthems in public worship. The average organist or choir-master has no idea of what is really wanted. As a rule, he thinks of a performance, when what is wanted is meditation and prayer. An anthem should be a devotional study, a quiet prayer, or a note of praise. It should therefore be cleanly simple, melodiously pure, and absolutely devoid of tricky cleverness. Dozens, out of the old heaps, should be remorsefully taken, and put on the fire or sent to cheap concert rooms. If any one wishes to know what is the kind of thing we object to, we cannot do better than refer to the following description of an anthem, taken from *The Modern Church*;—"Off went the nimble soprano with the very laudable though startling announcement 'I will wash.' Straightway the alto, not to be outdone, declared that she would wash. And the tenor, finding it to be the thing, warbled forth that he would wash. Then the deep-chested basso, as though calling up his fortitude for the plunge, bellowed forth the stern resolve that he also would wash. Next a short interlude on the organ, strongly suggestive of escaping steam or the splash of the waves, after which the choir individually and collectively asserted the firm, unshaken resolve that they would wash. At last they solved the problem by stating that they proposed to 'Wash their hands in innocence.'" This is not an exaggerated but a perfectly fair description of the strident, rollicking, steepchase clatter too often known as "the anthem." We repeat,—the sooner it disappears the better.

THE PENALTY OF GUSH.—In *The Christian World* the question is asked, "Is Dr. Parker consistent?" and the question is based upon his extravagant and varying blessing and banning. It is a question which calls for very serious consideration, but far beyond its application to Dr. Parker. We have, for some time, regarded Dr. Parker as a somewhat painful illustration of what gush, sensationalism, and exaggeration can do with a strong and able man. He is a warning. There is far too much gush, sensationalism and exaggeration amongst ministers, and, in a way, they swear abominably—and blaspheme:—witness nearly every one of the late Mr. Spurgeon's and Dr. Parker's published sermons and prayers. We prefer the typical average Unitarian with his funereal tones and his copy-book essays; and that is saying a good deal.

THE SWIFT LIE.—An American paper lately printed the following story:—

One day a Lie broke out of its Inclosure and started to travel.

And the man who owned the Premises saw it after it had started and was sorry that he had not made the Inclosure Lictight.

So he called his swiftest Truth and said:

"A Lie has gone loose and will do much Mischief if it is not stopped. I want you to go after it and bring it back, or kill it!"

So the swift Truth started out after the Lie.

But the Lie had one Hour the Start.

At the end of the first Day the Lie was going Lickety-split. The Truth was a long way behind and it was getting tired.

It has not yet caught up.

And never will.

"ASLEEP."—We greatly need a revision of our tombstones, our poetry and our current phraseology, with their meaningless references to those who "sleep in the grave." According to these curious Christians, the grave is really what a humorous critic called "a universal dormitory, not even relieved by dreams." But do they mean it? If immortality is a fact, these so-called sleepers are wonderfully awake: if not, they certainly do not sleep; we should use a shorter and much less pleasant word.

THE UNSEEN.—The Rev. M. J. Savage is well-known in England and in America, and he is known in both as a disciple and expounder of Herbert Spencer; but here is his latest utterance concerning certain painstaking inquiries he has been pursuing into what is called "Spiritualism":—

"A gentleman was once asked as to his religion. He replied that it was 'the religion of all sensible men.' When asked what that was, he replied, 'No sensible man ever tells.' But, notwithstanding this illustrious example, I am quite willing to tell. 1st. I am an investigator. I want to know the truth, whatever it may be. I cannot understand how anybody should want anything else. 2nd. So far, I am in possession of certain facts that I do not know how to explain, except on the supposition that I have been dealing with some invisible intelligence. I hope this is true. If anyone can explain them in any other way, I am quite ready to accept the explanation. In the meantime I propose to wait and study and not tell any more than I know."

NOTES ON BOOKS.

"Stories of the saints for children. The Black Letter saints." By Mrs. Molesworth. London: Longmans, Green & Co. (7s.) We have often thought that the lives of "the saints," in brief, tenderly told for children, would make a precious book,—even if considered only as lovely tales. The ideal is almost realised by Mrs. Molesworth whose beautifully produced work not only covers a great deal of the ground but captures and retains a great deal of the subtle beauty. The stories are short, and, as there are about fifty of them, there is considerable choice. Parents and teachers might go far afield and not find so

enticing a Sunday book; but, if read aloud, it would be well to go over the stories first, pencil in hand. Mrs. Molesworth has her personal equation. What we mean will be indicated by the following sentences from her book:—"It was a period of great strife about doctrines, and, though it is never right to condemn harshly those who differ from us, still we cannot but sympathise with the orthodox Christians of those days in their thorough earnestness. And it is impossible to hold those who caused dissension as altogether honest in their opinions, when we see how much the love of power and jealousy of others were mingled with their

refusal to accept the Church's teachings." What about the "love of power" of the dominant and persecuting majority? "The Empress Justina, an ambitious and interfering woman, who had unfortunately become what is called an 'Arian'—a follower of the false teacher Arius, who caused such trouble in the Christian world." The writer of this delightful book would have done well to resist the temptation to play partisan in telling her stories. But there is not much of this.

"On recent proposals relating to cremation, &c." A Paper, by Sir Henry Thompson, F.R.C.S., &c. London: The Cremation Society of England (8, New Cavendish Street). This Paper was read at the International Congress of Hygiene, and its main object is to shew that by many subtle means zymotic diseases are propagated by the burial of diseased bodies, and that the only safe remedy, or, rather, preventative, is the action of heat. Sir Henry Thompson says,—“The argument which appears to me wholly irresistible in relation to bodies deceased from infectious diseases is only by some degrees less weighty in regard to death by all other causes. Putrefying animal matter is always noxious, and may be dangerous to the living; the process of dessication and disin-

fection in earth must in any case occupy years for its accomplishment, and during the first period of the term much harm may arise. The unseen and lengthy process of putrefaction in the grave is one the details of which are too revolting to be illustrated by any verbal description. On the other hand, the action of heat speedily converts the constituents of the body, healthy and diseased alike, into innocuous gases which escape without trace of smoke, odour, or offence into the atmosphere, and into the white earthy ash already described. The atmosphere yields these gases at once to vegetable growths, which increase by absorbing them."

"Stirring ballads for the people." Numbers 1-4. By Professor G. B. Braishaw. London: G. Stoneman. In the main, making for righteousness; but sad doggerel.

"Notes of sympathy." Part I. By Clement Pike. London: W. Milligan, Camden Road. Notes, neither very deep nor very high, but clear, steady, sympathetic. Ten or a dozen simple, human poems, suggested and inspired by a bit of anxious and earnest-hearted London life; not altogether original, with full echoes of Walt Whitman and "Dagonet," but all thoughtful and from the heart.

MESSAGES FROM OUR FORERUNNERS.

WHEN we see men of worth, we should think of equalling them; when we see men of a contrary character, we should turn inwards and examine ourselves.—*Confucius*.

EVERY attainment and discipline which increases a man's acquaintance with the invisible world lifts his being. Everything that gives him a new perception of beauty multiplies his pure enjoyments.—*Emerson*.

It matters not at what hour of the day
The righteous fall asleep: Death cannot come
To him untimely who is fit to die.
The less of this cold world, the more of heaven.
The briefer life, the earlier immortality.—
Milman.

DEATH.—I have often thought upon death, and
find it the least of all evils.—*Bacon*.

DUTY.

How like a trumpet from the sentinel
Angel, that standeth in the morning star,
Empanoplied and plumed, as angels are
Whom God doth charge to watch that all be
well,
Cometh to me thy call, O terrible,
That, girt, and crown'd, and sworded for
Heaven's war,
Standest supreme above the confused jar

Of shock'd antagonisms, and the yell
Of trampled pain! Thou of the solemn eyes,
Firm-fronted duty, on whose high command
My heart waits awed, stretch forth thy har-
ness'd hand
And, with a louder summons, bid arise
My soul to battle. Hark, the muster roll!
Thy name is called. Forth, thou poor con-
script soul!
Cowley.