

The Coming Day.

JULY, 1893.

PEACE IN THE CHURCH.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON BEFORE THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION.

“Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.”—PSALM CXXII., 6.
TO THE ancient Hebrew this word, “Jerusalem,” stood for all that was venerable and sacred and dear. It was not only the name of the city where was his home and the home of his fathers, it was also the name of the city where the temple bore witness to the presence of his God. With a passion we can hardly understand, the pious Hebrew loved Jerusalem. To love Jerusalem was the early lesson of his youth, the supreme glory of his manhood, the profound emotion of his age. To wish well to her was to bless him: to pray for her was to invoke a blessing on his head.

Understanding this, we can enter into the spirit of that most touching ode—the song of the exiled Hebrews in the land of their captivity—so full of the passion and pathos of breaking hearts and indignant souls:—“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.”

And so, too, we can understand and enter into the spirit of another of these wondrous psalms, telling of the longings of one who was now absent from the temple, and kept from the happy, worshiping throng:—“As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear

before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday."

What was it in the old faith of Palestine,—what was it in the old faith of England—that led longing souls to love so ardently the "house of God" (as they called a place like this)?—a longing and a love so fadingly represented where reason has won its victory over credulity. One of the keenest of modern writers said lately, "I find a peculiar ring of joy in the old Gospel teachers, a joy bell, the sound of which does not catch my ear in the new theology." I know that times have changed, and that we have unlearned the Hebrew's narrow ideas as to the kingship and presence of God. I know that we have got beyond the superstition that confined the Eternal to one locality or even to one man-built house, but we have made a bad bargain if we have enlarged the bounds of God only to dissipate Him; if, in gaining broader ideas, we have lost the warmer love; if we have exchanged the old Hebrew's ardent and concentrated love of Zion for a universal interest which has only attenuated our faith and cooled our zeal.

Certainly, in some respects there need be no great sense of dissimilarity between ourselves and the ardent worshipers of God in Jerusalem. They had their temple: so have we. They had their sacrifices: so have we (not the blood of bulls and goats, but the better sacrifice of the living, devoted self). They had their holy-day: so have we. They had their psalms of praise: so have we. They had their remembrances of signal mercies: so have we. They had their need of help and comfort by the way: so have we. They had children who needed guidance and light and inspiration: so have we. Before them the dark veil hung, and they needed courage and hope: so do we. Why, then, should we not take their words upon our tongues, and, for ourselves and for our brethren, say, and say to-day, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee"?

Note what it was for which they prayed;—"peace." To the ancient Hebrew this meant unspeakably more than it can ever mean to us. For him, war meant desolation and uprooting, captivity and the trampling down of a dishonoured land, and with his whole heart he could cry, "Pray, O pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

But, confining our thoughts to our church fellowships and delights, we may well lift up the heart with the same fervent prayer for peace, for upon that all depends. Times of religious dissension cannot be times of spiritual growth, and the harvests of the soul can no more grow in the Church if strife is there than can the harvests of the field if trodden by armed men. For faith

languishes, and hope decays, and love dies, and worship is a sham if a pure affection does not make of many one.

And yet, let us understand what this peace is for which we pray, for there is a peace which is not good, such as the peace of sheer inactivity, the peace of indolence, when evil is tolerated or condoned simply to save trouble, and when wrong is endured simply because to set it right would mean work and worry. God forbid that we should pray for such a peace as this! Nor should we pray for that peace which is only another name for cowardice which flinches from the wrong, not because it is troublesome, but because it is threatening. Many a time has the Church been cursed with such a peace as that, when the evil was seen but when the heart was not valiant enough to confront it and oppose it, when the servants of the Heavenly King saw the way, but entered not into it because they were afraid. This is not the peace for which we are to pray.

So, again, there is a peace which is merely the result of unconcern, when "the cause" is not enough cared-for to lead anyone to go out for its defence, or to face a little trouble on its behalf, or to be a little lonely for its sake. They who desire such a peace as that would suffer the garden of the Lord to become a desert; but a peace like that is really decay, and the end of it may be death. It is a mournful fact that even amongst the reputed supporters of religion, and especially (strange to say) of rational religion, there are many who incline to such a peace as that. They keep their enthusiasm for the market and the exchange, or for politics. As men of business they are alert and enterprising: as politicians they may revel in the fray: but the Church must do nothing to disturb the serenity of their unconcern. Enthusiasm there is fanaticism. Even joy there is out of place. You may make it interesting if you can, but your zeal must not rescue it from being decorous and dull, and so it has come to pass that sometimes one of the dulllest and least ardent things in England is an average Sunday meeting of Unitarians, whose very music often sounds as though it were without a soul, and did not care.

No: but the true peace is linked with love: "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee." It includes unity of sympathy and aspiration, delight in the employments and fellowships of the temple, confidence in the truth to which the temple bears witness, faith in God, and hope for the future. These are the precious elements of a true and lasting peace.

For a few moments look at these.

First of all, there must be *unity of sympathy and aspiration*—not necessarily uniformity of belief. Indeed, it is impossible for any large number of independent and thoughtful persons to think in all things alike, but it is very possible for almost any number of persons to share the same

sympathies and to cherish the same aspirations. We may differ, for instance, as to the being of God, as to the mode of His existence, the meaning of the word, "personality," in relation to Him, His unity or manifoldness; but we may all agree to reverence the mighty Power that surrounds us, to listen for every indication of the will of the Great Supreme, to obey and to bless His eternal laws. We may differ, again, as to the nature and powers of Jesus, but we may all agree as to his life and spirit, and we may all desire to be like him and to follow him. We may differ widely as to the future life, but we may all be one in the devout desire to so live here that if we are to live hereafter, we may pass on with joy and not with grief.

As it is in the home, so may it be in the Church. The members of the family may differ in opinion on a hundred subjects, but they may all live in peace, as those who are linked together by the one sympathy of a common affection, and the one desire to give, where it is due, honour and reverence and love. So with us. We may all be one here in our desire to love, revere, and serve our heavenly Father, and to live beautiful and faithful lives, true to one another as to Him. And I rejoice to believe and feel that this is signally true here.

The second element of true peace is *Delight - delight in the employments and fellowships of the Church*. There can be no true peace where there is no joy. Even in the Church, if there is no joy there is but an armed neutrality. In such a case, what is wanted is more intelligence in what is believed, more soul in what is sung, more faith in what is said, more heart in what is done. And surely, surely, there is enough in the employments and fellowships of the Church to give us (if we will only heartily enter into them) inexpressible delight, so that one might long for the blessed Sunday, and sing—and help to make even Unitarians sing—

Welcome, sweet day of rest,
Whose gladdening beams arise
Welcome to this reviving breast,
And these rejoicing eyes!
The King Himself comes near
To feast His own to-day;
And they may sit and see Him here,
And love and praise and pray.
O for the living fire
From His own altar brought!
To touch our lips, our minds inspire,
And wing to Heaven our thought!"

Another element of true peace in the Church is *confidence in the truth to which the temple bears witness*. And what is that truth? the life and soul of it all? Simply this: that a human being is not only an earthly animal, that we have a spiritual nature, and that this needs to be sustained, educated, encouraged, trusted. In so far as this is not seen and believed, there must be

doubt and discord, hesitation and suspicion, the unrest of almost seeming to profess what one does not believe. But when the profound truth of the spirit-self is recognised, when that real self asserts itself and rejoices in the consciousness of its hopes and powers, what a reality it all becomes! what divine satisfactions content the soul! what meanings break forth from psalm and prayer! what undertones of grace and sweetness come from all! what peace descends!

Of *faith in God* what need to speak? It is the main essential. The meaning vanishes if He is not here; nothing is left but bare walls and a vacant dream. It is all a discord, and there never can be peace if we do not believe in Him.

And last of all, *hope for the future*. That also is a vital necessity. True worship leads into the unseen or it is meaningless, and where there is no meaning there can be no real peace. We are pilgrims on a journey—the children of the King, on our way home. These poor psalms are only the symbols of the happier psalms to come, and the prayers we utter now as a broken sigh shall end in heavenly exultations. Here find the secret of true peace below—the peace of God, which keeps heart and mind in perfect peace. And remember the closing words of this exhortation: “They shall prosper that love thee,” prosper in all the rich, deep things—in character, in insight, in hopefulness, in the ability to bear, in the power to steer, in the development and consecration of the will, in the brightening of hopes as the need arises and the night draws nigh. Yes, it is true—it has been proved to be true millions of times—they who love the things which we stand for here are enriched in the great, deep things; they have prospered, and they shall prosper who love thee.

THE INCARNATION.

A REVELATION OF HUMAN DUTIES.

A SHORT time ago, the Bishop of Durham delivered a “charge” to the clergy of Durham, in his cathedral, on the subject of this article. Towards the close of this somewhat novel charge, the good bishop says, “It may be said that these are vague words”; and “vague,” indeed, many of his statements are. In fact, the charge is one of the best instances we know of the influence of modern solvents and present-day forces upon old dogmas and bygone mechanism. The bishop sees clearly that religion must become a force for every-day life, and that the church must try to take the lead in practical usefulness, and he presses into his service the fading doctrine of the Incarnation. We should not say “presses into his service,” and we should not call the doctrine of the

Incarnation a "fading" one, if the bishop had been as thorough in his explanation of the Incarnation as he is outright in his fine advice concerning the real needs of the world.

His proposition at the outset is that "the Incarnation, in proportion as we give a distinct meaning to the truth, must become to us a revelation of human duties." But, having said that in his first paragraph, he takes us on through fifty pages, and never once gives us "a distinct meaning." In one place he says, "By the Incarnation, God enters through His Son into the world of Nature, and delivers us from the tyranny of materialism." We fail to see any meaning in this. We know that something like it is frequently said, but we can never find any meaning in the words. Will anybody explain what is meant (we do not say prove the truth of, but merely what is meant) by the words, "By the Incarnation, God enters through His Son into the world of Nature"? It seems to mean that God made all things as a man might build a house and fill it with furniture, then let it to a family, and then, by some supernatural process, get Himself born into one of the inhabitants of the house, and so enter into the life of the family. But does it mean that? And if it does, what is the bearing of it upon human life? If, by this entering of God "into the world of Nature," the human race got an infusion of "new blood," we can see how the Incarnation might have benefited it. But, of course, that is too gross to be intended. Or if, by this entering of God "into the world of Nature," the human race received fresh inspirations, bright hopes and new ideas, we can understand how the Incarnation helped the human race. But then it seems so perfectly clear that this did not occur for the first time in the case of Christ. It surely cannot be maintained that God came for the first time into the world of Nature, and into inspiring relations with man, when He came in Christ.

The good bishop, in truth, only uses the Incarnation as a kind of peg on which he hangs his fine discourse on the urgent and supreme duty of living in all respects as though we were brothers and sisters with one common father, and, to tell the plain truth, he seems almost inclined to give away the old dogma of the Incarnation of God in Christ as a lonely miracle, and to accept the splendid truth of the Incarnation of God in the human race as, for us, the highest revelation of Himself, and as giving us the truest ideal of duty. This is perfectly intelligible, and this is precisely the doctrine the bishop wants for his discourse. He wants to make us all feel that we are one in God, and that therefore we ought to live for one another, and he says that the Incarnation makes this clear. We agree with him, if the Incarnation is a fact for the human race and not for Christ only. If the human race is God's child, if it is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual creative fatherhood, then all he says is superbly true. Then we have an absolutely perfect reason why we should live for one another—in the family, in business, in society, in the state, in the brotherhood of the world, just as the bishop tells us.

As we have said, nowhere does the bishop explain the Incarnation, but here and there he drops a hint, and it might be profitable to gather these together, and then push them home. He says, "The Incarnation of the Word of God becomes to us, as we meditate on the fact, a growing revelation of duties personal, social, national."

"The meaning of the Incarnation, the central event in the life of the world, the central truth in the experience of men, in which the seen and the unseen, the temporal and the eternal, the finite and the infinite, are brought together, is not obvious at once. The treasures of wisdom which the Incarnation includes will not be exhausted till humanity has reached its consummation."

"By the Incarnation, God makes known to us the spiritual basis of life, in virtue of which man in the fulness of his nature is shewn to be capable of fellowship with God."

"This, then, is that which we are constrained to seek for in our personal relations through our faith in the Incarnation, a recognition of common divine sonship and "equal" spiritual brotherhood. It is a familiar claim, but perhaps it has lost much of its force because we have ceased to reflect upon it ourselves and to press it upon others. We assume that the claim is acknowledged, and we neglect to consider the fact by which it is established. For when seen in this light, as the application to men individually of the message that *the Word became flesh*, the assertion of the divine sonship of each man, of the human brotherhood of all men in Christ, is fitted to chasten, to guide, to inspire us: to furnish at once a solid foundation and a touchstone for our theories of social intercourse."

"The brotherhood of men, of classes, of nations: humanity fitly framed together by the ministry of every part for the realisation and enjoyment of one harmonious life: the prevailing power of devotion to a common cause: do the phrases seem visionary and unpractical? Does, then, I ask, the phrase *the Word became flesh* mean less? Is that unpractical? If I am a Christian, I must hold that God wills for men the highest which we can imagine. If I am a Christian, I must for my own part acknowledge the widest issues of the Incarnation and strive to establish them."

Are we pushing the bishop too hard if we say that the only valid working meaning in these words is that the human race is itself, in the deepest sense, the Incarnation of God, and that this both explains our duty and predicts our destiny? Jesus Christ may have been a fine illustration of the fact in his own person, and we may call it his revelation, but the meaning evaporates when we regard the Incarnation as resident in him alone.

OUR FATHER'S CHURCH.

WE often wish that some of the letters which are daily received concerning Our Father's Church could be seen by those who think it "vague" and not sufficiently "practical." The truth appears to be that because of its unlikeness to the ordinary churches, with their dogmas, rituals, and sectarian operations, it satisfies and rests disturbed and tired spirits. These letters are often singularly instructive, and illustrate all kinds and all phases of mental and spiritual experience. Some of these have come from America, Canada, Hungary, Italy, France, Germany, and, as a rule, with very few exceptions, they welcome Our Father's Church as a solution of difficulties and a haven from many doubts. After some hesitation, and purely for the sake of the good they may do, as making plain the uses of the church, we (by permission) lay before our members and readers the following touching series from an unknown correspondent. The letters in reply need not be given.

1.

"Your pamphlet, 'Our Father's Church,' has deeply interested me; so much so, indeed, that I feel compelled to write to you for further explanations, and in the hope that you may, perhaps, be able to help and counsel me.

Here, in Paris, so far at least as I am aware, the only English churches are the Anglican and Protestant, and for Dissent, one or two Wesleyan and Baptist chapels.

I was brought up altogether without religion, but some years since, owing to personal bias and force of circumstances, I became an 'advanced' Anglican church-woman. Possibly you have known many persons to whose æsthetic and emotional senses the beautiful Anglican ritual with its fervid beliefs makes a powerful appeal. But a merely emotional religion—except in the case of enthusiasts—cannot last, and, little by little, my faith has disappeared, and doubts have crept in.

At present I do not know what to do. Religion is vitally necessary to me, but what is truth? Of course, I am comparatively ignorant of any church doctrinal teaching (dogma I know) on the one hand, and of scientific evidence on the other. You will therefore see that my difficulty is really radical—either full acceptance of the Bible with all such an acceptance embraces of miracle, &c., or entire rejection as a basis of religion.

It is too vital a question to decide without help. Can you suggest any books that would put clearly both the church and opposing teachings before me? Books impartial and temperate, and entering as fully as possible into the subject. I need hardly tell you how grateful I shall be for such assistance, and for any personal advice you may give me.

As I have said, your 'Ideal' appeals strongly to me, but you will, I feel sure, fully agree with me that in my present troubled sea of doubts, light emphatically is what I need, and it can only be reached by study and thought, superficial at the best with my limited resources."

2.

"Allow me to thank you very gratefully for your letter, which has both encouraged and helped me. The books you have so kindly promised to lend will be of great assistance in helping me to think out difficulties.

I do not doubt that you will understand me when I confess that at present my greatest trouble is a moral shrinking from any decisive step. Perhaps it is as much physical as mental, as I have been overstrained for some time past. Anyway, the tension necessary for grappling with anything so momentous as religious beliefs seems to have collapsed. But you must not think I have for one moment given up—that is simply impossible—it only seems as if I must stand still and take breath.

Perhaps this sounds rather exaggerated. As a matter of fact, I have hardly put it strongly enough.

In England my few friends are earnest Anglicans (one, my confessor, the vicar of a well-known church; another the superior of a sisterhood). They have both been very dear friends, and the thought of losing them is bitter. Here I have no friends, barely acquaintances, and at times my mental solitude becomes almost insupportable. Under these two conditions, I think you will see that the present struggle costs something almost of life itself.

To have cut one's self loose from old errors, and yet not to be able to seize on anything in their place, is terrible to me. What you say of your personal feeling to God I feel only in capricious flashes as it were. It seems as if, in renouncing what had been life, all vitality of moral appreciation had disappeared.

Referring again to your letter, you say that you find your religion in life. Would you mind explaining further?

I do not suppose you mean it in the mere narrow sense of duty (though that is wide enough, rightly viewed), nor in what we may call the negative virtues. I take it you mean this and much more, which I can only faintly grasp at present. If I might dare to ask you to teach me—to lead me into the light that you yourself enjoy!

You know without conviction—whatever be the dogmas—one is morally paralysed. Renunciation after all is only a spiritual wrench, an abstract tooth-drawing operation, but the birth of a new belief can come only, it seems to me, through weary waiting and pain.

I must beg your forbearance for inflicting my moral ailments on you again. Your own kindness has tempted me to presume. May

I ask you, when you have a little leisure, to again help and counsel me? I must have some guide, and perhaps God has led me to you."

3.

"How can I thank you enough for sending me that little parcel of books! I have studied them with the deepest interest and sympathy, and, as I read, doubts lessened, difficulties lightened, and I am beginning to grasp what is so clear to you—the great and beautiful thought of the loving Father, ever near, ever with us, inspiring, helping, guiding, teaching. I want no more than that. How can I thank you enough for opening my eyes!

I think I have long dumbly felt what you put into words: the presence of God in everything good, true, and beautiful. At least, I know that all my inspirations came from them. For instance, music is almost a religion to me, yet I was always told it was a "snare." But few sermons I have ever heard have done me as much spiritual good as Wagner or Beethoven. I could not do or say a mean thing when they have spoken to me.

You find God in all that is ennobling and beautiful, and I have been taught to "resist" it all! You can imagine that I have suffered! To-day I went into the Madeleine, and my whole heart leaped out to God as I listened to the grand music. I did not fear or fight with myself, and life seems so wide and bright, and full of infinite possibilities now.

Will you let me enrol myself as a member of Our Father's Church? It will give me an object to work for, though I fear me here I cannot do much. But it will encourage me, and I shall feel less friendless and solitary.

May our loving Father, whom you have taught me to see with clearer eyes, draw you ever closer to Him."

DR. KANE EXPOSTULATES.

WE have received the following from the well-known mouthpiece of Belfast anti-Home-rulers:—

CHRIST CHURCH RECTORY,
BELFAST.

June 3rd, 1893

SIR,

Some one has sent me the June number of *The Coming Day*, and I cannot well express to you the pleasure with which I read the sermonette on "The Beauty of God, &c." It is indeed a very suggestive and most thoughtful discourse. I am equally at a loss to tell how ugly your references to Ulster appeared after reading your beautiful address on "Beauty." Truth is beauty, the other thing therefore must be ugliness, and your references to Ulster I assure you consist mainly of the other thing. Consider, for example, the *suggestio falsi* that I called Mr. Gladstone a "hoary British Pharisee," when all the world knows it was his friend, Mr. William O'Brien, so described him before the old gentleman was converted by "Votes, votes, votes!" to the dismemberment of the Empire to which he said O'Brien and others were marching through rapine. Consider, too, your assertion that by faith and wisdom we in Ulster mean bigotry and rebellion, "Orange cant for bigotry and rebellion." Will you, please, in the spirit of your sermonette, ask yourself what is there of bigotry in our contention at the present time that we should continue related to the justice-loving and freedom-loving community of Great Britain? If we were three to one here in Ireland, and claimed the establishment of a Parliament in

which we should have 80 members while our countrymen would have at most 20, and therefore be helplessly at our mercy, we might be suspected of bigotry and of persecuting designs. This, however, is not *our* case; but it is the case of the Irish Nationalists. They are asking for absolute power. Why will they not trust themselves to the Imperial Parliament? Cannot and will not the Imperial Parliament do Ireland justice? Has it not given the Emancipation Act, the Church Act, the Land Acts, the Education Act? In short, is there any grievance that it cannot remove or any act of justice it is incapable of doing? Why should we be content to exchange a Parliament such as we have in common with our English and Scotch fellow countrymen for a Parliament dominated by men who have been found guilty by a high court of justice of criminal conspiracy, and of promoting their designs by methods which they knew led to outrage? And then as to rebellion, when did Ulstermen rebel? We are struggling for the maintenance of the constitution; surely you don't consider that to be rebellion. I write in haste, and should not write at all, only I have been so much struck with your sermonette, which I had read very carefully before I saw the "ugly" paragraphs in the same paper. With good will for you and all men,

Yours very truly,

A. R. KANE.

The following reply was sent:—

S. NORWOOD HILL,
LONDON, S.E.,
June 5th, 1893.

DEAR SIR, --Thank you for your note. Of course I could not expect you to like the article on Ulster, but I think it just as beautiful as the sermon you are good enough to admire.

The application to Mr. Gladstone of the words, "hoary British Philistine," was in your speech, and not as a quotation. If Mr. O'Brien said it before you, I am sorry for both of you.

You and other good men in Belfast do not appear to understand English Radicals. We have watched your party longer and

more closely than some of you seem to imagine, and we have come to the deliberate conclusion that old religious feuds are mainly at the bottom of Irish opposition to Home Rule. But for these, we believe you would all naturally rejoice in the recognition of your nationality or your right to transact your own business. At the present moment, your ready threats of revolt, and your hurried declarations that you mean to disobey and defy a certain law if passed—*whether you are hurt by it or not*—have made us think lightly of your professions of loyalty, and largely discount your claims to be the representatives of law and order.

We do not think you are at all warranted in your constant assumption that an Irish Parliament would want to oppress Protestants and to be unjust to property. You think that under Home Rule you would be "helplessly at the mercy" of your "foes," and "under the heel" of your "historic enemies." (I quote from stock phrases in Ulster speeches.) You do not appear to see how this affects us. It reveals the existence of faction, temper, wasteful and pernicious ill-feeling; and it drives us to the conclusion that the cure is to bring you together, and to make you row in the same boat.

It is no answer to say, as you do, that the Parliament at Westminster can do justice to Ireland. It has grievously failed in the past; but, even if it had not, we think it is on every ground desirable that the business of Ireland shall be done in Ireland and by Irishmen and Irishwomen. We do not see why you should be always running to your mother, or why you should be tied to her apron strings, especially when you are always quarreling. It is the wise mother herself who should say:—"You two boys ought to feel ashamed of yourselves for always running to me with your bickering; Go and play, and learn to agree." The longer the old mother keeps you tied to her apron strings, the longer will your feuds last, and the more will you be encouraged to fret and kick. Left to yourselves, you would learn self-reliance, moderation, good-fellowship, real patriotism; you would have to consult for the common good: Old Bogie would more and more take on the appearance of a brother: you would find the path of least resistance, and Ireland would prosper.

There is an old Bible "prophecy" which may well be applied to Ireland under Home Rule: "The envy of Ephraim shall depart, and they that vex in Judah shall be at an end: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim." But that will never be until you learn to pull together.

We, on this side, do not think there is much in your plea that Home Rule would give the power to men who have been guilty of "criminal conspiracy" and of "promoting their designs by methods which they knew led to outrage." The phrase "criminal conspiracy," in relation to Irish affairs, may mean anything or nothing. I do not admit that the leaders of the Nationalists have been guilty of abetting really criminal courses. I know that some of them, in times of extreme difficulty and trial, used their influence for good ends, and to repress violent feeling (in that, setting an example which many leaders in Ulster might profitably follow). The wrong-doing and rapacity of property-owners in Ireland have been fully recognised by Parliament and by courts of law, and it was natural that violence should follow legalised robbery, and that revenge should pursue rapacity. The Irish leaders had to work in the atmosphere and on the lines of that condition of things. How could they avoid seeming entanglements with wrong-doing? I only wonder they came out of the ordeal as well as they did.

But in these great transactions we must think of the future, and we believe that when Ireland has the responsibility of self-government the right men will come to the front for solid work. The majority in Ireland are not fools. They want to be prosperous and happy. They love their country, and want it also to be prosperous and happy, and we firmly believe that they would be thankful to combine with their present opponents in an honest effort to make the best of Ireland's resources. Believing this, we regard your attitude as strangely unpatriotic and unfriendly, and can account for it only on the ground that you cannot bear the thought of giving power to old church antagonists. You think you are safe-guarding Ireland. We think you are only holding the fort for yourselves.

Truly yours,

J. PAGE HOPPS.

IRELAND: A STOCK EXCHANGE VIEW.

WE do not, as a rule, pay any attention to Stock Exchange opinion in relation to political questions, but, in an affair of money-value, we should be very much inclined to listen to it with very considerable care. Ulster may rave about the "financial ruin" that will follow Home Rule, but Ulster is excited, and considerations that are not financial and commercial colour its outlook. We prefer a cold-blooded Stock Exchange view, and have just come across it in the form of a notable little article in *The Stock Exchange; a weekly Journal for Capitalists and Investors*, which is really noticeable as to the fall in values in Irish securities, their subsequent partial recovery, and their future prospects. This journal is against Home Rule and believes it will not come: but it keeps cool and forecasts the consequences without temper or bias, and its few words, in the circumstances, are worth thousands of prejudiced prognostications and rhetorical flourishes. We quote every word of it:—

"We hope that none of our readers who may happen to hold Government or other Irish securities will be frightened into selling by the recent fall in the price of these stocks. That there has been a considerable fall—followed, in some cases, by partial recovery—will be seen by anyone who cares to examine the Irish stock-lists of the last month; nor is there any dispute as to the cause which has led to this decline. The introduction of the Home Rule Bill has frightened a few investors, who have sold, and market manipulations explain the rest. Even if the opinion of those who believe that Home Rule will be fatal to the prosperity of Ireland was correct, it would be folly to sell at present. Whatever else is uncertain in the political outlook, we may be sure that the present Home Rule Bill will never become law. It is possible, and even likely, that it will pass the House of Commons, but it is certain that it will be rejected by the House of Lords. If, before that rejection, Irish stocks have not recovered all their recent loss, it is as certain as ever the future can be that, with the rejection of the Bill, there will be sharp recovery. But if we take a wider view of the position, and assume that within a couple of years Home Rule will have been conceded to Ireland, is there ground for the belief that investments will be less safe than now, or that there will be any permanent

depreciation in the value of securities? That must depend upon whether Home Rule means material loss or gain to Ireland. No one can say with confidence whether it will mean the one or the other, but we cannot help thinking that, in one way or another, Ireland will gain more than she loses by Home Rule. We do not forget the threatened opposition of Ulster—we remember the plan of campaign and all it implies; but, after all, the Irish people are not demented: they know very well that if they destroy the national credit they must be the chief losers, and the many questionable courses they may have followed during the time when they were fighting they may abandon when to pursue them would mean heavy loss to themselves. No doubt the experiment of Home Rule is a very risky one, and it is impossible to argue from the fact that a hundred years ago the Irish Parliament acted honestly, that to-day it will act in similar fashion. There is no similarity between the two Parliaments; one was the representative of property, the other, if it ever assembles, will, so far as its majority is concerned, represent men who are without property. Still, it must not be forgotten that, as matters stand, Ireland is as poor and impoverished as she well can be. It is not the case of a country thriving and prosperous, which is to be suddenly handed over to men who may ruin that prosperity.

It is rather that of a country which, save in one small corner, is going from bad to worse, whose towns are bankrupt, whose land is becoming more impoverished day by day, and whose people are leaving it as if it had the plague. Home Rule can hardly make things worse—it may make them better. A native Parliament knows better than any English Government can know the wants of Ireland. It will spend public money more judiciously in meeting those wants; it will tend to keep Irish money in Ireland, and check the drain to England. At first, no doubt,

there will be uneasiness and apprehension; but we are hopeful that confidence will be restored before long. After all, the Imperial Parliament has not surrendered all control, and we may be sure that it would not tolerate open wrong. Under these circumstances we hope that investors will not accept the loss which they would have to reckon with if they sold their securities, but, at any rate, they will delay such selling for a time, for Irish stocks are certain to be higher, and a good deal higher, before they are much lower."

Lord Randolph Churchill may rave and Mr. Joseph Chamberlain may quibble for a year, and not supply as much wheat as is discoverable in this absolutely frank and lucid article.

LIGHT ON THE PATH.

THE FRIENDS.—The yearly meeting of the Society of Friends last month, in London, was an eventful one. It extended over six days, and the word "conference" was truly applicable to it. There was a full unburdening of conscience, heart, and mind, especially as to the present condition of the Society. *The Friend* says: "The discussion on the state of the Society this year has been without parallel in interest in the present generation, and has evinced an amount of intense thought and mental vigour that betokens well for our future. The discussion had not proceeded far ere the plough struck deep, and the men's meeting found itself for hours considering the fundamentals of Christian faith. There was much plain speaking, and many strong things were said that we cannot endorse; but the plea from young men on behalf of young men drove right home, and could not be turned aside. It would have done good to many of the thoughtful and cultivated young women of our Society, if they could have heard the whole discussion during the three sittings in which the state of the Society was before the meeting, for few could watch the course of thought without being convinced that the Society of Friends is taking an

advanced position on theological problems, from which it cannot recede, and our Church is likely to become the home of many earnest thinkers. It is impossible for our Church to remain where we were twenty years, or even ten years ago." As one proof of this, we quote from a speech by Mr. Sylvanus Thompson:—
"I would say it with the utmost reverence and with the deepest sincerity, knowing that it must give pain to many whom I would rather spare; but there is a ministry amongst us which tells us that we are going astray, that we are wrong, that we are not Christians, if we do not accept as a portion of necessary, essential Christian truth, the idea that by the sacrifice of the innocent for the guilty, by a sacrifice dripping with human and more than human blood, the vengeance of an angry God could be pacified, and that that is the only way in which the guilty could be brought to God. *Let me say to my dear friends, for myself and those with me, that we have not so learned Christ. The notion of a bloody sacrifice is a piece of heathenism, a piece of Judaism, as absolutely impossible of acceptance in the nineteenth century as would be the ceremony of circumcision if carried out in a Friends' meeting-house.*"

THEOLOGY IN THE BOARD SCHOOLS.—A member of a country School Board writes:—"I note your remarks on religious instruction in Board Schools, and the attempt that has been made to introduce religious dogmas into such schools all over the country. In most Board Schools in the country districts the parson rules the roost. In our own case he is chairman, and attends the school three times a week to give religious instruction and distribute tracts, a specimen of which I enclose you. My own children, aged four and six years, received this tract from the assistant teacher. I have been a member of the Board for the last six years, and no resolution with reference to religious instruction has ever been proposed. When I first went on, the Catechism was openly taught. The Board is composed of three churchmen, one Wesleyan and myself. I am afraid I should have very little support if I brought this subject before the Board. The children were recently given a holiday because it was Shrove Tuesday; at other times they are marched in procession to church for a flower service."

"ACTING."—Are we not getting rather soft about play-acting and play-actors? Even the grave and important London dailies give whole columns to the plots and performances of new plays, whether farcical or sentimental. Here is one of the latest bits of maudlin over a new actress:—"Signora Duse's death scene

was admirable in its subdued pathos. The deep joy and tenderness displayed in the reconciliation with her lover appealed to every heart. Seated in her bed, with his arm round her, the consumptive girl looked into his eyes, toyed with his hair, caressed him in every imaginable way, and congratulated herself that she was going to live for him and happiness. All at once her head fell gently on his shoulder as she sighed out his name, her hand dropped loosely to her side, and she passed peacefully away. The scene held the house spell-bound, and at its close Signora Duse was recalled again and again to receive the spontaneous applause which testified to her triumphant success." Even the solid and sober *Daily Chronicle* gives us two-thirds of a precious column over this player, and wipes its weeping eyes:—"The wretched girl, instead of going to the mirror to survey the change wrought in her by the fatal disease from which she has so long been suffering, sadly looks at her white and wasted hands. One of the most pathetic elements of this graphic illustration of the gradual fading of life comes, as may be supposed, with the entry of Armand after a protracted absence. There were few dry eyes in the house last night when Marguerite's pale face suddenly became illumined, and when she staggered into the arms of the man for whose presence she craved. The exultation imposing too severe a strain upon her strength, the final flickering of existence, &c." What morbid fooling!

NOTES ON BOOKS.

"The poetical works of George MacDonald." In two volumes. London: Chatto and Windus. It is only necessary that this work should be known in order to win for it the interest of a multitude of Mr. MacDonald's old admirers. In these two large and handsome volumes are gathered up the poetic product of his work during many years. Whether the work will be as acceptable to those who are not Mr. MacDonald's old admirers remains to be seen, for the taste for his somewhat peculiar poetry is a rather acquired one. It is apt to be occasionally perilously simple, and only the steady observer will infallibly

find the deep thoughts that never fail to tone and fortify. The poems are alive with quaint ideas and quaint expressions, picturesque fancies, out-of-the-way thoughts, arresting analogies, pretty devices, tender feelings. We feel moved to quote, but what would be the use of presenting a little root or spray of this or that as a specimen of the wood? It must suffice to say that it is a work which might give any thoughtful and sensitive man or woman many a happy and uplifting hour. It is a very human book.

"The King and the Kingdom: a study of the four gospels." Three volumes. London: Williams and Norgate. In turning over the pages of these volumes, one feels how entirely the author, with the help of the printer, has ignored almost every possibility of making them attractive. The pages are unrelieved by chapters or sections. Straight on, through over a thousand pages, the writer plods, without appearing to take breath more than twice. A closer scrutiny reveals the cause. The writer, as he explains in his Preface (reprinted in each volume, without alteration), is simply concerned to disentangle and spread out the multitudinous threads of the four gospels without bias, without anxiety, and without a case. As a matter of fact, he necessarily has his preliminary mood, his personal equation and his personal notions, but he is a cool and painstaking guide and is worth attention. The index to quotations from the gospels is an enormously long one. There are also useful indexes to various subjects, to miracles, and to parables.

"Verbum Dei." The Yale lectures on preach-

ing, 1893. By R. F. Horton. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Another of the books that make us smile—amused and glad. Not long ago, it took a rather daring Unitarian to say: "The Bible is not the 'Word of God,'" but here is Mr. Horton saying it, with the calm assurance that he has at his back not only his immensely strong congregation at Hampstead, but all the new and growing strength in the camp of the old "Orthodoxy." It is not at all easy to say what is the special vocation of the Unitarian Church at Hampstead, now that Mr. Horton has decided to stay there, and there are signs that even the Unitarian Association may shortly have to say, "Othello's occupation's gone." Anyhow, Othello will soon cease to be painted black. A leading statesman lately said, "We are all Socialists now." With more truth we may say, "We are all Rationalists now"—all who count, anyway. Mr. Horton's nine lectures are, of course, highly intelligent, perfectly simple, and right "up to date," with just a pleasant flavour of old times, and sufficient inconsistency to make the whole piquant and alive.

EMERSON DAY BY DAY.

*The debt is paid,
The verdict said,
The Furies laid,
The plague is stayed,
All fortunes made:
Turn the key and bolt the door,
Sweet is death for evermore.
Nor haughty hope, nor swart chagrin,
Nor murdering hate can enter in.
All is now secure and fast;*

1.—BELIEF consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul; unbelief in denying them.—*Montaigne.*

2.—SHAKESPEARE is the only biographer of Shakespeare, and even he can tell nothing, except to the Shakespeare in us, that it is, to our most apprehensive and sympathetic hour.—*Shakespeare.*

3.—THEY are not kings who sit on thrones, but they who know how to govern.—*Eloquence.*

4.—THERE is no event greater in life than the

*Not the Gods can shake the past:
Flies to the adamantine door,
Bolted down for evermore.
No thief so politic,
No Satan with a royal trick
Steal in by window, chink, or hole,
To bind or unbind, add what lacked,
Insert a leaf, or forge a name,
New-face or finish, what is packed,
Alter or mend eternal fact.—THE PAST.*

appearance of new persons about our hearth, except it be the progress of the character which draws them.—*Domestic Life.*

5.—ZOOLOGISTS may deny that horse hairs in the water change to worms, but I find that whatever is old corrupts and the past turns to snakes. The reverence for the deeds of our ancestors is a treacherous sentiment. Their merit was not to reverence the old, but to honour the present moment, and we falsely make them excuses of the very habit which they hated and defied.—*Works and Days.*

6.—As every pool reflects the image of the sun, so every thought and thing restores us an image and creature of the supreme good. The universe is perforated by a million channels for his activity.—*Plato*.

7.—If we tire of the saints, Shakspeare is our city of refuge.—*Swedenborg*.

8.—Who shall forbid a wise scepticism, seeing that there is no practical question on which anything more than an approximate solution can be had?—*Montaigne*.

9.—FATE is for imbeciles; all is possible to the resolved mind.—*Montaigne*.

10.—WE ask for long life, but 'tis deep life or grand moments that signify. Let the measure of time be spiritual, not mechanical.—*Works and Days*.

11.—THEY can conquer who believe they can.—*Courage*.

12.—DISCOURSE, when it rises highest, and searches deepest, when it lifts us into that mood out of which thoughts come that remain as stars in our firmament, is between two.—*Clubs*.

13.—THE sum of wisdom is that the time is never lost that is devoted to work.—*Success*.

14.—THE powers of the busy brain are miraculous and illimitable.—*Success*.

15.—THE charm of the best courages is that they are inventions, inspirations, flashes of genius.—*Courage*.

16.—THE head is a half, a fraction, until it is enlarged and inspired by the moral sentiment.—*Courage*.

17.—LET the man learn to look for the permanent in the mutable and fleeting; let him learn to bear the disappearance of things he was wont to reverence without losing his reverence; let him learn that he is here not to work but to be worked upon, and that, though abyss open under abyss, and opinion displace opinion, all are at last contained in the eternal cause:—

If my bark sink, 'tis to another sea.

Montaigne.

18.—'Tis the bane of life that natural effects are continually crowded out, and artificial arrangements substituted.—*Success*.

19.—WE do not count a man's years until he has nothing else to count.—*Old Age*.

20.—THE thing done avails, and not what is said about it.—*English Traits*.

21.—INTELLECT annuls Fate. So far as a

man thinks he is free.—*Fate*.

22.—AT the conjurer's we detect the hair by which he moves his puppet, but we have not eyes sharp enough to descry the thread that ties cause and effect.—*Fate*.

23.—THE pleasure of life is according to the man that lives it, and not according to the work or the place.—*Fate*.

24.—IF you accept your thoughts as inspirations from the Supreme Intelligence, obey them when they prescribe difficult duties, because they come only so long as they are used, or if your scepticism reaches to the last verge, and you have no confidence in any foreign mind, then be brave, because there is one good opinion which must always be of consequence to you, namely, your own.—*Courage*.

25.—WE live among gods of our own creation.—*Success*.

26.—THE Ode on Immortality is the high-water mark which the intellect has reached in this age.—*English Traits*.

27.—MORALS are generated as the atmosphere is. 'Tis a secret, the genesis of either, but the springs of justice and courage do not fail any more than salt or sulphur springs.—*Success*.

28.—LET us build altars to the blessed unity which holds nature and souls in perfect solution, and compels every atom to serve an universal end.—*Fate*.

29.—THE first wealth is health.—*Power*.

30.—LET us build altars to the beautiful necessity. If we thought men were free in the sense that, in a single exception, one fantastical will could prevail over the law of things, it were all one as if a child's hand could pull down the sun. If in the least particular one could derange the order of nature, who would accept the gift of life?—*Fate*.

31.—LET us build to the beautiful necessity which makes man brave in believing that he cannot shun a danger that is appointed, nor incur one that is not, to the necessity which rudely or softly educates him to the perception that there are no contingencies, that law rules throughout existence, a law which is not intelligent but intelligence, not personal nor impersonal; it disdains words, and passes understanding; it dissolves persons; it vivifies nature, yet solicits the pure in heart to draw on all its omnipotence.—*Fate*.