

The Coming Day.

DECEMBER, 1894.

IN WHAT SENSE IS JESUS CHRIST A SAVIOUR ?

(AN ADVENT SERMON).

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins."—MATTHEW i., 21.

THOSE who ask the question, "What think ye of Christ?" usually mean by the question, Do you think he came as one of three, and the second person of the Trinity? Do you think he came as a substitute for you, to shed his blood as the price of pardon? Are you sound about his nature, correct in your view of his pre-existence, accurate in your estimation of his sacrificial relation to God? These are held to be the great questions. To me they appear to be little more than creations of misguided, if not diseased, imaginations. For consider, what is the great reality in life. Here one makes it the efficacy of a priest's touch, the virtue of a magic wafer, or of an enchanted thimblefull of wine, or the power of a dozen drops of water; there another makes it the paroxysm of an excited emotion or the reception of a dogma. Can there be any doubt about it—that there is delusion in all this, assuredly spiritual superstition? The great reality must be mental culture, moral improvement, living spiritual power. And yet, see what the majority of so-called Christians are doing!—judging men and women entirely on the ground of their belief, the line of demarcation being not character but creed. A Unitarian, though as saintly as Channing or as unselfish as Florence Nightingale, is at once put on the left hand among the goats, while the last converted pugilist or showman who believes in the "blood," and is positive that Christ was the Almighty God, is as certainly at once placed on the right among the sheep. Here and there a noble soul, like Mr. Gladstone, protests against the monstrous immorality, but the great multitude of pronounced Christians go the other way. Mr. Gladstone, in rebuking the popular judgment, said, in his own weighty manner:—"A firm adherent to the principle of dogma, and under strong convictions as to the central elements of the dogmatic system of Christianity. I joyfully admit that the moral and spiritual results of that religion in very many cases overflow its dogmatic borders, such as I seem to see them. I have had many friendships with Unitarians, and have derived much profit from them, and I am truly glad to think that the Almighty is not stinted or limited in His modes of operation, and that those who, in fact, bear the blessed likeness of Christ are most truly and surely His."

What a splendid truth is here! and how surely it carries us right to the heart of our subject! "Those who bear the blessed likeness of Christ are most truly and surely His." That is the central truth. When you ask, "What think ye of Christ?" have you only in your mind the difference between Catholic and Protestant, Trinitarian and Unitarian? If so, you have in your mind nothing but a kind of theological riddle, and the answer will be a dreary guess that may only show more or less of ingenuity, or only indicate that the answerer had heard the solution of the riddle before. But if you have in your mind the far higher—nay, the infinitely higher question, Do you take Christ as your ideal of spiritual life, as your guide to duty, as your heart's inspirer, as your brother who knows the way to the Father's feet, then you have grasped the truth about Christ, and the question, "What think ye of Christ?" becomes, not a question soliciting an opinion, but an enquiry ascertaining your moral and spiritual position in relation to duty, to your fellow creatures and to God.

"Christianity," said one of our comrades, "is Christlikeness. A Christian is a man who, in his disposition and purposes, resembles Jesus Christ. The elements of Christianity are not intellectual beliefs about anything whatever; they are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Christianity is simply the highest form of manhood produced by the divine influence upon the soul. It includes every kind of excellence, not only gentleness, but courage; not only devoutness, but good citizenship; the care of the body as well as of the soul; fidelity to the truth as we see it, together with the utmost respect and kindness for those who see it differently. It includes humility—a profound sense of our own weakness and ignorance and fault; and it includes the very highest self-respect—a sense of the absolute sacredness of our own nature, as the child of God and the temple of His Spirit. It looks downward, taking reverent account of the humblest forms of human life, and of every created thing. It looks upward, recognising with veneration the unseen Power of the universe, and resting in its arms with peace unspeakable. It rejoices in hope, and lives in strong and joyful consciousness that good is mightier than evil, and that the universe is absolutely safe in its Father's hands. But why try to put in words all that belongs to a perfect life? Look at everything that is best in men and women; at every sweet and noble quality that shines in life; add all that the past has recorded of human excellence; add all that the imagination can conceive of attainment in character; and let all that go into the picture:—that is Christianity. 'Finally, brethren,' says the apostle, 'whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.'"

Now, I am not for a moment saying anything so foolish as that we who think these things are better than other people, though I do say we ought to

be. What I say is that, whatever our opinion, the great thing is not the opinion but the effect of it. If what you think of Christ is unrelated to conduct, your thinking is only like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. If you are a Trinitarian and think him God, your opinion is a bag of wind unless you are led by it to trust more than ever, not in your opinion, but in your likeness to the divine being you think you see. Or, if you are a Unitarian, and think him man, your opinion is only as a handful of chaff if it does not move you to long to grow up to the measure of the stature of a perfect man in him. I tell you if the difference between us were only a wrangle about definitions and dogmas I should hate the very sound of the words we had to use. But it is not that, for the question at issue is the weighty, practical one of the value of Christ to us as an inspirer in duty, as a spiritual force, a moral power; the question is whether, in the common affairs of life, the spirit of Christ is animating us to conquer our selfishness, to overcome our cowardice, to correct our errors, to purify our affections, and to elevate our aims; the question is, What think ye of Christ as your life's inspiration and guide?

One of our modern novelists pictures a poor, hard-working man on his death-bed, moaning over the blurred and misty record of his life, but the moan was a sorrowful indictment against so-called Christian people. "I've often been hankering after the right way," he said, "and it's a hard way for a poor man to find—at least, it has been so to me. No one taught and no one told me. When I was a little chap they taught me to read, but never gave me any books. Only I heard folks say the Bible was a good book. So when I grew a little older like I took to it. But you'd never believe white was white or day was day when you saw everybody acting as if white was black and day was night. It's not much I can say for myself in another world, God forgive me, but I can say this: I fain would have gone after the Bible rules if I'd seen folks credit it. But they all spoke up for it, and then went and did clean contrary to it. In those days I would ha' gone about with my Bible in my hand, like a little child, my finger on the place, asking for the meaning of a text, but no man told me. Then I took two or three texts as clear and pure as glass, and I tried to do what they bid me. But I don't know how it was. I saw masters and men all alike, caring nothing for minding these texts, so I grew so think it must be all a sham put upon poor folks and ignorant children, and such like."

And that is no fiction, for it is the truth that for one who strives every day to follow Christ there are a thousand who will fight over a dogma concerning him. Does, it matter, then, whether we hold him to be God or only man? Yes, in many ways. The practical value of the beautiful truth of the humanity of Christ is that when we know him as man we restore him to the race, we comprehend his struggles, we see the significance of his example, we learn the meaning of our sonship in perceiving his, we learn to go to God our Father for ourselves. Loving brother! we will not lose him by excluding him from the

circle of humanity. Glorious leader ! we will not silence him by transporting him to a realm of mystery beyond our reach. Bright example ! we will not veil the glory of his countenance by the hiding cloud of fabled deity. Come near to us, O spirit of the human Christ ! and, as our brother, teach us to be faithful sons of God. Men ask us what we think of thee, but may we rather ask, What, from thy bright world of love and purity, dost thou think of us ?

IF JESUS CHRIST CAME TO LONDON ?

(SPOKEN AT CROYDON.)

“CITIZEN SUNDAY” should henceforth mean much in the history of London. For once, hundreds of religious teachers in all sorts of churches agreed to devote the day to a consideration of this great city’s needs. It is a hopeful and wholesome sign of the times. May it lead on to a truer comprehension and a more fruitful discharge of the duties of the Church in these serious times !

For my own part, I purpose to devote all or most of this month of Sundays to the subject, and to do so with a well-known suggestion or question for our guidance and inspiration : “ If Jesus Christ came to London ? ”

This was the subject set up for discussion at a great gathering last Sunday afternoon, under the leadership of Mr. Stead. An impressive sight ! What a sign of the times, this vivid new spirit in relation to sociology !

Some may shrink from the subject, especially when we go on to say that our question means : What would Jesus Christ do about the School Board election, the work of the County Council, and the administration of the Board of Guardians ? And there *is* something to shrink from. Already we see the insidious poison trickling in. Even so tasteful a paper as the *Christian World* prints prominently a poem with the odious heading, “ Diggleism and Christ.” Alas ! one can see an almost sickening degradation possible. Many will be too ready to make Christ back their bills, or even take their side in a quarrel.

And yet the measure of our shrinking may be the measure of our unbelief. It may show how unreal he has become to us, just as the cry, “ A minister should not touch politics,” may only show how the fine old prophetic function of the minister has disappeared, or how the whole of that practical arena has become defiled.

It may really be doing the greatest possible service to Christ and Christianity to ask : What would happen if the founder came to see how we were getting on, or to take part in what we do ? I think he would find

comrades in some very unexpected people. Anyhow, we want a kind of measuring rod, a standard, by which all things may be tried, and I know none better than Jesus Christ.

The great difficulty is the utter dissimilarity between the circumstances of Christ's life and ours. There is very little resemblance between Palestine and England, or between London and Jerusalem. Besides, his life seemed to lie outside the world's routine, and one can almost excuse the feeling that it is a kind of sacrilege to connect him, for instance, with a contested election, and the push and pull of public life.

But unless we are to lose him for real life, we must try to imagine what he would do in our entirely different circumstances. And that is not so very difficult. What we have to do is to get a vivid insight into his actual character, to grasp his principles, to find his controlling moods and forces, and specially to get at the real tone and temper and bias of his spirit. In details we cannot much imitate him, but in spirit we might be entirely led by him. Everywhere, and in regard to everything, we can almost certainly tell what he would do, or what he would have us do.

One thing certainly shines out from so much as we know of this beautiful life:—its natural and most simple consciousness and recognition of humanity's oneness, and its oneness in God.

For my own part, I think the best part of Mr. Stead's hour and a-half's speech last Sunday was its superbly great beginning: "Sons of God, daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ, before we begin to speak, let us pray." I think it is nearly all in that "Sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ."

Suppose, now, we act at all up to that, what follows? Who is that little errand boy, that poor needlewoman, that old woman on her way to the work-house, that old man looking on his wreck before going the same dark, melancholy road, that child, half blue on a winter's morning before the School Board door, that criminal, shivering or scowling in the dock? "Sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ!" What an almost impossible meaning there is in these words! But the measure of the apparent impossibility is the measure of our own far-offness from the great human and divine ideal. O, my brothers and sisters, what would happen if we were true to it!

Next in value to that first three minutes of Mr. Stead's ninety minutes' speech was the revival of the precious rallying cry for a new national social union: "The union of all who love in the service of all who suffer." That, in its way, is as perfect as "Sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ."

What more do we need? If we could get it, no wrong would be without a remedy, no right would be beyond the hope of attainment. "The union of all who love in the service of all who suffer!" What a creed for any church! what a bond of union for any society! What a guide for any life! "The union of all who love in the service of all who suffer." Surely that is the ideal which brings us nearest to Jesus, which makes us worthiest of being sons and daughters of God! What it practically means in citizenship we shall see as we go on. It can only mean what the master would mean if he were here.

THE ATONEMENT.

BY J. TINKLER.

(Concluded from page 169).

Now mark how the whole ritual as regards these sacrifices centred on a double thought—the blood and the fat. In every sacrifice two things were reserved as sacred, the blood and the fat. All the rest—that is, all that was really wholesome—was used for food.

The blood and the fat—but the one no more than the other. Here is a parallel to the parable of the fire and the worm. The utterance in Mark is equally distinct about the worm that dieth not and the fire that is not quenched. Evangelicalism has preached a hell fire, but it has never dared to preach a hell worm. It has talked with eagerness of redemption through the blood, but it has never mentioned the other half of the "type." We have heard with weariness of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and the prefiguring types of the older testament. Preachers have talked glibly—far too glibly—about the precious blood of Christ, but even their profanity has never attained to the precious fat, and yet it is to be marked distinctly that each was as essential as the other to the perfection of the sacrifice.

Let us verify the result of our examination, and suppose that these Hebrews really believed these sacrifices to be efficacious in drawing down pardon for sin. How inexplicable becomes their conduct!

Let us take two clearly recorded instances where real sin (that is, sin against their moral law) was committed, the making of the golden calf and the sin of David against Uriah. How did Moses and David endeavour to make atonement? Surely, if ever these blood sacrifices of bulls and goats were necessary or effectual, it was on these occasions. Those who sought to make atonement were intimately acquainted with the rubric and ritual, and yet, according to the record, not one drop of blood was spilt.

The importance of this fact as rescuing the book from the superstitions of its expositors cannot well be over-rated.

And Moses said unto the people: Ye have sinned a great sin, and now I will go up unto the Lord, peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin and Moses returned unto the Lord and said: Oh, this people have sinned a great sin and have made

them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin and, if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses: Whosoever hath sinned him will I blot out of my book.

Mark well that we do not plead the grandeur or even the accuracy of this record. (It makes Moses stand out as nobler than his Maker.) We cite it as showing these two things: (1) According to the record, in this case of very real sin, the idea of atonement seems absolutely independent of blood sacrifice. (2) The eternal Justice cannot be satisfied by any substituted punishment, even though the sacrifice be acquiescent.

And the same verification comes from the story of David. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it. Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit." To this futility of blood sacrifice bear all the prophets witness in many passages too trite to quote.

The foundation of this supposedly Scriptural theory is rotten. The Jews simply hated Jesus, and thought him so dangerous to their religion that they crucified him. Surely the whole essence of sacrifice lays in its motive from the offerers, and yet here the Jews are completely ignorant. Could it be possible that an expiatory sacrifice was offered without the consent or even the knowledge of the offerer?

It is hardly worth detaining ourselves in discussing the morality of the idea of substitutionary punishment, and its irreverence is almost equally apparent, for what more fearful charge could you bring against any government than that its penalties could be bought off? The picture of a Judge accepting the sufferings of innocence in acquittance of the liabilities of guilt shocks our every sentiment of righteousness.

There is a striking passage in Paul's letter to the Philippians, where he expresses his desire "that I may know him (*i.e.*, Jesus) and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings." If Paul knew that the sufferings of Jesus were unique and substitutionary in the great plan of salvation, this was a strange utterance.

The atonement of Jesus was not a death to appease an imagined wrath above us, but a pure life witching away the malice from amongst us. Instead of the fiction of an incensed Jupiter, there was seen in Judea the man Jesus filled with the consciousness of the Divine nearness and the Divine goodness. He saw humanity revolted from the great goodness, and he took upon himself to be the medium of reconciliation. A pure enthusiasm to give light where

there was darkness, a strong passion for truth which could endure rejection and scorn, passion and enthusiasm firm to the end, even unto death, that is power whereby, alike then and now, God is redeeming, reconciling, atoning man to Himself.

Notice how the writers ascribe the operative effect as on man. Jesus was made perfect through suffering "that he might bring many souls into his glory." "Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we being dead unto sins should awake unto righteousness." "Christ also hath suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Satisfaction for sin, satisfaction to Divine justice—these are purely terms of artificial theology. We hear a good deal of rhetoric about dishonouring the majesty of the broken law, but can a law be dishonoured by the mere fact of its being transgressed? Spiritual laws are perfectly well able to take care of their own majesty. It is the transgressor only who is dishonoured.

If salvation depends on the understanding of the sacrificial death of Jesus, it is surely strange that Jesus should so uniformly omit it from his message. The Sermon on the Mount is absolutely barren of all these "great central truths" of the Evangelical Alliance.

If it is cavilled that Jesus could not speak of his death until it was accomplished, be it noted that he did very explicitly speak of his death, and (according to the record) foretold it more than once in detail.

Let us now suppose that death was, as we are so repeatedly told, the one base of human salvation, the central thing by which Christianity stands possessed of its value. Let us suppose, as we are bound to suppose, that the one fact which gave that death all its glory and all its meaning was that, by means of it, Jesus was to make expiation for human sin, and to purchase a free pardon for guilty humanity:—for what reason was this vital element not stated? How, consistently with the honesty of Jesus or even with mere kindness to the disciples, could it have been kept secret? But it was not uttered, and we are irresistibly compelled to conclude that it was no part of the thought of Jesus.

The same silence marks the day of Pentecost. It was only seven weeks after the death of Jesus, when Peter, with the other disciples at his hand, preached to the assembled Jews. It is impossible to imagine other than that the memory of Calvary was triumphant over all their thoughts: and his speech on that death—what was it? The expiation of human sin? Satisfaction of Divine justice? Justification? Imputed righteousness? Not a syllable of any of these things.

If ever there was an occasion, whether we look to the speakers, to the hearers or to the circumstances when these things (supposing them to be vital to the Christian faith) should have been uttered, it was there and then. But

they were not uttered, and we are compelled again to deny them as part of the disciples' gospel.

Oh, how Christianity has been wounded in the houses of its friends! "Rob the gospel of the Atonement," cries the modern pietist, "and you rob Christianity of its core. If I have no longer the precious sacrifice of my Saviour's blood to rely upon, I am without a refuge! If there is no Mediator between God and man there is no hope of deliverance for my sin-sick soul!"

And is it not most weak and most irrational to give up all hope of the deliverance of thy sin-sick soul for lack of a Mediator with God? What sort of a God dost thou worship if He needs such a go-between? Are His attributes consistent if He is Almighty and yet cannot forgive the offences of human frailty without the incense of blood to pacify Him? The precious sacrifice of thy Saviour's blood! Is it the pouring out of a red fluid which has been formed from the digestion of food that can make kind the Providence of a million worlds?

The remark of Cicero on the death of the Decii is not a little curious as the spontaneous utterance of a philosophic mind on the doctrine of vicarious punishment. "You believe that the gods were appeased by their death? How great, then, was the iniquity of the gods who could be appeased only by such noble blood!"

HOLIDAY GLIMPSES.

"A CONTINENTAL SUNDAY."

THE minor moralities, to say nothing of the major ones, run very much upon geographical lines. In fact, the moral latitude and the geographical one have always to be taken together by the onlooker if he would really understand what people are about, or how far they are either good or bad.

In Scotland, the writer of this note was reproved by "a wee lassie" for very quietly whistling a few bars of a hymn on "the Sabbath." In Basle he sat in an open-air theatre one Sunday evening with the unanimous approval of a crowded audience, witnessing the performance of a drama and the consumption of, say, 1,300 glasses of beer. At Ostend he "assisted," with a thousand others, on a Sunday afternoon, at a presentation of prizes to the scholars of a town school for teaching singing, and listened to a programme which contained nothing more "religious" than an "Ouverture de Rosamunde," a "Rigodon de Dardanus," a "Polonaise pour deux pianos," and a "Gavotte." In the evening the town provided a concert in one of the handsomest and most effective music halls in the world. The programme

was undisguisedly "secular," including the "Overture" to "Le Capitaine Henriot," a polka, a waltz, and a selection from "La Traviata," and a very brilliant performance it was, too; the people sitting in little groups of three or four round tiny tables, but not one in fifty drinking anything; the few who drank indulging only in coffee, but nearly all the men smoking.

In the hall, a gigantic poster announced the opening of the season on Sunday, July 1st. There are to be "public rejoicings," a congress of the Federation of Cyclists, with a procession and a reception at the Hotel de Ville; an afternoon concert by the band of the third regiment of the line, an evening concert assisted by the cantatrice, Mdle. M. Lignieri, followed by a ball, an illumination of the market place and the opening of a new aquarium. And that is a Sunday programme!

One has seen it before, and it is a stale story; but these glimpses do not always appear in the same light, even to the same pair of eyes, for life's experiences change one's point of view. How does it all look now to an old secretary of a society for procuring the very small crumb, the opening of public libraries and museums on Sunday in dear old drowsy England? It is difficult to say; one might easily fail to put the effect into fitting or really expressive words. The "Continental Sunday" has its bright, human and happy side, but a very slight turn to the left reveals the drinking dens, the hideous shows, the venerated brutality and the unvenerated and sometimes slimy silliness behind; and, with many thoughts, one thinks afresh of the wise old English grandmothers, with their solid, quiet, sweet and wholesome ways.

THE NEW SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON.

THERE is really very little to say about it, except that the old squad have been returned to power with a very much diminished majority, and that, if the votes could have been more economically used, the so-called "Progressives" would have been at the top. We have frequently expressed our opinion respecting the two sides in the matter of religious instruction. There really was nothing to choose between them, though, if anything, the balance of consistency and reality was in favour of the old majority with its circular. The "Progressives" undoubtedly played a game, and, to a very considerable extent, said what they did not mean in professing to yearn for religious instruction in Board schools. The leaders decidedly did not. The prize for the worst programme may be

handed to the *Daily Chronicle*, which hung out, in positively screaming type, the watchword, "Stick to the Bible. Trust the teachers." Trusting the teachers means hiding your head in the sand, and giving a multitude of young men and women the right to brew their own decoction from the Bible, and ladle it out to the children they happen to have on hand. *And they do it.* So that, in one school, the poor little people may be told that Jesus had no father, and, in another school, that his father's name was Joseph, and so on, all through the cabinet of theological curiosities. But the bulk of the teachers have protested that they teach the deity of Jesus Christ, and the majority of them, poor things! think they are quite unsectarian in doing that. And so, again, through the whole list of "Christian

truths." We believe as firmly as ever, that the subject has no business to be entangled with this matter of national education, and we further believe that London will say so at the next election if John Burns, John Clifford, and the rest of them will be thorough, frank, and consistent.

But while we do not think there is much to

choose between the two sides in relation to religious instruction, we entirely agree that the "Progressives" are far and away better School Board and national education men and women, hence we rejoice at their success. Some day they will grasp their principles and the meaning of them, then farewell to these miserably wasteful "religious" rows.

ELECTRICITY.

"The Life and Inventions of Thomas Alva Edison." By W. K. L. Dickson and Antonia Dickson. With 200 illustrations. (18s.) London: Chatto and Windus. Of course, an interesting book, telling the story of a marvellous life, still, we hope, in its full flow. But it is more: it is an eminently instructive book. The lover of Edison's grand subject will here find much to enlighten him as to his methods, aids and results. The book is magnificently produced, with a great variety of illustrations, many of them important representations of old and new apparatus. A splendid Christmas or New Year present for a young electrician.

"Electric lamps and electric lighting." By J. A. Fleming, M.A., D.Sc., F.R.S., Professor of Electrical Engineering in University College. London: *The Electrician* Printing and Publishing Company, Salisbury Court, Fleet Street (7s. 6d.) This very handsome book is a revised reproduction of lectures given at the Royal Institution of Great Britain, by a master of his subject—simple, clear, learned, solid. The new-comers are

happy in having the help of such men. We only hope such brilliant help will not lessen original research. It is an ideal bit of work as a specimen of nice printing and illustration. The volume is rich in highly instructive diagrams, and has a good index.

"Dynamo attendants and their dynamos." By A. H. Gibbings, A.I.E.E., London: S. Rentell, (1s.). An unpretentious little work, aiming to be "a practical book for practical men." It is an open question whether, for dynamo attendants, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." Many overlookers say it is, and protest that "follow your orders" should be the one thing needful. Perhaps so; but where there is no overlooker, or where private dynamos are in question, it certainly is desirable that attendants should know what they are dealing with. For such persons this book has been written, and we are bound to say that an intelligent and observant man would find it very suggestive. Indeed, it deals with the subject in a way which even experts might find informing.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

THE BIBLE FOR BEGINNERS.—We often wish that more teachers and parents would try "The Bible for Beginners," a book that was compiled with extreme care for schools and families. It has been described as follows: "The main object of the book is to lay before beginners what may be called a shortened Bible, in the words of the Bible itself, and in such a way as to preserve the unity and continuity of each book, and to give, in a connected form, as much of its contents as

shall convey a fairly adequate idea of both its substance and spirit." The book (over 280 pages, with maps) will be sent post free to any address for two shillings. A good judge thus writes: "I like the Bible very much. It is just what I wanted. It is difficult, and takes a long time, to pick out all the bits from different chapters that are suitable to read to children, and you have done it all for me. Thank you for sending me the book, and for editing it."

OUR VILLAGE CHOIR.—Our choir always sang an anthem before service as a kind of introduction. One Sunday morning this was it (or part of it):—

Soprano: " They toi-oi-oil not,
They toil not,
They toil not,
Ny-y-ther do they spin."

She paused:—

Tenor: " Ne-ee-ee-ther do they spin.
They toi-oi-oi-oil not,
They toil not,
They toil not
Nee-ee ee-ther do they spin."

The tenor ceased:

Bass: " Nay-ay-ay-ther do they spin.
They toi-oi-oi-oil not,
They toil not,
They toil not,
Nay-ay-ay-ay-ther do they spin."

Then the voices of the three were lifted up in semi chorus:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| " Ny-y-y-ther | } do they spin. |
| Nee-ee ee-ther | |
| Nay-ay-ay-ther | |
| They toi-oi-oi-oil not, | |
| They toil not, | |
| They toil not, | } do they spin." |
| N-y-y-y-ther | |
| Nee-ee-ee-ther | |
| Nay-ay-ay-ther | |

That morning a stranger conducted the service—such a dear old man! Solemnly rising when the choir had finished, he slowly said: " Brethren, we will *begin* the service of the morning by singing the familiar hymn: ' And am I yet alive? ' "

CREMATION VERSUS BURIAL.—Another horrible story comes to us concerning burial before death. It is too shocking to print entire, but the following may suffice to strengthen anybody's resolve to secure cremation:—" William Ludwig was taken sick with typhoid fever Aug. 28th, 1892, and fifteen days later was pronounced dead by the attending physicians. Thirty-two hours later he was buried in the churchyard, a short distance from the house. A short time ago the church organisation decided to reconstruct the cemetery, and to do this several bodies had to be removed. Among them was that of Mr. Ludwig. During the process, the

horrible discovery was made that he had been buried alive. His body was turned face downward. . . . The legs were drawn up, and the knees were still pressed against the sides of the casket, showing the desperate efforts the unhappy man had made to burst open his living prison!" We have said "secure" cremation. But we deeply regret to say that is not entirely possible. We have known cases where a man's most solemn requests have not been complied with by relatives who imagined they respected and loved him. Perhaps if the man will only put the direction in his will, and make bequests turn upon its fulfilment, he may be obeyed.

CREMATION.—The following table gives the birthplaces of the 1,164 persons cremated at Fresh Pond, New York, up to date:—

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Germany 595 | India 4 |
| United States .. 388 | Cuba 4 |
| England 40 | Russia 3 |
| Switzerland .. 25 | Belgium 3 |
| Austria 24 | Australia 2 |
| France 22 | Canada 2 |
| Hungary 10 | Norway 2 |
| Ireland 12 | West Indies .. 1 |
| Italy 8 | Asia Minor .. 1 |
| Denmark 6 | On Mediterranean 1 |
| Scotland 6 | Unknown 1 |
| Holland 4 | |

THEY ARE CLASSIFIED:

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|---------------|-----------------|
| Men 756 | Women 308 |
| Boys 60 | Girls 40 |

MOTHER CHURCH.—We have received from a Yorkshire clergyman the following interesting and instructive letter:—

" Pardon my saying it, but you are always disposed to be rather hard upon the Established Church, as though it were more utterly abandoned to priestism, and addicted to the support of exploded rubbish than any other of our religious bodies. I think we must plead guilty to the former part of the charge, but not to the latter. As an instance, I see in *The Coming Day* the statement that on Trinity Sunday the state-church publicly condemns all who do not 'thus think of the Trinity.' But what of the tenacity with which most of the sects maintain their blood-theology? Without this indeed it would seem that most of them would have nothing left worth saying.

Then, too, you may not be aware that in the Established Church this Athanasian Creed is merely a survival, and is actually dying out in practice.

This is, of course, not logical, but it is the usual way in which English arrangements become obsolete.

The neighbourhood where I write this has been eaten up with stereotyped clericalism till quite lately. Of recent years, however, this monopoly has been broken through, and the use of the creed in question is no longer universal. The disuse of it gave great offence, and the matter was referred to the Arch-deacon, who, though a high churchman, replied that the use must be regarded as optional. Since then it has been openly maintained at clerical meetings, &c., about here, that the rubric as to the creed was 'more honoured in the breach, &c.'

So perhaps you will admit that a tendency to modify in this respect ought to be rather encouraged and commended than denounced.

We are a stupid old church I know, but then I believe a good many of the sects are equally stupid, to say the least."

THE NEWSPAPERS.—We do not want to bring the newspapers into contempt by our exposures of their defects: on the contrary, we are anxious to improve them and increase their influence. But now, for instance, what are we to say to this? On a Wednesday, in its principal leader, *The Daily Chronicle* said of Mr. Chamberlain that he is "a very powerful statesman," and might do "a very great service to his country." On the following day it said—also in its first leader—"All this would be interesting enough if Mr. Chamberlain showed any knowledge of social questions or any desire to acquire it. But this he has never done. He is not a thinker, and he has not a tinge of scholarship in his nature. His mental output nearly always creates the impression that he has confined his reading to newspapers and magazine articles, and that his ideas, vivid as they are, are the mere scrappy suggestions of &c." This is somewhere near the honest truth, but what about the "very powerful statesman"? Can a very powerful statesman be a man who really knows nothing of social questions, who is no thinker and no scholar, whose mental output suggests that his education is bounded by

newspaper and magazine articles, and whose ideas are scrappy suggestions?

BOARD SCHOOLS AND "RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION." We are surprised at *The Speaker*. Discussing Board Schools, it says, "Freed from sectarian interference, religious instruction is one of the most fruitful and important of the teacher's duties." We beg to totally differ from that queer dictum. It is not a bit the business of the Board School to touch this controverted topic, and the teacher's duties do not properly include it. It is a clear survival, and a sheer intrusion in schools, created by Act of Parliament, paid for by public rates, governed by public bodies, and occupied by children who are by law compelled to attend.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.—Mr. T. P. O'Connor has said perhaps the severest thing of Mr. Chamberlain—and almost the truest, we are sorry to say:—"Of course, he is never capable of rising above selfish ambition, selfish temper, selfish hatred—but he can work himself into temporary sincerity. He thinks with such shallowness—with such imperfect knowledge—that he may easily say the very opposite things on the same topic at a distance of years, perhaps even of hours."

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.—The *Standard* puts it to perfection:—"If the House of Lords is to be reformed, it will be, in reality, because the nation is unwilling to submit any longer to an effective veto on the voice of the popular Assembly. That is what it really comes to." Of course!

CO-OPERATIVE PRODUCTION.—We very cordially commend to our readers "An Account of the Exhibition of Co-operative Productions, Crystal Palace, 1894." It is immensely interesting as a vivid sign of the times, and, in our judgment, shows the way out of old Egypt into the Promised Land. It is by Mr. Thomas Blandford, and is published by the Labour Association, 9, John Street, Adelphi, London, at the nominal price of twopence. Send threepence for a copy, or, better still, a shilling or more, the balance to go towards the next exhibition.

Dogs.—An article in *The Humanitarian* tells us that in Sir B. W. Richardson's lethal chamber at Battersea as many as three hundred dogs a week are put painlessly to death—150,000 in ten years. What a mercy! We wish the three hundred a week could rise to three thousand, unless, indeed, we could imitate the Dutch and Germans, and put the biggest of these brutes into harness.

GOOD ENGLISH.—It is a small matter, but the clever people at South Place, Finsbury, ought really to improve their notice placard. We remember seeing this:—"Mr. M. D. Conway will deliver the following lecture:—Phantoms." But "Phantoms" surely is not a lecture. We believe this odd error is a standing one.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

"Treasure Trove." By Ann Black. London: Reeves and Turner. A quotation for every day in the year. A very pretty Christmas present, charmingly printed and bound, and far beyond the usual "run" of books of "elegant extracts." The quotations are varied, original and piquant, and full of pretty surprises. About 150 writers are quoted.

"My lyrical life: Poems old and new." By Gerald Massey. Second edition. Two vols. (5s. each) London: Watts & Co. Mr. Massey's brief "explanatory" we find very bright and interesting. It is so intensely naive, open-hearted, unconventional. The phrase, "lyrical life," is used because Mr. Massey looks upon his singing days as only one half of his life. To new readers he says, "I introduce myself, or, rather, the writings of my other earlier self, who is now almost a stranger to myself!"

The poems are immensely varied in form, subject, tone and style, from daintiest love-song to breeziest ballad or sturdiest lyric or weirdest spiritualist tale. We like them all, though they are by no means equal in worth or merit. "The Haunted Hurst: a tale of Eternity," is very strong meat, but we can stand it. It is full of immense thoughts, immeasurably set forth.

The concluding pages, lifting us from the horrors of the earlier ones, right up to the sphere of infinite light and love, are really very great. For daring, vivacity, simplicity, and big, beautiful, serious thinking, we hardly know where to turn for anything like it. The earnest thinking and heart-fervour in these volumes are not fashionable just now, when most people seem to like affected prettinesses or artificial "art-work," but we shall not be surprised if many come round to the robust naturalness and seriousness of this rich-natured poet.

"Literæ Humanioris. An appeal to teachers." By H. S. Salt. London: W. Reeves. Another of the excellent publications of *The Humanitarian League*, published at the nominal price of twopence.

"The world's need." A Poem: by R. J. Close. London: Digby, Long & Co. The burden of this little poem is expressed in four of its lines:

"Almighty Love! 'twas written long ago
That tho' all gifts we have, all science know,
And penetrate the depths of mystery,
Yet they all profit nothing without Thee!"

HAWTHORNE BUDS.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY JOHN TINKLER.

- 1.—WE who are born into the world's artificial system can never adequately know how little in our present state and circumstances is natural, and how much is merely the interposition of the perverted mind and heart of man.—*The New Adam and Eve.*
- 2.—THE ideas of people in general are not raised higher than the roofs of the houses. All their interests extend over the earth's surface in a layer of that thickness. The meeting-house steeple reaches out of their sphere.—*Notebook.*
- 3.—INDIVIDUALS whose affairs have reached an utterly desperate crisis almost invariably keep themselves alive with hopes, so much the more airily magnificent as they have the less of solid matter within their grasp whereof to mould any judicious and moderate expectation of good.—*The House of the Seven Gables.*
- 4.—NOBODY will use other people's experience, nor has any of his own till it is too late to use it.—*Notebook.*
- 5.—MEN and women, and children too, are such strange creatures that one never can be certain that he really knows them, nor ever guess what they have been from what he sees them to be now. What a complex riddle—a complexity of complexities—do they present! —*The House of the Seven Gables.*
- 6.—THE heart of true womanhood knows where its own sphere is, and never seeks to stray beyond it.—*Bli-hedale Romance.*
- 7.—THE longer I reflect, the less am I satisfied with the idea of forming a separate class of mankind on the basis of high intellectual power. At best it is but a higher development of innate gifts common to all.—*The Procession of Life.*
- 8.—IT is requisite for the ideal artist to possess a force of character that seems hardly compatible with its delicacy; he must keep his faith in himself while the incredulous world assails him with its utter disbelief; he must stand up against mankind and be his own sole disciple, both as respects his genius and the objects to which it is directed.—*The Artist of the Beautiful.*
- 9.—A NEW trial in a higher court may set judge, jury, and prisoner at its bar all in a row, and perhaps find no one less guilty than another.—*The New Adam and Eve.*
- 10.—THERE is poisonous stuff in any man's heart sufficient to generate a brood of serpents. Could I for one instant forget myself, the serpent might not abide within me. It is my diseased self-contemplation that has engendered and nourished him.—*Egotism, or the Bosom Serpent.*
- 11.—IF the world were crumb'd to the finest dust and scattered through the universe, there would not be an atom of the dust for each star.—*Notebook.*
- 12.—ON the rudest surface of English earth there is seen the effect of centuries of civilisation, so that you do not quite get at naked Nature anywhere.—*Our Old Home.*
- 13.—SHAKESPEARE has surface beneath surface, to an immeasurable depth, adapted to the plummet line of every reader; his works present many phases of truth, each with scope large enough to fill a contemplative mind. Whatever you seek in him you will surely discover, provided you seek truth.—*Our Old Home.*
- 14.—How early in the summer the prophecy of autumn comes! —*The Old Manse.*
- 15.—HUMAN flower-shrubs, if they will grow old on earth, should, besides their lovely blossoms, bear some kind of fruit that will satisfy earthly appetites.—*Buds and Bird Voices.*
- 16.—THE root of human nature strikes down deep into this earthly soil, and it is but reluctantly that we submit to be transplanted, even for a higher cultivation in heaven.—*The Hall of Fantasy.*

- 17.—STIMULANTS cannot quell the disease; they do but heighten the delirium.—*The Old Manse*.
- 18.—WHO can estimate the power of gentle influences, whether amid material desolation or the moral winter of man's heart?—*Buds and Bird Voices*.
- 19.—I SHALL endeavour so to live that the world may come to an end at any moment without leaving me at a loss to find foothold somewhere else.—*The Hall of Fantasy*.
- 20.—MOONLIGHT is sculpture; sunlight is painting.—*Notebook*.
- 21.—NEW truth is as heady as new wine.—*The Old Manse*.
- 22.—TRUTH often finds its way to the mind close muffled in robes of sleep, and then speaks with uncompromising directness of matters in regard to which we practise an unconscious self-deception during our waking moments.—*The Birthmark*
- 23.—THOUGH the heart be large, yet the mind is often of such moderate dimensions as to be exclusively filled up with one idea.—*The Profession of Life*.
- 24.—FAME! Some very humble persons in a town may be said to possess it, as the penny post, the town crier, the constable, and they are known to everybody; while many richer, more intellectual, worthier persons are unknown by the majority of their fellow citizens. Something analogous in the world at large.—*Notebook*.
- 25.—PEOPLE in difficulty and distress, or in any manner at odds with the world, can endure a vast amount of harsh treatment, and perhaps be only the stronger for it, whereas they give way at once before the simplest expression of what they perceive to be genuine sympathy.—*The House of the Seven Gables*.
- 26.—IT is very singular how the fact of a man's death often seems to give people a truer idea of his character, whether for good or evil, than they have ever possessed while he was living and acting among them. Death is so genuine a fact that it excludes falsehood or betrays its emptiness; it is a touchstone that proves the gold and dishonours the baser metal.—*The House of the Seven Gables*.
- 27.—IN a forest, solitude would be life; in a city it is death.—*The New Adam and Eve*.
- 28.—THE past, dismal though it may seem, should fling no gloom upon the future. To give it its due importance, we must think of it but as an anecdote in our eternity.—*Egotism*.
- 29.—NATURE loves to delude her aspiring students, and mock them with mysteries that seem but just beyond their utmost reach.—*The Intelligence Office*.
- 30.—THERE is no surer method of annihilating the magic influence of a great renown than by exhibiting the possessor of it in the decline, the overthrow, the utter degradation of his powers—buried beneath his own mortality.—*P.'s Correspondence*.
- 31.—NATURE would measure time by the succession of thoughts and acts which constitute real life, and not by hours of emptiness.—*The New Adam and Eve*.

MANY CALLED—FEW CHOSEN.

I had a peep in Paradise last night;
 And there I saw, all clad in gorgeous yellows,
 The only remnant of our choir bright,—
 The lad—the little one—who worked the bellows.