

The Coming Day.

MAY, 1894.

DR. HORTON AND THE APOSTLES' CREED.

(SPOKEN AT CROYDON).

ONE of my pleasant duties here is to report to you any exceptional indications of the advance of rational thinking in religion, and the application of rational methods in dealing with dying creeds. A few Sundays ago I reported to you an instance which, although not entirely new, had gathered singular significance. Dr. Horton's book on the Bible, "Verbum Dei," gave us abundant material for reflection, and led most of us to the conclusion that he and Dr. Herford across the road might just as well unite their forces for all purposes.

We were mistaken. Dr. Horton, for some reason, has thought it desirable to assert, in a most dramatic manner, his "soundness in the faith," and it is only fair to him to report his repudiation of rationality. For that is what has happened. Dr. Horton has chosen two of the most irrational notions for his dramatic emphasis,—the supernatural birth of Jesus and the actual resurrection of the body, both of which he elevates into essential articles in the Christian creed, and it does not make the irrationality less that he takes his stand on the so-called Apostles' Creed, a creed which is not the apostles', and which carries off the palm for putting into the smallest possible compass the greatest number of unbelievable notions, such as that Jesus was the only son of God, that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin, and that the body will rise again. But Dr. Horton suddenly reveals the fact that he is enamoured of this creed, and that he so believes in it as to induce him, in a hitherto unheard of way, to call upon the members of his congregation to rise in their places and recite it.

First of all, that dramatic incident itself demands attention. Three times did Dr. Horton call upon his congregation to rise and repeat in succession the three portions of the Creed, after he had expounded and enforced them. It was so unlike Dr. Horton that it is difficult to believe it, but the report in *The Chronicle* is full and very explicit. The reason for doing it does not appear, but the pressure seems to have been most serious. Think what it means—what it must mean in such a congregation. Here are the father and mother, here sons and daughters, here friends and relatives. "I tell you," says Dr. Horton, "that this Apostles' Creed is true; that it is the veritable Christian

faith. Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, after being conceived by the Holy Ghost, and the dead body will rise from the grave. All of you who believe it, stand up in your places, and say after me these words." The pressure was almost awful; it was certainly exceedingly unfair. I remember a similar case, when a sensational preacher, in announcing the Communion service at the close of the ordinary service, begged and challenged all to remain, and added, "If any insist upon leaving us, let them retire before the benediction." Under this severe pressure, some remained, only to be shocked the following day at their loss of rationality and self-respect. It was a bold piece of priestcraft, but I do not see how it differs from Dr. Horton's *coup d'état*, and I find it very difficult to understand.

Dr. Horton, for some unexplained reason, seemed to be anxious to make it clear that he wished "to part company with a large number of faithful and earnest men, whom we all love and admire," and we know perfectly well to whom he referred. Then, in a manner which I soften when I say it was blunt, he proceeded to affirm in the strongest way the supernatural birth of Jesus. But the reason he gave for this astonishing miracle is more amazing than the miracle itself. He said, "The Infinite and invisible Father was not content to remain in distant isolation from His creatures, or to leave them wandering and groping," and therefore, to use Dr. Horton's own blunt language, He sent His son to us through a virgin's womb. And then, I suppose, He was no longer in a state of "distant isolation." Why, what difference has that made, even if it happened? One more incomprehensible wonder, one more miracle from without, that no one would comprehend, and that no one could prove, and then everything as before. Even though Jesus did come by miracle, he went away again, and henceforth, so far as we can see, was to the world what all other influential teachers have been, only in a higher degree. If there was more in his coming than that; if he introduced some supernatural grace that should remain; if he really broke up God's "isolation," and opened up a path, where are we to find it? There is only one claimant. That is precisely the theory of the Roman Catholic Church, and Dr. Horton's odd reason for the miraculous coming of Jesus logically leads to Rome, with its supernatural priesthood, its saving sacraments, and its sensuous way between God and man. The moment we repudiate the Roman Catholic Church, its divine priesthood and its sacramental efficacy, we have Jesus left to us only for what he is worth to us as a teacher, an inspirer, a leader and a consoler. But how did his coming as such end the "isolation" of God? In order to answer this question, let us go right on to Dr. Horton's own ground. What does he mean by the Infinite Father being in a state of "isolation from His creatures"? Was He isolated from them all through "the Old Testament dispensation," as it is called? If we are to believe the records, He seemed to be less isolated then than now. He was always appearing to His creatures,—now in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night, and now to patriarchs whom He guided and to

prophets whom He sent. Was He "isolated" from His creatures when He led His people from Egypt into the Promised Land? for so the story runs. Was He isolated from the writers of the Book of Psalms, from the poet who wrote the 23rd Psalm? Was that poor soul mistaken when he said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters: He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake"? What does Dr. Horton really mean? I am sorry to say that we are obliged to often ask that question when preachers are concerned.

Did it really need a great conjuring trick to bring the Infinite Father out of His isolation? Is He really isolated from us in relation to the natural instincts and functions of fatherhood and motherhood? Must He insult fatherhood and motherhood in order to come near to us? Did He break the bounds of His isolation when He conveyed a man to us by miracle, and was He isolated from the birth of little Noel last Christmas morning? O, the pitiable nonsense and real impiety of it!

But still further, as to this "isolation" from us of "the Infinite Father." Is he isolated from us all through this enchanting spring? In truth, every tree and shrub round Dr. Horton's pretty church last Sunday smiled at the nonsense that was being reeled off inside. George Herbert said,

My God, how sweet and clean are Thy returns,
E'en as the flowers in spring.

Was he right? Jesus said that his Father clothed the lilies, and cared for the birds, and counted the very hairs of our heads. In whatever sense that is true, it shuts out the isolation of God.

Later on in his discourse, in expounding the belief in the Holy Ghost, Dr. Horton pointedly said that the Holy Ghost, "by whose mysterious operation he himself became flesh and blood, came among those who believed in him, in order to abide . . . as their own personal life." He said, "The Holy Ghost lived and worked in our human hearts, gave us a faith that was no idle, fallible creed, but a living power, humbling us in contrition, restoring us to power, enabling us to pray not only with the words of prayer, but with the inarticulate utterances of the heart, uniting us with God and showing us Christ not as a distant person, but as a living, vital Saviour."

This implies that the Holy Spirit had also been in a state of "isolation" before Christ came, and that now he is here, a saving and an infallible guide. Is it true? Yes, if you are a Roman Catholic. No, if you are only one of a mob of sectarian Christians, mutually excluding one another, and differing even about the very words of Christ. Dr. Horton says that God came in Christ because He was "not content to leave us wandering and groping." But are

we not wandering and groping still? In this very discourse, Dr. Horton says to dear and admired friends, "I part company with you because you do not believe in Jesus Christ just as I do." Who is wandering or groping,—he or they? In another part of his discourse he says, "There are myriads—and I question whether there is such a large proportion in any community under the sun as in London to-day—who never seriously think, who live and perish without reflection." And yet God ended His "isolation" 1894 years ago, on purpose that His creatures should cease to wander and grope! Is Dr. Horton one of the myriads who do not reflect?

As regards the other great essential Christian doctrine, it does not appear that Dr. Horton said much, but he included it in his dramatic *tour de force*, in asking the congregation to stand up and declare its belief in it. But one would like to put Dr. Horton into the witness box and cross-examine him. I would give a good deal to see him in the hands of his neighbour, Dr. Blake Odgers, for half an hour. Does Dr. Horton really believe that any one of us will ever get back an ounce of this "muddy vesture of decay," when we have once cast it off? He may have some beautiful, subtle, modern meaning for this time-honoured phrase, "the resurrection of the body," and may even mean by it something that a modern spiritualist could readily accept; but he must know that the old creed-makers meant the creed literally, and that nine people out of ten will think Dr. Horton means it literally, and perhaps he does. But, in that case,—only think of it!—this most modern of Nonconformists, this rationalist in relation to the Bible, this cultured Philistine in relation to the old mother Church, actually so far shuts his eyes and excludes his science as to believe that dead bodies, drowned, burnt, and turned to scattered dust, will, by some new conjuring trick, be restored and united again with the glorified spirits, who have done very well without them for perhaps thousands of years. Poor spirits! Will they know what to do with the recovered shell? Will they ever be happy again in their old uniform? Will they go all over again the hindrances they had so happily left behind?

But no; Dr. Horton does not believe in any such nonsense. He has some occult explanation which distinguishes between the resurrection of the body and the body's rising again. What that subtle distinction is I know not, but it must be there. And yet, if beneath that confession, "I believe in the resurrection of the body," there lurks an explanation which somehow dismisses the frank old meaning, why go on repeating the old words in the old way, or why galvanise a congregation to repeat in a new way an assertion or confession which, if not a gross survival, is only a pious blind?

It is not a pleasant duty to say these things, but it is a duty, and it is our business to face it. If there is any seeming arrogance or egotism in it, we cannot help it. We have given up these old-time crude imaginings, this magical birth, this magical resurrection, and we cannot help being surprised

or entertained by those who are cleaving to them. Perhaps there is not much involved in it after all. It may make no difference to us or to them, in relation to the vital things. But the duty remains the same—to be as honest, as frank, and as rational as we can, and we may at all events cherish the hope that Dr. Horton will admit that “the Infinite Father” will neither hate us nor hurt us because we are doing the best we can with such faculties as He has given us, in a world where, surely, to be rational is to be on the right road, and to be honest is to be saved.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE GENESIS CREATION STORY.

Continued from page 53.

WE proceed now to the Mosaic narrative. Chapter 1, verse 1, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Science accords no such beginning. Every conception of the Universe, the more it is examined, points to none. All research points to two things:—the eternity of matter and the eternity of energy. Years ago philosophers allowed that matter was indestructible. One might change mechanically or chemically (perhaps one and the same thing) the condition of matter; but its elements would remain, merely entering into new combinations. To this law was subsequently added another called the law of conservation of energy. In other words, energy can only be transformed. For example, motion when arrested is transformed into heat; when partially arrested, into part heat and part transfer of motion, and so on. The conception of these laws is extended to the whole Universe. Research points to identity of matter and energy. We now know, by the continued discoveries of the spectroscope, that not only is our parent sun and his children the planets composed of elements in common, but that the stars (every one yet examined), the nebulæ, the comets, and the meteorites have all elements in common with us, and also that these stars (suns like ours) are moving, some from us, some towards us, of all variety of size; some, like Sirius, most enormous, are in all conditions of age; some forming from nebulæ, others more advanced and waxing in light and heat, others at the zenith of splendour, others (like ours) on the decline, others no longer even white hot, but only red hot, and others without doubt (like our moon) burnt out, giant black masses on the move amongst their fellows, and waiting one day the necessary impact with some other wandering body to burst again into splendour of light and heat by the collision. And so the circle is made from birth, maturity, decline, and death to a new birth. If the nebular theory, according to the light lately thrown upon it, be accepted, there are no elements of a beginning such as is contemplated in the Mosaic narrative, but a sublimity far beyond it. It is the exigence of our nature that has led us to postulate a

beginning in creation. Yet God the Creator is affirmed to be eternal; then why not His works? It may be asked—I hope reverently—if the Creator had no beginning, but created things had, in what position must we contemplate the Creator before the beginning described in Genesis took place? I am taking for the moment the anthropomorphic view of Him we find in the Pentateuch. Was He solitary, in sublime antecedence? Omnipotent but ineffectual? Omnipresent without place for ubiquity? Omniscient in introspection only? Alas! we deal with the Infinite in our finite way, and are thus led into miserable absurdity. All is as beyond our ken as that God is eternal and a Spirit, expressions to which we bow without comprehending.

The Universe, at any rate, lends no support, when scientifically investigated, to any perspective of commencement. The nebular theory points to no beginning and no end, but to a system carrying eternal resource within itself. Indeed, to this eternal aspect of matter and energy, one of the divines of the Church of England has paid a tribute. Preaching before the Association for advancement of Science, the Bishop of Manchester has said, "We have learnt that both the matter and energy of the world are fixed quantities; that no efforts of man can increase or diminish them, and that, furthermore, in the changes which they exhibit, their latest always implies an antecedent state (where is the beginning then?) with which and with all states it is connected according to rules or laws which are being gradually discovered. This is no speculation; it is a fact experimentally tested and scientifically established."

Verse 2, "And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the waters."

Without making too much comment on this vague verse, it cannot be strictly said that the earth was ever without form and void. The ancient philosophers were fond of discussing "voids," which to modern scientists do not exist. The earth was always more or less round—it is not quite round now—as all plastic bodies must be which revolve rapidly on an axis, and, as to its being void, it weighed the same in the so-called beginning as it does now, its volume and density alone being different, being inversely proportional; the greater the volume the less the density and *vice versa*, but the weight would be unaltered.

Then darkness could not have existed at "the beginning," for the earth was self-luminous, and not only so, but was then in close proximity to the periphery of our sun, whose light, though diffused, must have been very great. If darkness ever supervened upon the earth it must have been long, long afterwards, in that transition state when, after perhaps a score (or more, according to Proctor) of millions of years, the seas were first precipitated by condensation from their previous gaseous elements, in which they had been held by our globe's intense heat. As to the "Spirit of God moving upon the face of the

waters," Mr. Gladstone admits that waters, in the sense then known, could not have existed as such, and that "the term is imperfect." However, let that pass.

Verses 6 and 7, "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, &c. . . . and God called the firmament Heaven." The term firmament here reflects an ancient belief. Though this word is said to be synonymous with expansion, it clearly implies something more solid than air. The ancients could not understand how it was the sun, moon, and stars could be kept in the heavens without falling, unless they were set into a medium sufficiently solid to prevent it. The earth was believed to be a circular plain, like the top of a round table, with water all round it. Overhead was a supposed revolving crystal vault, into which the heavenly bodies were set. It was also imagined these bodies were about as big as they looked, and but a short distance away; in fact, only as important in relation to the earth as the Mosaic narrator evidently believed them to be. Job says (chap. xxxvii. 18), "Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten mirror." Thus speaks this most ancient writer as to the supposed strength of the sky. This firmament being created on this second day, light having been previously created and day divided from night, the Mosaicist makes God on the fourth day place in it the sun, the source (with the earth's revolution), of day and night. The moon and the stars are also set into it. But of this more anon.

We now enter the third day. Verses 9-13, "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear, &c." The expression here, gathering the waters into one place, accords with ancient knowledge, and, without making too much of it, there was evidently no conception in the mind of the narrator of the wonderful variety of configuration of the seas upon the earth, inland and other. But passing on to verse 11, we come to one of the greatest mistakes of the narrative. It is the third day. The sun is not yet created, yet the earth is made to "bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so, &c."

Now we know all this was impossible with a yet uncreated sun. Here we have the highest order of vegetation flourishing without the sun's action upon the leaves. The life of all such plants is entirely dependent upon whether sunlight takes action upon the chlorophyl residing in their leaves. Under the sun's light this secretion has the power of absorbing the carbonic acid from the atmosphere, where a proportionally small quantity is always present, and assimilating the carbon. In the words of Mr. Grant Allen, "In the green plant under the influence of sunlight, this carbonic acid is decomposed, the oxygen it contains is turned loose upon the atmosphere, and the carbon, more or less freed from its hampering affinities, is built up with the hydrogen of

water into the plant's tissues, into starch and other constituents of vegetable growth. This deoxidising function is the most essential in the plant's life." The leaves of a plant are much as our lungs, only in reversed action. The leaves absorb carbon and give out oxygen; our lungs absorb oxygen and restore carbon to the atmosphere.

In this inconsistency of the sun's light being yet unborn, yet so absolutely necessary for the existence of the vegetation said to have been perfected on this third day, Mr. Gladstone, on behalf of the party whom he has dubbed reconcilers, naturally sees a pronounced 'dilemma. He says he may be told, "How hopeless is the cry to reconcile Genesis with fact, when, as a fact, the sun is the source of light, and yet in Genesis light is the work of the first day and vegetation of the third, while sun, moon, and stars appear only on the fourth! Nay, worse still, whereas the morning and the evening depend wholly on the motion of the earth round the sun (*sic!*), the Mosaist is so ignorant that he gives us, not days only, but the morning and evening of days before the sun is created; and so his narration explodes, not by blows aimed at it from without, but by its own internal self-contradictions. It is hissed, like a blundering witness, out of court."

Passing by the blunder of making morning and evening depend "upon our motion round the sun," instead of our axial rotation, a slip of Mr. Gladstone's pen, we proceed. We see he does not evade his difficulties. He is not to be dismayed; the old Parliamentary hand boldly grasps the nettle. He tells us that this confusion of effect before cause, repeated as to light, morning and evening, and vegetation, being anterior to sun creation, is only there if the account be read naturally, as it is given, but not if the days, where requisite, are considered as chapters, and that the narrator, like some other historians are in the habit of doing, has let his historical glance run forward in the chapter. That historians are sometimes in the habit of letting the eye range forward in time beyond the period of which they are treating, for the purpose of placing before their readers a better purview of some distinct or correlated class of subjects, is true. But this is usual and allowable only with this object in view. But here in this narration there is no such excuse, for if the narrator is said to cast his eye forward in this third day, when dealing with vegetation before sun, the answer is that the matter then introduced is not correlated to the matter previously under treatment, for the organic is here the perspective, whereas the inorganic is being treated of, both previously and afterwards. Besides, no historian worth the name, in taking such a course, would disarrange a sequence of events that depended upon one another as cause and effect. In support of his idea of chapter *versus* day, Mr. Gladstone invokes some remarks of Professor Dana's to the effect that the six days of creation may be divided into two triads, the first triad setting forth the inorganic history of it, and the second the organic. How can this be when the third day treats

of high organic (plant) creation? Not only is the last day of the first so-called inorganic triad treating of the organic, but the first day of the second so-called organic triad treats of the inorganic only. It scarcely seems possible a professor could have made so strange a mistake, or that, having made it, so eminent a controversialist as Mr. Gladstone should have accorded it wide publicity.

To contradictionists this chapter idea naturally appears too like the drowning man catching at a straw. Why are we never to take this narrative in a natural sense, but, as discoveries are made and necessity compels, are invited by reconcilers to read it more and more in a non-natural one? In the days more than half a century ago, and prior to the revelations of geology, this Genesis account alone held the field, to use a Gladstonian phrase; there was no reason to challenge it, and these days of the Mosaist, with their explicit morning and evening, were always accepted as such. But when geology then began to tell the story of the vast ages that must have been consumed in the inorganic and organic development of the earth, it was felt that the time had come to set our mental house in order by enquiry into the truth of this ancient narrative of the Creation. We all know how this enquiry was met at the hands of the orthodox party. They shook their heads, and the geologists were requested to look again and find where they had made their mistake. It was impossible so authoritative a narrative could be wrong, and if geological facts pointed the other way, why, so much the worse for the facts. This attitude, however, could not long be maintained, and while some were only willing that the day should be considered equal to a thousand years, on the ground that to God "one day was as a thousand years," the more sagacious were inclined to invite a change of reading. The day was to be so no longer, but an epoch, indeterminate. Now a further reading is necessary, the narrative is made more Delphic. These periods being shown to be in false relative order, it is suggested the narrator has been only discursive, and the days, or some of them, are dubbed chapters! It is the old story of the rainbow over again. We are told (Genesis ix., 13) that in token that God would never again destroy the earth by a flood, He said, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." This reading stood absolutely unchallenged till the properties of light began to be understood, and it became clear that rainbows must have existed ever since sun and rain combined to form them; in short, as we now know, for tens of millions of years. So the reconcilers of the time found that the word "set" really meant "appoint," and the unlearned were so invited to read it. How shallow the basis for the change the context shows, "And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud," a pretty plain inference, if meaning is to be attached to explicit words, that in the mind of the narrator the bow was then and there first instituted. The phenomenon was believed to be new; not once is such an expression used as "the bow that is in the cloud shall be a token," or anything inferring pre-existence.

Before leaving the third day, it may be mentioned that Mr. Gladstone is compelled to admit, alluding to the two separate creations of light and to the creation of plant life in between these creations of light, that, assuming the light mentioned at the beginning to be the diffused light he argues for, such plant life could only be of the character of initial vegetation, whereas the vegetation mentioned is full formed. Had he used the term "highly organised," it would have been more appropriate, but the admission is significant of his extreme position.

(To be continued.)

RECOLLECTIONS OF THREE SUNDAY EVENING ADDRESSES AT THE PUBLIC HALL, CROYDON.

CAN GOD HELP MAN?

It all depends upon the view we take of God; and we seem to have a choice of four thoughts of Him. There is what we may call the heathen view, with fear mainly determining it; or the early Jewish view, with its rough personalising of God, as a being who made the world by magic, who created man and failed, who came down and walked in a garden, or confounded the speech of audacious builders; or the deist's view, with his isolation of God, who bears about the same relation to the human race as a watchmaker to a watch; or the modern spiritual view, which presents God as, in some way, our very life, "in whom we live and move and have our being." This is the view that Jesus cherished and taught. Did he not say, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"?

So long as we hold by the heathen, the Jewish, or the merely deistical idea of God, we shall have no strong answer to the question, "Can God help man?" All we can say is, "He can do as He pleases, and He may vary just as we do." In that case, we should never know His resolve until the event discovered it, and our only hope of inducing Him would be a sacrifice or a prayer.

The spiritual thought of God is a great emancipation. It may seem to dissipate Him, but that is only because we have too crudely imaged Him. The spiritual thought of God will not help us to image Him, but it will help us to make Him adequate. It will enable us to hold fast by His omnipresence. It will teach us that He is the inmost life of all things, and that we come into contact with Him every moment of our being. Thus understood, the question, "Can God help us?" becomes "Can any one help us?" for now we see that all comes from Him,—the mother's love, the friend's availing kindness, the

patriot's devotion, "the stream of tendency" which cleanses, refreshes and "makes for righteousness." God is in all wisdom, courage, self-denial (in the death of Jesus and in the life of Florence Nightingale). He is therefore always helping us, and not one throb of His pity, not one touch of His tenderness, not one virtue of His healing power, waits for decision on His part or prayer on ours.

Surely this is at once the happiest and the sublimest thought of God. It finds Him everywhere; it connects Him with all law; it makes Him indeed the source of all life.

God of the granite and the rose!
 Soul of the sparrow and the bee!
 The mighty tide of being flows
 Through countless channels, Lord, from
 thee.
 It leaps to life in grass and flowers,
 Through every grade of being runs,
 Till, from creation's radiant towers,
 Its glory flames in stars and suns.

God of the granite and the rose!
 Soul of the sparrow and the bee!
 The mighty tide of being flows
 Through all thy creatures back to thee.
 Thus round and round the circle runs,
 A mighty sea without a shore,
 While men and angels, stars and suns,
 Unite to praise thee evermore.

The old humanising of God produced superstition and fear; the purely spiritual conception of Him will flood the world with hope unfading. It has been finely said: "There is a thought of God that brings fear, terror, superstition; but raise the thought of God into its infinite potency, fill all time and space with His majesty, realise that He is co-extensive with law, and then realise that law is ever making for grace, that it is one with love, and He becomes the informing light of body and mind, a quickening radiance revealed in all life and harmony,—the ever-present, the ever-creating, and the ever-saving and uplifting God."

This great conception of God destroys two prevalent errors: that God acts in an arbitrary way, and that God inspired and led His children in days of old, but not now. It will effectually wipe out all that the phrase, "judgments of God," was intended to mean. It will teach us to kill the cholera by cleanliness and not by entreaty, to find the cause in our filthy ways, and not in his strident wrath. It will nerve us to fight famine with free trade, and so enlighten us as to track every misery home to its natural cause. It will make an end of the superstition that God was in the history of the stubborn Jews, but is not in the history of his pliant and receptive Englishmen,—with Moses and David and Isaiah, and not with Alfred and Cromwell and Gladstone.

Here is a living faith: God not absent or distant: as near to us as He ever was to any of His children. The history of the world and the march of man have God in every movement: His inspiration is still the "well of water springing up to everlasting life": and, for that tremendous Unseen, "when flesh and heart fail, He will be our strength and our portion for ever."

BOARD SCHOOLS AND THE CLERGY.

THE late debate at the London Diocesan Conference was in every way a notable one. If the opponents of the theological raiders are wise they will carefully study it, as it shews precisely what they have to grapple with on the other side. Anyhow, the one serious fact stands prominently out that the "Moderates" will have against them practically the whole of the London clergy. It is true that the voting was 110 to 20, and that the Bishop of London went against the "Circular," but the bishop and the 20 are as much in favour of theological teaching in the schools as the hottest raider,—as the voting next November will shew. That means the enlistment on the side of the raiders of the mightiest, the most industrious, and the widest-awake organisation in London.

A glance at this debate will well repay us, as it really packs into small compass all that can or will be said on the clerical side. Prebendary Peplow moved a resolution approving the Circular, which he backed up by the well-known assertion that it had become necessary to declare that the religion taught in the schools meant the Christian Religion, and that the Christian Religion needed, of course, to be defined. Mr. Ridgeway, M.L.S.B., proposed a very long amendment, not approving of the Circular, but approving of the defining word "Christian," and putting upon the teachers the duty of taking the New Testament as their text-book, from which they are to teach the Christian Religion. Put into frank English the difference between the two proposals is this:—One says: You are to teach the Christian Religion, which means this dogma, and this, and this; the other says: You are to teach the Christian Religion, which means whatever you can find in the New Testament for yourself.

Upon this, Mr. Riley, the leader of the raiders, announced, amid loud and prolonged cheers, his glorious victory. "We have inscribed on our School Board banner The Incarnation, The Atonement, and The Blessed Trinity, and only professional agitators were moving against the planting of this banner in the schools." A notable speech followed. Mr. Barge, a master of a London Board school, who had been educated and trained in Church schools and training college, said

that the clergy were needlessly alarmed. So far as he knew, Church doctrines were taught in the Board schools. The issue of the Circular was a tactical mistake, but they must now support it. The Rev. J. Coxhead "rejoiced" to hear this speech. It was full of comfort and encouragement, and he felt more than ever resolved to do battle against "such nonsense" as had been uttered at a meeting of teachers, when one speaker was foolish enough to say that the leading of a child to appreciate the charms of human speech expressed in inspiring verse and prose, that the helping of a child to hold communion with the loftiest spirits, that the training of the eye and hand to delineate beautiful forms, and thereby to foster a love for symmetry and fitness and truth, and that the teaching of music and science was as truly religious instruction as the teaching of theological dogmas, catechisms, and creeds. At this there was "laughter;" but not, as the unregenerate might imagine, against the speaker. No: these clerical gentlemen laughed at the idea that anything could be as religious as Mr. Riley's theological dogmas.

The Bishop of London wound up the debate in a very noteworthy speech. He was against the Circular, not against what it aimed at. His speech may be indolently or carelessly regarded as "broad." In reality, it was perhaps the narrowest speech made. It amounted to this:—We must have the Christian Religion taught in the Board Schools, and we must prevent teachers from teaching any other than (what we call) Christian doctrines. If any teachers are found out in teaching any other doctrines, those teachers should be had up before the Board!

So then, so far as we can see, there was not a man there to say a word for any other policy than the policy of the theological raiders; but, in truth, we almost prefer them to the "Moderates." What will happen if the Circular is sent out and enforced? Every teacher will know the dogmatic lesson he is to give; and, unless there is a revolt, that lesson will be given, *con amore*, in bewilderment, in disgust, or in a drill master's spirit, as the case may be, and there is an end of it. What will happen if the Circular is not sent out and enforced? if the "Moderates" have

their way? if the Bible is put into the teachers' hands with the injunction, 'There is your text book: teach the Christian Religion from it as best you can?' In one school, Mr. Barge will teach Church doctrines, as he says he does, as keenly as in Church schools; in another school, a conscious or unconscious Unitarian will quite as readily find his particular ~~is~~ in the book; in another school,

a Socialist will quite easily find all the religion he requires; in another, a mild moralist will meander all the year round about the Sermon on the Mount and so on. What nonsensical pottering it all is, and all because Churchmen want to keep alive their doctrines, because Nonconformists are unwilling to be true to their principles, and because the British public does not care.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

"Hymnal amore Dei." Compiled by Mrs. Theodore C. Williams, revised edition. Boston (U.S.): G. H. Ellis. A book of devout hymns and chants, in good taste, and free from old dogmas or new eccentricities. Each hymn has its tune printed on the same page. The book is very nicely printed, with unusually full indexes. We are glad to say that this is a hymn-book-making time; there is plenty of room for improvement. There is not much that is new or vigorous in this collection, but every compiler, and indeed every congregation looking out for something fresh, should see it.

"The veil lifted. Modern developments of Spirit Photography," with twelve illustrations; a paper by J. Traill Taylor, describing experiments in psychic photography; letter by the Rev. H. R. Haweis, M.A.; addresses by James Robertson, Glasgow, and miscellanea by the Editor, Andrew Glendinning. London: Whittaker and Co. A book which can only be described as supremely nonsensical or unmistakably important. To those who vote for the first, it may be useful to say that the evidence for the truth of the statements contained in this book is nearer and stronger than the evidence for the truth of the narratives of the four Gospels.

"Irish Druids and old Irish religions." By James Bonwick, F.R.G.S. London: Griffith, Farran & Co. Mr. Bonwick's first sentence is, "Ireland, whether viewed from an antiquarian or an ethnological point of view, is one of the most interesting countries in the world." In the spirit of that touch of enthusiasm, and with his well-known industry, he has worked in his rich mine,—with notable results. The table of contents is a most tempting one, suggesting scores of out-of-the-way but living interesting subjects, such as

Druidical magic, Druidical mysticism, Irish gods, serpent faith, sun worship, the shamrock and other sacred plants, well worship, round tower creed and Ossian the bard. The book has a necessary and very full index and list of authorities cited.

"Theosophy, or spiritual dynamics and the divine and miraculous man." By Dr. George Wyld. Second edition. London: J. Elliott & Co. A re-issue, "with corrections and additions," of an interesting work. Dr. Wyld is an old spiritualist, who appears to be confirmed in his faith as he proceeds. He makes noteworthy excursions into many fields, and everywhere finds enough to silence or refute a legion of agnostics. His stories concerning clairvoyance and kindred matters are to the point; his reflections are everywhere seriously thoughtful; his outlooks are wide, refreshing, inspiring.

"The spirit of God." By P. C. Mozoomdar. Boston (U.S.): G. H. Ellis. A modern Oriental book: a message to Christendom from its spiritual parent, and yet it is curious to see how western rationality and directness have put mental and logical toughness into the old mystical thinking and phrasing. The subject of the book is a rather vague one, but it turns out to be immensely far-reaching, including, one might say, all life and all time, and involving such subjects as miracles, incarnation, inspiration, destiny, pantheism, immortality, prayer. The book is not entirely free from rhapsody, but it is rhapsody resting on rational thought.

"Herbert Spencer's synthetic philosophy." By Benj. F. Underwood. New York (U.S.): D. Appleton & Co. One of a series of lectures at the Brooklyn Ethical Association,

under the general title of "evolution in science and art," a series which, judging from the prospectus, ought to be known in England. Mr. Underwood is evidently well-read on the subject entrusted to him. His lecture is a model of crisp condensation, telling well the story of the march from Descartes to

Leibnitz, from Leibnitz to Locke, from Locke to Kant, from Kant to Mill, and from Mill to Herbert Spencer. In about thirty pages, one of the knottiest of philosophical subjects is untied and set forth in a very workmanlike way.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

A MODERN BOOK OF HYMNS.—The Free Christian Church at Croydon has just got ready for the press a new hymn book, in the compilation of which old friends have been remembered while the new treasures have been carefully gathered. Many men, many tastes, but we venture to say that this new book of sacred song will be fresh as the day and full of the new spirit of the hour—"a consummation devoutly to be wished." It is by no means certain that the book will be generally offered for sale, but any minister or committee wishing to consider it might write to Mr. Mathews, 46, Denmark Road, South Norwood, S.E.

ANOTHER NEW PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS.—An exhibition is to be held at Kyoto, Japan, during 1895, to celebrate the eleventh centenary of the elevation of that city to the dignity of an Imperial residence. One of the chief attractions of the exhibition will be its religious department. Every religious community in Japan has been invited to participate. Services will have to be performed all day long, and interpreters will be provided for all who wish it. All Christian denominations are expected to take part in this second "Parliament of Religions."

MEN, TO THE RESCUE!—We have received a copy of a paper read at Birmingham by Mona Caird, on Women's Suffrage. It is bright and interesting, thanks to that peculiar and happy mixture of sense and chaff which the women-speakers have invented, and which men-speakers would do well to learn from. Here, for instance, is a lovely bit of chaff, at Mr. Samuel Smith's expense, as delightfully humorous as it is keenly penetrating:—"Mr. Smith says that women live (that is, the great bulk of them)

by the heart rather than the head. Supposing this to be true—what then? There exists a not inconsiderable portion of the sterner sex who live by neither! Have men no peculiar weakness, equally dangerous to the State, which might be thrown in their teeth? Why this unwearied one-sidedness? If the conditions of women's existence, as at present organised in harmony with Mr. Smith's preconceptions, have been encouraging to their affections, the conditions of men's lives have apparently been very stimulating to their appetites. Perhaps a little sympathy might, after all, not be so out of place in the councils of the nation. One of the safeguards of the electoral system is, that all the elements of social life can find voice therein, without danger to the State. Mr. Smith's naive assumption that there is, and ought to be, a special Providence for men, is both instructive and amusing. He says, with the simple candour of a little child, 'I much doubt that with female franchise will arise an agitation for substituting perfect equality between husband and wife, and, should that be successful, a time of social chaos would ensue.' We here have, by inference, the good old theory of subordination and patriarchal rule, in its pristine freshness, held with the same ardour as in the old days when a woman, in return for her submission, was, be it observed, at least entitled to certain protection and maintenance all her days and had not, as now she has, to face the possibility of being thrown—with all the disadvantages of her education—on the world, which still grudges her her liberty, and at the same time makes bread-winning for one of her sex a labour of Hercules. Yes, even before the concession of the franchise, women may ask to stand equal with men before the law! Such is the bold bad tenor of their thoughts."

MESSAGES FROM OUR FORERUNNERS.

COURAGE.—Certainly I have studied in vaine in thinking what a coward may bee good for. I never heard of any act becoming vertue, that ever came from any. All the noble deeds that have beat their marches through succeeding ages, have all proceeded from men of courage.—*Owen Felltham.*

THE POVERTY OF THE SCEPTIC.—A presumptuous scepticism that rejects facts without examination of their truth is, in some respects, more injurious than unquestioning credulity.—*Humboldt.*

HELP FROM WITHIN.—There are no other means in heaven or upon earth to heal and content the inward soul, but by strengthening the inward soul itself; and it is foolish to think small helps from without can belasting means of improvement.—*Jean Paul Richter.*

It takes a soul
To move a body,—it takes a high-souled man
To move the masses, even to a cleaner sty; ;
It takes the Ideal to blow an inch aside
The dust of the Actual; and your Fouriers
failed
Because not poets enough to understand
That life develops from within.—

E. B. Browning.

FAITH.—I fell among some Lutheran and Calvinist authors, who magnified faith to such an amazing size that it hid all the rest of the commandments.—*John Wesley.*

ONE'S FOES.—All the foes that attack a good man are, by the magic wand of his goodness, transformed to angels, which encamp about his dwelling place to guard him from sloth and pride.—*Theodore Parker.*

HAWTHORNE BUDS.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY JOHN TINKLER.

He wrought in the same sincerity and the same spirit that turned temples to churches and gods to saints.

MONCURE D. CONWAY.

1.—It is a delicious sort of mutual aid when the united power of two sympathetic yet dissimilar intelligences is brought to bear upon a poem by reading it aloud, or upon a picture or statue, by viewing it in each other's company.—*Transformation.*

2.—THIS is such an odd and incomprehensible world! . . . I begin to suspect that a man's bewilderment is the measure of his wisdom.—*The House of the Seven Gables.*

3.—WHAT a kindness of providence that life is made so uncertain; that death is thrown in among the possibilities of our being!—*Septimius.*

4.—MAN'S own youth is the world's youth; at least, he feels as if it were, and imagines that the earth's granite substance is something not yet hardened, and which he can mould into whatever shape he likes.—*The House of the Seven Gables.*

5.—MEN are so much alike in their nature that they grow intolerable unless varied by their circumstances.—*Blithedale Romance.*

6.—PROTESTANTISM needs a new apostle to convert it into something positive.—*Italian Notebook.*

7.—WHEN people think that I am pouring myself out in a tale or an essay, I am merely telling what is common to human nature, not what is peculiar to myself.—*Notebook.*

8.—To gain the truer conception of death I would forget the grave.—*Chippings with a Chisel.*

9.—ON earth a flower only can be perfect.—*Italian Notebook.*

10.—To persons whose pursuits are insulated from the common business of life—who are either in advance of mankind or apart from it—there often comes a sensation of moral cold

that makes the spirit shiver as if it had reached the frozen solitudes around the pole.—*The Artist of the Beautiful*.

11.—INTELLECTUAL activity is incompatible with any large amount of bodily exercise.—*Blithedale Romance*.

12.—It is summer and not winter that steals away mortal life.—*Notebook*.

13.—WE do ourselves wrong, and too meanly estimate the holiness above us, when we deem that any act or enjoyment good in itself is not good to do religiously.—*Transformation*.

14.—WE are apt to make sickly people more morbid, and unfortunate people more miserable, by endeavouring to adapt our department to their special and individual needs. . . . It is like returning their own sick breath back upon themselves.—*Our Old Home*.

15.—It is really impossible to hide anything in this world, to say nothing of the next.—*Blithedale Romance*.

16.—WHAT one man calls weeds another classifies among the choicest flowers in the garden.—*Letter to Fields*.

17.—A SCULPTOR, to meet the demands which our preconceptions make upon him, should be even more indispensably a poet than those who deal in measured verse and rhyme.—*Transformation*.

18.—FOLLOW some other object, and very possibly we may find that we have caught happiness without dreaming of it.—*Notebook*.

19.—It is a mistaken idea which men generally entertain, that nature has made women prone to throw their whole being into what is technically called love. We have, to say the least, no more necessity for it than yourselves; only we have nothing else to do with our hearts.—*Transformation*.

20.—WHILE there is a single guilty person in the universe, each innocent one must feel his innocence tortured by that guilt.—*Transformation*.

21.—If it were of the slightest real moment, our reputations would have been placed by Providence more in our own power, and less in other people's than we now find them to be.—*Our Old Home*.

22.—There is no use of life but just to find out what is fit for us to do, and doing it,

seems to be little matter whether we live or die in it.—*Septimius*.

23.—It is far easier to know and honor a poet when his fame has taken shape in the spotlessness of marble than when the actual man comes staggering before you, besmeared with the sordid stains of his daily life.—*Our Old Home*.

24.—BETWEEN man and man there is always an insuperable gulf. They can never quite grasp each other's hands, and therefore man never derives any intimate help, any heart sustenance from his brother man, but from woman—his mother, his sister, or his wife.—*Transformation*.

25.—THE heart never breaks on the first grave, and after many graves it gets so obtuse that nothing can break it.—*Dr. Grimshaw's Secret*.

26.—A QUARTER part, probably, of any large collection of pictures, consist of Virgins and infant Christs, repeated over and over again in pretty much an identical spirit, and generally with no more mixture of the divine than just enough to spoil them as representations of maternity and childhood with which everybody's heart might have something to do.—*Transformation*.

27.—As the pure breath of children revives the life of aged men, so is our moral nature revived by their free and simple thoughts, their native feeling, their airy mirth for little cause or none, their grief soon roused and soon allayed.—*Little Annie's Ramble*.

28.—THE bands that were silken once are apt to become iron fetters when we desire to shake them off.—*Blithedale Romance*.

29.—THE inner mystery of a work of genius hidden from one will often reveal itself to two.—*Transformation*.

30.—ANY sort of bodily and earthly torment may serve to make us sensible that we have a soul that is not within the jurisdiction of such shadowy demons, it separates the immortal within us from the mortal.—*Notebook*.

31.—ONCE in every half-century at longest, a family should be merged into the great, obscure mass of humanity, and forget all about its ancestors. Human blood, in order to keep its freshness, should run in hidden streams.—*The House of the Seven Gables*.