

# The Coming Day.

JULY, 1894.

## GOD'S WITNESSES.

SPOKEN ON WHIT SUNDAY; AT CROYDON.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."—ISAIAH xliii., 10.

RIGHTLY considered, and relieved of all so-called supernatural accretions, this is the real meaning of the event which Whit Sunday celebrates. The essence of the story is that the disappointed and perplexed disciples received an imperative call from above, a new baptism of the spirit, an influx of spirit-power, the Almighty's mandate, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." And, so far as history throws any light upon it, this was really so. Later on, splendid conversions of the great and strong gave them influence, and even the splendours of emperors helped to take away the reproach of the cross; but at first the Christian Church was a church of poor enthusiasts, of impulsive fanatics, of strugglers, outcasts, slaves.

At first this insignificant band of the first disciples had everything against them, and, for a brief space, it looked as though the cross had really ended all. But something happened—something that roused these stunned men from their despair, that took full possession of their longing, love and will, that fired them with a heroism stronger than death, and made them "kings and priests unto God." And they won in that fierce fight, and what they set up has outlasted the tremendous forces which fought against them, and, amid all the ebb and flow of the world's troubled life, this thing has gone on, not unchanged but unconquered, the testimony of the men who heard that mighty call, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

Why should we separate ourselves from Christendom in its celebration of this day? we, of all churches, who, in truth, stand nearest to the vocation and duty of a testifying Church? It is not arrogance, it is the recognition of a duty which leads such a Church as this to claim that, at a time when the Christian Church has largely departed from the simplicity of its first founders, we are witnesses to great elementary but vital and abiding truths.

And here we come upon an analogy which carries us even farther back—to the ancient people to whom this summons was originally sent. It was true,

in a sense, that the ancient Hebrews were special witnesses for God, but they were such in the order of natural selection. They were chosen in the natural sense, as being more fitted by temperament and history and drill to make a stand against the gross idolatries of the world. They were not God's favourites, but His instruments, just as all things are His instruments. And if we take this summons as our own from Him, and lay our hands upon this solemn league and covenant, it must be with the subdued and lowly thought that it reminds us, not of a favouritism of which we are to be proud, but of a task for which we are, in the world's order, set apart.

There is a truth, then, as well as a falseness in the doctrine of election. That God does choose men and nations is greatly true, but that He does this on any scheme of majestic favouritism is as greatly false. God does elect, but His election is as broad as His creation, His predestination as wide as His providence. The vessel to honour and the vessel to dishonour both bear witness to the potter, but they bear witness to something more than arbitrary will; both are elect, but they are elect on some far other ground than mere caprice; they bear witness to thoughtful selection and to a consideration of uses. And so the mighty Master uses all things for the education of humanity, for the development of the race.

As God's witnesses, then, to what are we called? This ancient saying tells it all, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." We are to stand and shine for Him. And is not this the vital want of this age, a keen apprehension of God, a profound consciousness of His nearness, as much more vital than faith as faith is more intense than belief? This would be the regeneration of the age. It was to this that Jesus bore witness. So far from claiming to be God, he was never tired of being a witness for God. His whole testimony could be summed up in this, "I am here to tell you of the Father, to deliver you from blindness and discord, to bring you home to God."

And, in so far as we are bearing the same testimony, we can feel at once the immense difference between this and sectarian aggrandisement or the mere propagation of a creed, and we may well take courage, knowing that such a witness-bearing as ours cannot—simply cannot—be in vain. They tell us, indeed, that we are few in numbers, with no ancient antecedents to grace our persons and dignify our cause, but surely that brings us specially near to the little band of disciples who sat with the master in that upper room. And he spake well who said, "A future to be worked for is better than a past to be only remembered." Besides, difficulties make brave men and women strong, and trouble knits men's hearts together, and the need of effort breaks down isolation and nerves the forces and faculties of the soul, and no Church ever got wrecked in the night of its trial, but many have gone down in the heyday of their pride.

Alas for the fearful ones that lament our smallness and deplore our isolation! "It is not of such men," said Theodore Parker, "that God makes reformers, apostles, prophets" (though He may make of them bishops and churchwardens, deacons and deans!). "Such men do not take up the truth when it is fallen by the wayside." But these first Christian heretics "could not hush the matter up. . . . So they took up the ark of truth where Jesus set it down, and they bore it on. They perilled their lives, they left all. . . . they were scourged in the synagogues and separated from the company of the sons of Abraham. . . . But it did them good; the chaff went its way—as chaff always does—but the seed-wheat fell into good ground, and now nations are filled with the bread which comes of the apostles' sowing and watering."

And with these, the apostles, may be reckoned some who may be counted as apostles too, Xavier for one, who said, when dissuaded from going to the half-barbarous islands of the Archipelago, "If those lands had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there, nor would all the perils of the world prevent them. But they are dastardly and alarmed because there is nothing to be gained but the souls of men: and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice?" There spake the true witness for God, into whose soul also had been poured, and on whose lips burned, the pentecostal fire.

But do any of us reply, "Alas, then! and what can I do: what witness can I bear: I who am but as a child in influence, and who have not the fire and force of such as these?" O, believe it, that to you also belong these solemn words—"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." He disdains not the weakness He has made: but the homeliest, simplest life may be a psalm of praise as sweet and clear as any that ever reach the happy heavens; not one of us so feeble, but that we may somewhere find our place awaiting us; no footfall so light and tremulous that it may not be welcome on God's highway. The old foot-path over the wealthy meadow, now deep and broad, was not all made by strong men's tread. Little children from the village have gone over it to the homely school; plodding labourers have trudged over it to the farm-house on the hill; poor women have faltered over it in search of shelter or of food, and every little pattering foot, and every sturdy tramp, and every lightest tread, have helped to make that foot-path clear.

So with this witness-bearing for God. We may not see the result of what we do: we may not be able to point out our share of labour in the foot-paths of the world: we may even think we have no share, but so it was with the fathers who plodded on, and knew not what they were doing. They struck out paths in the jungle, oftentimes at a venture, and died without assurance, but others followed on and pushed out the paths a little farther, and again others, who made a highway of the footpath, and some now think the highway was always there. But it was made—made through the centuries—made by gentle feet and sturdy tread, by hope, and love, and tears.

No, you must not plead your feebleness or obscurity: for God claims all things as His own:—

Smallest hands may do Him service,  
Weakest voice His praise may sing;

More a poor child's simple flowers  
Than the jewels of a king.

Does not the primrose as truly proclaim Him as the priest? The little ray of light that makes its way down the dingy lane, and in at the yellow pane of the garret window, where the poor sempstress plys her thread, is as truly sunlight as the flood of glory that ripens the golden corn or paints the daisies in the meadows far away. The tiny dew-drop that stands trembling on the morning rose is as truly water as the roaring cataract or the splendid sea. The diamond that lies among the homely workman's tools is as truly a diamond as that which flashes in the kingly crown. And even so the word of God, that breathes and blesses in the humblest server, is as truly the word of God as the message of sage or psalmist, prophet or seer. So all God's works are words, and all God's true children witness to Him every hour.

Understanding this, the distinction between the secular and the sacred will disappear, and the witness for God will everywhere be found—in the lover of the beautiful and the helper of it, in the good hater of cruelty and injustice, in the buoyant believer in freedom and justice and progress, in the right-minded politician and the honest trader, in the anxious experimenter and the eager teacher, in the impatient rebel and the outspoken heretical teacher, as well as in the temperate, the prudent and the counsellor of smooth and safe and cautious things.

Let us go back to the old roads—to our familiar ways—with this great claim of Pentecost upon us, "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." How would that dignify and elevate both us and what we do! Then we should plod on with a voice of sacred import ever audible, claiming us, owning us, directing us, as the children of the King. Then what a serious splendour would come down on even our lowliest duty, and with what other eyes should we look upon the obscurest task! Then, how strongly should we rise, and on what wings of reverence and faith, above the scepticisms and discouragements of our way! How should we lose our fretful care when we had lost ourselves in Him! How precious would be the memory of all work done, whether it seemed to prosper or fail, if all were done for Him! Then with what a gentle ardour, and quiet trust, and wholesome joy we should set our hands to whatever seemed our own to do, since we had lost the sharp anxiety that comes with the feeling that all depends upon one's self!

But remember this, God's call and claim "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord," means service for you,—service of some kind,—willing and conscious service. You are not His witness if you only witness to self-care, if you live a life that is centered in yourself,—if you play for safety and shirk

your share of arduous unpaying work. In some way you must help to push this load of the world's duty on, or stand convicted of getting more service out of the world than you give, which is the almost unpardonable sin. This claim "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord" is not the conferring of an honour but the sending of a summons: it is the advancement of the King's demand: it is the revelation of your own true calling, and the real significance of your life. It says to you something like this,

Art thou content? Hast thou no higher aim	Bound to that raft, cross-shaped, so firm, so
Than just to gain admittance at the door;	great,
In faintest characters to trace thy name	It was not meant that thou should'st use
Amongst the list of those who die no	thine oar
more?	Alone to guide, to move thy selfish freight
Dost thou not feel that thou art saved to	To realms thy fancy paints on yonder shore.
live?	Saved from the wreck, reach out a saving
Dost thou not know that thou art saved to	hand;
save?	Thousands are sinking 'neath the waves of
Forgiven, that thou mightest too forgive,	sin;
Releemed, alike for both sides of the	Stay not thy efforts till God bids thee land.
grave?	Thy task accomplished, He will steer thee
	in.

---

## TRINITY SUNDAY.

(SPOKEN AT CROYDON).

THIS is Trinity Sunday, one of the days appointed by Act of Parliament for the public promulgation of sentence as of death upon most of us—upon all those of us who do not "thus think of the Trinity" in the way set forth by the writer (or the forger) of the Athanasian Creed. The public promulgation of our sentence by the State is a public scandal, an odious misuse of the authority of the State, and a notable instance of the insolence of the Church. We do not treat these grave offences with contempt; we take public notice of them; we reprove those who aid and abet them; we brand them as a kind of blasphemy in relation to God, and as a stone of stumbling in relation to man. We say that this creed is as unchristian as it is insolent. It is entirely out of harmony with the simplicity and tenderness of the gospels, with the exception of a few doubtful lines. In truth, if Jesus Christ were here, it is highly probable that he would be in the front rank of those who are sentenced to "perish everlastingly."

When you come to think of it, into what a curious tangle have we got this thing we call Christianity! The Sermon on the Mount has got lost in a morass of priestly mud, with malediction for mercy, and threatening for blessing, and the cutting of dividing lines where Jesus said, "Come unto me, toilers and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." And this has sometimes gone to such an extent that those who have taken to the crooked road have

hunted down the unbeliever as with dog and gun—or fetters and faggots—and all in the name of Jesus! And to this day the old spirit, if not the old cruelty, remains. You may catch the old tone everywhere, and only modern civilisation stands between us and the perverted zeal of an excommunicating Church.

Here is the reply of one of the sentenced heretics to these priests,—Your Athanasian Creed is to me a jumble of incoherent inconsistencies; your sentence is yours, not my Father's. Your cursing creeds have never done any one any good. On the contrary, they have stirred up hate; they have brought in an unholy and unnecessary sword; they have led on to murder; they have driven hundreds and thousands mad. I thank God I have done with them. They confused me and misled me long enough. Glad am I now to see a brother in every fellow-pilgrim on my way, and you shall be my brother as I penetrate to the man behind the priest. For the rest, I appeal from you to your God, Jesus Christ,—ay, to the very Bible which you quote against me, whose sayings, indeed, I see and understand, but whose light is also clear to me, putting to shame the narrowness and the cruelty of your creeds.

And now I propose to prove that, and shall quote only the sayings that are attributed to Jesus, and I do this all the more willingly and hopefully because, as a rule, we avoid the conventional method of quoting Scripture in proof of this or that. And even now I do not intend to quote Scripture as evidence; for, that God is just and good, and that the Athanasian Creed is unjust and cruel, is true whether the Bible backs that up or not. I am about to quote the sayings of Jesus only because of their intrinsic beauty, and because the manufacturers of these maledictions dare to speak in his name.

And bear in mind what it is we are considering. This creed affirms the necessity for faith in the Trinity of a certain kind, or, worse still, for the acceptance of the doctrine in a certain way, and it attempts to coerce us with the threat that we shall “perish everlastingly” if we refuse or are unable to believe. Listen, then, to the founder of the feast:—

Luke xix., 10.—The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

John vii., 37.—If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

Matt. xi., 28.—Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matt. xix., 16-17.—Behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

Matt. vii., 21.—Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matt. xii., 50.—Whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

John x., 10.—I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John v., 40.—Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life.

Matt. ix., 12-13.—They that be whole need

not a physician, but they that are sick.

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

John xii., 46.—I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

John xvii., 3.—This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.

Luke x., 25-8.—Behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

And he, answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

Matt. xxv., 31-40.—When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

For I was hungry and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

And then, towering above even these great landmarks, we see the immortal Sermon on the Mount, concerning which we might say as a Greek teacher said, who, as a candidate for an appointment, was asked what Greek books he could profess as tests for examination: "I profess," said he, "the whole Greek language." So say we; we profess the whole Sermon on the Mount, which indeed is our Magna Charta, with its superb opening beatitudes,—

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.

When we look up at these great mountain ranges—so plain, so solid, so luminous—what is the use of quoting against us some poor little passage of Scripture tinged with symbolism, lurid perhaps with passion, dim with battle-

dust and smoke? No; the great mountains, the great lights, the great promises, the great guiding principles are enough forme, and the priest with his cursing creeds positively shrivels when brought clean out into the open where these things are.

The salvation taught by the creeds is sheer scholasticism, a mere legal fiction or a gross bargain between the murdered saviour and the sinner's God. As Jesus taught it, it is emancipation from darkness, and emergence into light. Jesus said that we could be saved by doing the Father's loving will, but the creeds say it is essential we should believe some mystery of the Divine essence which no one can either understand or define. Why should Athanasius, or Augustine, or Calvin stand between us and the gentle and winning saviour, Jesus? We are Christians, not Athanasians, Augustinians, or Calvinists—we, we who are often regarded as infidels, and denied the Christian name—we appeal to Jesus Christ from his pervertors. He is not our God: he is our brother: but his spirit, his teachings, his immense insights, his example, are all-sufficient for our needs; as, indeed, they might be all-sufficient for their's.

## OUR FATHER'S CHURCH.

### FOUR GLIMPSSES.

#### I

"It will give me great pleasure to be enrolled a member of Our Father's Church. I gratefully welcome every opportunity to join any brotherhood which has for its aim the soaring above the barriers which contrary doctrines and conflicting teaching have raised between sect and sect. Thank God that these barriers do not reach so high as heaven, and a loosening from the earth and a very slight flight upward of the soul lifts us entirely from these petty dividing walls. It seems to me that dogmatism, creeds, and formulas have only one effect: to contract aspirations, and to block the view of every soul-enlarging truth. I have myself passed through many stages of experience, my early life was all among the extreme evangelical-Calvinistic teaching of the Church of England, from which at the earliest my soul revolted. The sternness of the teaching and the severity and narrowness of that view of religion drove me for years

into extremes of religious belief. But in later years of my life I have been led into a peaceful and resting knowledge of the Fatherhood of our God, His all-embracing love, and the Brotherhood of Man as revealed to us in the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. The "Sermon on the Mount" is the key to the mystery of life. How small does sectarianism and ecclesiasticism appear from the Mount of Beatitude! We want a correspondence branch of some good broad sympathetic society to bring into contact with the strong, and those who "have overcome," the many who are now floundering intellectually, morally, and religiously, for the purpose of mutual aid and counsel on the great problems that have so shattered faith and "Christianity," as it is too universally expressed in the multitudes of sects. Is there facility, a platform, on which something of this could be initiated in connection with 'Our Father's Church?'"



## II.

Referring to the somewhat familiar criticism of vagueness and the demand for something visible, an old friend writes: "For my part I am quite content that the object of the Church should seem vague, as any attempt to establish definite principles of agreement would inevitably lead to disputes, barren arguments and the establishment of a sectarian element. The wider the basis and the more general the principles of our organisation, the more certain are we, I believe, of an influence for good; whether outwardly visible or not matters very little."

## III.

The following extract from a most thoughtful and touching letter will give an instructive glimpse of much that is happening:—"I have just come across your pamphlet entitled *The Ideal*, and have been very much struck with it. Words are useless to express what a wonderful and beautiful religion I feel it to be. I should give a great deal to become a member, and yet I doubt my right to do so. Although very young (I am only eighteen), I have lost all faith and comfort in religion, and the last few months, after a long period of doubt and conflict, I have taken to science and philosophy as my chief teachers, and become an agnostic. But comfort I have not gained from these sources, and daily and hourly I feel the need of some living and spiritual help, yet know not where to turn for it. I was brought up in the Church of England, but can find no strength or comfort in its creeds, which have largely failed to impress me with their reality. Our Father's Church has appealed to me more than any other religion I know, yet I feel you will say I have no right to become a member of it when I tell you that intensely as I admire the idea of the "Father" and long for it, I do not actually feel it. To me it is the most beautiful and comforting belief, and yet I regret to say it is with me not a reality, nor a certainty. I have long given up hope in a

personal God. I have felt so much lately the loneliness of life without hope or religion, and also the necessity of human nature for some strength and help outside itself, and your pamphlet somehow seems to show a glimmering light in the darkness—but you will judge whether or not I have a rightful claim to its membership. I should be very much obliged if I could have a few of *The Ideal*, for I am sure they would be a help to many."

## IV.

"I am afraid that, like all beautiful ideals, this soars above the conceptions of frail humanity. We are perhaps, most of us, more or less idolators or worshipers through our senses, and, unless we can see worshipers congregated within tabernacles of stone, we are apt to conclude that we may be wasting our sweetness on the desert air. To those, however, who, whether absent from Jerusalem or Mount Girizim, can, like the Psalmist, say, I have always set God before me, promptings of His influence for good, must be felt, which I suppose must be the essence and aim of every form of religion, or at least of true religion. This placing of God ever before us is no doubt a good habit, and may grow into a burning desire to see God, but when we remember that the greatest of idealists, whose life work was to do his Father's will, could say that only the pure in heart could see God, how distant seems our aims! and few there must be that attain thereto. Those beatitudes of Christ's have been as beacon lights to guide us onward, yet how few of us have imbibed their true spirit, even at the end almost of two thousand years! God's mill does certainly grind very slowly. We must, however, bow to the inevitable, that all good things are of slow growth, and that the ideal church, "Our Father's Church," will not be an exception. Let us hope that it may lead us beyond the labyrinth of petty beliefs and dogmas into the higher truths."

## THE NEW BOOK OF HYMNS.

THIS book, compiled for The Free Christian Church, Croydon, containing 533 pieces, and is not only a hymn book; it is a collection of precious religious poetry, as good for the home as for the church. The writers of the hymns contained in it number 260, and represent the Church during many centuries, including seekers after God apparently as far apart as Bernard of Clairvaux and John Stuart Blackie, Cardinal Newman and Charles Kingsley, Isaac Watts and Annie Besant, Keble and Conway, Faber and Carlyle, Tennyson and Tate and Braly.

We think there is no existing book of hymns which is at once as modern and yet as Catholic. It has added much to or changed the old hymn book tone, and brought into the Church a vocabulary and a range which the Church has not yet recognised, but which it greatly needs.

The hymns have been carefully arranged in subjects, the setting forth of which will give some idea of what has been done.

THE WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH  
 TIMES AND SEASONS  
 CHILDHOOD, YOUTH AND HOME  
 THE NATION  
 GOD IN NATURE  
 GOD SEEKING MAN

MAN SEEKING GOD  
 PRAISE YE THE LORD  
 THE HUMAN AWAKENING  
 JESUS, A MEMORY AND AN INSPIRATION  
 THY KINGDOM COME  
 THE UNIVERSAL RELIGION  
 WORK FOR GOD AND MAN  
 ON THE MARCH  
 LOVE, THE HEALER AND REVEALER  
 THE BLESSED LIFE  
 MEMORIES AND HOPES  
 ASPIRATION AND SELF-SURRENDER  
 DUTY  
 FREEDOM AND PROGRESS  
 REJOICING AND HOPE  
 TRUST  
 ENCOURAGEMENT AND CONSOLATION  
 SYMPATHY AND CHARITY  
 THE GREAT TRANSITION—FROM LIFE TO LIFE  
 MISCELLANEOUS PIECES  
 CHANTS

Beyond this and perhaps similar notifications to friends, the book will not be advertised, and will not be published in the usual way; but Mr. J. Page Hopps will send a copy to anyone desiring to possess it. Price half-a-crown, post free. The price to congregations, for quantities, will be two shillings and carriage.

## CONCERNING CROYDON.

I HAVE often been asked about Croydon:—How to get there from London on Sundays: What kind of a place is it as a residence: Is it on clay or gravel: Are there good schools: Is it unbearably Conservative? Fortunately, the Free Christian Church is opposite the West Croydon Station; and, from London Bridge, trains arrive morning and evening, ten minutes before each service, with many fair return trains. From other directions the train service is not entirely good (sometimes entirely bad); but, in many cases, a little consideration of time-tables will yield useful results. As a place of residence, Croydon has several advantages.

Charming country abounds,—and close. Any one of a dozen short walks, or the expen-

diture of a few pence, will take one to such delightful places as Addington Hills, Shirley Hills, Sanderstead, Purley, Riddlesdown, Warlingham, and a little further afield, Box Hill, Dorking, Horley, with Bexhill, Eastbourne, Brighton and Hastings within an easy ride by train. The great Whitgift school—a fine old foundation grammar school—offers every advantage as to education, both economical and good. It is a fact that Croydon's distance from the sturdy and independent life of the Midlands and the North has left it behindhand in sentiment and opinion, but it is neither worse nor better than London in this respect; and, as everybody knows, London Conservatism is one of its amusements.

West Croydon, East or (New) Croydon and South Croydon are really all one, and are practically only station names. South Croydon is the most modern, and nearest to the country. The houses there are, in the main, pretty and not extravagant, with nice gardens. East Croydon abounds in rich mansions and poor cottages, with two or three pleasant roads of not large villas. West Croydon is a rather busy centre, and offers a wide choice of moderate houses, with a fair number of restful streets. The soil varies—gravel, clay, chalk.

In about twenty or twenty-five minutes, London can be reached at all times of the day by express trains (third-class return, 1s. 3d.): return trains running up to midnight and beyond, though it must be admitted that

many of the London and Brighton carriages used between Croydon and London are very bad, the jolting and rattling being at times hardly bearable. Probably this will be soon altered, as railway civilisation is rapidly reaching London Bridge.

The following is taken from *The Recorder of The Free Christian Church*:—"The Free Christian Church is a voluntary society, deliberately left, by its trust deed, free to follow the light wheresoever it may lead, and to worship God in its own way, "in spirit and in truth." It stands for the Fatherhood of God and the service of Mankind. Sunday services are held throughout the year at eleven and seven.

J.P.H.

---

## LIGHT ON THE PATH.

---

A VOICE FROM THE KITCHEN.—A minister, having given an address on "Master and Servant," received the following, which we think has a good deal of sense in it:—REVEREND SIR, —I trust you will excuse any boldness on my part if I write about your address on Sunday night, when you referred to domestic servants. I think you spoke of a lady who advertised for a maid and received 200 applications, and only two out of that number were able to read and write. (The statement was that, out of 200 applications for a situation as "companion," only two could write a neat letter). I am a domestic maid myself and know a little about their inner life, and I feel quite sure, sir, I am right in saying that very often this abominable ignorance is the fault of the employer. If a girl is seen writing or reading she is immediately spoken of as a deceiver and robber by the mistress. So what is a poor girl to do? There are hundreds of girls to-day in domestic service who are yearning for a little knowledge and cultivation of the mind, but never have an opportunity of stepping into the intellectual

world. Our streets are crowded with girls who have once been intelligent, but through the treatment of and confinement of domestic service they have chosen a life of excitement and change. We are a race of people who seem to stand alone, and have had the name of being ignorant and giddy. It seems to stick to all who have chosen that life. The only time we have for self improvement is when we retire for the night, and then our bodies are tired, our mind and intellect are dulled, and we are too weary either to read or write. May I just say that most of these poor girls have been brought up in the midst of ignorance, only learning how to associate with pots and pans. I feel, sir, you are one who has great power, and knows and understands a little about the hidden lives of us poor girls. I think it very wrong that ladies should talk about us, and treat us in the manner we are being treated to-day.

I am, sir, yours obediently,  
A DOMESTIC SERVANT.

## NOTES ON BOOKS.

"The Monist." Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. This very thoughtful Quarterly, edited by Dr. Paul Carus, may now be had in England of Messrs. Watts & Co. Johnson's Court, Fleet Street. It always takes its readers into deep waters,—occasionally too deep for both explorer and guide. Its subjects are great and its treatment of them serious, but its supply of faith in anything beyond the body and its belongings is usually very moderate indeed. It is religiously agnostic and agnostically religious, and is therefore occasionally somewhat confusing. Still, it always provokes thought.

"The Religion of Science." By Dr. Paul Carus. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. There is a great deal of clean truth in this book, but, in reading it, we have sometimes wondered whether the writer of it has not made everything too clean. It does not do to rub the name off the door plate, or pitch the baby out with the water of the bath. "The Religion of Science" by all means; "Science is but another name for revelation," certainly. But why say "Christians demand blind belief; they do not want investigation"? That is too clean. It scrubs off the inscription with the good doctor's acid, and is as

bad as Draper's odious title, "The conflict between Religion and Science," when by Religion he meant the Romish Church. Dr. Carus tries to retain the old hopes and even the old phrases, but his "immortality" is no more than the sham immortality of George Eliot's "O may I join the choir invisible!" which only meant, O may I do good enough, to leave behind me an influence that shall live in somebody else! Dr. Carus permits no mistake about it. The idea of personal continuance after death is, with him, mere selfish egotism. Soul personality is an offence. We must abandon "the ego-soul," he says,—that is salvation. And yet we must watch even this outspoken representative of this school. When he borrows our language and says, "The souls of our beloved are always with us, and will remain among us until the end of the world," what he means is that our beloved ones have influenced us and are blended with our personality, so far as we have a personality, but that, as personalities, they have ceased to exist at all.

We entirely fail to understand why Dr. Carus or anyone else should take the trouble to erase the old trust. To say the least of it, it may be true after all. Why want to stamp it out?

## NOTES BY THE WAY.

FATHER IGNATIUS.—A curious incongruity. At one of his meetings lately, he began the proceedings delightfully, with the two verses of a most tender hymn, deliciously set to music and beautifully played by himself,

"Hush! Let a stillness deep  
Brood over every heart;  
Let every earthly thought  
Now utterly depart.  
Our souls all sweetly bless,  
And make this hour so sweet  
That we may truly feel  
Just resting at Thy feet."

This was very softly and expressively sung. Then came a loud prayer, and then—and O! the incongruity of it!—an "oration" like the

rush of wild bison over a prairie, denouncing, storming, affirming, defying, full of every raving of orthodoxy and the very rhapsody of the devotee. 'Out with everyone who does not believe in the story of the deluge! Infidels! Infidels! Deniers of Christ! Traitors! Damning immortal souls! Where did the water come from? Perhaps God made it supernaturally for the purpose! But does not God say that He made a firmament to divide the waters above from the waters below? Perhaps He let it fall! Where else did our oceans come from?' And so on—a violent, irrational, dramatic enthusiast.

Turning over his tiny hymn-book, we note, as the main fact, that it is steeped in adoration of Jesus. We wonder, however, what

Jesus would have thought of the following,  
with its tender beginning and its final howl.

## WHAT THEN?

After the joys of earth,  
After its songs of mirth,  
After its hours of light,  
After its dreams so bright—  
What then?

Only an empty name,  
Only a weary frame,  
Only a conscious smart,  
Only an aching heart:

After this empty name,  
After this weary frame,  
After this conscious smart,  
After this aching heart—  
What then?

Only a sad farewell  
To a world loved too well,  
Only a silent bed  
With the forgotten dead.

After this sad farewell  
To a world loved too well,  
After this silent bed  
With the forgotten dead—  
What then?

Oh! then—the Judgment throne!  
Oh! then—the last hope—gone!  
Then, all the woes that dwell  
In an eternal Hell!

THE EMPIRE.—A fierce writer in *The Agnostic Journal* is hardly too strong in some lines, entitled "A missionary hymn," and beginning,

Onward, Christian Soldiers!  
On to heathen lands!  
Prayer books in your pockets,  
Rifles in your hands.  
Take the happy tidings  
Where tra le can be done;  
Spread the peaceful gospel  
With a Gatling gun!

Tell the wretched natives  
Sinful are their hearts,  
Turn their heathen temples  
Into spirit-morts.  
And if to your teaching  
They will not succumb,  
Substitute for sermons  
Adulterated rum.

BODY AND SOUL.—The Queen of Roumania, in her book entitled *Pensees*, shrewdly says: "It is better to have a physician for a confessor than a priest. You tell the priest that you detest mankind; he answers, 'You are not a Christian.' The physician gives you a dose of medicine, and you love your fellow-being. You tell the priest that you are tired of living. He answers 'Suicide is a crime.' The physician gives you a stimulant, and immediately you feel life supportable."

FEATHERS.—Did *The Times* really say this of the thoughtless and foolish women who stick feathers about their persons?—"Let it be clearly understood, once and for all, that the feathered woman is a cruel woman, that for the sake of a passing fashion, which pleases no rational being and should disgust all who can think and feel and understand, she brings dishonour upon her sex, and robs Nature of its beauty without adding to her own."

And who wrote this,—the reproof of a slaughtered bird?—

"That wing is mine—you wear to-day—  
The thing that was stolen from me away.  
Well I remember the morning fair,  
When we skimmed the waves and cleaved the air,

My mate and I, as we sought to find  
Food for the little ones left behind,  
When peal on peal broke like thunder's sound,

And soon sea and rock and sands around  
Were strewn with the fair birds dying and dead.

My mate fell first—then, ere life had fled,  
The wings were wrenched from my bleeding breast,

And I was flung on the billow's crest  
I once had enjoyed to tread, but now  
A quivering mass I sank below,  
Hearing my hungry birdlings' cry,  
Worse than my own sore agony.

And you are a mother! well, that is good!  
What do you think of my hungry brood—  
The downy nestlings that 'neath that wing  
Were wont so cosily to cling?

A nice becoming plume for you!  
You who can pity the thrushes too!  
Murder and robbery in one day—  
Yet you'll wear that wing when in church you pray."

## MESSAGES FROM OUR FORERUNNERS.

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

*Milton.*

SAVING ONE'S LIFE AND LOSING IT.—People  
who are always taking care of their health  
are like misers, who are hoarding a treasure  
which they have never spirit enough to enjoy.  
—*Sterne.*

PREJUDICE.—Before experience itself can be  
used with advantage, there is one preliminary  
step to make which depends wholly on our-  
selves: it is, the absolute dismissal and  
clearing the mind of all prejudice, and the  
determination to stand or fall by the result of  
a direct appeal to facts in the first instance,  
and of strict logical deduction from them  
afterwards.—*Sir John Herschell.*

## HAWTHORNE BUDS.

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY JOHN TINKLER.

1.—NOTHING gives a sadder sense of decay  
than this loss or suspension of the power to  
deal with unaccustomed things, and to keep  
up with the swiftness of the passing moment.  
It can merely be a suspended animation, for  
were the power actually to perish, there would  
be little use of immortality.—*The House of the  
Seven Gables.*

2.—I HAVE always envied the Catholics their  
faith in that sweet, sacred Virgin Mother,  
who stands between them and the Deity,  
intercepting somewhat of His awful splendor,  
but permitting His love to stream upon the  
worshiper more intelligibly to human com-  
prehension through the medium of a woman's  
tenderness.—*Bliedale Romance.*

3.—A QUIET heart will make a dog-day  
temperate.—*The Toll Gatherer's Day.*

4.—WE cannot tell when a thing is really  
dead; it comes to life, perhaps in its old  
shape, perhaps in a new and unexpected one,  
so that nothing really vanishes out of the  
world.—*Dr. Grimshawe's Secret.*

5.—HOPE spiritualises the earth; hope makes  
it always new; and, even in the earth's best  
and brightest aspect, hope shows it to be only  
the shadow of an infinite bliss hereafter!—  
*The Paradise of Children.*

6.—PERHAPS, after all, the best way to fight a  
chimæra is by getting as close to it as you  
can.—*The Chimæra.*

7.—THIS so frequent abortion of man's  
dearest projects must be taken as a proof that  
the deeds of earth, however etherealised by  
piety or genius, are without value except as  
exercises and manifestations of the spirit.—  
*The Artist of the Beautiful.*

8.—To despise all things! This, at best, is  
the wisdom of the understanding. It is the  
creek of a man whose soul, whose better and  
diviner part, has never been awakened, or has  
died out of him.—*A Virtuoso's Collection.*

9.—It is a great mistake to try to put our  
best thoughts into human language.—*Trans-  
formation.*

10.—WE sometimes congratulate ourselves at  
the moment of waking from a troubled dream;  
it may be so the moment after death.—*Note-  
book.*

11.—WOULD Time but await the close of our  
favourite follies, we should be young men, all  
of us, and till Doomsday.—*Wakefield.*

12.—MAN'S best-directed effort accomplishes  
a kind of dream, while God is the sole worker  
of realities.—*The House of the Seven Gables.*

13.—The beneficent Creator has not allowed our comfort to depend on the enjoyment of any single sense.—*Biographical Stories*.

14.—WHEN God expressed Himself in the landscape to mankind, He did not intend that it should be translated into any tongue save His own immediate one.—*Italian Notebook*.

15.—Like all revelations of the better life, the adequate perception of a great work of art demands a gifted simplicity of vision.—*Transformation*.

16.—IT seems a greater pity that an accomplished worker with the hand should perish prematurely than a person of great intellect, because intellectual arts may be cultivated in the next world, but not physical ones.—*Notebook*.

17.—WHAT a sweet reverence is that, when a young man deems his mistress a little more than mortal, and almost chides himself for longing to bring her close to his heart!—*Transformation*.

18.—THE hunger for natural beauty might be satisfied with grass and green leaves for ever.—*Our Old Home*.

19.—FAITH is the soul's eyesight, and when we possess it the world is never dark nor lonely.—*Biographical Stories*.

20.—I OFTEN think that there are many things that occur to us in our daily life, many unknown crises that are more important to us than this mysterious circumstance of death, which we deem the most important of all.—*Septimius*.

21.—THOUGH our own individual follies are too intimately blended with our natures to be seen or felt, yet the dullest of us are sufficiently acute in detecting the foolery of our neighbours.—*April Fools*.

22.—I HAVE often felt that words may be a thick and darksome veil between the soul and the truth which it seeks.—*Diary*.

23.—HAS there been an unutterable evil in your young life? Then crowd it out with

good, or it will lie corrupting 'there for ever, and cause your capacity for better things to partake its noisome corruption!—*Transformation*.

24.—THERE is no more terrible mistake than to violate what is eternally right for the sake of a seeming expediency.—*Biographical Stories*.

25.—I THINK man is more favoured than the angels, and made capable of higher heroism, greater virtue, and of a more excellent spirit than they, because we have such a mystery of grief and terror around us.—*Septimius*.

26.—GENERALLY, I suspect, when people throw off the faith they were born in, the best soil of their hearts is apt to cling to its roots.—*Italian Notebook*.

27.—OUR souls, after all, are not our own. We convey a property in them to those with whom we associate; but to what extent can never be known, until we feel the tug, the agony of our abortive efforts to resume an exclusive sway over ourselves.—*Bliethedale Romance*.

28.—IT is not, I apprehend, a healthy kind of mental occupation to devote ourselves too exclusively to the study of individual men and women. If the person under examination be one's self, the result is pretty certain to be diseased action of the heart, almost before we can snatch a second glance.—*Bliethedale Romance*.

29.—WHEN life settles darkly down upon us, and we doubt whether to call ourselves young any more, then it is good to steal away from the society of bearded men, and even of gentler woman, and spend an hour or two with children.—*Little Annie's Ramble*.

30.—WHO more need the tender succour of the innocent than wretches stained with guilt? And must a selfish care for the spotlessness of our own garments keep us from pressing the guilty ones close to our hearts, wherein, for the very reason that we are innocent, lies their securest refuge from further ill?—*Transformation*.

31.—No summer ever came back, and no two summers ever were alike.—*Bliethedale Romance*.

## A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

---

Two hundred years ago, Dr. Isaac Watts, a foremost divine, scholar, and poet, wrote this :—

### THE HAZARD OF LOVING THE CREATURES.

---

Where-e'er my flattering passions rove,  
I find a lurking snare ;  
'Tis dangerous to let loose our love  
Beneath th' Eternal Fair.  
Souls whom the tie of friendship binds,  
And partners of our blood,  
Seize a large portion of our minds,  
And leave the rest for God.

Nature has soft but powerful bands,  
And reason she controls ;  
While children, with their little hands,  
Hang closest to our souls.  
Thoughtless, they act th' old serpent's part ;  
What tempting things they be !  
Lord, how they twine about our heart,  
And draw it off from Thee !

In our own day, F. T. Palgrave writes this :

To that green hill, the shepherd's haunt,  
Why speed the children's feet ?  
And who the Youth that sits alone,  
The clamorous flock to greet ?

His hands are laid above their heads,  
Their faces at his knee :  
His looks are looks of love ; yet seem  
Something beyond to see.

The simple townsmen cross the hill  
And bid the throng away.  
" Nor press around the stranger youth,  
Nor by the fold delay."

As one who smiles and wakes, he lifts  
A child upon his knee :  
" God's kingdom is of such as these ;  
So let them come to me." —

Ah, Lord and Christ ! Thy perfect heart  
No fond excess could touch !  
Yet when that innocence we see  
How can we love too much ?

They twine around our heart of hearts ;  
Their spell we seek in vain ;—  
Go, ask the linnet why he sings,—  
He can but sing again !

To winter life, their bloom and breath  
Renew a later spring,  
O dewy roses of the dawn,  
Fresh from God's gardening !

Earth's treasures waste with use ; but Thine,  
O Lord ! by lessening grow :  
From love's pure fount the more we take  
The more the waters flow.

How should we prize the things unseen,  
Not prizing what we see ?  
How turn away thy little ones  
Without forbidding thee ?

The shepherd will not we should stint,  
Or count our kisses o'er ;  
Nor bids us love his lambs the less,  
But him, who loves them, more.