

# The Coming Day.

OCTOBER, 1895.

## HEARTY SERVICE.

SPOKEN AT CROYDON.

'Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters: not with eye service, as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord: and, whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord.' COLOSSIANS iii., 22-3.

TAKEN literally, the first part of this injunction is hardly sound. It is not right to lay it down as a rule of life that a servant should obey his master in all things. But the spirit of it is wholesome in the extreme.

In a most real sense we are all servants, from the Queen upon the throne, who owes loyal service to the nation, to the little child who only owes obedience to its parents. The statesman who stands at the helm, the writer who criticises his proceedings in the newspaper leader, the preacher in the pulpit, the members of corporate bodies who discharge public duties, the prisoner at the bar and the magistrate on the bench—all are servants, and to all the service comes, that they are to do their respective duties, 'not with eye service as men pleasers,' but 'in singleness of heart,' and as unto the Lord.

And the phrase is a most searching and expressive one, 'not with eye service.' 'Eye service' is service adjusted to please or even deceive the eye, when the object is not to do the thing but to make out that it is done. It is eye service when the statesman trims, when the preacher flatters, when the public man plots, when the trader studies to put the best side out, when the workman covers the crack and the employer puts varnish on and lets it pass.

To begin with 'servants' proper; this apostolic Christian charge lays it upon work-people to do their duty, to make the right discharge of duty a matter of conscience,—nay! a matter between the worker and his God. But if ever this good old-fashioned rule were practised, it is to be feared that it is going out of fashion now. Indeed, one of the saddest things in our modern life is the frequent want of conscience and genuine interest shewn by men and women in the absence of their employers. Longfellow says:—

In the elder days of Art,  
 Builders wrought with greatest care  
 Each minute and unseen part,  
 For the gods see everywhere.

Yes! 'in the elder days of Art,' for in the old times the humblest man seemed to love his Art and take a pride in his work; but now a man is too ready to put on his jacket at the first stroke of the clock, even though his going would spoil his work, and to work only with 'eye service' while he is at it. There are many exceptions (the case would be hopeless if there were not), but I fear I have only stated what threatens to become the rule. We have had chronic contentions for years respecting wages and the hours of work; but everybody knows this is not where the shoe pinches. If you could only get work honestly done while men are supposed to be at work, if you could get their shorter hours filled with loyal service and conscientious duty-doing,—if 'eye service' were at an end, and men-pleasing were no more, if, in your absence as in your presence, the right thing were done 'from the heart,' the hours would not be too short nor the pay too high. What we want is honesty, common justice, fair-dealing, and an end put to the wasting of time and the carelessness which amount to practical swindling. We talk of Christian principles, of Christian beliefs, of salvation by faith, and the rest: why, here is real Christianity—the doing of daily work from a willing heart, a good conscience, and as in the sight of God. No amount of praying, church attending, psalm singing, and general spiritual varnishing on the Sunday can make up for the doing of bad work during the week. As well putty up a crack in a stone, and expect it to stand the wet and frost as to fill up the cracks in the life and the conscience by creeds and prayers. The day will come that will try every man's work, of what sort it is, and happy will he be who shall be found sound at heart.

And yet how fond people are of mere polish, hardly caring to ask what is underneath if the surface be but smooth. Better get a piece of wholesome oak, with nothing on it, whose glorious grain you can read like a book! I do not care much for church membership based on test questions; but if I did, I should like to improve on the old method. The old method is to test John as to his soundness in the faith before admitting him into the church. I would suggest that the committee should rather test the soundness of his work. I would postpone my questions to him about the Trinity, the personality of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of salvation by the atoning merits, and I would ask his master or his customers questions about his masonry, his joiner-work, his boilers, or his boots. If his work were good I would let him off on the question of faith. If he left the blemish exposed, and consulted with you about how best to make it good, instead of disguising it to please or cheat your eye; if he did as well behind your back as before your face, took a pride in his work, and treated your material as though it were his own, I should shut up the catechism and invite him in; for there is no greater rule for good living than this—'not with eye service as men-pleasers,' but doing life's work 'in singleness of heart.'

Take again the great class of public men, from the statesman who stands at the head of affairs, down to the humblest public officer. We have had some fearless, honest, single-hearted statesmen, but not many. It is so much the habit of a statesman to read the signs of the times, and to adapt his measures to his means, or his ambitions, that he is sorely tempted to overstep the boundary of duty and become only a time-server. But we ought to do our great political leaders justice here. It is necessary for them, up to a certain point, to take advantage of the tide of public opinion. The very word 'time-server,' with a meaning now so base, has its root in a really noble and necessary idea; for a statesman, though he had the truest and clearest possible conception of the absolutely best, must, if he would serve his age and do anything, be, in one sense, a time-server in the good old sense of the phrase—a server of his time; and he cannot serve a time for which he does not plan. But this may easily be overdone and carried to the base extreme of what we usually understand by time-serving, when conscience is silenced, and reason is disregarded, and the right is postponed, and when, to keep or win power, anything is done or said to please the eye or ear. Now one half of a statesman's duty is to educate the age, to train the nation, to create and then lead public opinion; and he is only a political juggler if his whole art consists in manipulating the prejudices, the passions, and the moods of the varying hour. The ideal statesmen have been as often unpopular as popular, as often alone as the leaders of a victorious army; and some of the most magnificent passages in their lives are those which are associated with the hiding from them of public approval. But the people are to blame for it when they have sycophants for statesmen, and echoes for politicians, and time-servers for leaders; for the people hate to be crossed and contradicted, and they love to be flattered and to have their prejudices and passions studied, and it is one of the hardest things a public man can set himself to do—to be simply true to himself and his convictions from time to time. The public man who is bent on popularity and power must spend half his time in 'eye service,' in being a 'man pleaser,' and the other half in seeing that he gets his price. A great public meeting, where a leader or representative politician explains himself to his supporters, is often one of the most painful and humiliating sights I know, except in some very exceptional cases. Here a bit of flattery is administered; here the scale goes down too much, and a little bit of admission is made on the other side; here a prejudice is soothed; here a passion is appealed to; here a sentiment is touched; here a superstition receives a nod of recognition; here a dear old fetish is paid its tribute; the whole proceeding reminding one of nothing so much as these very words, with their grave rebuke of eye service and men-pleasing, and the absence of a sincere heart bent on doing the will of God.

Or take the case of that great and important class—the clergy or ministers. The temptation is here perhaps even more direct, potent, and painful, for, in

addition to the necessity laid upon the politician to study eye service, the minister labours under the special disadvantage that he is expected to belong to a class by itself, and to be unlike other men; in most cases also he is not free, as the politician is, to change his mind, and to change public opinion if he can. He, poor man! is often bound down to a system of thought and a catalogue of opinions, all settled for him ages ago, and his duty is to expound and enforce these. He is therefore exposed to almost irresistible temptations; and, if he does not become a renderer of eye service and a man-pleaser, it will be a miracle of mercy. He is expected to please people, it is his duty; he is expected to make things pleasant; he must be neutral on a variety of subjects; he must be unlike other men in a variety of ways. What is the result? A race of men who, in spite of all, have done splendid service in morals and education, but who provoked a severe but a by no means unjust wit to say: 'There are three sexes: men, women, and ministers.' And again the people are to blame for it. They ask for what they get. They have too often discouraged manly ministers, and, in the great majority of churches, they have made free thought hard, free speech almost and free action quite impossible. The time is not far off when it will all be altered, when a minister will be what a professor of astronomy, or a teacher of geology, or a professor of music or chemistry is—a free man, teaching people who come to him to learn, because he is free; when he will be disentangled from the musty ecclesiastical coils that have been wound round him by church exigencies and church officials, and when he will be able to fully and joyously comply with this great Christian charge—to work, not with eye service as a man-pleaser, but in singleness of heart, and doing all as to God.

Take finally, as regards public life, the press, the newspaper press of the country. Of late years this has become a tremendous power in the country, and it must be admitted that in many respects it has been a power for good. The mere fact that it drags to light every notable event, and turns upon it the attention of the public, is itself a good. It has educated the public eye, put evil-doers on their good behaviour, and nipped many an iniquity in the bud. In the comments of the press, too, upon passing events, we have at all events a possibility of good. But no one who knows what is really going on in the newspaper world will for an instant deny that we are at the present moment suffering, to a very large extent, from the degradation of one of our mightiest powers. There are pure exceptions—life would be unendurable if there were not—but, to an extent that is perfectly shocking, these 'leaders' of public opinion, as they are called, these daily instructors of the people, are pouring down upon us an almost unbearable cataract of slush and are often the veriest hucksters that ever sold themselves for gain, or tricked out a stall to entice the palate or please the eye. The sails are spread to catch the prevailing wind. Eye service has become a science; man-pleasing a fine art; facts are deliberately ignored or manipulated; and the majority, or the party, with its prejudices,

superstitions, self-will, or mere ignorance, is given in to. The anonymous leader was originally intended as a shield to individuals, in the expression of truths and opinions too pronounced and advanced for individual utterance; it has, alas, become the shield behind which hired hands deal blows and administer flattery that would be disgraceful if the hands were seen. Again, I say there are noble exceptions, but it is unquestionable that, to an enormous extent, the newspaper work of this country is base work because the work of mere eye service, done for the purpose of men-pleasing and money-making. And it cannot be otherwise while the people lag behind, take their opinions from their papers, and love nothing so much as to be backed up in their prejudices or follies when they need to be shamed or instructed out of them.

I conclude with one reference to private life, and especially to the relationships and duties expressed by the words—wife, husband, child, father, mother. In a good home, all have duties to discharge and service to render, and I believe our greatest want at home is simple justice to one another. We often talk of the need of more love at home; but I believe we have a far greater need of strict honour and simple fidelity. Give me that, and I would even prefer a little homely roughness to the sickly veneering of sentiment covering a hollow though perhaps well-intentioned selfishness. I have heard people call one another endearing names who were always on the verge of an outbreak of selfishness, and, on the other hand, I have seen few of the appearances of sentimentalism with an underflow of true love and a basis of solid justice strong as the rock of God. We want loyalty to one another; we want to be something better than the renderers of mere eye service; we want singleness of heart as in the sight of God. Yes! that is the secret of it: be rooted in God, and all will be well:—

Teach me, my God and King, in all things Thee to see;  
And what I do in anything, to do it as for Thee.

All may of Thee partake. Nothing so small can be  
But draws, when acted for Thy sake, greatness and worth from Thee.

If done beneath Thy laws, e'en servile labours shine;  
Hallowed is toil if this the cause, the meanest work divine.

That, after all, is the bed rock of all abiding steadfastness and fidelity,—  
'To live,' as our glorious Milton said, 'as ever in the Great Taskmaker's eye.'

## SPIRITUALISM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

ILLUSTRATED BY THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL.

[A few years ago, the following study by Mr. J. Page Hopps was published. It is 'out of print,' but is still asked for. As the subject is to-day more interesting than ever, and as the last few years have strongly confirmed what is here set down, it may be interesting and useful to reproduce it.]

THE book of Ezekiel is a strong 'case in point' which supplies a vivid instance of the real significance of the Old Testament phrase, 'Thus saith the Lord.' It has been the perplexity of divines, the puzzle of critics, the difficulty of commentators, and the stumbling-block of devout and gentle souls. Its stupendous visions, its amazing symbols, its fiery rhetoric, its startling, not to say disgusting incidents, its all-pervading mysticism, have long made the book a very difficult one. It does not lend itself easily to the sensational allegoriser who can find Christ and the Church in the Song of Solomon; and it is as a stone between the teeth of the rationaliser who has proved himself so adroit in cracking the nuts presented to him by isolated records of 'miracles' and dreams. The reason seems to me to be perfectly obvious:—the key has been lost. The truth is that the only persons who are at all likely or able to understand this puzzling book are those who know something practically of what is known as Spiritualism. Ezekiel was simply what is now called a 'medium.' He was clairvoyant and clairaudient. He was a seer, a trance speaker, and a writing medium. He lived at the time of the captivity under the Chaldeans, and was most likely one of those who were carried away. Living in such troublous times, and (if there is truth in such things) probably influenced by spirits who took a vehement interest in the affairs of the Jews, both at home and in captivity, he was open to all kinds of influences, good and bad, sane and deleterious, sublime and ridiculous. The amazing blunder was and is—the putting everything down to Jehovah, a piece of folly that few practised spiritualists would be guilty of, who, when 'communications' come from Socrates, or Shakspeare, or Milton, always have their doubts.

Here, then, at last, we may probably find the secret of the wonderful and id supernatural-looking Jew,—the secret, too, of these wonderful and supernatural-looking writings. It is quite possible that the peculiar 'make' of the Hebrew made him receptive and responsive to spirit influences, and that this gave him the characteristics which make him one of the riddles of the world. This accounts for his inspirational history, his religious sensitiveness and fervour, his mysterious career, and the intensely spiritual and passionately prophetic character of his sacred writings. This, too, accounts for the degradations and the upsoarings, the folly and the wisdom, the grossness and the

grandeur of the various 'revelations' that came to him : since nothing is more certain than that openness to spirit-influence, so far from necessarily leading to truth and wisdom, may quite as easily lead to falsehood and folly.

The one little sentence—*Ezekiel was a spirit-medium* explains the whole book. He held regular séances, and the description of them in his book will be familiar to every spiritualist. A few instances will suffice to show this. In chapter viii., 1, we read, 'And it came to pass, in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me.' This phrase, 'I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me,' is, in the circumstances, a perfect description of a séance. The same formula occurs in other places. Chapter xiv., 1, 'Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, &c.' Chapter xx., 1, 'And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire of the Lord, and sat before me. Then came the word of the Lord unto me, saying, &c.' This repeated phrase, 'sat before me,' is the equivalent to the modern spiritualist's phrase, 'a sitting.' All through the book, the phrase, 'The word of the Lord came unto me,' occurs. In fact, the whole book consists of a collection of records of spirit séances and spirit messages, and of visions of clairvoyant or other occult experiences. The description in chapter ii., 1, 2, is one that will remind every spiritualist of what continually happens with a 'trance medium':—'And he said unto me, son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.' The only difference is that when the modern 'trance medium' is put by the spirit into the trance, and is made to stand on his feet, he is, as a rule, though not always, unconscious, and does *not* (though he also sometimes does) hear him who speaks.

The book contains many touching and devout messages of expostulation, warning and entreaty ; but a great many of the messages are coarse, vulgar, and ridiculous, as in the case of the long and disgusting comparison of the nation to a harlot (chapters xvi. and xxiii.). Even more disgusting is the command of the spirit recorded in chapter iv., in which Ezekiel is told to bake a cake with human dung for fuel and is only allowed cow's dung after expostulating with 'the Lord' ! If such a command came to a medium now, it would be laughed at or recoiled from ; or if any medium was foolish enough to take it as coming from God, and to attempt compliance with it, the very people who now look upon this Book of Ezekiel as 'the word of God,' would be the first to advise a lunatic asylum. But it would be difficult to say why John Smith in London to-day should be pronounced insane for believing and doing what an inspired prophet of Jehovah is said to have believed and done in Chaldea 2,400 years ago.

All this will, of course, be regarded by many as profane; but the real question is:—Is it true?

The case of Ezekiel does not stand alone, though it is a conspicuous one. The Bible is full of records of spirit intercourse—even to the ‘calling up’ of the so-called dead, as in the case of Samuel and the witch of Endor. The attempts to put down witchcraft were simply attempts to put down irregular and perhaps obnoxious spirit intercourse; but the attempts to put it down proved that it was believed to exist. When the boy Samuel heard the voice, it was not regarded as anything very wonderful; but it was taken at once as the voice of the Lord. Perhaps if the voice had spoken elsewhere, and outside of the recognised sphere of spirit intercourse, it would have been denounced as demoniacal. And this suggests one of the gravest considerations. What we really find all along is a bare assumption that ‘the Lord’ is speaking. In reality, there is always a conflict between voice and voice. In this very Book of Ezekiel, the strongest messages are those that are directed against opposition prophets. Chapter xiii. is entirely taken up with a violent philippic against these:—‘And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord; thus saith the Lord God; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing! O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts. Ye have not gone up into the gaps, neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. They have seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The Lord saith: and the Lord hath not sent them: and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word. Have ye not seen a vain vision, and have ye not spoken a lying divination, whereas ye say, The Lord saith it; albeit I have not spoken? Therefore thus saith the Lord God; because ye have spoken vanity, and seen lies, therefore, behold I am against you, saith the Lord God.’ Now, from this it is plain that these other prophets also spoke in the name of ‘the Lord,’ and we have only Ezekiel’s word for it that he alone was a genuine medium for the messages of ‘the Lord.’ It is a pity we have not got a record of what the other claimants said, that we might compare their messages with his. Surely they said nothing worse than what we find in Ezekiel’s Book, at chapter iv. But, in truth, we have never enough considered the case of the so-called ‘false prophets.’ Continually we find that there is antagonism between prophet and prophet—each one claiming to speak for God, and denouncing the other as not ‘sent,’ not spoken to, or spoken to only by an evil spirit. But may not that suggest the explanation? Perhaps it was not pretender against prophet, or impostor against medium: it was, perhaps, only spirit against spirit, inspiration against inspiration: and this may be held in company with the belief that there really *was* perhaps one strong militant spirit who took the Hebrew nation under his charge, but who found it immensely difficult to keep the upper hand.



In that case, the Jehovah of the Jews was no other than a finite spirit or band of spirits of very limited and variable power.

This somewhat startling suggestion receives considerable support when we look closely into this subject of prophetic inspiration. It is a by no means uncommon thing to find that the so-called 'false prophet' is said to be made such by Jehovah himself. The well-known instance, in the 22nd chapter of the first book of Kings, is sufficient to prove this point. The true prophet, Micaiah, is here represented as reporting a scene he had witnessed in the spirit-world. 'I saw the Lord,' he said, 'sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said: Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner. And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said: I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him: Wherewith? And he said: I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said: Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth and do so. Now therefore, behold, the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the Lord hath spoken evil concerning thee.' Nothing could be plainer. The 'false prophets' were made such by Jehovah himself, for the purpose of destroying these unfortunate kings who had displeased him! Who could this Jehovah be?

Apart from the subject of spirit intercourse, not only the Book of Ezekiel, but the whole of the Old Testament is a sealed book; but, with the light that this subject can throw upon it, it is exceedingly instructive, and everywhere clear. Turn where we will, we find indications of this intercourse between the visible and invisible spheres, and only the enormous assumption that the whole of these multitudinous records are fraudulent, or fanciful, or merely symbolical, will dispose of the inference that, in the days of the ancient Hebrews, spirit intercourse was regarded as an almost every-day event. 'The angel of the Lord' is never long absent from the record. He appears, so that he can be seen or felt; he speaks: he comes in vision: he acts as leader, guardian, inspirer: he works what we should call *miracles*: he actually wrestles with one of the patriarchs, who fancies he has 'seen God face to face.' Sometimes, only a vivid light is seen: or a bush glows with a glory that does not consume; or a hand appears—part of which is seen writing a word of doom. But why multiply instances? The Bible is full of it, and this Book of Ezekiel is only a striking instance. The spirit-appearances; the spirit-lights; the sounds; the trance speaking; the symbolism; the intense feeling, and the peremptory style of the messages; the dignity; the pathos; the authority; the vulgarity; the imbecility, are all perfectly familiar to the spiritualist, or to those who are acquainted with modern Spiritualism.

What has to be chiefly taken note of is, that whereas modern spiritualists know that spirits are not necessarily either wise or good, Ezekiel seems to

have committed the grave mistake of taking everything for granted, and everything as from God; and nineteenth century Christians back him up! What is our duty, then? Our duty is to follow the wise advice of the apostle John, when he says, 'believe *not* every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God.' If we do that, we shall find the true use of this very remarkable book of Ezekiel, as a record of interesting instances of spirit intercourse in ancient times; but, if we do that, we shall also be saved from the preposterous superstition of imagining that the Book contains a series of veritable revelations from the allwise God. Above all, we shall find the key to the Bible itself, and discover the true significance of the puzzling but familiar phrase: '*Thus saith the Lord.*'

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### MORE EMBERS AND ASHES.

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In reply to our criticism of 'S. Robertson's' letter (page 50), we have received another: if possible, more depressingly unenlightened than the first. As, however, it is a good specimen of its class, we print it:—

Dear Sir,

It is with much regret that I have been compelled so long to delay the answer to your letter in the pages of 'the Coming Day.' Since receiving it I have devoted weeks of careful study to the subjects therein alluded to, and can only say I am more than ever convinced of the absolute inerrancy of the Bible. Take it book by book, and it claims upwards of 2,000 times in the Old Testament alone to be the very words of God.

That it is inaccurate is not so easily proved though every thoughtful student knows that in the course of translation, &c., some few clerical errors have crept in, indeed many of the so-called contradictions but prove its absolute perfection. That it inculcates immorality, no one could affirm, that it recounts such acts is undoubted, how else should it be a faithful record of such a world? I will not add more, for the verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture being granted there is little room for controversy about the remaining points: that being denied it is open to any one to believe or disbelieve as he thinks best.

Whichever way it is, the orthodox believer is no worse off: he has, at any rate, a sure foundation in this life, a blessed hope in

departing, and the glorious assurance of a better resurrection. Should the Unitarian position, however, be, as we believe, untenable, he has an uncertainty here, he has denied the only Saviour, and for him there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of fiery indignation.

Yours for His service,

S. ROBERTSON.

The sentence at the end of the first paragraph, shews plainly that this writer does not know what the Bible is, but is under the delusion that it is one book. And yet, it is now one book only in the sense that a volume of selected poems from Chaucer to Tennyson, is one book. That is the fact whether we like it or not. A period of something like 1,500 years lies between the first fragments of the Old Testament and the last of the New. It follows that the claim made for one fragment is not a claim made for another. A very good test is this:—In Revelation xxii., 19, there is a curse or threat recorded against any who 'take away from the words of the book of this prophecy.' Would S. Robertson say that this applies to the whole Bible? If so, we can only advise an elementary study of the origin of the books of the Bible.

As for the astonishing assertions embalmed in this brief letter, such as that what we call the contradictions of the Bible only prove its perfection, that the Bible does not inculcate immorality (we would say *condone* and *command*) and that the inspiration of the Bible is

verbal, we can now only remain silent. There are some obscurations which are too colossal for continued exposure. When S. Robertson says that the Bible 'recounts' immorality, and asks, 'how else should it be a faithful record of such a world?' the point is missed. The immorality is not only recorded, it is condoned and commanded or done by Jehovah. See Hosea i, 1-3; iii., 1-3; Ezekiel iv., 12-15; Exodus xxi., 20-1; Numbers xv., 32-6; Numbers xxxi., 1-18. The horrible story in the last passage quoted is embedded in a series of commands to Moses, and Jehovah goes on talking to his favourite

without reproof of any kind: but the reverse.

With regard to the 'fearful looking for of fiery indignation,' we can only say that if God is disposed to burn us because we are anxious to find the truth, and honest in sticking to it when we think we have got it, we suppose He must. But, in that case, we shall spell His name, Devil. S. Robertson may call that 'blasphemy.' We mean it for profoundest reverence, and we only say it to shew how entirely we dissent from the disparagement of God implied in S. Robertson's odious threat.

## THE EMPEROR JULIAN.\*

'JULIAN the Apostate' is one version, 'Julian the Philosopher' is another: the first is an error with an animus; the second is a truth with a bias. Julian was, in no true sense, an apostate, and he was not first of all a philosopher. He was an admirable specimen of a grand intellectual pagan. Hence the very pertinent sub-title of the book, 'The last struggle of Paganism against Christianity.' In that struggle, Paganism lost because Paganism had shrivelled into a mere survival, just as Christianity will lose and shrivel up, dying from inanition, if it is not renewed with fresh forces from modern human tides.

This book is one of the 'Heroes of the Nations' series, and not the least notable one. Its author, Miss Alice Gardner, the learned lecturer on ancient history in Newnham College, has made it a strong as well as a charming book. It has hitherto been hardly possible to find or tell the truth about this really heroic character. Christianity (or, rather, its army of managers) has much to answer for, as an obscuring agent in relation to many reputations.

We cannot resist a strong feeling of sympathy with Julian. He was an honest pagan who could not bear to see the sweeping away of the old poetry and symbolism by a Christianity that was not always beautiful. Fancy it being left to Frederic Harrison to say whether England should be captured by the Salvation Army!

The concluding paragraph of this book

seems to us to be beautifully adjusted the balance in recognising the blending of Greek culture and Christian ideals. Hellenism neither lost nor won: it was merged. 'Julian's cause,' says Miss Gardner, 'has ultimately triumphed, not by the suppression of Christian institutions, as Julian vainly hoped, still less by the extinction of the Christian spirit as a motive power in the world, but by the permeation of society, speculation and practical life with the most permanent elements of Greek culture. If Julian was mistaken in thinking that the religious ideas lately come from Palestine would soon pale before the revived glories of Greece, no less short-sighted were those who thought that Hellenism was buried in the Emperor's grave. Sometimes for better, sometimes for worse, the two streams have blended, till it is now hard to conceive what either might have been apart from the other. We cannot feel that the triumphal cry of Julian's enemies, which has seemed ever to echo round his death-bed,' has been fully justified at the bar of history. It is the Christ, not the Galilæan, that has conquered.'

Miss Gardner is as nearly unbiased as any one could be, and we cordially commend her finely written story to our readers. The illustrations are unusually telling. Excellent in themselves as works of art, they are valuable as genuine illustrations,—illustrations which illustrate, to use her own keen phrase.

\* 'Julian, Philosopher and Emperor: and the last struggle of Paganism against Christianity.' By Alice Gardner London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

## 'SPORT!'

THE following was read as a 'Lesson' at the Free Christian Church, Croydon, on 'Young people's morning,' Sunday, July 28th. The extracts (very slightly edited) were taken from Edith Carrington's pamphlet on 'The extermination of birds.' (Twopence. Mr. W. Reeves, Fleet Street, London).

The idea of 'something to eat, something to wear, something to shoot'—and, it may be added, 'something to cage'—animates the breast of nine men out of every ten, and, worse still, of nine women out of every ten also, in defiance of consequence, leaving the thoughtful one hope only, that the new generation may be better taught, and that a reaction may set in before it is too late.

The manlier and more honest among 'sportsmen' confess freely and frankly that the 'hunting instinct' is a lust which they share in common with the 'brutes,' only without adequate reason for the slaughter, for they do not, like the brute, kill in order to live. Men of meaner mind try to shelter themselves behind the excuse that 'sport is justifiable' for various reasons, none of which can 'hold water.' Everybody is familiar with the nonsense which appears in language, either written or spoken, defensive of the gun; that it promotes skill, that it procures food, that it takes a man out of doors, that it keeps him from worse temptations, etc. The base and rotten argument that a man—the king of creation—must find his delight in the protracted agonies of helpless creatures on the hunting field in order to escape worse evils, is amongst the commonest as well as the vilest of props by which the 'sportsman' seeks to strengthen his bad cause.

Anyone who has seen, as I have, a long file of men returning weekly from a pigeon match, each bearing the victims he has slain tied to a stick (sometimes so heavily laden that it is carried by two men each holding an end), the drooping clusters of beautiful downy breasts looking to an imaginative eye not unlike huge clusters of bloom-covered grapes, will observe that needless wounds stain the feathers, broken wings fall limply down; here was no merciful or instantaneous death, but misery and terror prolonged! And what can be said of the moral aspect, of the tendency of such 'pleasures' for the human soul which can

find a solace in slaughtering the innocents?

Worse, however, lies behind the upper class of pigeon match. Low as it is, there is yet a lower depth. Those who cannot afford pigeons at which to shoot, trap and net starlings, rooks, sparrows—anything and everything that can be turned into 'food for powder.' These birds being common property, and undefended by law, are not even on the bad footing that the poor pigeons are. Not being worth taking home, the wounded are allowed to flutter away, if they can, half-dead, broken-limbed, bleeding, to pine away wherever they can hide. Scenes of this sort are the rule of the holiday in the outskirts of almost all large towns.

In papers of the lowest class, advertisements of birds for sale with a view to these matches often appear. Here is one (I purposely suppress names and dates): 'Jackdaws.—Any quantity of jackdaws for sale. Jackdaws for sale, jackdaws for pets, jackdaws for shooting.'

For these cruelties men who occupy high places in the social scale and support pigeon matches are largely responsible. Would the better class set their faces against such things, the leaven of example would soon spread.

But what can be done so long as prowling wretches of the basest type can point to their superiors and find in their deeds a justification of what they do? Among the individuals who might be expected from their position to set a better pattern before the working men's eyes are the following, who boast, by means of the columns of a noted sporting paper, of wholesale and cowardly butchery. The first is a clergyman's proud achievement: 'The Rev. J. E. Close picked up after a shot of his big gun, on Carlingford Lough, sixty-one curlew, the cripples all escaping in the darkness.'

Closely following this deed, and out-Heroding it in brutality, comes another record: 'This feat was far excelled by Captain

Vincent, R. N., who, in 1879, killed ninety-six widgeon at a single shot, and his best shot at golden plover realised one hundred and fifty birds.' Sir Frederick Hughes, of Wexford, says: 'The best shot I ever made at Brent geese was forty-seven birds bagged, besides all that got away in the rough water.' Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey testifies that 'in the winter of 1880-81, on the Shannon, with my big gun, carrying two and a-half pounds of shot, five times I obtained over seventy widgeon at a shot, and once ninety.'

Another newspaper relates that men on the banks of the Tyne are in the habit of decoying seagulls within range of their rifles by means of a tethered bird, for the mere pleasure of 'bringing down' these happy, harmless, useful creatures, the servants of the public.

The mental attitude towards living things, and the awful recklessness about taking life shown by these accounts (which are quite of ordinary and every-day appearance), the insensate cruelty and indulgence of all that is base shown by persons of this calibre, are a perfect revelation. One can easily believe that this description of sportsman would feel no compunction at supping upon skylarks, and keeping up the greedy *menu* which causes

the London market to be glutted with sackfuls of these exquisite warblers, wantonly snared in their homes among the far-away green fields. A London shopfront recently exhibited to a merciful and earnest lady, who was passing by, the painful sight of festoons of larks, with the notice attached, *Special order, ten thousand larks, one and sixpence a dozen.*

'God forbid that I should ever taste lark or thrush!' said a modern writer, Edward Clifford, 'I would almost as soon eat little cherubim!'

'Eat a robin? I would as soon eat a child!' was the heartfelt exclamation of Mount Stuart Elphinstone.

Unless this peculiar form of lustful greed be stamped out soon, good-bye to the sweetest ornament of our English skies. Another fifty years or so of carting the tiny songsters into market thirty thousand at a time, for gourmands to swallow, and the schoolboy and schoolgirl of the future will have to rest contented with remote guesses at what Robert Browning could have meant by a bird which

'Soars up and up, shivering for very joy.'  
And nature's student will be puzzled to elucidate Shakespeare's lovely line:  
'Hark, hark! The lark at Heaven's gate sings!'

## NOTES BY THE WAY

THE LONDON NEWSPAPERS. — We have occasionally drawn attention to the low tone of the London newspapers, especially the half-penny papers. *The Echo* is the only one that seriously tries to be neither rowdy nor repulsive. Here is a late specimen—by no means selected—one accidentally at hand. We cite some of its headings. They are all found in this one copy:—'The police courts,' 'Hampstead stabbing,' 'Six miners killed,' 'Killed on the Alps,' 'Bayswater tragedy,' 'he called out, "I shot her with a revolver I bought. She won't worry any more men as she did me."' 'The Motherwell tragedy,' 'A Somers Town woman found dying in bed after a drunken bout,' 'Kensal-rise horror: The deadly piece of granite and the murderous knife in court—the antecedents of Wingrove, and the history of the shilling

he was accused of having stolen,' 'A stone wet with blood,' (two columns of ghastly details), 'Glove fight,' 'The old Birmingham man performs wildly after a few rounds, and not being able to last as in his younger days, is ultimately knocked out,' 'Details of the fight,' 'Gaiety girl's baby,' 'Latest sporting news,' 'Highgate attempted suicide,' 'Criminal appeal,' 'Mrs. Wackerbarth's drink,' 'One down, t'other come on,' 'Stabbing charge dropped,' 'A man on the roof,' 'Fireman's awful death,' 'Jealousy and shots,' 'From all quarters,' including 'Two men drowned,' 'Fell dead in the street,' 'Died of erysipelas,' 'Leaped from her bedroom window,' 'Attempted to poison his wife,' 'A big gash in his throat,' 'A suicide,' 'Attacked his brother with a large knife,' 'Hanged himself,' 'Accidentally shot,' And

this paper is called *The Morning Leader*, and is sold all over London in the streets to men going to work! What a pitiable degradation! Who are the people who scavenge up this daily bucket of slush? and how does the editor really feel about it? If he goes to church, he, at all events, should mean the response, 'Have mercy upon us, miserable sinners!' What an opportunity he misses! and for what dragging down is he responsible!

ALPINE CLIMBING.—We are not insensible to the joys of mountain climbing—they are, indeed, many. But there is climbing and climbing. Mr. Mummery, who lately lost his life, was a specimen of the intemperate climber who must be classed with the inebriate bicycle racers who would die happy if they could 'break the record.' Mr. Mummery once flatly said that he chose a certain ascent and descent because he knew of 'no more difficult, circuitous, and inconvenient method of getting from Zermatt to

Brenil.' Surely this was sheer foolery, without a gleam of anything admirable.

ROWDY CHRISTIANS.—Some one occasionally sends us the *Freethinker*, edited by G. W. Foote, usually a hash of ghastly ribaldry. But foolish 'believers' are partly to blame. They emit folly enough to keep going a dozen *Freethinkers* with material for ridicule. Here is an extract from a late number: 'Harry Alfred Long is going on to fresh conquests. Long and Powell met in the City Hall to show how Christians love one another. Here is one incident of the encounter, described in the *Daily Mail*:—"Shouting and bawling were engaged in. A large number of those present got up on their seats and hurled threats and epithets at the principals and the chairman." By and by there was something like a free fight, and the police entered to restore order. And the whole blessed lot were Christians!'

## LIGHT ON THE PATH

OUR FATHER'S CHURCH.—We have an important announcement to make. Three Sunday evening gatherings will be held in the Queen's Hall, Langham Place, near Oxford Circus, on November 3rd, 10th, and 17th. Entrance No. 2 (small hall). The hall is a very beautiful and comfortable one, holding over 400 people, and is as central as any hall in London. The meetings will be conducted by Mr. J. Page Hoops, who will speak on the following subjects:

*There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.*

*Children and Angels.*

*Does God inspire His men and women now?*

The meetings will commence at seven prompt.

We want every helper in London to attend, and we want every helper in the country to write and tell London friends to go.

We have small circulars ready (suitable for enclosing in letters), and will gladly send any-

where as many copies as may be asked for. The more the better.

The expenses will be very heavy. We wonder whether the voluntary offerings at the doors will cover them.

FORCED INTO DISSENT.—Mr. Routh writes: 'I cannot admit the justice of your concluding remark in the 1st number of *The Coming Day*' in reply to a letter of mine. As a matter of fact, all that a clergyman is pledged to is acceptance of the general tendency of the Prayer Book as a whole, not each particular clause of it; this latter is an impossibility, because the book is here and there contradictory. It is therefore open to him to assail special portions if he wishes. As to being pledged (as you imagine) not only to accept but to teach that these things are all either divinely inspired, or at least totally exempt from error, this no one believes or expects to be taught—or if they do, the sooner they leave off expecting it the better. A position assuming perfection and finality would exclude all needful modification whatever, and so all adaptation would become impossible, so far

as I can see, except to a church which had formulated no beliefs at all. We must therefore take such a common sense view of such pledges as shall not crystallise our body or leave it in the dead hand of the past. We might recur to the illustration of the castle and say: That castle was originally made over by the king to its first owners on certain very rigid conditions as to providing fighting men, maintaining or, guarding the border, etc., and these conditions are legally handed down to the present time in the shape of deeds. Yet, inasmuch as circumstances are vastly changed since that period, no one thinks the present owner is really bound in honesty by any such stipulations.'

[We are sorry to say that we seem to be farther off than ever from understanding. We have not been discussing musty old title-deeds, ruined old castles and ridiculous old conditions. In 'Forced into Dissent,' we discussed the solemn sacraments, the living creeds, the enforced services of the Church. Any reply intended to be to the point should shew where we misread or misunderstood these, or how anyone can use these con-

tinually in public worship and not be 'pledged to their acceptance as a whole.' The 'position' described by Mr. Routh as absurd and impossible seems to us to be the position that actually stares us in the face.]

SPORT. -- At the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893, there were 300 Jains from India (a kind of heterodox and free-minded Hindoo). An English gentleman writes: 'I closed the discussion by describing some of the ways in which so-called enlightened Western nations prove their loving-kindness for the lower animals. As I described the horrors of bull-fighting, bear-baiting, fox, deer and hare hunting, dog, rat and cock fighting, it was curious to watch the expression of their faces. These 300 Jains looked at each other in a sort of terror of consternation, they caught their breath, devoured me with their eyes as if to search to the bottom of my heart and see if I spoke the truth, and at last the tension became so strong that I saw they could bear no more, and I stopped amid a dead silence.' What a rebuke to this Christian nation!

## LOWELL LINES.

1.—WHERE'ER a single slave doth pine,  
Where'er one man may help another,—  
Thank God for such a birthright, brother,—  
That spot of earth is thine and mine!  
There is the true man's birthplace grand,  
His is a world-wide fatherland!

*The Fatherland.*

2.—THE path of Nature is indeed a narrow  
one, and it is only the immortals that seek it,  
and, when they find it, do not find themselves  
cramped therein.

*Shakspeare once more.*

3.—WORLDLINGS cannot, struggle as they  
may,  
From man's great soul one great thought hide  
away.

*Sonnets.*

4.—MEN are weak, but man is strong.

*Villa Franca.*

5.—No age was e'er degenerate,  
Unless men held it at too cheap a rate.  
For in our likeness still we shape our fate.

*Harvard Commemoration Ode.*

6.—WRONG, tho' its title-deeds go back to the  
days of Sodom, is by nature a thing of yester-  
day, while the right, of which we became  
conscious but an hour ago, is more ancient  
than the stars, and of the essence of Heaven.

*The American Tract Society.*

7.—HE who scorns the least of Nature's  
works  
Is thenceforth exiled and shut out from all.

*Rhacus.*

8.—ONE may find grandeur and consolation  
in a starlit night without caring to ask what  
it means, save grandeur and consolation.

*Essay on Emerson.*

