

The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

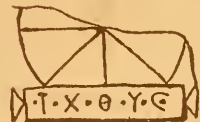
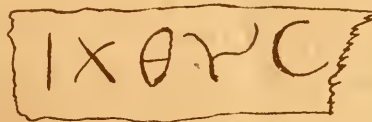
Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER



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IN PACE



FISH REPRESENTATIONS OF CHRIST IN THE CATACOMBS.

(See page 38.)

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The First Grammar of the Language Spoken by the Bontoc Igorot

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COUNT AND COUNTESS TOLSTOY.

After a recent photograph.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.

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MR. THOMAS A. EDISON AND MR. EDWARD C.
HEGELER.

BY THE EDITOR.

DISCUSSIONS of Mr. Edison's views of the soul and immortality have been filling the papers lately, both dailies and magazines, and we wish we could take up the subject and enter into it with all our might, but at present we must be satisfied with a few comments and will reserve a detailed exposition of the problem for a later issue.

It is noticeable that Mr. Hegeler compared the human brain to the phonographic record, as Mr. Edison does, but with this difference, that Mr. Hegeler more appropriately identified the soul with the record itself; not with the material on which it is inscribed, but with the line that registers the sound. This line which may represent the voice of a man, can be impressed into the wax or hard rubber, or perhaps into a more enduring material and before it wears out, can be transferred to innumerable records.

Such is the fate of man's soul. What we think and say and write and do, does not die with us; it continues to work. We transfer to others our modes of thinking and acting. Our life is not as if writ in water, but leaves innumerable traces, many of which remain efficient factors in after life. In every one of these factors we survive for good or evil, and the truth is that the sins of the fathers are visited upon their children until about the fourth generation, but their blessings spread and are hoarded up into the thousandth generation.

Mr. Edison is right in believing that our personality is not individual in its nature. The idea that we are constituted of an indi-

vidual soul-being is a common superstition of the old psychology. Every person is a multiplicity, and the great thinkers of the past form a considerable portion of the souls of modern men and women.

Mr. Edison says that he expects to live on merely in the ticks and clicks of telegraphs and in telephones and his various other inventions. But no "merely" is needed! That immortality is big enough for any one of us. In addition he will live also in the brain of other inventors who will carry his work to further accomplishment.

Wherever any one of Mr. Edison's inventions is used there is part of his thought, of his mind, of his soul, and that is the true Edison. Will he deny it? Scarcely. Mr. Edison's personal friends and the members of his family may love Mr. Edison himself—his person, his character, the twinkle in his eye and the smile on his lip, the human in him—better than his thoughts; or presumably they love his personality and admire his genius. But the recording angel of history, the destiny of mankind that doles out our rewards in immortality, cares naught for the former and weighs the soul only, and this soul of man, according to its merits, will take part in the life after death, in what is commonly called immortality.

The difference between Mr. Hegeler's view of immortality and Mr. Edison's denial of it does not touch the facts under discussion but is a difference of attitude; and "attitude" depends upon the point of view we feel inclined to take.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF TOLSTOY.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THEODORE STANTON.

A number of heretofore unpublished letters of Count Leo Tolstoy have recently been placed in my hands for publication. They are addressed to two physicians,—Dr. Makhovitzky, a Hungarian, and Dr. Skarvan, an Austrian. The first left his own country in order to sit at the feet of the Russian philosopher, whose private physician he finally became. The second is a young man, who refused to perform his military service, was punished therefor by the Austrian authorities and thus won the sympathy and then the friendship of Count Tolstoy.

The letters given below are addressed to the first of these gentlemen, except where Dr. Skarvan's name in the opening lines of a letter shows that it is addressed to him.

Dr. Schmitt, who is frequently mentioned in this correspondence, is the advocate in Germany of so-called "passive Christian anarchy." He is known to be a talented and prolific writer.

The Nazarenes, who also receive considerable attention, are a religious sect widely spread throughout Hungary and Servia. Their chief tenets are that they recognize no spiritual authority and are rigidly opposed to military service, which naturally brings down upon them the severities of the Austrian government.

The opening paragraph of the letter of February, 22, 1895, mentions two pamphlets. The first of these, entitled *Tolstoi, Poet and Prophet*, is by a Slovak writer named Hurban Vajansky. The second is in German, *Die Sekte der Nazarener in Ungarn*, and is by the Slovak priest Szebering.

Professor Massarik, whose name appears in the final paragraph of the letter of September 11, 1895, fills the chair of sociology at Prague University and is a very patriotic Tchech. He has often visited Tolstoy.

The article by Dr. Makhovitzky, which is referred to at the opening of the letter of February 22, 1896, is entitled "The Nazarenes in Hungary." The censor will not permit its publication in Russia, where it is known only in its manuscript form.

The Servian novel—see the letter of October 19, 1896—by Pierre Tomitch, is "The Nazarenes," and is published at Belgrade. While the author was in prison for political acts, he met there some Nazarenes who were undergoing punishment because of their religion. Hence the inspiration of the story.

The Ivan Ivanovitch, whose name appears in this same letter, is M. Gor-

bounoff, the well-known Moscow publisher of popular editions. In order to study close at hand the Slovaks, who are partizans of Tolstoy's views, he journeyed to Hungary in the summer of 1896.

Mr. Kenworthy, also mentioned in this same letter, is a London merchant who gave up his business in order to devote himself to the spreading of Tolstoy's ideas in England.

M. Tchertkoff, who appears in the last paragraph of the last letter, is Tolstoy's friend and confidential literary agent, who went to Christ Church, England, several years ago and established in that town a printing office where Tolstoy's works are printed regardless of the Russian censor. Tchertkoff now resides in Russia with Tolstoy, but the printing establishment still goes on in England.

THEODORE STANTON.

NEW YORK, September, 1910.

October 5, 1894.

Do you know anything about E. H. Schmitt of Budapest? He belongs to a group that practices the Religion of the Spirit and writes in their review very good articles. I am in correspondence with him. If you don't know anything about this body, try and see what you can learn and send me whatever information you are able to obtain. His articles and his letters please me very much.

I am also expecting you to give me more details concerning the Nazarenes,—not in the form of a private letter to me but in the shape of an article, by means of which the general public can learn something about this sect.

I earnestly hope you will make greater and greater advance in the cause of conscience in which you are engaged and in the accomplishment of truth; and that this good work will give you more and more joy.

I myself continue to go on just as you saw me. I pursue my labors and do so with joy, trusting that it will be useful to men.

* * *

February 22, 1895.

I have received the two pamphlets. The one about me is not good. The author attributes to the artistic sense a false significance. He places it above everything else, and so does not at all understand the rôle of religion in general and of Christianity in particular.

I found very interesting the pamphlet about the Nazarenes. I perceive that in your regular clergy, too, exists that terrible spirit of bad faith, and that they also place human interests, those of the state, before those of God. It is extraordinary, this fear which the clergy have of the truth, some of which truth is found in the doctrines of the Nazarenes. I find also in your orthodox clergy a consciousness of their febleness. They do not persecute the Nazarenes

because persecution is disgraceful; public opinion demands that they be liberal. A fair interpretation of the doctrine demonstrates the truth of the Nazarenes and the falsehood of the churches. What is to be done, then? Lying is all that is left, and this is what is done in this vain effort to defend their Establishment. I have now fully grasped the tenets of the Nazarenes and I continue to study this very important religious phenomenon. I still believe that a union with them of all thoughtful people would be a blessing. I beg of you to write me often about them.

* * *

September 11, 1895.

I have heard from you in a round-about way; but I am sorry not to have direct news. We all have the deepest affection for you, and would be glad to have a letter.

Don't lament over the fact that your life is not what you would have wished it to be. That is the condition of all those who aspire to Christian perfection. What is terrible is not *not* to attain what one desires for oneself, for one's soul, but, having attained it, to cease to wish for it,—this is what is terrible.

If you see Massarik, tell him I have not forgotten him, and that he is dear to me. As regards Ruskin, tell him *Unto this Last* and several other things I have known for the past ten years and have even translated them into Russian. Say also that I read with interest this summer Kidd's *Social Evolution*.

* * *

February 22, 1896.

I received a long time ago your article on the Nazarenes. It is already recopied and corrected. We have substituted for the expressions which sounded rather odd here their Russian equivalents, and we are going to try and get it published. The article is very good. We have read it aloud several times and each time it produces a strong and excellent impression.

The same thing must happen among the Nazarenes that happens among our Molokhans, Doukhobors and similar sects, viz., the adult faithful, who have reached their present convictions after much trouble, are inclined to stand up for every article of their faith and will neither advance nor go backwards. But the young generation who have grown up under these conditions cannot endure this stagnation; for life is movement, and it is through movement that one gets nearer and nearer the truth and all that is gained thereby. Hence it is that these youths must be helped and shown the way towards progress. If this is not done or if they do not find it themselves, it

is probable that they will go backwards, that is, throw in their lot with the old beliefs, or rather abandon all religion in order to be able to live in peace.

Schmitt has sent me the latest number of his review. The article entitled "Without a Country" pleased me very much. Tell me all about Schmitt and his periodical. Who are his friends and what is thought of him in your country?

* * *

April, 1906.

What you write me about Schmitt, my dear Skarvan, I felt but did not pay much attention to, though in the letters which I wrote him I made allusions thereto apropos of his "Catechism" of the Religion of the Spirit, and of his articles on this same subject, which I do not approve of. There is in his writings that mixing up of expressions peculiar, it seems to me, to all German writers. They do not perceive it and naively take it for profoundness of thought. In this connection Goethe has said that if the thought is lacking, put a word in its place. This fault is found even among their best thinkers, in Kant, Hegel and the others. Schopenhauer appears to be the only one who is free from it. This lack of clearness becomes still more pronounced when they wish to be eloquent and ornament their speeches with the flowers of rhetoric. This is the weak side of Schmitt. He thinks he has discovered something new, when, in a very muddled and vague fashion, he repeats the fundamental idea of the gospel and especially the teachings of St. John, that in man is the manifestation of God the Father, the Son of Man, who is the same in all men. There is no reason why he should be afraid to speak to the working classes of the true doctrine of Christ and prefer to present in a very bad and vague form Christ's doctrine without calling it Christian. All that he says and can say is but a poor paraphrase of what is so well said by Christ himself.

How do the Nazarenes get on? Our Doukhobors, notwithstanding the persecution of them, or rather because of this persecution, simply grow in the spirit.

A few days ago I received from Stuttgart African Spir's *Denken und Wirklichkeit*. It is one of the best philosophical works I ever read. Do you know the author?

* * *

October, 19, 1896.

The most important portion of your letter is that where you speak of the Nazarenes. It will be interesting to know what impression your book will make on them and what they will say of it.

It would be a good idea to translate and publish the novel of the Servian writer on the life of the Nazarenes. But would the Russian censor authorize it? Anyway, it is useless to send the book here, for no one in my circle knows the Servian tongue.

The trip of Ivan Ivanovitch, his account of you and your friends in general, taken in connection with your letters to me, give me a very exact idea of your country and of the persons there who are very near to me, and awaken in me the agreeable feelings of my intimacy with you all.

At the same time that I sent my article, "The Approach of the End," to Schmitt, I also sent it to Kenworthy and to France. Does Schmitt know this? I always do this way, and I hope the publisher will not be vexed if the article appears before or at the same time as his own does, and in another tongue.

Through Skarvan, I also sent to Schmitt some lines on the subject of the incompatibility between Christianity and the serving of the state; and the "Letter to Liberals," in which the same question is treated.

Thanks for your letters. May God send you all possible good fortune and give you greater firmness. It seems to me that this is what you lack. But it is well known that lack of firmness is always compensated by variety and gentleness in the character.

* * *

May 2, 1900.

I have been very busy of late, dear friend Skarvan. I have written two articles,—“Patriotism and Government” and “The New Slavery.” The latter treats the labor question.

* * *

June, 11, 1900.

Write me how you are and what you are doing; how you are working for yourself, for men and for God,—and for whom besides? Of course, I hope you are serving God the most and yourself the least. Knowing you as I do, I feel sure that such is the case. I embrace you fraternally.

* * *

Moscow, December 28, 1900.

One of the important events of these last few days, dear Skarvan, was the freeing of Pierre Véréguine. He is now in England. He was with me for two days. I am so glad that I took an interest in him.

Little by little, I am again getting back to work. A few days ago, I sent Tschertkoff my "Letter to the Clergy."

TOLSTOY'S PHILOSOPHY.¹

BY JOHANNES WENDLAND.

GOETHE spoke of his works as only details of a great general confession. Tolstoy could even more justly have so qualified what he has written. The leading figures of his great novels *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, *Resurrection*, always wear the author's

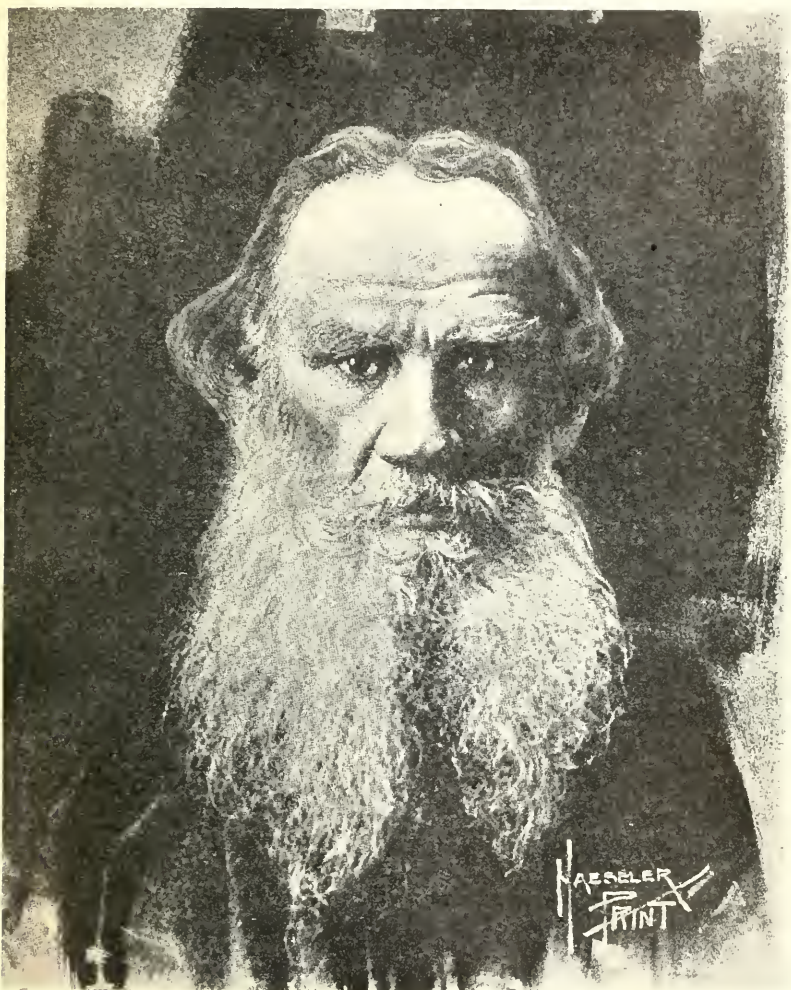


COUNT TOLSTOY AT WORK.

own features. It was in 1879 that the document entitled "My Confession" began the series of his philosophical writings, and these writings are but records of his soul-struggles with the problem: "What is the meaning of life?"

¹A summary of the article "Die Gedankenwelt Leo Tolstojs," in *Die Deutsche Rundschau*, Berlin, March, 1910, edited and translated by R. T. House.

Born in 1827 of a noble family, he early grew weary of a life of purposeless ease while the great mass of his countrymen were suffering about him. He undertook the management of his paternal

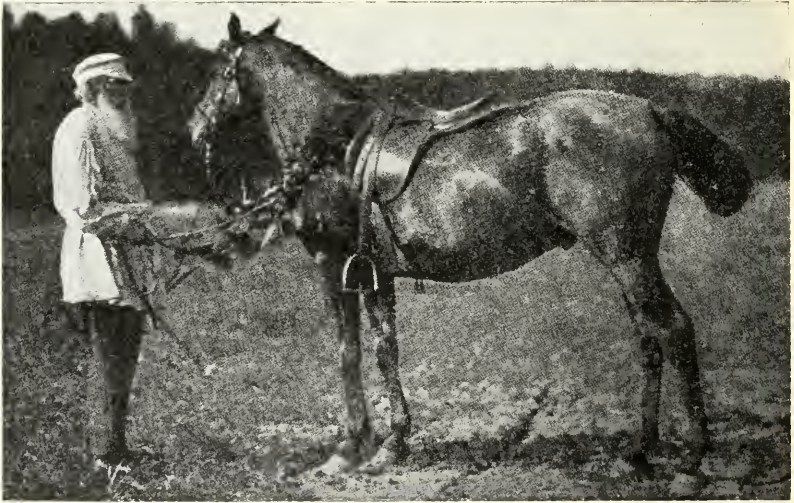


TOLSTOY IN THE LAST YEAR OF HIS LIFE.

estate; he went systematically to work to help the neighboring peasants in every possible manner; he established schools and himself taught in them. His pedagogical theories were of course his own, as always. There must be no compulsion. The child must

study when and what he pleases. Thus early appears the fundamental assumption of his whole philosophy.

A happy marriage, the care of a promising family, material prosperity and literary fame left him still unsatisfied. The question, "Why am I here on earth?" tormented him till he found the answer. He studied Kant and Schopenhauer, and the latter exercised a powerful influence over him. The conclusion that life is all evil, the relapse into nothingness the only real happiness, took hold of him for a time with terrible vigor. Strange that this healthy, prosperous, popular man should have been troubled with thoughts of suicide.

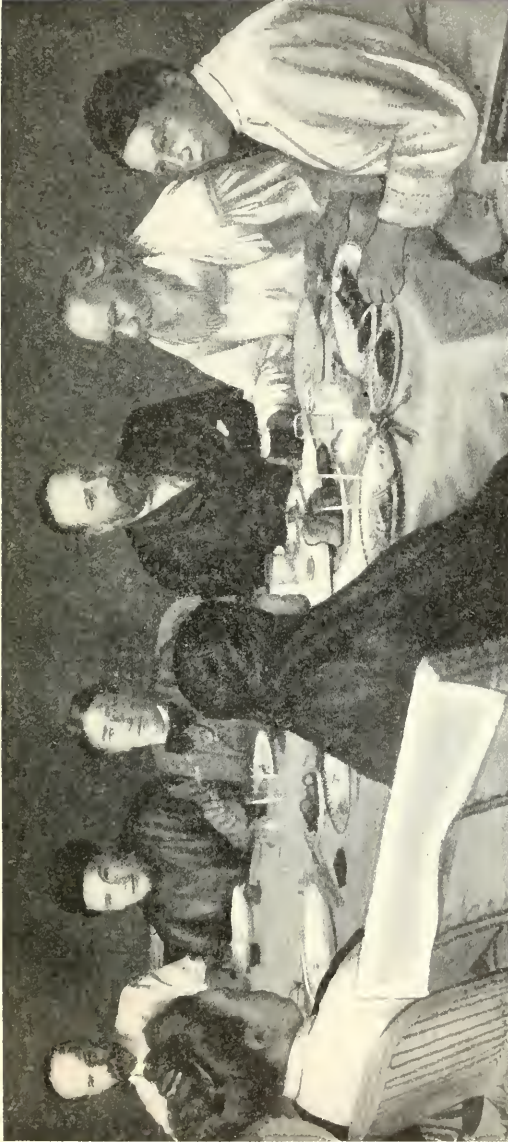


TOLSTOY WITH HIS HORSE.

For a long time he dared not go hunting with a gun for fear he might be impelled to turn the weapon against himself.

He seemed to see in the determined, satisfied lives of pious men evidence that they had found an answer to his question. But he saw no help in the orthodox church. Here were only formalism, hypocrisy, ignorance. He left the church and renounced its doctrines. He retained a belief in individual and universal progress and perfectibility, but still yearned for something more definite. We are moving; good!—but whither?

Many years later he wrote of his period of illumination: "In the year 1877 I became a new man. I count only the time from then. What lies before is vanity and selfishness." Critics fail to



AT DINNER WITH COUNT TOLSTOY.

"A meal at the Tolstoy table was a memorable experience.... There never was a home like it before, nor will be again. Prince and peasant were welcome alike and every guest shared with all the family." Kellogg Durland in *The Independent*.

Tolstoy is easily recognized in this picture, and the Countess is at his left at the end of the table. She is facing Tolstoy's sister, a Carmelite nun, at whose left sits Mme. Iqunnowa. Next to Tolstoy is his literary agent, Count Vladimir Tchertkoff, and then the Princess Obolenskaja, Alexandra Tolstoy, the daughter who shares Tolstoy's views, and at the end Dr. Lugovitsky.

find as definite a break as he himself describes, but at least his peculiar views come out more sharply after the date mentioned.

From his observation of those who professed religion he remained convinced that it contains a profound fundamental truth. He studied Greek and Hebrew, the writings of the old Church Fathers and modern Russian theologians. He cultivated the society of godly peasants, to learn if possible the secret of their unlearned faith. He made pilgrimages, he consulted hermits, monks, bishops, leaders of the smaller fanatic sects,—he even resumed attendance at the services of the orthodox church and observed the prescribed fasts.

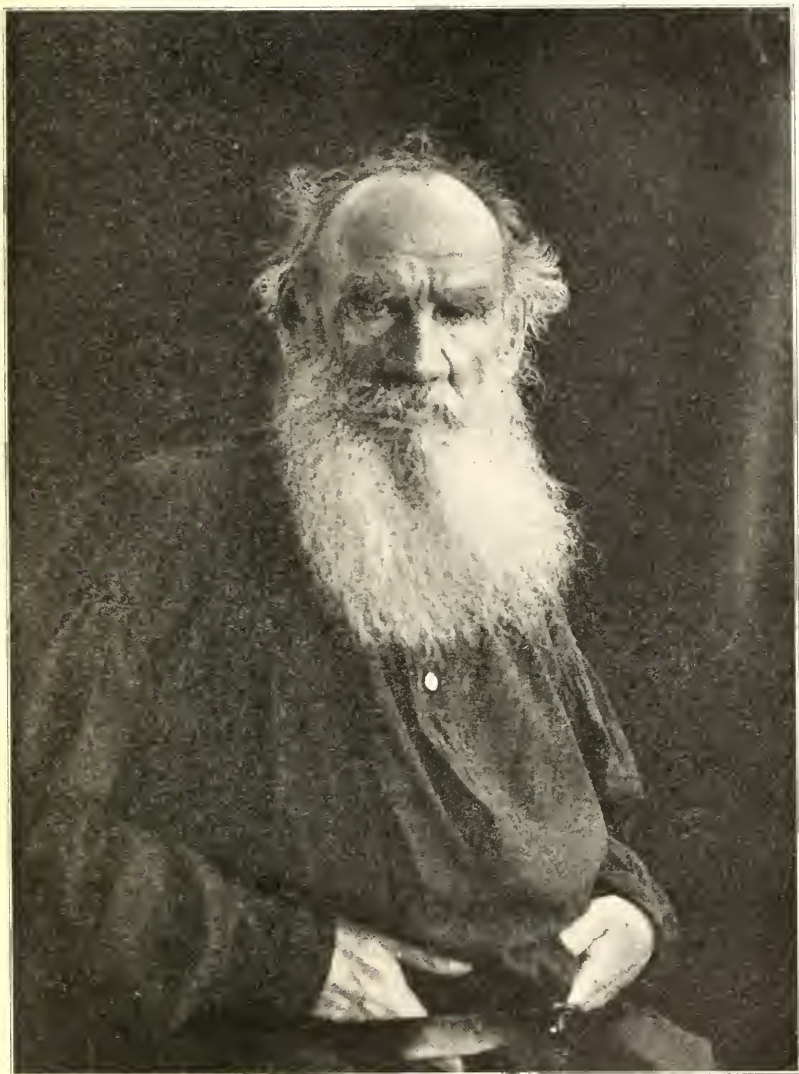
At last the conviction fixed itself—how far it was the result of these religious theories and practices is not clear—“In all my inner struggles and doubts I am overwhelmed by the senselessness of existence and am sunk into despair when I deny God. But the glorious joy of living comes over me as soon as I affirm God.” And the thought streamed through him: “Why seek longer? God is life. To know God and to live are one and the same thing.”

He was no nearer the church than before. But the Gospels offered him a full and satisfying answer to the question, “What is the meaning of my life?” Self-seeking and the pursuit of pleasure are unreasonable, because they bring warfare and satiety. The reasonable life is a life of love and sacrifice. Confucius, Lao-tze, Buddha, Epictetus, Jesus, all saw the great and necessary truth that the only way to real happiness lies through love to God and man.

There was no mysticism in Tolstoy’s religion. He was as insistent that the message be clear and reasonable as were the deists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as were Herbert of Cherbury, Chubb, Reimarius. He had no sympathy with Paul’s learned complications, no patience with the miraculous “plan of salvation.”

Tolstoy’s teaching was a flat contradiction of the proud individualism of Nietzsche. The mid-point of his doctrine was the command, “Resist not evil!” He followed the prohibition to its extremest consequences. If I find a robber in the act of murdering a child, I must offer no violent opposition; for I have no means of knowing what may become of the child if I save its life, or of the robber if I allow him to escape. “Yes, if the Zulus came to roast my children, the only thing I could do would be to endeavor to convince them that such a procedure would be useless or positively harmful to them.”

All war, then, is wrong, and all military service of every sort is to be denounced. Tolstoy opposed all acts of violence toward criminals, all imprisonment. The novel *Resurrection* contains a



Leo Tolstoy.
1908, 14 August

bitter arraignment of judges who condemn their equals or their betters to restraint or suffering. "Judge not that ye be not judged." How can men who know themselves to be full of sin and weakness, presume to punish others who are no worse than they? "I say unto you, Swear not at all." And yet in Russia millions take the oath while a priest holds the Gospels before them, open perhaps at the very page where the oath is forbidden. Here are the principal reasons for his criticism of the church. She sanctions the taking of oaths, she blesses the banners of murderous armies, she persecutes those of a different faith, she refuses to suffer in silence.

More and more radical grew Tolstoy's criticism. "Love your enemies." The command deals a death-blow at what is termed patriotism. The man who has room in his heart for a feeling of animosity toward the citizens of another country is no Christian.

There is no question that Tolstoy meant all he said to the deepest depths of his being. In 1882 Moscow suffered the, for her, unusual experience of a census enumeration. Tolstoy was one of two thousand volunteer enumerators, and his tract, "What shall we do then?" describes his experiences. He distributed large sums of money among the proletariat, and influenced others to do the same. He organized a systematic effort at moral education of the lower orders. But he found a fundamental error in the present constitution of society. It is wrong that a hundred thousand men should suffer in order that one thousand may live in luxury. The reasonable life is that in which each individual labors to supply his own physical needs, and accepts no help from others; and this reasonable life can be lived only in the pure air and unhampered freedom of the country.

"What then of art, science, culture, music, theaters?" Tolstoy evades nothing. Our over-refined culture is in the main unsound. Let all these things go if necessary. We can get along without them.

Then Tolstoy donned the peasant frock. He no longer lived in Moscow. He worked like a peasant, and peasants are his constant associates. But he had his library; he remained a very wealthy man; he carried his theories only half way to their logical outcome. This is due in part to the resistance of his family, who were by no means unqualified converts to his philosophy, and with whom he had been forced to effect a compromise. Still, without their influence, it would have been hard for even this courageous reformer to become absolutely consistent.

Years ago he abandoned the writing of romances. True art, for him, must be "an agency for human progress." In 1883 Turgen-

jeff wrote to him from his death-bed: "Go back to your literary work! How happy I should be if I could think that my entreaty would have an effect on you. My friend, great writer of the Russian people, listen to my prayer!" But Tolstoy could be nothing else than moralist and reformer. "Art for art's sake" was to him blasphemy. Rhymed poetry is folly, because language can have no other purpose than to express thought in the simplest and clearest possible manner, and his application of his literary theory continued to bring forth vigorous and beautiful fruit.

If Tolstoy had a valid message for the old world of convention it is this: Our highly-prized modern culture is not the last word of human accomplishment. We are not yet able to measure values by the ultimate, eternal standards. We must continue our efforts to prove all things, to let unessentials pass and hold fast that which is good.

THE RELIGION OF MOHAMMED.

AS PRESENTED IN EXTRACTS SELECTED BY COUNT LEO N.
TOLSTOY.

ABDULLAH Surawardi, a Hindu Moslem, has compiled a volume of Mohammed's sayings which are not contained in the Koran. This collection has been translated into German by Adolf Hess, and the Berlin *Deutsche Rundschau* of March, 1910, published some of these sayings selected and introduced by Count Leo N. Tolstoy, who finds in them truths common to all religions. After summing up briefly and in the simplest possible language the main facts of Mohammed's life and teachings, Count Tolstoy closes with the following comparison between Mohammedanism on the one hand and Christianity and Buddhism on the other: "The violent propaganda of Mohammed's teachings accounts also for the fierce opposition which it met from the gentle-spirited Buddhists and Christians. In spite of the austerity and pure morality of the Mohammedans which excited universal sympathy and respect, their religion did not spread so extensively as other faiths which preached gentleness and mercy and ascribed to God alone the power over life and death." Some of the most striking of these apocryphal dicta of the founder of Islam read as follows:

SAYINGS OF MOHAMMED.

Mohammed lay asleep under a palm-tree, and when he awoke suddenly, he saw his enemy Diutur standing before him with his sword drawn. "Now, Mohammed, who will save thee from death?" cried Diutur. "God," answered Mohammed. Diutur let the sword sink. Mohammed tore it away from him and cried in his turn: "Now Diutur, who will save *thee* from death?" "No one," answered Diutur. "Let me show thee that the same God will save thee also!" cried Mohammed and gave him his sword back. Thenceforth Diutur became one of the most faithful adherents of the prophet.

God has said: "The man who does good, I will repay tenfold and more; he who does evil will find requital if I do not forgive him; and he who will come a span nearer to me, to him will I come an ell nearer; and he who will come an ell nearer to me, him will I come to meet twelve ells; he who comes to me walking, to him I will run; and he who comes before me full of sin, but believing, I will come before him ready to forgive him."

O Lord, keep me my life long in poverty, and let me die a beggar.

None has ever tasted better drink than he who in the name of God swallows down an angry word.

Angels said: "O God! Is there anything by thee created that is stronger than stone?" God said: "Yes; iron is stronger than stone, for it breaks it in pieces." The angels said: "O Lord, is there any thing by thee created that is stronger than iron?" "Yes," said God, fire is stronger than iron, for it melts it." And the angels said: "O Lord! is there anything by thee created that is stronger than fire?" God said: "Yes, water is stronger fire, for it checks and extinguishes it." Then said the angels: "O Lord! Is any thing by thee created stronger than water?" God said: "Yes, the wind is stronger than water; it stirs it and drives it away." They said: "O Lord, is any thing by thee created stronger than wind?" God said: "Yes; the children of Adam, who give alms; they conquer all whose left hand knoweth not what the right hand doeth."

God said: "I was a treasure which no man knew. I wished to be known: so I made man."

Mohammed said one day to Wabischah: "Is it not true that thou wouldst know of me what is good and what is evil?" "Yes," he answered, "it is for that I am come." Then Mohammed dipped his finger in oil, and touching his breast, made a sign where the heart lies and said: "Ask thy heart." He did this three times and said then: "Good is that which gives thy heart rest and security; evil is what casts thee into doubt, even if others justify thee."

Without modesty and chastity, no faith is possible.

Be stubborn in good works.

An hour of meditation is better than a year of devotion.

The reward is as great as the suffering; that is, the more unfortunate and miserable a man is, the greater and fuller is his reward. It is true that whom God loveth he chasteneth.

Know ye not what undermines our faith and makes it impossible? The errors of the expounders, the disputes of the hypocrites and the comments of the rulers which lead away from the true path.

The time is near when nothing more will remain of our faith but its name; and of the Koran nothing but the outward signs; when there will be no more teaching in the mosques and no service of God there; when the sages will be the worst men of all, from whom quarreling and strife go out and to whom they return.

The striving after knowledge is God's will for every believer; but he who gives knowledge to the unworthy hangs pearls, precious stones and gold about the necks of swine.

There are three kinds of doctrine: that whose truth is certain—follow it; that which leads astray from the true path—avoid it; and that which is not clear—seek light for it from God.

Hope in God, but fasten thy camel securely.

To keep silence as much as possible and to keep cheerful at the same time—can there be anything better?

Shall I tell you what is better than fasting, alms and prayer? A friend making peace with his friend. Enmity and hate rob man of every gift of God.

God himself is gentle and full of humility; he gives the meek what he withholds from the violent.

One day Mohammed fell asleep on a poor mat and rose very dirty. One said to him: "O man of God, if thou wishest it, I will prepare thee a soft bed." Mohammed answered: "What have I to do with this world? I am here as a traveler who has stepped into the shadow of a tree and at once steps out of it again."

When thou seest one who is richer or more beautiful than thou, think of those who are less fortunate than thou art."

One came to Mohammed and said to him: "Truly, I love thee." Mohammed answered him: "Consider what thou sayest." The man said: "I swear to thee, I love thee," and repeated these words three times. Then said Mohammed to him: "If thou art honest, prepare for poverty; for to him who loves me poverty comes more surely than the stream to the sea."

God said: "For him whom I love I am the ears with which he hears, the eyes with which he sees, the hands with which he grasps, and the feet with which he walks."

As rubbing on the earth cleanses iron, so does rubbing on God cleanse the hearts of men.

Every good deed is a work of mercy; is it not a good deed to greet a brother in a friendly manner, and to pour from thy water-skin into his pitcher?

Mohammed asked: "Believe ye that a mother will throw her child into the fire?" The answer come, "No." Then said Mohammed: "But God is yet more merciful to his creatures than a mother to her child."

Pay the workman his wage before his sweat dries.

He honors God most who forgives his enemy when he has him in his hands.

Hell is hidden behind pleasures, paradise behind work and privations.

God gives a great reward to him who suppresses his anger.

Deeds are judged according to their motives.

God loves the men who earn their bread by labor.

He only is a true laborer for truth, who bears up under misery and forgets offences.

True modesty is the source of all virtue.

The grave is the first step towards eternity.

AN EXECUTION IN THE RUSSIAN POLITICAL PRISONS.¹

BY LEONIDE SEMENOF.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY COUNT LEO TOLSTOY.

THE account which follows shows, it seems to me, remarkable literary workmanship. It is full of feeling and artistic imagination. It should be given the widest publicity. This wish of mine recalls a conversation which I once had with Ostrovsky, the dramatist. I had just written a play, "The Contaminated Family," which I read to him, remarking that I should like to see it published as soon as possible. He thereupon replied: "Why, are you afraid people are going to become more intelligent?" These words were quite to the point in this matter of my poor play. But in this other matter, the situation is quite different. To-day nobody can help hoping that men may become more intelligent and that the horrors described below cease, though there is little reason to believe that such will be the case. Hence it is that I esteem most useful every word raised against what is now going on in Russia.

LEO TOLSTOY.

January, 1910.

There was nothing extraordinary about it. It was the same as always,—the same walls, the same barred windows. The day was clear and cold just like a thousand other days here below.

¹The translation of this article has been communicated by Mr. Theodore Stanton.

In the barracks the soldiers were lolling about, smoking, telling their long crude stories and laughing. The guards sometimes whispered together and then paced up and down the long somber corridors of the prison, their keys jingling, while they were lazily thinking ever the same thing,—their prison duties and their home comforts.

The political prisoners were in a nervous state. Now they would go pacing forward and back in their narrow cells; then, on a sudden, they would tremble, would listen to what was going on, and then begin once more their endless aimless tramp. And all around them was hideous,—the dirty walls of the prison and the awful stench.

The engineer sighed and threw himself down on the boards which served as a bed. He was a tall thin man with high cheek bones and weary sad eyes. His nerves were unstrung and his whole body worn out. One thought never left his head, where it clung most pertinaciously.

During the past few days he had tried with all his strength to put away from him all feeling. He had become quite indifferent to death,—“a slight necessary operation,” he would often say to himself while smoking a cigarette. “And afterwards, what? Nothing.” The whole thing seemed so simple and clear to him that it was not worth a moment’s reflection. The only thing necessary was, in some way or another, to keep occupied and stifle his conscience during the few days that remained to him. Every thing to prevent the inevitable had been done.

So the engineer would read and smoke. Then he would pace his cell to begin reading again. Fortunately he had some books. In spite of the severity of the solitary confinement system, he had been able to get books from the political prisoners confined in another part of the building.

In one of these books he had read a thought that would give him no peace of mind. It pursued him all day, and when he went to bed it was transformed into a nightmare, and this nightmare seemed to become a reality.

All humanity, he thought, is a unique, immense, monstrous organism. It appeared before him growing, spreading, devouring some of its cells for the benefit of other cells, and devouring him also!

And why was all this? And when the engineer would ask this question, then the thought would crumble to pieces. It seemed to lack a link. But nevertheless it would again get possession

of his head, infiltrating into his own veins as does sap into the veins of plants.

Then he would walk and smoke again. Sometimes he would listen to what the other prisoners were doing. In what state of mind were they awaiting the coming of death? Perhaps they had lost courage. But as this appeared bad and was disagreeable to him, he would banish such thoughts. Perhaps the others were more nervous than he was.

* * *

It was a clear winter's day. The director of the prison came and went in the court-yard and gave orders. It was cold and the frost bit one's ears. He turned up the collar of his great-coat. From his apartments came the odor of roasting turkey and this odor irritated him. He wanted to eat.

"Winding-sheets cost two rubles and fifty kopeks each," the prison bookkeeper informed him, a shrewd blond peasant with an obsequious manner.

The director glanced at him for a moment and said impatiently:

"Then that won't go, especially as the municipality has voted us no funds. The price is too high. We need money as it is. Explain the matter to them."

"I have already done so, Sir."

"But you idiot; tell them so again," he growled.

This clerk had long been a source of vexation to him. His thickheadedness, his blue eyes with their innocent look and his fawning ways,—the fellow seemed to be making fun of him. "He thinks me an assassin," the director would say to himself; "that all I am good for is to kill people and nothing else,—this stupid fool!" Then turning once more to his subordinate:

"Well, go and tell them so again or we shall have to get on without winding-sheets."

"I will obey orders."

The director interrupted him:

"Oh, enough of that obeying orders business. There is something else besides. We must have a wig and a beard. The official circular prescribes this. Go to Axenstein's and get them."

"I will obey orders."

So the clerk hastened away and the snow creaked under his feet. The director watched him disappear, then thoughts of his own cursed duties took possession of him once more.

"When will all this stop? It nearly drives me mad. Every day, new death sentences, fresh executions. I wish those fellows were in my place!"

And the old dominant hatred of the authorities which had been accumulating in his heart suddenly began to show itself and quickly reached the boiling point.

"And all this comes from those at the head. Well, let them go on with this. But if things take a bad turn, we are not going to be the ones who will suffer. We simply obey orders."

And this thought that it would be the chiefs who would suffer seemed to console the director and he went off to give further orders.

* * *

The President of the military tribunal at a dinner given in his honor by the officers of the regiment of the Imperial Fusileers, was exceedingly contented and freely indulged in laughter. He was a fat general, with red cheeks and long mustaches. He had once studied for a time in a theological seminary and he sometimes spoke like a clergyman. He really believed himself thoroughly upright and good, and he wanted to have everybody else think so too, even to the lawyer who had defended the prisoners, who, during a sitting of the tribunal had referred to him in most flattering terms as "that light of science." This pleased him very much, particularly because it was said in the presence of the Judge Advocate who was of a higher grade than himself and who had once written some sort of a book of which he was very proud. He it was who had said at one of the sittings of the tribunal: "No educated jurist can have a moment's doubt about the guilt of the prisoner now before us."

"And yet we had our doubts," the general said to his hosts at the table, "and we acquitted a most evident terrorist. Ha, ha, ha, 'no educated jurist,' he said. We let him see who runs things at the tribunal. We acquit when we like and we hang if the fancy takes us. There was something very pleasing about that Klemenkine," he continued, addressing these last words across the table to the lawyer.

"Whom are you speaking of, General?" asked the colonel of the regiment who did not understand to whom he was referring.

"We are going to hang the fellow over there," exclaimed the general; and then he continued, turning to the lawyer: "Nobody can bring this up against us, for all the blame was laid on two dead men. You doubtless noticed this?" And then more completely to satisfy the lawyer, he added with an air of importance and in an

undertone: "The Governor General called for seven. We had to find five more. May God receive their souls!"

Thereupon the general cast his eyes around the banqueting hall as though he were looking for some holy image, made the sign of the cross over his high stomach, which was beginning to perspire under his unbuttoned uniform, and raised his glass with these words:

"To your health, my legal friend. Don't feel so solemn over the affair. Perhaps we can do better next time."

* * *

One of the officers who was on the tribunal nearly burst into tears during the sitting, so deeply moved was he by the lawyer's speech in defense of a young college boy of eighteen, who, he was convinced, was innocent but who was, nevertheless, condemned to death. Now, at the banquet, this same officer was drinking like a fish, while, through his befogged eyes he saw all around him the good and charming faces of his brother officers, and was surprised, even himself, to find them so sympathetic. And now he was asking himself how he could have been so foolish during the sitting as to think for a moment of resigning from the army for such a thing. If he had done so what would he be now? Why should he have done so? If this boy had been let off another would have been hung in his place. The President had made it very clear to all the judges that it was necessary to hang five. So what difference did it make who the five were? In fact, he got so much comfort out of these reflections that he went on drinking harder than ever.

The lawyer had long been convinced that before a military tribunal neither eloquence, nor erudition, nor even sentiment, counted for anything. The essential thing was to be on good terms with the judges and to habituate them to his person, so that they should not fear him nor look upon him as a terrorist. So now he began to drink too, forcing himself to smile to the right and to the left with the officers in order to show them that he was quite one of them. But at the bottom of his heart, through the mists of the wine, the feeling was ever present, that this is the center where was prepared Port Arthur and Isoushima. And he thought how some day he would write all this in his memoirs.

* * *

The city was full of excitement. A meeting of voters at the Douma and a newly elected deputy were signing a protest against capital punishment. A telegram was sent to St. Petersburg. A large lady with deep-set eyes, but who did not weep, the mother of

one of those condemned to death, a college boy, was hurrying about, first to deputies, then to the Governor General, then to the lawyers and finally to the Judge Advocate. On all of them she produced an impression of terror.

The Governor General had declined to receive her. The others tried to remove her fears, stammered out vague assurances, made promises and hastened to get rid of her. She was accompanied by her daughter, a young lady who was not handsome, who watched over her mother with anguish and anxiety. She put her carefully in the carriage and said to her:

"Mama, mama, be calm. I am sure nothing will happen. Valia is innocent and will be pardoned."

The deputy also called twice on the Governor General, but the second time he was not received. This deputy was a physician, a kindly old man with gray hair and eyebrows, and watery eyes. He was very well known in town and was highly esteemed. The first time he went to the palace of the Governor General, a strange thought came into his head. Before him people were hurrying with a quick step. The snow shone. The cab-drivers were swinging their arms to keep their hands warm. The pale mother of the college lad came back to him, and then suddenly everything seemed a lie, a useless lie. Also a lie was his visit to the Governor General to intercede for the condemned. He spoke to himself, and this was the strange thought which haunted him:

"The Government is always the Government. The very noise being made about this boy's case will hurt our cause. The Government will not yield!"

But it would seem that the meetings, the protests, the general emotion which had spread everywhere, would arouse the country like a victorious wave and sweep everything before it. He was a witness of this historic movement, so grand and so important; so he went up the stairway of the Governor's Palace with a firm step and with the dignity of one of the people's representatives, resolved boldly to state the case.

* * *

The Governor General was a tall soldier, his torso tightly fitted into his uniform, his cheeks rosy, who carried superbly his seventy-seven years. He was thoroughly convinced that his broad face, his grand mustaches, his bushy eyebrows always severely contracted, produced the very impression which should be associated with a great dignitary such as he believed himself to be: and his every

thought and effort were devoted to augment this impression. To him, everything "was as plain as the nose on your face," he would say. It was the Liberals who pushed "them" to the point where they revolted. That was all there was of it. So of course he received the deputy coldly and told him that everything permitted by the law would be done.

The little deputy felt himself almost nothing when he stood before the towering Governor General, whose breast was covered with decorations, and met the steady gaze of those piercing eyes. For a moment, he quite forgot what he had come to say. But finally he tried to touch delicately on the humanitarian side of the affair. He spoke of the grief of the lad's mother. But the reply was always the same.

"All that the law permits will be done," and the Governor General extended mechanically his big hand on whose little finger shone a ring. But when the deputy was gone and the Governor General was back in his own study again, he burst out laughing and exclaimed:

"Why, he himself is a candidate for prison!"

The Governor General prided himself on being able to look men through and through, and he was especially proud of his ability to detect a revolutionist.

So he laid his cigar down on the corner of the table and in a firm hand signed the lad's death warrant. The only thing that troubled him was possible interference from St. Petersburg.

"I am responsible before the Czar and the nation for calm throughout the Empire. St. Petersburg mixes in everything but only makes blunders."

* * *

The night of this same day, when the condemned men were waked up for execution, all the officials who were to take part in the lugubrious affair were seized with a feeling of terror and anguish. The Sub-Director of the prison, a young officer on duty that night, with a very handsome and somewhat effeminate face, while hastening through the prison's somber passage ways, lighted by little petroleum lamps, felt much as he used to feel as a child when alone in the woods, trembling at every sound, at every tree, as though they boded danger. He imagined now that a thousand invisible and terrible eyes were staring at him from every side, surprising him in the act of committing a base and terrible crime. He had just been appointed sub-director, and this was the first time he was to take part in an execution.

There were some eight hundred prisoners in the building, and in spite of themselves the officials had come to look upon them as so many numbers and papers, and the *sang froid* with which the approaching execution was looked upon had communicated itself involuntarily to everybody.

But now that he was going in the middle of the night to announce death to men whose faces even were unknown to him,—this filled the young officer with fear, and he began to ask himself whether he should not blame the Director for having thus assigned to him a duty which was as disagreeable as it was delicate and difficult to perform. Or, on the contrary, should he feel flattered at the confidence thus shown him? This last way of looking at the matter was finally the accepted one. So, downing every fear, he affected in the sight of everybody a free and easy manner which he did not feel and kept nervously twisting his budding mustaches..

* * *

The awakened prisoners rose from their bunks pale and tired and looked dazedly around them. They were ordered to make haste; everybody wanted the terrible business over as rapidly as possible. At the same time, strangely enough, a sort of angry feeling against them suddenly took possession of officers and soldiers alike, at the sight of these faces half asleep and half frozen. This ill-feeling seemed to spring from the fact that it was these poor creatures who had forced them to rout out in the middle of the night and perform an awful duty that filled them all with horror.

“Make haste, you,” yelled a soldier into one cell, forgetting the presence of his superior officer; “there is no use in wasting time now.”

And the poor victims silently obeyed, all understanding what the brutal soldier meant.

* * *

The engineer had just fallen asleep when they came to get him. He had had much trouble that night in quieting his throbbing temples. He had smoked so much during the day that his nerves were over-excited. His enfeebled head was peopled with thoughts and images which became nightmares, and again he saw humanity take on the form of some monster embracing the whole earth and carrying on its mysterious work of rejecting dead cells, which had become useless, and creating new ones to take their places.

When called, the engineer started up half asleep, ran his fingers

through his hair, and stretched himself out as though he would enjoy his uncomfortable bed for the last time and thus prolong the final moments remaining to him. Then suddenly everything disappeared, everything vanished into nothingness,—the revolution, its actors, the tribunal, all. All things seemed to him so useless, so indifferent, and he said to himself:

“Only death remains and then all is ended;” and he again repeated: “A little operation, that is all.”

But this time no smile accompanied the thought. It only ran through his brain, simply, tranquilly, for an extraordinary calmness had suddenly spread through his whole being. Now everything seemed so mean, so small in the presence of that immense nothingness which was about to open to him and into which he was sure to disappear within the next few minutes. He would have liked to tarry for a few moments longer in the spell of this feeling which he had never experienced before. But the officer was in haste.

“There is no time to waste, none to waste. Get ready. Hurry.”

There was something cowardly in this order. The officer appeared to be trying to give himself courage and to stir up his own brutality. Such was the thought that flashed on the engineer’s mind as he started up. For a moment he felt offended at this indecent haste at such a time. But this feeling quickly faded away, for he could see that the officer was deathly pale and that his eyes were weak and haggard. He could not look the prisoner in the face.

“He is some libertine,” thought the engineer mechanically. But now all this seemed to him so small and insignificant, mere dust in the presence of the immense future nothingness, that he simply smiled and got up. He had to obey.

* * *

In the corridor, the victims were crowded against one another; all was disorder, one pushing the other, while the chains clinked and the heavy footfalls echoed. The soldiers were watchful. They appeared to fear that even now some of their prisoners might escape. Now and then they urged them forward. There was a slight delay as they all crowded through a door-way, when a loud voice exclaimed:

“Comrades, we are being led to the judgment seat of heaven.”

This was said by the son of a deacon, with pale cheeks and poor teeth. He did not seem to know just what he was saying, and his jaws were clattering together as though he had a fever.

“That’s all right; that’s the very road you ought to follow,”

replied angrily the soldier at his side, the same who had a few minutes before hustled him out of his cell.

* * *

At the prison registry office the minutes seemed an eternity. But this eternity advanced without pity, advanced and disappeared.

While they had been hastening through the corridors, the whole life of each prisoner appeared to rise up before him and pass through his mind as images which were extraordinarily wonderful. This terrible work of the imagination absorbed all of their attention, turned their minds away from everything else. They quite forgot to ask themselves if even yet something might not be done to save them. They walked like somnambulists. But this momentary and unexpected stop at the prison office broke the spell and made vanish all these more tender feelings.

The Registrar and the Director were busy finding the names in the prison books, and when found the names were called out. It looked as though they were scratched out. But all this passed before the prisoners' eyes as in a dream, like pale lifeless visions,—the books, the lamps, the bald head of the Director, the bayonets of the soldiers.

These soldiers still clung close to their prisoners. Their caps and often their bodies rubbed up against the bodies of their victims. Still they feared escape, and looked at them with an expression which seemed to say:

“We are not to blame for this, but we will be held responsible for anything that goes wrong.”

A nervous young soldier with a slight black mustache just beginning to show itself was clearly much moved and strove not to look at the prisoners. The strange thought that he was there living and well, while these other men, that tall prisoner, unshaven, his gray eyes so sunken like the eyes of all of them, would in a few minutes more be no longer among the living,—this sent a shudder through him, made his heart beat faster and caused him to grow deadly pale.

Among the prisoners was Klemenkine, a man of southern type, sturdy, with a fine face and thick hair. It was difficult for him to keep still. He sat down on a bench, took his head in his hands, his elbows resting on his knees. He stamped his feet and exclaimed:

“Comrades, the best they can do is to finish up this business promptly,” and he looked about on the unhappy group as he buried

his cold hands in his prison cap. Then wild thoughts of escape came into his head, and then he spoke again :

"Comrades, what does all this mean, anyway? I am innocent. I swear it. I was condemned without being heard. What does all this mean then?"

But the most terrified member of the unfortunate group was the young college boy. This tender lad, with his plump body and downy cheeks, contracted his eyebrows, bit his lips, and was plainly making every effort in his power not to break down, and yet sobbing in spite of it all. Suddenly, he hastily made the sign of the cross ; his face grew so red that the veins of his temples stood out ; his chin trembled, and, for a moment, his lips moved without uttering a sound. It was plain that he wished to say something, but his emotion was such that he could not do so.

At this moment, the engineer happened to be looking at him. He feared that the rush of blood to the throat might smother the boy. "This, added to his other suffering, would be too much," the engineer said to himself. But finally the lad got better control of his organs of speech and said in a whisper :

"I—I—I want a priest."

Then he looked frightened at the sound of his own voice, and, terrified, gazed wildly about. But nobody had heard him except the soldier who was near the engineer, and who, pale as ever, was still striving not to look at the prisoners. Trembling with emotion, he hastened to his superior officer in order to tell him of the boy's wish. But the officer's head was buried in the books.

"I want a priest," the youth now repeated in a louder voice, which, this time, was heard by everybody.

Thereupon, the son of the deacon exclaimed with an oath :

"And I, I want a cigarette."

The officer looked up from his registers and shouted at the frightened boy :

"You shall have one. But what are you blubbering about?"

But when he saw that young face so red and so terribly drawn, the eyes inflamed with emotion, he felt embarrassed and added in a more kindly tone :

"You will have one ; you will have all that the law permits."

The boy, confused, looked about him again and replied :

"Oh it's nothing ; I simply wanted to say something."

And the old thought suddenly came back to the engineer. All this seemed so little, so mean, in the presence of that eternal calm where all were soon to be annihilated, that he felt like trying to ex-

plain to the lad, in order that he should not break down and could smile with him, that all this was useless and that, even at such a moment one could be happy.

But at the same moment, a feeling of pity for the Director came into the engineer's heart,—this Director who, at such a time, was placed in such a terrible position; and when he saw in his face an expression of tenderness for the suffering of the lad, he felt that he too was a man. So he now thought of going, not to the lad, but to the Director and saying to him:

“Would it not be best to hang the boy first? I am ready to wait. It will be easier for the child.”

It seemed to the engineer that this could be brought about, “for,” he said to himself, “all here are men,—himself, the Director and the soldiers. These officers are not criminals. Each will understand this humane and natural sentiment in so important and general an act as death.”

But while mechanically he was asking himself how he was going to set to work to do this, for he saw that he could not say these things aloud, that the matter had to be explained with tact and prudence, for it to be understood,—in the midst of these plans the terrible business at the registry office was finished, and all was commotion again.

The deacon's son had noticed by the clock that they had been there only five minutes. “But it seemed like an age,” he said as they moved on.

It was now seven minutes to three a. m. All went crowding through the doors into the courtyard. The prisoners passed between two rows of soldiers. At their head marched the same young officer, while behind walked the group of witnesses required by the law to be present at the execution.

* * *

While the last formalities were being carried out at the office, the priest, in the greatest agitation, paced up and down the adjoining room, the private bureau of the Director. “All that seems unnecessary,” he thought to himself; it could surely be avoided in some way. The prisoners could be treated in a more Christian spirit and pardoned. But, was his conclusion, we are small fry, and the official world probably knows better than we as to what should be done. Several times the priest indulged in prayer. But the presence of other persons and the unusual surroundings disturbed him. He would brush back his long hair and fumble the cross. At this moment, the Director came to him and said:

"Father, one of the prisoners wants you."

All the others had declined the consolation of religion.

The priest hastened into the office, when it suddenly occurred to him to ask where the confession should take place. "Here or out in the court-yard?" It was decided that it should occur in the office.

"I shall now bring comfort to at least one of them, and I will pray for the others," said the priest, whose heart was throbbing.

* * *

The Judge Advocate was nervous and was striving not to notice what was going on. He was thinking of his wife whom he had left in his warm and comfortable bed. She liked decadent poetry, and, in a general way, held advanced ideas. He too sympathized with the movement and understood the whole subject. He felt that it was time to abolish the old régime; but yet it was plain to him that so long as the law existed, it must be carried out. "When they get the power," he said to himself, "then they will make other laws and live according to their own ideas." He too was angry with these men because they were not jurists and could not grasp such simple truths, though from a humanitarian standpoint, he admitted they were to be pitied. And while he was indulging in these rather philosophical reflections, he would now and again fumble the sentence which was in his pocket and which he would soon have to read to the condemned. He was now mustering up all his strength for this terrible task.

The doctor was drunk, smoked, and was complaining to the Director of some imaginary affront, while the young officer in command kept looking at his watch.

* * *

Out in the court-yard, within sight of the scaffolds, the college lad was sobbing and then suddenly burst into a flood of tears. He could not speak. He could only weep. All his strength and determination to bear up like a man had disappeared during the confession. He did not believe in God, he did not understand the conception. But thoughts of his mother were ever present with him, and he felt that the presence of this priest during his last moments would console her. He had begged the priest to tell her that he had died bravely, believing in immortality, with love for her in his heart and trusting that she would not be too sad. He was ready to lie to accomplish this end.

But in the hurry of the confession, he had forgotten to speak to the priest of his sister, and he was deeply pained by the thought that he had never been just towards this puny scrofulous child, who now would always think that in his last moments he had forgotten her and did not love her. But it was now too late to repair this oversight, and he wept, and sobbed, and shook throughout his whole young body.

It was a terrible scene. Tears were in all eyes. All felt that it should be ended. So the hangman seized the lad the first, who then became suddenly silent and swooned.

While entering the court-yard, the engineer had urged that everything possible should be done for the boy, and when he saw that there were five scaffolds, he grew still calmer. Again the old feeling of the littleness of everything took still stronger hold upon him so that the sobs of the boy no longer touched him. He knew that they were all going to die, that in a moment all would be over, both tears and what produced them. Twice he looked up at the starry heavens, and the stars seemed to tell him the same thing. For the last time he drew into his lungs a long draught of the cold fresh air and then he himself kicked away the stool on which he was standing.

Klemenkine, enervated and deeply effected by this scene of the college boy, yelled at the top of his voice and shouted out that this act would never be pardoned these "villains and brutes."

At this imprecation, the Judge Advocate and all the others trembled. But they said nothing, knowing that the hour for discussion had ended.

The workman shook with cold, and the son of the deacon tried to say something, but his eyes were haggard and no words would come.

Twenty minutes later, twenty long minutes, during which the Judge Advocate and the others stamped about impatiently in the snow, turning away from the hanging men and freezing with cold. The young officer and the Director looked at their watches. The doctor, wrapped in his cloak, moved from one corpse to the other hastily feeling their legs, though scarcely touching them. Then he murmured:

"Yes, they are all dead, quite dead. We can go now, and I will sign the document to this effect."

Then we all left, and soon the court-yard resumed its customary appearance.

THE FISH IN FOLK-LORE.

BY THE EDITOR.

BASED upon old folk traditions, fairy tales reflect the religious views of distant prehistoric ages, and this, we make bold to say, is most probably true of a story related of a fish and preserved in a Low German dialect. As it now reads it is simply funny and teaches the moral of contentment, but incidentally also it throws light upon the significance of the fish in the imagination of primitive mankind.

One day, so the story begins, a fisherman caught a wonderfully fine fish, and the fish said to the fisherman, "If you will let me go, I will grant you a wish." The fisherman was so astonished to hear a fish talk that without asking any favor he let him go; whereupon the fish said to him, "Whenever you need me, call upon me, and I will come."

In old Saxon days a fish was called a "but," and this term is still preserved in the German word *Butte* and in the modern English word "halibut," i. e., holy fish, the fish which is eaten as a holiday dish on feast days. The story before us preserves this old Saxon word and speaks of this wonderful fish as a "but."

At home the fisherman told his wife about his encounter with the but, and she said, "What a fool you are! Why didn't you wish that our hovel should change into a snug little house with all that goes with a decent homestead?" He answered, "Oh, our old hovel is good enough," but she made it so unpleasant for him at home that he hurried back to the beach and shouted loudly:

"Mankin, mankin,¹ timpe te,
Butkin, butkin in the sea,
'Tis my wife, my Ilsebill,
Wills not so as I would will."

¹ The original reads *Mannije* and appears to mean "mankin," i. e., little man, probably denoting the mysterious magician hidden in the fish. "Timpe te" may be a mere jingle.

At once the but made his appearance and said, "What does she want?" Then the fisherman explained that she was anxious to have in place of the wretched old hovel a snug little house and all that goes with a decent homestead. Thereupon the but said, "Be it so!" and when the fisherman came home he rubbed his eyes, for the hovel had disappeared and a snug little house was in its place.

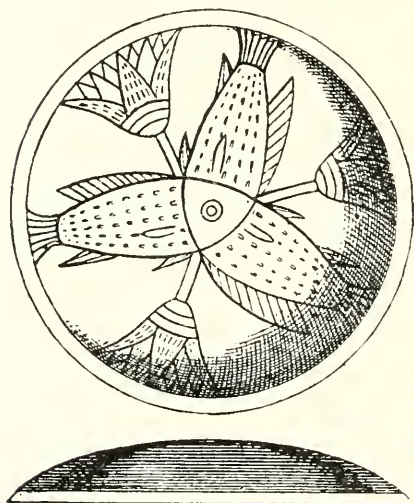
The story continues by representing the fisherman as always pleased with his condition while his wife is never satisfied. She is soon disgusted with the snug little house because it is too small, and sends her husband out again to ask for a comfortable mansion, then for a palace,—and every wish is granted.

Madame Ilsebill's contentment never lasted long. She was greatly displeasèd that there were rich barons living in the neighborhood, and she wanted to belong to the aristocracy too. So she charged her husband to ask the but to make him a count; but even that was not enough. She sent him to the beach again to become king, then emperor, and finally pope. Yet even when basking in the glory of her power, having all Christendom at her feet, she remained dissatisfied because there were things in this world over which she had no command. She ordered her husband to appear before her and said: "Every sunrise and sunset makes me fret because I can not make the sun move as I please. Therefore go down to the beach again and request the but to make me the Good Lord, who has command over the sun and bids him rise and set." The modest fisherman who always objected to asking too many bounties of the but, finally yielded to the demand of his wife though not without great reluctance—in fact with more reluctance than ever. When he came down to the beach he saw a storm rising along the horizon. Again he expressed disapproval of his wife's wishes, saying:

"Mankin, mankin, timpe te,
Butkin, butkin in the sea,
'Tis my wife, my Ilsebill,
Wills not so as I would will."

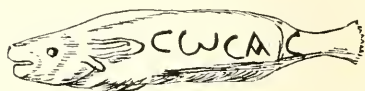
The but appeared and said, "What does she want?" He answered, "She wants to be the Good Lord who controls the sun and bids it rise and set." Thereupon a terrific thunder clap made the earth tremble, and when the fisherman looked around he found that all the palaces, all the courtiers and carriages had gone, and in their place was the wretched old hovel and in it his wife in her former state.

The story has been recorded by the Grimm brothers and its present form will have to be dated back to the Middle Ages when the papacy was at its zenith. The nucleus of this tale, however, as

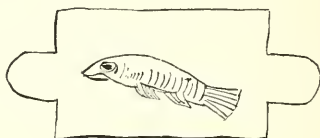


A LATE EGYPTIAN BOWL
(CHRISTIAN).

From Münter.



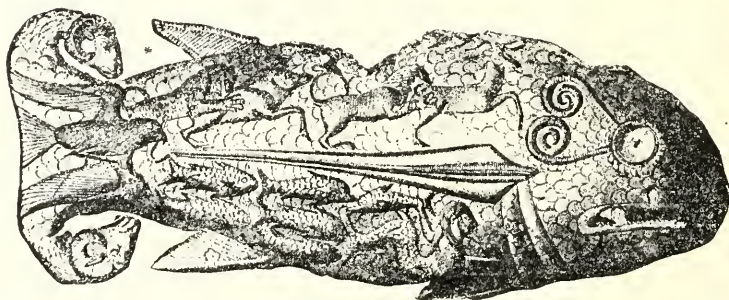
EVTYCHIANO
FILIO DVLCISSIMO
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INSCRIPTIONS IN THE
CATACOMBS.

From Becker.

well as other genuine folk-tales, is much older, and we can not doubt that it is prehistoric and pre-Christian. It characterizes a religious faith in which the fish was looked up to as the representative of a



A VOTIVE FISH DECORATED WITH MANY SYMBOLS.

From Ohnefalsch-Richter.

most mysterious power. The fish grants wishes, transforms and transfigures the lives of mankind, and is a source of all possible blessings; but at the same time it has power to take away what it

has given, and may dissolve the whole fabric of its bounties into the original chaotic state.

Folklore, and in general any notion, has an interest for us proportional to its similarity, or kinship, or historical connection with our own ideas, and so pagan religions claim our attention mainly if they somehow or other elicit comparison with Christianity. Thus a devout reverence for the fish among primitive peoples would simply be a curiosity were it not for the fact that the fish was a religious symbol of profound significance among the early Christians. During the second and third centuries, the fish was identified with Christ, and the idea of salvation became somehow closely associated with this mysterious emblem.

Origen says: "Christ is figuratively called 'fish,'" (in Matt. iii., p. 584, ed. B). Tertullian is more elaborate when saying, "We small fish are like unto *Ichthys*,² our Jesus Christ, born in the water, and are saved only by remaining in the water." (*De Bapt.* 5). Sev-



COINS OF CONSTANTINE.

erianus of Gabala in Spain solemnly declares that "if Christ were not a fish, he would never have risen from the dead."

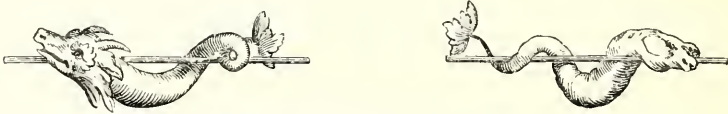
The fish has been sacred among almost all nations of the world, in Asia not less than in Europe. On the other hand we find that traditions and beliefs are more persistent than at first sight would appear, and when a new religion replaces an old worn-out faith, many of the old institutions, rituals, customs, practices, festivals and symbols remain. People are so accustomed to them that they unconsciously cling to them and when they try to account for them, invent new interpretations.

Such has been the fate of the symbol of two intersecting lines, (+) the thwart, which was used as an auspicious omen and a mark of protection among pagans all over the world. When Christianity

²ΙΧΘΥΣ, the Greek word for fish.

preached the gospel of Jesus the crucified, the thwart was interpreted to mean a cross and still bears that name. Such, furthermore, has been the fate of the labarum, the *signum salutis* of the Celtic soldiers of Emperor Constantine. After the emperor's conversion its pagan significance with the exception of its obscure name was forgotten and it came to denote the initials of the word Christ, being now called the Christogram. Constantine used the labarum before he became a Christian, which is proved by the fact that this emblem appears on his pagan coins. The fish symbol has encountered a similar fate as that of the cross and the labarum.

The sea had a peculiar meaning of its own. It served to symbolize the great gulf between life and death, and anything that could cross the sea (a ship, a dolphin, a bird of passage such as the crane, the swan or the wild goose, and more than all the fish,) represented



CHRIST AS A FISH ON THE ROD.
In the Catacombs.

the being which could reach the shore of the other world. The sea is salt, and salt has a preserving power. So salt too became a symbol of sanctity and even to-day holy water is salted.

Sometimes the dividing tide was regarded as a stream (called in Greece the Styx) and presumably it was not merely thought of as a means of separation but also the source of the renewed life hereafter; and the fish, the inhabitant of the deep, as its genius, its spirit, and representative, partakes of the reverence cherished for the sacred element, the source of life, the water.

We shall see in later articles that the fish remained a sacred symbol in the Christian church, but it received a new interpretation as the symbol of Christ which found its final expression in the famous acrostic

ΙΧΘΥΣ

which means

Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Υἱὸς Σωτὴρ
"Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour."

This interpretation sanctified the old pagan symbol, innumerable pictures of which we find in the catacombs.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AS A TEXT-BOOK IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

BY RABBI A. P. DRUCKER.

THE purpose of this paper is not to enter upon a technical or scientific analysis of the New Testament and the teachings of Jesus; neither is it to discuss them from an historical or religious point of view: the intention is simply to study the New Testament from a pedagogical standpoint and see whether it is good material for a text-book for the Sunday-school pupil. The present paper follows the same lines with respect to the New Testament along which my paper in the April *Open Court*, 1910, on the Old Testament was planned, attempting to show its influence on the child.

The New, like the Old Testament, contains many noble ethical conceptions, some sublime ideas and precepts. Particularly is this true of Jesus's sayings about children; his own democratic spirit, shown by his readiness to associate with the poor and outcast; and the glorious oration known as the Sermon on the Mount. But when we have mentioned these few particulars, we have also compassed all the commendable ethics of the New Testament. In most other instances, we find the same unethical teachings as in the Old Testament; the same unmerciful laws as those of YHVH; and in addition, a confusion in the sequence of events, a contradictoriness in the events themselves, and an inconsistency in the several characterizations of the exalted subject of the Gospel narratives, which, by blurring the childish conception of Jesus and confusing the childish notion of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, the real and the fictitious, brand the New Testament *as it stands* as unfit material to be put into the hands of young people as a Sunday-school text-book.

When we study the New Testament carefully, we find that the Gospels among themselves are not in accord as to some vital events in the life of Jesus. Thus, Luke recounts that Joseph and Mary,

the parents of Jesus, lived in Nazareth;¹ but because of a tax imposed upon the people, they were forced to go to Bethlehem.² Matthew, on the other hand, says that the parents of Jesus lived first in Bethlehem, but on the advice of an angel, in order to escape the persecution of Herod, went to Egypt, going after Herod's death to Nazareth in Galilee.³ It may here be apropos to note a flagrant contradiction in the genealogy of Joseph, the reputed father of Jesus, as recorded respectively by Matthew and Luke. The former makes Joseph a direct descendant of the kings of Judah, up to Solomon;⁴ while Luke, on the other hand, gives him an entirely different pedigree, tracing his descent from Nathan, the brother of Solomon.⁵

In the testimony of John the Baptist there are likewise curious contradictions. According to Luke's narrative, John the Baptist was not certain whether or not Jesus was the promised Messiah; for when the former was in prison he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?"⁶ But in John, the revelation comes to the Baptist as soon as he sees Jesus. The heavens opened and he, John "saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him (Jesus);"⁷ and John called out, "This is the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."⁸

Another such conflict exists regarding the discipleship of Peter. The Synoptics relate that Jesus, passing the Jordan, beheld Simon and his brother fishing. He invited them to follow him, and they complied.⁹ But in the Johannine account we read that Peter's brother was a disciple of John the Baptist, and that one day, as Jesus was passing by, the disciple overheard John, his master, murmuring, "This is the Lamb of God." And straightway the brother of Peter followed Jesus. Reporting to his brother, Simon, "We have found the Messiah," he brought Simon also to Jesus, both thenceforth being disciples.¹⁰

Again, the Lazarus fable, which in Luke is told only as a parable,¹¹ is in John narrated as an actual happening.¹²

So too, many of the acts of Jesus are contradictorily reported in the several accounts. For instance, the ceremony of the institu-

¹ Luke i. 26.

² Luke ii. 3-5.

³ Matt. ii. 1-23.

⁴ Matt. i.

⁵ Luke iii. 31.

⁶ Luke vii. 19.

⁷ John i. 23.

⁸ John i. 29.

⁹ Matthew iv. 19-20; Mark i. 20; Luke v. 10-11.

¹⁰ John i. 41.

¹¹ Luke xvi. 19-26.

¹² John xi. 1-44.

tion of the sacrament, according to John, took place a year before the time specified in the Synoptics.¹³ Furthermore, the time of Jesus's ministry differs in the Johannine version from that assigned by the Synoptics. John intimates that it comprised three years,¹⁴ but the Synoptics give it as only one year.¹⁵ Even as to the day of the crucifixion there is no accord, John giving it as the day before Passover, and the Synoptics placing it as the first day of the festival.¹⁶

The accounts of the trial of Jesus also are mutually contradictory. If we are to believe John, he was brought first before Annas, and then sent by the latter before his son-in-law, Caiaphas.¹⁷ But the Synoptics know no such person as Annas. Nor is there a uniform record of the dying words of Jesus. According to John, he expired saying, "It is finished." In Matthew, he cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Luke puts into his mouth the words, "Father into thine hands I commend my spirit;" while Mark merely states that he "cried with a loud voice and gave up the ghost."

Similar conflicting accounts exist of the final command of Jesus, before his ascension. Matthew¹⁸ quotes him as bidding those to whom he revealed himself, "Go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." But according to Luke¹⁹ he bids his disciples: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye shall be endued with power from on high."

* * *

The characterization of Jesus, as given in the Synoptics, differs widely from that of John. The former make him a severe inexorable judge, who insists upon faith as the only means of salvation,²⁰ while John surrounds him with a halo of kindness, love, and compassion. According to the Synoptics again, he merely insisted upon faith in God as the condition of salvation, so that when he was called good, he said there was no one good but the one, God who is in heaven;²¹ but John claims that Jesus insisted upon belief in himself as the Son of God, saying, "I and the Father are one."²² So too, on the one hand, the preaching of Jesus, in the Synoptics, is grounded upon the speedy coming of the kingdom of God,²³ whereas

¹³ See John vi. 33; 53-56.

¹⁴ John iii. 24.

¹⁵ Mark i. 14; Matt. iv. 12; Luke iv. 1.

¹⁶ Cf. John xviii. 28; Mark xiv. 12.

¹⁷ John xviii. 13, 24.

¹⁸ Matt. xxviii. 10.

¹⁹ Luke xxiv. 49.

²⁰ Matt. ix. 28; Mark v. 34; ix. 23; Luke viii. 48.

²¹ Matt. xix. 17.

²² John x. 30.

²³ Matt. xxiv. 34; xxvi. 29; Mark xiii. 30; Luke xxi. 32.

in John it is the idea of the glory of the Son of God that is everywhere emphasized.²⁴ In John, again, Jesus is eager to demonstrate his divine powers. He explains to his disciples that the blindness of the man they had met was in order that "the works of God should be made manifest in him,"²⁵ but in the Synoptics, he is always warning the people not to tell of the wonders he had performed.²⁶

As to the personality of Jesus, one would suppose that if any one had been expected to know about his birth and divinity, it would surely have been his mother, for it was to her that the angel appeared announcing the advent and future glory of Jesus.²⁷ Nevertheless, we find later that his own mother knew very little about his divinity. When the shepherds saw the angelic hosts and "came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger; and when they had seen it, they made known abroad the same which was told them concerning this child"; we are told²⁸ that Mary "kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." Also, when the aged Simeon beheld the infant Jesus and pronounced him "to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of thy people, Israel," "Joseph and his mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him."²⁹ Moreover, when Jesus remained in the Temple, and his parents, after a weary search, found him seated amid the doctors, they are said to have been amazed, "And his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Of this obvious answer, we read that "They understood not the saying which he spake unto them."³⁰ Contradictions such as these confuse the mind of the child and blur what should have been a definite conception of a consistent personality.

* * *

The teachings of Jesus in themselves are in some instances contradictory, in others, vague. At one time, he is made to say that "It is not meet to take the bread of the children and give it to the dogs."³¹ And again³² he says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." But in Mark³³

²⁴ John vi. 29; iv. 26; xii. 26.

²⁶ Mark, v. 43.

²⁸ Luke ii. 13-19.

³⁰ Luke ii. 42-50.

³³ Matt. vii. 6.

²⁵ John ix. 3.

²⁷ Luke i. 26-38.

²⁹ Luke ii. 32-33.

³¹ Matt. xv. 26.

³² Mark xiii. 10.

he maintains that the Gospel must be published among all nations. Further, in Matthew³⁴ Jesus enjoins upon his disciples, "Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not," while in John³⁵ we read of Jesus himself going on a missionary journey into Samaria, and Luke on several occasions takes pains to exalt the Samaritans as believers in and friends of Jesus.³⁶ It is Luke also who tells of the *good Samaritan*.³⁷

Matthew³⁸ in one instance quotes Jesus as saying, "All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Luke,³⁹ however, quotes Jesus in the words, "And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." Later, when the disciples tell Jesus that they have two swords, he is much gratified.⁴⁰

In Mark ii. 17, when speaking of his mission, Jesus says that "They that are whole have no need of the physician: but they that are sick;" adding, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Yet the scribes and Pharisees, whom he always denounced as the worst of sinners, when they asked him for a sign in order that they might believe in him, met with a refusal and were called harsh names by him; he preferred to let them perish rather than convince them of the saving truth he had come to bring to men.⁴¹ But in this respect he seems to have followed the example of John the Baptist, who, when the Pharisees and Sadducees came to him to be baptized, cried out, "O ye generation of vipers, who hath warned ye to flee from the wrath to come?"⁴² Thus, even when they were ready and eager to comply with the condition for salvation, both John and Jesus denied them the chance.

And what his harshness did not accomplish, his vagueness did, in turning away people who would fain have followed him.⁴³ Always in addressing the scribes and Pharisees, he spoke in parables and cryptic utterances, so that often even his disciples failed to understand him. But when asked wherefore he spoke in this vague way, he made answer,⁴⁴ "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Thus, purposely, he repulsed all overtures of the Pharisees. From these illustrations we see that even the teachings of Jesus are not helpful to the child's religious development at a time when we are

³⁴ Matt. x. 5.

³⁶ Luke xvii. 11.

³⁸ Matt. xxvi. 52.

⁴⁰ Luke xx. 38.

⁴² Matt. iii. 7; Luke iii. 7.

⁴⁴ Matt. xii. 11.

³⁵ John iv. 4-28.

³⁷ Luke x. 33.

³⁹ Luke xxii. 36.

⁴¹ Matt. xii. 39.

⁴³ John vi. 66.

anxious to implant charity, pity, and love for its fellow-men in its soul.

* * *

The promises of Jesus which were never fulfilled are many indeed. Thus in Matthew⁴⁵ he bids the people "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." "For verily, I say unto you," he continues the same promise,⁴⁶ "ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." This promise is repeated in Mark.⁴⁷ Again, in Matthew,⁴⁸ he says to his disciples, "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." This could, of course, not have referred to his own death and resurrection, since all his disciples were alive at the times of these events. He therefore must have meant something else which was never fulfilled. Then, after telling of the miracles, earthquake and eclipse of the sun, that were to befall, he concludes⁴⁹ with, "Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation." So too, in Mark,⁵⁰ he declares, "Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass until all these things be done." Further he asserts,⁵¹ "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." And in Mark xiv. 62 he tells the high priest Caiaphas, "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." It is needless to say that Caiaphas never saw this vision. Then again, according to Luke,^{51a} he promises his disciples that "There shall not an hair of your head perish." Yet many died in defence of his teachings. In John xi. 26, he makes this startling assertion: "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." In John xii. 32 he says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," but there were many that were not drawn unto him. Another singular statement occurs in John v. 25, where he assures the people that "The hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." This he follows in the twenty-eighth verse of the same chapter with, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice." And in John viii. 51 he says similarly, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." With all this seeming knowledge of past and future, with

⁴⁵ Matt. iv. 17.

⁴⁷ Mark xi. 1.

⁴⁹ Matt. xxiii. 36.

⁵¹ Mark xiv. 25.

⁴⁶ Matt. x. 23.

⁴⁸ Matt. xvi. 28.

⁵⁰ Mark, xiii. 30.

^{51a} Luke xxi. 18.

all the powers of heaven at his bidding, he cannot know the present : for he is obliged to ask his disciples⁵² what people say about him. Can the child who is given such material be otherwise than bewildered and confused? And later, is there any choice left it but to grow up either in credulous submission and fanaticism, or a mocker and reviler of faith and religion?

* * *

The God-idea of the New Testament on the whole is not more sublime than that of the Old. The ministers of the Christian churches are wont to emphasize on every occasion that the God of the Old Testament is a severe judge, meting out justice without mercy, whereas the New Testament God is a clement, merciful one, full of love and kindness; that YHVH is harsh, unbending, inexorable, while Jesus, the New Testament God is tender and full of compassion and gentleness. Yet the ideal of God presented in the Synoptics is on the same level as the God of the Patriarchs. For example, we are told, that on account of the sin of the first, helpless man, God was offended to such a degree that nothing but blood atonement would appease him. Therefore his only begotten Son was sent to earth, to give his blood for the salvation of men, to satisfy the vengeful thirst of God "the Father." But far worse than this is the sequel. To save men, the Son of God assumes humanity and dies for men. But the "Father" can devise no other way but that his Son should die by the instrumentality of the very nation who should have been especially saved; and because this nation, the Jews, cannot evade the divine foreordination, that they should be the executors of Jesus, therefore must they be accursed forevermore! A very questionable ideal of God this, to set before our children. Instead of receiving from this God their ideal of divine love and goodness, they come to regard him as harsh, inexorable, nay, even blood-thirsty and grossly unjust, and pitifully limited in his methods.

In several instances, God is even represented as absolutely unethical. Thus, when for some reason the three wise men, led by his star, come to Jerusalem, and Herod, terrified lest by this newborn, long-foretold King of the Jews he lose his throne and scepter, issues a decree for the massacre of all the children under two years, God the "Father" does not take the trouble to save the little ones. He contents himself with sending a dream to Joseph, ordering him to escape with Mary and his child Jesus to Egypt. It is as though a man should purposely destroy the dam of a river and let the water

⁵² Matt. xvi. 13.

flood the town, anxious only to place his own family in safety, but regardless of all the other inhabitants.

Again, the New Testament goes a step farther down the ladder in comparison with the Old concerning God's anxiety that the wicked should die. In the Old Testament we read⁵³ that God desires not the death of the sinner, but rather wishes him to repent and live. But here in the New Testament we read how God hardened the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees that they might not believe in Jesus, on whom their salvation depended,—just as in the Old Testament he hardened the heart of Pharaoh, to show later his divine power. Indeed, this was even more than blinding them to the truth. First it was ordained in heaven that the Son of God must be born on earth and be sacrificed, in order to save the world from sin. The executioners were appointed. Everything was foreordained. No one could change it. And then the Jews, who believed in God and had waited thousands of years for their promised Messiah, were selected to be the unfortunate murderers of God, and then were to be damned for ever for this terrible but unavoidable act. But the worst of it is, that Jesus was himself a participant in this divine conspiracy against the Jews. For when the latter tried their utmost to be reconciled with Jesus, and, remembering that Isaiah had enjoined on the people to ask a sign from God,⁵⁴ they came to Jesus also asking for a sign, he refused to give it to them,^{54a} because that Isaiah said again, 'Lest their eyes might be opened and their heart purified, and they repent.' More, he even gloats over this plight of the Pharisees, boasting that "If I had not come and spoken to them, they had not had sin."⁵⁵

In fact, in numerous instances, Jesus is represented as more harsh and inexorable than YHVH;—as in the statement recorded in Matthew,⁵⁶ "I come not to send peace but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law." In Luke again he says,⁵⁷ "I am come to send fire upon the earth. Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you: Nay, but rather strife." Another strong statement of his is the following:⁵⁸ "If a man come to me and hate not his father, his mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters: nay and his own life also: he cannot be my disciple." His treatment of his

⁵³ Ezek. xviii. 32.

⁵⁴ Is. vii. 11, 14.

^{54a} John xii. 39, 40.

⁵⁶ John xv. 22.

⁵⁶ Matt. x. 34-35.

⁵⁷ Luke xii. 49, 51.

⁵⁸ Luke xiv. 26.

own mother shows that he lived up to a strange conception of the fifth commandment: When he was told that she was waiting without and wished to come in to see him, he exclaimed oratorically, "Who is my mother?"—thus denying her admission.⁵⁹ And this idea is further emphasized in Matthew viii. 21, where one of Jesus's followers tells him that his father has died, and therefore asks him, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father;" and Jesus cries out, "Let the dead bury the dead. Follow me." Such is the example of filial piety which we hold up to the eyes of our Sunday-school children!

Even of the attribute Christianity bespeaks most insistently for Jesus, he falls woefully short. For Jesus appears unforgiving in the Gospel records. He never forgot a wrong. Because Capernaum did not treat him rightly, he cried out, "Thou Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell."⁶⁰ Even to his disciples he was frequently harsh. When they were unable to cast out an evil spirit, he cried out,⁶¹ "O ye faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you?" Yet later he himself had to admit that there was need of special power against that particular spirit (verse 21). At another time he spoke in this wise to one of his followers:⁶² "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." And again he cries out,⁶³ "He that believeth not, he is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Nor are his sayings alone calculated to give the child a wrong impression of God. His own rash actions likewise, do not afford very wholesome examples for the young child, as for instance the episode with the fig-tree, as recounted in Mark xi. 13. On his road to Jerusalem, Jesus saw a fig-tree. Coming to it and finding on it nothing but leaves,—it not being the season of the fruit,—he in his anger and disappointment exclaimed, "Let no fruit grow upon thee henceforward forever," and the fig-tree withered. Thus in his fit of anger he destroyed a useful tree. So again when he came to the Temple and beheld the money-changers he cast them all out, overthrowing their tables and the seats of them that sold doves.⁶⁴ Now, these people were there in accordance with certain laws and regulations of the Temple. If Jesus had any objection to them, he should have made complaint in a lawful manner, but should not have acted in this high-handed, impulsive way, which serves as an incitement

⁵⁹ Matt. xii. 48; Mark iii. 33.

⁶⁰ Luke x. 15; also, Matt. xi. 23.

⁶¹ Matt. xvii. 17.

⁶² John iii. 3.

⁶³ John iii. 18.

⁶⁴ Matt. xxi. 12.

to young people reading the story, to applaud the conduct of any demagogue. Indeed, it is a well-known fact that every lynching in the South is justified on this very plea, that Jesus also took the law into his own hands. The child, whose religious training has for one of its motives the making of a good citizen, is led to infer that it is a noble act to trample upon the rights of others and act on the impulse of the moment, regardless of the law of the land.

Some of the methods and devices of Jesus as reported by the Evangelists are not at all in keeping with dignity and sacredness of character. Mark reports, for example, that whenever Jesus cured or healed some afflicted person, he would bid him not to tell it to any one. Yet every man who experienced such a cure is reported to have told every one he met of the wonderful event—the miracle that had happened to him. Now then we must ask ourselves: Did Jesus really think that these people would obey him? If so, he did not know human nature. Just because they were commanded not to divulge the story of their cure, they were sure to talk about it. Besides, they could not help themselves. They were obliged to account in some way to their friends for the wonderful change that had come to them, how their blindness, deafness, lameness, was cured. If, on the other hand, Jesus did know that they would disobey him in the matter and merely ordered them to keep the secret to impress the people with his modesty, then he was employing a cheap device of playing to the gallery.

At another time, he is reported to have overcome the Pharisees and chief priests in debate by a trick. According to Luke xx. 2-7, when the Pharisees and priests asked him in the presence of the people by whose authority he spoke, he evaded a direct answer by an ingenious device. Dramatically he turned on them and asked: "Tell me, by whose authority did John baptize?" And as he foresaw, they were placed in a dilemma, as they could not safely answer this question. For, "they reasoned among themselves, if we shall say, of Heaven, he will say to us: Why then, believed ye him not? But if we say, of men, all the people will stone us, for they be persuaded that John was a prophet." Thus Jesus took an unfair advantage of them relying on the mob, and when his antagonists refused to commit themselves, he said to them, "Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." This was an excellent lawyer's expedient, but not the direct, illuminating reply one would expect of a brave prophet.

A further instance of the unfair advantages Jesus took of his audience, if we are to trust his chroniclers, was the parable of the

good Samaritan. We all know the story, but only a few of us are familiar with the conditions in Judea at that time. In order to appreciate thoroughly this parable of the good Samaritan, we must bear in mind the following data: First, there were three castes in Israel, the priests, the Levites, and the laymen (called Israelites). Second, the same division of castes prevailed in Samaria also. Third, the priests and Levites were by the law forbidden to touch dead and dying persons.⁶⁵ Now, having these facts in mind, we will see at once that Jesus himself could never have employed that parable as we have it, for it is manifestly unfair and unjust. Suppose one were to make a comparison between the Americans and the French, asserting that the latter were better mathematicians than the former; because, having propounded a problem to an illiterate American and found him incapable of solving it, he had later given it to a French professor of mathematics, who, of course, found its solution immediately. The very same unfair comparison is made in the parable in discussion. Jesus takes hold of a priest and a Levite of Israel, who are forbidden to touch a dying body, and hence would of course not have transgressed the law of God; while the Samaritan whom he next introduces, being a merchant, and hence a layman, had no such scruple to consider and could therefore easily aid the dying man. We see therefore that the Evangelists were not always careful how they reported the acts and sayings of Jesus,—unless we assume that Jesus did actually originate this unfair comparison.

It was, perhaps, the influence of this example of subterfuge which prompted Matthew to act similarly on his own account.^{65a} In his genealogy of Jesus, he attempts to prove that every fourteenth generation in Jewish history chronicles an epoch-making event (fourteen being a multiple of the old sacred number, seven). In order to make Jesus such an epoch-making person, he says,⁶⁶ "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations. And from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations: and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations." But in order to make the number of generations between David and the carrying into captivity the requisite number of generations, he drops out three generations between Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, and Ozias, the son of Amaziah. By this omission of three kings, Matthew leaps a period of seventy-seven years,—and this simply to prove by an old theory the great-

⁶⁵ See Lev. xxi. 1.

^{65a} See J. Horton's *Tekel: or, The Wonderland of the Bible*, pp. 420-422.

⁶⁶ Matt. i. 17.

ness of Jesus. One may here well pause again, to ask if this is fit material to give the child for its spiritual elevation and growth!

* * *

Other confusing ideas in the New Testament are the following:

a. The relation between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. It is all very easy to say that three are one and one is three. Yet even grown persons can hardly settle it in their minds. If you ask a minister of the Christian church how these three can act harmoniously together, he will answer that the three persons are really one, as Christianity is a monotheistic religion. But when you confront him with the New Testament teaching,—that God the Father was so severe with the world that he craved for a vicarious atonement, and that his only begotten Son offered himself as a voluntary sacrifice,—he will be at a loss to tell you how one and the same God can wish for a sacrifice and give himself as that sacrifice.

b. The same vagueness confronts the student in regard to the dual nature of Jesus,—the human and the divine. How could a Son of God, we may ask, feel physical pain, and his agony cause him to sweat blood? How could he await death with terror (“The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak”)? How could he, the Son of God, be tempted by Satan and informed if he bowed down before and worshiped the tempter, all the kingdoms of earth should be his? Here we are seriously informed that Jesus was human. But when we ask how a human being could assert, “I and the Father are one”? “I am the way, the truth, the life,” “Jesus was divine,” we are given for reply.

c. Nor has the status of Mary been clearly explained. To leave all theological discussion out of the question,—it was ordained for one reason or another that she should become the mother of God’s son. If she was the only one considered by the heavenly hosts as worthy of this honor, she should have been worthy of being informed of the honor in time, so that she might not have become engaged to Joseph until after Jesus was born. That would have saved her from suspicion and Joseph from jealousy.

It was all this vagueness that forced the Catholic church, and in a measure the Protestant also, to oppose all scientific study of the Bible. It was feared that the student might discover that the church ranged itself against reason and knowledge. The myth of the Garden of Eden was artfully utilized to impress on the faithful that God himself favored humanity’s remaining in ignorance and darkness. Knowledge is the special property of God. Yet man, made in God’s image and bidden to strive to become as nearly like God

as he can,—man is forbidden to seek knowledge. Urged to ascend to the regions of light, his soul is fettered to the prison of ignorance by the pseudo-divine command.

* * *

From what we have seen, we may at once conclude that the character of Jesus as presented in the New Testament is really weak and insignificant. Yet in our ordinary conception of him, he appeared colossal and awe-inspiring. We are therefore at a loss to explain how from these narratives we could have derived our wonderful, exalted ideal of him. The reason, to my thinking, is the fact that the narrators employed a dramatic device. In order to strengthen the personality of the hero of the New Testament, the writers introduced a villain as a foil to the hero. This villain was the Jewish people. By contrasting Jesus with the Jewish people, the former grew to wonderful proportions—on the principle that the blacker the villain, the whiter the hero. The custom up to the present time has been to lead Christian young people to a love of Jesus through the medium of hatred toward the Jews. This, of course, is at once an admission that Jesus by himself really appeared weak to the teachers. But this device of resorting to hatred as a means for implanting love is certainly a questionable one.

This device is clearly discernible in the stories of the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. The account given by all the writers places the whole burden of the death of Jesus on the shoulders of the Jews. It was the Jews, they tell us, who captured Jesus; who tried him by night; who delivered him over to Pilate; insisted upon his condemnation; and when Pilate inquired if he should release Jesus, it was the Jews who cried out, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

The account of Pilate's wife is rather a questionable story to bring into the Sunday-school. Claudia, the lawful wife of Pilate, was at Rome at the time of Jesus's death, basking in the sunshine of the Emperor's favor;⁶⁷ to whom, then, does the chronicler refer, when he tells us that the Governor's wife interceded for Jesus?

Again, aside from the fact that crucifixion was not a Jewish mode of execution, it was even considered a disgrace to all the people, that one of their number should be put to death in this way. For even the Romans inflicted this form of death only on thieves and slaves. And by using it in the case of a Jew, they would have

⁶⁷ The unprintable story of the lineage and career of Claudia and her marriage to Pilate, which might have served as the prototype for the career of Mme. Du Barry, is succinctly set forth by Giovanni Rosadi in his *Il processo di Gesù* (*The Trial of Jesus*, tr. by Dr. Emil Reich), ch. 16; also by Petrucci Della Gattina, *Memorie di Giuda*, vol. I. ch. 2.

stigmatized the whole Jewish nation as slaves of Rome. But for the Jews themselves to have asked this form of death for one of themselves, would have been like inviting a blow in the face. This version, therefore, is hard to believe, even for a child, for the following reasons: (a) We know that Jesus had many friends among the people. We know, for instance, that the chief priests and Pharisees were afraid to attack him in the Temple for fear of the multitude. Matthew states the matter plainly:⁶⁸ "When they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet." And Mark also testifies to the fact that the scribes and Pharisees feared to offend him because of the people.⁶⁹ Even after he was condemned to death and led to the place of execution, Luke tells us,⁷⁰ "There followed him a great company of people, and women, which also bewailed and lamented him." Yet when the crucial moment came, when Pilate asked whether they wished him to free Jesus, there was not a man, according to the story of the New Testament, to speak a word in his defense. Furthermore, any child would be struck by the incongruity of Pilate's position. Pilate asked Jesus during the trial, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" And Jesus answered and said, "Thou sayest it." Then Pilate, the representative of Cæsar and the one delegated to watch over the interests of Cæsar, the only rightful King of the Jews, turned around and said, "I see no fault in him."⁷¹

And the same method of shifting the ground and endeavoring to divert the attention of the student, is found in the story of the resurrection. Here was a chance for Jesus to assert himself and convince the people, especially the scribes and Pharisees, that they had made a mistake,—by appearing after the resurrection, openly and boldly in the Temple. The miracles,—the earthquake, the eclipse of the sun, and the opening of the graves of the saints, who entered the city, as told by Matthew—if witnessed by only a few others, would have afforded convincing proof that Jesus was the real Son of God. It seems, however, that no other record of these wonderful things chronicled by Matthew is to be found; hence doubt of their having occurred at all is justified. The story that a large sum of money was given to the guard in order that they should give out that the disciples had stolen the body while they were asleep, is rather amusing, to say the least,—because, first it would be almost an impossibility to buy a man who had witnessed such a wonderful event as the resurrection of a dead person; this sign

⁶⁸ Matt. xxi. 46.

⁶⁹ Mark xi. 18.

⁷⁰ Luke xxiii. 27.

⁷¹ Mark xv. 2.

would have converted the most hardened sinner. Second, by admitting that they had slept at their post, the guard would have put themselves in danger, inasmuch as the penalty for sleeping at the post was death. It would scarcely have been possible that they would put their lives in jeopardy for the sake of money, especially when there were so many opportunities for safer bribes. Here again, many extraneous matters were introduced, to divert the attention of the reader from a dangerous conjecture. Some one might suspect that Jesus was saved from death by Pilate and Joseph of Arimathea, after he had been crucified. The mind of the young reader would revert to the trial, where the Governor is represented as the friend of Jesus, anxious to save him, but afraid of the Jews. It was upon the Roman soldiers that the task devolved of crucifying Jesus. It being a holiday, the Jews durst not contaminate themselves by attending the execution of a criminal; or, if they witnessed it at all, would have stood at a great distance. It was therefore easy for Pilate to give orders to the soldiers that Jesus should not be killed by crucifixion, and that his legs should not be broken, as were those of the thieves. In agreement with Joseph the Arimathean, who was in the plot for saving the life of Jesus, the ostensible corpse was delivered into Joseph's hands, and laid away in the new sepulcher until it was dark, when by connivance of the guard, Jesus was allowed to escape. It was for this reason that he was able to show Thomas the nail marks in his hands, because he was still alive. So might the child reason. In order therefore to divert attention from this possibility, the distracting details were inserted into the story and the reader's feelings are played upon by inciting his hatred toward the Jews.

Hence the final impression after perusing the New Testament is not so much love for Jesus as hatred for the Jews. It is perhaps due to this influence of the New Testament that the Christian church is the most intolerant in the world. The Buddhists of Japan and the Confucianists of China are proverbial for their tolerance. If now and then they cry out against Christian missionaries, it is simply due to their previous experience, according to which the missionaries were too often merely the vanguard of the invading army. Even the Mohammedan church is more tolerant than the Christian, as recent events in Turkey prove. It was the Mosque that stood in the front ranks of the Young-Turkish reform, whereas in Christian countries the church always abets the tyrant, standing for reaction and persecution. France obtained liberty, equality and fraternity in spite of the church and the pope. And the great clause

in the American Constitution, "That all men are created free and equal," was derived, not from the pronouncements of the clergy, but from the influence of Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. Even to-day, if the Jews may be the criterion for Christian tolerance, we find the Christian church their most relentless foe, the most enthusiastic exponent of Anti-Semitism and its concomitant horrors. All the Anti-Semitic organizations of Austria, France and Germany are supported by the clericals. And even in our enlightened country, one has but to take up a denominational paper to learn who are in the vanguard of Jew-hatred.

Podbenotzoff, the former Procurator of the Holy Russian Synod, was one day upbraided by an English clergyman for not stopping the massacres and oppression of the Jews in Russia. "As a good Christian you should have acted in the true Christian spirit," the Englishman asserted. "We, the *pravoslavna* (the followers of the true word) are the only ones who have preserved the true Christian spirit," retorted Podbenotzoff. "The true spirit of Christianity is, to exterminate all infidels and unbelievers. Wherever the church had the power to destroy all God-forsaking people, she did it with full vigor. Look at the history of the church from its inception, and you will see that we, the Russians, are the only ones who preserved the traditional spirit of Christianity. It is the radicals and the half-Christians among the nations who have allowed the Satan of tolerance to control their conduct."

Such is the lesson the nations derive from the New Testament. Time and again the sword which Christ is vaunted to have brought into the world has been put into requisition in inquisitions and massacres,—to say nothing of the persecutions within the church, when Christian brother turned against Christian brother. Shall we infer then that the individual child will draw a better spiritual nurture from this book; or that it will not utilize the many existing contradictions in the same to justify any action it feels moved to?

THE INDISPENSABILITY OF BIBLE STUDY.

BY THE EDITOR.

IN a former number Dr. Aaron P. Drucker surprised our readers by the boldness with which he, a rabbi, criticised the Old Testament, declaring it unfit to serve as a text-book in Sunday-schools.¹ The present number contains an article by him on the New Testament in which he applies the same standard and comes to the conclusion that it would be equally inadvisable to use the New Testament for educational purposes.

Rabbi Drucker is the author of a pamphlet, *The Trial of Jesus*, which he claims is negative and critical only in the beginning. He calls attention to the fact that the Jewish judges of Jesus under the leadership of Caiphas, the high priest, can not have been the Sanhedrin as is generally assumed, and he is unquestionably right on this point, because the Sanhedrin had been abolished by Herod in 40 B. C. and was only reinstalled by Agrippa I in 42 A. D. The rabbi also enumerates the several points which prove that the proceedings of the meeting stand in contradiction to all the rules of Jewish law so that if it ever took place it ought to be regarded as illegal, its decision ought to have been annulled and under no condition could the Jewish nation as such be held responsible for its verdict. According to Lev. x. 6 and xxi. 10 it was even forbidden that high priests (in the quoted passages, Aaron, Eleazar and Ithamar) should even rend their clothes.

In spite of the facts which militate against the tradition that the Sanhedrin condemned Jesus, Rabbi Drucker does not doubt that such a council took place. He accepts the statements in the gospels as reliable, he only points out the illegality of the proceedings from the Jewish point of view, and exonerates the Jewish nation from any guilt whatever. He assumes that Caiphas the high priest was in-

¹ *Open Court*, April, 1910.

censed at Jesus because the latter had driven the money changers from the temple, and he convened a council on his own account.

The rest of his pamphlet is rather a sketch for a novel and contains the materials for a drama in the style of Mary Magdalen, the tendency being to prove that Jesus was the victim of an intrigue which the villainous high priest-Caiphaz spun against the beloved leader of the common people of Israel. Rabbi Drucker makes out that Jesus was a well-known preacher who traveled from place to place and whose fame had spread to Jerusalem for healing the sick and preaching the gospel of non-resistance. The people became so weak that even Pilate gave up his plan of driving them into rebellion. He came to Jerusalem to meet this gentle leader and to come to an agreement with him as to his own policy in Judea, but Caiphaz, a treacherous Jew who had bought his office for money and served as a Roman spy, intrigued against Pilate as well as Jesus and by infamous cunning thwarted the plans of both Pilate and Jesus. Not Judas but Caiphaz is the villain of the play according to Rabbi Drucker. All blame is laid on him—even the presence of the money changers in the temple is due to his greed and to his greed alone.

Rabbi Drucker offers a peculiar motive for Jesus withdrawing from Jerusalem and hiding on the Mount of Olives. It is stated in the following passage (p. 49):

“In his heart, Caiphaz was harboring evil designs against the favorite and leader of the people. He strongly suspected that one of Jesus’s demands upon Pilate would be the removal of the High Priest. Accordingly, he felt himself called upon to act in his own defence and thwart the plans of Jesus, even if this course should bring misery upon the entire Jewish nation. He sent word to Pilate to come quickly to Jerusalem with a strong force and arrest Jesus in the temple. The people, he said, would not allow the soldiers to arrest their favorite, and a riot would ensue. This would give him the opportunity of reporting to the Emperor that the Jews were a rebellious people, and that their leader, Jesus, had caused a riot in the Temple. If this plan succeeded, Pilate would have no cause to fear a Jewish embassy, for the Emperor would refuse to receive complaints from a rebellious nation.

“Jesus learned of this dastardly plan and determined to avert riot and bloodshed at any cost. He, therefore, quietly left the Holy City late at night after the Paschal Supper, and went to the Mount of Olives, only his disciples accompanying him; and even they knew not the cause of this extraordinary measure.”

The burden of Rabbi Drucker’s *Trial of Jesus*, which could as

easily have been written by a Christian, is to point out the injustice of "the monstrous accusation of the crucifixion of their beloved leader" (p. 63).

It goes without saying that Rabbi Drucker's assumption that Pilate had heard of Jesus before the trial is pure invention and has no warrant in either the gospel story or in history, but it would serve well as a motive in fiction which would respect all the statements of the canon and be nowhere offensive to either Jews or Christians.

A story as outlined by Rabbi Drucker would certainly be so much in keeping with the traditional views that it would be impossible to tell whether or not the author was a believing Christian, in fact it would rather imply that he appears to be a Christian.

It is certainly interesting to read what the author of *The Trial of Jesus* has to say on the New Testament as a text-book.

It is worth while to listen to the advice of men who tell the truth as they see it and fear not to run counter to their own sacred traditions, as Rabbi Drucker has done in his criticism of the Old Testament as well as in *The Trial of Jesus*, and our readers will not fail to read his article on the New Testament with deep interest even though they may not agree with him.

Rabbi Drucker is not always consistent. In his pamphlet he blames Caiphas and him alone for the presence of the money changers in the Temple, while in this article he states that "these people were there in accordance with certain regulations of the Temple." Here he blames Jesus for his "highhanded impulsive way." He also in the heat of argument carries points to extremes. That the Mohammedan church should be "more tolerant than the Christian as recent events in Turkey prove" is far fetched when we consider that the statement is based only on the fact that the mosque aided the Young Turkish reform, while it is contradicted by the innumerable massacres of Jews and Christians in Armenia and other countries. His attempt to illustrate Christian intolerance by a conversation between an English and a Russian clergyman is not forcible because the question is whether his readers will agree with him in recognizing the Russian form of Christianity as the only genuine one.

The writer of these lines does not think that the Bible is absolutely unfit for educational purposes, and has himself read to his children books of both the Old and New Testament. He does not believe that children should grow up without a fair knowledge of the religious book which has influenced the civilization of mankind, and the very language of which pervades the atmosphere we

breathe in our intellectual life. For this reason we deem it necessary that the biblical books continue to be read, and what ought to be criticised is not so much that both Old and New Testaments are read in Sunday-schools as the method with which they are treated.

The main trouble in the reading of religious literature lies probably in the change that has come upon our standards of literary reliability. We ought openly to acknowledge that at the beginning of the Christian era the demands of truthfulness and critical exactness in the circles of primitive Christianity were different from those now commonly recognized. The biblical books were not written by scientific men, and we ought not to measure them by the requirements made of writers nowadays, or even of the scholars of the time in which they were written, as for instance, Josephus, Philo or other authors of the Augustan age. The gospel writers belonged to and wrote for a class of people without any scientific training. They are obviously uncritical, and the looseness of their very style, their solecisms, grammatical blunders and lack of logical coherence prove that it would be unfair to judge them according to the standards of the best profane literature of classical antiquity, still less of our own age.

Moreover, the purpose of these canonical writings is not scientific nor historical, but devotional, and only if we consider the religious awe which pervades their story, the zeal, the enthusiasm, the devotion and the piety of their authors can we understand how these books made such a deep impression upon the world in spite of their glaring shortcomings.

We must bear in mind that classical antiquity is a period of aristocratic predominance. The old republics were not democracies in our sense, for even in Athens the real citizens constituted a minority, and everywhere the strangers, the slaves and other disfranchised residents were without political rights, and yet their existence could not be absolutely ignored. The mass of slaves and freedmen grew in number and importance until they actually became a vast majority and the decisive factor in the Roman empire. They reached the height of their influence under Constantine, and it is historically well recognized that in these lower strata Christianity had taken a firm root.

At this juncture of history mankind turned over a new leaf. The old culture had favored the few with privileges and the masses had no voice, but their influence grew and had to be reckoned with. To be sure they were not organized, but the emperors needed their sympathy and sought it more and more until Constantine learned

to control them by making their faith the official religion of the empire. Thereby the literature of Christianity was at once assigned a rank above all other books. When having the Gospel story read in any Sunday-school, in order to correctly understand the situation we must bear in mind that, while recognizing the awe in which the canonical writings were held, we cannot measure them by the common standards of literary excellence.

During the last century, or even during the last decade, new standards have arisen, and our sense of religious honesty has decidedly changed. By the side of our old emotional conscience which is purely sentimental, there has arisen a new demand. We may call it the conscience of scientific truthfulness, and until a most recent time even this has mainly remained limited to the narrow circle of scholars for it has not as yet taken deep root among the broad masses of even the thoughtful religious people who otherwise are well-intentioned, honest and fair-minded.

The first result of this new conscience is a careful scrutiny of the scriptures which has become commonly known as biblical research or higher criticism, and biblical research has brought to the surface many facts which make it necessary for us not only to revise the traditional doctrine of inspiration, but also our trust in the reliability of many scriptural statements.

Rabbi Drucker presents us with a fairly well chosen summary of the most important of these results of the higher criticism, almost all of which have been commonly accepted by New Testament scholars. Sometimes Mr. Drucker might even have presented his case more strongly. The parallel of the lamb to Marduk's ram of ancient Babylonia is more close than might be judged from Mr. Drucker's statements because the original reads, *ἀρνίον*, "young ram," and not "lamb" as the English has it. That Jesus was a Jew whose horizon was limited to Judea, appears from the passages quoted by Mr. Drucker, and he might have added that according to Matt. v. 18, he believed in the literal inspiration of the Mosaic law including even the diacritical points of the script. It is well understood that by "dogs" and "swine" (Matt. vii. 6; xv. 21-29; Mark vii. 24-30) Jesus means the Gentiles, and only a very twisted interpretation can take out the sting of the contempt he shows for them in these passages.

The responsibility for the crucifixion should certainly not be laid at the door of the Jews, and all the passages which indicate that the Jews and not the Romans crucified Jesus bear quite obvious earmarks of additions incorporated after Christianity had long ceased to be confused with Judaism and had more and more found recog-

dition among the Gentiles. The Jewish mode of execution was stoning. Stephen (Acts vii) was executed by the Jews, but Jesus to all appearance by the Romans.

While we would not advocate the suppression of the New Testament from the education of our children, we would most decidedly propose not to have it read in the traditional spirit of devotion, but for the information of the growing generation.

In the brief editorial comment on Rabbi Drucker's former article we insisted on the fact that the Bible is and will after all remain the most important book not only of the past but of the present and future, for the simple reason that it has been incorporated into the history of mankind. The Bible is a collection of religious documents which mark the path of progress. It contains not one but several conceptions of God characterizing the various successive stages. Though it is wrong to look upon the Bible as dictated by the Holy Ghost it remains a truly sacred book because it is a record of our religious development. Our duty is to discriminate and study the historical origin and the philosophical significance back of the different conceptions. Not all passages in the Bible are of equal value, but even those that express morally low conceptions remain significant, if only for the purpose of teaching the historian and the student of the history of religion how often mankind erred while groping after truth.

The Bible has been taken out of the public schools but we would insist that it should be read and taught just as much as profane literature and secular history, or even more. A knowledge of the development of Christianity and of its sacred books is indispensable for general culture, and the difficulty in teaching it originates solely from the inveterate and, let us hope, soon antiquated conception of religion, that for the sake of dogma the facts of history should, whenever necessary, be twisted; that ecclesiastical doctrines are more sacred than truth; and that whatever the result of our search for truth might be, our first duty is allegiance to traditional dogma. The spread of a scientific spirit, however, which is taking place at the present time, will by and by render it possible to teach the facts with impartiality, and the time is coming when the Bible will be admitted again into our schools unopposed alike by Jew and Gentile.

While the Bible is sacred we must not forget that there are more religious books than those of our own tradition. They are the sacred books of the Parsis, of the Brahmans, of the Buddhists, of the Chinese, and all of them make the claim and possess the

character of sacredness; all of these books, each in its own way, are revelations which characterize the development of man's comprehension of the divinity that shapes our ends.

The New Testament writings are documents in the history of religion and our present religious views do not suffer when we recognize that they originated in circles of an absolutely uncritical character. There is a good deal of the poetical spirit in them, and therefore their statements partake of the nature of religious romance and need not be regarded as historical. Further we must bear in mind that the crude ideal of God as well as of Christ was naturally naive and had to be as faulty as the horizon of the gospel writers was narrow. For truth's sake we must recognize this, but in spite of it, these narratives contain the seed from which Christian civilization has developed.

The reader will perhaps ask how that was possible, and we answer because in a prescientific age poetry is more powerful than science.

While the picture of Jesus in the Gospels is of a temporary significance, the Christ ideal has grown and has changed with the ages according to the needs of mankind, and the duty of the present is not to become despondent because the scriptures deemed so perfect by former generations are sorely lacking in reliability and even in true spirituality, but to look ahead and work out the ideals that in the future shall serve us as our guides in life.

Every age has its needs, and while early Christianity could be satisfied with the formulation of the faith as it then existed we have new demands and new duties and it is best for us to build upon the past, and to respect the work done by our predecessors without allowing ourselves to be enslaved by the letter of the confessions of faith as formulated in former times. But with all conservatism, with all reverence for what was sacred to our ancestors, we must bear in mind that the highest and most indispensable duty of religion is allegiance to truth.

MISCELLANEOUS.

A STATEMENT FROM RABBI DRUCKER.

In both my articles on the Bible as a text-book I have endeavored to make it plain that I was not criticising either the Old Testament or the New. I merely wished to point out the mistake we make in using the Bible *as it stands* as a text-book in our Sunday-schools. I have shown that some of its stories are not suitable for children. But that the Bible has still a great mission to fulfil and that its educational value is great, I never wished to deny. I simply maintain that we should apply the same scientific method in the religious school as we use in the secular school.

In teaching chemistry or physics, we change text-books to suit new conditions and ideas. A book on chemistry becomes antiquated a few years after it has been introduced. We would consider it wrong to use an old text-book on physics, even of the greatest ancient master. Nevertheless many even of our liberal ministers consider it quite in order to use without comment or revision a book two thousand years old as a religious text-book. It is this inconsistency alone that I wished to point out in my articles.

However, when the Editor taxes me with inconsistency, owing to certain statements in one of these articles which contradict statements in my pamphlet on *The Trial of Jesus*, he applies the same method in my case which I have criticised in connection with our Sunday-schools. If my later assertions in some instances contradict my pamphlet, I feel that I am justified on the same grounds which justify the authors of recent books on chemistry or physics to contradict their own findings of some years earlier.

I may also add here that the pamphlet *The Trial of Jesus* was written on this basis: Supposing that the main facts narrated in the New Testament *are* true; by putting them alongside facts attested by Jewish historians,—namely Josephus and Philo, and Talmudic authorities, we need not conclude that the ones or the others are false. Up to the present time this was the usual deduction of students; the Christians maintained that the Jewish traditions were wrong, while the Jews returned the compliment and claimed that the New Testament accounts were fictitious. The task I set for myself in this pamphlet, therefore, was to point out that after eliminating certain admitted interpolations in the New Testament, the remaining portions to a great extent corroborate Jewish traditions and historical accounts. Hence the pamphlet has no special Jewish or Christian stamp upon it.

A. P. D.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

LEADING AMERICAN ESSAYISTS. By *William Morton Payne, LL. D.* New York: Holt, 1910. Pp. 395. Price \$1.75 net.

This volume belongs to W. P. Trent's series of Biographies of Leading Americans, and at the first glance the reader feels a sense of surprise to note

that besides the Introduction the book consists of but four chapters dealing respectively with Irving, Emerson, Thoreau and Curtis. In order to make his selection it was necessary for the author to define the limits of the term "essay," and this he does as follows: "To this category we may assign all the prose compositions that exhibit the mark of style, that give pleasure by virtue of the form of their expression irrespective of its content, and that have, in consequence, a clearly recognized place in the history of literature. Our definition must be classic enough to include almost all prose that is not cast in the mold of fiction or the drama, and that does not find a place in the solid literature of some special subject, as history, science, politics, or theology."

Many of our essayists are known primarily for literary work in other fields and in this series have been treated in other groups. For instance, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes and Poe are naturally to be found among the poets although it is hard to make a distinction in the case of the last two. Hawthorne, Howells and Henry James are classed among novelists. The "Bibliographical Introduction" is really a very important integral part of the work as it gives brief biographies and critiques of all the other essayists from Benjamin Franklin and the beginnings of our literature to Hamilton W. Mabie and Lafcadio Hearn, including such well-known names as Nathaniel P. Willis, Ik Marvel, Margaret Fuller, Charles Dudley Warner, and concluding with a list of those literary people of to-day who can come under the head of essayists, such as, for instance, Brander Matthews, Henry Van Dyke, Agnes Repplier and Bliss Perry.

MODERNISM ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF SENSUAL IMPRESSION AND HISTORICAL INSPIRATION. By *Arius Luther Wright*. Albany: Joseph McDonough. Pp. 155.

The contents of this book seem to vary greatly in value. On the one hand they prove that the author is a great student of ecclesiastical history and well informed even in minor details, but on the other hand much of the book is crude and fantastic. Suffice it to say that even Atlantis plays an important part in it. The book is prefaced by an introduction consisting of a poem which in spite of many metrical infirmities betrays poetical ambitions and a certain talent. It seems to us that the author would be wise if he would recognize his limitations and concentrate himself on subjects where he could easily accomplish something above the ordinary. His note on Constantine would suggest the idea that he would be the right man to write a life of Constantine in novel form in which however we would advise him not to let his fancy go farther than absolutely necessary, and to let the main facts rest on historical ground. How interesting would be a chapter on Christian persecutions under Diocletian, a description of Constantine's relation to his Christian mother, the growth of Constantine's dream into the story of that supernatural vision, a description of the twelve bishops of Circa and their examination by Secundus, which proved that all had been traitors at the time of the persecution, Secundus not excepted, etc. Incidentally we will add that probably Constantine did not see a cross in his dream, but a labarum, which was originally a pagan symbol and was not interpreted as the Christogram until later (See Carus, "The Chrisma and the Labarum," *Open Court*, XVI, 428-439, and pages 37 and 38 of this issue).

It is difficult to understand why the book was called *Modernism*. At least it has nothing to do with the new movement in the Roman Catholic church, and we would say that it is interesting in spite of the author's theory of the law of sensual impression and historical interpretation. So far as it goes this theory is all right, but the way in which the author weaves Plato's story into the text detracts from the value of his more important ideas.

MYSTICISM IN HEATHENDOM AND CHRISTENDOM. By *Dr. E. Lehmann*. Translated by *G. M. G. Hunt*. London: Luzac, 1910. Pp. 293. Price 5s. net.

This book presents us with a concise and comprehensive account of the history of mysticism, passing in review, first, primitive mysticism and then in turn Chinese, Indian, Persian and Greek mysticism. Then comes the mysticism of New Testament Christianity, of the Greek and Roman churches, the early German mysticism, Luther's mysticism, quietism, and finally "Outcrops and After Effects," under which title is discussed the effect of mystical tendencies on literature and life. The translation is excellent. With the possible exception of the noun "Outcrops," (and we would hesitate to offer a substitute) the book has that best merit of a translator's style, that it reads thoroughly like an original English work. This is especially evident in the poetical language of the Introduction in which the author defines a mystic and sets forth the significance of his mission: "For this is the true mission of mysticism, that it announces the approach of dawn, and evil is the day which is not preceded by this dawn. The tragedy of mysticism—and it requires all human energy to prevent its taking place—is that it may just as easily degenerate into the dusk of evening, enveloping the soul in impenetrable twilight."

THE FOURTH GOSPEL IN RESEARCH AND DEBATE. By *Benjamin Wisner Bacon*, D. D., LL. D. New York: Moffat, Yard, 1910. Pp. 544. Price \$4.00 net.

This volume comprises a series of essays on problems concerning the origin and value of the anonymous writings attributed to the Apostle John. A group of four of these essays appeared a few years ago in the *Hibbert Journal*, and their purpose was to bring before the lay public the issues of the great critical debate on the question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel. In these the cause of the opponents of the traditional position was frankly espoused. Others of the essays of the volume appeared during the same time and afterwards in various theological journals in the interest of research pure and simple. After an introductory statement of "The Issues Involved," the chapters are gathered into four parts treating respectively the External Evidence, Direct Internal Evidence, Indirect Internal Evidence and Latest Phases of Debate and Research.

The Putnams are to bring out in the spring a work to be entitled *The Letters of Elizabeth Cady Stanton: An Epistolary Autobiography*." The editors are to be Mrs. Stanton Blatch and Mr. Theodore Stanton. Anybody having letters of Mrs. Stanton would confer a favor on the editors by sending copies, or the originals, to Mr. Stanton, Rue Raynouard, Paris, France.

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