

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON LITERATURE.

One of the influences of Christianity is, that it has opened nothing less than a new world of literature. The rise of the Christ-religion proclaimed itself by that record which was an entirely new departure from all that had gone before in the literary world; and that new departure contained a germ from which has grown a great and mighty literary life. Consider the works of philosophy, science, theology, that for eighteen centuries have fallen like drops of intellectual light from the pens of its followers. The "Civitas Dei" of St. Augustine, the "Summa Theologia" of Thomas Aquinas, the "Imitatio Christi" of A. Kempis (of which more than fifty million copies have been printed), the "Novum Organum" of Bacon. Side by side with these heavier works, poetry and imaginative literature have imbibed a new spirit. All the master-pieces of later ages have sprung from Christianity. The "Jerusalem Delivered" of Tasso, the "Divine Comedy" of Dante, the "Fairy Queen" of Spenser, Milton's "Paradise Lost," the immortal works of Shakespeare, which alone contain and exhaustive treatise of moral philosophy and system and divinity. It is the secret influence of Christianity which lends such power to, and sheds such lustre through, the pages of Scott, and Dickens, and many others that I might mention. In fact, it alone has given that tone of true refinement and honest merit to all our modern literature of fiction which is worth the reading.

If space permitted I might show also how it has influenced music and art, but I merely suggest these heads, and add a word from Archbishop Trench. "Who would have supposed," says he, "that, nourished by the Christian books, by the great thoughts which Christ set stirring in the heart of humanity, there should unfold itself a poetry infinitely greater, an art infinitely higher, than any which the old world had seen; and that those skillless Christian hymns should yet be the preludes to loftier strains than the world had ever listened to before? Or who would have supposed that those artless drawings of the catacombs had the prophecy in them of more wondrous compositions than men's eyes had ever seen—or that a day should arrive when above many a dark vault and narrow crypt, where now the Christian worshippers gathered in secret, should arise domes and cathedrals embodying loftier ideas than did all those Grecian temples which now stood so fair and strong?"

But to return once more to literature for a moment. Not only has Christianity been the motive power to all the best of modern literary works, but it has been the very preserver of all ancient literature, and at certain epochs the only patron of learning. "That the clergy," says Mill, "were the preservers of all letters and all culture, of the writings and even the traditions of literary antiquity, is too evident to have been ever disputed; but for them there would have been a complete break between the ancient and modern world." So, then, the ministers of Christianity kept alive the torch of learning; in her monasteries were preserved and reproduced the ancient MSS., and there she taught the generations, as they followed one another, all that they know of art, of science and religion.—By W. W. De Hart, S.T.B., in *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine* for August.

ESQUIMAUX GRATITUDE.

When Sir John Ross was wintering in Felix Harbour, Prince Regent's Inlet, in 1829-30, his vessel, the *Victory*, was visited by some tribes of Esquimaux that had arrived from Iwiliik and vicinity. One of the men, Tullnahui, had lost a leg, just below the knee, at some period of his life, the stump of which had healed perfectly, and which in all other respects was an excellent case for a sailor's false leg of wood, which the ship carpenter was instructed to make for the poor cripple. When shown its use and benefits, his joy and appreciation were unbounded, and one of the first thoughts that entered the grateful creature's heart was, how he could repay the kindness. The making of the false leg was at once decided as the work of the white angels, and Tullnahui thought it meet and proper that payment should be, in some way, of the same general character. He had noticed that the ship's carpenter was worn by some wasting disease to almost a skeleton, and he therefore repaired to his village, procured the most eminent angels, and returned, intending that Mr. Carpenter should be made whole, physically, at least. The proffered compensation was so comical, although offered in the best of faith, and the poor workman's condition really so bad, that Ootookin, the angels, was not allowed to practise his performances, and the occasion was soon forgotten amid the other objects of attraction by which their attention was so fully occupied. This case typifies the remark I have already made, that the Esquimaux are more prone to force their superstitions on others than to receive the religion of others, and do not couple it with the secrecy and exclusiveness of the Indians of our continent. Poor Maslin, the carpenter, shortly afterward died of consumption, and Tullnahui got along famously with his wooden leg, that bore a brass plate with the name of the ship, her locality and date of wintering; which the poor savage, deeming it to be of some mysterious power—and it being, as well, a beautiful ornament to his eyes—always kept brightly polished.—Lieut. Frederick Schwatka, in *Frank Leslie's Sunday Magazine* for August.

COLOGNE CATHEDRAL.

Cologne Cathedral is completed at last. Nothing remains to be done but to remove the staging and scaffolding and derricks, and to put the beautiful terrace in order. And for this \$200,000 will be required. There is something wonderfully impressive in the structure, by far the finest architectural work in Europe and the richest specimen of the gothic order in the world. It was begun 613 years ago, in 1270, when Germany was little more than half civilized, and the Normans ruled England, holding the Saxons in sub-

jection in a lot but a trifle better than serfdom. Who designed this magnificent edifice is not now certainly known. It took over fifty years to finish the choir, which was consecrated in 1322. Work was continued on it till down into the troublesome times of the Reformation, when it was suspended, the great iron crane standing to show that the faith which begun would surely complete the edifice. And the return of order brought the spirit needed for the task. Work was resumed. The unrivalled beauty of the place compelled the admiration of Protestants, and made the building an object of pride. The King of Prussia took hold of the enterprise as a national monument, and in 1842 laid the foundation of the transept. The nave, aisles and transepts were opened in 1848. The magnificent south portal was finished in 1859, and the north portal soon after, and the central iron spire was raised in 1860. The towers, as now completed, rise upward of 500 feet. Over \$2,600,000 have been spent in the work since 1864. Such a building is a history in stone. Eighteen generations of artisans have worked upon it. Thousands of men have chiselled and wrought their whole lives into it, of whom not one in a hundred had a conception of the finished structure. They builded better than they knew, in a literal sense. And at last it stands, a thing of marvellous beauty and grandeur, rooted in the faith and pious devotion of the ages, as though it had grown out of the hearts of an unconquerable people.

SOMEBODY'S SECRET.

Somebody and I, in the moonlight,
Went down where the golden rods grow;
He told me a beautiful secret,
That nobody ever will know;
For I'll keep it well—
I never will tell
The secret he whispered so low.

He told the sweet story so softly,
It didn't even waken a bird;
The katydids kept such a chatter,
I do not think they could have heard;
But they never tell,
I know very well,
No, not if they knew every word.

The moon and the stars heard the secret,
I know by the smile that they wore;
They winked at each other so slyly,
I'm sure they had heard it before;
But they'll never tell,
I know very well;
They've heard it too often before.

For 'tis said the story's an old one;
But that I will never confess;
If old, it keeps up with the fashion,
And oftentimes wears a new dress;
And I'll keep it well—
I never will tell
The secret—I'll leave you to guess.
—J. E. Mackay, in *Our Continent*.

A MONOSYLLABIC PROTEST.

Think not that strength lies in the big round word,
Or that the brief and plain must needs be weak.
To whom can this be true who once has heard
The cry for help, the tongue that all men speak,
When want or woe or fear is in the throat,
So that each word gasped out is like a shriek
Pressed from the sore heart, or a strange wild note,
Sung by some fay or fiend? There is a strength
Which dies if stretched too far or spun too fine,
Which has more height than breadth, more depth than length.

Let but this force of thought and speech be mine,
And he that will may take the sleek, fat phrase,
Which glows and burns not, though it gleam and shine—
Light, but no heat—a flash, but not a blaze!

Nor is it mere strength that the short word boasts;
It serves of more than fight or storm to tell,
The roar of waves that clash on rock-bound coasts,
The crash of tall trees when the wild winds swell,
The roar of guns, the groans of men that die
On blood-stained fields. It has a voice as well
For them that far off on their sick-beds lie;
For them that weep, for them that mourn the dead,
For them that laugh and dance and clap the hand
To joy's quick step, as well as grief's slow tread,
The sweet plain words we learn at first keep time,
And though the theme be sad, or gay, or grand
With each, with all, these may be said to chime,
In thought, or speech, or song, or prose, or rhyme.

—Prof. J. A. Alexander, D.D.

WAR ON THE CIGARETTE.

A crusade against the cigarette has been started among the children of the public schools of Philadelphia. One of the principals has called the attention of the Board of Education to the subject, in a letter in which he says that, of the 50,000 pupils in the public schools of the city, a large proportion use tobacco in various forms; and that the habit has increased to an alarming extent since the cigarette was instituted. A short statement of the physical and mental disorders produced in children by the use of tobacco has been printed and posted on the inside of the cover of every text-book used in one school. The association of male principals has approved his letter to the Board, and an energetic campaign on that line is the expected result.

THE Vicar of Downholme, in Yorkshire, committed suicide lately by cutting his throat with a pair of scissors.

CARLYLE'S TRIUMPH OVER DIFFICULTIES.

In a strong and entertaining view of Carlyle's life and character, John Burroughs says, in the midsummer (August) "Century": "Carlyle owed everything to his power of will and to his unflinching adherence to principle. He was in no sense a lucky man, had no good fortune, was borne by no current, was favoured and helped by no circumstance whatever. His life from the first was a steady pull against both wind and tide. He confronted all the cherished thoughts, beliefs, tendencies of his time; he spurned and insulted his age and country. No man ever before poured out such withering scorn upon his contemporaries. The opinions and practices of his time in politics, religion, and literature were as a stabbly, brambly field, to which he would fain apply the match and clean the ground for a nobler crop. He would purge and fertilize the soil by fire. His attitude was at once, like that of the old prophets, one of warning and rebuking. He was refused every public place he ever aspired to—every college and editorial chair. Every man's hand was against him. He was hated by the Whigs and feared by the Tories. He was poor, proud, uncompromising, sarcastic; he was morose, dyspeptic, despondent, compassed about by dragons, and all manner of evil menacing forms; in fact, the odds were fearfully against him, and yet he succeeded, and succeeded on his own terms. He fairly conquered the world—yes, and the flesh and the devil."

COLOURS MADE BY THE HUMAN VOICE.

The "Philadelphia Press" says: An optical demonstration of the effect of sound on the colours and figures in soap bubbles was given at the Franklin Institute recently by Prof. Huleman. A film of soap was placed across the end of a phonoscope. To bring the sound in direct contact with the soap a tube was used. A reflection of film was thrown on a canvas screen, where it first assumed a bluish-gray appearance. An intonation of the voice, with the lips close to the mouth of the tube, caused a number of black spots to appear on the reflection. When these passed away a beautiful light green, intermingled with pink, remained. These two appeared to be the principal colours caused by sound. It was noticeable, however, that, while a certain tone would cause the same figure to reappear, it had no control over the colour. A tone which, for instance, caused one solid colour to appear, would bring out, perhaps, a dark blue at one time and a yellow at another. No difference was noticeable in the effect of the male and female voices.

TO AVOID DROWNING.

It is a well-known fact, says the "Scientific American," that any person of average structure and lung capacity will float securely in water if care is taken to keep the hands and arms submerged and the lungs full of air. Yet in most cases people who are not swimmers immediately raise their hands above their heads and scream the moment they find themselves in deep water. The folly of such action can be impressively illustrated by means of a half empty bottle and a couple of nails, and the experiment should be repeated in every household until all the members—particularly the women and children—realize that the only chance for safety in deep water lies in keeping the hands under and the mouth shut.

Any short necked, square-shouldered bottle will answer, and the nails can easily be kept in place by a rubber band or string. First ballast the bottle with sand, so that it will just float with the nails pointing downward, then by turning the nails upward the bottle will be either forced under water at once, or will be tipped over so that the water will pour into the open mouth, and down it will go. To children the experiment is a very impressive one, and the moral of it is easily understood. It may prove a life-saving lesson.

CANINE SAGACITY.

An instance of canine sagacity which deserves to be recorded came under the notice of the Cornwall "Reporter" lately. Our little staggie "Nip" has been continually persecuted by the assaults of a bigger black dog belonging to a neighbour. He was kept in constant terror and was not allowed to rest in peace, even under his own vine and fig tree. Things went on in this way until one afternoon, when he struck on a rare worthy the intellect of the nobler creature. On the appearance of the big black dog "Nip" walked quickly off, leaving his enemy in quiet possession of the premises. He was soon, however, seen to return, accompanied by Mr. McLean's big boaner. The latter went to work at once to demolish the trespasser and intruder, while "Nip" stood by a more than interested spectator. His eyes glistened, his whole body quivered with delight, and his tail wagged 200 circles of joy a minute. As soon as the battle was over and the vanquished black dog disappeared crestfallen and minus a considerable amount of wool, "Nip" accompanied his protector home again, chattering all along in the most familiar of dog Latin. The truth of this story is vouched for.

It is probable that the marriage of Prince Louis of Battenberg and Princess Victoria of Hesse will be celebrated in the private chapel at Windsor Castle.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA objects to "public feeds, sitting for hours at a crowded tavern table surrounded by viands you do not wish to eat and liquors you do not wish to drink." This is a little ungrateful from a man who for years has been among the most habitual public diners in London.

THE visitor to the Cologne Cathedral is met at the entrance by a shaven crowned, serge-robed, and sandal-footed monk, whose duty it is to present with his left hand a card printed in German, English, and French, politely requesting a contribution for the building fund of the church, while with his right hand he holds out a silver platter.