

SPECIAL  
ARTICLES

## Our Contributors

BOOK  
REVIEWSCHRIST AND THE COMMON  
PEOPLE.

"And the common people heard Him gladly."—Mark xii. 37.

Society to-day is very much like what it was in the time of Christ. It then and now ignores the people. It exploits them for its own ends, but otherwise will not touch them. Society in Christ's day found no difficulty in ruling the people from above, and it did so by steadily refusing them their rights and liberties; but times are changed, and the people are no longer to be treated as dumb driven cattle. Still society continues to divide them into higher, middle and the lower classes; but Christianity knows no such distinctions. Jesus Christ never treated them in such a fashion, though He had to face and defy society in His sympathetic treatment of the people. Officialism was rampant in His day, and when it found that it could not use Him for its own purposes it turned fiercely upon Him. It is sad to think how officialism has ground down the people and persecuted them. We see in Russia, in her wild welter of revolution to-day, the frenzy and ruin that the official classes there have produced; for it is really they, in the long-drawn tyranny and oppressions, that are making the country such a scene of strikes and plunder, murder, and rebellion. Just as it was in the time of our Lord, so it is now in a new movement, the people find their opportunity, and they do not hesitate to seize on it. Ever since John the Baptist preached that the Kingdom of God is at hand, the people have been coming to their own, and it is they that in the long run won everywhere against officialism, and they are sure to win in Russia, too.

When the official class everywhere in Judea turned its lip in scorn and hatred against Christ, the people drew closer and closer to Him. They were quick to recognize that He belonged to their side of the House of Israel, and He was always at home among them. Did not that sturdy son of the people, Abraham Lincoln, say, "The Lord prefers the common people, that is the reason why He has made so many of them." Considering that Jesus Christ was one of themselves, and that he had been brought up in a humble home it was natural that He should find His work among them, and that they should find their friend and leader in Him. The people love to follow their leader, and how trustful they have been of their leaders, even those of them who have sold their lives and liberties for a mess of pottage. But at last they had found a leader they could implicitly trust, and they gave themselves heart and soul to Him. He had nothing to say against the Roman Government, nor the institutions of his country, nor the services of the temple and synagogue, but He had everything to say against the intolerance of the priesthood, the insincerity of Phariseism, and the hollowness of public worship, and the people followed Him with hearty sympathy in this line of teaching.

It must be remembered, too, that when He came to closer quarters with the people themselves, He did not spare them nor flatter them, nor pander to vitiated tastes and habits: He simply told them the plain, unvarnished truth. It was His candor that won their confidence and affection. Nor did the Son of Man make any attempt to amuse them. He Himself was no ascetic, and there was no note of asceticism in His teaching, for He came eating and drinking, and sharing with them in the common joys and sorrows of life; but He would not at any point lower His ministry to that of a mere entertainment for the people; and what delighted Him was to find that the

people were in full sympathy with the higher ideals of His life and work; and this comes out so strikingly in the case of the Samaritans, when they said unto the woman, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." The impression is abroad to-day that you need not expect to draw the masses to the Church, unless you provide amusements for them. Hence it is that we are getting up institutional Churches, and all kinds of intellectual and social enjoyment in connection with them. We are not condemning them, but what we wish to say is that we do not find such things in the programme of Christ. All that He did was to identify Himself with the people and sympathize with them, and they came in crowds everywhere to wait upon His open-air ministry. The people were so receptive not only on account of the correspondence and affinity between Him and them, but because He brought them a Gospel they could understand, and that they so much needed, and wherever this old Gospel is preached in our day, it has still its old power and attractiveness.

The people found Jesus Christ so interesting, because He was so deeply interested in them. What leader had ever come so near to them as He did? He entered in every case into their lives and thoughts, sorrows and sufferings, as if He was a member of their family; and, indeed, who had sympathy and compassion for the multitude in its units as He had? He blessed the children, He healed the sick, He opened the eyes of the blind, He fed the hungry, and He brought the dead to life again, and what form of service and sacrifice was there that He had not given on behalf of the people? for He "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sickness," and when the people in their dumb, silent way came to understand this, no wonder that they welcomed Him and heard Him gladly.

Then, too, He was as winsome in His teaching as He was in His person. The people had found that life was one long, unending struggle with oppressions, from the Roman Government in taxes, and the Pharisee with his traditions, that ground the very soul out of them. There was no sense of joy in life, and no pleasure in the work of their hands. Christ came into their every-day life with His message. It was a sincere, plain, and homely statement, but in telling it He laid hold of the life around Him—its paths and patience, its sea and fishing, its sowing and reaping, its poverty and wealth, its men and women, its fields and trees, its sheep and goats, its lost coin and its lost son, and He made a new use of them, and brought new meaning out of them. The people had found nothing but toil and drudgery in their pursuits and occupations, but when Christ touched them, throwing the light and life of eternity around them, they became symbols of higher and better things. When the people found them throbbing with spiritual lessons and relations, they saw a new dignity in labor, and found a new value in life. The teaching of Christ had spread a renewing and uplifting influence everywhere around them. "He made God real, truth living, duty absolute, forgiveness actual, help present, life joyous, and eternity itself a welcome light on the path of death." It was surely the right thing when "All bare Him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth."

Sorrow is sometimes the covered way through which we walk into the kingdom that never grows dim.

"NEITHER SCIENTIFIC OR  
CHRISTIAN."

In a recent sermon, founded on Timothy I., 20, Rev. Dr. Lyle, of Hamilton, said: It was in 1806 that Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy gave to the world what she was pleased to call her final revelation of religion which was to supplant Christianity, and her advocates are pleased to say it is not only a revelation of religion, but it is science and philosophy as well. Voltaire said of Rome that it was neither holy nor an empire, and some say of Christian Science, and with equal truth, that it is neither scientific, Christian nor philosophical. What was its message of science? Mrs. Eddy made it a fundamental principle that there was no matter; that what mortal mind sees, tastes, touches and smells is but really a belief. She insists on the nothingness of matter not as an axiom, but as a fundamental truth. In other words she would have us believe that the city of Hamilton is only a dream, the Dominion of Canada merely existing in belief, and the whole universe only a delusion. She also makes the astounding statement that it is a waste of time to study modern science. She would have us believe that senses deceive us, that our inferences are untrue, that we are the victims of worldly illusions, and that we are doomed to believe in the existence of things which do not exist. Is a doctrine scientific which denies that facts given in experience are untrue? If so, then all science is untrue. Dr. Lyle thought the title Christian Science had been used by Mrs. Eddy for her teachings because she realized the value of having a good name. The reality of the material world was the largest factor in man's experience.

What is her philosophy? The work of philosophy in all ages, from the time of Socrates, has been to bring about a final unity of the universe and of God and man. How does Mrs. Eddy get to the final unity of God and man? Her definition of man is that he is the infinite expression of the infinite mind, that he is co-existent, co-eternal with God. In simple English this meant that man is as big as God in these three things. In one part of her book she declares that the soul of man is God, not that it expresses God. Her contention is that mortal existence is a dream and she solves the problem of science and philosophy by saying there are no such things and they never existed. She is compelled to blot out the earth and sky and deny everything but the existence of God himself. What a ridiculous belief this was.

As to her religion she herself describes it as the last and final one, and Dr. Lyle added he hoped it would be of the kind. Her description of God showed she was a pantheist, which she was at great pains to deny she was not, like the thief who hoped to draw attention from himself by his cries of "Stop thief!" She identifies God with nature, which is the belief of the pantheist. She describes God not as a person, but as a divine principle, mind, truth, love, etc. She puts principle first, however. Dr. Lyle did not hesitate to say that Mrs. Eddy was either greatly deceived herself or she was trying to deceive others.

What does she think of Christ? She says that Jesus and Christ are not to be regarded as one person, for Jesus is the man and Christ is the principle. Was not this deception from first to last?

It could not be denied that she had cured many people, but should she claim a monopoly of divine healing on these grounds? The Roman Catholic Church, the Greek and Mormon Churches had records of healing that would bear