

school will cling to a fantastic name. Every man must either be a theist or an atheist; he must either believe that there is, or that there is not, proof of the existence of a God: that the existence of God could be disproved, no atheist ever pretended. This, however, is by the way. The facts with which jurisprudence has to deal are that at the present time, while the majority continues to believe in God, there is a minority, containing some most respectable people, which does not; and that members of the minority will sometimes be found on the jury panel and on the witness stand: perhaps they may even sometimes be found on the Bench. It has hitherto been assumed that religion was the sole basis of veracity as well as of morality in general. But it is possible to hold firmly the great doctrines both of natural religion and of Christianity without assuming anything of the kind. Apart from any theological belief, a man may obviously have inducements, both personal and social, to tell the truth, which will make the rejection of his testimony a flagrant wrong, both to him and to the interests of public justice. Were it not for the conduct of the English Conservatives in the Bradlaugh case, it might have been deemed impossible that any being endowed with reason should be found capable of upholding, as a tribute to the God of truth, the exaction of a false profession of faith from an unbeliever. On the other hand, the Agnostics themselves will hardly deny, or deem it offensive to assert, that a sincere belief in a Power which marks and punishes perjury, when it is unmarked and unpunished of men, is an additional guarantee for veracity; nor will they question that in the minds of common people, the belief is still sincere; and Public Justice, though she may be no theologian, must take notice of a motive which, whether founded on speculative truth or not, is, in its operation, real. It would be dangerous to assume that, in the mind of a rustic witness, the old religious basis had yet been replaced by that of evolutionary science. Even such evasions as kissing the thumb instead of the book prove that the awe of what the book denotes retains its power. In political cases the oath is utterly superfluous: the guarantee for the right performance of duty is not profession, sworn or unsworn, but a responsibility enforced by the vigilance of the constituency, or of the community at large. In the case of witnesses, the obvious course, where the witness objects, or attaches no meaning, to the oath, is to permit affirmation, and leave the difference, if any, between the values of the two kinds of testimony to find its level in the estimation of the jury. In the case of a jurymen the course to be adopted is not so obvious; but this matter is of less consequence, as nobody deems it a privilege to be a jurymen, nor does the exclusion of an individual from the jury box affect a cause like the exclusion of a witness. Whatever policy is most liberal is most Christian; and Christianity has suffered enough already from association with political injustice. Only let a Christian legislator ask himself honestly what St. Paul would have done, and he will not be likely to go wrong.

A BYSTANDER.

HERE AND THERE.

EASTER MONDAY—a Bank holiday here as well as in England—may to a certain extent be looked upon as a day which in the Old Country, in no small degree, inaugurates the commencement of summer sports. In the list of events set down in the programme, cricket matches and athletic meetings figure prominently, but what is especially noticeable is the large number of fixtures for lacrosse. The game has made rapid progress in the Old Country, perhaps more especially in the northern counties, where in the vicinity of the great commercial cities it is most popular. The chief devotees of the game are, for the most part, drawn from the ranks of football players. As yet the game has assumed neither a definitely winter or a definitely summer sport, for by some clubs it is played in the summer only, when the football is laid on the shelf; by others only in winter, the former adopting it in the hot months to keep themselves in trim for football, the latter displacing the old winter sport in favour of the new. The visit of the Canadian lacrosse teams to the old country is now bearing fruit, for until their arrival lacrosse was not thoroughly understood; but we may now confidently expect that, before long, England will be able to send a twelve over here capable of holding their own in the national game of the country they visit, and when that event takes place, right royally will they be welcomed.

THOSE who are interested in athletic sports cannot fail to appreciate the inauguration, by the delegates of the various athletic clubs throughout the Dominion, of an association which is to bear the title of "The Amateur Athletic Association of Canada." The popularity of amateur sports has long been assured. The formation of fresh clubs and the increase of annual meetings sufficiently testify to the fact. The circumstance that these

contests are solely open to amateurs is not, however, guarantee sufficient that every event in connection with them is altogether above board. The very definition of what constitutes an "amateur" too often now-a-days wants explanation, while of late a certain amount of crookedness, which at one time was only to be met with in some of the lower ranks of professionalism, has crept into amateur circles. To put down any attempt at this, to protect the mutual interests of its members, and to advance all legitimate amateur athletic sports, is the object of the association. That a considerable impetus will be given to amateur athletics by this movement, there can be no reason to doubt, for clubs belonging to the association must hold annual athletic meetings, containing in their respective programmes at least three events open to amateurs, and any club failing to hold such a meeting will forfeit its membership. The first annual meeting will be held in Montreal in September.

THE *Saturday Review*, in an article on the decline of rowing and sculling in England, attributes the falling-off to the habit of spirit-drinking, and the waterman's custom of idling away nearly the half of every week. The former pernicious habit, now so long established amongst the working classes, has undoubtedly begun to have a serious effect upon their health and constitutions, whilst evidences are not wanting to prove the superior bodily strength of the labouring class in the colonies—a class both better bred and better fed, and living in a purer atmosphere, removed from the material and moral dinginess of great cities. The lack of public encouragement also prevents the most likely men from taking up rowing as a business. "It is not very flattering to our national good sense and good taste to find that, when so many thousands of pounds are annually offered for horse-racing, which so little promotes the strength or health of the people, it should have been found impossible to raise the very few hundreds necessary to give a first-rate regatta, such as was formerly held upon the Thames every year." The one thing that has most discredited professional rowing is the fact that book-makers manipulated the matches to suit their own personal ends, to the detriment of both public and performers. English amateur rowers and scullers have not suffered the same loss of prestige as the watermen. Foreigners seldom enter for the big events at Henley. When, last year, a Frenchman and a German entered, the former was defeated easily, whilst the latter, though he won his trial heats and beat the Frenchman, stood no chance against Mr. Lowndes, the winner. "The analogy of cricket and other sports, besides professional rowing, seems to show that if there had been crews anywhere good enough to win the Grand Challenge Cup, or the Diamond Sculls, they would have appeared at Henley to dispute these coveted trophies." The attempt to retrieve the lost laurels of England in the recent Buear-Ross match resulted in a disaster which "disposes of our chance for many a day to come, and again condemns English professional sculling to a place in the international list far below Canada, Australia, and the United States."

DR. PRICE, the Welsh Druid, who was recently tried and acquitted of having indecently cremated the body of his child, has at last succeeded in accomplishing his object. He fixed three hurdles on a hill, then had half a ton of coals piled within the triangle thus formed, and upon a pair of large iron grates he placed a box containing the body of the child, wrapped in napkins. Petroleum was thrown over the coals, and this served to make the pile a mass of fire as soon as ignition took place. The Druid, with a large shawl thrown over his shoulders, was present during the process, and chanted an ancient sacred song, in the presence of a number of women, who climbed the hill and peered over the fence to catch a glimpse of the proceedings. He promises to cremate his bull "Morgan" in similar manner after he has died a natural death.

AN English writer says, gourmets have often been advised that London is a place worth living in, as it is the first to receive the fruits of the year. This year will not diminish its reputation. Although March is not the month to expect strawberries and asparagus, London has both, thanks to Science aiding Nature. Two weeks ago English strawberries could be purchased at four shillings a basket of twelve berries at Covent-garden and elsewhere, and asparagus at five shillings a bundle. The prices are not so much too dear. Indeed, a dramatist remarked sententiously that the strawberries were "dirt cheap; for, look," said he, "a month ago I saw one of Mr. Hollingshead's coryphæes, whose salary is probably thirty shillings a week, munching strawberries at half a guinea a basket." Lilies were selling at two shillings a spray a few weeks ago. And notwithstanding close time, Tay and Severn salmon has been an article of food all the winter.