

The Indian Churchman says: "The most vigorous efforts at reform which proceed from Hinduism itself are to be found in that part of India where Christianity is strongest. In Bengal, such efforts provoke but a languid interest, and from Bombay we scarcely hear of them at all; but in Madras there are movements promoted by two excellent papers, *The Indian Social Reformer* and *The Hindu*; and Mr. Subra-mariya Iyer has commenced a new reform association. He goes so far as to say that caste, at the present day, has ceased to serve any useful purpose, whatever the community may have owed to it in times past, amidst the difficulties of primitive existence and social vicissitudes. The evil caused by it far outweighed the good it might have done. In these days, true sympathy, knowledge, and science are the real powers for civilization."

THE Rev. G. A. Lefroy, of Lahore (India), has printed a valuable paper on "The Strength and Weakness of Mohammedanism," dwelling first on the best side of Islam, its intense faith in a personal Deity, and in a resurrection and a judgment to come; and then arguing that Mohammed not only impaired the good effects of the truths which he proclaimed by his licentiousness, but aggravated the evil by his claim of a special divine sanction for his irregularities. The paper is illustrated by some apposite quotations from Archbishop Trench's Hulsean lectures. Mr. Lefroy, however, in reference to a speech by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the S.P.G. annual meeting, argues that in commending the elements of truth in the system of Islam it is necessary to correct the favorable view by admitting its evil side. He shows that the speech, as reported, was misapprehended by Mohammedans in India. He also states that in his preaching in Delhi he is frequently confronted by the alleged success of Mr. Quilian's "mosque" in Liverpool.

A PARABLE.

"I NEED oil," said an ancient monk. So he planted him an olive sapling.

"Lord," he prayed, "it needs rain, that its roots may drink and swell. Send gentle showers." And the Lord sent a gentle shower.

"Lord," prayed the monk, "my tree needs sun. Send sun, I pray Thee." And the sun shone, gilding the dripping clouds.

"Now frost, my Lord, to brace its tissues," said the monk. And, behold, the little tree stood sparkling with frost. But at evensong it died. Then the monk sought the cell of a brother monk, and told his strange experience.

"I, too, have planted a little tree," he said, "and, see, it thrives well. But I entrusted my little tree to its God. He who made it knows

better what it needs than a man like me. I laid no condition. I fixed not ways or means. 'Lord, send it what it needs,' I prayed—storm or sunshine, wind, rain, or frost. Thou hast made, and Thou dost know."

SOME BUDDHIST CRITICISMS ON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

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IN the *Yaso Mugen Rou*, "The Absurdities of Jesus," published at Tokyo, in the 25th year of Meiji, and the year of the Japanese era 2552 (A.D. 1892), we have a series of five lectures by Mr. S. Katsube, which may be interesting to some of our readers as affording an idea of the way in which the native religious teachers view the new doctrines which are being imported into their midst.

The object of the first lecture is to prove that the so-called God of the Christian religion is none other than the devil himself. The argument is ingenious. It is shown, in the first place, that all destruction of life is contrary to one of the fundamental laws of the universe—the one which forbids the taking of life. A particular case is then taken—that of the Flood. It is pointed out that in the Flood there was a wholesale destruction of life, which God, who is almighty, might very easily have avoided. It is also pointed out that Noah was likewise involved in this sin, inasmuch as he confined his warnings to words without taking any active steps to ward off the evil—the building of the ark being only for the selfish purpose of saving himself and his family. But, so says the Christian Scripture, whosoever committeth sin is of the devil. Therefore Noah is of the devil, and He who instigated Noah to do all this can be none other than the devil himself.

The English reader will probably smile at this argument; but it is one that passes muster with an average Buddhist audience.

In the second lecture the writer sets himself to prove that the God of the Christians cannot be the Father of mankind. This lecture begins with a text, or rather three texts, from the Christian Bible: "Call no man your father upon earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven"; "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth"; "No man cometh unto the Father but by me."

When Christians, it says, are asked the meaning of the first of these texts, they reply that we owe our bodies to our earthly parents, but our souls to God, who is, therefore, in this sense, our Father.

But, says he, to use such an argument betrays an entire ignorance of the nature of the soul, which is so intimately connected with the body that it cannot possibly be supposed to have an independent origin. (If our author could read Wilberforce on the Incarnation,