

models, and by specimens of underclothing lent by the Rational Dress Society, dresses lent by Hamilton and Company, and boots lent by Messrs. Marshall and Burt, which were exhibited after the lecture, as also a set of the baby clothing invented by Miss Ada S. Ballin, and first described in these columns, lent by Mrs. Addley Bourne.—*The Queen*.

### CORRESPONDENCE.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed: EDITOR OF THE WEEK, 5 Jordan Street, Toronto.

Contributors who desire their MS. returned, if not accepted, must enclose stamp for that purpose.

#### ALGONQUIN PARK.

Now dark before us, gulfs of pine are seen,  
That bear the name still of their Indian queen;  
Great solitary shades! so still and deep,  
Even passing sighs in hollow murmurs creep!

To the Editor of *The Week*:

SIR,—It is a matter of common remark that our streams diminish as our woodlands are cleared away, and that the clearing of a mountainous country exercises an influence upon the watercourses and springs in the plains.

A glance at the map of what is known as the Ottawa and Huron territory of Ontario will show that the Muskoka River, which empties into Lake Huron, and the Petewawa, which runs into the Ottawa, have their sources within half a mile of each other; and that the Madawaska, another tributary of the Ottawa, takes its rise four or five miles east of the sources of the two first-mentioned streams. Burnt Island Lake, at the headwaters of the Muskoka, and Otter Slide Lake, at the head of the Petewawa, are each 1,405.85 feet above the level of the sea.

At the Height of Land between the Muskoka and Petewawa, and between the sources of the Madawaska and the Great Opeongo Lake, and around the upper lakes and streams in this region, there are numerous beaver meadows, great tracts of marsh and swamp closely grown over by stunted tamarack and dwarf spruce, or carpeted by marsh plants, and occasionally opening into prairies with long, coarse, wiry grass and bushes. These swamps and prairies occupy the valleys between the ranges of hills, which are here widely apart, running about N.N.E. and S.S.W., and rising abruptly above the surface.

There is much picturesque scenery in these regions, and fish and game abound in and around their waters. Brook or speckled trout are found in immense abundance, while moose, red deer, beaver, and other animals are numerous in these unfrequented parts.

With a view to preserve the forests and the fauna of this locality, and its lakes and streams, it is proposed that the townships of Canisbay, McLaughlin, Bishop, Freswick, Bower, and the township south of Bower and east of Canisbay, be reserved by the Government as a public park, to be called Algonquin Park, subject to regulations for its maintenance and management. Its picturesque scenery, abundance of lakes, and opportunities for angling, will make it a favourite resort for tourists and invalids in summer.

Those who lament the destruction of our forests and fauna will rejoice to see the success of such a scheme for their preservation in this part of our public domain; looking at the same time to its importance for the maintenance of the waters of the rivers having their sources within its boundaries.

In a country like ours, a practical acquaintance with the labours of forest planting and management will in many cases be required by the owners of property, whatever plan of special training may be devised. Some maintain that forest instruction should form a part of the course of instruction at the Ontario Agricultural College, where they could have a nursery and experimental station; while others insist upon the superiority of a separate academy placed in a forest, which would impart that special information needed in the planting and care of forests. A. K.

Toronto, 5th April, 1886.

#### NEO-CHRISTIANITY.

To the Editor of *The Week*:

SIR,—“The Evolution of American Christianity” is the subject of a noticeable article in a late number of *THE WEEK*. The writer, Rev. G. J. Low, treats the subject in a broad and liberal spirit, as indeed he does all theological and rationalistic questions from a Christian standpoint.

There is much food for thought in Mr. Low's paper for the Agnostic, as well as the Christian. He frankly admits that Christianity is now in a state of “transition,” and shows how “unsatisfactory and shifting” its condition is to-day—how it is divided up into a thousand and one sects—how it is “neither coherent nor homogeneous,” but rather “a sort of conglomerate.” This is all true enough, and the serious question is how this evolutionary movement which has now taken so vigorous a hold of the religions of the world, and especially Christianity, is to issue.

“Is Christianity emerging from chaos to order, or is it undergoing the process of decomposition and decay?” That is the pertinent question which Mr. Low puts; and that the Agnostic's answer should be widely different from that of the Christian is what would be naturally expected. The one would say Christianity is to, or soon will, emerge from chaos to order, while the other with equal sincerity will say it is undergoing the final process of “decomposition and decay.” Mr. Low ventures to think, though

with evident misgiving, that it is evolving towards “order, strength, and beauty, and not towards further decay.” And how is the “order, strength, and beauty” thus prognosticated to be brought about? By “organic unity.” This is to effect the ultimate salvation of Christianity from its present perilous position; and the “unifying tendencies” are already apparent. On three grand bases—“Doctrine, Polity, and Worship”—there is to be an assimilation of all sects except the Roman Catholics, who “must be left out of the question,” and the Unitarian Protestants.

As to Doctrine, there seems to be but little hope that unity is very near at hand, but Mr. Low suggests that the *Nicene Creed* would perhaps be more acceptable as a basis of doctrinal unity than any other credal formula.

As to Polity, the assimilation is now said to be progressing favourably; and the *desideratum* of unity of worship is to be achieved by the general adoption of the Church of England Prayer Book in its entirety.

Such is the scheme for the organic union of the Christian Churches of America, with the exception of the Church of Rome and the Protestant Unitarians. And this organic union, bear in mind, is “absolutely necessary” for the preservation of Christianity from total collapse and decay! In reckoning up the probabilities of a consummation of this organic union, the less sanguine Christian will, it is to be feared, exclaim “forlorn hope!” The Agnostic will exclaim “*absolutely impossible!*” His prognosis must be about like this: Every vestige of the supernatural part of Christianity *must go*, and that comparatively soon, while the natural or moral part—that is, Christianity in its rational aspects—will remain. In these days of scientific naturalism and critical historical research, no unification of the conflicting creeds or assimilation of the diverse sects of Christianity will be possible on any basis which retains one vestige of the supernatural part of Christianity. True, an esoteric belief in God and Immortality, and even the divinity of Christ, might be retained in the individual, but it could never be successfully made obligatory, or enjoined authoritatively. Mr. Low, if he lives long (which I hope he may), will see that there must be a much wider doctrinal basis than the *Nicene Creed* to carry with it any prospect of even the partial exoteric assimilation which he hopes for.

But let us for a moment look at the idea of a scheme of unity and affiliation for the different sects of a great system of religion like Christianity, professing to be a divine system and essentially monistic, which *necessarily excludes* one great sect of that religion and another lesser sect! The great Church of Rome—the oldest Christian Church—forming so large an integral part of Christendom, must imperatively “be left out of the question” of Christian affiliation and confraternity, as there can be “no compromise with her—no parleying!” What a spectacle is this for the Heathen and the Agnostic (which, by the way, in the opinion of some excellent people, mean about the same thing)! Here is at least *prima facie* evidence against the moral integrity of the whole system, including all of its sects. That the Unitarians are excluded is, of course, not so much to be questioned or wondered at. If Prof. Fiske, the author of the “Cosmic Philosophy,” and the foremost exponent of Evolution and the philosophy of Herbert Spencer in America, can be properly classed as a Unitarian (and Mr. Low so classes him), then we certainly cannot wonder that Unitarians are to be ruled out of the coming family compact, for I should say Mr. Fiske stands distinctly and unequivocally *outside* of doctrinal Christianity. But then “there are Unitarians and Unitarians.” Mr. Low recognizes the gulf between Channing Unitarianism and Parker Unitarianism.

“No doubt, if this multiplication of sects were to go on much longer, the end would be that Rome and Agnosticism would divide the prey between them.” Very likely Mr. Low has here given us a correct predicate so far as it goes, for it will soon be between Rome and Reason—between Authority and Science—and the end will be that Reason will disintegrate Rome, and Science triumph over Authority. And this present “transition” and disintegration of which Mr. Low speaks is the beginning of that end. That the Anglican Catholic Church will, however, be the last of the Protestant sects to succumb to the inevitable is more than likely, since no other Christian sect is so broad and liberal, and “meddles so little with politics and religion”—no other shows a spirit at once so accommodating and conciliatory towards the heretical developments of recent science.

There are other salient and essential points in Mr. Low's able paper (and the above are merely touched upon), but as this, Mr. Editor, is probably as much space as you can afford on this subject, I shall not trespass further here. To such of the readers of *THE WEEK*, however, as might desire to peruse a more extended reply, I beg to say that my full review of Mr. Low's paper will appear in the issue of the *Boston Index* for April 8, to which I beg to refer him and them. ALLEN PRINGLE.

Selby, Ont., March 29, 1886.

ALMOST the first duty of a new regiment stationed in Edinburgh Castle, says the *St. James's Gazette*, is its only unpleasant one. Immediately it gets into its quarters in the castle it has to despatch a representative body through the oldest streets to cry out at the top of their voices that the citizens must be wary of the soldiers' beguiling ways. This is called “crying down the credit of the regiment,” and the ceremony has just been performed by the Seaforth Highlanders. On a recent forenoon a detachment of these, accompanied by a drum-major, paraded High Street and neighbourhood to discharge what must be described as this unpleasant duty. It consists of a proclamation to all whom it may concern, that any one who is so foolish as to supply the soldiers with goods on credit to the amount of more than a single day's pay does so at his own risk. At her own risk, it might be said; for, owing to some reason unknown, it is understood that the proclamation is specially addressed to shopkeepers of the softer sex.