

PASSING.

BY ALICE WILLIAMS BROTHERTON, IN THE ATLANTIC

66 **W**HAT ship is this comes sailing
 Across the harbour bar,
 So strange, yet half familiar,
 With treasure from afar?
 O comrades shout, good bells ring out,
 Peal loud your merry din!
 Oh, joy! At last across the bay
 My ship comes sailing in!"

Men said in low whispers,
 "It is the passing bell,
 At last his toil is ended."
 They prayed, "God rest him well!"

"Ho, captain, my captain!
 What store have you on board!"
 "A treasure far richer
 Than gems or golden hoard;
 The broken promise welded firm,
 The long-forgotten kiss;
 The love more worth than all on earth,
 All joys life seemed to miss."
 The watchers sighed softly,
 "It is the death change,
 What vision blest has given
 That rapture deep and strange?"

"O captain, dear captain,
 What forms are those I see
 On deck there beside you?
 They smile and beckon me,
 And soft voices call me—
 Those voices sure I know!"
 "All friends are here that you held dear
 In the sweet long ago."
 "The death smile," they murmured:
 "It is so passing sweet
 We scarce have heart to hide it
 Beneath the winding sheet."

"O captain, I know you!
 Are you not Christ the Lord?
 With light heart and joyous
 I hasten now on board.
 Set sail, set sail before the gale,
 Our trip will soon be o'er;
 To-night we'll cast our anchor fast
 Beside the heavenly shore."
 Men sighed, Lay him gently
 Beneath the heavy sod,
 The soul afar beyond the bar,
 Went sailing on to God.

We don't hear very much at the present day on the subject of evolution. It is true that some writers like to speak of it as an absolutely established fact, and calmly imply that no one of any reading or culture believes in anything else; yet perhaps there is no theory that has ever been started which has so little evidence to support it. Many of its great exponents virtually admit this. Dr. Tyndall, for instance, allows that "no shred of trustworthy experimental testimony exists on the side of spontaneous evolution," and Professor Huxley allows that the doctrine of Biogenesis (which is in fact that life cannot spring from dead matter) is "victorious along the whole line." It is little wonder then that enthusiasm regarding it is dying out.

Haeckel's imaginary Continent of Limuria, where missing links were supposed to have flourished, is fast fading away, to the unsatisfactoriness of all things fanciful. As a means of assisting humanity, evolution has not much to recommend it. Suppose it had missionaries out among the heathen pressing its claims upon them to-day. Of what particular advantage would it be to the savages to preach to them that they are the lineal descendants of apes and gorillas? Is there anything in the idea which could at all elevate their thoughts or help them? How different, in all respects, is the attitude of the Christian missionary towards the heathen! He has a revelation from God, a story direct from Him, a story of love and good will, and his story is supported by a fair amount of evidence, which, of course, is not to be despised. At all events it quickly asserts itself, and the savages soon feel its wonderful influence. What move of scientists can ever shake its power? No theory of man can seize the soul and influence it as Christianity does, and perhaps the strongest expression descriptive of this power comes from Charles Darwin himself, whose mental exertions were spent upon "the great Hypothesis," when he said that the work of the missionary in its beneficial effect upon barbarous people was like the wave of the magician's wand.

"One proof" says an article in the *Missionary Review of the World*, "of the deepening interest in missions is the increasing number of university men that are offering themselves for service. It was long before any such, in the Church of England at least, were willing to work among the heathen; but during the last four years seventy-nine English university men have become missionaries. In former days of coldness, special colleges for training missionaries were wholly indispensable, but the belief is growing that ordained men in the foreign field require at least as good an education as ordained men at home.

In a little church in Aneityum, one of the New Hebrides Islands, there is the following epitaph, in the native language, to John Geddie, missionary: "When he landed in 1848, there were no Christians here, and when he left in 1872, there were no heathen." Missions certainly were not a failure there.

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND says that Japan at the present time is in the unique position of a nation prospecting for a religion, and that in it are missionaries prospecting for converts. He says these include Episcopalians of every degree of height, Presbyterians of every degree of breadth, Methodists of every degree of warmth, and that Roman Catholics are practically out of the race.