

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWS

THE NORWEGIAN REVIVAL.

The Evan Roberts of the Old Land of the Vikings.

Lunde belongs to Vansø, in the very south of Norway. As a lad he took to the sea, and eventually settled in the United States. At the age of eighteen, towards the end of 1896, he and some companions, out of curiosity, attended a meeting of the Norwegian Corps of the Salvation Army in Chicago. He paid no special heed to what was said; but as he left the hall one of the Salvation Army lasses greeted him with a friendly "God bless you," a welcome to Jesus, and an invitation to come back. That friendly personal appeal paved the way to his heart and made him think that there must be something in the religion whose confessors so lovingly sought to win others for their Lord. He attended the meetings regularly for a fortnight, but he says, "I would not yield myself to God." On the morning of Sunday, 13th December, however, the Lord was too strong for him. It was at the forenoon service, with less than a score of people present, that Lunde advanced to the platform and was saved. He never actually joined the Salvation Army, but he continued to attend the meetings both in Chicago and Boston. Coming under Baptist influences, the lad sought re-baptism; but as he is loyal to Lutheran doctrine in other respects, and does not advocate re-baptism for others, he hardly comes into conflict with the Lutheran Church.

At the age of twenty-three Albert Lunde was back again in Norway, a warm-hearted Christian, speaking lovingly about the Saviour to his personal friends, and in small gatherings of neighbors. Eventually he devoted himself to evangelistic work, and in various parts of the country much blessing attended his services and missions. Undoubtedly many of the Lutheran priests looked askance at him on account of his divergence from Lutheranism on the question of baptism; and some were bitterly opposed to Dean Knudsen, of Tonsberg (now the Minister of State for Ecclesiastical Affairs), because of his friendly attitude to Lunde's mission in his parish. Meetings at Bergen were attended by many conversions and a considerable spiritual awakening. Then Lunde proceeded to Christiania shortly after the New Year. There were no special preparations made, no great expectations entertained. There was no organised crusade, nor any extra advertising. The meetings were held in the Hausmann Str. Mission Hall; it was quickly crowded. The Tivoli Theatre was then secured; it was packed from the very first. The next move was to Calmeyer Str. Hall, the largest in Christiania, capable of housing 5,000 people, and the vast hall was crowded night after night for months. Men, especially young men, were conspicuous by their presence, and hundreds on hundreds were converted.

The revival, however, was not confined to the Calmeyer Str. Hall and to the meetings addressed by Lunde. All the meeting-places and mission halls in Christiania became well attended, and all the Free Churches developed renewed spiritual activities, and conversions were numerous everywhere. In several of the State Churches the flame burst into a blaze; and eventually the Bishop was asked to allow revival services to be held in the city churches, with the usual after-meetings. He said he had no legal right to grant such permission, but it would be very wrong of him to interfere with any such meetings. Some of the city ministers at once threw open their churches, and especially at Trinity Church and Grønlands Church the crowds were so great, and the number of anxious souls so large, that sacristies and halls were full, and inquir-

ies were falling on their knees in the body of the church, and Christian workers hardly able to get at them for the press. So unaccustomed were the Lutheran priests and curates to dealing with troubled souls that appeals were made to all Christian workers to assist, with the striking result that Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, pastors and laymen took part in the State Church services, and in dealing with the anxious ones. And the pulpits of the churches were at last thrown open to Lunde, layman and Anabaptist although he is. He preached with telling power and great acceptance in the Urnienborg Church to the Frønger congregation, the most fashionable congregation in Christiania, whose minister, the Rev. Sir T. Kiøeneas, is the most popular preacher in the active service of the Norwegian Church.

Albert Lunde, in character and disposition, has much in character with his Welsh brother, Evan Roberts; but he has distinct gifts as a popular and heart-searching preacher, his appeals being simple, clear, and impressive. His one thought is, how to win souls; and the Holy Spirit accompanies the Word with power. Lunde speaks with burning zeal, recurring ever and again to the atoning death of Christ and His resurrection; and the tender love running through all his testimony and the strong conviction and faith which mould his message prove him to be a natural orator. He is humble, unassuming, modest; whilst his tact, shrewdness, and personal piety win the hearts of all with whom he comes in contact. He believes in the Bible as the living Word of God; and his addresses are far more carefully prepared than is usual with Norse evangelists. Above all, he is a man of prayer, and that is possibly why he has accomplished so much and inspired so many.

His evangelistic methods are very similar to those of Gipsy Smith, but very different from those usual in Norway. The element of novelty, therefore, has had its share in drawing people to the meetings; but the Spirit and the Gospel have reached and held their hearts.

The revival has been the theme of general conversation for many months, and during the summer, when indoor meetings ceased, the services have been conducted in the open air. Many of the city ministers have taken their part regularly in the conduct of these gatherings; the Free Church ministers have had the hardest and most blessed summer in their experience; and evangelists and Christian workers have had no cessation of toil nor any desire for it, the results having been so numerous, striking, and gladsome. The revival has even reached the jails. Evangelistic services have been held in the prison chapels, and both wardens and criminals have found the Saviour. One of the most splendid results of the revival has been the conversion of the Lutheran clergy. We do not refer to their spiritual conversion, but to the change of their attitude towards revival work, and their willingness to co-operate with laymen and with Nonconformists for the salvation of souls. To those who know nothing of Norway and its priests this is one of the most joyful results imaginable. The alienation between priests, Lutheran lay workers, and Nonconformists has been greatly the cause of the deadness of religion in Norway. The removal of this alienation is a happy augury for the future. The Haugan revival a century ago was a great blessing to Norway, in spite of the opposition of the clergy and those in authority; what untold blessings might have resulted if the church had co-operated in that revival! This year the Primate of the Norwegian Church has placed himself on the side of the revival movement, and has

met the lay evangelist with much goodwill.

Lunde was invited to Sweden by a representative committee. One of the largest State churches in the capital was placed at his command. Daily meetings were held attended by the nobility and gentry, by the bishops, priests, and populace; and amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of the fortnight's mission was the King's son, Prince Oscar Bernadotte. Multitudes were converted, and arrangements are being made for an evangelistic campaign which may accomplish for Sweden what has already been attained in Norway.

What we have said about the revival in Norway refers more particularly to the capital of the country. But it may be said that the movement is almost universal. It would be very easy to give many interesting details of the work, many examples of wonderful conversion, many accounts of strong answers to prayer; but these are common to all revivals, although they excite much attention in a land where religion has been so formal a thing as in Norway, a country, indeed, in which it has hardly been considered proper to be noted for piety and for true Christian zeal. Now all this is in process of happy change, and the outlook for Christianity is much brighter than many who have been interested in Norway had dared to hope. Indeed, only a year or two ago the religious outlook was dark indeed. But there were faithful, believing bands and hearts at prayer. Their prayers have been answered, and the doubters have been put to shame.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

The difference between the old conception and the new was driven home to me when I read a review of Professor Cornill's books on Old Testament history and prophecy. Professor Cornill is professor of Old Testament theology at the University of Königsberg. He is an authority in the line of his work, and the results of his labor (at least in their general character) have been accepted as such as those of his co-workers by all who are familiar with the problems involved and with the arguments on which the fabric of our higher criticism is based. But in addition to the scientific qualification of Professor Cornill, we must add that he is personally of an extremely devout temperament, and we know that he has reached many of his conclusions against his own wishes. Yet, in the minds of those unacquainted with the real problems of the Bible, he figures as a rankly destructive critic, and we read in a review of his "Prophets of Israel," by a writer of the old school, the following humorous passage:

"When Dr. Cornill gets to heaven, and hears Moses and the Prophets praising the Messiah they foretold in the sublime strains of their inspired prophecy, he will wonder that he wrote this book."

This is apparently not meant for a joke, and we are even surprised at the breadth of the reviewer who grants the possibility that Professor Cornill may meet Moses hereafter, and be sent to a different destination.—From "The Resurrection A. Hyperhistorical Fact," by Dr. Paul Carus, in the November Open Court.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society is sending out this year 29 new Missionaries of whom 16 are to fill vacancies.

Mr. Heli Chetlain and his companions, of the Philafrican Mission in Benghella, Portuguese West Africa, from their station at Lincoln, are in communication with tribes to the South and Southeast who beg vainly for teachers. But the money is lacking to extend the work.