

city. Baptist deaconesses are also at work extending their medical mission in the London slums. The Wesleyan Chapel committee recently sanctioned a fresh expenditure of \$750,000 on new chapels, Sunday schools and mission halls. Similar efforts are being made by the evangelical denominations in other British cities. This is home mission work that is needed in all our large cities, and if followed up wisely and persistently it is work that will bring good results. This is obeying the Saviour's command to go out into the highways and byways and gather the waifs of society into the kingdom.

### THE CRITIC'S CORNER.

#### Religion and Culture.

"The alarming spread of scepticism among the Nonconformists during the last quarter of a century has been largely due to their wincing under this charge of want of scholarship. They long refused to barter the faith of Christ for German rationalism. But Mathew Arnold's appeal for "culture" was a veiled taunt which they keenly felt; and like the school boy who is ashamed into evil ways, by the fear of being deemed unmanly, they betook themselves to the new cult. Under this influence many of the younger men are now ministers of 'culture' instead of being ministers of the gospel. The result is that while politically and socially Nonconformity never stood higher, as a spiritual power it has sensibly declined. It is bartering its birthright for a mess of pottage." (The Bible and Modern Criticism by Sir R. Anderson, page 255.)

This is the charge made against a large body of faithful men by a gentleman who after a lifetime of experience gained in connection with Scotland Yard has set himself to define the narrow path of Evangelical orthodoxy and the exact method of Biblical interpretation. The only knowledge I have of Sir R. Anderson is gained from his meetings, and these leave the impression of a sharp determined man who is thick-skinned and dogmatic. The wonder is that the gentle Bishop of Durham should write a preface for a book of this kind. But I know something about Nonconformist ministers in England, sufficient at least to feel the injustice of this charge. With all one's admiration for Mathew Arnold's great ability it was not possible to resist the feeling that in uttering the taunt just mentioned he showed a lack of that high culture whose apostle he claimed to be. The utterance of such a taunt was certainly not a manifestation of "sweetness and light." The reply to Mathew Arnold was not as difficult as it might appear at first sight. It was not necessary for Nonconformists to sell their birthright for a mess of pottage. They could point out that they had always believed in the harmony of religion with the highest education, and that their leaders had always been men of the first rank of whom no church need be ashamed. Further they were able to state that the taunt of lack of culture, came with bad grace from those who had monopolized the ancient universities and kept out all who would not subscribe to their dogmas. If they had felt inclined to carry the war into the enemies camp, they could have stated that in spite of their difficulties the great

body of their ministers were equal in intelligence and education, to the average of the church of England, which possesses, as well as great scholars, a host of half educated underpaid curates. However it was not their business to copy too closely the example of "the superior person." The Nonconformists have had their troubles, they have had, like all other intelligent men, to face the new problems of modern thought, and we believe that in doing so, they have been faithful to the great principles of the gospel. They could declare, that their zeal for education and their desire for culture was no new thing. Long before Sir R. Anderson was born, Nonconformists fought for the education of the poor men as they do to-day. As to culture, if that means were academic learning and superficial polish, many of us can fight life's battle with little of it, if it stands for real knowledge concerning in God's world and God's Word we wish to have as much of it as possible, and we desire to welcome truth from every quarter. If either culture or religion, means accepting the fads that Sir Robert Anderson offers we are glad to think that the great body of Nonconformists are of a different mind. VERAN.

### METHODISM AND THE GOWN.

It is reported that in the case of Dr. Rose the court of appeals of the Methodist Church has decided against the gown, so we suppose that will be the end of the matter. Our opinion is that the sober black gown is a very suitable pulpit dress for the minister but it is not a thing that we would press at the risk of dividing a congregation. Further, we think it is a matter upon which, as in the Presbyterian Church, there might very well be "home rule" in the congregation, and that it is not the best way for the minister and people to be sat upon by a court of appeal. We are afraid that our Methodist friends have at times to put up with far worse things than a gown on the minister's back, however, that is their affair as they have their court of appeal.

### Literary Notes.

The April Harper's Magazine opens with an article on the Economic Aspects of Mormonism by Professor Richard T. Elv, of the University of Wisconsin. Brander Matthews writes of Criticisms of all sorts and William Sharp has a well illustrated article on The Land of Theocritus. In fiction we find several short stories, including a characteristic one by W. D. Howells, and one of Annie Hamilton Dowell's inimitable child sketches. Lady Rose's Daughter ends in this number. This book is certain to be the most talked of novel of the season. Harper & Brothers, New York.

The Road—The ever-existent universal only Religion, by C. C. Harrah, minister of the gospel. Scott Heights Book Company, Des Moines, Iowa. Here we have much truth packed into small space and given in a cheap and easily accessible form. The writer is evidently a broadminded intelligent man, who desires to see an increase of free, living religion. He believes in Jesus as the new and living way—he prefers the word "Road"—and he set the life of discipleship above all creeds and traditions. Any intelligent reader will find much that is a restive and stimulating.

Prof. McGiffert says of it: "It is a courageous, wholesome, stimulating and genuine Christian message you have uttered, and I hope it may find many readers and accomplish the good it is fitted to accomplish."

The Bibelot for April (T. B. Mosher, Portland, Maine) contains "Lyrics by Arthur Symons" The preface tells us that in turning from the critic to the poet we cannot but be impressed with the fact that we have found "a poet with something to say" Hence Mr. Symons' critical essays are now followed by his poems. Take then one specimen:

The Labour Gazette is a monthly publication (price 3 cents), issued by the Department of Labour by order of Parliament. It is packed full of facts on all kinds of questions relating to the industries of the country, so that it is a mine of information from those who are interested in economic conditions. The demand for different kinds of labour and the wages obtainable is given as well as information as to recent strikes and legal decisions affecting labour. The price 20 cents per year surely brings within reach of the smallest purse.

The Bible and Modern Criticism by Sir Robert Anderson K. C. B., L. L. D. (Fleming Revell Co., \$1.50.) This book passed into a second edition within a few weeks of its publication and that as the author says "is a striking proof of the interest which attaches to the subject of which it treats." It is noteworthy that the book has a preface by Dr. Moule, Bishop of Durham, who accepts the general position of the writing without endorsing all his expressions. He says "I must dissociate myself from certain passages, which reflect upon the *animus* of some representatives of the New Criticism with a severity I cannot follow. Among both leaders and followers in that school I reckon some much respected friends of reverent and Christian aims, I am sure; and that fact is continually with me in any expression of the profound anxiety with which I view the tendency of the school."

"But when I have said this, I am ample free, as I am earnestly willing, to avow my mental and spiritual sympathy with the great *envoi* of this remarkable book."

The book is readable, as it comes from a man of strong conviction and remarkable energy, a man who is utterly opposed to the higher criticism and is a hard bitter, a man of such large practical experience has a store of interesting illustrations, which give liveliness to the book even when they are not convincing as arguments. This question of Biblical criticism cannot now be confined to colleges and professional students; it is the duty of intelligent laymen to inform themselves on this important matter, and men like Sir R. Anderson set us a good example in this line.

Speaking of the *humanity* of the Bible, the author says "and our condemnation of the Higher critics must not blind us to the fact that if they have not actually rescued this truth, they have brought it into prominence and made it real. But on the other hand, our debt to them in this regard cannot be allowed to outweigh, or even to palliate, the evil of their system." The aim of the book is to point out the evils of the system pursued by the higher critics, and to show that while scepticism may be logical, there critical theories are absurd. We believe that many of the views advanced are untenable, but the book is worth reading for its *obiter dicta*, as well as for the bold attack upon the views now popular among scholars.