

sentence, "We are quartered in a convent." This was noted by the agents of Germany in England and sent to Berlin by a roundabout route. The agents knew what unit the soldier belonged to; the Germans knew where that unit was, and the result was that the convent got heavily shelled, many men being killed.

This shows more definitely than perhaps we have realized up to the present the real danger from spies. The Chaplain goes on to say that England simply swarms with them and they carefully read everything that is published connected with the war and even the smallest thing that may be useful is smuggled into Germany by so-called "benevolent neutrals." The French Censor and the Chaplain both desire that all this should be thoroughly understood, so that people may be warned against any such publication. It is simply impossible to tell what use may be made of the slightest information by spies, and if it is difficult, according to the Censor, to make people in England understand this, it is probably still more difficult for it to be realized in Canada. All the more necessary, therefore, to put the facts of the case before people.

"If."

Mr. Sidney Low has raised an interesting and important issue in a recent article by asking, "Who drives the chariots of history?" He points out that no one can read the diplomatic correspondence just before the beginning of the war without noticing that a slight difference in certain personal factors would have saved the world from this catastrophe, and in the light of what has happened, he feels tempted to ask certain questions. Here are some of them:—

What a different world-story our textbooks would have to tell if a careless nurse had allowed Julius Caesar to die of whooping-cough in his cradle.

If Alexander the Great had not "done himself" too well when he dined at Babylon.

If the pistol which Robert Clive snapped at his own head had not missed fire.

If "some forgotten captain" had not "moved his troops to the left when he should have gone to the right," in that battle of Tours in 723, which stayed the tide of Arab invasion, Moslem doctors, as Macaulay has reminded us, might even now be lecturing on the texts of the Koran in the quadrangles of Oxford.

If a fair wind had blown down the Channel in the last week of July, 1588, a Cardinal Archbishop of London might be preaching from the pulpit of St. Paul's.

Mr. Low points out that it will now be more difficult to believe in that "stream of tendency" which was supposed to have been flowing beneficently before the war broke out and was leading us towards moral and intellectual perfection. It is also shown that Evolution is no longer satisfying, that Darwinism with its assumption of a slow upward movement is no longer credible in the face of the intense violence and startling retrogression which have marked this war. It is well for men of the world to be faced with these great and vital questions, though to the Christian, who believes in the fact of sin and the power of free will, there is nothing surprising in what has happened. Indeed, the only surprise is that men should have so far believed in any "Evolution" which might be thought to render retrogression impossible. Those who know their Bible will still be able to believe, perhaps as never before, that "there is a Divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." Or to put the truth in more definitely Biblical language, "The Lord reigneth, be the earth never so unquiet."

## Argument from Design

Ordinary people are for the most part theists, and their reasons for this position are usually summed up in the well-known phrase, "the argument from design." For a long time this has been a very natural method of arguing in favour of the existence of God, and it is well known that the most widely circulated view of this argument is associated with the name of Paley. But since the time of Darwin, Paley's view has not been so generally accepted; indeed, many people have thought that Darwin's theory of Evolution totally destroyed the argument from design, because it was said that indications of purpose or contrivance in nature could not provide sufficient arguments to prove the existence of a perfect Divine Being. Whether this be true or not, there can be no doubt that, since Darwin's day, a strong desire has been expressed for some form of the argument from design which would be more satisfactory to modern thought, and might at the same time be regarded as in harmony with the Evolution theory. Several efforts have been made, and made successfully, in this direction, and one of the most recent, and, in many respects, one of the best, is to be found in the new book, "Theism and Humanism," by the Rt. Hon. Arthur James Balfour, now First Lord of the Admiralty in the present British Government (Hodder and Stoughton, London and Toronto, \$1.75 net). It is now generally known that "The Gifford Lectures," of which this book is the substance, do not deal with questions outside of what is usually called natural religion, and the result is that Mr. Balfour has been compelled to limit his consideration of the subject, so as to exclude any thought of Christianity as a system of supernatural revelation. But notwithstanding this, the book is of real importance to all Christian people, because Christianity is necessarily based on a theistic view of the world.

Mr. Balfour's main theory is that leaving aside all earlier questions of biology, man's ideals of aestheticism, ethics and knowledge necessitate a belief in God as their source, and that, unless God exists, man's deepest convictions concerning beauty, goodness and truth are without foundation. It has been pointed out that the new method is not so much an argument from design as from value, though, of course, the value argues very definitely for a belief in God. First of all, Mr. Balfour urges that beauty would lose its real meaning if it were regarded as something accidental or materialistic, that a work of art requires an artist, "not merely in the order of natural causation, but in the order of aesthetic necessity." This means that beauty is a revelation of spirit to spirit, and, therefore, implies the existence of the Divine Spirit whom we call God. In regard to the connection between ethics and belief in God, Mr. Balfour shows that virtues, properly understood, are impossible apart from a belief that they came from God and obtain their sanction from His will. "Ethics must have its root in the Divine." But more important than either beauty or goodness is the consideration of knowledge, and with remarkable force Mr. Balfour argues that intellectual conceptions cannot possibly be due to a naturalistic view of the universe, that beliefs must find their origin in God, that they cannot be traced back to causes other than rational. So that the only alternative to a belief in God as a guarantee of our knowledge is an entire scepticism, which is both unthinkable and impossible in daily life.

It will be seen from all this that Humanism (in which we include the various aspects of

beauty, the essential features of morality and the necessary principles of knowledge) needs belief in God, if it is to have any value for human life. Thus this new "argument from design" does not derive its force from those remarkable contrivances of nature which were so impressive to the generations before Darwin, and which are really as true to-day as ever, but bases itself on those deeper things which make human life what it really is. Even Darwin admitted that a belief in Evolution was not incongruous with a belief in God, but notwithstanding this, it is probably wiser to concentrate attention on those ideals of life to which Mr. Balfour gives attention, in order to prove the absolute necessity of theism.

The real value of this book lies in the fact that it gives another proof that the materialism associated with the Darwinian theory is wholly impossible. There was a time when, to use the title of a well-known book by the late Dr. George Matheson, men asked, "Can the Old Faith Live with the New?" But we have entirely left that position and now find, on the basis of the newest and best science and philosophy, that naturalism cannot possibly explain the universe. It is the virtue of Mr. Balfour's delightful book that it brings home to ordinary people the utter failure of any merely material explanation of things.

Not the least interesting part of this work is the autobiographical reminiscences of Mr. Balfour's life as an undergraduate at Cambridge. He tells of the arrogance with which materialism endeavoured to overwhelm everybody forty years ago who could not believe in the purely physical conception of the universe, and he remarks that he objects to it, not merely because he considers it insufficient and wrong, but "because it talks loudly of experience, yet never faces facts, and boasts its rationality, yet rarely reasons home." All this is particularly welcome, both for itself, and also because of the eminence of the author as one of our leading statesmen. It cannot help being impressive to the general public to realize that one whose life has been, and is, so active in the service of his country is, nevertheless, ready to champion the cause of supernaturalism, and to show that the deepest, truest and strongest convictions of the human heart are associated with belief in God. This is a book pre-eminently for "the man in the street," who will see that God must be regarded as the foundation of all scientific knowledge, and that it is only, in Mr. Balfour's words, "in a theistic setting that beauty can retain its deepest meaning and love, its brightest lustre."

We have endeavoured to call attention to the main outlines of this able book, though it is quite impossible to indicate the fullness and completeness of its treatment. It is not to be supposed that all readers will accept everything it contains, but as a whole, it is certainly one of the most important works of recent days, both for its subject, and also because of its author. If there should be any who are still troubled by the conclusions of modern materialism and who desire to keep themselves abreast of the most recent philosophical thinking of to-day, they should give attention to this book. But it should be read by all.

## ONLY

Only a seed, but it chanced to fall  
In a little cleft of a city wall,  
And, taking root, grew bravely up,  
Till a tiny blossom crowned its top.

Only a thought, but the work it wrought  
Could never by tongue or pen be taught,  
For it ran through a life, like a thread of gold,  
And the life bore fruit a hundredfold.

Only a word, but 'twas spoken in love,  
With a whispered prayer to the Lord above,  
And the angels in heaven rejoiced once more,  
For a new-born soul "entered in by the door."



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