

It may, perhaps, be objected that the work of Colonial Clubs in Great Britain must of necessity be extended to all the British Colonies, to which colonization is directed; that each country, and, indeed, each district, is the natural rival of another in the attraction of settlers; and that so comprehensive a range of operations would be unwieldy and unpractical. The same difficulties have to be met on a smaller scale in the Eastern States. It would seem, however, to be only a matter of management. The conflict of interest between different countries in the attraction of settlers is apparent only. The inclination of settlers and the climate and conditions of each country vary. A man who would flourish in one country might very possibly be a failure in another, under conditions less favourable to him. Certain it is that Canada need not fear from any comparison and can only be benefited by enlisting the sympathies of those primarily interested in other countries in the general conduct of colonization and by the lessons to be learnt by comparative colonization.

The existence of a Repatriation Society among the French Canadians in Montreal may be accepted as an indication that interest might be sufficiently strong among Canadians to form associations of this nature in the older provinces for the conduct of home colonization and the retention of our population in the country. To those who are interested in Imperial Federation, and realize the necessities of the unemployed and the astonishing ignorance in the Old Country, even among the educated classes, respecting the resources of the outlying portions of the Empire, the incentive given to study and literature on these subjects and the opportunities afforded for the distribution of information by the establishment of Colonial Clubs in Great Britain will appeal with an irresistible force, for the Greater Britain, as outlined by Professor Seeley, can never become an accomplished fact, until the difficulties attendant on the cost of transportation and the obtaining of accurate and definite information are overcome, and those, who are crowded out and down, have free and safe access to the homesteads that are their heritages

ERNEST HEATON.

Bradlaugh, the Atheist M.P.

THE *Westminster* for May contains a review of the life of this eminent atheist, written by his daughter, Mrs. Bonner. He is described as an atheist by both daughter and reviewer, therefore we may, without offence, style him one. The review by Clarence Waterer is a striking instance of "how-not-to-do-it." Dogmatising is not biography. It also contains self-evident misstatements. Fair-minded persons, apt to judge others by themselves, and who are unacquainted with the facts, and also unaware of the unreliability of heated extremists, would, on reading it, form a most erroneous opinion of the British clergy—speaking collectively of all the denominations. One solitary fact will suffice to explain. Referring (p. 515) to his lectures in the provinces to convert people to atheism, the reviewer—quoting from the biography—states that Bradlaugh's place of meeting "was (often) filled with a turbulent throng, urged on by the religious leaders of the district, even clergymen of the Church of England . . . hammering at the doors and encouraging the disturbance." So far as ministers are concerned this is false. It is absurd to ask us to believe that clergymen of any denomination acted so. The writer was a great newspaper reader; had such been a fact he must have heard of it. No doubt in some instances people resented what they believed to be a deliberate attempt to insult their religion and to destroy the foundations of society; but none of the clergy of any denomination promoted violence. This false charge shows how careful we should be before accepting the statements of avowed atheists as being true. Common-sense teaches us that if the belief in a Supreme Being and in a future state were banished from the earth, there would be moral chaos. Intelligent men know what was the result of a repudiation of the Deity during the French Revolution. Instead of a millennium there was a pandemonium. Robbery, outrage and murder ran riot. Including the wholesale murders, the civil and foreign wars, engineered by such men and their successors, the loss of life by the lowest estimate was three—Taine says seven—millions.

Bradlaugh's missionary work was practically to shake his fist in the face of others which is not the way to excite

"good will towards man." Doubtless there were instances where people practically resented such conduct, especially those who believed rightly or wrongly that the lecturer purposely meant to mock at their religion.

One of his failings was excessive combativeness. Careful observers know that often the denial of a Supreme Being is simply the result of combativeness. It is a necessary of life to some. With such men, if the majority came round to their opinion, they would immediately right-about-face, and contend the exact contrary to what they had previously said. Bradlaugh's excessive combativeness and firmness brings to mind a humorous saying during the great Civil War. One John Lilburn became very notorious for always combating the ruling power for the time being, whether King, Parliament, or Cromwell. Evidently his idea of purgatory was a state of peace and quietness. It was humorously said of him that "if the world was emptied of all but himself, John would quarrel with Lilburn and Lilburn with John." His spirit must have revisited "the glimpses of the moon" during Bradlaugh's time.

The reviewer's quotations from the work show the comparative inferiority of the female mind for biography or history. There is too much passion and too little reasoning. Thus (page 511) it is stated that his life "ended at last with something almost akin to his legal murder." This is a good specimen of excited feminine reasoning and atheistic facts. His premature death like that of multitudes of others was mainly the result of overwork. The talk about murder is simply childish. Shrieking is no argument. In future generations this will grow into a myth of martyrdom and rank with "the Guard dies but does not surrender."

BRADLAUGH'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

A very brief autobiography, published about 20 years ago, is far better so far as it goes. It is written with less heat and gives a clearer idea of the man. He was born in 1833 and died in 1891, when he was slowly altering his opinions upon some important questions. He became opposed to Socialism and to some of the aims of what is now known as the New Unionism. Like so many others he at middle life realized that "the voice of the people" (understanding by that, manhood suffrage) is not "the voice of God," but something widely different.

The writer was much impressed by Bradlaugh publicly stating (a year or so before his death)—he almost stood alone—that, in one large branch of industry, capitalists get a very inadequate return for their money. Labour-shysters asserted the contrary but he knew better, and quoted statistics in support of the truth. If he had lived a few years longer he would probably have improved into Deism, or even something more orthodox, and would also have adopted sounder views on a variety of other subjects. He was intelligent, fearless, thoroughly honest, and abhorred shysterism—consequently he would have opposed the "New Unionism," which has, in England, called into being, as a reaction, "The Free Labour Association."

His own account of his early days is temperately written and very interesting. His father was a poor law clerk, and he himself was a Sunday School teacher. There is one very instructive fact to be learnt from his autobiography, namely, that practically over-religious teaching had a great deal to do with his ultimate falling away from belief. There was too much of the letter and too little of the spirit. A narrow-minded clergyman was unintentionally the cause of his leaving his father's house and also his situation. There are no means of testing the truth, but it has been commonly asserted, and widely believed, that if we took the children of 1,000 ministers of all denominations, and also those of the same number of the laity of the same social rank, that we should find more lapses from right-doing in the one than in the other. The only feasible explanation is, that there is an excess of religious teaching and restrictions in the case of the children of the clericals. "Man cannot live by bread alone." Ofttimes the spring is bent too far in one direction and there is apt to be a corresponding rebound.

When Bradlaugh first attended Free Thought meetings he spoke on the orthodox side, but little by little he drifted into Deism and ultimately into Atheism.

HIS MILITARY CAREER.

Being very independent, sooner than accept pecuniary help, he enlisted in the Seventh Dragoon Guards, which regiment he ultimately left with a very good character. He