

tion from our plan of salvation, and Lyman Abbott has joined the enemy.

Then is everybody keeping watch on the walls? Yes; but it is not the ministers or professors of religion; they have no time; they are too busy abusing the Pope; showing up the errors of popery, and sending missionaries to Quebec.

The man who is doing the work of Christianity to-day is, strange to say, a layman. Previous to the last general elections in England, no one looked upon Mr. Balfour, the Tory leader in the House of Commons, as a theologian, although he is a strict Presbyterian. He was a golf player and slightly dilettante. Mr. Gladstone had, it was thought, monopolized theology, but when Balfour's "Introduction to the Study of Theology" came out every one was more than surprised. It knocked Mr. Gladstone clean out. Every pulpit in England and Scotland echoed with his praise. It is doubtful if Mr. Balfour's book had not more to do in winning the great Conservative victory than anything else—than even the Liberal local veto.

Now, what was the cause of all this praise? Simply because the book, forgetting all the miserable divisions of the sects, grasped the common enemy of Christianity with a death-like grasp, which even the great Spencer has since tried to unclasp in vain. If reason furnishes no grounds for belief either in materialism or theology, we had better take theology and life than materialism and death.

It goes without saying that although a Tory of the Tories, people take great pleasure in Mr. Balfour's triumph. Every lover of his kind must feel that ethics is bound up with religion of some kind. When the belief in the old gods of Rome and Greece, bad as they were, gave way, society fell to pieces; and for over 500 years the Greeks felt the awful tyranny of the Turk. Let us hope that no such calamity will ever befall Christianity. It is the grandest of all religions to-day; and we have the word of its founder that the gates of hell and corruption will not prevail against it. Having such assurance, we can calmly watch the advance of intelligence and knowledge, satisfied that whatever changes may occur, Christianity will be able at all times to adapt itself to the circumstances, and preserve for ages to come the present moral order in the human race.

X.

Manners.

NOT long ago I read a story in which one of the characters is thus spoken of: "He had no respect for the pretty public and private lies that make life a little less nasty than it is." Though this is hardly an absolute definition of "manners," we may take it as indicating their legitimate scope and influence—the making life "a little less nasty than it is"—in other words, the addition of beauty to the bare details of conduct.

There are many who declare, even many who undoubtedly believe, that manners are superfluous, a luxury, and, as such, enervating; and not only this, but that they exercise a demoralizing influence, blinding us to facts, and thus drawing us from the path of exact rectitude.

These people say, with much appearance of truth, that manners disguise our real sentiments and feelings; that they are a mask through which the features of our spiritual being are undiscernible; that they are, in fact, as termed in the quotation given above, "pretty little lies." Such sturdy advocates for the naked truth fail to realize that the spiritual being requires a decency of covering no less than the material body. Our thoughts sent naked into the world would violate the proprieties just as surely as would a company of *fin de siècle* emancipators and reformers if they were to shake off the fetters of dress, and promenade King Street in the primitive costume of Father Adam. The most ardent upholders of Truth would hardly go so far as to advocate a return to nature in that respect.

Here we may remark that manners of some sort are as universal as dress, and that is universal as mankind. The most barbarous tribes have some usages, peculiar, it may be, to themselves; no nation has yet become so highly evolved that manners have ceased to be. To create manners is one of those fundamental impulses which Matthew Arnold calls "the vital instincts of humanity" and as such cannot be ignored.

Then the question arises, to what extent shall manners be employed? It is not easy to fix a definite limit; the manners that in one person would be seemly and appropriate, in another would savour of affectation, and in yet a third would seem wanton rudeness and lack of consideration. There are limitations, too, of age and sex; of nationality, rank, and education; and sub-limitations as various as are the dispositions of mankind. Perhaps the most nearly we can arrive at defining their extent is to say that they should be employed so far as they conduce to use or beauty. It would, too, be well if we could grasp the idea that beauty is the highest use of all.

But in order to be beautiful, manners must be a perfect fit—the most exquisite hand is marred by a clumsy glove; the most opportune gift by a tactless giving; the kindest thought by an awkward expression of it. Manners may be defined as the dress of conduct. Some keep a fine suit for special occasions. The Sunday coat of ill-fitting broadcloth and the boots with excruciating squeak have suitable accompaniment of manners as stiff and uneaseful as themselves. The manners that are put off and on in this fashion are not the desirable ones.

Besides their fit we must consider their suitability. Those that are in perfect accord with office or workshop are as much out of place in a ball-room as a rough business suit would be. A man will hardly take a formal acquaintance down to dinner with the same familiar ease of manner which he displays in bringing refreshments to the lady with whom in their childhood he had popped corn and eaten Philadelphia. Yet manners the most unassuming have just as much need of perfection in detail as has the stately round of formal etiquette.

These variations in manner are no more an affectation than are the changes made in outward costume as occasion may require. Of course there are people who have one suit for all occasions, and find it "plenty good enough." For such people most of us have pity, and, perhaps, just a touch of contempt. On the other hand, the fine-lady airs and dandy affectations that some misguided youths and maidens inflict upon their associates are often the result of trying to wear the dainty ceremoniousness appropriate to periods of relaxation during the press and hurry of work-a-day hours.

In conclusion, let us say that manners have, as it were, a close-fitting inner garment that yields to every movement, yet never gets awry. This garment is always the same; it is untouched by fashion; unaffected by changes in the outer array; and its name is, consideration for others.

Calgary.

JOHN FRANCIS DEANE.

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Notes by the Way.

JUST in the middle of meditating some ideas picked up in the course of recent travel, which might or might not be worth publication, a copy of THE WEEK reached me, and decided the matter in favour of a contribution to the journal which is always received with eager welcome by me, more especially when absent from home and things Canadian are not accessible.

The wise and liberal-minded policy of the State of Massachusetts in making provision for the starting of free public libraries in all its towns willing to take the necessary steps towards securing such benefits, is widely known, but people are not so well aware that Vermont has recently followed this good example, which it is to be hoped will have many more imitators. The establishment of small free libraries is now being vigorously pushed all over the State, the sum of money allowed to each place wanting a library being one hundred dollars for the purchase of books to begin with.

Those who are of the opinion that all this is foolishness and "means taxation of the people for the reading of novels, many of them most injurious to the mind, and leading to great waste of time which ought to be devoted to studies of a more profitable character," will please explain how people are going to get the books of a more profitable character, if there are no libraries. Is no wheat to be sown for fear tares may come up also? The difficulty about books injurious to the mind, of which doubtless there are many, should be solved by having a competent and reliable body of readers, which