

irrational. When the spirit of "the world" bursts through the levees of the Church, faith no-faith rushes head-long in at the crevasse. This view of the issue that is upon us is so palpable, that the most acute infidels perceive the cause of no-faith to be lost unless they can append an ethical affirmative to their negations. "Altruism" is their proposed substitute for Christian charity, and "ethical culture" is the school in which unbelief is to educate its saints. There must be a religion of some kind. As Christianity passes to oblivion, let us set up the "Religion of Humanity!" If Mr. Huxley is a good witness, the attempt will be disappointing. "I know of no study," he says, "so unutterably saddening as that of the evolution of humanity as it is set forth in the annals of history..... [and] when the positivists order men to worship humanity—that is to say, to adore the generalized conception of men as they ever have been, and probably ever will be—I must reply that I could just as soon bow down and worship the generalized conception of a wilderness of apes?" Now, when altruism discovers that morality without a God and holiness without a Saviour lead to "unutterably saddening" results, it will become more apparent than ever that the issue in this great conflict is one of morals.

Just at this point, my eye falls upon the report of an article by Mr. Gladstone, wherein he says:

The conviction which possesses my mind is that the main operative cause which has stimulated the growth of negation is not intellectual, but moral, and is to be found in the increased and increasing dominion of the things seen over the things unseen.

The report tells us that

Mr. Gladstone wages his indictment against modern civilization and the enormous development of luxurious enjoyment. We have altered the standard of our wants, multiplied the demands of appetite, established a new social tradition, created a new environment, of which we are doomed to be the creatures, and the compensating forces lie in the Christian creed—primarily in whole-hearted acceptance of Scripture as the Word of God; secondarily, in the dogmas of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Sacraments, and the future judgment. Is it wonderful, he asks, that in a self-indulgent age a creeping palsy should come silently over the inward life, or that the devotee of doubt passes naturally into spiritual atrophy? Under the name of the so-called "inquiry" of the day, we become the mere victims of assumption due to prejudice, to fashion, to propensity, to appetite, to the insidious pressure of the world power, to temptation in every one of its Protean shapes.

What is most depressing in the present situation, then, is that the moral tone of "the world" is so low; that it invades the territory of supernatural religion; and that, while it produces infidelity and altruism without, it gives rise to rationalism and doubt within. There is consequent conflict. But what is encouraging is, that the Christian Creeds will never lose their rightful influence until Christian ethics are wholly destroyed, and that can be—never! And another ground of encouragement is that only the Faith in its integrity, the religion of God; Incarnate of our Lord dying for the sins of the world; of grace from the Holy Ghost; of the ancient and unchanging gospel of pardon, holiness, and hope—only this will satisfy the needs of sinful men who feel their sins. The preacher of naturalism who invaded the haunts of vice to exhort its denizens to give up their life of drunkenness and

impurity, and become good, was aptly "sized up" by the harlot who said: "Eh, man, your rope is not long enough for the like of us."

I must defend myself from the possible imputation that I have charged immorality upon all doubters and sceptics. Nothing is further from my thought. Individually, some who hold the Faith are not as good as their belief, and some doubters are better than their faith no-faith. It is, nevertheless, true that there are men who will testify that they date their departures from the Faith from the time when moral delinquencies got the upper-hand, and the secret practice of devotional habits was laid aside. Agnosticism is in all its degrees a doctrine of despair. If there is no basis of certitude in religion, let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die.—*The Diocese of Chicago.*

CHRISTIANITY AND POLITICS.

(CONCLUDED).

I have so far been simply developing and illustrating some principles in connection with politics and the Church of Christ, but I should like now, for a few moments, to apply the principles, be they true or false (God knoweth), to a few of the disturbances in the body politic at present—*e.g., Property or Capital.* The Englishman's Bible on this subject has been hitherto Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations;" but men of brain and moral strength have recently questioned the principle that prosperity should be gauged by wealth or happiness by idleness. A vast sea of discontent rolls its broken waves on every civilized shore. In vain does the world stand as a rock to resist its impetus. Men, women, and children, in the throes of misery in homes, factories, mines, and workshops, produce not merely the necessaries, but the luxuries of life; the sweat of their hands and brains, and the crushing out of their hearts' energies go to provide, not for the needs of their own or other's families, but for the enrichment of the clever employer or the lucky capitalist, who makes his gains by "the hands" in the factory, and indulges in a luxury that Babylon, Greece, and Rome were strangers to, and which is now enervating a very large portion of the capitalist class, physically, morally, and intellectually. This luxury cannot even be concealed, because the several families who vie with each other in wealth and prodigality must exhibit their extravagance, for the very purpose of being remarked, and getting credit for their moneyed superiority.

The Church of Christ is an aggressive, didactic, and parental organization, and therefore cannot be so cowardly and false to her trust and mission as to allow either of these parties—the modern Lazarus or the Dives of social position—to conclude for a moment that either the extreme feelings of envy and hatred of the poorer class, or the cold, cruel neglect and heartless luxuries of the richer, are justifiable, human, or Christian. Our pulpit and our platform, our schools and our parochial lectures, our readings and our libraries, our pastoral visits to the "three-shillings per week" room of the artisan and the grand drawing-room of the capitalist, must have no uncertain tone. If the church is to be valued as the teacher of Christ-truth, she must mark impartially the lines of peace and good-will for both classes,

condemning firmly and calmly the impossible and immoral yet popular doctrine of "the equalization of property." She must also insist faithfully that the owners of all sorts of property, be it intellectual, landed, financial, or social, should seek through Christ the "moralization" of that possession, and should use it to check not merely positive, but negative wrong—and sin; and to exercise their powers under the deep consciousness of being only "life trustees" for the good and happiness of their fellows. The church must teach from her pulpits that idleness in any class or the prevalent habit of living on the "unearned increment," is a crime; that industry is an essential element for self-respect and moral goodness; that property in itself is no proof of human worth, and cannot be accepted as an evidence of honest labour and unselfish merit.

I fear that if the Christ organization called "the Church" be silent on these questions they will lapse before long from the social to the socialistic sphere, become a dangerous element in scepticism, and increase the dislike to listen to teachers of religion.

The poorer classes have been taught by our politicians that "Political Equality" is the birth-right of everyone who arrives at twenty-one years, whether he is taught the "three R's," or remains as illiterate as the Sligo electors.

A talented writer to whom I am much indebted reminds us that the late Frederick Maurice foresaw that this doctrine, unless wisely limited and directed, would soon lead to the revolutionary doctrine of "the equality of all property and of all ranks."

Let us therefore teach plainly that the poor have their duties as well as the rich, and that goodness is not the monopoly of either class, also that true equality and brotherhood can be realized in Christ alone, that there cannot be brotherhood except under one Fatherhood, and no real unity except by the one Spirit. Let us teach that the Church of Christ consists of a Royal Priesthood, whose "living Sacrifices" are rational, acceptable, and eucharistic; that each person, though helping others to bear those life burdens which are abnormal, is also resolved to do his own life work and bear his own cross, not by deputy, but by the expenditure of his own thought and feeling, that he will share his real life-wealth with his fellow man and enjoy the naturalism of the teaching in S. John xiii. 17—"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." In all the nations the Church of Christ has her place, not as dictator, but suggester, adviser, and teacher. She is not expected by the Master to convert the world in this age, but to be His witness and magnetic power, not by bringing mere cold, abstract dogmas and texts to the crushed and bleeding hearts of the race, but, by translating the printed creed into living work and sympathy, compelling the approval of even the critical and censorious, and presenting to man the beautiful object lesson of Is. lxi.

I believe that nothing human should be extraneous to the Church, and that the work of imparting information and enforcing all laws relating to prevention of disease, recovery from sickness, extension of education, promotion of measures for temperance and purity, of thrift and insurance, of improved dwellings and more refined surroundings, should be entered on by all her members, so that the purpose of the appointment of the ministry by Christ in Ephes. iv. 12, may be fulfilled—that is, "He gave some, &c., &c.,