

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER.

CHRISTIAN TENETS THE JEWS MAY ADOPT.

TO find a celebrated and influential Jew advising his race to "follow the letter of the Law in the spirit of the Gospel" is a decidedly interesting feature of the religious situation. Mr. Claude G. Montefiore, president of the Anglo-Jewish Association, founder of *The Jewish Quarterly Review* and a man of light and leading in British Jewry, gives his fellows this counsel in the current number of *The Hibbert Journal* (London). Before giving this advice, he takes occasion to remark to the Christian readers of his article that some of the doctrines which they imagine to be distinctively Christian were, and are, Jewish. The conception of the fatherhood of God and of His loving-kindness, for example, has been paraded as Christian, "whereas to the rabbinic, medieval, and modern Jew it was, and is, the ABC of his religion." Similarly, the doctrines "that reconciliation with one's neighbor must precede reconciliation with God, or that the best alms are those given in secret, or that impure thoughts are evil as well as impure deeds, or that there is peculiar joy in heaven over the repentant – these doctrines and several others are not only rabbinic commonplaces, but familiar Jewish maxims."

The common Jewish objections to Christianity are that some of its teaching is "unpractical and overstrained," that the ideal is so high as to be "incapable of realization," that "if some maxims were literally obeyed, there would be a subversion of law and order, and universal confusion," that "the tendency of the teaching is to make a man take a too selfish interest in the saving of his own soul," and that it "points toward an ascetic morality."

In one divergence of doctrine between the rabbinic religion and that of the synoptic Gospels, however, Mr. Montefiore seems to incline toward the latter. He says:

"The rabbinic religion followed the prevailing doctrine of the Old Testament in holding that, on the whole, the right principle of human conduct, and the great principle of divine conduct, was that of proportionate requital, or tit for tat. I do not mean to say that other principles, such as that of the divine forgiveness, did not frequently cross the principle of tit for tat, but still it seems true to say that tit for tat occupies a very large place in Jewish ethics and religion, a larger place than the facts of life or our highest ethical and religious conceptions can fully justify and approve. Now the teaching of the synoptic Gospels seems to traverse that doctrine in many different ways. As between man and man we have, for instance, the teaching, 'If ye love them which love you, what thank have ye?' and the reception of the prodigal son, and as between God and man the teaching seems more emphatic still. Not only that the sun rises on the evil as well as the good, but also, in the parable of the vineyard, I will give unto this last even as unto thee.'....

"Perhaps one reason, tho not the deepest, why the doctrine of tit for tat is less thought of in the Gospels, is their rather pronounced antagonism to earthly good fortune, their strong sympathy with, or even partiality for, the weak, the miserable, and the poor. The only treasures of any value are the treasures to be attained in heaven. The treasures of earth are transitory from a double reason – the individual dies, and the old order is rapidly nearing its close. The same thoughts meet us not infrequently in the rabbinic literature, but we note in the Gospels a kind of passionate glorification of renunciation and adversity as marks of true discipleship, and as the one sure passport to heaven. This note goes beyond – how far rightly is another question – the rabbinic 'chastisements of love.' The soul is all. 'Adversity is the blessing of the New Testament.' With incomparable eloquence and power the

Gospels disclose to us one aspect of the ultimate truth, one facet of reality, to which we can never again be blind, even tho we realize that it is by no means the complete reality, by no means the only truth through which we must work and live, the truth, I mean, which Professor Bradley, with such splendid insight, has lately shown us to be exhibited by King Lear, that 'the judgment of this world is a lie; [that] its goods which we covet corrupt us; [that] its ills, which wreck our bodies, set our souls free'; 'the conviction that our whole attitude in asking or expecting that goodness should be prosperous is wrong; that, if only we could see things as they are [R3731 : page 68] we should see that the outward is nothing, and the inward is all.'"

And of the Christian doctrine of self-renunciation to save others he writes:

"The renunciation, the self-denial, and that *daily* carrying of the cross, whereby Luke, as Wellhausen notes, changes mere martyrdom into a general way of life, are not in the Gospels urged and intended solely to save one's own soul, but also to save others. The endurance, the self-sacrifice, are not to be merely passive, but active. They are to be helpful and redemptive; through loving service and sympathy to awaken in the sinner the dormant capacity of righteousness and love.

"Lowly, active service for the benefit of the humblest is an essential feature of the synoptic religion. 'He who would be great among you, let him be your servant.' 'It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish.' The teaching of the synoptics in this matter seems to cluster round those three great sayings: 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister;' 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners;' 'The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost.'

"And here, once more, we seem to be cognizant of fresh and original teaching, which has produced fruit to be ever reckoned

among the distinctive glories of Christianity. It has two aspects: first, the yearning and eager activity to save and to redeem; secondly, the special attitude of the Master toward sinners and toward sin. The rabbis and the rabbinic religion are keen on repentance, which in their eyes is second only to the law; but we do not, I think, find the same passionate eagerness to *cause* repentance, to save the lost, to redeem the sinner. The refusal to allow that any human soul is not capable of emancipation from the bondage of sin, the labor of pity and love among the outcast and the fallen, go back to the synoptic Gospels and their Hero. They were hardly known before his time. And the redemptive method which he inaugurated was new likewise. It was the method of pity and love. There is no paltering with sin; it is not made less odious; but instead of mere threats and condemnations, the chance is given for hope, admiration, and love to work their wonders within the sinner's soul. The sinner is afforded the opportunity for doing good instead of evil, and his kindly services are encouraged and praised. Jesus seems to have had a special insight into the nature of certain kinds of sin, and into the redeemable capacity of certain kinds of sinners. He perceived that there was a certain untainted humility of soul which some sins in some sinners had not yet destroyed, just as he also believed and realized that there was a certain cold, formal, negative virtue which was practically equivalent to sin, and far less capable of reformation. Overzealous scrupulosity, and the pride which, dwelling with smug satisfaction upon its own excellence, draws away the skirt from any contact with impurity, were specially repugnant to him. Whether with *this* sin and with its sinners he showed adequate patience may perhaps be doubted, but it does seem to me that his denunciation of formalism and pride, his contrasted pictures of the lowly publican and the scrupulous pharisee, were new and permanent contributions to morality and religion. As the Jewish reader meets them in the synoptic Gospels, he recognizes this new contribution; and if he is adequately open-minded, he does it homage and is grateful."

SPONTANEOUS GENERATION OF LIFE.

We see much in the public prints respecting the efforts of chemists and biologists to produce life, and several "professors" have announced their success in so doing. What are the facts?

For centuries scientific minds – skeptical respecting the teachings of the Bible that God is the author of life, the Creator of all things – have been examining nature to see how life has its start. At first it seemed that new bugs, worms and insects were from time to time created independently. For instance, many have noticed that an old, water-soaked wooden pail would be lifted and an enormous roach found beneath it – too large to have crawled under, and perhaps of a kind not previously seen in that quarter.

Further research demonstrated that there are in the earth, the air and the water, microbes far too small to be seen by the naked eye, which, under favorable conditions, would produce larger living creatures of one kind or another, according to the environments and conditions.

Then came the suggestion that *all* the larger forms of being were mere *evolutions* from lower to higher. With this thought the learned of this world have been wrestling for the past fifty years, shaking the foundations of faith in the Bible for millions. For if the Bible be true this theory is false as respects man's origin. Instead of further evolution being our *salvation* the Bible points us to our *fall*, to the *redemption* accomplished for the world by the Son of God, and to the coming *deliverance* of the groaning creation from *sin* and its *death* penalty. Only those who trust the Bible [R3732 : page 68] record are safe from the blighting influence of this evolution error.

STILL ON THE WRONG PATH

Still pursuing the wrong trail, our wise men of to-day conclude that although they cannot gainsay that our entire race sprang from one pair, and although the highest type of monkey still leaves an impossible chasm between it and mankind, even in his most depraved condition, nevertheless they may yet find the "missing link" by which the first human pair, supposedly very inferior and degraded, could have been produced. Alas! how much more men will labor to establish an error than to corroborate a truth.

Without waiting to find the "missing link," others of the "learned," who know not God, have started at the other end of the line, to prove that God had nothing to do with creation. Rather their claim is that *Nature* is God. And although they know her not except in his works, they ascribe all power and skill to Nature. The endeavor now is to prove that Nature is God – that the very lowest form of life, *protoplasm*, is Nature's oldest child, from which sprang, gradually, by evolution, every creature, including man, who they claim is progressing rapidly without a fall, without a Redeemer, and without need of any heavenly aid, to perfection.

DR. LITTLEFIELD'S FINDINGS (?)

Dr. C. Littlefield now steps before the world announcing that he by experiments has actually produced [R3732 : page 69] living organisms where there was no life of any kind previously. He asserts that he was very careful in these experiments and surely excluded every lurking microbe. If true, if it can be corroborated by others, it will be assumed as proof that there is no Creator, no God, except Nature. Ah! says one of old, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

If it be true that a low form of life can be produced chemically, it proves nothing. What is Nature but the creature of our all-wise

God? The divine power placed all the conditions of Nature and *fixed* her limitations as we behold in the various animal species. The Bible record is that God commanded the sea first to bring forth, and produced the conditions necessary to its teeming life. But the same Bible with explicitness declares the special *creation* of mankind in the Creator's *likeness*, and not in the image of a baboon.

THE CLAIM IS DISPUTED

Fortunately for the truth, when one "professor" seeks to shine another seems ambitious to shine by extinguishing him. So here we have from the *Scientific American* Professor C. E. Tingley's repudiation of Professor Littlefield's claims, with logical reasons for supposing that the experiments were not reliable. We quote:

"It is a far cry from a simple protoplasmic cell to that of a highly organized insect such as that just described, in fact almost as far as it is from lifeless crystals to living matter. Oppositely, the higher critics will have none of it, basing their conclusions on practically the same grounds that Professor Tyndall took in relation to Dr. C. Henry Bastian's experiments nearly thirty-five years ago. This scientist, it would seem, was eminently qualified to investigate the origin of life, for he was recognized as an authority on biology and the pathology of the nervous system, and he was a strong advocate of the doctrine of spontaneous generation of life. In one of his many papers he pointed out the results he had obtained in creating life artificially, and he declared that 'observation and experiment unmistakably testified that living matter is constantly being formed *de novo* and in accordance with the same laws and tendencies which determine all the more simple chemical combinations.' Professor Tyndall took up the matter and carefully tested Dr. Bastian's experiments, but took precautions, which the latter had neglected, to prevent the ingress of life during the processes of sealing the vessels, and though he varied the

experiment in many ways no germs of life manifested themselves, so that Tyndall felt impelled to thus testify: 'I affirm that no shred of trustworthy evidence exists to prove that life in our day has ever appeared independent of antecedent life.'

"The moral of Tyndall's statement is obvious; the value of Dr. Littlefield's or any one else's experiments in the artificial generation of life lies absolutely and solely on excluding every trace of pre-existing life and thus preventing contamination which must otherwise surely follow during the progress of the tests. Carelessness in this respect has led biologists, even those who believe in the hypothesis of abiogenesis, to cry down every attempt made looking toward the artificial production of life. At various times Spencer, Huxley, Darwin, and Pasteur were firmly convinced that they had found the secret of life, but repeated experiments wherein antecedent life was more rigorously excluded than before proved their efforts futile.

"Evidently error of a similar nature has crept into the tests of Dr. Littlefield, and this is not said without due consideration, for the present writer has performed the experiment as above written, not one but many times, and in every instance the result was not successful beyond the mere crystallization of the chlorides.

"It is true that more recent reports state that the development took place under sealed glasses thoroughly sterilized before beginning and sealed from the air when placed on the shelf, but it is obvious that there was every chance for pre-existing life to slip in, and so what would otherwise have been regarded as a wonderful achievement in science has not been taken very seriously by men skilled in either chemistry or biology."
