

formed him; not an occult something of which he could have no information. The table he saw before him certainly existed: it was hard, polished, coloured, of a certain figure, and cost some guineas. But there was no *phantom table* lying underneath the *apparent table*—there was no invisible substance supporting that table. What he perceived was a table, and nothing more; what he perceived it to be, he would believe it to be, and nothing more. His starting-point was thus what the plain dictates of his senses, and the senses of all men furnished."

### MONCURE D. CONWAY, A MILITANT MISSIONARY OF LIBERALISM.

Some time ago we published an article on the Boxer Movement, illustrated by the reproduction of Chinese proclamations and pictures, from the pen of a Christian missionary, the Rev. George T. Candlin, who lived in China during the outbreak of the troubles, and who is known to our readers through several thoughtful contributions on Chinese literature to both *The Open Court* and *The Monist*. His pamphlet, *Chinese Fiction*, published in our Religion of Science Library, shows his thorough acquaintance with and appreciation of the Chinese character and modes of thought.

In the present number we offer an article on the same subject, from the opposite standpoint, by Moncure D. Conway, whose trenchant pen has won him a deserved reputation for the humorous and satirical treatment of such phases of the religious and social conditions of our age as seem to need reform.

Moncure D. Conway is a descendent of the Washington family, a Virginian by birth and a minister by education. In 1857, he was compelled to leave Washington, D. C., where he had charge of a congregation, on account of his denunciations of slavery. He then accepted a call to a Unitarian church in Cincinnati, and when the war broke out lectured gratuitously throughout the Northern states, advocating emancipation. He set a good example to his fellow-citizens by colonising his father's slaves in Ohio. In 1863, he visited England, and in 1870-71 served as a war correspondent for the *New York World*, during the Franco-German War. Having grown more and more liberal, he became the speaker of the South Place Ethical Society in London, and since resigning his position lives as a literary man, devoting himself mainly to religious and ethical topics.

Moncure D. Conway is not yet entirely free from a certain acerbity in the statement of his propositions, which may be due to the unpleasant experiences and persecutions to which he has been repeatedly subjected on account of his convictions. Our readers will observe that he denounces militant Christianity on account of the excrescences of its militant character, but it will be noticed that he himself has proved his whole life long one of the most fervid militant missionaries for what he recognised as the truth.

P. C.

### THE JUDGES OF JESUS, JEWS OR GENTILES?

*To the Editor of the Open Court:*

Allow me to ask if you will elucidate a statement published in your April number in your commentary on the story "The Crown of Thorns."

The passage alluded to is as follows: "Jesus was crucified by the Romans, not by the Jews." Meaning that the *death-decree* passed on the Teacher of Galilee by the Sanhedrin of Jerusalem was *executed*—according to the Roman law—by Roman officials?

Will you insert a note in the Miscellaneous Columns of one of your forthcoming numbers illustrative of the exact inference the paragraph is intended to convey?

This point is referred to your consideration, as some readers may be carried away with the idea that the learned Dr. Paul Carus transfers all odium in the Hebrew tragedy, and all authority, from the famous Jewish Senate which governed Judæa, on to the shoulders of the Roman Procurator who countersigned the Sanhedrin's decree; passing the sentence of death being the authority allowed to the Jewish Council, the *power for executing the Senate's sentence* being rigorously vested in the hands of the Roman procurator. To use the words of the Deputies of the Jewish Sanhedrin guilty of Christ's arraignment before Pilate: "We have already judged him according to our laws, and having found him guilty of death have brought him unto you to carry the sentence into execution."

The printing press is the pedagogue of the world. And all earnest students are encouraged to question of their "pedagogue" any statement which may not be clearly understood. Surely, *The Open Court* will not fail its many students.

GEO. AULD.

BASSETTERRE, St. Kitts, B. W. I., April 27, 1901.

In reply to our correspondent, we will state that at the time of Christ's crucifixion the Romans alone exercised the right of capital punishment in Judæa. The Jewish Sanhedrim could make as many declarations as they pleased that a certain man deserved death according to their laws, but they had not the power to execute the judgment. It is quite probable that the Roman prefect would not have executed Jesus had he not been delivered over unto him by the Jewish authorities. But for that reason Pilate, the representative of the Roman Empire, remains the responsible person who alone had the right to pronounce judgment in the case. According to the Gospel accounts, the Jewish Sanhedrim, having condemned Jesus for blasphemy, plays the informer in order to have him executed for his pretensions as a Messiah, and as such Jesus is executed by the order of Pilate.

The statement that "Jesus was crucified by the Romans, not by the Jews," is made without any implication, merely as a statement of fact; but we might as well incidentally mention that originally among the Jew-Christians Rome was regarded as the main enemy of the kingdom of God. Rome is compared to Babylon, and is criticised with the severest names in the Revelation of St. John the Divine. The Gentile Christians, many of whom were Romans, were more careful in their attitude toward Rome. Paul himself was a Roman citizen, and he never uttered a definitely hostile word against Rome. When by and by the Gentile Church became positively Roman, the Roman authorities were more and more exonerated, and the whole odium of the crucifixion of Jesus was then thrown upon the Jews.

P. C.

#### CRUELTY TO ANIMALS IN ITALY.

*To the Editor of The Open Court.*

Will you kindly allow me by means of *The Open Court* to endorse the wishes expressed in your March number by your correspondent Signora Evelyn Martingengo Cesaresco, that animals should receive that careful and considerate attention that is surely their due at the hands of all men and more particularly those professing Christianity. "Their lives," in many cases, are not fallen in "pleasant places,"