

MISCELLANEOUS.

FATHER HYACINTHE'S LECTURE AT GENEVA.

Father Hyacinthe Loyson lectured of late (June 12) in the great Hall of the Reformation at Geneva, to a large audience of Protestants and liberal Catholics on "The Religious Crisis in France." The orator was by no means onesided, for he placed the blame for many misunderstandings between the religious and irreligious upon both parties, the leaders of scientific and liberal progress and the representatives of the Church. The latter he considers too narrow and blind to the significance of science, and the former, especially the Comtean positivists, would fairly limit man's life to the narrow span of the few experiences which the individual gathers between the cradle and the grave, while deifying that same limited humanity.

When the orator had finished the critical part of his lecture he was interrupted by the acclamations of his audience, and after a short pause proposed his remedy for the ills of to-day. He expressed his belief in a universal Christianity based upon the successive and progressive revelations of God, made according to the degree of man's intelligence. He stated his faith in a holy and eternal God, and explained that morality was based upon the respect of humanity as found in oneself and one's fellows. This is the gist of the saying of Jesus which bids man "love the Lord thy God. . . and thy neighbor as thyself."

Father Hyacinthe is not a Calvinist, but on the contrary is still a Catholic. He has cut loose from the domination of Rome and represents the liberal religionists of France who would continue in the forms and ceremonies of the Church without submitting to the hierarchy. The faction of those in sympathy with him will probably gain a new significance after the separation of Church and State in France.

Our own differences with Father Hyacinthe Loyson have been expressed in a discussion concerning the conception of God which appeared some time ago in *The Open Court* (XI, 618); and we must add that after the pleasure of having met him personally in Paris during the Exposition of 1900 the discrepancies of belief appeared greatly minimized; for we are perfectly willing to allow him the right of using terms in the sense to which he is accustomed, while he gave a much more philosophical and less dogmatic interpretation to his thoughts than might be anticipated by those who read his expositions or listen to his sermons. He is decidedly a man of deep thought who, though he loves the religious forms to which he has been accustomed from childhood, is broad enough to see that his mode of worshiping God and even his inter-

pretation of the nature of God are but one possibility among many, and he respects the scientific and philosophical conception above others for its exactness, provided it be not negative and destructive, while he would sanction the poetry of religious language and ceremonies according to the needs of the devotional heart.

AN APPEAL FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

An appeal comes to our readers from the Countess Evelyn Asinelli of Geneva, Switzerland, in her attempt to arouse the interest of Americans in the deplorable condition of the Boers. Besides making many thousand orphans the war has ruined nearly every home; and England's small indemnity does not go as far as it should towards adequate relief because of mismanagement in the distribution.

Miss Emily Hobhouse verified some very painful reports she had heard by spending two months in careful investigations, visiting the northern districts so difficult of access, and the desolated villages from which no word had come since the signing of the peace. In an open letter she has told of the miserable condition of the half-starved people and their ruined homes. She said, "Sad indeed it is to see the people on farms situated often twenty, thirty, or fifty miles from any town. The man has probably tramped away to seek work for cash; the women and children sit silent at home. No word of complaint is ever heard. There is nothing to do: no clothes to make, no food to cook, no garden to till, and neither seeds nor water. They sit in a row silent."

Countess Asinelli writes us the following account of this enterprising woman's brave endeavors towards the alleviation of the pitiful state of affairs:

"Miss Hobhouse who has devoted her life to those who suffer, is a very practical woman. She understood after having lived with the ruined Boers, that one thing alone could do them a permanent good, and that was to give them the means of gaining their living. She therefore settled at Philippolis, a small town in the Orange River Colony, where with the help of two experienced teachers, she opened a large work-room; young girls from sixteen to twenty-two years are taught to spin, to weave, and to knit by machinery; we hope by and by to be able to add a fourth branch of activity, namely lacemaking, for which there is good market in South Africa. As these industries were totally unknown in the country, they have a chance of success which might be doubtful elsewhere. The progress of the whole undertaking is most encouraging.

"Unfortunately, the current expenses are very high; life is expensive over there and moreover wood being costly and very scarce, our Boers can not reproduce the looms and the spinning-wheels to the degree required for all our new pupils and for the home use of our now very able first workers. This last point is a serious hindrance, as we shall be obliged to send the necessary material from our posts, which means an increase of expense."

As yet there are only one hundred subscribers to the undertaking, and any help from new friends who may see this appeal will be welcomed by Countess Evelyn Asinelli, 8 Grand Pré, Geneva, Switzerland, and wisely administered.