

*To the Editor of The Open Court.*

"I have just read your *apologia* in reply to the *Expository Times*. If the title Christian does not describe you then I have no right to it, for I not only take what is in the main your view of the truth, but I preach it. I often tell my people that even Jesus did not speak of Christianity, but of the truth.

R. J. CAMPBELL.

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*To the Editor of The Open Court:*

Your personal *Apologia pro fide sua* in the October *Open Court*, gives opportunity which perhaps others as well as myself will embrace, to express interest in what you have so frankly said, whether friendly or adverse. I have only this excuse, as a monthly reader of your valuable magazine, and as a seeker for the same ends which you seek with such evident sincerity and ability, for retouching the personal note sounded in your article.

Probably there are other Presbyterian ministers besides myself who have read with mingled approval and criticism your very interesting account of your changes of thought, and therefore, of faith. We children of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries must be stolid indeed not to have heard the voice of the *Zeitgeist*. Unless pledged and bound to tradition, who of us but has moved on in the direction you have gone, though it may be to find a resting-place for faith much nearer the old hearthstone?

With most of your philosophical positions, I am in full agreement. As to your ethical sympathy with essential Christianity, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, I am also in accord with you. Only it seems to me that it is not necessary to give up the personal Divine of Christ especially as manifest in the consummation of vicarious love on Calvary. On the whole I can echo word for word the sentiments of Père Loyson, quoted in your notice of Madame Loyson's book.

I have noted in the margin of your article some points of your philosophical creed which I perhaps do not fully comprehend, about which I would like to talk with you. But as to the spirit of your theological assertions, I fancy even my friend Dr. Minton must be in responsive sympathy with that.

JOHN H. EDWARDS.

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### "STATE AND CHURCH."

*To the Editor of The Open Court.*

I do not write to engage you in a controversy but to thank you for the number of *The Open Court* for October, 1905, which contains my letter on "State and Church." Nevertheless, you will permit me to say that your answer does not invalidate my proposition in any particular.

It is not my idea that the Catholic Church cannot brook either the competition of other religions or the independence of philosophical thought; this statement was merely borrowed from a religious work published with the approbation of Leo XIII. I simply told you that in France, religion was an insignificant factor because to the great majority of the French it means nothing but some outward and occasional ceremonies. The ballot on the separation of Church and State has verified this assertion.

The partisans of the Church prophesied that this measure would cause

a revolt among the people, but they have acquiesced in it with perfect indifference.

You think that perhaps, after several generations, the French "will be glad to revert to their old faith," but you do not take into consideration one factor of the intellectual condition of my countrymen of the future, i. e., the development of the scientific spirit.

The old Catholic faith cannot flourish where the number of men who repeat with Tertullian: "*Credo quia absurdum*" is constantly decreasing.

PARIS, FRANCE.

YVES GUYOT.

#### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

THE SUPREMACY OF JESUS. By *Joseph Henry Crooker*. Boston: American Unitarian Association. 1904. Pp. 186. Price, 80 c.

Rev. Joseph Henry Crooker, the Unitarian minister of Ann Arbor, Mich., publishes his view of Christ in a book entitled *The Supremacy of Jesus*, and he treats his subject in the following chapters: (1) The Historic Position of Jesus, (2) Jesus and Gospel Criticism, (3) A New Appreciation of Jesus. (4) The Master of Inner Life, (5) The Authority of Jesus.

While Mr. Crooker is a liberal who finds the divinity of Jesus in his ennobling mission and the great example which he gave the world, his "New Appreciation of the Historical Jesus" does not leave him without power and man without motive. It brings Jesus close to us to rebuke our sins, to heal our wounds, to strengthen us against temptation, to move us to service." Whatever the higher criticism may have to say of the central figure in the New Testament, "only in this way can he be most historical and also most helpful to us." (P. 115.)

THE NEW LIGHTS. A Drama in Four Acts. By *Hugh Mann*. Boston: Richard G. Badger. The Gorham Press. 1904. Pp. 51. Price, \$1.00.

The poet, Mr. Hugo Mann, does not intend this drama to be a mere product of *belles lettres* but incorporates in it a tendency which characterizes the present phase of our religious life. "New Lights" is the name of a sect locally called New Mennists, a branch of the Mennonites of Pennsylvania. They are very devout and look upon all other confessions as heretical. They are non-resistant; take no part in politics, not even to the extent of voting; refuse to go to war, and also to go to law even to recover stolen property; and they are earnest, hard-working, law-abiding citizens. They dress in a peculiar garb somewhat resembling that of the Quakers. Despite their narrowness they are serious and well-intentioned, and we can understand that many interesting events in their religious development have taken, and are still taking place.

The details of the plot, our author informs us, are founded on fact and occurred about a generation ago. The concluding words of James, a heretic and the hero of the tale, when he wins Katherine, a member of the sect, express the general tendencies of the drama. They read as follows:

"There is no such thing as sin, Katherine,—there is only ignorance. And ignorance shall be dissipated as we grow in knowledge through experience. You know Jesus, your Saviour, as you call Him, said, 'Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.'"