

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE CHARITY BALL.

Christianity at its very beginning was a religion of the poor and for the poor. Christ came on earth for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to the poor. And if Church history can be relied upon we must assume that the earliest congregation actually bore the name Ebionites, i. e., the poor. Among the congregation at Jerusalem it was no idle theory that the rich should give up their possessions to the poor, which means to the congregation of the Ebionites, and should lead a life of communism, for we read in the Acts that the Christians in Jerusalem "had all things common."

During the progress of Christianity denoting a march of world-wide conquest the economical principle of communism was surrendered, and it became a religion advocated by the rich and deemed good for the poor. Many of the doctrines of Christianity have become untenable and yet the old spirit of the communistic ideal is still haunting us from time to time. The luxuries of the day tauntingly displayed sometimes in pride, sometimes in mere frivolity, naturally produce a reaction, venting itself in contempt of those classes which are mere spenders of wealth and not earners, and it is remarkable that some of our richest men have given utterance to appreciation of the dangers that lurk in wealth and the hollowness of worldly frivolities.

Our frontispiece by L. P. de Laubadère entitled "The Charity Ball" (*Bal pour les pauvres*) exhibits the contrast of the charitable rich to the needy poor, the latter being represented by Christ himself. The picture is perhaps somewhat exaggerated and touches the boundary line of sensationalism, but it contains a deep moral lesson to be heeded not only by the wealthy but by all those classes who employ the worldly goods that are at their disposal for empty pleasures and riotous living. The insufficiency of wealth is perhaps more felt by those among the wealthy who are thoughtful than by frivolous spendthrifts, and this is borne out by the articles of Carnegie in which he alludes admiringly to the primitive principles of Christianity and deems it a disgrace to die a wealthy man. A similar note thrills through the touching words of a Christian millionaire, the son of the wealthiest man on earth, who in speaking of the tribulations of wealth said some months ago:

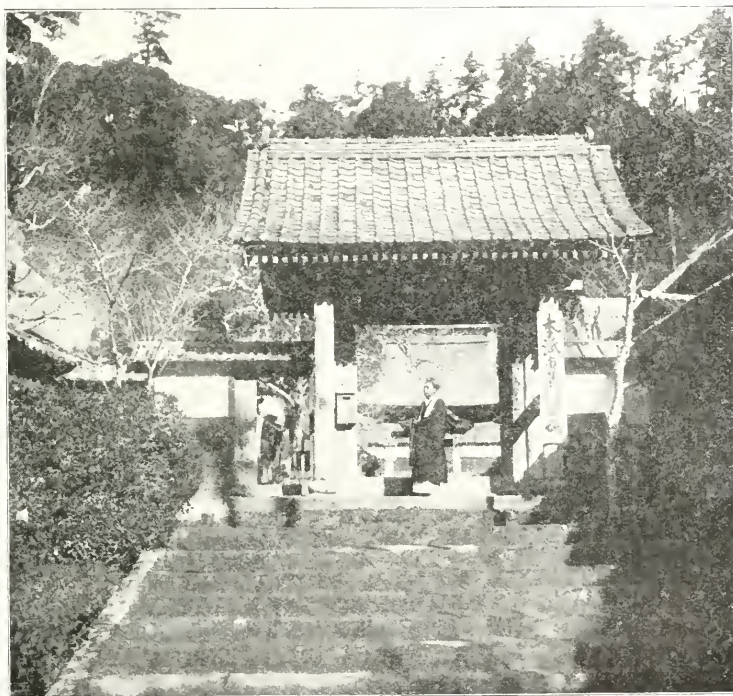
"The men who are less apt to sin are those who are obliged to give strict attention to their work. It is easy to do right when we are engrossed with the problem of how to make our living. But the man who has achieved immense success, the one who has accumulated a fortune in easy fashion, is the man who finds it difficult to keep from doing wrong.

"To those who may be envious of great wealth I would say that they are

better off by not having it. Be satisfied with your small portion, whatever it may be. Too much prosperity for an individual is a bad thing. It breeds idleness and that leads to sin."

SOYEN SHAKU AT KAMAKURA.

In preparing the Rt. Rev. Soyen Shaku's book for publication which is now ready for the market under the title *The Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot*, we came into possession of an interesting picture showing the author in his pontifical robes, standing under the gateway within the grounds of his mon-



astery at Kamakura, Japan, and we take pleasure in presenting it here to our readers who may be interested in the thoughtful expositions of the religion and philosophy of a modern Buddhist priest.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS OF NAZARETH. By *Philip Sidney*. London: W. Stewart & Co., 1904. Pp. xi, 215. Price, 2s. 6d.

Philip Sidney deems it his duty to speak "The Truth About Jesus of Nazareth" in plain language, and he derives his opinion "from a study of the Gospel narratives." He proves to be a close reader of the Scriptures and the ideal Jesus disappears in the scrutiny of a man who scorns to read the records in the light of later interpretations. He appears to accept the trust-