

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE DOCETIC HERESY IN BUDDHISM.

One of the strangest parallels between the history of Buddhism and Christianity is the appearance of the Docetic heresy in both religions. An essential thought is the idea that the Buddha is the Blessed One whose peace of mind is never disturbed and whose equanimity is never rippled by pain or suffering. For the Buddha has escaped suffering; even in this life he lives in a state of undisturbed happiness, and this idea has produced the heresy of Docetism.

We quote from *Buddhism and Its Christian Critics* the following passage:

"The Docetic heresy believed that Christ, because he was God, could have suffered no pain; his whole being was uncontaminated with material existence, and his body was mere appearance, a sham—hence the name of the sect from *δοκεῖν*, to seem. This view is represented in the apocryphal "Gospel according to St. Peter," in which we read (verse 10): "And they brought two malefactors and crucified the Lord between them; but he kept silence, as *feeling* no pain." Docetism is also one of the Buddhist heresies, as may be learned from a passage quoted from the *Fo-pan-ni-pan-king*, an expanded rendering of the *Parinirvana-Sutra*, translated into Chinese by Dharmaraksha (*Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XIX, pp. 365 ff.). The Tathagata says to Chunda, the smith:

"To those who as yet have no knowledge of the nature of Buddha, to these the body of Tathagata seems capable of suffering, liable to want (but to others it is not so); at the time when the Bodhisattva received the offering of food and drink (he was supposed to have eaten the food). . . . so now having received your offering, he will preach the law. But still, as in the former case he ate not, so neither does he eat now."—Transl. by Samuel Beal, *loc. cit.*, p. 367."

The Docetic heresy is not originally orthodox but has grown up later. The Docetic views, as appears in the just quoted passage, are very artificial. The Buddha himself has to explain to Chunda, the smith, that Buddhas do not eat, do not suffer pain, and in a similar way the "Gospel according to Peter" has the insertion that Christ *seemed* to suffer, so it is difficult to believe that the Docetic view was original. It is a secondary thought based on the principle that Christ is God and God does not suffer.

We do not intend to enter here into the problem whether Christian Docetism has produced its Buddhist counterpart or *vice versa*. This much is sure, that Buddhist influence begins to be strongly felt in early additions to the Christian canon. The main traces of Buddhist thought are to be found

in Luke and in the Fourth Gospel, not in Matthew and still less in Mark. They seem to have reached Christianity in its later Hellenistic form, not in its primitive Aramaic sources.

P. C.

A BALAAM AMONG THE HISTORICISTS.

Less than a year ago Dr. Erich Klostermann, Professor of Theology in the University of Strassburg, addressed by special invitation the *Pastoral-conferenz* on "The Latest Attacks on the Historicity of Jesus." The address was notable for its dispassionate tone, for its clear and fair statement of some aspects of the controversy, but more especially for the numerous and important concessions made to the radical criticism. The audience must have heard with dismay from such a high-placed authority that "the strength of his attack has been hitherto mostly underestimated," that "rusty weapons will have to be set aside in the corner," that "even Weiss has alas! not renounced these weapons," that "we can not make appeal to Schmiedel's Nine Pillars against *these* opponents," that "new and more efficient weapons will have to be forged." (Conspicuous by name among the castaways is the "*uniqueness*," along with the "*uninventibility*"—a fact to be commended to the prayerful consideration of such as Mr. Edwyn Bevan, who in the *Nineteenth Century* (April, 1813, p. 859) not merely leans but formally lays out his Deutero-Christianity at full length on this "*uniqueness*," now officially discarded.) Klostermann does not essay to forge these much desiderated "doughtier weapons," but in the brief "Foreword" to the published Address he says significantly: "The wishes expressed to me for an essentially enlarged statement or for greater sharpness in repelling the adversaries, I could not fulfill." No explanation of this inability is either stated or hinted. "I took thee to curse mine enemies, and behold thou hast blessed them altogether."

W. B. S.

CRIMINOLOGY.

Mr. Arthur MacDonald is a great advocate for the study of man, and his specialty is the study of criminal man. He has with various success proposed the idea of establishing laboratories to investigate the criminal, pauper, and defective classes, and has proposed a bill before the finance committee of the New York State Senate and the Judiciary Committee of the United States House of Representatives for this special purpose. We do not doubt that his proposition is important, and among the many movements of reform it ought to have full consideration. Mr. MacDonald writes to us:

"When a student chooses for his life work a subject in the older branches of knowledge, as physics, philosophy, philology, Greek, Latin and natural history, he finds the field somewhat well developed; but not so in more recent sociological lines of research, as criminal anthropology (criminology, shorter term), and other cognate subjects, in which there is full opportunity for mental acumen and scientific ability of the highest character, to carry out most lofty purposes.

"The question may arise as to what course of study will prepare one best for such work. I would suggest the following: