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## THE SURPRISE PARTY.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

Now it happened that a certain man had an infirmity.

The same was grievous and vexed him sore, albeit he kept it upon his wife.

For the woman was one desirous of change, yea, even a gadabout.

And it came to pass that the man and his wife gave up their flat in the city and went to live in Montclair, which is in Jersey, over against the Oranges.

And soon after they had come thereto, to-wit, about the space of a week after they moved in,

Behold, the man was alone in his front yard about the going down of the sun.

And a stranger appeared unto him, even at the gate, and did say unto him, This is Mr. Johnes, I presume?

And the man answered and said, I am he. Behold thine hand man, what wilt thou?

Then said the stranger, I am the Rev. P. Pry, and have recently settled in this place.

And Johnes answered and said unto him, Verily am I rejoiced at this saying of thine, that thou hast settled;

For, of a truth there be few that settle, else had I been a rich man before now, and that keeps me poor for I am honest.

Then said the minister, Thou mistakest my meaning, for better had I said, I have been called.

And Johnes said, Show thine hand, peradventure it be full, for I have only one little pair.

Behold they be twins, and are even now in the house, and they be daisies.

Nay, saith the clergyman, the daisies may I behold later. Now as to thyself, hast thou experienced a change?

Johnes answered straightway, Verily I have that, and a change for the worse.

Then said the clergyman, How can this thing be? Is there no benison on this thine house?

And again Johnes saith, I know not how that may be about a benison, but verily there ought to be a new roof, for the one that now is leaketh.

Then the clergyman heaved a sigh and saith, One thing thou lackest.

And Johnes answered, Right thou art, it is a sewer.

Then would the holy man have gone away, carrying few, if any sheeves with him;

But Johnes, who was after a fashion worldly minded, spake unto him, saying:

Tarry yet a while, for I have somewhat to say unto thee. Thou hast piped unto me and I have not danced perhaps, but verily have I answered thee as the spirit moved me, truthfully.

Do now, I pray thee, tell me certain things, for I marvel greatly and I would not disquiet myself in vain.

Hast thou, O my friend, ever had the measles?

And the clergyman answered and said, Verily I fail to see the relevancy of this thy question; but I did have the measles in my youth.

And Johnes saith, How many measles didst thou have in thy youth?

And the clergyman saith, Mr. Johnes, thou art impertinent.

But Johnes answered, saying, That may well be, seeing thou didst set the example thyself.

Yet another question, I pray thee: Where didst thou get thy cheek, for I perceive that it is large?

Then was the clergyman wroth and saith unto Johnes, Thou art a son of Belial, and gat him straitway to the gate.

And he skipped and danced with wrath, yea, like unto a bubble on a hot stove.

And Johnes went into his house justified, albeit he had not gotten all the information he wanted;

Neither about the number of the measles the clergyman had in his youth,

Neither as to where he procured his cheek.

And lo! while the clergyman did skip and dance Satan perceived him afar off, and saith in his heart, Why, how is this that the servant of the Lord skipeth and danceth?

And when he drew nigh he listened from behind a hedge and he heard the minister communing with himself.

And what he said was like unto swear words, yea,

verily a blue streak thereof, albeit he was praising the Lord that he was not like unto Johnes.

Then Satan saith, Oh, ho ! oh, ho ! But the clergyman seemeth to be on my side after all.

And Satan rejoiced greatly, and, having heard Johnes's name mentioned, thought he would drop in on him unawares.

And Satan did so ; and it was eventide, and the supper table was set, and there Johnes sat with his wife over against him.

And the kids (them that were daisies) sat on either hand and they all did eat pancakes.

And Mrs. Johnes asked her husband concerning the servant of the Lord, and as to what he wanted.

Then Johnes smiled, and lifted up his voice and saith, He was a saucy fellow and a puffed up.

And he came unto me not to seek and save that which was lost, nor yet to minister unto me or thee ;

But because he snuffed the collection plate.

Yet do I cherish no enmity against him, but rather pity him because of the infirmity he hath.

And when Satan heard what had been said, and saw into Johnes's heart, and perceived how much better it was than the ministers,

He was vexed and chagrined, and he said unto himself, Gosh ! How mixed things be in this world !

Verily, but it is difficult to tell t'other from which ; for I could have declared that Johnes was my disciple.

Then Satan gat him away quickly from Montclair, yea, even unto Hell.

(Which, by the way, was not so very far.)

And later on concluded to drop in upon the Lord.

So he crossed the gulf and rang at the door of Heaven and a seraph came.

And the Lord was in and came down into the front room and talked with Satan,

Very sociably and about the weather, which Satan said was milder his way.

And one thing led to another till Satan said, O Lord, but I have an excellent idea.

And the Lord smiled and said, Some of thy ideas are excellent. I would I had thy perseverance. But what is this particular idea ?

Then saith Satan, My ideas are not generally particular, (whereat the Lord smiled again,) but such as I have give I thee.

And then he went on in his plausible and amusing way, telling about Johnes and the parson.

And when he had gotten through he saith, Now see here, O Lord, isn't it about time this thing stopped ?

Would it not be more comfortable both for thee and for me if we could tell our disciples apart easier ?

Lo ! now this is my idea : that we agree upon a non-partisan board ;

And they shall have a civil service examination at once, without waiting for the judgment day. It would save us both a great deal of trouble and expense ;

What sayest thou ?

Then the Lord smiled once more and answering, saith :

It is kind of thee, Satan, to come so far out of thy way to propose this unto me ;

But, then, thou seest, it is the kind I don't like. For I know my sheep.

And, (which is vastly more important for the sheep,) I am known of mine.

The fact is, Satan, that judgment day is going to be a surprise party.

Abstractly, no doubt, that idea of a non-partisan board is excellent from thy point of view.

But from mine own it is quite otherwise. It would not be a square deal ;

For verily when good and evil go into partnership it is evil that getteth the best of it,

And I desire to find out who are really my disciples, by trying them with temptations and letting them try me by their own free choice.

This logic ought to have been convincing to Satan, and perhaps it was.

But who is there lets logic stand in the way of his wishes ? Not the Evil One, of a truth.

For he was persistent and saith again : O Lord, if so be thou and I cannot agree upon a policy of conciliation,

How would it do to take a vote of the inhabitants of the earth,—take the sense of the populace, so to speak ?

Then the Lord answering, saith unto Satan, Thou triflest, Satan, for the populace have no sense :

But some of them have big warm hearts, and that is the sort I want for angels.

Then Satan murmured that he supposed he would have to wait.

But verily thy day of judgment, O Lord, saith he, will indeed be a surprise party.

And when he had thus spoken, Satan said good evening, and hung his tail, and went forth unto his own place sore discomfited.

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## BUDDHISM IN JAPAN.

BY NOBUTA KISHIMOTO, M. A.

### V. THE ZEN AND THE SHIN SECTS.

HAVING pointed out the principal features in which all the "twelve recognised sects" of Japanese Buddhism are unanimous, I will now explain some of the differences. But, as it would lead us too far to investigate the characteristics of all these sects, let us pick

out the two extreme ones and be satisfied with investigating and contrasting their peculiarities.

The two extreme sects are the Zen sect and the Shin sect.

The Zen sect, which is the most ascetic and most contemplative of all the twelve sects of Japanese Buddhism, was not introduced to Japan till the close of the twelfth century, A. D. But the sect itself is traced to the early part of the sixth century, when Bodhidharma came from India to China, where he became the founder of the *esoteric* Buddhism. The teaching of this sect is called *esoteric*, because this sect rejects book-instruction and teaches to look inward into one's own heart. The "transmission from the heart to the heart" is its essential doctrine, and the only way open for this transmission is by contemplation. Hence the name of this sect, namely, *Zen*, which stands for the Sanskrit *Dhyana* and means contemplation. The founder, Bodhidharma, is said to have sat down cross-legged in meditation, with his face toward a wall, for nine years. Thus this sect is in contrast to all other sects which adhere to books, traditions, and outward acts as essential to the attainment of Nirvāna. "To become Buddha," to borrow the words of a writer, "the mind only needs to be freed from every one of its affections, not to love or hate, covet, rejoice, or fear. To do or aim at doing what is virtuous or what is vicious is to leave the heart and go out into the visible tangle world. It is to become entangled in the metempsychosis in the one case, and much trouble and vexation in the other. The other method is in the mind; it is the mind itself. The fountain of knowledge is the pure, bright, self-enlightening mind. The method taught by all the Buddhas is no other than this. Let the mind do nothing, aim at nothing, hold fast to nothing: that is Buddha. Then there will be no difference between living in the world and entering the Nirvāna. Then human nature, the mind, Buddha, and the doctrine he taught, all become identical." Such is the spirit of this sect of contemplation.

The *Shin* sect, on the other hand, is the most secular and most easy-going of all our Buddhist sects. The name *Shin* means "true," and the full title of the sect reads, "The True Sect of the Pure Land." In Japan there are at present four sects which are of the "Pure Land" type, that is, the sects which teach that if one "repeats the sacred name of Amitabha Buddha with a whole heart" he will gain the good effect of being born in the Pure Land after death. Of these four, the Shin sect goes to the utmost extreme in emphasising this teaching. The Shin sect was originated in Japan during the early part of the thirteenth century, and its foundation is the belief in the "Other Power of the Original Prayer of Amitabha Buddha." This "Orig-

inal Prayer" is this: "If any of living beings of the ten regions, who have believed in me with true thoughts and desire to be born in my land and have even to ten times repeated my name, should not be born there, then may I not obtain the perfect knowledge." With this prayer Buddha practised good deeds during many *kalpas*, intending to bring his stock of merits to fulness for the deliverance of all living beings. Therefore, if one believe in the vicarious power of this "Original Prayer," and repeat the name of Amitabha Buddha, he will be born in the Pure Land and enjoy perfect happiness. If one believe this and practise this, that is all that is required. This belief and this practice will naturally work out one's salvation, and hence there is no further use of any artificial devices, such as "becoming homeless and freeing one's self from worldly desires." Hence even the priests and monks are allowed in this sect to drink liquors, to eat fish and flesh, and to marry, just as the ordinary laymen do, while all these acts are generally prohibited in all the other sects of Japanese Buddhism.

These two extremes of Japanese Buddhism, although they agree in certain points, as was above stated, do yet differ in many points from each other. To note some of the main differences: the Zen sect is essentially *atheistic*, or I might say pantheistic in its teaching, while the Shin sect is almost *theistic*. The former does not admit the existence of anything except the self-enlightening mind—the contemplator. There is no personal God who is apart and distinct from the contemplator; there is no external world which is not the result of our delusion. On the contrary, the Shin sect regards Amitabha Buddha not only as the all-merciful Saviour, but also, practically, as the all-present God. Thus Amitabha Buddha of the Shin sect plays the double part of God the Father and of the Son, Christ, of Christian theology.

The Zen sect is *idealistic* in its conception of salvation, while the Shin sect is *realistic*. According to the latter, salvation means the actual transfer of those who believe in Amitabha Buddha from this world of pain and suffering to that "Pure Land," where they will enjoy eternal happiness, living together with Buddha and his saints. Just as this world is real, so is this "Pure Land" real to the believers of this sect. But according to the Zen sect, even the present world has no real existence, and, if so, how much reality can the future world claim for itself? There can be no salvation apart from the enlightenment, the emptiness and tranquillity of the mind, according to this sect.

As these two sects are different in their conception of salvation, so they are different as to the *means* of salvation. The Zen-sect teaches "self-help" as the only means of salvation, while the Shin-sect empha-

sises "others'-help" as the universal way of salvation. *Faith*, says the latter, is the means of salvation; while the former says, *meditation* is the means of salvation. "If one believes in Amitabha Buddha," teaches the Shin-sect," and is devoted enough to repeat his name, he will never lose his salvation." Thus a man is saved by a power not of his own, that is to say, by "others' help." The Zen-sect, on the contrary, teaches that as salvation consists in enlightenment and as the enlightenment cannot be passed over from one to another like merchandise, every one must work out his own salvation by discipline and meditation. Here, salvation is by one's own power, that is, by "self-help."

As the teaching of these two sects is different in these cardinal points, so the *conduct* of their monks and priests is quite different, one from the other. Those of the Shin-sect are *secular* or *optimistic*, while those of the Zen-sect are *ascetic* or *pessimistic*. In the one case, as the power of faith and the power of the "Original Prayer" are strong enough to bring about one's salvation, naturally there is not much use in hard discipline and austere life. In the other case, as the enlightenment is the ultimate end of existence, the life of its monks and priests is a life of retirement, celibacy, poverty, tranquillity, uprightness, self-mortification, and meditation.

Finally, as the natural result of such a hard life in the one case and an easy life in the other, the *adherents* of these two sects divide themselves into two distinct classes. Generally speaking, the adherents of the Zen-sect are more *scholarly*, at least better educated, than those of the Shin-sect, who are more *ignorant*. Probably this distinction is more true among the clergy of these two sects than among their lay-believers. Among the lay-believers of the different sects, as we saw above, there are not so many differences either in belief or in practice, as there are among the clergy of the different sects, although the influence of the Zen-sect is very strong among the educated and reflecting classes of the laity in general.

These are the main differences, as far as I can see, between these two extremes of Japanese Buddhism—the Zen-sect representing the negative or ascetic Pole and the Shin-sect the positive or secular Pole. Between these two extremes there are many sects of intermediate nature, some tending more towards the Zen-sect, while the majority tend towards the Shin-sect.

#### WORDS AND THEIR MEANING.

##### A REPLY TO MR. ELLIS THURTELL.

In an article on the Parliament of Religions entitled "The Dawn of a New Religious Era," which appeared in *The Forum* (reprinted in an appendix to

*The Monist*, Vol. IV, No. 3) I said with reference to some strictures made on Mohammed's religion:

"Dr. Washburn's quotation from the Koran reminds us of similar passages in the New Testament; the old orthodoxy of the Moslems, however, is giving way to broader views. *Tout comme chez nous!*"

"Prof. Minas Tchéras, an Armenian Christian, when sketching the history of the Armenian Church, said sarcastically that real Mohammedanism was quite different from the Islam represented by Mr. Webb. This may be true, but Mr. Webb might return the compliment and say that true Christianity as it showed itself in deeds such as the Crusades, is quite different from that ideal which its admirers claim it to be. Similar objections, that the policy of Christian nations showed very little the love and meekness of Jesus, were indeed made by Mr. Hirai, a Buddhist of Japan. We Christians have reason enough to be charitable in judging others."

The two words *We Christians* in the last sentence have proved a great stumbling block to Mr. Thurtell, who considers them as a "sop" to the Christian church, implicating me in hypocrisy. Mr. Thurtell criticised the expression again and again; I explained the passage, but he would not be comforted; and in a late number of *The Agnostic Journal* he recurs to it a third time. The passage and the whole article in which it appears are such that I consider myself beyond reproach. I purposely include myself under the category of what Mr. Hirai called Christians, for, to be fair, I am as much guilty as our Baptist minister or any other orthodox Christian of the wrongs which the Christian powers have, inflicted upon Japan, and by thus including myself I made the acknowledgment more impressive.

I must add that I have never, so long as I have stood before the public as an author and editor, used the expression "we Christians," and it is not my habit to classify myself among Christians. Nevertheless, I do not intend to forego the right of calling myself a Christian, or a Buddhist, or a pagan; a Kantian, an anti Kantian or anything else. The notion of issuing injunctions against the use of names and words is a very popular one, but it is an assumption of authority which is totally unjustified.

Mr. Alfred W. Martin of Tacoma, Washington, in a spirit of sincerity and with an enthusiastic love of truth, protests (in No. 363 of *The Open Court*) against the use of any sectarian name, Christian, Buddhist, or Mohammedan; and I grant that it is *his* duty to drop the name which appears to *him* inappropriate, but I cannot grant him or any one else the right of forbidding others the use of any name, if according to *his* definition of the name the bearers are not entitled to its use. Everybody can define the term Christian or Buddhist as he pleases, but he goes too far if he makes a matter of conscience of his own definition.

Mr. Thurtell says, "Christian means one who believes in supernaturalism." Is that so? Well, I know that many of those who call themselves "orthodox Christians" are, as a rule, addicted to that world-conception which most appropriately is called "dualistic supernaturalism." But why generalise? There are many millions of Christians who scarcely know what supernaturalism means and whose Christianity consists in following the moral injunctions of Christ. Many Christians, for instance Professor Turner of Jacksonville, Ill., reject supernaturalism and in conscious opposition to Churchianity proclaim Christianity to be an acceptance of the simple Christ-word and a living in accord with Christ's ethics.

The word Christian has changed its meaning in every century. The first Christians called themselves "disciples" and they were one community among many other similar communities by no means limited to the Essenes in Palestine, all of which called themselves "disciples." The disciples in Antioch were nicknamed by the pagan population "Christians," and this nickname came to be adopted for all the disciples of Jesus. The original Christianity, viz., the faith of the "disciples" who gathered round Jesus in Galilee, consisted in the hope that the kingdom of heaven was near at hand and that it would come by repentance, or rather by a *μετάνοια*, a renewal and radical change of our soul. The platform of the disciples of Jerusalem was communism carried to its extreme, a policy which proved very disastrous, for the relief of the poor was only temporary, and the well-to-do members of the Church were hopelessly ruined; so that we need not wonder at the complete disappearance of the Christian Church among the Jews.

The meaning of the name Christian was fixed by St. Paul as that of a member of the Church, as he founded it among the gentiles, and, according to his definition, we should have to define a Christian as a believer in the resurrected Jesus. This of course does not exclude that at the time of Paul there were many Christians who called themselves Christians without believing in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, as we read in I Cor., xv, 12:

"How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"

The very zeal with which Paul emphasises the necessity of the belief in Christ's resurrection proves that the faction of Christians who rejected it was not inconsiderable.

The apostle's notion of the resurrection is of a double nature, for he first believes in the resurrection of Christ's body and then again and again emphasises the resurrection of Christ's soul in the souls of the Christians. In the epistle to the Colossians he says:

"Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. . . .

"Mortify therefore your members . . . put off all these: anger, wrath, malice . . . and have put on the new man—viz., Christ—which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

The word knowledge reminds us of the Buddhist term "enlightenment." In the second epistle to the Corinthians v, 17, we read:

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

And in the epistle to the Galatians Paul says:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Thus a spiritual conception of Christ's resurrection and a gross materialistic belief in the revivification of the dead body of Jesus are strangely mixed in the apostle's imagination.

Christianity changed again when some Neo-Platonists became impressed with the new religion, and the author of the fourth Gospel very philosophically defined the essence of Christ as "the Logos," or "the word." To Christians of his stamp Christianity meant a belief in the incarnation of the world-ransom, which revealing itself in all great teachers of mankind, had reached its climax in Jesus. Philo has written a book to prove that Moses was an incarnation of the Logos; and now a Christian came and wrote the fourth Gospel, generally called the Gospel according to St. John, to prove that this same Logos who was in the beginning, who was with God, and who was God himself, had, at last, appeared in the flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. This was the fulfilment—*πληρωμα*. While Paul emphasised man's need of faith, this class of Christians sought salvation by knowledge. While Paul speaks of belief and believing (*πίστις* and *πιστεύειν*), the fourth Gospel begins to speak of knowledge and knowing (*γνώσις* and *γεγνωσκειν*), making knowledge the main condition of right-doing. Jesus says, John xii, 17:

"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Christianity was a different thing with almost every great teacher who arose, with the patriarchs and the fathers. To the most important Roman father, St. Augustine, Christianity was by no means only a belief in Jesus as the world-saviour: to him it was universal religion; it existed among the ancients and was not absent at the beginning of the human race. But since Christ came in the flesh, St. Augustine says, it has become customary to call this true religion, which existed before, "Christian."<sup>1</sup>

It would lead us too far to trace all the changes of the name Christian. This much is certain, that the view of a Christian of to-day resembles that of a member of the first church at Jerusalem as much as a physicist's conception of gravity resembles his notion of

<sup>1</sup> Ipse res quæ nunc Christiana religio nuncupatur. erat apud antiquos nec defuit ab initio generis humani, quousque ipse Christus veniret in carne, unde vera religio quæ jam erat, cœpit appellari Christiana.—Retr. i, 13.

falling bodies when he was a baby. There is a historical connexion among all the stages through which Christianity has passed, there are no sudden changes, nevertheless there are changes, and many of them are radical and even reversals of what at other times was regarded as its most fundamental teachings.

Christianity is a living power still, and our Christian institutions contain, in spite of the dead lull that obtains at present, great potentialities.

Christianity is a historical movement, which, beginning with Jesus Christ, attempted in the first centuries after its appearance to gather in its stream all the rivulets of kindred aspirations. It comprised many narrow and many broad minds. With the attainment of secular power, the principle of narrowness reached ascendancy in the Christian church. Nevertheless, we witness again and again powerful endeavors after a larger and even after a cosmical latitudinarianism. Who can predict the future of Christianity? Will our churches rot away in their bigotry and paganism? Will they always remain in the bondage of a belief in the letter and remain dead to the spirit? Will Christians systematically shut out the light of the sole religious revelation we have—rational inquiry and science? Who can tell? Certain it is, that the Christianity of the twentieth century will be different from a belief in the Thirty-nine Articles, or a blind acceptance of Westminster confession. The Bible criticism, the historical research, the philosophical and scientific studies of so many faithful and truth-loving Christian scholars have not been in vain; they have already borne fruit here and there in the closet of the devout student, but the great harvest day has not as yet come. I cherish the confidence that come it will and come it must.

If there are men,—and I know some of them personally; most of them belong to the Unitarian church, but some others belong to very orthodox churches, in America and also abroad,—who believe in the Christianity of the future, calling themselves “Christians” because they labor for leavening the whole dough with purer, truer, and more noble ideals,—who can blame them? Who dares to take them to task or reproach them for hypocrisy?

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I do not, as a rule, call myself a Christian. The passage which gave offence to Mr. Thurtell is the first in which I used the phrase “we Christians,” and I am not anxious to join a church or have myself classified as a Christian. Nevertheless, I reserve to myself the liberty of calling myself what I please, for I have as good a title to the name Christian, if not a better one, than the Pope at Rome.

As my Christianity is not the primitive hope of the

first disciples, nor the dream of mediæval dualism, but the broadened faith of the church of the future, the judge that will decide my case is neither the historian who digs up the roots of Christianity from the dead past, nor the present authorities of our ecclesiastical institutions, but the better educated posterity which have learned to recognise the religious import of the light of science.

Who has a right to call himself this or that? Can I call myself a Kantian? Certainly! I have sat at Kant's feet as his disciple. I learned from him. His modes of thought are impressed upon my mind and form part of myself. Kant's philosophising has, to a great extent, become part of myself, and this gives me a title to calling myself a Kantian. Nevertheless, while I have adopted many of Kant's modes of philosophising, I have not adopted the results of his arguments. I reject the main doctrines of his philosophy, his apriorism and transcendental idealism. In this sense I am an anti-Kantian, and am fully entitled to label myself as such.

As to Christianity, the case is similar. The teachings of the Christ of the Gospel became part of my soul while I was still a little child. Many of his most beautiful injunctions were taught me at such an early time as lies beyond the pale of my recollection, and the sentiment of Christ's ethics has become and is still the most constituent foundation of my moral life. Have I not as good a title to the name Christian as any other Christian? If I do not call myself a Christian, for reasons which I need not explain here, I can truly say that I am a Christian, and I hope that those who censure me for once having used the expression “we Christians” are “Christians” in the same sense.

I do not hesitate to call myself an “infidel” among people who understand by “infidelity” a disbelief in Christian dogmas. I did so of late in the presence of a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nor would I hesitate to call myself a pagan among people who identify paganism and humanitarianism as developed by the ancient Greeks. But I would be apt to call attention to the infidelity of the so-called faithful to the ideals of him whom they worship as their Master, and I would point out their paganism, which, in a certain sense, is not much higher than the idolatry of fetish-worshippers.

In a certain sense I am a Buddhist, for I adopt the main doctrines of Buddha as to the non-existence of the *âtman* or ego-soul, and the irrationality of the belief in a creation of the world by a big ego-deity out of nothing. Should these subjects be discussed, and I were asked whether I am a Buddhist, I would say, “Yes, I am a Buddhist; I side with Buddha and reject the dogmas of the Christian church.” Should, however, on another occasion, the question arise

whether I belonged to one of the Buddhist sects, I would have to answer, "No! I am not a Buddhist!"

One of the delegates at the World's Parliament of Religions, Christopher Jibarra, the Venerable Archimandite of the Apostolic and Patriarchal Throne of the Orthodox Church in Syria, was a Christian and a Mohammedan, and he attempted to prove to us that he could consistently be both at the same time. Whether his logic is sound depends upon what he considers as essential in both religions.

No controversy is so sterile and profitless as a quarrel about words, and I would not have gone thus far into detail, were not the question, What do we mean by classifying ourselves as Christians, Kantians, Germans, Englishmen, Americans, Unitarians, infidels, etc.? of importance. A man who calls himself a Christian, means that some Christian ideas or aspirations, which he considers of great moment, have become embodied in his soul as a part and parcel of his being. Thus a man may consistently be a Christian and also an Englishman or an American. Nay, he may be a Christian and a Buddhist and a Kantian at the same time.

Names are labels, and it so happens that many different things are labeled under the same name. It is not the label which makes a thing such or such, but the substance, and while the employment of labels affords a great help in classifying the various brands, we must not attach to the labels too much importance. Labels are lies when used to deceive, but otherwise labelling is a mere matter of expediency, and when a name is properly defined and illustrated by samples, so as to be unmistakable, we must allow the conflict of contradictory definitions to be decided in a struggle for existence.

## AGNOSTICISM.

By agnosticism I understand that world-conception which considers the fundamental problems of philosophy as intrinsically insolvable. This philosophy is very prevalent at present and exercises, in my opinion, a blighting influence upon our generation. In the editorial article, "The Message of Monism to the World" (*The Monist*, Vol. IV, No. 4, p. 547), I said:

"The natural consequence of it is that the children of our time have become shallow and exhibit a lamentable lack of character, which appears in the methods of education, in the productions of art, in the religion of our churches, and in the principles of moral conduct."

My reviewer, Mr. Thurtell, says:

"*The Monist's* editor, however, still stands committed to an attitude of uncompromising hostility towards agnosticism. This comes out strongly in his second contribution, 'The Message of Monism to the World.'"

Having quoted several passages he continues:

"And, upon my word, it is enough to take one's breath away

to read the words italicised, and to remember that they spring from the pen of a Freethinker who has already sacrificed his cock to Æsculapius in the phrase, 'We Christians.'"

By agnosticism I mean what the name denotes, that which it has been characterised as in Mr. Spencer's *First Principles*, and by the inventor of the term, Professor Huxley, who declare that the solution of certain very important problems is intrinsically impossible. I stated in the article that "I am myself an adherent of the agnosticism of modesty, which remains conscious of how little we know," and that "I object only to the agnosticism of arrogance, whose devotees dogmatically declare, 'We do not know, and thus no one can know.'" Nor have I any objection to the agnosticism of Mr. Stewart Ross, who published in the *Agnostic Journal*, p. 89, the following passage of a letter of mine to him. He says:

"Dr. Paul Carus defines our agnosticism with commendable penetration when, in a private letter, he writes: 'You seem to mean by agnosticism: the insufficiency of the present knowledge, and try to extend the compass of man's soul by all means at our disposal, including the mystic realm of our hopes, fears, and, also, the subconscious yearnings of our heart. I have never found you denying the possibility of knowledge in any sphere of existence; but, on the contrary, trying to anticipate future knowledge.'"

With all these very plain finger-posts, Mr. Thurtell should have been able to understand my meaning. I mean that the now so popular philosophy which, as a matter of principle, teaches the intrinsic impossibility of knowledge on all vital questions, including the religious problems of God, soul, and immortality, exercises a most pernicious influence.

Let us not haggle about words; let us discuss the substance of the proposition. If Mr. Thurtell can prove that I am wrong, I shall be glad to listen to his criticism and profit by it.

## A PERSONAL REMARK.

In concluding these remarks I have to thank Mr. Thurtell for his careful and, aside from these two points, very appreciative review of my article. I know that his criticism comes from a sincere heart, and his objection to the term "Christian" springs from an uncompromising love of truth. He writes in a letter to the *Agnostic Journal*:

"I only wish I could follow Dr. Carus's easy-going example in the matter. I can emphatically assure him that it would be very much to the advantage of my position in this English village could I do so."

I can sympathise with Mr. Thurtell; but I wish he could follow my example without sacrificing his opinion. Years ago, when my position at the Royal Corps of Cadets at Dresden was made dependent upon my keeping quiet on matters of religion, I preferred to resign. But now I am at liberty, and having criticised without reserve the many errors of dogmatic Chris-

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tianity, I need not fear being accused of hypocrisy when at the same time I call attention to the noble sides of Christianity. I suffered years ago for being, as I was called, an "infidel," and as I have now nothing to lose and nothing to gain, I trust that I can afford to be impartial. There is no sense in attempting to destroy Christianity; our aim must be to develop it, and lead it on the path of progress to truth.

There is no creature which does not carry in itself—especially in the beginning of its career—the potentiality of at last developing a rational soul, and there is no religion but it may develop into a religion of truth. Says Mr. Thurtell:

"In the third section of his exposition Dr. Carus assures us that 'science is a religious revelation'; that 'Monism does not advocate a revolution in religion, but a reform,' and much besides in a similar strain. Yet Virgil's 'Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes' will surely haunt the far-sighted theologian's mind as he reads this article. For the 'message' can scarcely prove other than a mandate for unconditional surrender."

This is quite true. We can compromise on names and on many more things, but we cannot compromise as soon as truth is at stake. Nevertheless, let us make it easy to our brothers who are lagging behind to reach the truth, and let us show them the truth as they are able to understand it. Let us follow the example of the reformer as described by Isaiah, who says:

"A bruised reed shall be not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

P. C.

AUNT HANNAH ON THE RELIGION OF HER CHILDHOOD.

BY MINNIE ANDREWS SNELL.

In th' days 'ats past an' gone—  
Days of pantalettes an' play,  
When th' six days work wuz dun,  
An' th' bath wuz taken—say,  
Do you know I 'member best  
Of all those times, th' meetin's—well—  
Th' weary tenthlys—an' th' rest,  
Mostly car'way seeds an' hell.

On th' Sabbath, t' th' sound  
Of th' bells ajanglin' loud,  
We could mostly then be found  
Filin' inter church—a crowd  
Of starched an' long-faced girls an' boys  
Marshal'd in our Sunday best,  
Treadin' soft t' make no noise,  
Knowin' 'twas th' day of rest.

Th'ough th' windows came th' scent  
Of th' grass an' laylocks sweet,  
An' th' green elm's branches bent  
An' nodded—tell th' little feet  
Ached t' leave th' weary place,  
An' th' high pew seemed a cell,  
An' th' preacher's solemn face  
With my eyelids rose an' fell.

Then I 'member, when instead  
Of th' "ninthly" an' th' bum  
Of th' bees, my little head  
Sleepy bobbed an' dreams 'ud come;  
An' some hand 'ud slyly give  
Country treat of pungent smell;  
Th'ough years th' mingled mem'ries live  
Of car'way seeds an' hell.

An' th' we're wiser far to day  
Than when we shrank in fear of flames;  
An' th' we've gained in many a way,  
An' call things by sci'ntific names,  
I 'member still th' joy an' fear—  
Th' preacher's words, like solemn knell—  
Th' seedlin' sweet—a mem'ry dear  
Of car'way seeds an' hell.

BOOK REVIEWS.

JOHN BROWN AND HIS MEN; With Some Account of the Roads They Travelled to Reach Harper's Ferry. By Richard J. Hinton. New York, London, and Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Co. 1894. Pp., 752. Price, \$1.50.

This volume of the series on "American Reformers" is extremely rich in sketches from life of the heroes of the tragedy of Harper's Ferry. A lively description of that event and its consequences occupies more than half the volume, but not to the exclusion of much interesting and new information about the earlier life of John Brown and his brave followers. The plea offered in excuse for the Pottawattomie massacre is especially worthy of careful consideration; and so is that presented in vindication of Forbes from the charge of treachery. Cook's memory, also, is redeemed from much injustice by the publication of his alleged confession in the Appendix. There, too, may be found many important letters and papers by John Brown, for instance, his "Declaration of Liberty."

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