

Mr. SPENCER has also his own pet substitute for the Almighty. He would keep people in the path of moral rectitude by the worship of the Unknowable: an indefinite, sonorous Something—or Nothing—with a capital U and no mind or will. The rest of the 'philosophical' Babel greet this new agnostic 'god' with a storm of boisterous ridicule and protest. It is described by one of them as 'a sort of a something about which I can know nothing.' 'It might,' said another, 'be a gooseberry or a parallelopiped.' 'To make a religion out of the 'Unknowable,' Mr. HARRISON declared, 'is far more extravagant than to make it out of the Equator or the Binomial Theorem.' And they all spat upon the new idol and hacked it to pieces with the axe of their sharpest sarcasm. Mr. HARRISON's own little plan fared no better at the hands of the other professors in the Babel school of new 'morality.' It is Merely COMTE's idea hashed up and served hot: the cult of collective Man, 'the Religion of Humanity.' Mr. HARRISON would dethrone the Living God. But he finds that, if this old world is to wag creditably on, he must find a substitute for Him. So he makes Man in General—Humanity with a capital H—the god of Man in Particular: of JOHN of STYLES and JOAN of NOAKES, of JOHN ROE and RICHARD DOE. The drunkard, according to his theory of moral sanction, is to be kept from tasting the wine when it is red, the thief from his neighbor's till, the murderer from his victim, not by the thought of their responsibility to a just and all-seeing Judge of the living and the dead, but by a tender consideration for a pure abstraction called Humanity, and by the thought that, ages hence, some people would probably feel the better for his self-restraint! Now the other apostles of the new school of morals were not restrained by any sense of respect of Mr. HARRISON's Capital Letters. They fell with great violence upon his Plan, tore his Substitute for a Deity into Ribbons, and flung them to the four Winds of Heaven on a Storm of Ridicule. His fetish is contemptuously compared by one of them to Mr. SPENCER's Unknowable (with a capital U). By another it is irreverently described as 'a stupid, ignorant, half-beast of a creature,' worse than 'the ugliest idol in India.' 'Mostly fools!' is CARLYLE's description of the ruck of Humanity which Mr. HARRISON sets up as the god of the new dispensation.

It is needless to prolong the agony of clamorous contradiction. It will be time enough to take the professors of the new 'morality' seriously when they shall have evolved a sane theory of the origin of matter, life, mind, will and conscience, and presented at least some decent semblance of agreement among themselves as to the basis of the code which they would substitute for that which has dominated the human race from the dawn of its history to the present hour. The contradictions and absurdities of the new-pagan school are, however, instructive in so far as they furnish a melancholy, but luminous, proof of the vagaries of the human mind when it sets forth to devise a scheme of domestic and social relations which shall not be based upon GOD. 'I'm honest,' says 'Mr. Dooley,' 'because iv th' polis force.' Punishment is in the nature of things. Its necessity and value are recognised. It is an ordinary and necessary part of domestic and civil life, down even to the sewing union and the boys' debating club. But fear of the policeman's truncheon or of the soldier's bayonet is not everything in civil life. It may, and does, keep the small criminal in order, as fear of the cat o'-nine-tails suddenly stopped garrotting in London a quarter of a century ago when all other means had failed. But what control can it exercise on those in high places who hold the police and the judicature in the hollow of their hand? MONTESQUIEU's saying applies forcibly here: 'The laws are like spiders' webs: small fies are caught in them, but larger ones break through.' Let it once be proclaimed and believed that man's natural instincts are his moral law, and the last protecting barrier of civilised society is carried away, and the world would witness once again, and on a vastly greater scale, the red pandemoniums of the French Revolution and the Paris Commune. Hope in GOD and love of Him, and of mankind for His dear sake, sustained the martyrs in their torments from lapsing into the crime of idolatry, and led, and still lead, to those splendid acts of patient heroism—such as those of St. VINCENT DE PAUL, St. JOHN of GOD, and Father DAMIEN—that ennoble our race. But every human

soul does not, or will not, soar to the serene heights of doing all things for the love of its Creator. And in the spiritual as in the civil domain, for the less heroic or ignoble souls the fear of the punishments of violated law acts as a deterrent when right reason and hope and love have made their appeal in vain.

ROBESPIERRE was no Christian. Yet he exclaimed: 'Let us lay the foundations of our morality in GOD; no nation has ever yet ventured to socialise atheism.' In the course of an able article on the new 'morality' in 1884, EDMOND SCHERER said: 'Let us learn to see things as they are; the true, the good, the ancient, the authoritative morality needs the Absolute, aspires to the transcendental, and finds its mainstay in GOD alone. Conscience, like the heart, demands a future. Duty is nothing if not sublime, and life would be a comedy but for its relation to eternity.' Despite his fantastic theories, Sir JAMES STEPHEN admits that if there is to be religion—and there must be if there is to be a moral code and security from social chaos—the only workable system is Christianity. CHRIST, he says, has reigned so long, 'the object of passionate devotion and enthusiasm' to myriads of people in every time and clime, precisely because they believed that He lives, that He possesses an authority which His acts had proved to be divine. And he rallies the founders of fresh creeds with the well-known witticism of TALLEYRAND, who, when requested to furnish advice as to the best method of promulgating a new religion, counselled him to try the effect of being crucified and rising again on the third day.

## NOTICE

TO SUBSCRIBERS, ADVERTISERS, Etc.

We beg to intimate to our Subscribers, Advertisers, and other Patrons that Mr. Charles Columb, Junr., has been appointed Secretary and Manager of the New Zealand Tablet Printing and Publishing Company, in lieu of Mr. John Murray, who is no longer connected with the Company.

## Notes

### Fiji's Governor

The New Zealand Methodist protest against a Catholic Governor in Fiji overhauled its purpose. Those who framed and passed this foolish and busybody protest were not prepared for the strong and emphatic resentment with which their impertinent interference with Governor Jackson's religion was received by the white population—Catholic and Protestant—of the islands. A letter received by us a few days ago from the Right Rev. Mgr. Mackay, at Suva, bears testimony to the popularity and success of the representative of the Crown whose religious faith was deemed to unfit him to be Governor of Fiji. 'During the voyage,' says the Monsignor, 'I have conversed freely with Fiji residents of various creeds—Anglicans, Free-kirkers, Presbyterians, etc. All were quite unanimous in asserting that there never was a better Governor in Fiji, that he is a model of even-handed justice, sympathetic, enthusiastic in promoting its interests and watching over its general welfare—in a word, the very jewel of a good Governor.'

### Imported Experts

What is the matter with New Zealand brains and hands? Are the brains of brain or the hands less deft than those of the average white? They are not, we wene. Then why the craze for imported experts of various brands and divers calibre that seem to have possessed the soul of some of our State Departments? There are some branches of applied science—such as, for instance, electricity and bacteriology—that are, at worst, but slightly affected by climatic or other local conditions. In such as these the 'imported man' would, from the outset, stand on practically the same level as a New Zealand expert of equal attainments. But there are other important branches of science and industry which depend, directly or indirectly, to a great extent on soil, climate, etc. Such are, for instance, dairying, horticulture, agriculture, fruit-growing, forestry. In these important and growing branches of our trade and commerce, it would take the foreign expert years of patient observation—perhaps years of costly blundering—before he could hope to find himself working on equal terms

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