

## Current Topics

### The "Tablet" in Its New Form

That the enterprising action of the Directors of the *N.Z. Tablet* is meeting with a full measure of appreciation is shown in correspondence constantly received in our office. We append a few extracts from letters in this connection:—

From Australia—

"The *Tablet* is a bright spot in a world of poor journalism whether of the greater or the lesser order. It has the body of knowledge behind it which is now become so rare."

From Wanganui—

A correspondent writes: "The glorified *Tablet* looks very fine and should take on well."

From Ahaura—

"I like the new *Tablet*. It is very attractive and should commend itself to every Catholic worthy of the name."

From Wellington—

"I must say I find the paper very instructive and also very interesting as it covers so many topics."

Palmerston North—

"Allow me to congratulate you and your directors on the improvement and additional reading matter in your paper."

From Invercargill—

"I must compliment you on the decided improvement in your paper."

From Central Otago—

"We are delighted with enlarged *Tablet*. Trusting you will be long spared health and strength to defend truth and the liberty of our Holy Church."

### Moslem Defenders of Christ

It is a satirical commentary upon the alleged Christianity of modern governments that the Moslem professors and students of the Moslem University of Cairo have had to urge the Government to prevent the name of Our Divine Lord being used in blasphemy by a Zionist newspaper. Here is the letter that was sent: "We, the undersigned, professors and students of the University El-Hazar, in the religious section, rise in protest against what was written in the Zionist paper *Dour Hayom* against the Lord Christ. 'Grave are the words which come from their mouths, they speak but lies,' says the Koran. This is a sacrilegious violation of divine religions and a provocation to public opinion the world over. And we find that the silence of the Government upon this audacious fact shows disregard for the principles of the mandate which declares that the religious sentiments and beliefs of the country subject to the mandate are to be safeguarded. We therefore ask your Excellency to follow up this serious occurrence by punishing with an iron hand the audacious misdeed in order to calm public opinion and do what is necessary before the evil increases by this example and the commission of similar offences. We support the secretary of the Islamo-Christian Executive Committee in his protest and in his intention of bringing the affair before the courts, and we hope that this present pro-

test will be given consideration by his Excellency the British High Commissioner." We hope that the High Commissioner, when he read that letter, did not feel like a very superior person dealing with semi-savages. Imperial pride sometimes makes us forget that humility is a virtue.

### Spare the Rod

The new humanitarianism which aims at destroying the moral fibre of the unfortunate children trained under it, is anxious at the moment to banish the birch from the school-room. Every now and then an irate parent attacks with pen and ink "the barbarous medieval custom" of birching scholars into scholarship. "The process of evolution," he says, "renders it altogether undesirable and unnecessary that my offspring should be humiliated by being struck with a strap." A glimpse of the writer would possibly confirm the suspicion that in his case evolution had not proceeded very far. Stephen Leacock, in *College Days*, has outlined a special policy for anxious parents who enter their children at boarding schools. If they wish their boy to be a favorite with the masters, they should imitate the old-fashioned type of father: "Now I want this boy to be well thrashed if he doesn't behave himself. If you have any trouble with him let me know and I'll come and thrash him myself. He's to have a shilling a week pocket money and if he spends more than that let me know and I'll stop his money altogether." Brutal though this speech sounds, the real effect of it is to create a strong prejudice in the little boy's favor.

### The Modern Way

But the up-to-date parent does it all wrong, says Professor Leacock. "Now I've just given Jimmy fifty shillings," he says to the schoolmaster, "and I've explained to him that when he wants any more he's to tell you to go to the bank and draw for him what he needs." After which he goes on to explain that Jimmy is a boy of very peculiar disposition, requiring the greatest nicety of treatment; that they find if he gets into tempers the best way is to humor him and presently he'll come round. Jimmy, it appears, can be led, if led gently, but never driven. During all which time the schoolmaster has already fixed his eye on the undisciplined young pup called Jimmy with a view to trying out the problem of seeing whether he can be driven after all. And he will be driven.

### Pre-Birth Reminiscences

In this ghostly age nearly everyone is interested in the occult sciences. The prim school miss and the callow youth alike are anxious to peer over the Edge of Beyond and behold what their Creator does not wish them to see. All kinds of shadowy, unhealthy, and absurd beliefs are held by people who repudiate the Ten Commandments as unscientific. Thus we have a multitude of foolish people putting a severe

strain on the place where their brains should be if they had any in trying to remember some incident in their previous existence, and perhaps persuading themselves that they had figured as Socrates in Athens or had sailed with Cleopatra on the bosom of the Old Nile. Jocular folk, however, sometimes upset the mystic applecart in a manner which brings the gods into contempt. A writer in a Rangoon paper was travelling in Ceylon, and stopped at a Rest House kept by a fat Singhalese woman, who had a wide reputation for curries. He tasted the lady's wares, complimented her upon their excellence, and enquired where she had learned the art of making them. Let him tell the story himself:—"Her face grew pale and mysterious, and bending over the table, she whispered: 'I learned this when I was a Rani in a previous birth.' 'Rani? Say that again,' I exclaimed with a violent start. 'Were you the Rani of Kalputrigalle?' 'Yes,' she said, uttering a cry. 'Wait on! Were you the wife of the famous Maharaja Zillitilike?' 'Yes! How do you know?' and tears burst from her eyes. 'Because I was that Raja.' With a loud shriek and a spasm the woman reeled and fell heavily on the floor. Here was a scene. I seized a jug of water, and as Rajas frequently do, poured the contents over her face. That revived her, and as she recovered consciousness, she moaned 'Maharaja! Maharaja!' and crept on the floor to embrace my feet. This had to be stopped in time: 'Woman,' said I, 'I mean Mrs. Punaratne, not that out, now; you were the Rani and I was the Raja of Kalputrigalle eighty years ago; that is gone and done with now; you are the keeper of this Rest House and I a holy Sanyassi; just as it should be. It was a glorious time anyhow. Do you remember when we rode together on elephants to Jakarapatne and fought the English and slew the British Emperor?' She remembered every bit of it. 'And how you rushed to the palace kitchen and returned with two hundred different curries?'—Yes, of course, she remembered quite well.—'Well, be a good girl and fetch me that pudding, and I'll be off.' She wiped her tears and did as she was bid. I got a free dinner that day."

### Humanitarianism v. Religion

The truth of the proverb that the devil is the ape of God is nowhere more clearly manifested than in those who seek to run society upon purely secular lines in the interests of man. Humanitarianism has been described as Satan's masterpiece, for it presents itself in an alluring guise as a great effort for the good of humanity, but good without God or religion. Men of the type of H. G. Wells profess to believe that the Humanitarian Utopia can be attained and maintained by training man to find happiness in the service of man. The idea of man, spelt with a capital "M," permeates everything to-day. The humanitarians, puffed up with their windy theories, talk about training men scientifically to be good and moral without any religious motive behind. "Serve humanity and you serve yourself" is the slogan of this kingdom of diabolical selfishness. A moment's reflection, however, will

