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## EDITORIAL.

### MATERIALISM AND IMMORTALITY.

Prof. Goldwin Smith, in his legitimate lines, is a success, and deserves the reputation which he has achieved. Yet it seems to us that, in his attempt to settle by his late article in the *New York Sun* the great problem of immortality, which has been considered by various correspondents of this able journal for the last few weeks, he gives a practical demonstration of the fact that great men can do some very foolish things in intellectual gymnastics. At least it seems thus to our untutored mind.

Professor Smith believes in immortality. He says that it is demanded by the responsibility based upon belief in consequences beyond the present life; by the cultivation of character, "since the best of character formed by life-long effort and self-denial would, equally with that formed by life-long crime or sensuality, come to dust"; and by interest in the future of our race. This is practically the Professor's argument. We are impelled to think that he would not be a successful apostle of immortality "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation." Yet we are glad that he believes in it.

It seems, however, that Professor Smith does not believe in the immortality of the soul. Note as he knocks the prop from under the ancient structure: "It is not on the old ground that the doctrine of a future life can be sustained. Bishop Butler, who has said in the most effective way all that there was to be said from his point of view, argues that the soul, or, as he calls it, the 'conscious being', is indivisible, indiscerptible, and therefore, presumably, unaffected by the dissolution of the body. But we have now learned to believe that there is nothing in us which is not the outcome of our general frame, and, presumably, liable with our general frame to dissolution at death."

We cannot reconcile the foregoing statement with Prof. Smith's doctrine, that there is a future for man beyond this life, and with the admission that there is a "voice within us which tells us that in the sum of things it will be well with virtue, and that the effort and self-denial expended in the promotion of a good and beautiful character will not have been expended in vain." According to the Professor, there will be the death of the man, and then at some future time the re-creation of the man. This must be through the volition and energy of some infinite spiritual force, which, no matter what the Professor chooses to call it, we choose to call God. We cannot understand why the learned Professor, who admits the existence of a spiritual creator, cannot admit the existence of a spiritual created being, in other words, the soul.

His position only proves to what foolish lengths materialism goes in striving to preserve its ancient landmarks. Forced step by step, during the centuries, to-

ward the spiritual domain, it arrives at the threshold of the temple of the soul to turn its back with foolish excuses upon the open door. Professor Smith, and all other observing ones, must know, it appears to us, that each passing year adds its argument for the existence of the spiritual man, and that as the Son of Righteousness climbs higher on the archway of Time, the enfolding shadows are lifted gradually from the landscapes of the immortal soul. Without the soul the Present is meaningless and useless, and the gleaming Future nothing but a taunting mirage. May we all be divinely helped to read the value of our souls in the words of that awful question: "For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

### LET THE DISTINCTION REMAIN.

A question was recently asked in a Northern paper: "What is the difference between a Northern and a Southern gentleman?" The editor answered that a Southern gentleman had always been more noted than his Northern cousin for courtesy and deference toward ladies. The writer was once riding in a crowded Broadway car and overheard the remark that one could always tell if there were a Southern man in a car by a readiness to give a seat to a lady. This is as it should be, and every true Southern man is proud that such is the case.

It is then with a great deal of regret that we notice that this distinction is gradually becoming less prominent. Within the last week we heard a minister say that if he were traveling for a distant point he would not feel himself called upon to offer his seat to a lady who possibly was going only to the next station. A man who is looking for an excuse can easily find one, but we should remember, that in whatever position a man may be placed, it is always his duty to look after the comfort and well being of every lady with whom he may come in contact. Our mothers expect it of us; our wives require it of us, and our manhood demands it of us.

We all rejoice in the prosperity of our Southland, but if this is a result of the push and energy of a busy age, let us hope that the ideal may be far distant. Something is indeed wrong with our political economy if, in order to keep abreast with the times, we must abandon such sacred traditions of the past. Let us all hope that there may be no occasion for regrets in this line. The best motto we can give our young men and boys is the one given thousands of years ago: "Be strong, quit yourselves like men."

### THE BOARD OF PUBLIC CHARITIES.

Through the courtesy of Capt. C. B. Denson, Secretary, we have come into the possession of a copy of the Biennial Report of the Board of Public Charities of North Carolina, 1897-'98. It is a valuable and interesting document, and deserves a wider and more appreciative reading than it now enjoys. It shows what the great State of North Carolina is doing for her criminal and helpless ones. If the work done for these classes be a test of Christian civilization, then North Carolina in a modest way may claim a large share. The penal and charitable institutions are adapted in character, with one exception, to the various demands of humanity. The equipments may not be so large and elaborate as in other States, yet they are reasonably adequate, and there seems to be but little trouble in securing appropriations when needed.

We are glad that the Board of Public Charities speaks in no uncertain words of the pressing need of a State Reform School. Some significant statistics are given, showing what a large number of

criminals in the State are minors. It is well known that to place boys and girls among older and more hardened criminals is to destroy the moral future of these boys and girls, and to prepare them to become greater scourges to society. The State must crown her penal and charitable work with a Reform School. It has been a great blessing to other States. It will be a great blessing to North Carolina.

The care that is being bestowed upon the county homes and jails is a matter of encouragement. There is one fact, however, which is a reproach to many of our Christian workers, and that is, that there is a large number of county homes and jails where no religious services are ever held. In the majority of cases in which religious services are held, they are only occasional. In the light of all this, the visit of John's disciples to Jesus and His reply to their message would make very interesting reading. We would suggest that no minister of the gospel can perform his duty, fulfill his mission, and fully exalt Christ, until he has seen that the prisoners and other unfortunate ones are ministered unto. The gospel has a very close and vital relation to Lazarus and the thief.

There are many interesting and encouraging facts in the report. We have not the time nor space to advert to them all. We would advise our preachers and other Christian workers to procure a copy. It will furnish them with much needed data. The Board has done its work well and deserves the appreciation of all our citizens.

### OUR CHURCH LITERATURE.

Several weeks ago we had occasion to write a short editorial, under the above caption, giving our views concisely as to the need of a more general distribution of the church literature published at our Publishing House at Nashville, Tenn. Having given the subject more thought, we are not inclined to change our opinions expressed in this former article, but to emphasize more fully our convictions. Although our Publishing House at Nashville is accessible through the mails, and our Sunday schools can, after a considerable lapse of time, get the Sunday school literature that may be ordered, still there are many books published that Methodists would like to buy and read, if they could obtain them. The Publishing House cannot afford to send out catalogues to individuals who might wish to buy a book, and the individual cannot afford the expense of postage on these works. The best plan which presents itself to the writer of this article, is for the Publishing House to establish a branch store in the largest, most centrally located city in each Conference, and keep a complete stock of literature on hand at all times, suitable for Sunday schools, and such general literature as the Methodists in each Conference might desire. These branch houses having been established, they could advertise within the bounds of the Conference in which the house is situated, and then all who may wish a book or books could get what is wanted without delay.

### The Man that Has the Line.

In the inspired record of the remarkable vision of Ezekiel, in which the prophet was shown the rill of water that trickled from under the threshold of the temple, and thereafter expanded itself into a broad, spreading river of salvation, mention is made of an angel interpreter, who is described as the man that had the line. Through the mazes of his mystical dreaming, there walked by the prophet's side this mysterious instructor, a kind of spiritual surveyor, who measured the distances traveled from the Temple of God and the depth of the increasing waters, while giving to the whole its proper spiritual interpretation.

In this case the man with the line was an angel, or a superior being. Generalizing the phrase, however, we may say

that the man that has the line is very frequent in history, and often quite a necessary factor in the conduct of affairs. Take the man that has the line of logic. He instinctively measures, for himself and others, all things by the norms of clear and accurate thought. He may not himself be able to write a text book on logic, but he knows enough practically to think logically and to detect fallacies wherever these appear in the speech of his fellow-men. Such a man is a useful member of society, and contributes really to genuine progress, inasmuch as he exposes shams and thus clears the way for the more rapid progress of the abiding truth.

The historian also is a man with a line, who does good work for humanity by estimating distances up and down the centuries, collecting and distributing historic data in their appropriate locations, furnishing the proper perspective for a correct view of the whole, as related to the rising Temple of faith, and, in the manner of the angel's question to Ezekiel: "Son of man, hast thou seen this?" calling the wandering attention of men to a careful consideration of the moral aspects of all physical happenings. In a particular definition of the office of the historian, he appears as a statistician. The man that has the line is naturally a man of notations. He speaks in formulae and dreams in figures. The sign of life to him is a cosine. Yet he is a useful man, though his temptation is to tabulate things that do not belong to him. Society needs statistics, dry as they are, for either as signs of growth or beacons of warning, their testimony is necessary in order to the formation of any proper judgments as to the public state.

The man that has the line is also the man who believes in orthodoxy, which is practically to be defined as right thinking as to right things. We all believe in religious liberty. But the other extreme of indifference as to the question of false or true teaching is equally indefensible. We are not to fling out with consciences Pilate, "What is truth?" and to leave the question to echo and re-echo helplessly through the corridors of life's Pætorium. We are called upon to determine some definite answer to that momentous query. Therefore the man with the line of orthodox measurement in his hand, so long as he comports himself in the dignity and brotherliness of the Gospel, is not to be railed at. It is not safe to jeer at him, for he may be, as in Ezekiel's vision, an angel; he may be measuring for a larger and fairer Temple, for whose broader and heavier walls, not the flimsy scaffoldings of a mere human speculation, but only the firm foundations of Scriptural orthodoxy, will do.

This, however, needs to be added, that the man that has the line cannot, in order to be of any great use to mankind, be simply a man of logic, statistics, and formulae, but must also be a man of spiritual sensibility and broad outlook upon the things of God and men. He must not be simply analytical, but must also be sympathetic, constructive, inspiring in his spirit and methods of work. We need the man of cosines, or the accountant who can give us a result to within a tenth of one per cent., but we need also the man with the poet's soul, whose aspiration springs out along the leaping curves of a quickened imagination, the hypobolas of the spiritual life. The man that has the line is properly the man whose heart God hath touched, so that while measuring exactly, as did the angel in the vision, the cubits of an earthly linear extension, he is able to speak intelligibly and interpretatively of mysteries which transcend all the algebras and astronomies, and to conduct us to that Temple of the living God, from which as a norm all historic tendencies are to be measured, and toward which, as a centre, shall the gathering of the believing nations be. Of such spiritual measurements we cannot have too many.—*New York Observer.*

### Women Who Grind at the Mill.

[Sunday School Times.]

Our Lord beheld with especial sympathy the hard lot of the women of his time. That it was a hard lot was especially due to the ideas of legalism in connection with God's dealings with his children which then constituted orthodoxy. When men thought of God chiefly as a great exactor, an infinite forbiddler, whose pity they were to move by "binding the burden of the law upon their shoulders," it was not to be ex-

pected that women would be in great esteem, or that the object of such worship would offer much scope for their affectionate nature. Just as the hard military legalism of Islam lies like a crushing yoke on the neck of woman in Mohammedan countries, making polygamy and its kindred indignities not only possible, but natural; so, though in a less degree, the Pharisaism of Zelotism of later pre-Christian Judaism were crushing the women of Palestine.

Our Lord always takes an attitude of respect towards women, and assumes their fitness for the highest services of the kingdom of God. So far as we can speak of him as learning, we surely may say that he learned this from his wonderful mother, the historian and poet of the opening chapters of the third Gospel. Mary of Nazareth was a notable woman in every sense. She had lived in the fellowship of prophets and psalmists, until she had caught their tone of Hebraic devoutness, and acquired their form of utterance, beyond all others of her time. In the Magnificat, she appears as one of the last psalmists of Israel.

There were limits to her understanding of her Son; but the home she made at Nazareth, and perhaps afterward in Capernaum, was surely the finest atmosphere earth could have furnished for the divine boy to grow up to manhood amid congenial surroundings. We cannot draw the line between the divinely known and the humanly acquired in his equipment for his work; but surely we may say of any son of such a woman.

"Happy he

With such a mother! Faith in woman kind  
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things  
high  
Comes easy to him."

From the very beginnings of our Lord's ministry this faith in woman is shown. His beatitudes are a series of recognitions of the virtues which especially characterize a gracious womanhood. To an age which glorified strength, and measured the forces that govern the universe in terms of military empire, he proclaims the superior worth of mercy, purity, peace, and sympathy, and discloses the world-subduing efficacy of meekness. He presented thus a new ideal of human character, in which womanliness comes to its rights; and, in justification of it, he disclosed God as no less gracious, tender, and helpful than his daughters among the elect of humanity. The infinite Rabbi, the all-knowing Lawgiver, the all-powerful Warrior of Jewish thought, gives place to the Father in heaven, showering his gifts upon the evil and the good, watching the flight of his sparrows, clothing his lilies, feeding his ravens, but, above all, caring for his human children with an unselfish affection that stops short at nothing they need of him.

Our Lord's life fits his doctrine in this respect as in every other. Nothing in it is more beautiful than his dealings with women. The worst of them found in him a refuge from men's scorn and a saviour from their living death of sin. The best of them rejoiced in his sympathy with their sorrows, his guardianship of their purity, his honor for their excellence of character, and his acceptance of them as members of the kingdom on equal terms with men. It has often been remarked that he never found an enemy among the women of his time, and that no woman's voice was ever lifted up in reproach of him. They supported him out of their substance, they gathered round his cross, they hastened to his tomb, and they were the first preachers of his resurrection.

One feature of his dealings with them is especially noteworthy. As compared with man, woman is naturally more spontaneous and unconventional, and yet very easily ensnared by convention and routine. She attaches an undue weight to man's censures, and accepts his light notions of what is fitting and proper as though it were a social. In our Lord's time, these laws of social convention were arranged to "keep woman in her place," and to subject her actions to masculine judgment. She must not intrude upon male society when grave matters were in hand. She must ask men's judgments before doing anything the least out of the common. In a word, she was treated like a grown-up child, and bidden to keep out of the way of those who had the grave business of life to attend to, and required to act upon their judgments in all things.