



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

CURRENT EVENTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Is There Anything in Prayer?—This is the title of a very suggestive discussion by J. Edward Park in the *Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1921. He declares that the conventional way of picturing prayer is artificial. A triangle is imagined in which the petitioner and the object of his solicitude are bases, and God is the apex. The praying person “sends up a prayer to God, which God considers, and, if it seems good to him sends down the answer.” In reality there is no such triangle. The experience of prayer and of its “answer” are simple aspects of one and the same total experience. In any crisis of life where intense desire for some event exists, there is a surplus of emotion which cannot be expressed in action. When one has done all he can, he must await the outcome. If the unsatisfied desire meanwhile finds no wholesome outlet, worry, fear, and morbidness result. In prayer one gives a constructive outlet for longing, and assumes a co-operative attitude toward the cosmic forces which determine the outcome. The situation is thus changed by prayer, and different results in experience actually occur. “Prayer is not asking God to change the course of things, but asking him to help me to be a part of that course of things.”

Is Naturalism Really Scientific?—Professor Herbert A. Youtz raises this pertinent question in a stimulating discussion entitled “A Missing World” (the *Personalist*, April and July, 1921). Just as the movements of the planet Uranus showed inexplicable variations until the new planet Neptune was discovered, so a purely mechanistic philosophy encounters disturbing phenomena so long as it attempts to do away with human personality. Professor Youtz insists that a real science must face *all* the facts. He contends as earnestly as do the advocates of naturalism that we must interpret all reality in terms of an evolutionary process. Personality is not to be saved by withdrawing it. “Man is bound up in the cosmic process as definitely as any animal. . . . All of our highest powers and capacities are linked by processes to the earlier stages and the lower animal powers. Mind itself is inseparable from brain. It is all one process, parts of one fact.” But when beings with intelligence and conscience emerge, “you have an actor and not a thing or a puppet.” “The cosmic process goes on, but man measurably

controls it and directs it and makes it work his purposes." To ignore or to obscure this fact is unscientific. Those who interpret the meaning of personal life—the theologians and philosophers—are as essential in a genuinely scientific world as are the scientists themselves.

What about Social Radicalism in the Churches?—Professor Harry F. Ward in the *Methodist Review* (September, 1921), raises this question in an article entitled "Which Way Will Methodism Go?" Shall the church become a defender and bulwark of the present social order? Or shall it be expected and encouraged to ask critical questions and to arouse debate over unsatisfactory conditions? There have been some notable attempts of late—especially in connection with the financial support of the Young Women's Christian Association—to persuade those interested in capitalistic control to withhold funds wherever Christian organizations are suspected of sympathy with radical social reforms. Professor Ward calls attention to the fact that the bulk of Methodist membership is rural and small town. "This section has long had an economic grievance against the financial world and its control of credit, transportation, and distribution." Public sentiment may thus be counted on to support a sober criticism of industrial conditions. The attempt to obscure the issue by bringing to the front theological controversy will fail, for not all theological modernists are social radicals, nor are "fundamentalists" inevitably conservative on industrial questions. A real passion for social regeneration will, Professor Ward believes, arouse a spirit of enthusiasm in Methodism. His diagnosis would seem to fit equally such a denomination as the Baptists, and all whose membership is recruited by evangelism among the common people.

What about Religious Leadership in Protestantism?—Professor Franklin H. Giddings in the *Independent*, August 20, 1921, presents a startling situation in Protestant churches. There are five thousand vacant pulpits this year in America and another five thousand will need ministers next year. But the seminaries have turned out only one thousand six hundred graduates this year. And not all of them can be counted on for ministerial service. While colleges and universities are over-crowded, why has the theological seminary a small attendance? Dr. Giddings' analysis of the present situation of the Protestant churches and their failing influence in the last generation, finds three outstanding causes: (1) bad theology, (2) bad Christianity, (3) bad Protestantism. His solution is concretely stated: "The Protes-

tant churches can save themselves if, and *only* if, they stand with courage and conviction for: (1) Intellectual honesty, attested by a respectful demeanor toward scientific thinking and historical scholarship; (2) Regeneration, attested by honest work and honest dealing; (3) Faith in regenerative forces, attested by liberty of conscience and respect for the free, moral agency of individual fellowmen."

The same facts form the basis of Glenn Frank's editorial comment in the *Century* for September. It is evident that for some reason the Protestant ministry does not attract students enough to supply the need for educated leaders. The precise difficulty is hard to determine. Undoubtedly the economic situation is a potent factor. Until churches are ready to give financial support to men of ability they cannot expect the best service. Even more important, however, is the sense of an opportunity to accomplish really big things. Here freedom to experiment is imperative. But the conservative tendencies of religion tend to put a premium on conventional activities and ideas.

The Religion of G. Bernard Shaw.—In the *Independent*, July 23, Preston Slosson tells of the religious experiences of Shaw. He was brought up in traditional Calvinism with its emphasis on supernaturalism and divine interventions. He regarded the teachings of Charles Darwin as destructive to the foundations of this religion. But gradually Shaw came to believe that Darwin was an honest naturalist trying to work out the theory of natural selection. But evolution could not be wholly explained on that theory for Shaw held that the creative energy of organic nature did not merely result from chance survival. It was through biology that Shaw found his present creed. He now believes that life is divine and that God is doing his best unceasingly in human evolution toward better things. Man has a sacred moral obligation to help God to perform this great task.

Should the Churches Scold the Colleges or Help Them?—This important question is raised by Rev. T. H. Taylor, in the *American Church Monthly*, August, 1921. Children both at home and in the church are too often fed religiously with mere conventional doctrines. When they are suddenly plunged into the freedom of the colleges and universities, they become bewildered. The wreck of faith is not entirely due to storms of the sea or the dangers of the voyage but largely to the improper fitting out of the ships before they leave the sheltered harbor of home and church. The intellectual difficulties of our day are inevitable. The church must be ready to help her youth to face the crises. First,

the ministers and the Sunday-school teachers need more definite courage to recognize the changes wrought in the traditional ideas and to be intellectually honest in dealing with the youth. Secondly, the minister should make more definite systematic efforts to acquaint people in his parish with the proven results of modern thought and to interpret these conclusions in a religious way.

Has the Church the Right to Judge Economic Questions?—Economic heresy hunters are a feature of modern religious life. They discredit certain leaders of the social movement in the churches, or cut off funds from religious organizations that utter moral judgment concerning industrial conditions and relations. This situation is discussed by Professor Harry F. Ward in the *Nation*, August 24, 1921. If the church has any right to give moral judgments on economic questions, that right must be derived from its ability to know the exact facts and on the basis of these to make a plan for human rights. It is deplorable that so frequently ministers are handicapped by inadequate knowledge in their endeavors to interpret the world of human passions. None the less the church must insist on its right to stand in defense of the spiritual interests of men. And this right it is staunchly defending today.

Democratizing Philanthropy.—Social betterment has been, in the past, a gift from the few to the many. Should it not rather be the cooperative effort of all? Mrs. Cornelia J. Cannon, in an article called "Philanthropic Doubts" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for September, states the case for organized activity, to replace the "orgy of charitable activity" that has characterized the last thirty years in America. "Our task is," she says, "not buttressing the weaknesses of our fellows with our strength, but organizing the energies of man to reconstruct his world."

Writing as a Side-Line for Ministers.—The *Writer* for August has a suggestive article, "Writing as a Side-Line for Ministers": "It would help many . . . ministers . . . to keep from growing rusty if they would use their spare time for side-line writing for magazines. It would quicken them intellectually, inspire them to better service, increase their audience, and awaken them to renewed interest in life. . . . Being a minister," the author, Mr. William S. Poole, continues, "I find much difference between preaching a sermon to the people of a congregation who take what I give them because I am their minister, and submitting an article to some editor at "usual rates" and getting

a rejection slip because I did not measure up. . . . This grindstone keeps my ax sharpened." He mentions the many ways in which a minister has the qualification for doing effective Christian work through the press.

The Women's Congress in Vienna.—The Third Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was held in Vienna during the month of July, with Miss Jane Addams presiding. Representatives from twenty-eight countries came as delegates, fraternal delegates, or visitors, and conferred with each other upon matters relating to the peace and freedom of a reconstructed world. Miss Florence Kelley, reporting the congress in the *Survey* for September, says: "In general the resolutions introduced by the national sections and from the floor, by their number, variety, and the tenacity with which several were advocated, registered growth in confidence, keeping step with the growth of women's political power since the first congress at the Hague in 1915."

Significant among the resolutions adopted were those bearing upon the problems of education, such as the resolution in favor of abolishing corporal punishment in all institutions, including reformatories; and for protecting children against misuse for political purposes. The focal point of a discussion of state or ecclesiastical control of education was a question put by Madame Duchêne of Paris: "If the self-governing nations cannot control their schools in the interest of the people, and of the future peace of the world, what is the basis of our hope that we can control any part of our government?"

A cable message from the congress carried congratulations to President Harding on calling an International Conference for the Limitation of Armaments, and the congress committed itself to a program of demonstrations in favor of immediate world-wide disarmament in the week previous to the conference.

Mobilizing Christian Public Opinion.—The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is performing an invaluable service in voicing the sentiments of Christian people. The following letter to President Harding is significant:

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, through its Commission on International Justice and Good-Will, desires to express to you its profound satisfaction in your invitation to other nations to join in a Conference on the Limitation of Armaments.

We rejoice in the step thus taken and earnestly hope that it may lead to some concerted plan by which general disarmament may be brought about.

We are convinced that this action would be of incalculable significance in making larger funds available for the constructive tasks of peace, in removing suspicion and misunderstanding among the nations, in abolishing war, and in promoting international good-will and brotherhood.

In declaring our conviction on this great moral issue, we are confident that we are voicing the sentiment of the overwhelming majority in all of the thirty denominations that comprise the Federal Council. At the meeting of the whole council last December, attended by official representatives of all these churches, action was taken urging our government "to co-operate fully with the governments of the world for the achievement of general disarmament." Similar action has been taken independently by practically all official church assemblies since that time. Beyond any question the religious forces of the nation are united in their desire to secure the early adoption, both nationally and internationally, of a thorough-going policy for the limitation of armaments.

We are, therefore, grateful to you for the step you have taken, pledge ourselves to use our best efforts to arouse the minds of the people to the moral principles that are at stake, and assure you that your action is supported by our united prayer that the coming conference may result in rich blessing to mankind.

A Creed for Peace-loving Christians.—The Commission on International Justice and Goodwill, of the Federal Council of Churches, has formulated the following:

CREED FOR BELIEVERS IN A WARLESS WORLD

Isaiah 2:2-4

- I. WE BELIEVE in a sweeping reduction of armaments.
- II. WE BELIEVE in international laws, courts of justice, and boards of arbitration.
- III. WE BELIEVE in a world-wide association of nations for world peace.
- IV. WE BELIEVE in equality of race treatment.
- V. WE BELIEVE that Christian patriotism demands the practice of goodwill between nations.
- VI. WE BELIEVE that nations no less than individuals are subject to God's immutable moral laws.
- VII. WE BELIEVE that peoples achieve true welfare, greatness and honor through just dealing and unselfish service.
- VIII. WE BELIEVE that nations that are Christian have special international obligations.
- IX. WE BELIEVE that the spirit of Christian brotherhood can conquer every barrier of trade, color, creed, and race.
- X. WE BELIEVE in a warless world, and dedicate ourselves to its achievement.