IN RELIGION'S REALM.

Expressions From the Various Religious Newspapers.

The Religious Thought of the Day as Expressed in the Sectarian Press—Some Matters of Interest to Both Ministers and Laymen.

"The theory that our wise leaders decided to abstain from radical changes and leave things in the Prayer Book substantially as they were, not because they were convinced that the things were true and ought to be retained, but because they could not decide what to substitute for them, is a theory at variance with the facts of the case," remarks the *Living Church* (P. E.) of Chicago. "The changes which have been made contradict the assumption that the church occupies the attitude of waiting for more light; there is no trace of that 'process of solution' in which she is said to be involved. These changes, though not numerous, are very definite; they do not look like a preparation for opening the gates to what is called 'modern thought,' but rather they erect additional barriers against those theories in religion which assume that proud name. The dogmatic element is strengthened not weakened. Men who desired to pave the way for great changes in doctrine would not have ordered a dogmatic creed to be publicly used, which before might not have been read at all. They would not have emphasized the doctrine of baptismal regeneration by introducing it where it did not occur before. They would not have placed a lesson in the confirmation office which gives new emphasis to the idea of a divine and supernatural gift conveyed through the laying on of hands. They would not have refrained so carefully from the various 'flexibilities' and 'adaptations' which might, without apparently touching doctrine, have seemed to meet some of the demands of the day, and instead of new features of that kind, have gone back and restored old elements omitted a century ago, even some which were left out three centuries ago. They would not have added a new holy day to celebrate a great miracle."

"What has the verdict determined?" asks the New York *Independent*, referring to the Briggs trial. "Simply this, that the teachings of Dr. Briggs are within the proper limits of toleration. It does not decide that they are right; it does not adopt them and commend them to the church. Many of those who voted for acquittal have distinctly declared that they do not accept or approve his views; but they insist that he is an earnest, scholarly seeker after the truth, and that he ought to have liberty to investigate, to think and to proclaim. This is what they say in their verdict. So far as the Presbytery of New York is concerned, he is not to be called to account for anything said in his inaugural address, which, when it first appeared, few approved, but many condemned as unguarded in statement, wrong in many conclusions, dangerous in tendency and showing more friendliness to the foes than to the defenders of an inspired Bible and a supernatural Christianity. The vote is a vote for a toleration wide enough to cover the views of an erratic mind that prefers the Martineau type of Christianity to the Spurgeon type; that honors the Unitarian who rejects the supernatural in the Scriptures and depends upon his own reason for divine authority; that lauds Cardinal Newman who prefers the church to the Bible."

The New York *Christian Intelligencer* (Ref.), in its comments on the Briggs case, says: "There is no desire on the part of the vast majority in the Presbyterian Church to restrain critical study of the Scriptures, or abridge personal liberty of belief within very broad confessional limits, but there is earnest opposition to having mere theories and disputed assumptions taught to theological students and published to the world with the authority of a Professor in a theological seminary, as so certainly established that not to accept them is the proclamation of one's ignorance. What is needed is not trials for heresy, so much as a better spirit on the part of theological teachers, if not a reorganization of the Prebsyterian system of seminary government. It is apparent, from the even division of the votes in the Presbyteries of New York and Cincinnati, that the Presbyterian Church is nearly evenly divided on the questions at issue, and a further pressing of the cases can only result in a division of that recently reunited body. To the majority in it, and a still greater majority out of it, this can only be regarded as a calamity to be avoided if at all possible. It is, therefore, to be hoped that there may be mutual concessions, and a way be found by which liberty of inquiry will be allowed without any jeopardy to the truth. There is an obligation in this direction as incumbent on the accused Professors as on their prosecutors."

"It is, of course, possible, but not probable, that this decision (in the Briggs case) will be accepted by the prosecution, and that Dr. Briggs and the Union Theological Seminary will be left hereafter undisturbed," says the New York *Christian Union*. "But the majority for the defense on some of the charges is small, the decision of the case of Professor Smith is favorable to the prosecutors, and the action of the General Assembly at the last two sessions has indicated a majority in favor of the policy of repressing freedom of scholarship and teaching within the Presbyterian Church. The differences between the two parties are certain to come up in another form, in the movement to amend the Confession of Faith, or to substitute a new and shorter creed, which latter movement is apparently gaining strength in some quarters. It is not, therefore, probable that the decision in either the Smith or the Briggs case will be accepted as final. If the decision of the New York Presbytery should be reversed; if the General Assembly should decide that Dr. Briggs cannot remain in the Presbyterian ministry while he holds and teaches his views, it would seem that a disruption of the church must almost inevitably follow. For these views are held and taught more or less distinctly and positively by all the Faculty of Union Theological Seminary, including Professor Briggs' successor in the Chair of Hebrew—Professor Francis Brown—by a considerable number of faculties of other Presbyterian theological seminaries, by not a few of its most eminent preachers, and by a large proportion, if not an absolute majority, of the graduates of the New School theological seminaries of the past ten or fifteen years. If, therefore, Dr. Briggs is ultimately condemned, either they must go out individually into other freer denominations, or in a body to form again a New School Presbyterian Church, or remain in the present body by sacrificing their convictions and keeping silence respecting the nature, constitution and authorship of the books of the Bible, which latter is an alternative not to be anticipated."

The *Christian Register* (Unt.) of Boston, in its remarks on the Briggs case, says: "But this is rather the beginning, and not the end, of the controversy. The two points which will in the future present themselves are—First, as to the truth of Dr. Briggs' opinions; and, secondly, can those holding them remain in good standing in the Presbyterian Church? So far as the real interest of the truth is concerned, it matters little what the General Assembly may finally do. The ascertained results of knowledge will stand, and no vote of the ecclesiastics can roll back or ultimately resist the conclusions of modern scholarship. If the Presbyterians or any others close their eyes to the light, so much the worse for them. It is a gratifying feature of the result of this trial that probably many who voted to acquit Dr. Briggs from the charge of heresy did not accept his opinions, but desired to make the Presbyterian Church broad enough to include him within the fold. But, as we have already said, this is only the beginning of the irresistible conflict. Even so staid and conservative a body as this cannot escape the influence of the time spirit, and must either move on or fall out of the real current of religious thought."

The following is from the *Congregationalist* of Boston: "The *Christian Mirror* of Portland, Me., has been discussing at length the doctrinal statements of one of the five young men ordained at Farmington, September 27th, and printing communications from Dr. J. G. Merrill, Moderator of the Ordaining Council, and others. The creed referred to was printed in the *Christian Union* and has been widely discussed. At the time we refrained from any extended comment on the matter in deference to the unanimous vote of the council, on which were brethren widely known, who have the confident of the churches. It is often neither wise nor just to judge of the fitness of candidates for ordination by their written statements only, or to pronounce judgment on councils ordaining them. It is to be supposed, when a creed is unsatisfactory and the council unanimously proceeds to ordain, that it is influenced by reasons satisfactory in themselves which have not been made public. We suppose this to have been the case at Farmington. But we frankly say that if the creed referred to is all that was presented, in our opinion it does not embody the faith of the Congregational churches, and we cannot sustain the action of the council in accepting it as sufficient evidence of the fitness of a candidate for the Congregational ministry. If something more satisfactory than this creed was presented to the council an injustice has been done to the candidates, the council and the churches in omitting its publication."

"The so-called gift for funeral discourse, which usually means simply that a preacher can be relied upon to eulogize the deceased and flatter the family pride of the mourners, is no gift at all," says the New York *Christian Advocate* (Methodist). "The minister who does it contradicts the words of Jesus and the doctrines which he himself preaches. He who, standing in the pulpit on the Sabbath, declares that those who live in sin cannot be saved, and when brought face to face with mourners who bewail the death of a friend, and deplore still more the life he lived, speaks as though the deceased had certainly ascended to glory, is a betrayer of the truth. Those who, to avoid this, are blunt and severe, or make any remark of the deceased which they would not dare to make to him if he were living, are not of the spirit of the Gospel. In such cases, by wise selection of the Scripture, as well as by unusual solemnity of manner, by omission, and by the administration of consolation without respect to the deceased's religious life, especially by showing that no spiritual consolation can be obtained by any one who is not himself in the favor of God, or seeking His face, the truth may be honored without wounding hearts already breaking."

The San Francisco *Western Witness* (R. C.) says: "The disclosures concerning Archbishop Ireland and Archbishop Corrigan are very painful and humiliating, as well as a terrible shock to the children of the Holy Church. At a moment when our separated children in the United States are striving to unify the sects, we who are one in faith are confronted by the gravest charge of disunion among the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries on matters of discipline.

"To the most casual observer a serious rent in the archiepiscopal body has been plainly visible since the arrival of Monsignor Satolli. Those among us watching the signs of the times have been struck by the fact that if one of the Archbishops mentioned above was announced to be Cardinal, in a few days the other was, by the press, nominated in like manner. Those familiar with current news in Rome knew that Miss Eades (not Ides as in the dispatch) as a faithful Matriarch, wrote and cabled opportune matter for Archbishop Corrigan. This was well balanced by equally interesting cablegrams sent by Archbishop Ireland, when in Rome, regardless of expense—story puts the figures in several thousands."

"We would fain hope against hope that there must be gross exaggeration in the dispatches. We should belie our information to say there was no truth. The so-called conspiracy must of necessity unearth another, to which a hint was given in our last week's number. If so, it will be seen the conspirator's work is not limited to opposing or supporting the Papal delegate.

"All this will throw back the work of the church at least fifty years in our beloved country. We of the laity can only wait and earnestly pray. The *Witness* has taken for its motto: 'The truth will make you free,' and its norma of action is and shall be, 'Locuta est Roma, causa finita est.' We have been persecuted because we have followed the decrees of Baltimore and the Orders of the Holy See to use Catholic books in the Catholic schools of San Francisco, but it has not altered our determination to be always on the side of the Pope. We and our readers will await in prayer and silence for the issue of this shocking crisis. Were it but the matter of a Cardinal's hat, as suggested by the secular press, it would matter little in our glorious democratic republic; not so where the practical daily life of the church is in question."

COLE OF SIERRA.

Words of Praise from a Marysville Paper—His Qualifications.

[From the Marysville Democrat.]

The announcement has been made that D. T. Cole of Sierra County has been, or is to be, appointed to the position of Harbor Commissioner, soon to become vacant. This is an important office and one that should be filled by a man of good business ability and strict integrity, as there is considerable chance for a big leakage in that place. The *Democrat* is not a partisan journal and seldom takes part in discussing the qualifications and merits of men for political office, yet we feel inclined to say that Governor Markham will make no mistake if he appoints Mr. Cole. He is a pioneer citizen of the State and has filled with ability and strict integrity several important offices of honor and trust. At present Mr. Cole owns quite large property interests in Yuba County, both real and personal, and is one of the directors of the Northern California Bank of Savings in Marysville. He is also largely interested in hotel and mill property in Sierra County, where he resided many years, until about four years ago, when he bought real property in San Francisco and erected buildings, expending about $60,000, and resides in that city. At the election of 1890 he was a nominee in this district for member of the State Board of Equalization and came within a few votes of defeating R. H. Beamer, receiving a vote largely in excess of that of his party. Mr. Cole was a delegate to the National Republican Convention held at Minneapolis last year, and for years past has taken an active and conspicuous part in the politics of the State. His appointment will be received with general satisfaction, and he will be found an efficient and honest official, who will at all times stand with the people and oppose boodle measures.

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HORRORS OF DAHOMEY.

The Frightful Human Sacrifices Practiced There.

One Thousand Slaves Put to Death When the Present King Was Crowned—A Beautiful Country—The Object of the Present French Invasion of It.

The military operations of the French against Dahomey have caused public attention to be directed more than ever before to this little-known country, whose name for many years has been a synonym for savage cruelty, for of all the tales of barbarity which Africa has given to the world, and they are innumerable, no one has ever exceeded the story of Dahomey. The atrocities which are an every-day sight in this out-of-the-way corner of the Dark Continent are all the more terrible in that they are perpetrated in the name of religion, and every massacre, however hideous, is really a sacrifice.

THE DAHOMAN RELIGION.

The religion of the Dahomans is a form of nature worship. They believe in one great supreme being, whom they consider too far removed from earth to concern himself in the least about human affairs, but who delegates his power to a host of inferior deities, who have their homes in the fields, the forests, the springs; who preside over the crops, the rains, and the sunshine. To these sacrifices are annually made with great pomp and ceremony of things as precious as the worshipers can procure. Nothing is more precious than human life, and the King, who rules Dahomey like a demi-god, being regarded as such by his people, makes every year such sacrifices as he deems becoming to the dignity of a monarch who terms himself the brother of the stars. These annual sacrifices are called the "customs," and every year from sixty to one hundred victims are put to death, partly in honor of the gods and partly to carry news to the dead.

The Dahomans believe in the immortality of the soul, and also that every soul enters the other world in precisely the same condition in which it leaves this; that a king is forever a king; that a slave can never hope for freedom. Every year, when the season for the "customs" approaches, a certain number of persons, sometimes the King's own subjects, sometimes captives taken in war, are selected for the sacrifice. The native Dahomans are alone intrusted with the duty of bearing the King's messages to the dead, and each, in turn, is brought to the King on the great day of the festival. The supreme ruler of Dahomey whispers into the ear of the doomed man the message he is to convey to the other world, and he is immediately decapitated. In Dahomey no sanctity is attached to human remains. The bodies of the victims are dragged to the suburbs of Abomey, the Capital, where clouds of hungry vultures wait for the coming feast, and in a few hours nothing is left of the unhappy victim but the bones. Nor are these interred, and hundreds of acres of ground in the vicinity of the Capital are strewed with the whitened relics of mortality. The skulls alone are preserved; carefully cleaned, they become trophies, and are seen everywhere in the vicinity of the Capital, on door posts, on poles, on the cornices of the houses, while the walls of the temple are almost entirely composed of these ghastly reminders.

FATE OF THE SLAVES.

The King's people are rarely subjected to the horrid tortures that fall to the fate of the slaves. The Dahomans are a warlike people, and every year raids are organized into the neighboring country to recruit the number of slaves. In the palmy days of the slave trade sacrifices of the captives were by no means so numerous as after its suppression. Then a slave was valuable, and the cupidity of the King prevented such destruction of property as was involved in the sacrifice of human life. But since the suppression of the traffic in human flesh the lives of slaves are comparatively worthless in Dahomey, and hundreds are annually put to death with the most savage tortures. They are dismembered limb by limb; they are tied to posts and hounds are set to worry them to death; they are securely fastened to the ground near the nests of the ferocious ants of the country, that attack them and tear their flesh, bit by bit, away, the spectacle of a still living man with his body half eaten by the ants being not infrequently seen. Near the royal palace there are long avenues, and when the King desires to receive an embassy with unusual pomp gibbets are erected, and on these are hung, head downward, dozens of hapless slaves, there to remain, guarded by the King's soldiers, until death puts an end to their sufferings. Even before the breath has left the body, however, the vulture, in Dahomey a sacred bird, begins his work, and the screams of the sufferers, torn to pieces by the greedy birds, render the vicinity of the palace hideous. Shocking as are the daily exhibitions of cruelty in this terrible country, they are far surpassed by the scenes which take place when a monarch is crowned. The new King provides himself as speedily as possible with a sufficient number af victims, and then celebrates the "grand customs," in which from 500 to 1,000 men are put to death in order to provide the deceased King with a suitable retinue in the other world. Then blood flows in streams. On the accession of the present ruler so great was the number of those thus wantonly slain that a large trench was made in the ground, in which a canoe was placed. The blood of the murdered men was conducted by conduits into the trench until its quantity was sufficient to float the boat.

CHARACTER OF THE COUNTRY.

Yet Dahomey is a country the character of which recalls the lines of the old hymn, "Where every prospect pleases and only man is vile." Near the coast the land is low and sandy, but a few miles from the sea the forests of the interior begin, and present a scene of leafy grandeur such as can be seen nowhere outside of the tropics. Most of the trees are of gigantic size, while intertwined creepers and vines, overhead and under foot, render the progress of the footmen almost impossible. Further on the forests give way to rolling lands of wonderful beauty and matchless fertility. In any part of the country two crops are possible in every agricultural year, but so little acquaintance have the people with practical agriculture that they never raise more than is necessary for their own consumption; famines are far from uncommon, and the population of Dahomey is actually decreasing. There is excellent reason for this fact, aside from the horrid sacrifices. Polygamy is common; every man has as many wives as he can get; the King has from 3,000 to 6,000. Besides, in connection with the royal establishment there is a body of troops, the Amazons, the like to which the world elsewhere does not show a parallel. Nominally the King's wives, they are rarely so save in name, but are nevertheless kept in seclusion. They drill in private, and when they march abroad a herald precedes them warning all men from the streets. They number from 1,200 to 3,000, according to circumstances, form the King's body guard, and from all accounts are far more savage and bloodthirsty than the men. From their earliest years they are carefully trained to cruelty, and the private sacrifices of the palace, where they alone officiate as torturers and executioners, are believed, from what is known of them, to exceed in diabolical savagery anything that is ever seen in public. Human sacrifices and the practical celibacy of so large a number of women have reduced the population of Dahomey, once believed to exceed 3,000,000, to less than 500,000, and the decline is still proceeding at a very rapid rate.

SCHEMES OF THE FRENCH.

The French war in Dahomey is a part of a long conceived plan to build up in the western part of Africa a French colonial empire of grand dimensions. Already in possession of Algiers and Tunis, the French aspire to the control of the Western Sahara, the Valley of the Niger, and a large part of the Guinea coast. The Sahara is by no means the desolate sandy desert that has been depicted in schoolbooks, but abounds in oases which are capable of supporting a large population. Experience has shown that in many places water may be obtained by sinking artesian wells, and this being the case, the desert may yet blossom like the rose. A railroad has already been projected to connect the Algerian possessions of France with the coast of Guinea, but complete subjection of the hostile tribes of coast and interior is a necessity before such a line can be built, to say nothing of its maintenance. The French military operations against Dahomey are therefore in line with the French progress southward through the Sahara; Dahomey must be conquered before the French African empire can exist. Many months ago the war was begun by French aggression from the French colonies in Guinea, and has been going on with varying success ever since.

The Amazons fight well, and the character of the country through which the French have been forced to make their way renders progress very slow. Having passed the coast, they are now penetrating the forests and mountains a few miles inland, but the Amazons are skillful in bush fighting and the French are placed at no small disadvantage, having repeatedly fallen into ambuscades. Of their ultimate success but little doubt can be entertained, for their superiority of weapons and their military training gives them an advantage that the untrained courage, even of the Dahoman Amazons, cannot overcome, and their conquest of the county will remove one of the most appalling blots on the face of the earth. Civilized races are not commonly gentle in their dealings with savages, and the stories from time to time made public of French cruelty to their prisoners may be all true; but even when all this is taken into the account, the establishment of a responsible government in Dahomey and the abolition of the horrid sacrifices will rid Africa of one of its most terrible curses, the wanton destruction of life.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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—OF—
Anaheim Irrigation District.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT UNTIL the 27TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1893, at 2 o'clock P. M. of that day, sealed pyoposals will be received by the Board of Directors of the Anaheim Irrigation District, in the County of Orange, State of California, at their office, in the City of Anaheim, county and State aforesaid, for the purchase of $300,000 of the issue of the bonds of said district, which said bonds were issued in accordance with the provisions of an Act of the Legislature, known as the "Wright Act," as amended by an Act approved March 29, 1891, the entire issue thereof consisting of eleven hundred bonds of the par value of $500 each, and five hundred bonds of the par value of $100 each, dated ——— and payable in ten series, as provided in said Act, interest and principal payable at the office of the Mercantile Trust Company, New York. Said proposals should be addressed to said board and indorsed "Proposals for Purchase of Bonds," and will be opened by said board on the day and hour above mentioned, and the purchase awarded to the highest bidder; but the board reserves the right to reject any and all bids. Said proposals to be accompanied by a certified check, payable to the order of said board, in the amount of 2 per cent. of each and all bids.

By order of said board.

B. V. GARWOOD, Secretary.
Dated January 3, 1893. ja6-20t

BONDS FOR SALE.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN BY THE Board of Directors of the Linda Vista Irrigation District of San Diego County, California, that said board intends to sell $840,000 of the bonds of said district on SATURDAY, the 28th day of January, 1893, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon of that day, and will receive sealed proposals for the purchase of said amount of bonds, at its office in said district, until that day and hour, when the proposals will be opened and considered by said board.

[SEAL.] JAMES P. JONES, President.
GEORGE K. PHILLIPS, Secretary.
Dated January 5, 1893. ja6-td

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