

THE CHURCHMAN

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LUXURY AND POVERTY :

A CALL TO A SIMPLER LIFE.

A NUMBER of past and present heads of the social and religious "settlements" in London have put forth a memorial calling attention to the extreme of luxury which exists alongside the extreme of poverty. They submit that luxury which leads people to much expenditure on private enjoyment, amusement, or display, without making them more useful to the community, is an actual cause of poverty. It is allowed that money spent in luxury employs labour, but it is urged that money spent on developing the productive powers of individuals or the land employs as much or more labour, increases capital, and has for its result a healthier and wealthier population, whose increased demand for the necessaries of life makes the broadest basis of trade and industry. Without elaborating the economic argument the memorialists try to show, from their own experience, how the example of luxury permeating the whole body of society makes for poverty :—

1. It seems to set up "having" rather than "being" as the chief object of life, and under its influence the individual's powers of admiration, hope, and love are neglected. Education comes to be regarded as a means of livelihood only, not of life, charity tends to treat men and women as animals with no wants beyond food and shelter. But these neglected powers of "being" are those by which men live.

2. It induces the selfishness which makes us, as a nation, indifferent to the ugliness of our towns. When private possession of wealth is regarded as necessary to happiness, the sky is defiled with smoke, grass and trees are destroyed, and slum quarters are permitted in order that successful people may surround themselves with the comforts and beauty which art and skill provide.

3. It leads to cruelty in our industrial relations. When among rich and poor no good seems comparable to the good which money can procure, profits are put before health, gambling before work, and force before right; child labour is used, conditions of trade and housing which cripple strength are permitted, and wars, industrial as well as foreign, are justified; landlords take their rent, and holders of shares in companies take their dividends, and forget earners' sufferings. Human beings injured and weakened are thrown on the scrap-heap, they become unemployed and unemployable, and poverty follows.

The memorialists do not ask for extremes of asceticism or of voluntary poverty. They ask for the example of full lives spent in refined homes; lives which find their interest in clear thinking and deep feeling, so that people may realise that the greatest happiness is within their reach if they will seek "to be" rather than "to have." Neither do they presume to put any narrow definition on luxury :—

"We believe," they conclude, "that the example of a simpler life—more effectively than great money gifts—would contribute to national stability. It is an example to whose power all high religious ideals bear witness, and to those who call themselves Christians not only the teaching but the very spirit of Christ must surely, in this respect, make peculiar appeal. We leave to the individual and national conscience the interpretation of what is meant by simple living."

Most gladly do we welcome and endorse this appeal by Canon Barnett and his colleagues on behalf of restoring greater simplicity of life in place of the insensate luxury which stands in such appalling contrast to the poverty which exists in our midst. The question is one on which all who devote themselves to social service can heartily agree, whether they themselves are Anglicans or Roman Catholics, Nonconformists or Agnostics; and it is one on which

plain-speaking, when it is free (as this appeal is) from false statement and exaggerated rhetoric, may do considerable good.

The appeal is primarily based on moral and religious grounds, but the signatories allude to the economic aspect of the question, and are evidently conscious of having strong economic arguments on their side. The distinction between productive and unproductive labour, and between productive and unproductive consumption, is familiar to all students of political economy. From the purely economic standpoint there can be no doubt that a country is in a healthier condition when the maximum of money is spent on employing productive labour, and in a less healthy condition when a large proportion of capital is employed in a multiplicity of trades which only minister to the luxuries and extravagances of a comparatively limited number of its citizens. This, however, is not the point on which emphasis is chiefly laid. The heads of settlements are more concerned to show the mischief which is being wrought by the setting up of a false ideal—the ideal, as they aptly describe it, of *having* rather than of *being*; the practical acceptance of the profoundly anti-Christian view that a man's life does, after all, consist in the abundance of the things that he possesseth. Luxury does only affect the wealthiest classes. The ideal which it represents permeates all classes, materialises them, deadens them to spiritual aspirations—even to intelligence in secular life and conduct. Further, it engenders a recklessness in the race for wealth which makes those who engage in commerce and in manufacture careless as to the conditions under which the workers carry on their work: profits, rents, dividends are regarded as the essential objects of industry; little or no thought is given to the fate of the human instruments by whom the dividends are earned—

“human beings, injured and weakened, are thrown on the scrap-heap; they become unemployed and unemployable, and poverty follows.”

Such is the picture drawn in the appeal, and, unhappily, there can be little doubt of its substantial accuracy. No great city in the history of the world has ever presented a more pitiful contrast of the extremes of wealth and the extremes of poverty than the London of to-day. We are reminded that twenty-eight out of every thousand Londoners—or nearly three per cent. of the population—are paupers. The problem of the unemployed is with the authorities every winter, and during the last few months it has overtaxed the resources of the Local Government administrators, and baffled their carefully planned schemes of relief. A considerable proportion of the children who come to the elementary schools are so underfed that it is useless—indeed cruel—to expect them to engage in brain work. And alongside with these phenomena of endemic poverty we have the opposite phenomena of increasing wealth. Consider the rapid multiplication of places of amusement, many of them of a luxurious type, and the equally rapid growth of monster palatial hotels. In private life the standard of living has risen in the same ratio. The luxuries of half-a-century ago have become the necessities of to-day. Incomes once considered to constitute wealth are now held to be a mere competence, and what was once thought a competence would now be accounted a perilous approximation to poverty. When Samuel Warren wrote *Ten Thousand a Year* that figure was taken to represent great wealth. Since then the Hudson has flowed into the Thames, and, judged by the American standard of silver kings and oil kings, and steel trusts, or the South African scale of gold and diamond mine-owners, the rent roll of an early Victorian landowner or the balance-sheet of a

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prosperous eighteenth-century trader would seem mean and insignificant.

Not, of course, that luxury is a modern invention. It has been in all ages, one may suppose, a com-

though pagan moralists might denounce luxury. there was nothing in pagan religion which could act as a check upon it; luxury was in no sense alien to or in conflict with the

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mon-place of satirists, moralists, and preachers. Sumptuary laws were devised in vain, and it needed something more potent than the shafts of satire to effect a remedy. But

spirit of pagan self-development or the freedom of natural life and impulse. That is not the case with Christianity. The Christian is bound to acknowledge that luxury is alien



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to the "mind of Christ." It is true that He did not live as an ascetic like the Baptist, but any sober analysis of His teaching or His example must convince us that He Who spoke so sternly of the perils of riches, and chose to be known on earth as the Carpenter's Son, did not sanction luxury as an ideal for the attainment of His followers; and the most superficial knowledge of Church history would enable us to see that the men who have lived most consistently with Christ's teaching have been those who have detached themselves most completely from so false an ideal.

The signatories of the appeal do not attempt to prescribe any exact definition of luxury; they prefer to "leave to the individual and national conscience the interpretation of what is meant by simple living." Few things are more perplexing than the casuistry of wealth, and we do no doubt that there are in England at the present moment hundreds of affluent men and women whose consciences are uneasy, perhaps tormented, because of their doubts as to whether they are justified in profuse expenditure on this or that indulgence. Yet to the individual conscience it must be left; there can be no procrustean rule. The appeal is not conceived in any ascetic or puritanical spirit; it is not directed against refinement or art, or the possibilities of enjoying what is beautiful in the world around us. But luxury for the sake of ostentation, and the desire to accumulate fortunes which it is difficult to find the means of spending in order to eclipse a rival and to achieve notoriety or to buy social success—these things would come under the ban; and, short of these, an immense amount of expenditure by less wealthy people on food, and on dress, and on fine houses upon a scale quite disproportionate to their income. The appeal makes mention of the enormous total of the national

drink bill—now nearly £175,000,000. If some of the balance-sheets of the wealthy were to be published, we wonder what would be the proportion between the expenditure on almsgiving or religious objects and that on wine, or milliners' bills, or theatre or entertainments. Out of the thousands of nominal Christians who, without any great sacrifice, could give away a tithe of their income, how few there are who do anything of the kind! A tithe of the incomes of affluent Churchmen would solve the financial problems of the Church offhand; a tithe of the riches of Great Britain would provide open spaces and better housing, and would do all that can be done by money for the settlement of our social problems. But it is not the poor only that would be benefited by the restraint of luxury; it would be an even greater blessing to the rich themselves, and it would purify the social atmosphere in which the whole nation lives and moves.

—Guardian.

We all complain of the shortness of time, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do; we are always complaining that our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them.—Seneca.

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Parish Notes.

S. JOHN'S PARISH.

Holy Week passed off very well, the Ven. Archdeacon Whittington being the special preacher on Palm Sunday, and the Rev. Chas. Vaughan taking the Holy Week addresses. The congregations throughout the week were very good, taking all things into consideration. We were very glad to have Mr. Vaughan amongst us, and feel sure that many will long remember the eloquent and deeply impressive remarks.

Good Friday was on the whole very well observed, though we were sorry to note that sports and the like were being held in places near Launceston, tempting some to regard it as no more than a holiday. To the Christian who is in earnest Good Friday must ever be sacred, because it is our commemoration of the death of Christ. The various services in S. John's were all very well attended, notably the "Three Hours" taken by Mr. Vaughan. In the evening, in the school-room, there was a Lantern Service taken by the Rev. F. A. Fernau, at which there was a good congregation, the school-room being very full though not crowded.

A good many people object, for various reasons, to Lantern Services. Had any such been present at the service on Good Friday night and seen the reverence and the attention of the people, we think they would have condoned the innovation, and recognised that the lantern can be made of the greatest use for missionary purposes. We are indebted to S. John's choir for the great help they gave at the service, to Mrs. Fray who presided at the organ, to Mr. H. Brownrigg for manipulating the lantern.

We believe that very soon no church will consider itself properly equipped without a lantern for Mission and Sunday-school purposes, and for that reason we were glad to see that S. John's Sunday-school has invested in a bioscope, which we feel sure will be made use of not only for amusement but also for education. Children are taught as easily, if not more easily, through the eye as through the ear.

Easter Day was as usual carefully observed. There were celebrations of H.C. at 6, 7, 8, 10, and again after 11 o'clock Morning Prayer in S. John's, at 9 in S. Oswald's, at 11.15 in S. Aidan's. The total number of Communicants for the day reaching to very nearly 400. The Rev. C. Vaughan preached morning and evening in S. John's. The Rev. C. G. Wilkinson, as usual, rendered invaluable help in the matter of celebrations, indeed without his assistance we should have been hard put to it, through our long list of services.

S. George's Day this year fell upon the same Sunday as Easter Day, and there was a special service in S. John's in the afternoon, attended by the president and members of S. George's Society. The Rev. C. Vaughan was the preacher, and gave a very stirring address on loyalty, which was much appreciated and most attentively listened to.

By the time this number of "The Churchman" is in the hands of its readers, the session of Synod will have begun. We hope that Launceston people will give the members of Synod so hearty a welcome that this will not be the last session held here. During Synod week the services in S. John's will be as follows:—H.C. every morning, except Tuesday, 7.30; Matins, 10.0; Evensong, 7.10.

The Launceston Musical and Literary Competitions were held in Easter Week. S. John's Choir entered for two events, having first prize awarded to them in one, losing first prize by two marks in the other. Better luck next time.

HOLY TRINITY PARISH.

We will give first place to Easter in our reports. Truly Easter Day of this year was a glorious one. Our Church had been made lovely indeed by some willing hands, and the abundance of flowers and green had hardly ever been equalled before. On the Sunday before Easter the Rector asked people to send for the purpose palms and ferns in pots, remarking that only the best could be worthy of the object, and the result was the magnificent groups of these in different places. The decorators are to be commended for the work. Not the least beautiful was the altar, with its eight vases, looking as it should on Easter Day, a thing of beauty in itself. The attendance at Holy Communion was very good, the total for the day—211—being the highest we have known in Trinity, and 43 increase on last Easter. The services were all bright and cheerful, and we congratulate the choir on leading so well the worship of the day, all the more when we remember that several members were away.

Good Friday Services were fairly well attended, and we have to thank the Rev. C. Vaughan for a most interesting address in the evening.

Trinity Young Men's Club.—The club is now in full swing for this season, and will meet every Monday and Wednesday night at 7.30 to 9.30.

Trinity Girl's Club.—The Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday, April 25th, when it was decided to open

for this season on Tuesday, May 2nd, at 7.15 p.m., and Tuesday in each week at 7.15 p.m. to 9.15 p.m. The following committee for 1905 was elected:—President, Mrs Barry; Mrs F. Croft; Misses Nichols, Spotswood, E. Fraser, E. Dutton, and M. Sutton, hon. sec.

Synod Week.—We are all looking forward to the holding of Synod in Launceston, and hope it may be successful in every way. Trinity Parish has been doing its share manfully in the work of preparation. Those who are sending cakes, etc., for the reception on Monday afternoon are asked to send them to the Albert Hall as soon after 10 a.m. as possible. Let one and all make a point of being present at the Public Meeting in the same Hall on Monday night.

Trinity Mission Hall, Inveresk.—On Saturday afternoon, April 8th, the children attending the Monday afternoon work classes assembled in the private grounds of Mrs Aubrey Weedon, at Invermay, for their annual treat. Mrs Weedon had done everything to ensure a pleasant gathering; the grounds were gay with flags, and S. George's tent had been lent for the provisions. A number of races for the different classes were run, various games going, and swings kept the place alive and merry. About 5 o'clock the children sat down to tea. Plenty of good things continued to issue from the tent till all were satisfied. Then the Rector presented the prizes won in the classes during the past season. A few more games, the distribution of sweets, and then the children gathered with the Rector and teachers, and gave three hearty cheers for Mrs Weedon. This was the signal for home, and all went away feeling that the picnic in Mrs Weedon's grounds was very much nicer than the confinement of the Hall.

A concert was held on Wednesday, May 3rd, in the Inveresk Mission Hall in aid of the Sunday-school prizes. A large audience quite filled the Hall, and everything passed off to the evident satisfaction of all. Mr F. Richardson's phonograph was highly appreciated, and Miss Whitelaw had to respond to an encore for an excellent recitation. An enjoyable programme was given, concluding with the farce entitled "Box and Cox," by Messrs. E. Nicholas, R. Rosevear, and Champion. Miss K. Richardson and Mr J. H. Brown presided at the piano, and the Rev. E. G. Barry occupied the chair. The piano was kindly loaned by Messrs. Munnew and Findlay. The items presented were:—Piano solo, Miss Kent; song, Miss Wood; recitation, Miss Whitelaw; phonograph, Mr F. Richardson; song, Mr Oliver; auto-harp solo, Mr F. Croft; song, Mr F. Harrison; recitation, Miss Whitelaw; song, Miss Heales; phonograph, Mr F. Richardson; piano duet, Mr Brown and Miss Nicholas.

Sunday, April 30th.—A Harvest Thanksgiving Service was held. The Hall had been very nicely decorated, and much fruit, corn, and bread was in evidence. A large congregation assembled on Sunday night, and a very bright and taking service was entered into with spirit by all. The choir deserves a word of praise for its nice singing.

S. GEORGE'S, INVERMAY.

We regret to have to chronicle in our notes that Mrs. Armstrong has found it impossible, owing to ill-health, to keep on the Girls' Bible Class. Some of the members of the class have taken teachers' positions in the Sunday-school, and are showing signs of the good teaching they received at Mrs. Armstrong's hands, the others have come into the first class, and later on a senior division

will be formed, and instruction given by the superintendent. We cannot thank Mrs. Armstrong too heartily for her untiring work, and we feel sure sincere appreciation of all her work will be felt by those whom she has been teaching. When the winter has passed we hope an improvement in her health will be noticed.

The Easter season has come and gone with all its many blessings. The services on Easter Day, as they should be, hearty and well attended, and the number of Communicants was large. The weather was particularly fine, and allowed many aged and invalid to attend the great service of thanksgiving.

The initial social of the Guild will be held on May 31st, and a committee has the arrangements well in hand, so that a successful gathering should result. This month the Guild social will take the place of the regular monthly one to be given during the winter by the elder classes in the school.

We are pleased to see our old friend, Mr Rattan, again. He is the guest of Mr T. W. Massey, and is up for Synod. He is looking very well, showing that the rigours of the large Stanley Parish are agreeing with him.

S. George's congregation realises its responsibilities in regard to the coming session of Synod, and besides giving help in the way of cakes, etc., for the afternoon teas in connection with the "At Home," and on certain Synod days, the members are extending hospitality to some half-dozen visiting Synodsmen. The meeting of Synod in Launceston is an experiment, and we hope it will prove a successful one. If the interest shown by Church people at S. George's is a criterion, it certainly will be.

S. PAUL'S PARISH.

Our Church folk have had a very busy time since our last notes appeared. First of all our committee, who are responsible for collecting for the S. Paul's share of the refreshments required at the Albert Hall on Monday, the 8th May, at 3 p.m., and at the marquee in S. John's Church grounds, near the school-room in Elizabeth Street on Thursday, May 11th, have been most successful in obtaining the necessary help from the parishioners; every one has responded to the call made, and most willingly, too; and the Rector and Churchwardens tender their grateful thanks to one and all for what they are so kindly doing. We would ask that the things be sent to the Albert Hall before 12 o'clock on Monday, the 8th, and to the marquee by 2.30 on Thursday, the 11th.

Easter has come and gone, and we hope left pleasant memories of bright and hearty services for that Holy Day. The congregations were very large, and the Church looked its best, notwithstanding the scarcity of white flowers, which fortunately did not affect us; we had any amount to do our very best with, and certainly we must congratulate the decorators on their work, which must indeed have been a labour of love, judging by the time they so willingly give up to this good work. The Rector preached at both services, taking for his text in the morning the words, "Heavenness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and at evensong, "And they remember His words," the large congregations listening with deep attention to the subjects which were presented to them.

On Sunday, the 30th, we had our Harvest Thanksgiving Service. Ever since the Rector instituted this ser-

vice more than 30 years ago, it has always been the custom at S. Paul's to hold it on the Sunday after Easter Day, and though late in the season, was if anything more successful than in previous years, the earnest band of church workers having one and all done their best to make the little church as beautiful as possible. The colours used were white, crimson, and yellow, with lovely autumn foliage, intermingled with grain. The decorations of the east window, Altar vases, and beautiful crimson and white cross under the white marble one, standards and arches, choir stalls, pulpit, lectern, Litany desk, font, west and side windows were carried out in a most effective manner, and at night the effect was most beautiful. The services both morning and evening were fully choral, and each commenced with the singing of a Harvest Hymn; special psalms, lessons, hymns, and prayers were used. The Rector preached at both services, taking in the morning for his text Psalm lxx., 9, "Thou visitest the earth and blessest it, Thou makest it very plenteous," and in the evening from Matthew xiii., 31, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Both addresses were listened to with marked attention by the large congregations present. The singing also was very hearty on both occasions.

Mr Cooke and Major Court are busy making arrangements for a children's entertainment in the Sunday-school at an early date. We trust to the parents to help us by allowing their children to attend the practices, and then by helping us with their presence on the eventful evening.

Next Sunday, May 7th, the children are to have a holiday in the afternoon to enable the superintendent and teachers to be present at S. John's when the Lord Bishop delivers his Synodal address at 3 p.m.

St. John's.

BAPTISMS.

- April 5—Ellen Linda Jones.
 " 8—Hilma Rosena Jacobson.
 " 12—Daisy Gwendoline Field.
 " 19—Eric Matson.
 " Ila May Price.
 " Zillah Iris Lathey.
 " Mildred Irene Ferguson.
 " 26—Hazel Edna Armitage.
 " Amy Louisa Britton.
 May 3—William Thomas Morley.
 " Jean Winifred Harris.

MARRIAGE.

- April 22—Frank McDonald to Maud Louisa Pillgrem.

BURIALS.

- April 10—Frances Elizabeth Green.
 " Letitia Mary Kelly.
 " Warick Wettenhall.
 " 19—Bernard Phillips.
 " 20—Arthur Rex.

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THE VISION OF MIRZAH.

When I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several Oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled, "The Vision of Mirzah," which I have read over with great pleasure, which I have translated word for word as follows:—

"On the 5th day of the moon, which according to the custom of my forefathers I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotion, I ascended the high high hills of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, surely, said I, man is but a shadow and life a dream. Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes towards the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a little musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceedingly sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard; they put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of the last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

"I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a genius; and that several had been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised

my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him as one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The Genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarised him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, Mirzah, said he, I have heard thee in my soliloquies; follow me.

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, cast thy eyes eastward, said he, and tell me what thou seest. I see, said I, a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it. The valley that thou seest, said he, is the Vale of Misery, and the tide of water that thou seest is part of the great Tide of Eternity. What is the reason, said I, that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other? What thou seest, said he, is that portion of eternity which is called Time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the world to its consummation. Examine now, said he, this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discovereth in it. I see a bridge, said I, standing in the midst of the tide. The bridge thou seest, said he, is human life, consider it attentively. Upon a more leisurely survey of it I found that it consisted of three-score and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which added to those that were entire, made up

the number about an hundred. As I was counting the arches, the Genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it: but tell me further, said he, what thou discoverest on it. I see multitudes of people passing over it, said I, and a black cloud hanging on each end of it. As I looked more attentively I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge, into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination, perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that the throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their number was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent after so long a walk.

"I passed some time in the contemplation of the wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everthing that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and

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danced before them; but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scymetars in their hands, who ran to and fro upon the bridge, thrusting several persons on the trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been forced upon them.

"The Genius seeing me indulge myself in this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it: take thine eyes off the bridge, said he, and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend. Upon looking up, what mean, said I those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens, cormorants,

and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches. These, said the Genius, are envy, avarice, superstition, despair, love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.

"I here fetched a deep sigh, alas, said I, man was made in vain! How is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death! The Genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. Look no more, said he, on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it. I directed my sight as I was ordered, and (whether or no the good Genius strengthened it

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Munnew & Findlay,
Launceston.

with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate) I saw the valley opening at the farther end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted thickly with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the side of fountains, or resting on beds of flowers: and could hear confused harmony of singing birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the Genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. The islands, said he, that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore: there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among these islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirzah,

habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him. I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length, said I, show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant. The Genius making me no answer, I turned about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."—*Spectator*.

☪

THERE IS NO UNBELIEF!

Whoever plants a seed beneath a sod
And waits to see it push away the clod—
He trusts in God.

Whoever says, when clouds are in the sky,
"Be patient, heart; light breaks by and by,"
Trusts the Most High.

Whoever sees, 'neath winter's field of snow,
The silent harvest of the future grow,
God's power must know.

Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock each sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep.

There is no unbelief!
And day by day and night unconsciously,
The heart lives by that faith the lips deny—
God knowing why.

☪

If civilization is to make any sufficient answer for itself and for the many serious ills it promotes, it ought to be that it renders the vicissitudes of life less extreme, that it provides a resource for all of us against excessive want.