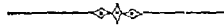


should say the same. Canon GREGORY'S "The Work of the Church during the present century," is well worth reading. Lord MIDLETON'S "Irish Legislation and its Results," is out and out the best paper on this subject, so far as we know.



We have received from Archdeacon MOULE, Shanghai, the following letter :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHURCHMAN.

DEAR SIR,—I have read with deep and painful interest the article in your Magazine for November, 1882, on the "Present Aspect of the Conflict with Atheism." I cannot but hope that the serious and alarming statements made by Mr. Walter Browne both as to the strength of the atheistic forces, and the confusion and division in the otherwise invincible ranks of Christians, will lead to some definite result ; at any rate to the speedy republication of the works by Sir James Paget and Dr. Asa Gray, as to the subject and contents of which Mr. Browne is so provokingly silent.

My object in writing to you from the other side of the world is, however, to draw attention to two slight flaws in Mr. Browne's article. In the first place, he does, I think, but scant justice to the character and work of the Victoria Institute. Whatever may have been the special scare which led to the formation of that admirable and most useful Institute, it is certain that its investigations have gone far beyond the unproven hypothesis of evolution. If Mr. Browne will glance through the titles of the papers printed in the sixteen large volumes of the "Transactions of the Victoria Institute," he will admit, I feel sure, that his description of its character is meagre, if not unjust.

He thinks that evolution is "an hypothesis to be investigated, not a heresy to be written down." In reply, I would venture to remark that evolution, as applied to the origin of species and the order of creation, has been investigated most exhaustively, and has been found to be an hypothesis and no more. The proofs of its probable application, were creation to be originated over again, are many. The proofs of its application in the creation with which our investigations are concerned are not forthcoming. Even the discovery of a specimen or two of "missing links" would not do. They would be set down, and justly so, as freaks of nature, not as sure links in a calm chain of evolving species. What the theory wants, and must have, if it is to stand, and cannot have, for they are not, is crowds of such specimens, covering all the old world which geological excavations have disclosed ; and specimens also growing and evolving under our eye on this modern earth. They should be as numerous as the flint-flakes in the "great and terrible wilderness."

But they are nowhere to be found. Since, therefore, the hypothesis is a heresy judged by Nature's book, and since it is exultingly used as contradictory to the Bible, it might, scientifically speaking, be "written down." I doubt, however, whether this will be found to be the true character of the papers on the subject published by the Victoria Institute.

I have one more complaint to urge against Mr. Browne's argument before I revert heartily to the tone of thankful appreciation with which I began. Speaking of the necessity for aggressive work in preaching the truth to the enemies of the faith, he writes thus : "It may be said that the Church does this in her missionary enterprises to heathen lands. But it is a strange way of maintaining an empire to be straining after foreign conquests while you refuse to check rebellion at home. Why are the enemies of the faith in East London less worthy of attention than those in India?" To this language I venture to offer a very strong protest. I make bold to reverse the whole picture. How can you expect to keep down rebellion at home when you show apathy and indecision about rebellion and revolt in the wider provinces of your vast Empire? Is force no remedy? then Ireland can go on murdering and terrorising over law and the officers of law. But the roar of guns at Alexandria, and the shock of battle at Tel-el-Kebir, showed rebels near home that whatever politicians may say, the policy of England is to maintain her Empire intact. Well, and are not India and China parts of the Empire of our Lord? What does Mr. Browne mean by "*foreign conquests*?" Does he mean that we are "straining after" what the Church has no prior right

to possess? Are not the five hundred millions of India and China as much part of the Empire as the four millions of London? Is not rebellion in the East as dangerous as revolt in the West? And how stands the fight? There are twice as many clergy of the Church of England working in London with its four millions as there are in all the heathen and Mohammedan world with their one thousand millions of rebels. The British Isles, that little corner, albeit the citadel of Christendom, possesses twenty-three thousand clergy of the Established Church; the vast world for which the Church's Lord lived and died only five hundred. I am convinced that more zeal for foreign missionary enterprise will react at home. Send us one thousand men to reinforce your army abroad. Strike boldly, and infidels at home will believe that we are in earnest. Unkind critics cannot help making merry over the idea of "war undertaken in the interests of peace." But surely the Church's war is such; for its sure result will be the setting up of the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace.

Apologizing to you, sir, for the length of this letter, and to Mr. Browne for the freedom of my critique on his important and timely article, I remain,

Yours faithfully,

A. E. MOULE.

We have sent a proof of this letter to Mr. BROWNE, who replies as follows:

SIR,—With regard to the points raised by Archdeacon Moule in his very interesting letter (the kindly feeling of which I fully appreciate), the truth or falsehood of what is known as evolution is much too wide to be discussed on this occasion. Archdeacon Moule, seems, however, to share in the prevalent error of confounding together the doctrine of evolution (which teaches simply that existing species are developed by natural descent from pre-existing species) with the theory of natural selection, by which Mr. Darwin sought to account for that development. The evidence for the former grows daily wider and deeper, and it is now accepted, at least within wide limits, by almost every naturalist of repute, while it is only a misconception which sees in it anything contrary to Holy Writ. The doctrine of natural selection, on the other hand, is becoming daily more and more discredited; and we now hear thorough-going partisans like Dr. Romanes admitting (as Mr. Darwin himself admitted) that other principles must be likewise at work. It is a signal instance of the want of organized intercourse between religion and science that this confusion should still be prevalent.

But whether evolution is true or not, I must adhere to my statement that the Victoria Institute (in whose objects I most fully sympathize, and much of whose work I can admire) has obtained the reputation of holding a brief, so to speak, against evolution; and whatever it may have gained by assuming the functions of an advocate, it has lost that credit for impartiality which can only attach to a judge. I think it probable that this fact has had a serious effect in impairing the estimation which might have attached to papers on other subjects, read before the same Society.

With regard to the second part of the letter, I deeply regret that a passing metaphor should have led Archdeacon Moule to suppose that I fail to appreciate the noble efforts made in the cause of foreign missions by the Christian Church, or would for one moment suggest that those efforts should be relaxed. The surest mode, however, of ruining foreign missions would be to allow a spirit of secularism and infidelity to prevail in the nation at home. The duty of meeting these home heathen on their own ground has a double claim upon us; it is not only a contention for rightful supremacy; it is a struggle for existence itself.

WALTER R. BROWNE.



THE MONTH.

THE Report of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences for 1882 contains much that will interest those of our readers who are inclined to look upon this movement with regard and hope. The Executive Committee of the Council