THE POPULAR PULPIT

THROUGH HUMANITY TO GOD.

By Dr. A. A. Berle.

It is sometimes said that the existence of God is not a matter susceptible of proof or that such proof would be undesirable even if we could obtain it. It is also alleged that the Bible assumes the existence of God and does not, therefore, attempt to discuss the matter regarding it as among the res adjudicata of the spiritual life. But both these statements are inexact. The Bible does not undertake as an argument to prove the existence of God, but it is filled with arguments which are addressed to the judgment only on the basis that it would require reasons for God's work and exercise judgment on the use of His authority. Nor can it be alleged that such proof if we can find it, is useless. The best answer to this is that man has from the dawn of the human intellect been trying to find such proof which would seem to be good evidence that he regards such proof as of value. The simple assurance of the existence and supreme authority of God is probably the one single force which alone supports all religion. All doctrines and personalities and rituals become useless and hollow unless underneath and through them there abides this one fundamental truth.

The fundamental inquiry of religious men in our day may be imagined, then, from the fact that this very doctrine involving everything else has with all the rest been laid under the searching scrutiny of criticism and interrogation. Where other ages have debated what kind of a faith they should have ours has questioned whether it should have any at all. At other times men have doubted whether a particular cult was divine or not; our age has boldly dared to ask the question whether there be any Supreme Head to the world and the human race.

Most of the argument in time past for a natural reason has gathered around what is called the argument from design. The theologian and philosopher Paley furnished its characteristic illustration in the symbol of the watch found in the roadside which from its mechanism and orderly adjustment of part to part showing design proved a designer. The world is such a mechanism, argued he, and thus proves the existence of a great designer whom we call God. The late Dr. John Fiske, applying the doctrine of evolution to the universe which showed to be not a mechanism but an organism, took this so-called teleological argument and substituted for Paley's watch the lily, arguing that the unfolding growth of a lily showed design as God exercised it in the natural world far better than a thing of mechanical arrangement like a watch, but was not less but more the evidence of a purpose and therefore of a mind governing and directing the affairs of nature and the world.

But the mind of man does not easily rest its faith upon arguments which cannot be illustrated best out of his own nature and experience. Hence by and by the watch argument with its mechanism began to lose interest. And now even the attractive evolutionary statement of the argument sounds tame and lifeless. Nature is great, but human life is greater. The organic world, with its multitude of wonderful forms and changing forces, is fascinating and often bewildering. And for a time the mind can be bewildered into resting in this kind of an argument. But sooner or later the mind revolts and demands proof from within. Nature's laws, after all, apply only to man when man applies them. If he does not like them he neutralizes them. He makes night day and day night to suit his ends. He makes summer cool and winter warm with device and appliance, and in a thousand ways shows that after all natural law, so often invoked as if it were a finality in this world, is a thing with which man takes all kinds of liberty.

The only laws with which he cannot take liberties are the inner ones. And this is true because, as Jesus taught, the kingdom of God is within us, not without us. What is less than God we can control, because He has given us charge of it. But God Himself and His kingdom, which He has written in the nature and heart of man himself, must be and will be obeyed.

Singularly economics by the increased estimate under Christian inspiration and guidance which it has put upon man has supplied the newest form of the argument for the existence of God. Man is an economic animal, but one that reasons, thinks, has memory, can suffer through time and mingle in the present many intangible and mighty forces which cannot be reduced to statistics. Thus the spiritual valuations in man's life have acquired great economic importance. It is of greater importance that a man shall feel that justice is being done than that he shall have a full dinner pail. The full pail with conscious injustice prevailing will never, as it has never, still the anger and cupidity of man.

But where men under great trial have been reduced for justice's sake to dire straits, they have shared and shared gladly and uncomplainingly the most meager fare. This was because the man was greater than his work. It is the spiritual capacity of man, so wonderful in his aspiration, so capable of sacrifice, so divine in his demand for the realization of the most abstract spiritual ideals, who thus himself proves and illustrates that because he seeks these qualities seen incomplete in himself in an eternal quest for completeness there must be a final resting place where the faulty justice of man becomes the perfect justice of God, where the fragmentary knowledge of man becomes the omniscience of God and where the divided powers of man are united in the omnipotence of God and where the intermittent moods of benevolence among men are made whole and final in the universal love of God.

Man is himself the sublime and final argument for God's existence, and the God reached, not through mechanics or philosophy, but through man himself, will be the God of Jesus Christ revealing Himself as Power, Knowledge and Love.

MAKING THE MOST OF LIFE.

By Rev. H. R. Harris.

They who live longest do not necessarily make the most of life. Long life is desirable provided the years are all filled with that which is good. But an empty life cannot be redeemed from vanity by length of days. A life filled with good fruit is better than a long life. Jesus, who made more of life than any other, did not live long. His life was cut short by violence while He was yet a young man. A life poured out in blood for the sake of righteousness is far better spent than one which has been carefully guarded and preserved even down to old age at the expense of righteousness and truth. In order to make the most of life it may be necessary to lay it down as a sacrifice.

One who finds most pleasure does not necessarily make the most of life. Some think there is nothing better in the world than to have what they call a good time. They count that day lost which does not bring them some social delight or worldly gratification. But all wise men agree that mere pleasure should be sacrificed to some higher good. They who live in pleasure are dead while they live. Jesus, whose life was a perfect model, never ran after pleasure. We do not know that He ever sought it for a moment. It was His meat and drink to do His Father's will and finish the work which was given Him to do. The joy of a good conscience and the approval of the heavenly Father are infinitely superior to all worldly pleasure.

The man who makes the most money does not always make the most of life. Money is not to be despised nor thrown away. Money is a means of great good when properly used. But "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things he possesseth." A millionaire may live a narrow and unsatisfactory life. His millions will be a millstone about his neck unless they are used for some good purpose in the world. It is better far to be rich in good works, rich in faith, rich toward God, rich in character, than to be rich in gold and silver.

It is thought by some that learning is the thing that makes life rich and grand. But one may be learned without making much of life. Learning is a good thing. The study of science affords wonderful satisfaction. Few things contribute more to the enrichment of life than a well-stored and well-disciplined mind. But knowledge and learning are not the principal things. Some men are wiser and stronger without learning than others are with it. Jesus was not a learned man according to the standards of this world; yet when He opened His mouth and spake such streams of truth and wisdom proceeded from His enlightened mind that His learned enemies said, "Whence hath this man these things, never having learned?" Peter and John were unlearned fishermen, yet they made the world richer by their wisdom. John Bunyan was not a learned man according to the standards of this world, yet what scientist or philosopher ever did so much as he to enlighten the world? The wisdom that cometh from above is superior to the wisdom of this world. It is not the scientist, but the saint, that lives that life which is life indeed. It is not the philosopher, but the Christian, that is the light of the world. It is not the scholar, but the good man, that makes the most of life.

THE BESETTING SIN.

By Rev. J. H. MacDonald, D. D.

According to the teaching of Jesus the commandments enjoin two eternal duties—love to God and love to our fellow men. The first has been emphasized in all ages. The second has been largely overlooked or looked upon as an impossible thing. The tenth commandment is in the main a dead letter, although it strikes at the greatest of sins—selfishness.

Selfishness is the basis of all the wrongs of society. It refuses to acknowledge the goodness of God and His right to command, since it denies the fact that his bounty was given for all men, and presumptuously thrusts itself between a kind Father and needy children.

A place to stand upon is as necessary to man as the air he breathes. A private control of nature's reservoirs means slavery. If I own a piece of property on which men are compelled to live, and have the power to maintain my claim, I own the men. They must do as I say, or die.

The divine right to control coal fields does not differ essentially from the divine right to control negroes. This selfishness, while fearing socialism, is driving the nation headlong towards it. Every evil condition of society has its roots in selfishness.

CHURCH MUST AID THE POOR.

By Rev. Edward Judson, D. D.

The story of the good Samaritan is the keynote of the coming religion, and through it we can learn how to handle a person in distress.

Churches must come down from their lofty positions and strive to better the conditions of the lower classes. I should be glad to see that wherever a church lifts its spire around it there should be a guide, as it were, of philanthropic institutions for the care of the poor, the old and the friendless. The church is not a place where people are to worship, but where they may learn to be good and kind to others. If the church shows this interest in men it will come about that the workingman going by the great structure will feel his heart soften as when he passes some great hospital where lie the halt and the lame of all classes.

The parable answers three questions: First, who is our neighbor; second, how to be neighborly, and, third, how to inherit eternal life.

Pleasure.—There is a widespread feeling that there is something degrading and unworthy in a life of pleasure, and that if we get into the current we will be swept into the abyss further than we intended to go. Pleasure is justified just to the extent that it rejuvenates. We are least successful in the management of our pleasures. We work at such a pressure that when the time for work is over we seek relaxation without any thought as to whether it will be helpful to us or not.—Dr. Felix Adler, Ethical Culture, New York.

NEW OUTPUT OF FURS

CONTRAST OF COLOR AND VARIETY INDULGED IN.

Full-Length Fur Garments Are So Heavy that They Furnish a Good Excuse for Not Having Them and Make Stole Neck Pieces Very Popular.

New York correspondence:

UCH contrast of color is indulged for the street this winter, and few stylish gowns are seen that have not a bit of color somewhere as piping, cording or lining for the fancy trimming of galloon, braid or lace. It seems odd to find this idea carried into furs and heavy coats, but if you keep your eyes open you surely will find it impressively apparent among swagger garments. Even the more sober furs that one would class as least adaptable to colored trimmings have these touches. An example was a three-quarter length coat of Persian lamb. This fur always seems very dignified and less adapted to frivolous turns of fashion than many newer skins, yet in this instance it was trimmed with black silk braid woven loosely so that a three-inch strip of green velvet showed under the braid. This trimming appeared in the collar as an insertion and again in the sleeves at the wrists. It was handsome and in a way a greater extravagance in fur than a plain coat of Persian lamb would be, for the color made it impossible as an accompaniment of gowns of some colors, so made more than one fur garment a necessity. At the left in today's first pictured group is a scheme very often resorted to for bringing color to the fur coat. Here it consisted of stole finish in dark green broadcloth embroidered in black silk cord. The fur was seal. In the garment of the initial picture was a less positive but equally stylish response to the fashion, in a belt of milanese lace over bright green velvet, this on a squirrel coat with ermine collar. On garments that combine two or more furs showily, and ermine always is showy, bright colors are not used so often or so freely as on one-fur pieces.

The excess of weight in full-length furs supplies an oft repeated excuse for not appearing in a fur coat of latest types, it's so heavy, a stole neck piece is so much better suited to our climate, and all that, but many a time the maker of such excuses would be vastly pleased to possess the more expensive article. Yet the saving isn't so much as it would have been last season or any one of many winters before, because the really fine neck piece is very costly. Stole shapes are followed, not a few of them so long as to drag on the ground if they slip ever so little one way or the other. But that does not seem to trouble the wearers. Then if one costly fur doesn't call for sufficient outlay, a second one may be added for lining. This type of garment appears in the left-hand stole of the two pictured. It was Russian sable lined with ermine. The other, of wolf, was high grade, too, this fur rating just now as a very stylish one. The general becomingness of these long neck pieces is a second argument in their favor. They add height to dumpy women, and set off excessive height to advantage. If only they didn't leave one's arms so out in the cold, much could be said of their protective value. In feather neck wear the stole is very pretty, especially in white feathers for evening.

The value in dressiness of fine laces is very high, and it is very freely used. Whole lace gowns, lace jackets over silk, lace flounces, lace trimmings, lace collars and every combination of lace known are in style. So no matter how small your piece of lace is, if it is the real thing, just trot it out and gloat over your less fortunate neighbor. The stores show what is styled new patterns in the old laces, and many of them are exquisite and not easy to distinguish from the real old. Still there is great satisfaction in knowing that what one is wearing has genuine age. The owner of an old lace shawl may, without very difficult scheming, use it as part of the drapery of a gown, and without cutting or in any way spoiling it for use as a shawl, if that style should return.

Novelties in trimmings are making headway in street dress. Witness, as an example, bunches of grapes applied in showy quantity. The design is made of round wooden button moulds covered with cloth or silk and arranged in grape clusters. The stem is of narrow strips of the cloth or silk to which the grapes seem to be fastened. This is sometimes in the same material as the dress, again is in different material and color. The clusters are from three to four inches long and some two inches wide, so they stand out very distinctly.

With such ornamentation creeping into street dress, it is natural to expect extreme dressiness in calling gowns. This expectation is fully realized, though not always through elaborate mediums. The three calling costumes the artist grouped were representative of the plain richness of this grade of woman's attire. First is a white broadcloth, with milanese lace trimming the wrap. The hat was a white furry felt trimmed with black feathers. Next this is a black velvet costume, with sleeve puffs and front of white gauze, lace collar and black velvet hat. Last comes a blue dotted velveteen, the strap trimmings edged with light green velvet, front and turn-over light green cloth embroidered in heavy white silk. Muff and hat were squirrel fur. When elaborateness is attempted in calling suits, it may be carried to the extreme of fancifulness, but gowns of the pictured grade are a majority.

FROM THE FURRIER'S NEW OUTPUT.

SWAGGER SUITS FOR CALLING.

Delicate pink coral is brought out in brooches, bar and stick pins and in belt buckles to match the neck chains from India's strand.

Neck chains do not now hang to the waist line, as in the summer, but simply loosely encircle the neck.

GOOD Short Stories

John Chalmers, the missionary friend of Robert Louis Stevenson, and every inch a man, once telegraphed to England: "Getting in trim for next season. Ask Jones send one gross tomahawks, one gross butchers' knives. Going East, try make friends between tribes." London was convulsed over the missionary's peculiar way of promoting friendship with the New Guinea cannibals.

On one occasion Charles Burleigh, the great opponent of the slave trade, was in the middle of one of his eloquent denunciations of slavery when a well-aimed and very rotten egg struck him full in the face. "This," he said, calmly, as he produced his handkerchief and wiped his face, "is a striking evidence of what I have always maintained, that pro-slavery arguments are unsound."

A story is told of the late Professor Snell, of Amherst College, which relates how he once asked for a definition of the solar corona from a member of his class in astronomy. The young man, after a good deal of hesitation, and a dread consciousness of impending failure, plunged desperately into the statement that he did know what the corona was but had forgotten. The Professor turned to his class with a tragic gesture, "What an incalculable loss to science!" he exclaimed, with emotion; "that the only man who ever knew what the sun's corona is has forgotten!"

According to the New York Tribune, Secretary Moody, during the President's recent visit in New England, on more than one occasion impersonated his chief. Passing through the numerous New England villages that were close together, it became somewhat of a task for the President to show himself and greet the crowd at every station. The resemblance of the Secretary of the Navy to the President in height, build, and general physical appearance, offered a plan by which Mr. Roosevelt could be rested. Mr. Moody, donning a high silk hat, putting on a pair of eye-glasses, and buttoning a frock coat tightly across his chest, would repair to the rear platform, lift his hat, and smiling bow right and left to the throngs as the train passed slowly along.

In an article of reminiscences, Mary Stuart Boyd says that the late Bret Harte never obtruded his personality. He also had a dread of people regarding him for his work only, not for himself. "Why didn't you tell me it was Bret Harte who sat next me at dinner last night?" wailed one of society's smartest young matrons, in a note to her hostess, the morning after a large dinner party; "I have always longed to meet him, and I would have been so different had I only known who my neighbor was." "Now why can't a woman realize that this sort of thing is insulting?" queried the author, to whom the hostess had forwarded her friend's letter; "if Mrs. —— talked with me, and found me uninteresting as a man, how could she expect to find me interesting because I was an author?"

SOFT-COAL EVIL IN ENGLAND.

Smoke-Laden Air Costs People Millions Yearly and Injures Health.

Evil as is the smoke situation in New York, London and the larger English cities suffer to an even greater extent, for there the atmospheric moisture is greater. It has been conclusively demonstrated by distinguished British scientific authorities that the smoke nuisance is responsible for the density and ghastly foulness of the nauseating fog known as the "London particular," which enfolds the Britsh metropolis in an impenetrable shroud.

In the London museum there is exhibited what appears to be an elongated sponge sodden with black dye, but what is in reality a lung, bearing silent but forceful testimony to the polluting work of the all-pervading soft coal.

For some years fitful attempts have been made to combat the evil or at least to reduce the output of the deadly soot, but the consistently apathetic attitude of the average Englishman to all matters pertaining to the public welfare has greatly retarded the endeavors of the little band of scientists and medicos who have been earnestly striving to impress the nation with the deadliness of the ever-present peril.

The Smoke Abatement Society has done something to lighten the national darkness in that respect and to awaken the people to a realization of the danger which menaces them, and the ordinances of some city, town and district councils now regulate the volume of smoke from factory stacks, and in many places manufacturers, masterfully indifferent to the well-being of the people and impatient of restraint, have been encouraged by the gentle persuasion of heavy, and in some cases repeated fines to terminate, between certain hours, the black, thick belchings and to install expensive smoke-consuming furnaces.

The curtailment of the volume of smoke, the limiting of the hours in which stacks may vomit their black streams and the mixing of hard and soft coal are only alleviations of that evil, the sole cure for which is the utter prohibition of the use of soft coal except in furnaces which "eat" their own smoke.

The burning of soft coal is estimated to cost London millions of dollars a year. It necessitates the wholesale "week-end" outings of the people which are so surprising a feature of London Life, driving millions into the country between Saturday and Monday to get a breath of fresh air; it compels every householder to employ two servants in place of one to keep the rooms and curtains clean, and it makes necessary the repainting of houses and buildings at least every two or three years, besides ruining furniture, destroying valuable pictures and causing an immense expenditure for the washing of linen.

Both above and beyond all these, says the New York Times, is the injury to public health resulting from the constant inhalation of smoke-laden air. The typical Londoner strikes an American visitor as pale and undersized, and those who have studied the subject attribute the degeneracy of the race of metropolitan cave-dwellers to nothing so much as the shutting off of sunlight and the burdening of the atmosphere by the fumes from soft coal.

SPEAKING OF SOUP.

How It Was Served in a Primitive German Hostelry.

"Speaking of soup," said a prominent musician who has traveled over a good part of the earth, to the New Orleans Times-Democrat, "reminds me of an experience I had some years ago while in one of the provinces of Germany. I had stopped over in a small town for a day or two and was at the best hotel in the place. This is not saying a great deal, for the patronage did not justify anything like gorgeousness in the matter of service or in the kind and character of the food furnished the guests. The proprietor, at any rate, was doing the best that he could, and, no doubt, I would have got along all right but for the peculiar method they employed in serving soup. I have never seen the method employed in any other place, and, to be candid about it, I have not been on the lookout for the unique way of serving the first number on the menu. The first intimation I had of the curious practice was when a big, heavy Hollander, with a husky voice, who had rushed up behind me, asked, 'Soup?' 'Yes,' I replied, and before I knew what had happened he had squirted the soup out into my plate. I was surprised and shocked and not a little puzzled at first, because I did not know how the waiter had managed to squirt the soup into my plate so quickly. I had expected him to bring my soup in the usual way, in a plate. But he shot the soup over my shoulder before the echo of the 'ja' had left my lips. I watched him make the round of the table. He had the soup in a receptacle of some sort that looked like a cross between a bagpipe and something else, and it worked with a suction-rod arrangement. If a guest wanted soup he would press the rod and the liquid would squirt out into the plate. It was interesting enough, but, to save my life, I couldn't eat the soup, and, in fact, I couldn't eat anything else in the place. I suppose it was all right, but I simply couldn't stand for it, and when I left the place I was nearly starved."

SHE MIXED THE ORGANS.

Why the Beggars' Instruments Bore the Wrong Signs.

Visitors to Blackpool recently were much puzzled by an old woman who was playing a barrel organ.

At one end of this instrument she had pasted this notice:

"Help the blind."

Beneath this appeared a second appeal:

"I am the father of seven motherless children."

The old woman wore a pair of blue spectacles, behind which her eyes were completely hidden.

A few streets farther on the mystery of the inscription was cleared up, for there sat an old man turning music out of another organ, as dilapidated as the one whose faint strains could almost be heard from up the street.

He, too, wore glasses, and his organ bore this legend:

"Help the blind."

And under it:

"I am the mother of seven fatherless children."

A man stepped up to him and said:

"Look here, my friend, the next time you go out you had better get the right label on your organ."

The grinder must have guessed what the error was, says Tit-Bits, for pushing the glasses back from his eyes, he peered quickly up and down the street as if looking for a policeman.

Seeing none, he leaned over and read the sign:

"That's the old woman all over," he muttered, replacing the glasses and turning his instrument to leave; "she's mixed them blooming organs up again."

No Such Luck.

"I see that a pugilist was killed recently in a slugging match."

"Well, that is not defense of the sport."

"Well I should say not. You see——"

"You see we can hope for the same happy result all the time."—Baltimore Herald.

Just a Trial.

"So you are really going to marry," said the first Chicago girl.

"Yes," replied the other. "I thought I would for a while."—Philadelphia Press.

Man wants but little here below—but woman wants a little of everything.

It is human nature to be ungrateful to the man who fights your battle for you and gets licked.