

## THE EDITOR'S TABLE.

### Toymakers.

THE kindly toymaker, so familiar a figure in German literature, is rarely encountered in the imaginative writing of English authors. No English town has been famous for its making of toys as Berchtesgaden and Sonneberg and Nuremberg have been. The factories and home workers of such towns sent their toys all over Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Though they never had a monopoly in the trade, the toymaker in fiction and drama was rarely anything but German, though, in fact, every country had its own toys. Paris excelled, for instance, in dolls, which even in the Middle Ages were dressed in the height of fashion—they were, indeed, the mannequins of their day and served to spread abroad the fame of French dressmakers.

It is not to be expected that many toys should have survived from antiquity. It is no part of the function of a toy to survive. Its proper destiny is to disintegrate in the hands of the child. Still, enough toys have come down to us to give a fair notion of the fashion of children's playthings throughout the ages. What they show, from the horse and rider belonging to the second millennium B.C. and found in that cradle of civilization, the island of Rhodes, down to the products of our own day, is that the fashion in toys is unchanging. The toys in which children most delight to-day—the doll, the animal and the moving figure, such as the monkey on the stick—have altered scarcely at all since the dawn of history. In spite of elaboration and over-refinement, the toys in which children delight are still much the same as delighted the little ones of the ancient world.

A toy that may be looked at and admired but handled only with great care is a poor plaything. Similarly, too much realism detracts from a toy. The imagination of the child is the toymaker's inspired collaborator. Given the simplest of objects, the child will invest it with character and quality belonging to a world into which no grown-up can ever gain entrance. Nothing more than the rudimentary suggestion of form or function is needed for the child's invention to add incalculable enrichment.

Doubtless that is why children never can be parted from well-remembered favourites of the toy-cupboard. The treasured rabbit—reduced by the long and hard usage of affection to little more than a stretch of greasy fur—or the nondescript rag which scarcely even in pretence is able to retain the semblance of a doll, has gathered round its attenuated being so strong an aura of devotion that to part it from its owner creates a minor tragedy. The sternest parent can hardly do otherwise than conceal, with what shame he can muster, that the adored Wilfred or the beloved Jemima has gone to Valhalla on the kitchen fire. The imagination of childhood transcends all the evidences of physical dissolution.

The toymaker is the very humble minister to a creative power which passes so completely with childhood that its operations can be remembered only dimly, if at all. On the other hand, the toymaker can acquire a gratifying mastery in his own restricted sphere. His material is, for the most part, at hand, and his tools are of the simplest. So it has been through the ages, and to-day one of the queerest by-products of the war is to be seen in the toymaking of men on whom it imposes an enforced idleness.

Auxiliary firemen, air-raid wardens and others engaged in civil defence fill the long spells of waiting for something to turn up in a variety of ways. The recent exhibition of pictures at Burlington House disclosed a wealth of artistic talent among firemen. Not all can paint, but almost all can make toys if they have a mind to do so. As Mr. Arthur C. Horth points out in an admirably practical book\* on the subject, one of the advantages of toymaking is the possibility of using up odds and ends of material. Many of the toys he describes, and the making of which he illustrates by clear working drawings, can be constructed with small pieces of wood, which

would otherwise be used to light the fire. Further, the toymaker's ingenuity puts to good use household remnants of all sorts—from scraps of linoleum to corks. Since a high degree of skill is unnecessary—the assurance is Mr. Horth's—the amateur toymaker can embark with confidence on his agreeable and varied task.

Let none think such an employment of waiting hours on duty is trivial. The need of the child for toys is older than history, and must be satisfied if the child is not to suffer in its natural development. Imports of toys have ceased, and home manufacture on a commercial scale is bound to be small. Thus the amateur may pursue an absorbing hobby and be at the same time a real benefactor of the race, in the persons of its smallest representatives.

## REVIEWS.

### LETTERS FROM HELL.

*THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS.* By C. S. Lewis. (Centenary Press, 5s.)

MR. C. S. LEWIS has once more made us all his debtors. He has written, from an angle altogether original and surprising, one of the wittiest, most penetrating and most instructive expositions of Christian teaching that has appeared for many years. Few books merit unqualified praise, but this is certainly one of that select company. Every priest and layman who desires to combine edification of the most thorough kind with no less satisfying intellectual delight should take steps to get hold of it at once.

These thirty-one letters (Mr. Lewis refrains from revealing how they fell into his hands, but they were serialized in the *Guardian*) represent the correspondence of one Screwtape, an Under Secretary in the Tempters' Department of "Our Father Below," with his youthful nephew Wormwood, who is starting his career in the "Lowerarchy" of Hell. Screwtape administers to his inexperienced relative all sorts of advice and practical tips on the art of undermining the faith and morality of Christian people, with an especial eye to an unfortunate human who has recently been converted to religion, and who has been assigned to Wormwood's diabolic supervision. Through the pages of the correspondence we follow, breathless with excitement, the progress of Wormwood's assaults upon his patient, only heaving a sigh of relief when the *dénouement* discloses the failure of all the young demon's schemes.

Primarily, of course, the book is a study in the strategy and tactics of Hell; and it is certainly an advantage to have a glimpse of the endless siege of mankind from the Enemy's front line. Mr. Lewis, or rather the highly competent official whose writings he has chanced upon, lifts the veil concealing the weak spots in the human armour. A truly horrifying picture is painted of the subtle ways in which the stoutest faith may be sapped by blandishments addressed to pride, sensuality, intellectual arrogance, and the thousand and one vanities of human beings.

Almost more enlightening and entertaining, however, is the wholesale "debunking" to which a multitude of ill-considered, muddled, but widely popular theories about morality, social relations and religious truth are submitted. The shibboleths of our self-appointed Brains-Trusts and hucksters of humanist uplift are devastatingly exposed—the more amusingly because by one unusually well qualified to assess them at their true worth. Moreover, since the devils presumably know at least as much about God and His purposes for man as men themselves do, a great deal of positive theological teaching is got across obliquely, in the correspondence on subjects ranging from marriage to prayer. Probably Letter XIV., with its wonderful picture of the divine plan for man, is the most remarkable, but there are plenty more of almost equal calibre, written in the same clear-cut style and with the same extraordinary insight.

### EDUCATIONAL IDEALISM.

*WHAT IS CHRISTIAN EDUCATION?* Christian News-Letter Books. By Marjorie Reeves and John Drewett. (S.P.C.K., 1s. 6d.)

THIS book records the findings of a Committee of teachers, clergymen and parents who have been meeting for a year to consider the bearings of a Christian philosophy upon the general setting and outlook of education. The main thesis is that education was made for the child and not the child for education, and further, that the whole community, and not a specialized professional class, is concerned in the education of the young. The book also rightly pleads that education is a process coterminous with life.

The view taken of human personality and its needs reflects the outlook of *Pastor Pastorum*, and Part I. of the book is an

interesting and valuable essay on educational ideals, vocation, and leadership. On this last vexed question Miss Dorothy Sayers, who contributes a Foreword, justly commends what she describes as an "apocalyptic glimpse of the obvious." "Since gifts are diverse, the individual must be trained both to lead and to follow freely, leading in the things in which he excels, following in the rest."

Part II. of the book examines educational techniques; and here the findings may be described as doctrinaire and utopian rather than realist. In spite of its title, the reader will look in vain for a definition of Christian education; and although the teaching of religion is very far from being equivalent to Christian education, it is an indispensable part of it.

Only a short ambiguous paragraph on page 50 refers in an equivocal phrase to the need that children should know what Christ taught and the view of life which Christianity proclaims! Those who rightly assert that Christian education cannot have any basis except in a full and definite belief in the Incarnate Son of God, will not be comforted by the like ambiguous phrase in the Editors' Foreword, "a faith in the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."

### EASTERN GANGSTERS.

*JAPAN'S KAMPF.* By Jaya Deva. (Gollancz, 6s.)

AS MR. DEVA shows in this rather quaintly written book, the culminating act of Japanese aggression was the outcome of a long and carefully prepared policy. Readers of Miss Freda Utley's excellent works will not be surprised by Mr. Deva's revelations of the darker elements in Japanese politics. The conspiracy goes back to the notorious Tanaka Memorial, which heralded the advent of unchecked gangsterism. The constitution, such as it was, faded gradually away and political success depended upon the aptitude with which a man mastered the new technique.

First, he must found a new patriotic society, which would go one better than any existing society. Next, by threats and

## TRANSATLANTIC CHRISTIANITY.

*A HISTORY OF THE EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY.* Vol. IV: Europe and the United States. By K. S. Latourette, D.D. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 25s.)

THOUGH its scheme still makes for a certain amount of shapelessness and repetition, this fourth volume of Dr. Latourette's great history of Christian missions is not a whit behind any of the previous three in interest and importance. Indeed, in so far as his narrative has now reached events of which the immediate consequences are more familiar to those now living, the interest is enhanced by the addition of an almost personal concern. Casual facts are illuminated through being put in their proper relation to other items of knowledge; and the reasons for the course taken by events gradually become clear and comprehensible.

Dr. Latourette mentions a number of general features of the spread of Christianity during the nineteenth century which mark it off from earlier missionary enterprises. It was much more a movement of the rank and file; and the advance of civilization made it possible to employ far more women as evangelists. The direct results were individual rather than group conversions. On the other hand, the indirect effects of Christian preaching were enormous in many regions, in which formal conversions were few, but the influence of Christian ideas permeated vast tracts of non-Christian society. Since various forms of Protestantism lent themselves much more easily to exerting this kind of influence than did the Catholic system, the permeation was largely of a distinctively Protestant character. What that involves appears in the sequel.

This is not to say that Roman missions, in which the French nation took a predominant share, were not active and successful. The mere catalogue of their missionary orders and congregations is astounding. But Protestant America was taking an increased hand in evangelization, and by the end of the century its activity was so pronounced that more than half the living agents and more than half the money contributed to non-Roman missionary propaganda were coming from the United States. It is therefore appropriate that the greater part of the present volume is taken up with the truly fascinating, if not wholly admirable, study of the development of American Protestantism.

The one big gap in the treatment of his main subject is that the learned author scarcely mentions Canada, and says nothing about the processes of expansion in Latin America. This is very odd. But so far as concerns the impact of the Americas on the world at large, he is perhaps to be excused for confining attention to the United States, where things have happened so big and so strange, even in the field of Christianity.

During the nineteenth century the proportion of the citizens of the United States professing membership of some organized Christian body rose from a fifteenth to nearly a half. Practically the whole of the original

promises, he must obtain the financial backing of one of the great commercial families. Then, having secured the sinews of war, he was unlucky if he did not manage to win a few seats, though more important than a seat here and there was a well-timed murder or two. Having established beyond dispute his political credentials, either, in due course, he became Prime Minister, which was highly profitable, or committed *hara-kiri* and perished in a blaze of patriotic glory.

Under such leadership Japan started on her enterprising career. Each aggression was accompanied by a profession of philanthropy which made it even less agreeable to its victims. The Japanese went into China to redeem it from Bolshevism, into the East Indies to free their suffering peoples from the British and the Dutch, into the Philippines to liberate the Filipinos from the Americans. But their actions very soon made it quite clear that what they meant by "Asia for the Asiatics" was "Asia for the Japanese."

### FEDERAL UNION.

*ACTION.* By Lionel Curtis. (Oxford University Press, 9d.)

MR. CURTIS'S new pamphlet develops the subject of its predecessor, "Decision." After being greatly attracted by the arguments of Mr. Streit, Mr. Curtis has reverted to his old opinion. Union with the United States will come some day: union within the British Commonwealth should come now, or as soon after the war as is possible. Once a federal government, having control of foreign policy and defence, has been set up, other countries will be given the opportunity of joining it, and in this way of assisting to keep the peace of the world.

Mr. Curtis is, as always, most persuasive, though he does not appear quite to appreciate the urgency in time of what he advocates. Unless the necessary steps are taken immediately after the war, even before it is over, they may not be taken at all. From being ready to do almost anything to prevent the recurrence of war, the world moves very quickly into an intolerance of any sort of foreign entanglement.

settlers came of Protestant traditions and stock. When the frontier surged towards the west, largely along geographical lines corresponding with the parallels of latitude, religious efforts of an extraordinary kind pursued the migrants. The activities of some of the preachers, of whom details are given, rival the exhaustive peregrinations of John Wesley.

Methodists and Baptists—the latter on the whole working rather more to the southward—were in the van of the evangelists, though Presbyterians seem to have delivered the first impulse to revivalism. These were largely spontaneous movements. Congregationalists, with their stronghold in New England, led the way in organized propaganda. Among the Negroes, the vast majority of converts were gained by the Baptists, and, in rather lesser measure, by the Methodists. The reasons are worth noting. These forms of Christian faith possessed a stronger appeal than others to the uneducated and economically depressed classes. They also gave more scope to the desire of the Negroes to be their own masters at least in their religious organizations. This helps to explain also both why in pre-abolition days Negroes were principally their own evangelists, and why the moral standards of the converts were not always very high.

Roman Catholicism was strong in the towns and among certain groups of immigrants; the Episcopal Church acquired an influence out of all proportion to its numbers among the better-to-do; but the religion of the rural districts and the small towns was one or other of the forms of sheer Protestantism, which for all their fissiparous tendencies grew steadily into a closer general resemblance to one another, and finally created the modern impulse to denominational federation. Some of the most powerful religious movements were undenominational from their first propagation on American soil.

Consequently, the ideals, institutions, and culture of the United States are Protestant, and manifest a character very much their own. American Protestantism is nowadays—it was not always—undogmatic and non-rationalistic: it has lost the allegiance of the intellectuals to a great extent. Its energies have been poured out mainly in different forms of personal idealism and in social and philanthropic directions. Negro Christianity in its early days was largely bound up with social and educational advantages. The Mormons and some other strange sects had an economic as much as a religious foundation. And throughout the century the lines of development have been at once activist and pietistic. The object sought has been not so much the building up of intensive organizations, bound together by strong intellectual ties of conviction, as the permeation of the whole of society with a particular set of ethical ideals.

\* *I Made It Myself.* By Arthur C. Horth. (Batsford, 6s.)