

If our good friends the Christian Scientists have a reasonable share of "the saving sense of humor," they must appreciate an accidental juxtaposition on the editorial page of a recent issue of the Christian Science Sentinel. That interesting publication carries at the head of its editorial columns this standing notice:

Mrs. Eddy Takes no Patients.—The author of the Christian Science textbook takes no patients, does not consult on disease, nor read letters referring to these subjects.

Immediately under this notice appears in the issue of the 13th an editorial which begins as follows:

Jesus' success in healing the sick and his exhortation to his followers to do the works that he did, point to the true test of Christianity, and it is only as Christian Scientists are able to measure up to his standard that they know that they are his present-day followers.

Another horrible burning of Negroes at the stake in Georgia, under circumstances indicating collusion on the part of the military who were ostensibly guarding the prisoners, testifies to the lawless savagery of the whites. The crime of the Negroes was brutal to the extreme, but they were common criminals and the long arm of the law reached out for them and was about to exact the legal penalty for their crime. The mob, on the other hand, was composed of "best citizens," who have become as lawless as common criminals, but against whom the arm of the law is paralyzed; and it was worse than brutal, for it was not only indifferent to human suffering but was malignant in producing it. There was no excuse in this case on the plea of the law's delay. The criminals had been convicted and were to be hanged September 9 for a crime committed July 28. Neither was there the flabby excuse that the crime was "nameless." It was a ruthless homicide for robbery. No excuse for this mob is possible. It was actuated simply by insane race hatred and hunger for the enjoyment of human agony. To call it savage is to slander the instincts of the savage.

It is agreeable to observe in

some of the daily papers a disposition to return, at least in theory, to axiomatic morality. Among the instances we note the following: "No cause is so good as to justify assassination." But this may not be as axiomatic as it sounds. What does "assassination" mean? If it excludes excusable or justifiable homicide, then the "axiom" is meaningless, as may be seen at once by throwing it into that phrasing, thus: "No cause is so good as to justify man-killing without excuse or justification." Of course not. But if "assassination" means the intentional killing of a human being, whether with or without excuse or justification, then the axiom condemns several things that are not yet disreputable, whether they are wrong or not. What about "assassination" in self-defense? What about "assassination" for crime, commonly called capital punishment? What about war? Is it axiomatic that the "assassination" of a tyrant out of war is not justified, and yet that the "assassination" of thousands of persons in war is justified? If so, perhaps some one can explain at what point between retail assassination, which is wrong, and wholesale assassination, which is right, the principle of justice begins to distinguish.

MORE ABOUT THE PROTECTIVE SPIRIT AND ITS OPPOSITE.

We owe to Henry Thomas Buckle the term "Protective Spirit" and the conception of its application in affairs political and social. This—although it may appear to be a mere incident in his argument—will in time be recognized as perhaps the most original and valuable contribution which his book has brought to modern thought. And yet reviewers and commentators have hardly mentioned it. It is a dangerous subject, and to many a most disagreeable one. It goes to the root of modern contentions. It forces into consciousness an irrepressible conflict.

The Protective Spirit makes much of inequality. Its underlying

ing conception is that the many are dependent upon the few. In the ordination of things it thinks it right that the many should be drawers of water and hewers of stone. It persuades itself that the best welfare of the masses lies in the guidance and protection of the more favored classes.

If the Protective Spirit were to formulate its honest creed, its first article of belief would be: "I believe in special privilege." It demands special privilege in order to maintain ascendancy. It believes in landlordism and in all commercial processes whereby wealth can be concentrated. It believes in monopoly and big dividends. It winks at lobbies, silent favors, railroad passes and subtle bribes, whereby legislators and public officers are kept in line with the established order, and are nourished with the hope of keeping themselves in the favor of favored classes.

The established order, even in this so-called democratic country, is fully imbued with the Protective Spirit. A century ago one might talk of the independence of a free American citizen. True, we had slaves, but the average white man was in truth far more independent than the average white man to-day. There was less monopoly; there was more opportunity for self-employment. The decrease of independence marks the growth in America of the Protective Spirit, which has all along been dominant in Europe.

Mr. Ghent's clever book, "Our Benevolent Feudalism," is the witness of this fact. No one can read this book, taking with him the thought of the Protective Spirit, without seeing how true it is in its main argument, and how truly it shows the growth of the ideas that have upheld the ancient regimes of the old world.

Ghent did well to use the word "benevolent"; for benevolence is a necessary adjunct to the maintenance of the Protective Spirit. This benevolence is for us—as indeed it was for vassals and underlings of medieval kings and lords, and as it is for vassals and underlings of kings and lords to-day—the very flower of the Protective Spirit. It is perfume to our nostrils. We worship in its incense. We educate our youths to breathe its sweet odors.

But benevolence requires the stuff to be benevolent with, and great benevolence requires much stuff, and much stuff comes in but one way, namely, by diverting wealth. The Protective Spirit makes people blind to the ways of diverting wealth.

A high tariff lets the manufacturer fill his pockets with double prices. It is all right—infant industries and labor, especially labor, must be protected. A street-car monopoly lets investors draw dividends on watered stock. It is all right—we must protect capital and not drive it away. Land monopoly lets the owner take the value which the public gives to his land. It is all right—vested rights must be protected.

Such are the kinds of protection that in modern times Buckle's Protective Spirit needs to thrive on. Given these forms of protection, then those who are so favored will throw their benevolent arms—or alms—around the great body of the people, and will manage for them their politics, education and religion. Many a one who talks eloquently of the improvement of the masses thinks that this is the only way to promote the welfare and development of "such people." This is the Protective Spirit.

The real mistake of the good men who believe in the Protective Spirit lies in supposing that development can come from without.

The opposite of the Protective Spirit is the Democratic Spirit. The Democratic Spirit makes much of equality. Its underlying conception is individual independence. Its ideal is a fair field for self-development. It abhors special privilege and favoritism of every kind. It believes in equality in all affairs, political and social, under laws that recognize no distinction, save the great distinction between what is common and what is individual.

The Democratic Spirit believes in the equal rights of every individual in that which no individual has produced. It believes in the exclusive right of every individual in that which he himself has produced. It believes that the right of the individual to his own can only be attained by the recognition of the common right of all in what should truly belong to all. It

believes that the root of social distress lies in fostering the favors and special privileges whereby some can hold or take more than their share of the common right.

The Democratic Spirit believes in neither giving nor receiving protection. It abhors the protected ways of diverting wealth.

A high tariff lets the manufacturer fill his pockets with double prices. The Democratic Spirit says this is wrong—let the buyer be free to buy where he chooses, and let government cease to tax one for the benefit of another. A street-car monopoly lets investors draw dividends on watered stock, while the people pay more fare than is necessary, and get little from the company in taxes. The Democratic Spirit says this is wrong—the street belongs to all the people, and those who have special use of it should pay properly for the privilege. Land monopoly lets the owner take the value which the public gives to his land. The Democratic Spirit says this is wrong—what is produced by all should belong to all, and whoever holds land should pay properly for the privilege.

The Democratic Spirit has no part in the protection of favors and vested wrongs. It believes that the absence of these forms of protection will remove all color of need for the guidance and benevolence of the Protective Spirit. It believes that in a fair field, the people in self-dependence will have a chance to develop into manhood and true ideals of living, as can never be possible so long as the Protective Spirit holds sway.

The Democratic Spirit has never been organized, but it is spreading and rising into consciousness here and there. It is indeed the new conscience—the conscience that concedes the rights and possibilities of all men, despising none, and ready to believe that failures and shortcomings and degradations are perhaps mainly due to the denial of rights and the greed of privilege. The new conscience says, in the words of the noble mayor of Toledo, who has just passed from us, "We are all people—just people, you know."

By and by the scattered forces of this new conscience will unite to overthrow the Protective Spirit and to establish the Democratic Spirit, and this triumph

will be the next great consummation in the march of human progress.

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NEW ZEALAND.

Auckland, July 15.—In the year 1896 the parliament of New Zealand passed a law entitled "The Rating on Unimproved Values"—in other words, the local option taxation law. Several amendments have since been made, which leave the position as follows:

In any city, borough or county 15, 20, or 25 per cent. of the local taxpayers, according to the number in the district, can present a petition to the chairman or mayor of the local governing body, asking that a poll be taken for the adoption of the provisions of this act. If a majority of the local taxpayers who vote on the question decide in favor of adopting the act, then all the local taxes are thereafter levied on the unimproved value of the land, and buildings and other improvements go untaxed?

Since the passing of this law, about 65 places have voted on the question; and 54 have agreed, mostly by large majorities, to adopt the act, while 11 have rejected it.

Palmerston North was the first locality in the colony to adopt the act, which they did almost immediately after its passage. Others followed soon after, and every year since that time additional localities have adopted this method of raising local revenue.

The act provides that after three years the local tax payers can revert, by vote, to the old system; but up to the present time only three localities have taken a vote on the question of reverting, and all have refused to revert, two out of the three by larger majorities than those by which the act was adopted in the first place. In the third, where the mayor was fighting hard for a reversal, the majority of votes in favor of continuing the new system was only nine less than for its adoption three years before. This locality is the borough of Devonport, near the city of Auckland. The voting here was 415 for the maintenance of the new system, as against 176 for a return to the old. The number of votes may appear small, but one explanation of that is that only owners of property are allowed to vote.

Two of the leading cities in the colony, namely Wellington, the capital city, and Christchurch, have adopted the act within the past three years. The opinion of the people of Wellington may be gathered from the following extract from the annual report by the town clerk for 1903:

"The result of the first year's trial of this system of rating must be considered a gratifying one, and leaves no room for regret at its adoption. That