

is the answer to the question why men don't go to church.

Not the self-sufficiency of the men, but the self-sufficiency of the churches.

Come, they say, and we will show you the Christ! And they lead us to his empty tomb.

Now, I have no right to find fault with the church for its shortcomings, and I do not. I agree that it is silly to criticize the church, simply because not all who profess and call themselves Christians are perfect.

But I do submit that when the church offers to show us the Christ it ought to do it. And it doesn't.

He comes to loose the prisoner's chains,  
To set the captive free.

That was true for 18 centuries before the church found it out. I suppose Christians have sung hymns something like that ever since they hid in the catacombs. But it was only a few years ago that the church learned that the spirit of Jesus made slavery impossible.

In all those years the spirit of Jesus has not penetrated the consciousness of the church.

I do not blame the church for that; do not even criticize it. It has been seeking the Christ always, coming nearer to him always. And if it had been confessedly seeking him it would have had inexpugnable claims to all it professed.

But it has believed that it had Jesus caged in its shrines. And that was not true.

Now the evangelist would say that slavery has been abolished some forty years and that the church did after all lead in abolishing it, wherefore my criticism is picking flaws that do not exist.

That is my very complaint. Slavery is not abolished. And the church is as blind to its prevalence as it was all the eighteen centuries during which chattel slavery flourished.

Pious Massachusetts to-day is engaged in the murder of childhood in the cotton mills of the South. If the spirit of Jesus had penetrated the church that had been impossible.

I do not say that hideous crime is the fault of the church; I do not blame the pious men who commit it. Individually they are doubtless as charming and chivalrous as the old slaveholders. But they do not know Jesus or they could not tolerate this crime. And the church to which they belong is not penetrated by his spirit or they must have known him.

He maketh wars to cease.

You cannot imagine Jesus giving sanc-

tion to a war of conquest. We do see the church give its sanction. We have heard Te Deums sung to the god of battles—who was a heathen god—for the victories of a war of conquest. If the spirit of Jesus had penetrated the consciousness of the church that had been impossible.

One has no right to blame the church for its imperfections. But one must say the church is self-sufficient proclaiming the Christ when it does not know him.

For the defense of his home all of us would fight. We do not pretend to be Christians to the extent of believing that all who take up the sword must perish by the sword. We don't believe that. But we do pretend to have been affected by the spirit of Jesus so far that we will not do willful murder. War of conquest is willful murder. And by the way, since I began writing this line a Minneapolis preacher has anticipated me on that ground. He must be a follower of Jesus.

Mind you, I am not criticising the church. I have no right to criticize the church. It is ever so much better than anything I could make in its place, and is doing more good than any other thing in the world. Except possibly the trade unions, there is no other institution comes so near conveying the spirit of Jesus in the world. It is only its self-sufficiency.

The business man who has any sense realizes well enough that a code of morals is not all he wants in this world. He is as restless as the rich young man in Palestine eighteen centuries ago. Something else is wanted to make life complete. Perhaps—for he is vague about his thinking—it may be the gospel of Jesus.

Well, he goes to church, say. And there he finds exercises in charge of the gentleman mentioned in the New Testament who shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, neither entering themselves nor suffering them that are entering to go in.

They lead him to an empty tomb and tell him to contemplate that. And he is not interested in tombs.

But, oh, my friends, if the messenger met him at the door with the tidings, Jesus is alive, he is alive! He is walking the streets of this very town to-day. Come, let us go find him!

Then would the church work and pray for the coming of his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.—The Red Wing (Minn.) Argus.

The first thing which the democracy will write upon the slate will be the nationalization of the land.—Hughes.

#### SPURIOUS OPTIMISTS.

Extracts from an article entitled "Are We Worse Than Our Fathers?" by a member of the Jonhstown (Pa.) high school, class of 1905, published in "The High School Spectator," Thanksgiving number, 1903.

Political apologists who attempt to justify the corruption of their own age by exhuming the crimes and follies of the past . . . advance the fatal optimism which breeds indifference to actual conditions and silences the demand for light on the wrongs of society. Their optimism is that of the slave holder and the buccaneer. If the people can be made to believe that everything is as it should be all effort at reform will stop. Progress comes only through a conception of something better. And the creed of the apologist springs from the belief that conditions are as good as can be hoped for. In order to advance the doctrine "let well enough alone," he will emphasize the corruption of the past and ignore that of the present. What though we torture Filipinos? Did not the Assyrians skin their captives alive? What though bribery, flibustering and gerrymandering are practiced to-day? Did not our fathers put them into practice also?

The fact that our fathers were as bad as we are reflects no credit upon us. Crimes of the past do not excuse present wrongs. We have had the benefit of education and experience, and a tolerance of what was known to be wrong in the past is all the more inexcusable in us. We at least pride ourselves on being an enlightened and highly civilized nation. We say we are a people of progress. Yet there are men who maintain that, because we are as good as our fathers, we have no reason for complaint. Such doctrines are advanced by some of our leading statesmen. But the role played by them is certainly not creditable to their reputation as exponents of advanced education and enlightenment.

Despite the wonderful difference between the civic principles of our fathers and those of the present day, there is a still greater difference between the ideals of our fathers as a nation and those of the present generation. Internal degeneracy cannot be compared with the change in our existence as a nation. Within the last few years we have changed the principles of our government completely. Our moral relationship with the world has been revolutionized. Either our fathers were wrong or we are wrong. We have repudiated the principles on which our government was founded. While we once believed in the consent of the governed,

we now believe that might makes right. And while we once commanded the respect of the world as the refuge of the oppressed and champion of liberty, we are now looked on as a newly-awakened monster, ready to take the place of the tyrants against which we formerly rebelled and to act the bully toward the weaker peoples of the earth.

The intention of the founders of our government was certainly that America should be more than this. The principles laid down by Jefferson were only the foundation of what the nation should be. The history of mankind up to that time had been but the record of ambitious and deluded kings, and of the attempts of one race to subjugate the other; of the stronger to crush the weaker. The defenseless were consigned to slavery or the grave. Liberty was a lie and justice a mockery to the masses of humanity. But we would make a nation that would be a haven and not a curse to the downtrodden of the earth. We would glorify the arts of peace and justice and not of war. We would not build our state on the skulls of fallen millions, nor pitch our camp by rivers of human blood. We would not build as the nations of the past have built. We would not plant the spirit of hate and revenge in the hearts of neighboring peoples who at the earliest moment would trample us in the dust. But we would gain the allegiance of the world in one grand endeavor to lift humanity upward and to bring them forth into the light of liberty. Nor did we dream in vain. The Greeks, the republics of South America and the smaller nations of Europe have good reason to be grateful for our championship of their cause. We were trusted and revered in every land. Our banners made tyranny tremble and our statues of liberty enlightened the world. We were working out the national ideal and had secured the confidence of all the world; but our ideals were blasted, our principles repudiated and our triumphs worsted by one of the blackest betrayals recorded in history.

Since then we have gloried in our infamy. We have cast aside our ideals as nursery rhymes, and have assumed the role of a world power. We have become conscious of our strength; but rather than uplift the needy we will join the tyrants of the earth. We ask not what is right, but what dare oppose us. From the words of Lincoln that "those who refuse liberty, to others deserve it not for themselves and under a just God shall not long retain it," we turn to the policy of imperialism, which plants the flag over conquered peoples and asks:

"Who shall haul it down?" Militarism follows quickly in the wake of imperialism, and thus frantic exhortations for a larger army and more powerful navy are being constantly forced in our ears. The plea of patriotism, which Dr. Samuel Johnson so truly characterized as "the tyrant's last resort," has been intoxicating the younger minds of the nation with its pictures of the glories of war and world exploitation. The American Man with the Hoe must not only suffer betrayal as a disciple of freedom and a friend of the republic, but he must carry the soldier of imperialism on his back.

But with all these wonderful changes in our history we still may not be worse than our fathers. There may be other silent but potent forces that counterbalance our retrogression as manifested on the surface of modern events. Nowhere is liberty more vigilant than in the presence of despotism and tyranny. And who can say but that truth and sanity are on the verge of awakening, and that the forces of a new political revolution are already fomenting and making ready to restore the republic as effectively as it was overthrown?

#### A VERY NICE PAIR.

Two magpies sat on a garden rail,  
As it might be Wednesday week;  
And one little magpie wagged his tail  
In the other little magpie's beak.

And, doubling like a fist his little claw-hand,

Said this other: "Upon my word,  
This is more than flesh and blood can stand,  
Of magpie or any other bird."

So they picked and they scratched each other's little eyes,

Till all that was left on the rail  
Was the beak of one of the little magpies,

And the other little magpie's tail.  
—Nursery Nonsense.

"What is your definition of 'graft'?" said the inquisitive person.

"Graft," answered Senator Sorghum, "is made up of the perquisites that come to some other fellow's office and to which you cannot lay any claim."—Washington Star.

"Do you think Skinner can make a living out there?"

"Make a living! Why, he'd make a living on a rock in the middle of the ocean if there was another man on the rock."—Exchange.

#### BOOKS

##### HUMAN HISTORY THROUGH SYMBOLISM.

Peculiar stress is laid by modern school men upon the importance of history in connection with psychology and

sociology. Not only is history regarded as a story of past events, serving the race as each individual is served by the memory of his own personal experiences, namely, as a guide for the future; but it is appealed to as the record of race impulses which determine future events as irresistibly as do the stars according to another fatalistic "science." Human experience is thus offered us no longer as a teacher from whose lessons we may learn, but as a master whose decrees we must obey.

In keeping with the pretentious character of this fatalistic philosophy, its outlook is extremely narrow. For history, in its contemplation, is confined to the story of events. The primary perceptions of the race do not enter in. While, for example, the story of Jove's love for Leda is considered, this is merely because the existence of such a story is a fact. But the wonderfully precise symbolism of the story, so suggestive of human perceptions which depend upon intuition rather than history, is thrust out as unscientific. Nothing more profound or sensible is inferred from this story than that the prehistoric imagination from which it sprang must have been immature and fantastic.

To this lop-sided philosophy, an able and devoted student of myth lore, one who is familiar also with the modern form of fatalism, contributes (*Symbol-Psychology; a New Interpretation of Race-Traditions*. By Adolph Roeder. New York and London: Harper & Brothers) a balancing weight. Mr. Roeder distinguishes between race intuition and race history. In doing so he uses several illustrations, one of which will make his point very clear even to the least reflective reader. We quote it:

Read our modern American historically-fashioned records of Uncle Sam, John Bull, the Russian Bear, Tammany Tiger and other types, correctly, according to race-intuition, and you have instructive history; read them with too much literalness, and you have rather serious historic and ethnologic results.

It may thus be seen that Mr. Roeder's idea of symbolism is that its value "resides in its meaning, and not in its historic origin." For a further example, "the value of the American flag lies in the fact that it symbolizes American institutions and citizenship, and not in the fact that once upon a time a lady named Betsy Ross, in a town called Philadelphia, did sew a few red strips of bunting on a white cloth and a few white stars into a blue field." The moral of which is this: "If we should some day find out that the lady's name was not Ross, but possibly something else, or that the house where it was first made was not on Arch street, but down Laetitia street way, or any other set of facts, it will in no wise invalidate the efficiency of the American flag as a symbol."

This common sense principle Mr. Roeder applies to all symbolism, including that of the Bible. He recommends,