

CORRESPONDENCE

MR. W. S. LILLY AND MR. F. H. O'DONNELL

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—In common with Mr. Devine and many admirers of Mr. Lilly and his brilliant works, I must say I was amazed when I read his article 'Our Masters' in the *Nineteenth Century*. I asked myself can this be the Mr. Lilly who wrote 'Ancient Religion and Modern Thought,' 'Right and Wrong,' 'Shibboleths,' 'The Claims of Christianity,' etc., etc.? Is this the Mr. Lilly who wrote so learnedly on the Vedas, who dissected with such ability the sophisms of Spencer and Huxley, who lashed with such fierce scorn the ethics of London party journalism? Is it possible that this same righteous Mr. Lilly is now using the disreputable tactics of that same journalism to cast obloquy on the Nationalist Party? But there he is in white and black, in a widely circulated review, stooping to use, after true Tory fashion, the villainous garbage supplied by a creature like F. H. O'Donnell. I must say I was, as a strong admirer of Mr. Lilly's books, completely taken aback when I read his article 'Our Masters.' But Horace's maxim, 'Nil admirari,' and a few more old sayings, recalled to memory, restored my composure. I recalled, too, the repeated admonition of a wise old friend: 'Don't be surprised at anything from poor human nature, even though it be clothed in the habit of a monk, the cloak of the philosopher, or the robes of a cardinal; that is when congruous temptation, self-interest, or party prejudice comes in.' Mr. Lilly must be a strong Unionist. The rise of the Irish Party to its present predominant position in British politics must go fearfully hard with Unionists. Hence Mr. Lilly's unlooked-for lapse from dignity, good manners, and righteousness.—I am, etc.,

'BOOKS.'

DARWINISM.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir,—Mr. McCabe has come and, perhaps, gone. From the loudness of the trumpeting of him by his friends down this way, one would look for a great upheaval in the public mind. I thought the new 'culture' would swamp Christianity in this province altogether; that not a believer in it would be left. For up-to-date matter the audience was treated to the usual wild hypotheses, assertiveness, and personal conceit, which mark the Grant Allen school of second and third-rate exponents of Darwinism. He was constantly repeating 'all scientists, all biologists, all palaeontologists, of note think so.' The same rubbish we have been hearing these thirty years. The fact is, people are tired of Darwin and Darwinism. A writer reviewing Father Wasmann's book, *The Problem of Evolution*, in the January number of the *American Catholic Quarterly* puts the case thus:—'Men have settled down to the very sane conclusion that the theory of evolution is nothing more than a weariness to the spirit and a burden to the flesh, and that Darwinism has become an intolerable bore.' My object in writing is to throw some light on the attitude of many scientists at the present time towards Darwinian ideas. An opportunity to do so is given me by a book recently praised in the reviews, *Darwinism To-day*, by Dr. Vernon Kellogg, professor in the Leland Stanford University, U.S.A. Dr. Kellogg is a strong evolutionist, a working scientist and author of books on biological subjects. He may be regarded as an authority on the matter for which I quote him; he is a witness from the other side. In his first chapter, Dr. Kellogg makes allusion to 'the numerous books and papers appearing now in such number and from such a variety of reputable sources, revealing, among biologists and philosophers, the existence of a widespread belief in the marked weakening, if not serious indisposition, of Darwinism, some of the writers even seeing shadows of its deathbed.' Indeed, he writes his book to calm the fears of all the old Darwinists—schoolmasters, sociologists, philosophers, scientific laymen, and educated readers—who had settled down in a confirmed belief in Darwinism and evolution and had oriented their thoughts and conduct accordingly. He anticipates a panic among these, when the rapidly increasing anti-Darwinian books and pamphlets are circulated—especially the fierce attacks from Germany. It is the countrymen of Haeckel who are strongest on the 'sterbelager des Darwinismus,' the deathbed of Darwinism. 'For it is precisely the German biologists' (writes Dr. Kellogg, p. 4) 'who are most active in this undermining of the Darwinian theories. But there are others with them; Holland, Russia, Italy, France, and America all contribute their quota of disturbing questions and declarations of protest and revolt. The English seem most inclined to uphold the glory of their illustrious countryman, Darwin. But there are rebels even there.' Altogether it may be stated with full regard to facts, that the greater part of the current published output of general biological discussions, theoretical treatises, addresses and brochures, dealing with the great evolutionary problems, is distinctly anti-Darwinian in character. This major part of the public discussion of the status of evolution and its causes, its factors and mechanism, by working biologists and thinking natural philosophers, reveals a lack of belief in the effectiveness or capacity of the 'natural selection' theory to serve as a

sufficient caudo-mechanical explanation of species-forming and evolution. The fair truth is that the Darwinian selection theories, considered with regard to their claimed capacity to be an independently sufficient mechanical explanation of organic descent, stand to-day seriously discredited in the biological world.' Our author admits that for years there has been a steady and growing stream of scientific criticism running against Darwin's theories; but, in the last few years this stream has, as already mentioned in the preface and introductory chapter of this book, reached such proportions, such strength and extent as to begin to make itself apparent, outside of strictly biological and naturo-philosophical circles. Such older biologists and natural philosophers as von Baer, von Kollischer, Virchow, Nügel, Wigand, and Hartman; and such others, writing in the nineties and in the present century, as von Sachs, Eimer, Delage, Hacke, Kassowitz, Cope, Haberlandt, Henslow, Goette, Wolf, Driesch, Packard, Morgan, Jaekel, Steinman, Korschinsky, and de Vries, are examples which show the distinctly ponderable character of the anti-Darwinian ranks.' Dr. Kellogg with praiseworthy frankness adds: 'Perhaps the names of these men mean little to the general reader. Let me translate them into the professors of zoology, of botany, of palaeontology, and of pathology in the Universities of Berlin, Paris, Vienna, Strassburg, Tübingen, Amsterdam, Columbia University, etc. Now without knowing these men personally, or even through their particular work, the general reader can safely attribute to men of such position a certain amount of scientific training, of proved capacity, and of special acquaintance with the subject of their discussion. One does not come to be a professor of biology in Berlin or Paris or Columbia solely by caprice of Ministers of Education or of boards of trustees. One has proved his competency for the place. To working biologists those names—I have given, of course, only a selection and one particularly made to show variety of interest (botany, zoology, palaeontology, pathology)—mean even more than the positions; they are mostly associated with recognised scientific attainment and general intellectual capacity.' Though Dr. Kellogg thus gives his opponents their due, still he is much offended by the contemptuous way in which some of them refer to Darwin and his system. One of them, Dr. H. Driesch, a professor of biology, says:—'Darwinism now belongs to history, like that other curiosity of our century, the Hegelian philosophy. Both are variations on the same theme, viz., how one manages to lead a whole generation by the nose.' The same writer, complains our author, speaks of 'the softening of the brains of Darwinians.' But more grievous still and more calculated to create a panic among 'educated readers' and Darwinians, is Dr. Wolf's 'Kritik der Darwin'schen Lehre.' For Dr. Wolf is 'no indignant theologian of Darwin's own days, no ignorant and angry Dr. Wilberforce, but a biologist of recognised achievement, of thorough scientific training, and of unusually keen mind.' To hear such a man disdainfully referring to 'the episode of Darwinism' and suggesting 'that our attitude towards Darwin should be as if he never existed,' is, says Kellogg mournfully, a deplorable example of those things which make the judicious grieve.' But Dr. E. Dennert caps the climax when, in a paper 'largely given to a gathering together of the anti-Darwinian opinions and declarations of numerous well-known, and reputedly placed biologists,' he adds insult to injury in concluding:—'We (anti-Darwinians) are now standing by the deathbed of Darwinism and making ready to send to the friends of the patient a little money to insure a decent burial of the remains.' What ribald blasphemy in the eyes of all those educated readers, schoolmasters, and sociologists who had staked their hopes for this life and even for the next on Darwin's teaching!

What of McCabe and his emphatic, constantly repeated appeals to all the scientists of standing, all the biologists, all the palaeontologists? He was clearly calculating on the ignorance of his audience. He miscalculated, however.—I am, etc.,

'JACOB JUTTERBOCK.'

Puni Creek, July 25, 1910.

Invercargill

(From our own correspondent.)

July 25.

At the weekly meeting of the Catholic Club on Tuesday, 19th inst., the Rev. Father Kavanagh read a most instructive and interesting article on the fall of Catholicity in England. The various causes that led to the so-called Reformation were fully dealt with, and the subsequent and continuing progress of the Church in England was referred to. The Very Rev. Dean Burke, at the request of members, explained the arguments of Evolutionists with regard to the 'missing link,' and also gave very lucidly 'the other side of the story.'

The annual social of the Hibernian Band was held in the Victoria Hall on Wednesday, 20th inst., about 200 persons taking part. During the evening several of the band's soloists gave instrumental items, and a duet was contributed by Misses M. Shea and A. Hishon. The band is to be congratulated on another very successful function, Messrs. A. R. Wills (conductor) and T. McGrath, jun. (secretary), meriting a special word of praise for the completeness of all arrangements.