

tude is definite towards this theory: it is one of condemnation *in the present state of evidence*. The Biblical Commission, June, 1909, decreed negatively in answer to the following:—

"Can we, in particular, call in question the literal and historical meaning (of Genesis: caps. I, II, III.) when in these chapters, it is question of the narration of that which touch the foundations of Christian religion: as, for example, the creation of all things by God in the beginning of time; the production, creation of man; the formation of the first woman from the first man; the unity of the human race?"

That is, in the present state of evidence, the Commission meant to deny the actual ancestry of Adam's body man or a part the immediate formation of Eve's body from Adam's.

4. What is the binding force of this decree? The decree is not an infallible pronouncement, but in the matter of such decrees a Catholic is bound not to teach anything against them. We cannot verbally, or in writing, combat these decrees without incurring the note of heresy. But, it is held by theologians that, if in our own mind we are convinced of the cogency of the contrary arguments, we may represent them to the Commission or we may hold them internally. The Church's course is the rational one of forbidding her subjects to advocate publicly a doctrine that entirely lacks proof. She thus protects the unlearned and upholds truth.

### The Public Conscience

Some time ago we listened to an orator criticising our social and economic conditions. He produced much evidence in support of his arguments; and he emphasised repeatedly the need of letting the public know the facts. He assumed that when the public knew something they would do something. It was not the first time we had heard that fallacy enunciated; and as the orator was speaking we could not but remark that here was a man, a professed supporter of secular education, expecting a result from secular education which only religious education can give. People do not act so much from what they know as from what they feel; and their feelings are determined to a great extent by their early training. Knowledge by itself has no propelling power. It is only when knowledge is confronted with principles which have been deeply impressed on the heart that we are moved to action. It is not sufficient to know the difference between right and wrong; we must also feel it. We heard two men discussing a war-time conspiracy, in which a number of highly-placed public people were alleged to have filled their pockets with the fruits of their dishonesty. Said one: "I suppose we should do the same thing if we were in their places." The other replied: "I suppose so." And then he added: "Good luck to them if they can get away with it." To those two men the fraudulent act was as immoral as a dogfight. To them the criminal was to be envied if he escaped detection and punishment. That little discussion indicated the root cause of many evils in our midst. It showed first a toleration of wickedness

that only an immoral system of education coupled with a laxity in home training could inculcate. It is vain for men to raise their voices against rampant evils in the State so long as they support a system of education that does not influence feelings on questions of right and wrong, that places the material before the spiritual. As long as that system obtains, the schools will be the birthplace of moral plagues that will march like an army of occupation throughout the land. Until we learn to shudder at evil, evil will remain an honored guest in our household.

### How Conscience Is Trained

In this connection Balme's is worth quoting. "It is an error to suppose," he says, "that conscience resides solely in the intellect or is generated in the heart. It is a judgment, not a sense; but, we judge of things in a very different way according to the manner in which we feel them. Add to this, that the feelings have an immense influence on moral ideas and actions; the result is that conscience is formed under the influence of all the causes which forcibly act on our hearts. Communicate to two children the same moral principles, by teaching them from the same book and under the same master; but suppose that one in his own family sees what he is taught, constantly practised, while the other sees nothing but indifference to it; suppose, moreover, that these two children grow up with the same moral and religious conviction, so that as far as the intellect is concerned there is no difference between them; nevertheless, do you believe that their judgment of the morality of actions will be the same? By no means; and why? Because the one has only convictions, while the other has also feelings. In the one, the doctrine enlightens the mind; while, in the other, example engraves it constantly on the heart. Thus, what one regards with indifference the other looks upon with horror; what the one does with negligence the other performs with the greatest care; and the same subject that to one is of slight interest is to the other of the highest importance. Public conscience, which, in fact, is the sum of private consciences, is subject to the same influences as they are; so that mere instruction is not enough for it, and it requires the concurrence of other causes to act on the heart as well as on the mind." If our secularists had imbibed a little of the wisdom of Balme they would understand that the surest way in which to stem the tide of evil is not to tell indifferent adults about it, but to train the children to hate and avoid it. In that case they would cease to be secularists.

### The "Coming Christ" of the Theosophists

From the *Fortnightly Review* we learn that Mrs. Annie Besant, the leader of the Theosophical Society, has for some time been coaching a young Hindu to play the part of the "coming Christ." She had this fellow with her in Holland not long ago at the annual meeting of the Order of the Star of the East, the esoteric section of the Society. His name is Krishnamurti, and the adulation lavished upon him and Mrs. Besant herself throws a significant light upon the whole movement. "We have been extra-

ordinarily fortunate," writes one member, "because we have been walking in the wonderful sunlight of the presence of Dr. theosophical member." "Is there any language in the world in which one could adequately express the infinite love and tenderness of the Lord?" Mr. Krishnamurti answered a question during those never-to-be-forgotten days. "It was amusing," we read again, "to see Mr. Krishnamurti fetch his cloth and wash his plate and fork and knife, just as the others did." One must be a Theosophist to appreciate the humor of the spectacle, for in Mrs. Besant's circle Krishnamurti appears not as a man, but as a divinity. It would be unjust to blame this luckless youth for the evil of which he is made the object. Notoriety has been thrust upon him against his will. Left to himself, he would doubtless have preferred a menial profession than that of forming the centre of a group of adoring women. Sane Theosophists, not under the domination of Mrs. Besant, describe him as "quite a good lad." He confesses naively to having discovered an affinity in Charlie Chaplin: "Many a philosopher would give many years of his life to feel as he does." We may yet live to see the famous moustache and interminable trousers figuring on the platform of the Theosophical Society.

### Sensible Warfare

The war in China is said to be progressing wonderfully well. One observer lately returned from the seat of war describes it as a war between generals. No soldiers are killed. Every combatant shoots wide of the mark, or pops paper balls into the enemy ranks; but all honestly try to get hold of the enemy general, and if successful, cut off his head. That kind of warfare has much to commend it, but it would not cut much ice in Europe. Think, for example, how disconcerting it would be, how opposed to all constitutional usage, if in the event of a European war, the soldiers decided to refrain from attacking one another but confined themselves strictly to capturing and punishing the enemy politicians, financiers, and diplomats. That would put an end to war talk. Several Radical newspapers recently expressed dismay at a statement to the effect that it is now possible for an aeroplane carrying super-Louis gas to fly over a city and exterminate all the inhabitants in a few moments. We see no cause for uneasiness in this. On the contrary, it is about the most hopeful note that has yet been sounded—it brings into the danger zone the politicians and conspirators who make the wars. Hitherto, this confraternity have been able to insult the enemy from afar, to dispense hot air in comfortable halls and cosy luncheon rooms miles away from the trenches. But to run the risk of being choked with gas in the midst of a passionate lament that the duties of State prevented them from rushing out to seek death in "the far-flung battle line" would be too ridiculous altogether. Peace, distasteful as it is, would be better than that.

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