

Education Department to provide for prominence to be given in the history lessons in public schools to the importance of the British Navy. The Department has promised to accede to this request, and to publish articles in the School Journal on the subject. "The primary school syllabus in history, and the history readers that are most generally used in the schools are at present under review, and steps will be taken at an early date to effect such improvement as will make the teaching of the subject more effective. The Department will welcome any suggestion by the League in regard both to the syllabus and the text books used." The Navy League appointed a committee to wait on the Education Board with reference to the question of teaching history in the schools. This paragraph from the daily Press has given us hope. For many years we have protested against the distorted accounts of ecclesiastical events during the reformation period, which have been taught by the teachers and in the history text books used in schools, but no organised attempt has been made to get this teaching corrected. If the Department is prepared to consider suggestions from a committee of the Navy League on the choice of text books surely it will be prepared to consider suggestions from the authorities of the Church. Unfortunately history, as far as we can gather, is not, nowadays, usually taught from text books. Individual teachers give lessons from their own notes, and it is difficult to know exactly what is being taught. The history lesson, when it deals with the story of religious movements, especially with that of the Reformation, can be made to distinctly favor the interpretation of historical events that is characteristic of a particular religious party. We have known history text books to teach that Elizabeth, or Henry the VIII. or somebody else founded the Church of England!! That the Roman Catholic Church was abolished and a new Church founded by the State to take its place. That the Roman Catholic Church is "the Catholic Church." That religion was persecuted under Charles 1st and liberty of conscience allowed by the "saintly" Cromwell. It is natural perhaps that historians with a religious prejudice should magnify the faults of those who disagreed with them, and minimise those of their heroes, but to teach a one-sided history of religious movements is distinctly sectarian. Unless such history text books are specified for use in the schools, as are acknowledged by the authorities of the various denominations to give a fair account of their history and origin, it is cant for the educational authorities to view with horror the introduction of "sec-

tarian" religious teaching into schools by authorised religious teachers. Anyhow, we have never asked to be allowed to teach our views of Christianity and of Church history and principles to any but children of our own denomination, and even this is not allowed on the score of "sectarianism." It would be a work well worth doing if the Bishops would appoint some competent person or committee to go into this question and to review such history text books as may be chosen by the Department, or, better, to make suggestions to the Department as to books which give a fair account of events that have moulded the character of Christian denominations and the religious opinions of Englishmen.

### The Three Layers of Life.

Every Christian realises that his or her personality is expressed by body, soul (mind, reason) and spirit. Now there is a whole layer or level of life corresponding properly to each of these three divisions, and each level has its own laws; but the laws of the lower level are cut right across the moment we try to live by the laws of the level above. Thus we may say that we have three strata, body, soul, and spirit, and the most terrible mistakes are made when men insist that the laws of the lower stratum shall be applied to the higher.

Thus Darwin discovered some laws that govern plant and animal life. The Law of Natural Selection, in a nutshell "the survival of the fittest." The stronger weed, the sturdier insect, the fiercer animal wipes out the weaker. This law is true enough as far as it goes—it is true of vegetable and animal life—including the animal life of man. The ghastly blunder was to apply Darwin's theory to reasoning human beings, Prussianism and Nietzsche's "blonde beast," are simply Darwinism mis-applied to human life. The stronger race has the right (following weeds, etc.) to eliminate the weaker. Darwinism, true as applied at the biological level, is an appalling mistake—as this generation has learned to its cost—when mis-applied at the human level of life. For—as Huxley has well said in his *Romances Lectures*—there is another law dominating human life—the law of the sacrifice of self for others. Man, as such, has the reason and the feelings which enable him to rise above the mere assertion of the individual self, and to work for the good of others—for the good of the nation, the good of the race—even when it means toil and loss, and the sacrifice of self. We feel, we know instinctively, that these the higher, altruistic, human instincts are right, and that to inter-

pret human life on a merely animal plane is wrong. So much is this conviction embedded in human nature, that it took something like forty years of Neitzscheism to debauch the German mind to the superman animalism, for the filthy work their rulers meant them to do. What they learnt, with such horrible results, was Darwinism mis-applied to the human layer of life.

But there is a third layer—the Spiritual. There is something more, something higher than "the good of man," "the greatest good for the greatest number," there is "the greater Glory of God." There are Divine sanctions in the world. There is a definite Divine Law, and history tells, with no uncertain voice, the fate of nations that disregard God's Law. To apply this in one direction only—that of sex. Many of our politicians, and others, regard the matter of divorce solely from the second layer point of view. What decides the question of divorce, and the consequent right of re-marriage, is the question whether, in the opinion of the Judge, the longer continuance of the marriage bond, is likely to be of benefit to society! Not a thought of God's Law. Thus the Marriage Laws of the State in this country have quite definitely gone down to the second, humanitarian, level. But Christians cannot for a moment allow this. We are bound to maintain the spiritual level. The Laws of God, as expressed by Christ, are at least as high above merely humanitarian law as that law is above "the struggle for existence" and "the survival of the fittest." It devolves then upon us Church men and women, and Christian people generally, to endeavor to make it clear to our politicians that we shall not quietly acquiesce in the dragging down of marriage in New Zealand to the lower—level life.

G. D. WILSON.

### Ruatoki Mission Station.

This year we have had no Native priest residing amongst us, so have been obliged to depend upon a Lay-reader, with a monthly visit from the Rev. Ernini, of Whakatane.

The Parishioners of Avonwick, South Devon, have presented the Chapel with a Font, beautifully designed by Mr Gurnsey of the School of Art. It was dedicated by the Bishop when he and Mrs Sedgwick visited us in June. Four of our little ones are preparing for Baptism, one being the daughter of the "Prophet" Rua, a most intelligent child and greatly devoted to the Mission. At Christmas time instead of being keen to return to her parents, she concealed herself for an hour or two in the