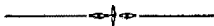


of a return to Zion. The captives are merely spoken of in such general terms as "Jacob" and "Israel," "house of Jacob," "house of Israel," which, while they do not exclude Judah, do not necessarily include it; so that in this respect xiv. 1, 2 would seem to be more closely related to the circumstances of Isaiah's own age than even xi. 12, where "the dispersed of Judah" are expressly mentioned. Again, in these two verses the return spoken of is not to Zion, but "to their own land," to "their place," to "the land of the LORD." The inference, then, is that when Isaiah xiv. 1, 2, was written Israel was in captivity, but *not* Judah; and this, speaking broadly, was the state of things in B.C. 729, when a considerable portion of the ten tribes had gone into captivity, while those who remained in the land of their fathers were under the sway of Hoshea, the nominee of Assyria.

In reviewing the above argument, it will be found that there is one point in which we lack confirmation. From Israel's captivity being mentioned in the Burden of Babylon, and in connection with a desolation presently to come upon Babylon, one might suppose that the captive Israelites were taken to Babylon, whereas the conqueror expressly tells us that he took them away to Assyria. To this seeming discrepancy it is sufficient to reply that Babylon is here regarded as the seat of empire, and that, as shown above, Tiglathpileser made it his second capital, and appears toward the close of his life to have given it the preference over Nineveh. Thus, being carried captive to Assyria and being carried captive to Babylon become equivalents.

C. BOUTFLOWER.

(To be continued.)



ART. III.—THOUGHTS ON SOME SOCIAL QUESTIONS, PAST AND PRESENT.—I.

THE close of the old century and the beginning of the new has given rise to many comparisons as regards social matters, some of the conclusions arrived at being unfavourable, while others are too flattering and generally optimistic. Those of us whose memories can go back through a long period of years are not inclined to agree entirely with either of these opinions and statements, but desire to discriminate between those matters which have without doubt improved, and others which have not done so, during the lapse of years.

As the younger members of the present generation are somewhat apt to believe that the present state of things is

mainly owing to their own exertions, and that little of it is due to the labours of the past, it may be well for them to learn some facts from those who have had a longer experience than their own.

In considering Social questions, it is remarkable to find the unanimity with which the terms "apathy" and "indifference" are used with regard to them. This state of feeling is the case more especially in the country than in London, as I have reason to know from a residence in both, but everywhere it is the truth in greater or less degree; evils, if known, are ignored, or considered to be hopeless, and beyond the reach of help, and what has always been, must still continue to be. That this is more especially true with regard to "intemperance" cannot be denied. That this apathy is to be found even in the "Great Council of the Nation" is surely a disappointing and undeniable fact, social questions and urgent reforms being too often postponed or laid aside year after year. The late Bishop of Durham says indeed truly, "There is no strong public feeling against the vices which are widely dominant among us—gambling, drunkenness, impurity. Till the conscience is enlightened and aroused, legislation must be ineffective."

But the most remarkable and striking instance of "apathy" is certainly shown by women, who shrink from the contemplation of unpleasant subjects and evils, and only too willingly shut their eyes to them, a disposition which, I cannot help remarking, is strongly supported by their male relatives, who are almost universally opposed to their knowledge of, or taking part in, any such matters. But I cannot help asking, will shutting our eyes and ears to all the evils which surround us ever effect an improvement in them, or help to remove the terrible burden? Having had experience of the poor in London and the country (though chiefly in the former), I am confirmed in my opinion that the average poor in London have a higher standard of morality than the rural poor. I am, of course, not speaking of "wicked London" (as it was called by the late lamented Bishop), but of those working classes with whom I had to do in my ten years' work with a "Mothers' Meeting." Amongst the three hundred families visited by the Parochial Mission woman, she heard of only one instance of a girl having "gone wrong"; and some years after I was told of another, which had come before the Guardians, as the girl applied for admission to the workhouse. I knew the family well, and the mother died during my residence in the parish, which probably might account for this sad circumstance. But perhaps the most remarkable part of it was the overwhelming sense of shame and disgrace felt by her family,

and their earnest request to the Mission woman to keep it secret from their neighbours in the same locality, and even from the clergyman who had presented the girl for confirmation. Surely this is very different from what I heard in the country places in which I lived subsequently, where an absolute indifference seems to prevail as to all such occurrences, and no shame is felt.

Looking at the state of things which exists not only in country villages, both in the North and South, but in the towns also, is it possible to say that we are satisfied with the results of our costly education in either Board, or Voluntary, Schools, as shown in the after-lives of the children, both boys and girls? As I wish to give facts in support of my assertions, I cannot refrain from stating the following circumstances, however painful they may be. I have just heard of a country union in which a girl has been received for her second confinement at the age of sixteen! About twenty-five such cases are admitted annually, many at the age of fifteen. The number as given in the Report of the Workhouse Girls' Aid Committee of Kensington is no less than 100 in the year, and I will give the following extract from it: "The number of these women does not appear to be decreasing. In our larger unions it is estimated that 100 illegitimate children are born every year, so that, taking twelve only of the largest London workhouses, we have a total of 1,200 such births each year. This but represents a small proportion of the total number." What can the excellent committees referred to (which ought to be adopted in every workhouse) hope to be able to do in going to the root of this terrible evil? They may well ask, "The problem is one of considerable magnitude. What means are available for stemming this vast tide of illegitimacy and pauperism?" And I may add, Who will answer this question?

The chief social efforts of which I heard in country towns were for the support of Rescue Homes on a small scale, which seemed to me utterly inadequate, and merely palliative of results, instead of going to the root and causes of the evil they sought to remedy. As I have so often said before, during the last fifty years, but must repeat once more, it is of little use to remove the victims from temptations when it is perfectly certain that another band (for the supply will equal the demand) will immediately be forthcoming to take their place, and it must be obvious to everyone who has considered this sad subject that the only real and effective measures are such as are adopted by the White Cross League, and all those who maintain and uphold the fundamental law of one standard by which men and women are alike to be guided and ruled

and judged. I may add that the beginning of this only really effective movement is within my own recollection. A Northern Bishop says in his recent charge: "The low standard of public opinion on this subject, not alone in our own district, sometimes almost fills our hearts with despair. Unfaithfulness before marriage, and the light view of it as a sin against God, are among our greatest hindrances, and until all religious bodies set themselves, not only in word, but in practical discipline, against this all too prevalent sin, there will be no healthy public opinion created." That preventive measures are now being adopted in this and other departments of social work is a matter for sincere satisfaction and congratulation.

And here I cannot help asking another question as to the efficiency of our methods of education as regards practical, or, I might say, physical, results. It is impossible to believe but that a more direct teaching on the matters concerning life and health might be promoted in our schools. We read every year of the enormous mortality amongst little children, said to be caused mainly through unwholesome and unsuitable food; and this is traced to the ignorance of the parents. Can we doubt that many of the sad cases of invalids and cripples (of whom we are told there are no less than 1,800 in London alone) might be prevented or ameliorated by the teaching of the mothers of this class, not only in schools, but in after-life, by the Mothers' Meetings, now held everywhere. Again, as to the results of education in after-life, can we read without shame and horror the following fact?—The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children records that in one month 2,700 cases of neglect by starvation and ill-treatment were recorded, involving 7,648 individuals and 3,511 offenders!

While comparing the condition of country and London as regards morality, it is impossible to exclude the consideration of intemperance also; and here, surely, we find the greatest amount of the "apathy" of which I have spoken. My experience showed this evil to be far more general, especially amongst the young of both sexes, in country towns than in London, and the number of public-houses far greater and more striking. In two or three towns that I could name, it was almost impossible to count them in driving through the streets, so numerous were they on either side; and when one old tumble-down or unattractive house was condemned, it was rebuilt by the wealthy firm of brewers in an absolutely palatial style, and well-named "palace," irresistible to passers-by. In the afternoons, especially on Bank Holidays, boys and girls, even children, were seen the worse for drink in the streets. It was impossible for me to believe an opinion which I have heard, that the number of public-houses does not affect

the drinking of the population. It is supposed to be, and it may be, useless to quote statistics, but to my mind they are of overwhelming importance, and I will give a few, at least, of them which may be forgotten by some.

Our National Drink Bill amounted last year to over £162,000,000. All the public-houses being supported by the working classes, they are thus responsible for their number, as whatever the rich may consume in drink, it is not procured there.

Out of 11,000 committals of women to Holloway Prison in the year 1899, there were 4,000 habitual drunkards; in one day 150 were in confinement, with from three to 65 convictions each, while more than half had three convictions within twelve months; 82 were received in one day. Then we are told that 60,000 children came to ill-usage through drunken parents; and when we read the testimony of the inspectors of workhouses that total abstainers are not found amongst the inmates, can we avoid the conclusion that half of our State institutions and hospitals might be closed if the evil of drink were suppressed, for it is a well-known fact that the larger proportion of inmates in both are driven there as the result of immoderate drinking? The testimony of some of our excellent matrons of the modern Poor Law infirmaries confirms this sad fact after years of experience in this department of work. As regards the two other vices of gambling and betting, they may have become less prevalent among the upper and middle classes than in past generations, but have they not largely increased in the lower classes, as a glance at the police-court reports will swiftly prove, these temptations being the cause of so many crimes?

Another matter I must name, in which, I believe, no one will contend that we have improved, is that of domestic service. I, who can look back for more than seventy years, recall with gratitude the excellence of those who served us and my grandparents, including our valued old nurse. A lifelong service indeed was hers, but, besides herself, there were many others (one of her family, even for forty years), as nursemaids, housemaids, and men-servants, whose stay with us was for over twenty years. It is rare now to find such contented devotion to one family and situation, and every year it becomes more so. The restless spirit of the age, with a love of "change," is especially remarkable in this class, with increased fastidiousness, independence, and a growing desire for liberty, amusement, and dress; and many of us are asking what will be the condition of matters in the course of this new century. The employment of Chinese, or coolies, or at least Germans, is foretold, and is not improbable, the latter being largely

engaged at present for domestic service.¹ As to a supply from those who are now being taught in Board-schools, there is little, or I may say nothing, to be hoped for, as they openly declare their determination *not* to "go to service." One of my recent cooks, who herself left school at ten years old to assist in earning for a widowed mother, told me that all her young nieces, of whom she had several, expressed the same resolve, and look forward, no doubt, to being "young ladies," with their titles, in shops, post-offices, or some similar employments, where, of course, the chief temptation and attraction is "evenings to themselves," though not "at home." Yet, I must add, this same cook read and wrote well, and had quite as much learning as was necessary for her position in life, even though French, drawing, and the piano were not added. This modern notion, new within the last fifty years, can surely not be considered an advance and improvement on old times. Greater liberty and less control, and even the suggestion that our maids should be addressed by their mistresses with the title of "miss," will, I believe, not avail to induce them to remain "in service," not even if pianofortes and bicycles, and the abolition of the things now called "caps," are added to the list of bribes held out.² I cannot help wondering sometimes if mistresses recommended or required the present fashion of frizzled hair (exactly like the woolly heads of negroes), it would be willingly adopted by our maids.

There is one more point connected with our servants to which I must allude, and which can hardly be considered an improvement on old times—viz., the great increase of correspondence which has taken place, and which, I believe, is in great measure caused or encouraged by some societies and plans which are connected with young servants, and which arrange for correspondence with them. It may do good and be a help to some, but I cannot help thinking that at least it must take up a large amount of time which ought to be given to their employers. I have known of weekly and daily letters, which, of course, have to be answered.

It strikes me sometimes that there is something to be said in excuse for the failings of domestic service, and that is in the unreality that almost necessarily pervades it, the members wearing, as it were, a mask, and never appearing as their real selves or with their natural manners and voices, being, in fact, what one may describe as two personalities—above stairs and

¹ The entire discontinuance of the terms "master" and "mistress" is surely another striking sign of change in these relations.

² I have recently heard of two parlour-maids who advertised and received forty and fifty replies, some ladies going in carriages and bicycles to interview them. No wonder that wages are rapidly mounting up!

below. Everyone must have noticed the change that occurs when in the presence of their masters and mistresses, and this change cannot be conducive to an open and honest character and deportment. It has sometimes occurred to me if this may not be true also with regard to those who surround Royalty. Are *they* seen, as a rule, in their real selves, or with a mask on?

There is surely one other remarkable change in the servants of the present day—as to Bible-reading, which was the habit formerly on Sundays, but is now almost entirely superseded by magazines, or even the Sunday paper. But is not this the case also with all classes?

There is one more subject I must touch upon in connection with past and present, and that is dress. It is many years since I wrote a leaflet on this matter for a small society which was started, and I was asked to assist; but, like all similar efforts, it proved fruitless, and came to nothing in striving against the all-powerful force of fashion. It is surely remarkable, on looking upon old records showing women's dress during many generations, to find the prevailing hideousness and folly of almost all the fashions which have found favour—or, at least, have been adopted—by all. One of my sisters, who was given to collecting, made drawings of costumes from the earliest times, and throughout the whole series the prevalence of ugly, and even preposterous, fashions is the impression left by them. Whatever the artistic tastes and knowledge may have been of the Great Masters who painted these portraits, we find the same disregard of beauty and proportion. But what strikes me as so remarkable in this fact is that the same thing is true at the present day, when art schools are to be found all through the country, and where one would suppose that art principles would be taught and recognised, even in connection with dress. But, instead of this, what do we find? Can anything be more utterly at variance with all such principles as the fashions of even the last few years, when hats of enormous dimensions tower upon the heads of delicate and slender girls, and even children, and bonnets with standing plumes which almost rival in height the soldiers' bearskins? I have often been tempted to suggest to *Mr. Punch* that he should take up the subject of these foolish exaggerations of head-dress, and hint that the towering black plumes at present in fashion must be those of the discarded ornaments of hearses, now, happily, things of the past. Then, as to garments: We have gone from the extreme of the most enormous skirts, distended on crinolines, to those of such narrow dimensions that not a fold is to be seen in them, tightly stretched,

as they are, over the figure ; but, to make amends apparently for this scanty supply of material in width, we have the addition of a trailing skirt, of all recent inventions the most objectionable from every point of view, the doctors telling us that it may even be the means of spreading serious and dangerous diseases, as well as of conveying dust and mud into the houses.¹ One would hardly think it possible that any persons could be so lacking in common-sense and decency as to persist in such methods, but so it is, and will remain till Fashion once more forbids it. Protests have been made in the papers, and even a proposal that some sort of organization should be formed to oppose it, but at present without avail. If such dresses are desired for the house or evening wear, at least they might be fastened up when walking out-of-doors—a suggestion which, it might be supposed, the common-sense of everyone would supply. One instance of the ever-varying absurdities of fashion may be forgotten by many, and I will record it. When the great glass-house was being erected in Hyde Park in 1851, the architect was asked how he meant to arrange for its being swept and cleaned daily. He replied that there was no need to provide for that : “ spaces would be left between the boards of the flooring, and the ladies’ trailing garments would do all the rest ! ” And thus they swept the streets also ! The conclusion at which I have arrived on this matter is that principles of art, beauty, grace, and common-sense have nothing to do with the important subject of dress, and that we are under the tyranny of persons—I suppose in Paris—who have no knowledge of them, a tyranny in which all persons acquiesce, without a thought of rebellion, however much of health, comfort, cost, or convenience may be involved. I have more than once expressed my conviction that a great part of the opposition of sensible and educated men to the admission of women to responsible or public work is due to the absurd and exaggerated dress so conspicuous at the present time, and so suggestive of frivolity. Why cannot the example of our Princesses be followed, in their small becoming bonnets and sensible skirts ? But Fashion is too tyrannical.

LOUISA TWINING.

(To be continued.)

¹ At a recent meeting on the “ Open-air Treatment of Consumption,” the following words were said by Sir James Crichton Browne : “ Without this seed [of consumption] they could not have tubercular disease. The lungs of consumptive persons were the granaries from which the seed was drawn ; the atmosphere was the sower that scattered it broadcast ; the trailing skirt, so often seen in Mayfair, swept up from the pavement dust mixed with bacilli, and was a source of great danger.” But this worse than absurd fashion is not, alas ! limited to Mayfair.