













## THE INFIDEL'S WOE.

REV. THOMAS DIXON DETAILS THE MISERIES OF AGNOSTICISM.

A Prelude on the Hunger Riots in Berlin and Elsewhere. The Soul of Man Never Can Be Satisfied with "I Do Not Know"—Uncertainty Is Agony.

New York, March 20.—Before the usual great congregation that fills Astoria hall every Sunday Mr. Dixon reviewed this morning the recent hunger riots in Europe and their kindred manifestations in America, preceding the sermon of the day. He said:

Famine, hunger, desperation and crime seem to be the order of the day with the under masses of the Old World. Each day's events confirm our studies in the mind of the thoughtful student of the civilization the idea that society is being driven by a resistless power toward a crisis of tremendous import. From the present outlook it is exceedingly doubtful if a forcible check can be put upon the forces of the social evil that are now years longer, unless the ruling spirits in our governing aristocracies of blood and money display new powers of discernment and adjustment. Will the governing forces of the society that is aware to this fact and adjust themselves? We shall see.

Certainly the signs of the times in the social world give us food for serious thought.

FAMINE, HUNGER, CRIME.

In Russia, famine—grim, gaunt and horrible beyond the power of the prosperous to conceive—ravages and lays waste a territory covering over 400,000 square miles containing a population of 20,000,000. The grain crop of the Caucasus for the past season was abundant, and yet millions are starving.

In Germany, for three days the city of Berlin is terrorized by surging crowds of unemployed hungry men. They are charged upon by the police and dispersed, but they seem to rise out of the earth from a hundred quarters at once, and for three days the senseless, pathetic riot of hunger held its dismal carnival of violence. Behind the gates of the imperial palace there cry across mounted police drove them back. But the emperor heard the cry, and he will hear it again before he is much older.

The news comes from Vienna of hundreds and thousands out of work, hungry and rioting.

From France we hear the echo of dynamite bombs, the source of which is not in doubt.

England is threatened with the greatest strike in the history of the labor war, in which 300,000 men are engaged, and engaged and millions of workmen necessarily affected.

HUNGER AND CRIME HERE.

In free and prosperous America we are not lacking in social distress. The other day James Castoria, a bricklayer, hungry and out of work, applied to police headquarters and asked to be arrested that he might have food and shelter. Refused the favor of an arrest because he had no money, he calmly stepped outside, smashed the window of the building and was duly arrested. He wanted to be imprisoned for two months, after which he thinks he can live at his trade.

A man by the name of Frank England broke into the house of Rev. Frank Clark the other day in broad daylight to get something to eat for a starving wife.

In the ruins of the Hotel Royal, Joseph Rooster faints twice from lack of food while trying to earn a few pennies for a starving family.

Within the past few days in Brooklyn there was found a whole family, with one dead, all the sick and the head of the household dying, that had been five days without food, fuel, sufficient clothing or medical attendance.

A farmer in Alabama the other day, when offered for his cotton a price far below the cost of production, drove his team out on the bridge and dumped his crop into the river.

POLITICS, OR DEEPER?

Men and brethren, say what you will about the causes, these are awful facts. They are facts that are crying to the world-wide record. Read their lessons.

1. When such phenomena appear under the czar of Russia and the stars and stripes we are driven to the conclusion that even the forces of political government are today more incipient to the world's social disease. The secret of the trouble must be deeper than mere politics—there is something radically rotten at the heart of civilization itself.

2. The church of Christ must hasten to know that this is the question of the age. If the church has no solution of such a problem I honestly believe that as an organic power the church must surely perish in the twentieth century.

3. Should not our men of verbiage read in these signs anew the deep obligations laid upon them to rescue and save society? Can we feast and dance and banquet while our brethren starve? Is it nothing to us that our men are right to do what pleases with him to do what he ought to do.

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MUST KNOW.

All knowledge is partial. We recognize that fact. The Christian does not pretend to know the last that may be said about the great problems of religion. "We know in part" cries the great Apostle. The part we know is the way marked out by the compass. It is not necessary to know the mysteries of the depths of the sea to be able to navigate the ocean. We need simply to understand the laws of navigation and the use of the compass. When presented with this tremendous issue, however, of the way of life, it is not sufficient to say, "I do not know," when the means of knowledge have been given to every man. To answer the great problems of life, we must know, and to be content with profound stupidity. Man can know. He must know. The questions are of such tremendous import that nothing short of sublime stupidity or of insane ignorance can be satisfied with this answer of ignorance.

A PERSONAL QUESTION.

The question of the way of life is a personal one. The most tremendous question ever presented to man is the question of God—of sin, of good, of evil, of pain, of life—the beginning, the end, the mystery back of science. The question whether I am to perish with the matter that I touch, the eternal question of immortality that hangs over the human soul, cannot be answered by a stupid "I do not know." The human soul cries "I must know!" Besides, the human soul is conscious of free-

dom and conscious of the responsibility of life incidents to that freedom. Ignorance of law exonerates no man when the means of knowing law are at hand. God has written his law in the heavens. He has flashed it in the inmost soul of man, in the primal light of his intellect, every man coming into the world. He has written it in the Book which he has given to man. While we recognize the fact that there are uncertainties and mysteries, religion, while we recognize the fact that all knowledge is partial, even the most exact results of inductive science, how shall we settle this great question of God and of life and death and immortality?

To whom shall we turn for perplexity? To infidelity or to the Christ who has the word of eternal life?

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Infidelity offers to man the strength of a denial, the consolation of a negation, the luxury of destruction. When Athens fell, the Venetians had hurled their miscreant shot into the Acropolis. The masterpieces of genius and the statues of the ages were shattered to pieces. I suppose there was a certain joy and satisfaction in the barbarism of that assault. I suppose there was a sort of joy and glee in viewing the shattered ruins of Grecian art and glory.

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It has never done anything else in the history of the world. Its whole work has been purely destructive and obstructive. The human heart has cried for light. Infidelity has sought to put out the light from the souls of the friends of truth and erring men and women. The world has cried for light. The answer has been the darkness, a denial. The world has cried for bread, and it has been struck on the head with the stone of iconoclasm. What man needs is a lamp unto his feet, a light to show him the way. What infidelity has given has been articulated air.

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LECTURES ON ROCKS.

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European Sunday ought to be looked upon only as a calamity. Such a day intensifies passions the Sunday was designed to abate. It doubles the opportunity of both vice and crime. Under its aegis, the lawless and the lawless are a poor one compared with the vision of a great nation in which the dreamer sees the labors of the week all suspended for one day, the deus of temptation all closed, the churches, the parks, the libraries, the colleges, the halls all open, and frequented by millions of persons in youth or in old age who one day in seven touch existence on its greater side. If these millions cannot all feel with deprecating or to stay? In the silence, they can all feel for one day in each week that there is much of nobleness and happiness possible to mankind.—Professor Swing in Forum.

A QUESTION FOR SCIENTISTS.

Is Mrs. McAndrews Right in Blaming Her Son for Her Son's Guilt?

Director of Detective Desmond yesterday had a novel experience in the way of finding a new cause for crime. The experience was that the visit of a mother and much distressed old woman to the Four Courts. On the previous day a young man named Patrick McAndrews had been arrested in North St. Louis, charged with having burglarized a house, and had been taken to the police station. I do not see how it could survive the first exposition of its purposes and faiths. Mr. Frank, the expounder of this new religion, made this sublime declaration of faith on behalf of his followers: "We believe in the super-natural, purposive potency of nature. We look upon the universe as the involution of the divine potentialities. The all potential is within all and working through all. What this ultimate, divine potency is we do not claim to be fully able to comprehend." O weary, sin sick souls! Weary, sorrowing, despairing men and women, wrestling with the realities of a stern life! Come, here you will find comfort. Words, words, words! Wind, wind, wind!

Upon the other hand, listen. "We believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, and in the forgiveness of sins." Take your choice. There is comfort in playing upon words and in the manipulation of sound words will find it in the agnostic articulation of air set forth as the creed of this remarkable conglomeration of men