

A Curse to the Country.

A writer in an English journal, "Reynold's Newspaper," who, the editor says, holds a very important position in China, and has exceptional advantages for knowing that country and its people, states in the course of a long letter:

"The missionaries have the best houses in China, finely furnished, large staff of servants, and a splendid table. They do no work in the summer, but go away to the hills, where they have fine summer residences built, and they are not long in the country before they buy land and make money. This is not idle talk, as all foreign residents in China can bear out what I say.

"I have visited missionaries and dined with them, and can assure you that if they were in England they could not keep the houses they do here and be able to go away to a summer resort for three or four months every year. Another great benefit they have is that they get so much for every child they have. Now, Mr. Editor, I beg of you to do your best to try and prevent any more money being sent to this country to support missionaries. I am sure that the money can be laid out to much better advantage in England amongst the starving poor than to keep a lot of idle people here in luxury. The missionaries are flocking to Shanghai in hundreds, and many of them stay with their families at the best hotels at seven dollars per day. This equals at least fifteen shillings per day each, so you will see it requires capital to do this. You can hear people remark on all hands what an enormous amount of money must be sent from England to keep these people going. Many say they are a curse to the country.

Occasion for Rejoicing.

There are now three great archaeological exploring expeditions engaged in making researches in the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris, and along the ancient canal uniting those rivers near their mouth. The French explorers are directing their attention to the buried city of Tello, which they have resurrected and are compelling to reveal their antiquities and a long forgotten past. The Germans commenced vigorous work in the spring of 1899, on ruins they found in Babylonia. The students of historic beginnings will keep an eye directed to their movements. But the most successful of these expeditions is that under the direction of Prof. Hilprecht, now at work on the palace of the priest-kings of Nippur. This structure has a frontage of 600 feet. Its library of magnificent proportions, written on earthen tablets, not one of which bears a later date than 2,280 years before our era, and which was found buried under 70

feet of rubbish, is absolutely of more practical value to scholars than any discoveries made in Egypt.

Prof. Hilprecht represents America, and is now in the lead of all other investigators, thanks to the Pennsylvania University, in whose service he is laboring. He is positive that evidence is furnished by these discoveries that there was an advanced civilization in that region near 9,000 years ago. It is demonstrated by these discoveries that Egypt was colonized from the East, and that civilization did not originate there, as many have maintained.

All the world has reason to rejoice that these explorations awaited this Scientific age, so that truthful translations will be made, instead of garbled and false renderings to make them harmonize with sacred history.—[Progressive Thinker.

Attitude of the Clergy Toward the Theater.

We must put the stage on the same broad basis. The dramatic instinct cannot be crushed out. The noblest genius, in days ancient and modern, has been consecrated to it, from Æschylus to Shakespeare, from Shakespeare to Metastasio, Corneille, Racine, Victor Hugo, Tennyson. There have been noble actresses like 'Hamlet' and blameless comedies like 'Paul Pry.' Nowadays, theaters, actors, authors, playwrights are on the increase in every part of the world. No human power can stem the current, because the power of the drama is human; aye, and it does subserve at times the noblest moral as well as a most delightful recreative purpose. Where will you find a more pathetic comment upon the drunkard than in Mr. Jefferson's 'Rip'? where a more appalling revelation of a guilty conscience than in Sir Henry Irving's presentation of Eugene Arm? where more innocent comedy than in Mr. Toole? where more grand pathos and purity than in Mrs. Kendal? Where will you find a nobler power of viewing the great moral master-passion of tragic sympathy, justice, pity, than in Mr. Beerbohm Tree's unique presentation of them in 'Julius Cæsar'? The attitude of the clergy toward the stage should be one of discriminating sympathy rather than wholesale condemnation. If they want to reform the stage they must reform the public; praise what is good and denounce what is bad. They would do well to go to the play themselves, and get up and go out when a play is revolting or its general tendency bad. The people—still more the actors—will never believe that we parsons know anything about the stage if we never go near it. We cannot afford to taboo it; we ought not to be frightened at trying to direct for good such a tremendous force for good or evil as is the modern theater.—[Rev. H. R. Haweis, in The Outlook.

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