

and— Many people felt considerable disappointment when they found that she was declaring herself an apostle of the mystic Faith of the Theosophist. But though few people feel sympathy with these doctrines, they must, at least, recognise that Belief in any doctrine at all is a distinct advance from Atheism.

Mrs. Besant is still full of vigour and life, and it is quite impossible to tell where her search for Truth may lead her before she dies ; but, at least, she is an honest, clever woman, who, in her time, has done some good, and, perhaps, some harm ; but the ultimate result of the fermentation caused by her teachings will not, we think, be decided in this generation.

Review.

“FROM Our Dead Selves to Higher Things,” by Frederick James Gant, F.R.C.S. (Nisbet & Co., 3/6); “The Lord of Humanity,” by the same author (Longmans, Green & Co.).

These books are remarkable in several ways. Mr. Gant's reputation as a surgeon and as a writer and teacher upon surgical subjects has been for many years firmly established alike by his work in the military Hospitals during the Crimean campaign, and ever since then at the Royal Free Hospital, and by his classical monographs on clinical surgery. Such acknowledged mastery of the theory and practice of his Art might have been sufficient to satisfy most men, but Mr. Gant has entered the field of Theology, and, we are bound to confess, has occupied it with remarkable success. The two volumes now before us, of which the latter named is in its second edition, the former being a more recent work, are similar in their chief characteristics, though differing in subject. Both display the author to be what we might term a scientific theologian—a type, by the way, which is sadly wanting in the Church itself. Evidently imbued with the deepest belief in Christianity himself, he clearly regards agnosticism as due, in many instances, to a passive lack of knowledge rather than an active scepticism, and his argument is directed, with considerable dialectical skill, to proving that the teachings of science corroborate, in the most minute particulars, the great truths upon which the Christian religion is based. As we read it, the broad proposition underlying both these books is that just as the body is most healthy when rigorous obedience is given to the laws of nature, so the soul requires for its best environment a purely spiritual atmosphere, not only of Faith, but also of daily works. Upon thoughtful men and women desirous only to ascertain Truth, we cannot doubt that the perusal of either or both of these books would have much effect, and to members of the clerical profession, they may specially be commended, for they present an aspect of theology with which clergymen, as a class, are, we believe, but little acquainted.

Inventions, Preparations, &c.

Those who are partial to that most exquisite and costly of all scents, Otto of Roses, will be interested to learn that the peasants who produce it in Bulgaria have largely given up raising grain in order to raise roses. Whereas the price of Otto in large quantities three years ago came out at a ha'penny a drop, it now reaches from a penny to two pence a drop. Eight teaspoonfuls (an ounce) of Otto would now cost from two to three pounds, and a small canister not as large round as a dinner plate and about three inches thick would cost from two to three hundred pounds. The unprecedented demand appears to have been created by the “Vinolia” Soap Co., which consumes annually thousands of pounds worth of Otto in Toilet “Vinolia” Soap, and which has advertised an Otto Toilet Soap everywhere and so popularized this scent to an unprecedented extent. There has been quite a storm among the manufacturers of Toilet scents in France and elsewhere in consequence of the present high price, due to a certain firm of agents in Turkey buying up the bulk of Otto and so running up the price. Many manufacturers will now have to raise the prices of their products or else reduce the quantity they use of the expensive Otto. The manufacturers of “Vinolia” Soap are advertising that the price and quality of “Vinolia” Soap shall not be altered, but it is currently reported that they are not making any profit this year on their Otto Toilet Soap, though they held a very large quantity of the scent before the present extraordinary prices were reached.

SPECIALITIES FOR INVALIDS.

We have been much pleased with several of the specialities for invalids, manufactured by Frederick Mason, of 52, Acre Lane, Brixton, S.W., who for some twenty years, we are informed, superintended the preparation of the various well-known manufactures of Messrs. Brand & Co. The essences of beef, chicken, and mutton are most palatable and nourishing, and the variety of invalid soups and jellies are most useful, because it is well known to all Nurses how difficult it is to tempt the appetite of invalids with the preparations so ordinarily made in a private house. To medical men and district Nurses we would specially recommend the concentrated meat lozenges, because they would find these a good substitute for ordinary nourishment, when they are out on a lengthy round of exhausting work. For excellence of manufacture, variety, and cheapness, we can strongly recommend these preparations to the notice of our readers.

A CHRISTMAS PUDDING.

A correspondent writes: “Now that Christmas is so near, I think I can't do better than give a very good recipe for a plum pudding, for you know it is all the better for being made and mixed some time beforehand. Take three-quarters of a pound of flour, two ounces of Borwick's baking-powder, two ounces of bread crumbs, one and a half pounds of suet, two pounds of raisins, one pound of currants, ten ounces of sugar, two ounces of almonds, one pound of mixed candied peel, salt and spice to taste. Mix the ingredients well together, and add six eggs, well beaten, and three-quarters of a pint of milk ; divide in two, and boil eight hours.”

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