

HE REPUDIATES IDEA OF HELL.

Dr. Agar Beet Refuses to Believe in Eternal Physical Torment, and Startles Methodists of England.

Perhaps no divine has been talked about in England in recent years more than Dr. Agar Beet, the great Methodist theologian, late dean of the Wesleyan College at Richmond. Dr. Beet has recently resigned his professorship because of a principal, the basis of which is, to put it in his own words:

"I cannot believe in a material hell and everlasting torment."

Not the least interesting feature of the situation is that many of the Methodist authorities do not take any active exception to Dr. Beet's beliefs. In fact, he accuses them of agreeing with him in secret. They were willing to have him continue as head of the Wesleyan College if he would suppress one of his books, "The Last Things," dealing with his views on the future life. The great Methodist journals of England have taken sides as to whether or not Dr. Beet should have been let alone. Even Hugh Price Hughes, when president of the Methodist conference, in a signed article, maintained that Dr. Beet's views in no way detracted from his evangelical orthodoxy.

WESLEY'S HELL A MYTH.

The significance of this was made apparent in a recent talk with Dr. Beet in his home at the Wesleyan College, in which he told us why his conscience no longer allowed him to keep from the world the written reasons for his belief that the material hell of John Wesley is a myth.

"We must have growth in theology as in other things," said Dr. Beet. "Why, a hundred years ago it was believed that infants were punished after death! Much of what we now recognize as error has always been mixed with truth."

"We cannot now believe," continued Dr. Beet, "as our fathers believed, in the hell fire of fifty years ago. During the last half century Methodist opinions about the doom of the last have changed completely. Few Wesleyan ministers can now read Wesley's sermons on 'Hell and Eternity,' Nos. 73 and 54, without repudiating much of their teaching with indignation, and it is worth noting that, when selecting fifty-three sermons as containing his distinctive teaching, Wesley did not include these."

DOUBTS NURSED IN SILENCE.

"How is it," he was asked, "that so comparatively little of any radical change in the Methodist belief reaches the outside world?"

"This overflow of the dogma has been carefully hidden," replied Dr.

Beet. "Godly ministers have nursed their doubts in silence, some under a sense of guilt for concealing their change of views, until the need for concealment has become to them a humiliating and intolerable bondage. In some cases even men have not dared to think, lest the thought they dared not utter should make them the more conscious of their bondage. And is it possible that such sentiments are at all general?"

"This doubt and fear at widespread. There has been a retreat from the position held by our fathers along the whole line; for the most part in darkness and solitude. Of all this I have abundant and pathetic proof. Only this concealment has hidden from the public gaze the extent and direction of the retreat."

"I feel this position to be utterly dishonest," continued Dr. Beet. "We clerical friends who had congratulated me upon the stand I had taken. He didn't answer. Many of these men hold the same opinions that I do, but they are afraid of the people."

NOT A CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

"What opinions of yours is it," I asked, "to which so strong objection has been taken?"

"The Bible does not say definitely what will be the fate of the wicked. I am sure it does not teach categorically their endless suffering. My recent studies of the early fathers convince me that they did not hold it. While there are some passages in the Scriptures that seem to suggest conscious suffering, there are many others that contradict that view, and in the absence of distinct and definite teaching I do not believe that we have any right to dogmatize."

"In fact," continued Dr. Beet, "the natural immortality of the wicked is not a Christian doctrine at all; it has been incorporated in Christian theology from the Platonic philosophers, but no proof of its truth is to be found in Scripture."

"Does this step of yours in any way affect your loyalty to the Methodist church?" I asked Dr. Beet.

"I will tell you frankly," he replied, "that the events of the last eight years have compelled me to revise my estimate of some members of the Church. They are not bad people, but they are timid, and in great stress and great unrest, not merely about 'last things,' but about the authority of the Bible and other things. We cannot escape the difficulty by trying to hold intact the traditions of the past."

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NOW HAS FULL CONTROL.

Lake Superior Corporation's Property at the Soo Free.

Jersey City, Oct. 9.—The report of President C. D. Warren to the shareholders of the Lake Superior Corporation at the annual meeting contained the gratifying announcement that the last Canadian property to remain in the receiver's hands, the Lake Superior Power Co., has been released and has passed into the full control of the corporation within the past few days. The distribution of the new securities to underwriters has been completed and only a percentage of the securities due to shareholders remains to be issued. The old indebtedness has been practically all settled, and when a few disputed claims and outstanding small accounts have been settled the balance of treasury bonds for the use of the corporation will be a little over \$1,000,000.

The President anticipates that the funds obtained by realization on these bonds, the sale of nickel matter and ore on hand and the increased

net earnings expected during the current year will be sufficient to permit of extensions and additions to the plant, which materially increase the earning capacity. The new arrangement consummated with the Ontario Government will, it is hoped, make more profitable operations in the woods possible. Arrangements have also been made with the Bondholders' Committee whereby the works necessary to strengthen the great power house in order that it may safely bear the strain of the full head of water required to develop the maximum horsepower will be commenced next spring.

The President spoke in optimistic tones of the prospects for the current year, with an estimated output of 150,000 tons of steel rails, an increase in volume of 50 per cent. over last year, and at a reduced cost and the full supply of iron from the two furnaces instead of having to purchase 50,000 tons. Warm appreciation is expressed of the very substantial assistance which the government of Ontario extended, and thanks given to some of the bankers who afforded financial assistance to the underwriting company.

BLAZING LEAVES BURN \$5000 AUTO.

Machine of David H. Posner Destroyed on Grounds of Riding and Driving Club, Watertown.

Boston, Oct. 9.—While standing occupied in the driveway leading to the clubhouse of the Riding and Driving Club, Watertown, late yesterday afternoon, a 40-horsepower automobile, valued at \$5000, owned by David H. Posner, of 8 Garrison street, Boston, was practically destroyed by a fire, which is believed to have been caused by sparks from burning leaves on the grounds of the Oakley Country Club, about 10 feet away.

Yesterday afternoon Mr. Posner, accompanied by his chauffeur, drove out from Boston to take dinner at the clubhouse, arriving shortly before 5 o'clock. They left the machine and entered the building.

About half an hour later the chauffeur discovered the front part of the machine in a blaze. A telephone message was sent at once to the Watertown fire station, but the automobile was practically destroyed before the arrival of the firemen.

A big gasoline tank containing 160 gallons was near the blazing machine, and for some time there was fear that it would explode and ignite the clubhouse.

ESCAPED RUSSIAN PRISON.

Mutineer Walks From Cell Disguised as Guard.

London, Oct. 9.—The Daily Graphic publishes the following from its correspondent in Berlin:—The agents of the Russian Bundist Committee in this city have received information of the escape from prison of the Russian student Feldmann, who was the chief organizer of the mutiny of the Kriaz Potemkin in the Black Sea. The res-



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one was planned by the foreign Committees of the Bund and Social Democrats, and was carried out with remarkable skill. Two revolutionists disguised as prison guards entered the prison, and boldly walked out again with Feldmann, dressed in a uniform similar to their own. It was anticipated that the other guards on duty would be unable to remember how many had originally entered Feldmann's cell, and that consequently the departure of three instead of two would pass unobserved by them. This calculation was fully justified, and Feldmann, with his rescuers, got safely away. A prominent lady revolutionist also played an important part in organizing the rescue.

The following morning when the officers of the watch proceeded to his cell, instead of Feldmann, a well-arranged effigy of the young Jew was found on the sleeping pallet. No trace has since been found either of Feldmann or of the missing guards. The police admit that they have lost one of the most important prisoners who have fallen into their hands for the last twelve months, and they place the responsibility upon the military authorities.

BODY BURNED TO A CRISP ON FLOOR.

West Somerville Woman Met Death as Result of Gasolene Stove Exploding.

Boston, Oct. 9.—The dead body of Mrs. Maria Beaumont, 79 years old, was found on her kitchen floor, the flesh burned to a crisp by West Somerville firemen yesterday. The fire, which was caused by the explosion of a gasolene stove, destroyed the interior of the house at eleven Grove street.

Mrs. Beaumont had evidently been asleep upon a couch in an adjoining room.

Hearing the crackling of flames, she probably opened the door and stepped into the kitchen, where she was almost instantly overcome by the fire and smoke.

The fire was first noticed by Miss Matthews, a teacher in the Highland grammar school. She sent a pupil, Everett Adams, to the quarters of engine 4. Patrolman Charles S. Johnston and several firemen made futile attempts to save Mrs. Beaumont.

Mrs. Beaumont had lived in West Somerville and vicinity about 30 years. She was a native of Wolfboro N. H., and is survived by a son, Richard Beaumont, who is in business at 125 Hudson street, New York, and a daughter, Mrs. Augusta Walton of 2212 Wabash avenue, Chicago.

BRUTAL DOG-FIGHT.

Sydney, C. B., Public Sentiment Shocked—Several Arrests Likely.

Halifax, Oct. 9.—A Sydney special says one arrest has already been made and four others are likely to follow in connection with a brutal dog fight which took place on Sunday morning last.

The owners of the dogs having put up a side bet of \$35 each on their respective dogs, repaired to a spot just outside the city limits, near the city reservoir, where the fight took place. Both dogs being well bred bull terriers put up a desperate fight and one was killed outright before the melee ended.

The arrests are being made at the instance of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, but it is likely that the city authorities will also take a hand in the matter. Several prominent professional and business men of the city who witnessed the fight, will be subpoenaed as witnesses.

A TRAGEDY.

Kleene Gawn.—Is there a more beautiful spectacle on earth than the moon rising full-orbed from the peaceful bosom of the lake? Gladie Kister—No, indeed. I could sit here hour after hour waiting for it to—

Policeman (suddenly appearing)—Hi, there, young fella! Take y'r arm away fr'm that g'yril's waist or I'll run yez in, begobbs!"

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