

this prediction will be fulfilled to the letter, or not, it is certain that by scientific progress the domain of agriculture is steadily being encroached on. The world is subjected to new methods, regardless of what the consequences will be to those whose lives are devoted to the previous ones. Against this there can be no remedy except a Chinese wall, excluding all scientific research and its practical application to the affairs of mankind—a relief measure impossible to apply.

THE ACT OF SUICIDE.

Among the more heinous crimes which mark the present condition of society as unsatisfactory in this country, that of self murder keeps well up to the statistics. The act of suicide is, according to the recorded reasons therefor, chiefly the outcome of a desire to escape from conditions which the individual has been thrown into by crime either on part of himself or some other person. Much the smaller percentage is of the class where there is no apparently strong reason and where the "epidemic" of suicide or insanity, temporary or otherwise, can be chargeable as a cause. The greater share of the occurrences is the outgrowth of crimes whereby personal honor has become involved.

This method of supposedly escaping through death, self-inflicted, from woes that press hard and fast upon the mind is growing more popular with each generation, judging by the statistics which are compiled of this class of events; and it implies that there is no idea that by shuffling off mortality the trouble and worry will be also cast aside. To an intelligent individual there never was a worse error. All who recognize it hereafter, no matter to what state they may view it as existing, must recognize that the intelligence of the individual continues as an entity; that the body is that portion which is subject to the unconsciousness called death. They also must recognize that while in this life the body is the lodging place of many pains and ills, yet above all these are the worry, the mental anxiety, the sorrow and pain of the intelligent organism which possesses the body, and which are the very things that most of the suicides would escape from. Even with these, then, a moment of thought is sufficient to discover that while they escape the lesser bodily ills yet the greater mental agonies continue, augmented by the further fact of the great crime through which escape was sought and not found.

From the rational standpoint of continued existence, therefore, there is no such thing as escape from ill by way of suicide. The adoption of that method of departure from mortality only greatly multiplies the burden of the sorrow, and fastens it immovably upon the individual. All other offenses less than murder may be in a degree recompensed for, and escape from the burdens thereof be obtained in fair measure at least, by continuing in life; but never by plunging into death. When once the latter course is adopted, the entire capital which might have been used in liquidating the debt is swept out of existence, and there

is incurred a penalty that cannot be satisfied. If the would-be suicide who thinks to escape ill, through death could but realize this he would shrink and turn in most instances from the contemplation of the awful deed. The fallacious idea that responsibility and sorrow end at death is responsible for many lives going out at an unseemly time.

From a religious point of view, even more strongly than from the standpoint of philosophy, the crime of suicide is abhorred. The individual who would hurl back at the Creator the divine boon of a tabernacle of flesh and bones, whether of himself or of another, is a murderer in the sight of God. Whether it be the killing of himself or of another, the act is the same. The divine law is condemnatory to the uttermost of the destroyer of human life. "A murderer hath not eternal life abiding in him." And there is no distinction in the crime because the victim may be self instead of another.

The Latter-day Saints look upon suicide with the utmost degree of abhorrence; to them self-murder and the murder of another are in the same category. The resort of suicide is beyond the pale of that which is permissible under any circumstances whatever. There is no condonement therefore of any more than for taking the life of another. Both are one crime—the highest against the law of nature and of God.

HOW TO KILL THE SPARROWS.

The problem of how to kill off a goodly portion of the precocious English sparrows that lay such a severe tax on orchard and field has puzzled our legislators to the extent that in attempting a solution they have offered a very liberal reward for sparrow heads and eggs. Judged by all indications, the offer of this bounty is likely to result in much more injury to the public, through the encouraging of boys in robbing nests of all kinds of birds and in destroying or driving off those members of the feathered tribe which it would be preferable to have remain, than in any good that will come through a check in the increase of sparrows.

In this matter of keeping the sparrow under control, the London Spectator states it as a demonstrated fact that the killings by boys make more severe inroads on other birds than on sparrows, and gives to the common house cat the credit for performing the most effective work against the offender. It states that the cat is as much the natural enemy of the young sparrow as of the mouse, and cites as a point in favor of this view that in neighborhoods where there were many poor families and cats—for it is given out that poor people keep more cats than rich people—sparrows were reduced to a condition of scarcity. In individual cases rich people's cats were not as effective in the work as the feline members of a poor household, for the reason that they were so well fed that they did not engage freely in poaching; but even with these, when they once tasted sparrow flesh, the sport was too fasci-

nating and the appetite too strong to break them of it, although repeated whippings had been tried to attain this end. It is further noted that the sparrow catchers were not encouraged by their habits to seize young chickens, etc., but rather manifested a tendency the other way.

Just how far it would be advisable to encourage the number of domestic cats in order to keep down sparrows may be a matter of serious discussion to those not particularly favorable to certain characteristics of this member of the feline race; but it is interesting at least to know that there are localities where the excessive fecundity of the English sparrow is neutralized so as to prevent his being an expensive nuisance, as our London contemporary says it has ascertained beyond question there are.

LONGING FOR THE MESSIAH.

To those who believe in the second coming of the Son of Man to this earth, it must be interesting to know that not only among professed Christians but also among Mohammedans there is at present a strong belief in the coming of a Messiah, and deliverance, through him, from bondage. In one of the magazines there is an article on this subject—the substance of an interview with a prominent Persian, in which he explains briefly the principles of the Persian sect, the Bahists.

These, he explains, are identical with Mahdism. Mahdism is the doctrine of the Mohammedan Messiah. It is taught orally and is never imparted to outsiders, owing to certain initiatory formalities which the "profane" would be sure to ridicule. But as the doctrine of a Messiah was the bright star of hope to ancient Israel during the persecutions and oppression of that nation, so it is the hope now of the Mussulmans of the oriental countries. And owing to many circumstances in this Messianic, or Mahdiel, belief is now so deeply rooted in all Mohammedan nations—especially the Schites—that it has become their life and soul. If the oppressed hordes in Persia, Turkey, Morocco, have endured patiently so many bad governments, it is because they are sure that a Mahdi will soon arise to remedy all these evils. They are crying out, like the Jews, for a savior and a deliverer.

Tradition declares that Friday is the day on which he will reveal himself to the world, and accordingly every Friday, in all the mosques, prayers are offered up and invocations are made beseeching Allah to hasten the time of Messiah's advent. All Mussulman sects aim invariably at the realization of this Messianic doctrine. All the different Mahdis, past and present, those of the Sudan as well as all the others, are but the expression, more or less incomplete, of this central doctrine of a Messianic deliverer.

According to tradition, the true Mahdi will be preceded by sixty fore-runners called Babe-doors—and the Persian sect derives its name from this word. They believe in the establishment of a new and universal religion in which modern progress is accorded a place by the side of Islamic precepts, and the movement is said to shake the