

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER ON "ZIONISM."

While I have generally confined my weekly observations to matters of local interest, still there is nothing, to my knowledge, to prevent me from forming opinions concerning subjects of universal concern—and from penning the same for publication. My attention has recently been drawn by the reports of the last Zionist Conference, to this very unique subject. It is a harmless and beautiful chimera; it is the practical expression of an idea that, in all times and under all conditions, has possessed the Jewish mind; it is a serious attempt at realizing Dr. Theodor Herzl's dream—a vision of himself, as the second Moses, leading "Israel out of Egypt, and the house of Jacob away from a barbarous people."

For more reasons, therefore, than one, I am not of those who would cast ridicule upon the enthusiasm of those prominent Hebrews, who actually believe that by steady work, concentration of action, and unity of forces, they can eventually reconquer Jerusalem, make Palestine again the land of Israel, and build anew the gorgeous temple of the Ancient Alliance upon the sacred summit of Mount Zion. Moreover, I have had for years the privilege of a more than passing acquaintance with some of the leading Hebrews of this city, and of other sections of our continent, and I have learned much from some of my Jewish friends concerning the aspirations of their people, the hopes, both temporal as well as religious, that they firmly entertain. I have discovered that while they all rank as Jews, in the religious sense, yet they are by no means united—no more on the question of "Zionism" than upon any other one. This I will briefly explain.

All the sections of Protestantism—or nearly all—claim Christ as the Messiah and the Founder of Christianity; upon this one point they agree, upon every other tenet of religion they differ. They are all Protestants—inasmuch as they "protest" against the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church—but no two of them hold the same doctrines. In a lesser degree, because of a smaller number of sects, all those who belong to the Hebrew nation, and are Jews in religion, have one vital point upon which they are united; on others they differ, more or less radically, according to their respective degrees of orthodoxy, or heterodoxy. They all believe that the promised Messiah, the great "King of Israel," the one destined to lead them, as God's chosen people, into the possession of their ancient heritage, is yet to come; but they do not agree upon the form that Messiah will assume, nor the manner in which he will appear, nor even in the mission that he will have to fulfil. It is this division, or rather these many divisions, that have cut up the Jewish people into various denominations. In this city alone we have

two, or three of them. The Orthodox Jew is as strongly opposed to the Reformed Jew as the Anglican Christian is to the Baptist Christian. I am not going to inflict a history of the "variations" of Judaism upon the readers—I leave that important work for some new Bossuet, should ever an emulator of the great "Eagle of Meaux" arise in our midst. I merely wish to observe that when we hear of such a movement as "Zionism," inaugurated by members of the Jewish race, we must not run away with the idea that all Jews believe in it—or even that all Jews sympathize with it.

It is exactly this lack of unity upon the subject that marks the movement with foregone failure. In the first place the Jew is a business man—if he is anything. He has an instinctive leaning towards commercial transactions, and a kind of intuition in all matters that concern money, trade, exchange, and such affairs. He may be filled to the brim with patriotic zeal; he may be even fanatical upon all that touches his religion; he may have the profoundest contempt for every other form of worship; he may love the "land of Israel" and the once glorious city of Israel's kings, with all the energies of his Hebrew soul; but these conditions of mind and sentiment never once blind him to the facts and the conditions by which he is surrounded, nor lead him into the folly of supposing that his money is capable of purchasing everything that may come within the range of his desires. The Jew is far-seeing; he is shrewd; he is careful in his transactions; he is great or small; consequently, he scarcely ever becomes a bad speculator, or a foolish adventurer in the domain of business.

In consequence of this leading characteristic of the Hebrew, he may wish, with all his soul, for the re-possession of Palestine, yet he will think twice before he sacrifices a dollar in an enterprise that his experience and sound common sense tell him can never be a success. If money could purchase Jerusalem, it might have been bought generations ago by the millionaire sons of Israel. But money is not all-potent—many opinions to the contrary notwithstanding; there are international questions of paramount importance that would have to be counted with. The map of the world cannot now be altered by even the most earnest and enthusiastic meeting of liberators, regenerators, or whatever else they choose to call themselves. It is absolutely useless for the learned and wealthy children of Israel to contend with the existing order of things. Nineteen hundred years have rolled over the descendants of the twelve tribes, and throughout the desert of existence, generation after generation of them, has aimlessly wandered—without a country, a home, a prospect. During all these long decades the Church that the Crucified established has been growing in strength, expanding in influence, augmenting in numbers, proving by the very miracle of its stupendous development and immortal vitality, that her founder could have been none other than the Messiah foretold by the prophets, expected by the patriarchs, and announced and described in the sacred books of the Old Testament. The "Zionist" movement may serve as a harmless amusement and afford an innocent employment for the less occupied of the Jewish race; but its conception is so visionary, that not even a tenth of the Jews, all over the world, can be made to believe in it.

THE ORIGIN OF LIFE.

So-called philosophers are every day seeking to discover something new, something to attract public attention towards themselves, something that may aid in effacing God from the records of life. The latest philosophic fad is that of Prof. William Boelche, of the University of Leipzig, who claims that animal and human life is derived from the stomach. The theory is elaborated in a most mystifying article of several columns, this is the article in question. While scientists have been searching for a century through the whole universe for the cause of the origin of man the secret has been at our very doors. "In any pond, in almost every drop of stagnant water on the street is the clue to this hitherto mystery, but now a mystery no longer. "Look into a drop of muddy water with a microscope and you will see a small oblong, fish-like object. It is an infusorium, a little organism that has neither heart nor lungs, neither limbs nor sight, yet it grows, moves and probably enjoys life. "This creature has been found to

be practically one simple cell, which performs all the functions of life. But as its principal function is to eat, it may be said to be all stomach. "It surrounds the food with a part of its gelatinous cellular body, takes it into itself as a whole, and digests it whole, much as a drop of water swallows up a bit of red color and dissolves it until the whole drop is colored by it. This primitive method of devouring with the whole body may still be observed among bacilli. "How does this show the origin of human life, do you ask? "In this way. This tiny simple creature suggested to scientists that probably the first life-cells that appeared on the earth were still smaller and simpler than this infusorium. These cells were so very small and weak that a number of them joined themselves together by the instinct of common interest. "Then the first step upward took place. Each one of these cell-beings had hitherto moved itself forward in the water, by wriggling its thin round body, thus reaching its prey." "Shipping the mending development of these ideas we come to the con-

clusions reached by the professor. He says:—

"This is the twentieth century outcome of the most remarkable triumph of nineteenth century science, the tracing of the origin of life to a few cell animals. The evolution of higher forms of life was simply a division of labor among cells. When Robinson Crusoe was on the desert island he had to be a tailor, shoemaker, cook and all. The one cell infusorium in the water of a swamp is the Robinson Crusoe of organic life. After centuries of progress social man has divided labor so that each individual is served by tailors, shoemakers, cooks, etc., saving time and labor by doing that for which he is best fitted, and concentrating his energies. By this social economy progress is made possible far beyond anything that Robinson Crusoe could accomplish. If the stomach is the cause of all life, it is well for every one to have a good understanding of it. Almost any one looking, say at the stomach of a goose, knows that its purpose is the reception and digestion of food—but here his knowledge stops. He does not even know what the walls of this stomach consists of and if asked will reply: "Of flesh." But what then is this "flesh?" Tell him the place of this stomach is in a certain preparation, under a microscope, and a whole world of wonders lies before his eyes. Under the guidance of the scientist he at last sees that the wall of the stomach is called "flesh," is a series of cells. And the scientist will tell him that what is true of the stomach is true of all the rest of the body of goose or man; the cells in various arrangements and countless multitude make up the whole being. Here is a wonderful complex thing, but immediately any one who is interested in the first stages of life will ask: "How, then, did this complexity start?" "The cell is the real original being, and all higher creatures are nothing but the associated development of a number of cells. The oak and the man are but enormous "stacks" of millions of millions of cells, the original creatures. The elementary organism, then, behind all living things which existed on earth millions of years ago was a cell creature, a single cell. That no such animal is found now does not prove anything to the contrary, for it is axiomatic with evolution that the earlier and simpler types die out altogether as they give way to the higher developments. Yet we see something like this original animal in the so-called infusoria of every street puddle or country marsh, or in the bacillus, consisting sometimes of a single cell, which multiplies by dividing itself. Man is merely a problem in addition or multiplication of cells. But this is only one side of the question. There is also a special line of evolution in the division of labor among the multiplied cells. The cells of the mass gather in groups, for this division of labor, and each group does nothing but its special work. This is the secret of the development of the organs of higher organisms or creatures. These organs are the result of a highly specialized evolution. They arise in the great process of evolution from the primitive creature of a single cell to the oak, the goose or man, upon the ground of the division of labor applied everywhere in the economy of nature on account of its tremendous utility. Even the stomach, the organ with which this investigation began, is created under this law of utility and division of labor. At some time it was developed in that mass of cells which was to become a higher animal—it was developed in some form by which a group of cells in the whole cellular mass undertook the work of digestion, and developed this special function. So it is now apparent how the origin of the stomach accounts also for the origin of all human and animal life."

Here is materialism—mother of all evils—pure and simple. It is the theory of evolution applied to human life. We have passed over columns of explanations that amount to nothing; but we must soon be moving, if we do not want to have these pretended philosophers of the skin-deep profundity overturn Europe—even as the barbarians under Attila overran it centuries ago. It does not require any extensive argument to confound the learned scientist. The origin of the subject may be traced to the lowest grade of animal life. Let us suppose then that man is really "a problem in addition or multiplication of cells"—which we deny—whence came all the cells? If from one tiny original cell, whence, or how came that one into existence? The erudite professor would seem to deny the fact of creation; yet some power must have created the first cell. Why not at once say "it was God."

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