

advantage of favouring wind currents to drift across the Russian frontier, though it is perhaps more likely that if any have done so, it has been a matter of compulsion rather than of choice. And yet one does not like in these days to be too incredulous. Should it prove literally true that the Germans have found a means of aerial propulsion, and that their balloonists have been amusing themselves, or preparing for future eventualities, by hovering over Russian fortifications, turning on electric search-lights, sailing against the wind and returning at pleasure to their own territory, the proof of the fact would be hailed simply as the realization of what many now confidently look for as one of the wonders of the near future. The strangest, most incredible thing about it would be the preservation of the secret. No such apparatus could be perfected without a great deal of experimenting, and a balloon experiment is a kind of thing which could hardly be carried on in private. Hence we are disposed at present to regard the startling exploits of German balloonists as existing only in the fertile brains of press correspondents and too credulous readers.

THOSE who are disposed to deny the Scripture doctrine of total depravity will be hard put to it to find any other theory on which to account for the conduct of the anarchists in Paris during these last few weeks. That desperate men will sometimes resort to desperate measures for the accomplishment of their ends, we can well understand. But in all cases it is a postulate of simple reason and common sense that the ends in view shall be somewhat clearly defined and that the means used shall stand in some intelligible relation to those ends. But so far as appears those who have been exploding their dynamite and other compounds, or trying to explode them, in different parts of Paris, seem to have acted without concert and without any discoverable plan or purpose save that of indiscriminate murder. There is not even the cunning method of the dangerous lunatic in their madness. Some sort of explanation has indeed been suggested, on the authority, it is said, of one or two of their leaders, to the effect that their aim is simply to strike terror into the communities in which they operate, and, by the very uncertainty of their movements, throw organized society into the confusion and helplessness caused by the dread of unknown and ever-present danger. This view takes from the perpetrators the last semblance of human motives or feelings and transforms them into veritable fiends. It is the part of revengeful cowards to plot in darkness the destruction of the objects of their fear or hate. But to involve the innocent with the guilty, or to seek to destroy life at random, irrespective of personal hate or fancied wrong, displays an instinct more savage than that of the wild beast. Whatever the explanation of deeds so wantonly ruthless, it is evident that the perpetrators have overshot the mark. They have quite underrated the strength of the self-preserving instincts of the nation. Hence, frightened by the vigour of the authorities they have aroused against them, they seem to be putting beyond their reach the implements of destruction they had prepared with so much care, and seeking to hide their devoted heads from the fierceness of the storm they have aroused. Such seems to be the most probable explanation of the unused bombs which the police are discovering in various places all over the city. Another effect which may not have been foreseen by the miscreants is the uniting of the forces of law and order in all civilized countries against the perpetrators, or would-be perpetrators, of such horrible barbarities. Hence it is not unlikely that these senseless atrocities in Paris have done more than anything else that could have occurred to make the avowed anarchist an outlaw on the face of the earth, to be driven forth from the organized society which is the object of his unreasoning hate. If his hand is against every man without distinction, it will not be strange should he find every man's hand against him, to banish him from the face of the earth.

TWO LOST LEADERS.

WITHIN a period of ten days England and America lost, the one an eminent historian, the other an eminent poet: Professor Freeman died on the 16th, and Walt Whitman on the 26th, of last month. In mental habits, in lines of thought, in education, culture, and occupation, they differed widely as the poles; but one thing they had in common, each was master in his own sphere. And in that sphere each had something new to

say to mankind and said it fearlessly. The one was nursed in the lap of refinement and scholarship, a Fellow of Oriel, Regius Professor of History, a D.C.L. and LL.D.; the other's university was in the fields and the streets, with no education but that of his own reading and observation, and no honours but the praise of men themselves praised.

Of both men, it may be said, no half views are possible. To "damn" either of them "with faint praise" is simply out of the question. They were both extremists, and of both extreme estimates are held. Their force and originality were obtrusive, consequently they were both either lauded or detested, they could not be passed by. Especially is this the case with Whitman. To some Whitman's defects—and his defects are many and obvious—were nauseous. Scholars in whom were inbred the austerity, the severity, the restraint, the silence on certain topics, of recognized literary ideals, from long and close intimacy with ancient poetical traditions, could not away with Whitman's vagaries. His deliberate bursting of the fetters of classic literature seemed to such to be mere puerile bravado. And it would be easy, by cataloguing such defects, to make out a very strong case against him. However, detraction, enough and to spare, there has been and will be. To our thinking Whitman will yet wield a powerful influence. Let us here dwell rather on his excellences than on his defects.

Whitman's was the more fascinating personality. It is the poet that puts mankind under the greatest obligations, and Whitman was a poet if ever there was one. He enormously extended the meaning of the word poet. Pope undoubtedly would have denied him the title. But since Pope we have had Cowper, since Cowper, Keats, since Keats, Browning—and since Browning, Whitman; and in this chain can be traced the breaking away from "sayers of words" in metrical language. And, apart from the language, in the thoughts, too, there has been change. Nor Pope nor Cowper nor Keats nor Browning told such things as Whitman told. Indeed one English paper has declared that any man in England who "might issue such trash . . . would be a proper inmate for an asylum." Whereas the simple fact is sanity, wholesome, vigorous sanity, is the especial and contradistinguishing attribute of Whitman. He sang Man; his predecessors sang man. He sang the whole man, body, soul, and spirit, and saw poetry in him and his surroundings. They sang but parts of man, and in a very great deal of man's surroundings they thought they saw things unfit for or incapable of poetic treatment. Herein lay the greatness of Whitman, and what a greatness it was! what an optimism! How paltry seem beside his great "cosmic emotions" the small planetary sentiments of those who timidly shut their eyes to a large part of God's universe and speak and write only of such things as to them seem good. They forget that "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." Whitman remembered it, and what is more believed it, and what is more, taught it. Nothing to him was common or unclean. And why? What constituted this tremendous difference between Whitman and his predecessors? and indeed his contemporaries? Simply the greater comprehensiveness of his *ποίησις*. Poetry transforms all things, or to use a word hallowed by sacred allusion, poetry transfigures all things. Those to whom such expression may appear strong it may be permitted to remind that in all ages the divine character of poetry has been simply and tacitly accepted. Did not the Hindu and the Greek drama each spring from religious ceremonial? Was not the Sophoclean and the Pheidian art closely linked with worship—was not in fact Greek art and Greek religion one and the same thing? Who was it described the poet as a man *ἔθεος καὶ ἔκφρων*? Strabo, too, let it be remembered, defined all poetry as the hymning of the gods. What has divorced poetry and worship? Ah! that is a question with a very long ecclesiastico-historical answer. Perhaps Walt Whitman will be a forerunner of a reconciliation of art and religion. To many, no doubt, this will be a hard saying. But we venture to think it will be this only because the superficial faults and deficiencies of Whitman's poems have blinded their eyes to the truth and depth of his utterances. It is true there is an inchoateness in Whitman, an incongruity, a want of harmony, a lack of that indefinable thing called "taste"; there is a crudity, a chaos. But then these things are inseparable from Democracy. Wherever Democracy is in the ascendant, inchoateness, and incongruity, and crudity are rampant. And Whitman was the poet of Democracy.

But none of these faults need nullify the lesson taught us by his grand poetical optimism. The great problems that his poetic protestantism have raised—for example, the place of sin in the universe, and the limitations of personal conduct, on the philosophical side; and the relinquishment of metrical form and the acceptance of a catholicity of treatment both in matters of form and subject, on the literary side—need not concern us here; suffice it here to point out that the very fact that he raises such vital problems is proof at once of the originality and the greatness of his genius.

Turn we now to Professor Freeman. To say that Freeman was the first historian in England would not provoke denial. His stores of knowledge were immense, and as accurate as immense. His mental activity and his physical energy must have been enormous. What with lectures, published or unpublished, magazine articles, contributions to the *Saturday*, prefaces and introductions to the works of others, and his own *magna opera*—they deserve the title—a bibliography of E. A. Freeman would be a gigantic task indeed. Up to the very last too he was writing or correcting. His "History of Sicily" has only reached the third volume, his "Sicily" in the "Story of the Nations Series" is just out, and three weeks before his death a fourth series of "Historical Essays" was issued from the press. His contributions to history are great. Above all he taught the unity of history, the impossibility of a solution of continuity in history, the organic nature of history. To-day this may seem a common-place. Yes, because Freeman made it such; it is a proof of his influence. But with all his scholarship his books lack something. The splendid "History of the Norman Conquest in England" is splendid with knowledge rather than with life. No doubt it is invaluable to the future scholarly historian, but to the present unschooled reader who does not happen to be an historian its value is quite appreciable. That torso, the "History of Sicily," too, what innumerable facts are presented to us in it, but with how little perspective? However, one must not expect too much. Freeman undoubtedly gave us of his best, and he has enriched our knowledge to such an extent that probably only the future will be able properly to estimate it. Let us not here carp at minor inherent defects of intellect. In him, as in Walt Whitman, the world has lost a leader.

OTTAWA LETTER.

IF an uncouth barbarian not used to the niceties of Parliamentary language were to sit through one of the sessions of this House of ours, and hear the gross insinuations cast across the floor, he would judge that for an unalloyed sample of rascality and iniquity the gentlemen on the Treasury benches were only equalled by the leading lights of the Opposition. Most of us think that Sir John Thompson, Mr. Foster, Mr. Dewdney, Mr. Tupper, Mr. Bowell, Mr. Laurier, Sir Richard Cartwright, Mr. Mills and Mr. Davies are respectable citizens and gentlemen of as good morals and honour as the rest of us, strangers and pilgrims, in this vale of tears. Yet these men have little hesitation, even when the heat of debate does not form an excuse, in implying that those to whom they are politically opposed are not only robbers and thieves in their individual capacity, but collectively are a gang of desperadoes of the very worst type. In the highest court in the land one gentleman, by *inuendo* if not by direct accusation, says such things of another which, if spoken between men in the everyday walk and business of life, would a few years ago have led to a duel, and now would result in an action at law for slander.

It was a good piece of advice Lord Stanley gave, not long since, when he suggested the wrongfulness of breaking the seventh commandment in order that one might find one's neighbour convicted of violating the eighth.

The past week was occupied principally in a discussion over supply, and a very acrimonious debate ensued on an item for a certain sum of money to be granted to Mr. Burgess, the late Deputy Minister of the Interior, who was found guilty last session of having allowed irregularities in his department. The item provides for payment of part salary as chief clerk in the department. Sir Richard asked if it was the intention of the Government to reinstate Mr. Burgess as Deputy Minister? Mr. Dewdney acknowledged that he would recommend such a course, while Sir John Thompson and Mr. Foster said the Government had no intention of the kind at present. Mr. Laurier asserted that no other inference could be drawn from the conduct of the Government in this matter than that Mr. Burgess would be reinstated on the 1st of July next. Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Dickey, Government supporters, expressed the hope that the Government would not take this step. There were three other items which stuck in the crop of the Opposition. They provided for payment of salaries to certain clerks who were suspended for grave offences. Mr. McMullen made everyone feel very uneasy