

against which, in reference to this hideous affair, we ought to be on our guard. One is, injustice to the class in which these scandals occur. Rank and wealth undoubtedly are snares, and industry is the best security for virtue. But the vices of the palace are dragged to light, while obscurity hides those of the cottage. Ask any one who knows the manufacturing cities of England, and you will be told that the moral maladies of civilisation are not confined to the higher grades of society. The other error to be avoided is exaggerated alarm as to the moral condition of the world. People give the reins to their fancy, and imagine that for one Colin Campbell case which becomes public there must be scores lurking beneath the surface. But there is no ground for any such belief, and a glance over the circle of our own acquaintance will be enough to dispel the hateful suspicion. The worst consequence of these loathsome disclosures is the desecration of marriage, than which no greater injury can possibly be done to humanity. Might not the Duke of Argyll and others, whose family honour is concerned, have done something more to save their own names and the morals of the community from the publication of this scandal? The verdict was no doubt right, and it covers the husband with special shame, though to believe in the purity of either party seems to us impossible.

It is a relief to hear that the Coleridge-Adams scandal is dead at last, the libel suit which the Lord Chief Justice's daughter had been induced to bring against her father having been quietly settled. We repeat that the very fact of such a suit having been brought, necessarily with the cognisance and approval, if not at the instigation, of Mr. Adams, is a sufficient proof that Lord Coleridge must have had sufficient reason as a father for opposing the marriage. He appears to have been unguarded and perhaps unmeasured in his expressions to persons on whose secrecy he had reason to rely; that is the sum of his offending. All the stories about his niggardly treatment of his daughter while she was under his roof are pronounced totally false by those who knew his household well, while the conduct of the daughter herself after her flight from home shows that there must be something in her character more than strange.

THE author of "The Democracy of Reason, or the Organisation of the Press," is before his age, but the world may some day come up to him. Upon his mind has dawned the great truth that deliberative assemblies are growing obsolete. No real deliberation any longer takes place in them. They are the invention of an era in which there was no Press, and national opinion could be formed and ascertained only by bringing the representatives of the people together to deliver themselves orally in a legislative hall. The name of a Parliament denotes its original object. The real deliberation and the decisive debate now take place outside the hall of the Legislature. It is by means of books and journals that opinion is now formed. The speeches delivered in Parliament are little more than editorials in a diluted form, discharged against the party opposite. Nobody is convinced by them, nobody is expected to be convinced by them: nobody listens to them unless they are seasoned with rhetorical appeals to passion, with telling personalities, or something alien to the object of deliberation. To talk of the different parties in the assembly as taking counsel together would be a mockery. It is quite true, too, as the author of this pamphlet says, that many of those who, by their knowledge and intellectual powers, are qualified to give the best counsel to the State, are no orators, while many who possess the gift of oratory are otherwise totally unqualified for giving counsel to the State. Recognising these facts, the author of the pamphlet proposes to organise the Press, by methodising its discussions, and providing an apparatus for registering their result. Their result, when duly registered, he seems to think, will prevail by force of demonstration, like the correct solution of a mathematical problem. Evidently he takes a kind view of human nature. His apparatus is a central committee, which is to arrange and classify the various arguments transmitted to it by the editors, who will have manifested by insertion their belief that the argument, or proposal, is worthy of consideration. Each legislative project, or Bill, is to go through this alembic of discussion three times, so as to keep up an equivalent for the time-honoured form of three readings. This done, and if the weight of reason on the side of the proposal is sufficient, the Committee will take the Bill, put it in a legal form, and present it to the Houses of Parliament, calling on them to show cause why it should not be passed into law. Should it be thrown out, the public will reconsider it, to see if they can meet the views of Parliament; if not, "it must again be presented, when Parliament must either pass it into a law or take upon itself the responsibility of rejecting the demands of justice, common sense, and reason, as demonstrated by the intellect of the nation." That responsibility, it is to be feared, as Parliaments are at present, would be lightly borne. The difficulty will be in appointing the Committee. With this the author of the

pamphlet at present does not grapple. The fact from which he starts, we repeat, is unquestionable, and is likely some day to force itself practically on the attention of the world. Parliamentary debate, as a mode of making up the mind of the nation, is becoming obsolete. It will probably give place in the end to something more rational, though it is likely to last for our time, and perhaps for some generations beyond.

EVOLUTION has still some hard nuts to crack, at least unless a space of time absolutely unlimited is allowed for the process of natural selection, or of natural selection and hereditism combined; hereditism being, let us observe, a supplementary addition to the original theory, and an account of the matter hardly less mysterious than creation itself. One of these nuts a writer on the Origin of Instinct in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* essays to crack. It may be objected, he observes, to the theory of hereditism that among animals the acts which are assumed to have given birth to an hereditary tendency were purely accidental, and such as could leave no trace on the organism. Such, for example, is the act of a European cuckoo laying its egg in the nest of another bird. The thing may have happened once, and possibly, as Darwin suggests, the young cuckoo in that particular case may have derived some advantage from it, and have thus survived in the struggle for existence. But how did it become common to the whole species, and hereditary? The writer in the *Deux Mondes* says that there is a tendency in young children, which is strong also in all inferior intelligences, such as those of animals and idiots, to the mechanical repetition of an action until it becomes a confirmed trick. Of this he cites several instances such as that of a caterpillar which will starve rather than eat the leaves of any plant but the one to which it happens to have become accustomed. The hen cuckoo, according to this theory, having once laid her egg in another bird's nest, repeated herself mechanically till the habit became ingrained and was transmitted, with the organism, to her progeny. This might account, though we cannot help thinking in a supersubtle manner, for the hereditary character of the habit, but would hardly account for its universality. Are we to suppose that in the struggle for existence all the European cuckoos perished except the progeny of the one which had by accident laid its egg in the nest of another bird? But the whole subject seems replete with difficulties for the Evolutionist. An ordinary bird builds a nest in anticipation of laying its eggs. By what process of natural selection or of natural selection and hereditism combined can this forecast have been evolved? We may go further back and ask how, in the beginning of things, there can have been a bird without an egg or an egg without a bird? Any conceivable process of evolution which could afford a solution of this problem seems to postulate infinite time; and infinite time, the astronomers tell us, must not be postulated. Evolution is still a hypothesis, and it is not the only hypothesis which covers the facts. They are equally covered by that of a single creative force, infinitely various in its productions but showing its identity by homologies.

WE thought we were saying rather a strong thing when, in speaking of Paul Bert, the atheist and vivisectionist, we suggested that if there were no law but that of Evolution to enforce respect for humanity, he might take it into his head to vivisect an Annamite. But it seems we were not saying a strong thing at all. Paul Bert himself, if the correspondent of the *New York Tribune* is to be believed, distinctly contemplated human vivisection as a possibility of the scientific future. He said, truly enough no doubt, that animals were not entirely satisfactory. He proposed to vivisect criminals. He hoped to find a Chinaman who would sell himself for the purpose, as they are said sometimes to sell themselves as substitutes for other men on the scaffold. His light and callous language on this hideous subject makes one's blood run cold. He showed a vestige of humanity only by rendering the tortured animal voiceless, so that it could not cry out, thereby enhancing the torture, while he relieved his own ears. Even Paul Bert, however, condemned vivisection when practised as an amusement. He declared (if the correspondent of the *Tribune* may be trusted) that there was to his knowledge a group of fashionable ladies who profited by the throwing open of all the lecture rooms at the College of France to learn there how to vivisect, and exercised their art for amusement in their boudoirs. Morphine intoxication, he said, gave a passion for this sort of thing. Cruelty became a delightful stimulant to the deadened nerves. If this be true, the admission of women to the anatomy school is likely to produce curious results in more ways than one. Victor Hugo, it seems, who was present at this discourse on the scientific necessity of vivisection, was staggered by the mystery of iniquity which it seemed to disclose in nature. It would indeed be difficult to believe that the world was under the government of justice and beneficence if the horrible torture of innocent and helpless creatures, which are never to be requited for their suffering, were a necessary part of the dispensation.