

of our globe through its different stages of transformation, which is a truth attested by the well established facts of geology, but rather the evolution of all living organisms, even that of man, from a few initial types, which is in plain contradiction with these facts.

Still it is this latter unwarranted claim that has impressed itself chiefly upon the poetic mind of England. How true this statement is will at once become apparent when we cast a glance at the writings of George Elliot, in many respects the greatest among English writers of fiction in our days. At least, if a harmonious and plastic style, a rich and glowing imagination, an intellect wonderfully penetrating in the analysis of the web of human life and character, joined to a heart filled with an ardent enthusiasm for all that is great and noble and beautiful and a loathing for what is low and base, if these constitute the elements of human greatness in an author, that distinctive title must certainly be conceded to George Elliot. There is no writer in modern literature, in whose works the doctrine of evolution in its most materialistic interpretation has found so prominent a place, as in those of George Elliot. It furnishes the intellectual substratum, especially of her later novels and poetic tales. The strangest feature in her works, is her eager and ardent endeavor to establish a system of morality upon the barren foundation of her philosophy. Religion is likewise largely represented therein, especially in her earlier writings. Her heart, alive to all that is noble and good, could not underestimate the importance of this factor in the life she was depicting. In her later works, however, religion appears rather as a scientific problem than as a living issue. But with the decline of the religious interest, her moral ardor grows apace, for there is always a serious moral purpose running through her works.

What a vain endeavor to build a stable footing for virtue to rest upon, on the shifting sands of materialism! In order to avoid the rock of utilitarianism, which the materialistic school has vainly sought to circumnavigate, she follows the direction of her master Herbert Spencer, in making the individual interest subordinate to the race-interest, and in making the advancement of the human family the final object of all human activity. Who could be so

blind as not to perceive that this only changes the name of the difficulty without affecting its nature? Such an attempt is nothing more than a re-enactment of the old fable of Sisyphus. Whenever man endeavors to raise himself, by his own unaided efforts, without a helping hand from beyond the skies, he invariably falls back to his original level, and, if history may be credited, he often falls a little lower. Looked upon from this point of view, what a sad spectacle does the career of George Elliot present to us. What wonder that a mist of gloom and sadness hangs over most of her stories! Gifted with the rarest qualities of mind and heart, there is nothing which her genius might not have accomplished in her own particular sphere, had it been illumined by that light which shone upon this life from Mount Calvary.

The life and writings of Alfred Tennyson, present to us a more harmonious picture. He is no stranger to all the theories that pervade the intellectual atmosphere of his time, but like a master, he rises superior to them, utilizing all as the poetic material for his airy creations. Even the theory of evolution is therein embodied, but with him it is no governing principle, but rather a fruitful source from which he draws some of his most striking imagery. Moreover, it is not with him an evolution that ends with the grave, but it points upward to a nobler destiny. Thus he tells us :

" Arise and fly
The ruling foun, the sensual feast
Move upward, working out the beast
And let the ape and tiger die "

And again, in describing the great hall of King Arthur, he tells us that it was girded by four zones of symbolic sculpture.

" In the lowest (zone) beasts are slaying men,
In the second men are slaying beasts
And on the third are warriors, perfect men,
And on the fourth are men with growing wings. "

In either picture, it needs no explanation to point out the direction our flight is to take.

The central idea of Tennyson's writings is that of progress, but progress in accordance with law and order, not by the pitiful efforts of the revolution, for which movement he entertained nothing but contempt. It was Tennyson's mission to teach " that freedom must be one with order, that duties were to assert them-