

# Revelation And Science.

## A REVIEW.

By "CRUX."

LAST week I reproduced several of the leading points in the admirable sermon of Rev. Father Walshe, delivered on the occasion of the visit of the British Association to Southport. It will be remembered that he touched upon science and revelation, science and nature, science and God, science and man, and defined true science and pointed out how instead of conflicting with it aided religion. I reserved for this week the second section of that sermon, which treats of science and the Scriptures. I did so for the reason that this is one of the most universally discussed questions in the domain of polemics. As the subject is vast, and my few comments can only be a summary of Father Walshe's views, while his expressions are only a summary of the great subject itself, I will enter upon it without further preface. "The subject matter wherewith the Church is concerned is mostly of a spiritual, supernatural and moral character, and so far the boundary lines of science and revelation do not intersect. On the other hand, in the Church's interpretation of Scripture, she finds herself sometimes within a region which is also claimed by science." There are the words with which Father Walshe introduces his divisions of this section of his subject. It is thus divided:—

- 1.—The origin of the universe.
- 2.—The origin of man.
- 3.—The unity of the human race.
- 4.—The antiquity of man.

With these four points have we now to briefly deal.

### I.—ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE.

Of the four this is the most important, because it is the basis, or starting point of all the others; or, in other words, we must begin with the origin of the first created objects before coming to that of subsequent creations. The simple catechism tells us that "God created the world from nothing." The creation of the universe is, therefore, the starting point. But at this very outset we meet with denials of the creation and conflicting theories regarding the origin of the universe. Taking up his subject here Father Walshe says:—

"The nebular hypothesis is well known as the scientific solution of the world's origin. According to this teaching, the materials, whereof the universe is composed, were once in a gaseous and incandescent state. In process of time the gaseous rotating mass became more and more condensed; portions of the mass separated from the central body and ultimately formed the planets which revolve round the sun. The process of cooling and condensation went on until the crust of the earth, for instance, became capable of supporting organic life. The hypothetical character of this suggestion is, of course, confessed, though many astronomical and physical facts seem to lend it support and tend to move it from the region of hypothesis."

My purpose is neither add to nor take from the words or arguments of the preacher; I would not pretend to do so; it would be presumption. But as the sermon was delivered before a scientific association it stands to reason that the ordinary reader may not, without some difficulty, be able to grasp the arguments. It is merely the reducing of those arguments to less scientific language that I pretend to do.

Taking the above described hypothesis; whether it be a mere hypothesis or a proven fact does not much matter as far as Catholic teaching is concerned. The sole point is that the power of God is the energizing principle whereby the universe has come into existence. Whether it came into existence in a flash, or by long and slow evolution, does not change the attitude of science and revelation regarding each other. It is the power of God acting, whether with instantaneous rapidity, or in a gradual and almost imperceptible manner that is the main point. I will not quote the lengthy passage that tells of the origin and development of vegetable life and of animal life through different cycles of the prehistoric aeons. It would only serve

to confuse. But the Rev. Father Walshe says:—

"The human mind is much attracted to any hypothesis which helps to bring order and arrangement into elements hitherto diverse and confusing, and which seems to confer knowledge at the cost of small labor. This fact may explain to some extent the enthusiasm wherewith the evolutionary hypothesis was greeted in the middle of the last century. It is the simple truth to say that more careful observations have served to modify its claims very considerably and that centuries must elapse before the last word can be definitely spoken. The difficulty of proof or disproof is accentuated by the fact that during the supposed evolutionary process in the vegetable and animal kingdoms—a process extending over immense periods of time—all or nearly all the intermediate types are said to have perished. Existing species represent merely the 'tips of the branches' of the genealogical tree, of which the members represented by the trunk and main branches have long since become extinct."

The question now is this: "Is the principle of evolution in conflict with Catholic teaching?" If there should be any conflict between evolution and Catholic doctrine, it would be simply between a hypothesis and revelation, and not between science and revelation. Father Walshe thus explains this:—

"In answer to the question just proposed, we say that the materialistic school of evolution, which seeks and finds in the constitution and potentiality of matter for a sufficient explanation of the universe and denies the necessity of creation and of a Creator, this school is absolutely opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church; it is equally opposed to the dictates of common sense."

But if it be granted that the power of God is the agency which slowly evolves the creatures of the earth, that He in the beginning created some few primordial forms and imposed upon them the law of development, then, excluding the case of man, such modified evolutionary teaching is not opposed to any article of Faith, and stands or falls accordingly on its own intrinsic basis. The conflict therefore between science and revelation is no longer a conflict of the very moment God the Creator is admitted. The Church is opposed to the theory of evolution because the theorists exclude the power of God as the creative agency, not because the theory presents a certain slow and developing form of creation. Grant the power of God behind all the changes and Faith has no war to wage on the evolutionary hypothesis.

### II. ORIGIN OF MAN.

Once the Divine creative principle is admitted in regard to the origin of the universe, it is only a matter of logical sequence to apply the same to the origin of man. If we find that inanimate matter has necessarily come from the hand of a Creator, much more so animate life, and being must have come from a like science. Here is the brief manner in which this is set forth:—

"It is of Divine Faith that God created directly an immortal, immaterial, spiritual soul which He infused into a material body and so fashioned the first man the father of the human race. It is against Faith to hold that man, in the entirety of his nature, could be evolved from a lower form: The belief and teaching of some of the highest authorities in anthropological science, including amongst them the most famous living English advocate of evolution, is quite in accord with Catholic doctrine that the formation of man requires the direct interposition of God."

That life be created there must be life behind it. The inanimate cannot produce the animate. Spontaneous generations is impossible, for back of it there must be some first principle of life, no matter how remote, no matter how great or small. There is no escape from the necessity of ascending link by link the chain of being until we reach a first cause. Science can go as far as the confines of the limited, the finite, but there it ceases all explorations for there is nothing material beyond for it to investigate. But having reached that limit, it must pause to ask what is the first general cause of all that is framed within the circumference of the finite. It is then that revelation comes into play and supplies that which science cannot reach. And in this there is no conflict. It is merely that revelation takes up the chain where science has left it down, and carries it to its source.

### III. UNITY OF ORIGIN OF MAN.

—This is a subject of more than exceptional interest at the present moment. According to the first chapter of the Book of Genesis the world was created by God in six days, now Father Walshe says:—

"It is well known, moreover, that there have been and are in the Church three distinct schools of interpretation regarding the Mosaic cosmogony: (a) The literal interpretation which accepts the words in their obvious sense and regards the 'days' as periods analogous to ours. (b) The concordistic interpretation which takes the word 'yom,' or 'day,' for an indefinite period and endeavors to identify the six days and the creatures created therein with the geological periods and their flora and fauna. (c) Finally, a school of interpretation has existed from the days of Augustine which gives an 'ideal,' or 'metaphorical' account of the events recorded in the first chapter of Genesis—the purpose of the sacred writer being (in the opinion of the 'Idealists') to emphasize the claim of God as Creator or to give liturgical expression to devotional feeling or some such praiseworthy object."

He adds then:—

"Now the ideal interpretation cannot be extended to any fact which is bound up with dogmatic teaching. Accordingly, it is certain that God created the first man who was the father and representative of the human race—that Adam sinned by disobedience and thereby incurred the Divine displeasure upon himself and his family—that in consequence of sin a new Adam was necessary for the redemption of mankind."

Consequently the Catholic doctrine of original sin and of subsequent Redemption involves the unity of origin of the human race. All scientists agree that racial differences are not as pronounced as are the specific differences amongst plants and amongst animals, which belong to the same stock and can be traced to a unity of origin in their respective kingdoms. This much being allowed, whether the man of science be an evolutionist or not he must see that there is no conflict between science and revelation as far as the unity of origin of the human family goes. All are agreed upon that score. And we thus see that revelation corresponds with science in as far as science can go; and when science can go no farther, then revelation completes the task—but without there being any clash.

### IV. ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

On this last point, in which those who would efface the idea of God and who have no faith in revelation, are most emphatic and persistent. Father Walshe says:—

"Man was created at the end of the sixth day. How long is the period which has elapsed from that event to the present time? Do we accept the computation of the Vulgate or that of the Septuagint? The genealogies of Genesis are doubtless incomplete. The fact of the chronological discrepancy proves that the chronology itself is not a matter on which the Church has pronounced. The geological record shows that Let us therefore appeal to science. Man did not exist upon the earth until the beginning of the Quaternary period, and whether the Quaternary period has already lasted for 20,000 years or only for 10,000 years is a question for science to answer. It matters not to us whether the longer or the shorter period be ultimately chosen as nearer to the truth."

Taking the general features of the Mosaic record we find that it is supported by the record of the rocks. In the strata of the earth's formation, and in the records of all scientists, we have a procession from simple to complex forms. This is apparent in every case, be it in one kingdom or the other. So that in this scientific record, just as in that of the Scripture man is shown to be the most recent and the most perfect of the works of God. Therefore, there is absolutely no conflict between science and revelation on that score. Thus, if we resume the whole subject, we find that revelation completes the work of science and science proves revelation.

This seems to me to be one of the clearest of refutations that have been made if the claims of the infidel scientist against the existence of God are consequently against creation, then Redemption, and finally all revelation and religion. It is plain, it is simple, and it is, in itself, scientific in the highest degree. Man may delve into the secrets of nature and build on what he extracts any theories he may desire, but he cannot set up a hypothesis against a fact; nor can he, by any means, bring science and the Scriptures into conflict.

## Our Curbstone Observer

### How Names of Places Arouse Bigotry.

SHAKESPEARE it was, I think, who said that "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." He may be right; but still it would not be recognized as a "rose," it would have another name. If that other name had been given to it from the very beginning I suppose it would not make any difference as far as the popularity and odor of the flower are concerned; but having had the name of "rose" and being universally known as such, it would no longer be recognized were we to agree to give it, at this stage, some other name. There are many names that have been given to objects and places that would have been different had those who gave the names any idea that there could be objections to them later on. After a name has become generally accepted, or is consecrated by long usage, or has a special significance and designates in a precise manner a particular thing, or place, it is no longer permissible to change it at will, or to suit the whims of individuals.

NAMES OF PLACES.—No matter how unacceptable to some people the name of a place may be, no individual has a right to change it. If that person be a public official, to whom the public must look for information he should be ten-fold more exact in his use of place names. For example if a certain name be given to a small town, and that in the official postal guide it is known as A.B., no person has a right to call it C. D. The latter may be more appropriate, may sound better, may have many other claims to recognition; but if a person were to use it in directing a letter, that letter would be sure to go to the "Dead Letter Office." There are means, of a legal character and formality, whereby the names of places may be changed. But unless such proper means are used, there is no doubt that it is a wrong to the public for any individual, no matter what his reasons for so doing, to make the alteration. This may seem a queer subject, but I will give an illustration and it will be then clear to the reader what I mean.

A CASE IN POINT.—I have had occasion to make several trips, from one city to another, along a certain line of railway this summer. On that line there are three places that are called after Saints. The names I will not give as they are for I do not want to be the direct or even remote cause of trouble for any person. But I will call them St. Peter's, St. Anthony, and St. Mary's. I have noticed each time, that, on approaching these stations the brakeman, whose duty it is to call out the names, goes through the cars shouting "Peter's," or "Anthony," or "Mary." At first I thought it was an oversight, or a slip of the tongue, or due to the hurry in which he shouted, and that I had failed to catch the word "Saint" before each name. But I soon learned otherwise. Two weeks ago I was travelling on the same line and a lady was on board who wished to get off at "Saint Mary's." She was a stranger to the route, and depended on the officials to tell her when her station would be reached. The brakeman ran through the car, and shouted twice, "Mary." The lady paid no attention. When we were pulling out from the station, she glanced through the window and saw the name over the door of the station. She sprang up and rushed to get off, but it was too late, the train was flying, at thirty miles an hour, towards a station ten miles ahead. I told this story to a fellow passenger, and he, who travels for a large fur store in Montreal, had all the pluck of a drummer. So when the brakeman came around shouting "Anthony," the drummer, stopped him and asked:—"Anthony whom, are you looking for?" The reply was that he was calling out the name of the next station. But the drummer remarked that there was no such station on the line; that the next was "Saint Anthony." The answer he got was:—"I have no believe in these 'saints.'" And he proceeded to the next car to call for Anthony.

RANK PREJUDICE.—Deep, and very ignorant (much as I dislike the

term, I can find none other) must be the prejudice that could push a man, especially a man in an official position, to such an extremity of foolishness. Granted that he had no faith in saints, nor in God, for that matter, the fact remained that the name of the place was Saint Anthony and he had no right to alter it in any form. By that bigoted and silly exhibition of his lack of education the man caused a poor stranger to travel ten miles out of her way, and at an inconvenience to her that we do not know. I was aware of this one case; but there may have been others during the years that the man in question is on the road. If he had a letter of great importance to himself to send to a person in that town, would he take the risk of addressing it to Peter, or Anthony, or Mary? Certainly not, for the intuition that comes of self-interest would make him understand that he ran the risk of his letter never reaching its destination. Then why should he, in his official position, and when acting, as it were, a guide for the public, allow his rank prejudice to alter a proper name and to thereby deceive those whom he is bound to properly direct?

ANOTHER EXAMPLE.—A few years ago I was standing on the curbstone in front of the Jesuit Church on Bleury street, when a number of American tourists came out of the Church and crossed over to my side. One of them, an elderly lady of apparently "blue-stocking" proclivities asked me the way to "Catherine street." I politely told her that the next street up was "Saint Catherine street," if that was the one she was looking for. She thanked me and said "yes," that is the street," and added "without the necessity of a saint on it." I made no reply, as I considered the remark beneath contempt, but I felt in my heart that if there were no saint on it, there would soon be a rank hypocrite there—just as soon as that lady reached it, I cannot say whether she intended to be humorous and failed, or intended to display her lack of good breeding, and succeeded; at all events I paid no further attention to them. There is nothing to be gained by such acquaintanceship.

CONCLUSION.—These couple of examples, drawn from my personal experiences, suffice to show me how utterly inadequate must be the home and school training of such people. And unfortunately, they are not the exceptions. Their kind is to be met with in all ranks and stations of life. Yet they must be very miserable; for I think that all small souls must be miserable, and deserving of pity. There is one consolation, however, in the fact that their influence is absolutely null in the world, and they simply are able to secure for themselves the contempt of all right-minded people. Still, in this small way, they show what they would gladly do if they had the means and power to accomplish their purpose. The will they have, the power they lack; and well it is for modern civilization that it should so be.

## Late Archbishop Kain.

The editor of the "Western Watchman"—Rev. D. S. Phelan—in his editorial references to the death of Archbishop Kain refers to some of the chief characteristics of the great prelate as follows:—

The death of this distinguished churchman though long expected, came like a shock to the people over whom he has exercised rule for the past ten years.

If that event had occurred a year ago it would have been little short of a calamity; but with that wonderful foresight for which he was remarkable all through life, he made ample provision for the great diocese by having a coadjutor appointed with right of succession, so that St. Louis will not be without an Archbishop one hour by reason of his demise.

Archbishop Kain has been in charge of this diocese and ecclesiastical province since 1893; and these ten years have been filled with monuments of his zeal and activity. For he was engaged in worldly business, and it was while a clerk in a village store that he acquired those habits of industry, assiduity and economy that clung to him through life.

It is remarkable how often a short business career in the world has developed the greatest qualities in the subsequent churchman. The late Archbishop Kenrick was for several years engaged in business in Dublin. The Archbishops of Halifax and Baltimore were similarly employed before they began their studies for the Church. It develops earnestness, method and persevering industry, and teaches the value of money.

Young men who have spent all their

lives in a seminary and have never had an opportunity to work off or spend their surplus animal energy are apt to prolong their happy-go-lucky college ways after they are ordained, and until hard and sometimes sorry experience sobers them and makes them realize that the ministry is a field of toil and trouble and that the lot of the priest is to labor and pray.

Archbishop Kain governed the diocese as he would conduct a great business in the world. He was a great church builder. He revealed in work for the orphan and the sick. He seemed to find a superterrestrial satisfaction in seeing the orphans and the poor sitting at his knee and listening to his merry laugh and humorous tales. He was never better than in such company.

He was saving almost to the point of parsimony, but he had his purse ever open to the calls of the orphans and the outcasts of the city's streets. He left behind him in Wheeling when he came to St. Louis \$130,000 with which to continue the works of charity he had undertaken. During his stay in St. Louis he strained every nerve to raise enough money to build a cathedral worthy of St. Louis and her Catholic people. He had a large income, but it was always eaten up by the end of the year. The only property he could call his own, having purchased it with his money presented to him on his departure from his former see, the \$10,000 lot near the site of the cathedral chapel, he devised by will to the Cathedral Board as his personal contribution to that great work.

Archbishop Kain was not a man to surround himself with a coterie of friends. He had no favorites in the diocese. The men he advanced were those who seldom darkened his door as indifferent to his friendship as he was to theirs. He did not understand that the honors of the sanctuary should follow personal regard. The men who did most for him were the men who received least from him.

He was brusque and inconsiderate of the conventionalities, oftentimes to a painful degree. This was the fault of his training and temperament. He was made a Bishop very young, after eight years of priestly ministry, and he developed that unamiable, magisterial temperament, which is so repulsive in pedagogues; but in him it was not accentuated as in many other Bishops, with a chilling self-consciousness. He was as simple as a child in his deportment, but sometimes as thoughtless and impulsive as a spoiled child.

Archbishop Kain was never appreciated by the laity of his diocese. They could never get accustomed to his bluff ways and his abrupt style of official intercourse. But the priests all loved him for his honesty, straightforwardness and truth. He could say "no" with a round resonance that drowned further attempt at parley. He had no secrets. He was too open for a prudent ruler. But he never got into trouble on that account, as he never was afraid to repeat in any company what he had said "in secreto aurium."

In his private life Archbishop Kain was a very devout man. At home or abroad, on land or sea, he rose promptly at 5 o'clock for prayer and meditation. He never omitted Mass where it was possible to celebrate. He had a fixed hour for saying the office and rosary, and his spiritual reading was done with as much regularity as when he was a student in the seminary. He allowed nothing to interrupt his devotions.

When with him in Paris he was on one occasion making his thanksgiving after Mass, when a high French ecclesiastic requested the pleasure of an introduction to "Sa Grandeur" of St. Louis. When he was asked to shorten his devotions to meet the dignity he showed irritation and refused to interrupt his prayers. When he finally arose the dignity was gone.

Archbishop Kain loved the company of priests. He never was happier than when surrounded by his brethren, himself the "older brother." He was kind to those who needed kindness, and could be very bluff—the less deserving was sure to find sharp retort.

To the everlasting credit of Archbishop Kain it must be said that he found St. Louis a diocese thoroughly unorganized—not disorganized—and he left it one of the best organized dioceses in this country. He established the parishes with new buildings and fixed regulations governing the administration of the sacraments; he gave the whole diocese a code of laws that bespeak his consummate zeal and prudence.

He labored long and well in the vineyard of the Lord, and the Bishop of Bishops will reward him. If no was sometimes hard on others, he never spared himself, and his death was the final breaking down of a splendid constitution and the culmination of a devotion that asked only to spend and be spent in the service of God.