

sponded, to a great extent, with the teaching of the late Professor T. H. Green of Oxford. As Dr. Young himself was accustomed to say, he had arrived at very nearly the same conclusions by his own independent investigations. Professor Green left a very enthusiastic body of disciples behind him; but already there are symptoms that some of them are beginning to call in question the doctrines of the Master. Professor Seth, by no means the least illustrious of the band, was lately reckoned among the Greenites, but in his second series of Balfour Lectures he declares roundly that he has come to doubt the principles of the Balliol Professor's philosophy after having received them with something like enthusiasm. And probably the same thing would happen at the University of Toronto, if an ardent believer in Professor Young was appointed; and we believe that the late Professor would rejoice that it should be so. He was not the man to put forth a Confession of Faith on Philosophy and compel subscription to it on the part of all teachers. He knew that unless Philosophy was free it was nothing; and he would rather have had his successors faithful to truth than merely loyal to his memory. As Aristotle said of his great master: "Plato is a friend; but Truth a greater."

We do not presume to guess by what considerations the ministers were swayed, when they appointed two Professors in the place of Dr. Young. Certainly the provision cannot be regarded as over-liberal. Queen's University is a smaller institution than the University of Toronto, and it has now two Professors of Philosophy. The very curious objection has been raised that they are of different schools of thought. Such a parochial style of argument has a curious sound in connection with the teaching of Philosophy. If men are to be taught to think with scientific accuracy, it is a distinct advantage to be taught by men having different points of view. So far from the authorities being worthy of censure for acting upon this principle, in the opinion of impartial and dispassionate judges, they will deserve commendation.

NOVEMBER.

THESE are the days that try us; these the hours
That find or leave us cowards—doubters of Heaven,
Sceptics of self, and riddled through with vain
Blind questionings as to Fortune. Mute, we scan
The sky, the barren, wan, the drab dull, sky,
And mark it utterly blank. Whereas, a fool,
The flippant fungoid growth of modern mode,
Uncapped, unbelled, unshorn, but still a fool,
Fate at his fingers' end and Cause in tow,
Or, wiser, say, the Yorick of his age,
The Touchstone of his period, would forecast
Better than us, the film and foam of rose
That yet may float upon the eastern grays
At dawn to-morrow.

Still, and if we could,
We would not change our gloom for glibness, lose
Our wonder in our faith. We are not worse
Than those in whom the myth was strongest, those
In whom first awe lived longest, those who found
—Dear Pagans—gods in fountain, flood and flower.
Sometimes the old Hellenic base stirs, live,
Within us, and we thrill to branch and beam
When walking where the aureoled autumn sun
Looms golden through the chestnuts. But to-day—
When sodden leaves are merged in melting mire,
And fallow fungi stud the dripping trees,
And garden-plots lie pilfered, and the vines
Are strings of tangled rigging reft of green,
Crude harps whereon the winter wind shall play
His bitter music—on a day like this,
We, harbouring no Hellenic images, stand
In apathy mute before our window pane,
And muse upon the blankness. Then, O, then,
If ever, should we thank our God for those
Rare spirits who have testified in faith
Of such a world as this, and straight we pray
For such an eye as Wordsworth's, he who saw
System in anarchy, progress in ruin, peace
In devastation. Duty was his Star—
May it be ours—this Star the Preacher missed.

SERANUS.

SUICIDE.

DR. WM. OGLE is reported to have read an interesting paper before the Statistical Society in London (England), on a recent occasion, dealing with the statistics of suicide. Dr. Ogle's enquiries embraced only the limited area of England and Wales, comprehending a population not specially subject to suicidal tendencies; but his figures are striking, and suggestive of speculation as to the result which might be reached by an extension of the enumeration to the rest of the civilized world. The resource of suicide marks a stage of human progress to which "the heathen in his blindness" has not yet attained,—a point of social elevation to which the noble savage has not had sufficient opportunity of being educated by the superior white man. The compiler of the paper referred to fur-

nishes several curious facts in regard to suicides, from which it appears that the rate of self-destruction increased (in the cases recorded) rapidly with age until after middle life and then declined, and that at all ages—except the romantic period from 15 to 20 years—the number of male suicides was much in excess of that of the females. Furthermore, it is stated that of the various methods in vogue women favoured the least shocking, such as drowning and poisoning; and with regard to the poisons themselves, whilst the men chose those that were painless and sure, the women took the first that came to their hand—an evidence suggestive of a less degree of deliberation than in the case of the stronger sex. This was to be expected, considering the liability of weakness to falter if not precipitate, and perhaps to the same characteristic is to be ascribed the marked disproportion between the number of deaths among the two sexes, which is stated to have been 267 males to 100 females. But the capital fact of all is that of the total number of deaths registered in fifteen years as due to suicide, this number being 42,630, or at the rate of 72 in the million of population annually.

Mortuary statistics in general wear a gloomy and forbidding aspect to the ordinary reader, but they possess a deep and valuable interest to those for whose study and instruction they are designed. This can hardly be said, however, of that part of the statistics of death which relates to suicide. It is not easy to discern where the value of the melancholy enumeration comes in, save as being a distinct and necessary part of a general return. One fails to see the profit of subjecting the miserable figures to analysis, since no attempt is made, or perhaps can be made, to diminish the annual total through the application of preventive measures suggested by a study of the statistics. Hygienic and sanitary science has yet to be discovered adequate to the growing need of "ministering to a mind diseased," in the light of the Registrar-General's returns of the extent of the evil. That a given number of persons died of typhoid fever last year, and a given number of smallpox, and of diphtheria, and so on, are facts of immense value to the Health Officer by making manifest the quarters in which remedial measures need to be applied; but that so many people hung, and shot, and drowned, and poisoned themselves last year is a species of information which fails to suggest any obvious means of lessening the number of similar deaths during the coming year. The disease is not one which science can seize, or drive into a corner, or in any way exterminate. In fact for the purpose of public health the enumeration of suicides, generally, as well as that of accidental deaths, or deaths from "unknown causes," possesses merely a subtractive and negative value.

Outside the special departments, however, to which the Registrar-General's returns are of most practical importance, these figures are not without an interest of their own to the unscientific world. That so large a proportion of the population as the return indicates make away with their own lives every year is a matter of considerable concern. The act of the *felo-de-se* strikes the imagination far more awfully than that of the homicide. In the latter case the interest is divided between two persons; in the former the self-destroyer concentrates it entirely upon himself. The mind rarely attempts to realize the last moments of a person who has been slain by another—it is too much distracted by circumstances; but it is fearfully drawn into the darkness enveloping the death of the suicide. If Simon Peter, after cutting off the ear of Malchus, had cloven in two the head of the traitor Judas, the betrayer's death would not specially impress us; but Iscariot was spared until seized by remorse and horror, and then "went out and hanged himself," making a wide difference in the effect upon our imagination of that gloomy event.

It must be admitted that the majority of the suicides of which we read every day are not specially interesting, lacking, as they do, the accessories which strike the imagination; but, still, the most commonplace suicide is an act in both dramatic and moral interest above the level of any homicide of whatever degree. The most striking murder is not free from the vulgar taint of brutality. Even the "deep damnation" of Duncan's "taking off"—a deed which, from an artistic point of view, constitutes the finest murder on record—is qualified in its effect upon the imagination by the presence in the motive of very contemptible and base ingredients—impatient ambition and foul ingratitude. In all cases the taking of another's life is so much more in accordance with animal impulses than the taking of our own, that the two acts in their nature must ever occupy distinct planes of moral elevation. But concerning suicides in general it is to be apprehended that our definitions are as inexact as our judgments are confused. There is little complexity about the act of homicide to affect the completeness of our conception of it; with self-destruction the case is different. There is serious need to be accurate here. If the command, "Thou shalt not kill," forbids suicide as well as homicide, it is necessary to be careful in defining what "suicide" really is. The term itself is of modern creation, and, like most modern terms, is deficient in the simple and forcible significance of the words which our ancestors employed to express their ideas of things. The act was called "self-homicide" up to the middle of the seventeenth century by all our best writers, as Archbishop Trench states, and a writer in 1671 resents the introduction of the new word "suicide." It is less, however, with the word than with the thing which it represents that we are concerned. The law defines it to be "the deliberate and intentional destruction of one's self, by a person of years and discretion, and in

his senses;" yet even the law admits the uncertainty of its judgment and withhold its sentence on the *felo-de-se* by resorting to the merciful fiction of temporary insanity. It behooves the moral law which we set up for the direction of our judgments to be as cautious as the criminal law in fixing upon the memory of a dead man the brand of felony.

In estimating responsibility we need to be careful in marking the distinction between the scope of the terms "voluntary," and "deliberate" or "intentional." In the case of suicides the distinction is an important one, with a view to excluding acts not properly classifiable under that heading. Take the case of deaths which are *avoidable*; and here again the need of exactness is obvious in classifying voluntary, but avoidable, deaths according to the force of circumstances. It would be monstrous to contend that the incurring an avoidable death by a free moral agent must *per se* bring the act under the head of suicide. The admission of this principle might justify its logical extension to the cases of the Christian martyrs, and even to the death of Christ itself. But we are very lax in our rules of everyday judgment in such matters, through want of adequate regard for the essential elements of "deliberation." Leaving out of consideration all such cases as those of soldiers, sailors, etc., where death is a question, not of certainty but of chance, and the degree of choice is limited by necessity or duty, there remain a large number of instances, under the eyes of all of us, in which certain death is daily courted by thousands without a thought either of resistance or deliberation. To constitute suicide the will must be active and intelligent. We speak of certain people as "killing themselves by inches"—by intemperance, or vice, or neglect of the rules of health—and though these persons are not blind to the end to which they are hastening, their moral responsibility falls short of that which attends deliberate self-destruction. Cases of fatalism may be put out of court as distinct in their nature and entitled to judgment under different rules. Millions of persons have read Plato's narrative of the death of Socrates, and no doubt the diversity of opinions upon the matter has been great. We may be sure, however, that "suicide," as we understand it, was quite impossible to such a man, though no doubt the great philosopher's composure in swallowing the hemlock is far above the general comprehension of a race of men hardly fitted by their temperament to perform upon themselves the work of the executioner. The responsibility of an act is rightly measurable by, first, the degree in which the will assents to it, and second, the extent to which the will is free and intelligent. The measure of our free-will intelligence in any given circumstances must be taken in connection with the force exercised by conceptions of duty, necessity, etc., and by cognate emotions.

The causes which lead to suicide, or rather which precipitate an act rarely deliberative in the strict sense of the word, are as various as those producing natural or accidental death. A consideration of those causes would be necessary to a proper classification, but the results may be conveniently generalized under these heads: (1) Deaths caused by Mental Disease; (2) by Moral Disease; and (3) by a sense of Moral Responsibility. Regarding the nature of the cases coming under the first head, no remark needs to be made; as to the second, a wide field for investigation is opened, without, however, the prospect of useful result. Viewed in its consequence, disease is disease, and it is bootless to explore its character if we have no means of providing a remedy. The evil is one of the incidents of a civilization which begets conditions it has not power to satisfy. Propositions, or judgments based upon a general classification are never entirely just, and it is more charitable to incline—as the law does—to the side of leniency than to pronounce a verdict upon imperfect and perhaps speculative evidence. While, however, in regard to the cases of suicide springing from what is termed moral in contradiction to mental disease, it is urged that we have no clear right to sit in judgment upon acts into the sources of which we cannot see, no pretence is made to judge upon that aspect of the matter which has reference to a future state. This is for the teachers of the gospel to undertake, if they believe that they are competent to pronounce sentence. It is the social import of the question of suicide which is here exclusively dwelt upon. That the growing prevalence of the "evil" is a natural effect of growing causes, and at the same time fulfils a useful office in the economy of human society, may be discussed without touching forbidden ground.

The limits of a paper will permit little more than a bare indication of the points which are suggested in this connection. Mr. Darwin draws attention to the artificial processes by which civilization checks the action of the law of natural selection. These processes, by preserving and propagating the weak and diseased, contribute directly to the degeneration of the race, and are therefore, from a social and scientific point of view, a positive evil. To this degeneration may be wholly ascribed the existence of the mental and moral disease under which ninety-nine out of every hundred suicides may probably be classified. Now the transmissibility of disease is a fact well established, and it would follow that if no check was applied to the propagation the dimensions of the crime would become insupportable. Society and medical science apply no check; their action has a contrary tendency; and here it is that nature appears to step in with her own remedy, causing the miserables, as Carlyle describes it, to "puke up their sick existence by suicide." Every spontaneous act has a design and use, if we could see its hidden office. In the primitive state the strong prey upon the weak; in the artificial or civilized state society protects itself from its criminals