

A view of her art would be incomplete without a glance cast at her philosophy. She has clothed with the dress of fiction what Herbert Spencer has put forth in the form of abstract speculation. She is imbued with the prevailing English philosophical notions and is therefore a pronounced evolutionist. Her philosophy of life is consequently glowingly optimistic, in keeping with the evolutionary belief that man will rise to better things on "the stepping stones of their dead selves." Her main philosophical idea is that of fealty to race. It is brought out in a particularly strong light in her poem "The Spanish Gypsy" and in the novel of "Daniel Deronda." This tenet of race fealty is one of the main planks of the evolutionary platform. All we have, say its supporters, has come to us through the race, and if we possess good we must return that good to the source from which we have obtained it, by sacrificing individual interests to the common weal. Thus George Eliot makes the Spanish Gypsy give up her luxurious home and her noble betrothed husband in order to return to the tents of her forefathers and to aid in re-establishing her tribe in its former glory.

To philosophers of this school, the Christian theory of self-sacrifice seems faulty, since selfishness, say they, is its actuating principle. To them this Christian self-sacrifice is a barter, and a one-sided one at that. Christians by their own confession do good and practise self-abnegation that they may receive a far greater good in return. The motive of the evolutionists as put forth in George Eliot's books is one in which selfishness plays no part: gratitude to the race for benefits received, and a desire to further its advancement are the mainsprings of their actions. This philosophy has undoubtedly much in it that is beautiful and noble, theoretically considered, but the veriest tyro in the knowledge of human nature knows how utterly futile it would be in practical life with humanity as it is. Even in the speculative order it is far from being perfect, since in searching for the source of good it stops short of the true First Cause, and contents itself with doing homage to nature and race, which with it can be but irrational abstractions, since they have no origin and no intelligible ultimate end. This weak-

ness in evolutionary metaphysics becomes glaringly apparent when an attempt is made to utilize them as the basis of a moral code. Human nature in its fallen state chafes at restraint of any kind, and a moral law to be binding upon it, must be so sanctioned as to compel compliance. The fair authoress herself by her bold defiance of the social code, gave the strongest proof that when the existence of such a sanction is disbelieved, "if self the wavering balance shake it's rarely right adjusted." Her works have a high morality because in them she was illogical; her life from the Christian standpoint was a sad falling away from the moral code, for in it she followed out her principles to their logical consequences.

Materialism in metaphysics must inevitably lead to Epicurianism of the most sensual kind in morals, if violence be not done to the logical sequence of ideas. The *a priori* demonstration of this truth is not difficult. Man as he now is, has naturally inclinations and appetites that can be satisfied only at the expense of the happiness of others. Every Don Juan must have his Haidee. Given, then, that the moral law has no sanction other than that of fealty to race, life with the majority of men becomes a mad race for pleasure in which no regard is had for the rights of others, so long as individual gratification is secured. A preacher who would appeal to the ordinary man to tread the path of rectitude out of gratitude to the race, would be laughed to scorn by all who know aught of human nature. No, if society is to last, we must have prisons in every one of our cities, and if men are "to move upward working out the beast," they must be actuated by a belief in a life beyond the tomb where good shall be rewarded and evil punished.

The *a posteriori* argument is equally available to support this contention. Materialism has given birth to the "art of despair" and to the thousand and one vile productions of "realism." And the materialistic artists who carried out their principles in their own lives first drained the cup of degradation to its very dregs and then, maddened by the draught, either raved wildly at existence or fell into defiant despair.

Byron in England and De Musset in France are single instances of a general truth. The hideousness of that portion