

reasonably predicate pain, sorrow and wrong, and are not puzzled at their existence. It is only on the theory of a *good* God controlling the universe that we stand dumb with confusion and wonderment in the presence of all this woe, pain, misery and wrong with which the world is filled,—this terrible "struggle for life," where the strong prey upon the weak, where animal eats animal, and man eats man! The theologians have had upwards of two thousand years to reduce the materialistic paradoxes of Epicurus on the existence of evil, but have they done so? If there be a God and he is all-powerful, he *could* remove the *surplus* evil and pain from the world, and if he is all-good he *would* remove it, is an argument which has never yet been answered by a Paley, a Butler, a Dawson, or any other Christian theist or Bible apologist. I use the phrase "*surplus* evil and pain" for this reason: As a sort of apology for the rank malevolence abroad in the world, and as an argument for the existence of a beneficent God, Christian theists tell us that pain is necessary as an antecedent to the proper enjoyment of pleasure; that it is necessary to the growth and development of character; that the storm on the ocean is an essential pre-requisite to the adequate enjoyment of the subsequent calm; that all smooth sailing would be monotonous and insipid. Now, we will admit this for the sake of the argument; but there yet remains the mass of *surplus* evil to be accounted for, which is wholly unnecessary for such corrective and distributive purposes. It may, perhaps, be necessary that the tempest toss the ship about on the bosom of the ocean in order that the living freight may have a keener appreciation of the succeeding calm, and also to develop awe and sublimity in their breasts; but to accomplish this it is scarcely to the purpose to send all to the bottom of the ocean. That we may have a proper relish for our food and a due appreciation of the blessings of a good appetite it may be necessary that we feel the pangs of hunger and starvation occasionally; but to give us this wholesome discipline it would seem scarcely necessary that millions of human beings should actually be starved to death!

Now, on the theory of *inexorable law*, instead of a *beneficent providence*, we are not surprised that a ship which is not strong enough to ride the storm should go to the bottom, even though five hundred bishops and clergymen should be aboard supplicating an unknown God for succour. On the theory of *inexorable* and *merciless law* in which we are fast bound, we are not "puzzled" that millions of human beings should starve to death when these laws or conditions of nature are violated in over-population and a false political and social economy. Or when a Tay bridge goes down with its living freight under the pressure of train and tempest, the atheist is neither surprised nor puzzled; but the Christian, who worships a benevolent (?) God and believes that not a hair falls from his head without his notice, can only look at such a malevolent horror in dumb silence and amazement,—he has no explanation. Our theory of the presence of evil in the world is, therefore, at least rational; but is the Christian Theory rational? Is it rational to suppose that all the pain, sorrow and evil in the world have been caused by the puerile circumstance of of a woman eating an apple! This would be as monstrously unjust as it is irrational and absurd.

As to the origin and maintenance of life "without God" it is quite as comprehensible and rational without God as with one with the Christian conditions and qualifications. An universe of matter containing the "promise and potency of all forms and qualities of life" is as intelligent and comprehensible as a God *outside* the universe embodying the potency of all life. From the time that Lucretius declared that "Nature is seen to do all things spontaneously of herself without the meddling of the Gods," and Bruno that matter is the "universal mother who brings forth all things as the fruit of her own womb," down to Prof. Tyndall who discerns in matter "the promise and potency of every form and quality of life," scientists have never been able to discover the least intrusion of any creative power into the operations of Nature and the affairs of this world, or the least trace of interference by any God or gods. In the primeval ages of ignorance and barbarism the gods were supposed to do everything, from the production of wind, rain, tempest, thunder and lightning, earthquake, etc., down to cholera, measles and whooping-cough. Science now explains all these things and a thousand others. Indeed, in modern philosophy there is absolutely no room for the gods in the universe, and nothing left for them to do. And there cannot be any room *beyond* it for them, for "above nature we cannot rise."

The materialistic theory (and to it we subscribe) is that there is but *one* existence, the *universe*, and that it is eternal—without beginning or end,—that the matter of the universe never could have been created, for *Ex nihilo nihil fit* (from nothing nothing can come), and that it contains within itself the potency adequate to the production of all phenomena. This we think to be more conceivable and intelligent than the Christian theory that there are two existences—God and the universe—and that there was a time when there was but one existence, God, and that after an indefinite period of quiescence and "masterly inactivity" he finally created a universe either out of himself or out of nothing,—either one of which propositions is philosophically absurd. And in either case to say that God would be infinite would be equally absurd.

Yours respectfully,

Allen Pringle.

Napanee, Ont., April 23, 1880.

TRADE—FINANCE—STATISTICS.

RAILWAY TRAFFIC RECEIPTS.

COMPANY.	1880			1879.		Week's Traffic.		Aggregate.		
	Period.	Pass. Mails & Express	Freight	Total.	Total.	Incr'se	Decr'se	Period.	Incr'se	Decr'se
*Grand Trunk.....	Week April 24	\$ 60,741	\$ 121,805	\$ 182,546	\$ 158,095	\$ 24,451	.....	17 w'ks	\$ 420,342	.....
Great Western.....	" 16	35,929	54,731	90,660	81,949	8,711	.....	16 "	155,697	.....
Northern & H. & N.W.	" 15	6,007	16,667	22,674	14,494	8,180	.....	16 "	44,588	.....
Toronto & Nipissing.	" 14	1,329	2,200	3,529	3,230	299	.....	15 "	8,186	.....
Midland.....	" 14	1,653	4,151	5,804	3,102	2,702	.....	14 "	14,291	.....
St. Lawrence & Ottawa	" 17	1,440	1,641	3,081	2,794	287	.....	14 "	1,540	.....
Whitby, Pt. Perry & Lindsay.....	" 21	502	1,132	1,634	1,414	220	.....	"	6,456	.....
Canada Central.....	" 14	2,696	3,136	5,832	5,087	745	.....	15 w'ks	9,981	.....
Toronto, Grey & Bruce	" 17	2,292	4,838	7,130	5,247	1,883	.....	16 "	10,682	.....
Q., M., O. & O.....	April 8	8,481	5,783	14,264	5,788	8,476	.....	14 "	29,880	.....
Intercolonial.....	Mar.	43,934	97,075	140,109	93,222	46,887	.....	3 m'ths	92,958	.....

*NOTE TO GRAND TRUNK.—The River du Loup receipts are included in 1879, not in 1880; omitting them the week's increase is \$28,651, aggregate increase \$492,942 for 17 weeks.

†NOTE TO Q., M., O. & O. R.V.—Eastern Division traffic included in week ending April 8th, 1880, and also in aggregate from 16th March, 1880, prior to which time traffic of each Division was shown separately.

BANKS.

BANK.	Shares par value.	Capital Subscribed.	Capital Paid up.	Rest.	Price per \$100 April 23, 1880.	Price per \$100 April 23, 1879.	Last half-yearly Dividend.	Per cent. per annum of last div. on present price.
Montreal.....	\$200	\$12,000,000	\$11,999,200	\$5,000,000	\$136½	\$139½	4	5.86
Ontario.....	40	3,000,000	2,996,756	100,000	80	66	3	7.50
Molson's.....	50	2,000,000	1,999,095	100,000	82	77	3	7.33
Toronto.....	100	2,000,000	2,000,000	500,000	125	110	3½	5.60
Jacques Cartier.....	25	500,000	500,000	55,000	70	34	2½	7.14
Merchants.....	100	5,798,267	5,518,933	475,000	95¼	81½	3	6.30
Eastern Townships.....	50	1,469,650	1,382,937	300,000	...	...	...	...
Quebec.....	100	2,500,000	2,500,000	425,000	...	...	...	...
Commerce.....	50	6,000,000	6,000,000	1,400,000	12½	104	4	6.64
Exchange.....	100	1,000,000	1,000,000	75,000	...	...	...	...
MISCELLANEOUS.								
Montreal Telegraph Co.....	40	2,000,000	2,000,000	171,432	95	104¾	4	8.42
R. & O. N. Co.....	100	1,565,000	1,565,000	...	...	...	...	...
City Passenger Railway.....	50	...	600,000	161,000	94	80	75	5.32
New City Gas Co.....	40	2,000,000	1,880,000	...	120	108½	5	8.33

*Contingent Fund. †Reconstruction Reserve Fund. ‡Per annum.

CHANGE OF TIME.

We would call the attention of our readers to the change of time on the Q., M., O., & O. Railway advertised in our columns to-day, to take effect on and after Monday, May 3rd. The increased facilities in Train service and change of hours of arrival and departure to meet the requirements of business men show that this favourite line continues to keep the comfort and interests of the travelling public always in view and with magnificent palace cars on day trains and sleeping cars on night trains between Montreal and Quebec, we may expect that increased travel and revenue will reward their efforts.

*THE FARMERS' DELIVERIES of home-grown Grain in the 150 towns in England and Wales for the week ended April 3rd, 1880, and for the corresponding weeks of the previous nine years and the weekly average prices:—

	WHEAT		BARLEY		OATS	
	Qrs.	Price.	Qrs.	Price.	Qrs.	Price.
1880.....	43,603	48s 4d	12,593	35s 0d	2,713	22s 6d
1879.....	43,856	40s 11d	19,856	32s 6d	3,639	21s 1d
1878.....	31,415	50s 0d	18,949	42s 0d	4,304	25s 3d
1877.....	34,215	51s 5d	17,947	41s 11d	1,958	25s 5d
1876.....	41,227	45s 2d	24,619	33s 10d	2,474	25s 11d
1875.....	54,284	43s 1d	13,536	40s 8d	2,050	29s 6d
1874.....	34,041	59s 5d	11,079	48s 8d	2,721	28s 3d
1873.....	38,324	55s 1d	13,339	39s 0d	2,972	23s 5d
1872.....	49,379	54s 0d	19,538	35s 11d	4,131	22s 3d
1871.....	78,399	50s 7d	22,419	36s 8d	5,839	26s 10d
Average 10 years.....	42,975	50s 5d	17,287	38s 7d	3,280	25s 0d

And the deliveries from—

	Wheat, qrs.	Barley, qrs.	Oats, qrs.
September 1, 1879, to April 3, 1880.....	946,118	1,441,719	132,280
September 1, 1878, to April 5, 1879.....	1,671,479	1,559,269	125,062
Decrease in 150 towns.....	725,291	117,550	*7,218
Decrease in the Kingdom.....	2,501,164	470,205	*28,872

*Increase

* The receipts of Live Stock at New York for the last four weeks have been as follows:—

	Beesves.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep.	Swine.
April 19.....	13,575	75	3,850	23,703	39,189
April 12.....	11,669	47	2,491	24,260	36,145
April 5.....	11,883	146	2,581	25,000	32,069
March 29.....	11,155	156	1,669	24,960	31,786
Total 4 weeks.....	48,282	425	10,591	97,932	139,189
Corresponding 4 weeks 1879.....	38,858	237	12,116	81,731	128,396
Corresponding week 1879.....	10,314	50	4,160	19,854	34,884
Weekly average, 1879.....	10,933	142	2,698	24,005	33,089
Corresponding week 1878.....	9,349	89	3,623	20,100	30,517

*From New York Produce Exchange.