

[For the News.]

A CONSIDERATION.

(Appended in a volume of Song.)

BY J. R. N., LONDON.

Here end my songs, my hours of idleness
Stolen from the busy days of cheerless toil
Mid dusty volumes; here my fancy halts.

I side with Love: I hate a stunted scope.
Though women are not angels, still to muse
On them as such, spurs emulation on.

PROF. STOKES, F.R.S., ON MODERN SCIENTIFIC THOUGHT.

The announcement that Her Majesty the Queen had graciously signified to the Victoria (Philosophical) Institute of London her consent to receive the volumes of its "Transactions," gave additional éclat to a crowded meeting of its members held on the 15th of January at the Hall of the Society of Arts.

"We should expect a priori that, as the wisdom of the designing mind must be immeasurably above our own, so contrivance should as a rule extend far beyond what we can trace." We should expect, therefore, on purely theistic grounds, that the doctrine of evolution, assumed for trial, would be a useful and ordinarily trustworthy guide in our scientific researches; that is, might often enable us to go back one step and explain how such or such a result was brought by natural laws from such or such an anterior condition, and so might lead us to extend our knowledge of the operation of natural causes.

As for Mr. Darwin's theory of ancestral derivation and survival of the fittest, Dr. Stokes said it was one which "from its nature can hardly, if at all, be made a subject of experimental investigation, or even of observation in the records of the past," and, therefore must rest mainly on the estimate which may be formed of its own probability, "though doubtless," Professor Stokes added, "an underlying feeling that the phenomenon was in some way explicable by natural causes has contributed not a little towards its propagation." Still the most he could say on behalf of Darwinism was that it was "highly ingenious as an hypothesis."

Professor Stokes referring to the question of the creation of man, said,—"In the account of the creation it is distinctly stated that man was separately created, 'in the image of God,' whatever that may imply. Nor is this a point in which, by a wide license of interpretation, we might say the language was merely figurative; that we can afford to understand it so, for that Scripture was not given us to teach us Science. Our whole ideas respecting the nature of sin and the character of God, are, as it seems to me, profoundly affected according as we take the statement of Scripture straightforwardly, which implies that man was created with special powers and privileges, and in a state of innocence from which he fell, or if we suppose that man came to

be what he is by degrees, by a vast number of infinitesimal variations from some lower animal, accompanied by a correspondingly continuous variation in his mental and moral condition. On this latter supposition, God was made to be responsible for his present moral condition, which is but the natural outgrowth of the mode of his creation. As regards the lower animals, little change would apparently be made from a theological point of view, if we were to interpret as figurative the language which seems to assert a succession of creative acts. But the creation of man and his condition at creation are not confined to the account given in Genesis. They are dwelt on at length, in connection with the scheme of redemption by St. Paul, and are more briefly referred to by our Lord Himself in connection with the institution of marriage."

As against these statements "so express, so closely bound up with man's highest aspirations," we have nothing more to adduce on the side of science, says Professor Stokes, "than a hypothesis of continuous transmutation incapable of experimental investigation, and making such demands upon our imagination as to stagger at last the initiated."

A modified theory of Darwinism, as applied to the creation of man, was thus dealt with:—"Some have endeavored to combine the statements of Scripture with a modified hypothesis of continuous transmutation, by supposing that at a certain epoch in the world's history mental and moral powers were conferred by divine interposition on some animal that had been gradually modified in its bodily structure by natural causes till it took the form of man. As special interposition and special creation are here recognized, I do not see that religion has anything to lose by the adoption of this hypothesis, but neither do I see that science has anything to gain. Once admit special divine interposition, and science has come to the end of her tether. Those who find the idea helpful can adopt it; but for my own part this combination of the natural and the supernatural seems somewhat grotesque, and I prefer resting in the statement of a special creation."

A discussion ensued in which many Fellows of the Royal Society took part, including Sir J. Risdon Bennett, vice-president of the Royal Society, Sir J. Fyfe, K.C.S.I., Professor Lionel Beale, Mr. J. E. Howard, Dr. John Rae, and others.

Several applications to join the institute were received.

SOME WITS OF THE PAST.

A confession frankly made by Sir Samuel Garth, physician to George I, and a member of the Kit-Kat Club, has been preserved: perhaps the truth it reveals is as conspicuous as its humor. Garth, coming to the club one night, declared he must soon be gone, having many patients to attend; but, some good wine being produced, he forgot them. Sir Richard Steele was of the party; and, reminding him of the visits he had to pay, Garth immediately pulled out his list, which amounted to fifteen, and said, "It's no great matter whether I see them to-night or not; for nine of them have such bad constitutions that all the physicians in the world can't save them; and the other six have such good constitutions that all the physicians in the world can't kill them."

Attorneys have ever been fair game for a joke, and Foote certainly made the most of them. One day, a simple farmer who had just buried a rich relation, an attorney, was complaining of the great expense of a funeral cavalcade in the country. "Why, do you bury your attorneys here?" Foote asked. "Yes, to be sure we do; how else?" "Oh, we never do that in London." "No!" said the other, much surprised: "how do you manage?" "Why, when the patient happens to die, we lay him out in a room overnight by himself, lock the door, throw open the sash, and in the morning he is entirely off." "Indeed!" said the other, with amazement: "what becomes of him?" "Why, that we exactly cannot tell; all we know is there's a strong smell of brimstone in the room the next morning."

Swift had some whimsical contrivances to punish his servants for disobedience of orders. The hiring of his maidservants he left to his housekeeper, and, that form being over, he acquainted them that he had but two commands to give them—one, to shut the door whenever they came into a room; the other, to shut the door after them whenever they went out of a room. One of these maidservants requested permission of the dean to go to her sister's wedding, which was to take place at about ten miles from Dublin. Swift not only consented, but lent the servant one of his horses, and directed that a manservant should ride before her. The maid, in her joy at this favor, forgot to shut the door when she left the dean's room. In about a quarter of an hour after she had left the house the dean ordered a servant to saddle another horse, overtake the maid and her escort, and oblige them to return immediately. This was done, and the girl came into the dean's presence with the most mortified countenance, and begged to know his honor's commands. "Only to shut the door after you," was the reply. But not to carry the punishment too far, he then permitted the maid to resume her journey.

One night Garrick and Foote were about to leave the Bedford together, when the latter, on paying their bill, dropped a guinea; and not finding it at once, said, "Where on earth can it be gone to?" "Gone to the devil, I think,"

rejoined Garrick, who had assisted in the search. "Well said, David," was Foote's reply; "let you alone for making a guinea go farther than anybody else."

Foote having dined at Merchant Taylors' Hall, he was so well pleased with the entertainment that he sat till most of the company had left the table. At length rising, he said, "Gentlemen, I wish you both a very good night." "Both!" exclaimed one of the company; "why, you must be drunk, Foote; here are twenty of us." "I have been counting you, and there are just eighteen; and as nine tailors make a man, I am right. I wish you both a very good-night!"

A nobleman of questionable veracity told Lord Chesterfield one day that he had drunk six bottles of champagne. "That is more than I can swallow," remarked his lordship.

A young person, being hardly pressed to sing in a company where Colman formed one of the party, solemnly assured them that he could not sing; and at last said rather hastily, "that they wished to make a butt of him." "(O, no," said Colman; "my good sir, we only want to get a stove out of you."

Colman and Bannister were dining one day with Lord Erskine, the ex-chancellor, who, in the course of conversation on rural affairs, boasted that he kept on his pasture-land nearly a thousand sheep. "I perceive, then," said Colman, "your lordship has still an eye to the Woolstack."

George Selwyn's morbid passion for public executions and similar horrors became notorious. He paid a visit to Lord Holland while the latter was on his death-bed. When his lordship was told that Mr. Selwyn had called, he said: "Should he come again, please to show him up. If I am alive I shall be happy to see him; if I am dead, he will be happy to see me."

Some ladies were bantering Selwyn on his want of feeling in going to see Lord Lovat's heads cut off. "Why," said he, "I made amends by going to the undertaker's to see it sewn on again."

Satire is reckoned the easiest of all wit; but I take it to be otherwise in very bad times; for it is as hard to satirize well a man of distinguished vices as to praise well a man of distinguished virtues. It is easy enough to do either to people of moderate characters.

The common fluency of speech in many men and most women is owing to a scarcity of matter and a scarcity of words; for whoever is a master of language, and has a mind full of ideas, will be apt, when speaking, to hesitate in the choice of both; whereas common speakers have only one set of ideas and one set of words to clothe them in, and these are always at the mouth; as people come faster out of a church when it is almost empty than when a crowd is at the door.

Old men and comets have been revered for the same reason—their long beards, and pretences to foretell events.

It is with men as with beauties—if they pass the flower they lie neglected forever.

Dr. Young relates: "I'll send you my bill of fare," said Lord B., when trying to persuade Dr. Swift to dine with him. "Send me your bill of company," was Swift's answer to him.

Swift, in the Examiner, defends aristocracy on its true grounds, but with a fierceness quite equal to his brilliant wit. "A pearl," says he, writing of the positions from which great men have come, "holds its value though it be found on a dunghill; only that is not the most probable place to look for it."

Lord Palmerston, during his last attack of the gout, exclaimed playfully to his medical adviser, "Die, my dear doctor? That's the last thing I think of doing."

One warm summer night, at the Hay-market, Foote had put up Garrick's "Lying Valet," when the little manager called in at the green-room, and with self-satisfaction said, "Well, Sam, so you are taking up, I see, with my farces after all." "Why, yes, David," was Foote's reply; "What could I do better? I must have some ventilator this intolerable hot weather."

Lord Chesterfield, when Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, being asked one day whom he thought the greatest man in the country, replied, "The last man who has arrived from England, be he who he may."

A story is told of Swift's commanding "Sweetheart," as he called his cookmaid Mary, to carry down a joint of meat, and do it less; and on her alleging that was impossible, his grave request that when in future she chose to commit a fault, he hoped she would choose one which might be mended.

GUSTAVE DORÉ.

The death of this versatile artist, at Paris, recently, removes the foremost character in the French school of contemporary art. Indeed, for certain classes of illustrations, Doré stands so entirely by himself, that he may be said to form a school of his own. His work is different in scope and treatment from anything, by other artists, ever seen in France.

Doré was by extraction from Alsace, and was in his fifty-third year. He differed in three important respects from his leading French contemporaries: he laid great stress on light and shade; had but little of the genius of color, which characterizes the work of the German Markardt, for example; and he was a great moralist. As an illustrator for wood-engraving, he was prolific beyond all precedent. His illustrations of Biblical subjects and others similar, are

good specimens of his wonderful powers in this direction.

Doré was the only artist in Paris who chose subjects with a moral, as do the German artists. In the later phases of his genius he has been called the Hogarth of France. Among his most impressive paintings are such wonderful compositions as his "Martyrs in the Coliseum," "Dream of Pilate's Wife," "Christ Leaving the Praetorium," and "Christ Entering the Temple," in which are grouped scores of life-sized figures. The imagination displayed, the massing of chiaro-oscuro, the rush and movement of the multitude, and the moral impressiveness of the ideas conveyed are indicative of an immense reserve power.

Doré was not only a great artist; he was a broadly educated man. Of course, he loved music, and understood it. He sang well—a rich baritone voice; played on the piano, violin, flute, and guitar. He was a regular opera-goer, where he was sure to attract attention by his shabby attire. For it is said that he was the "worst dressed man in Paris."

Doré passed his life in drawing and painting, sleeping, or dancing about with a fiddle in his hand. In society, when he was not napping or fiddling, he was constantly making sketches. His fertility was prodigious, and on that account his brother artists do not look upon him with a favorable eye. A statistician has calculated that Doré's pictures and drawings, if laid flat, side by side, would suffice to cover the railroad track from Paris to Lyons. He attached no importance to his work, and although in business transactions a man of singular acuteness, in private life he was the most "giving" of artists.

When he was in Switzerland, a few years ago, he used to give his water colors away right and left to his neighbors at the table d'hôte. It is told of him that, on one occasion, an English lady begged Doré to write his name on a slip of paper, so that she might possess his illustrious autograph.

"Oh! madame, I will give you something better than a mere signature."

And, suiting the action to the word, he took off his black necktie, asked for a bit of flake powder, mixed it with water, and, with a match, he painted on the necktie a gay procession of cupids offering a necktie to a lady, signed it "Gustave Doré," and handed it gallantly to his fair admirer.—Musical People.

HE WON'T PAY.

"I got that notice this forenoon," he remarked as he handed the printed slip into one of the ward windows at the Water Office recently.

"Y-e-s, I see," replied the clerk as he handed it back.

"I am notified," resumed the citizen, "that the water is to be shut off from my house unless I pay rates at once."

"Yes, sir."

"Is this despotic Russia or free America?"

"I guess so," sighed the clerk as he looked over a lot of figures.

"Then you'll shut my water off, will you?"

"I presume we will."

"I don't believe it! We've been frozen up for ten days, and if anybody can find any water to shut off they may try it on."

"Frozen, eh?"

"Frozen tight as a crowbar, and whose fault is it? You contract to give me so much water daily or weekly or monthly for so much money. Where's my water to-day?"

"Then it's frozen?"

"Frozen? Didn't I say every water-pipe in my house was frozen as solid as the Rock of Gibraltar? And whose fault is it?"

"I see," murmured the clerk.

"What do you see? Do you see me going around the neighborhood borrowing water, or do you see those frozen pipes. The landlord says he didn't freeze 'em up!"

"No?"

"And I didn't."

"That's so."

"But the weather did. Am I any more responsible for the weather than you are? Why don't you run your water over a huster in the winter and take the chill off?"

"I think we will."

"And now I won't pay until I get water! No, sir! I will see you hung first! You can go up and die, and pick and turn your old rags around, but you can't scare me into paying!"

"I know it," was the brisk answer.

"You may advise me to light a candle and crawl under the house and knock the top of my head off against the joists, but I won't do it! You may advise hot bricks, but I'd like to see myself holding bricks against the cold pipes to please anybody! Warm rags will sometimes do the business, but am I going to hunt all over Detroit for rags and burn half a ton of coal to warm 'em?"

"No," softly said the clerk.

"And don't you forget that you are a servant of the public, either!"

"Never!"

"And as I said before, shut off and be hanged to you!"

"Yes."

"And I will move!"

"You will."

"And you may sue for the amount and I will fight you to the highest court in the universe! This monopoly can't bluff me for a cent!"

"That's so," was the calm reply, and the citizen walked out as stilly as if his legs had been drilled for water-pipes and there had been a freeze-up.