

## IN THE DESERT OF SINAI.

We began the march soon after the sun had risen, turning the eastern sky into the aspect of a conflagration. The heavens above were "as brass," and the earth beneath "as iron." I breakfasted on raisins and half a cup of strabour made with some stale water which had been begged from the scanty stock of the nomads of the night before. These folded their tents, and passed away on that search for water which is the life-long occupation of the dwellers in the desert. They left not a trace behind. Soon after they went out of sight I walked on alone, as is my usual practice, in advance of the camels, but soon sank on a stone from exhaustion and suffering. Hassan had pebbles in his own mouth, and gave me some to put in mine, but he spoke thickly, though doubtless he had taken more water than he gave to me. We marched for four hours—a burning, weary, silent march—and halted at noon in the sharp, deep shadow of a high rock, where the mercury fell to 111 degrees. The glare on the sand beyond the shadow was blinding. The lower strata of the air were shimmering with heat. It was terrible to emerge from the shadow of that great rock into the furnace glare once more, and plod on once more under the fiery sun. I usually soak a towel, several times folded, in water, and lay it on my head under my hat, letting the end hang over the back of my neck; and being unable to get any water, I suffered severely from the sun. As the afternoon went on I became dizzy and distracted; I felt that I should soon be delirious. I tried to speak to Hassan, but my tongue only rattled in my mouth. I felt that if any one were carrying water and would not give it to me, that I would take it by force—that I could even commit a desperate crime to get one cupful. And still we marched on silently under the blazing skies, through the heated, shimmering air. I felt my reason going, and tied a handkerchief over my eyes; then lassitude came on, and the longing for water turned into a longing for death, and the fancied murmur of the "dark river" in my ears was a pleasant sound.

Then there were voices, and Hassan, speaking thick, uttered the one word "Water." I took the bandage from my eyes, and saw that we were in a valley. In front palms waved, and there was a greenness on the earth. I thought I was again being mocked by the mirage, but the blessed reality was confirmed the next moment, when I saw in the distance the Sheykh Barak running toward me with a pitcher of water in his hand. I seized it, and in unreasoning haste drank an enormous quantity, when Hassan forced the cooler from me, and drank the remainder, poor fellow. The thirst still raged, but there was hope, for in the long valley which we had entered I recognized the Wady Feiran, the great oasis of the Sinaitic Desert. The Arabs lifted me very gently from my camel and laid me on a blanket under a palm tree. Hassan brought me a cup of goat's milk, warm and healing, and putting a water-cooler beside me, warned me to take the water only by sips. It was pure and ice-cold; it was abundant; and reason having returned, I drank it rationally.

Three thousand fruit-bearing palms, and perhaps two thousand young ones, grow in that grand oasis. Barley was springing, flocks were nibbling herbage which, though scanty, was green; there was a murmur of water, and as I fell asleep that murmur became transformed into the sound of "the river of the water of life," and the rustle of the palm fronds overhead into the whisper of the foliage of that tree "whose leaves are for the healing of the nations."—*Mrs. Isabella Bird Bishop.*

## THE ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN.

The Spencerian form of evolution is more refined and extensive than the Darwinian. Like the system of Comte, which it resembles in many respects, it claims to be scientific and encyclopedic. It really is a vast effort to build up a purely abstract monism; but it is doubtful if Spencer has succeeded as well as Spinoza, who made a similar effort along other lines. The form that the evolution principle takes in Spencer's hands makes it really a kind of transformism. It takes for granted the persistence of force, and a not very clearly defined relation of co-ordination between the homogeneous and heterogeneous is its foundation principle. In the few sentences at our disposal here, we cannot do justice to such an elaborate system, either in the way of statement or of criticism. Indeed, we can only make one critical remark. Admitting, for the sake of argument, that Spencer's system gives a sound natural history of the development of the cosmos from its original condition of stable equilibrium in the homogenous, how is the first step in the movement toward the heterogeneous to take place? Is it by chance or of necessity? Both of these views have already been disposed of. Does the homogenous contain within itself the principle of its own development, or is the explanation beyond its sphere? If we take the former view, the principle itself requires an explanation. That explanation will land us in the latter alternative. In short, it is maintained that this theory gives us as its first principle a condition of stable equilibrium, which cannot have movement given it in any, much less a given, direction without the hypothesis of an intelligent power. And further, it can be shown that all along the line of development, of which evolution gives the natural history rather than the philosophy, the materials for a teleology may be found. In order to make good our position here we do not require to refute Spencer's doctrines generally. We need only to show that, even if true, they do not destroy the design argument. Even if evolution be admitted as an explanation of nature, the evolution itself in its origin, direction and progress needs explanation. It is evident that the series in the cosmos can neither originate, direct nor continue itself. The ground of this explanation must be beyond the series.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that teleology survives. There is room for the design argument, and its services are needed. The only adequate explanation of the admitted facts of adaptation in the universe is the hypothesis of an extra-mundane, super-mundane, and intra-mundane intelligence. This intelligence transcends nature, and is also

immanent in nature, but its immanency is dependent on its transcendency. By other lines of reasoning this intelligence can be connected with the being of an infinite personal God, whose relation to the existing cosmos of nature is such that He is immanent in it, and yet He also transcends it. He is in all, through all, and over all.—*F. R. Beattie, in Knox College Monthly.*

## A FRIEND.

"Friend" I have called thee; by that sacred name  
Was he who trusted God renowned of old;  
And in all ages souls of tested gold  
Have joyed to own the pure and mutual claim  
Of spiritual friendship; not the frenzied flame  
That passion kindles; nor the nameless glow,  
Sweetly through all the soul dissolving slow,  
When Love's ethereal fire enwraps this frame;  
Not these, but something gentler, calm, refined,  
Unselfish and exalted, that we feel  
Like spring's returning sunshine o'er us steal,  
Awakening hope and strength through heart and mind;  
Divinest compound! None but heaven could blend  
The rest and comfort breathed in that word "Friend."  
—*George Lansing Taylor, in the Brooklyn Magazine.*

## THE FUTURE OF PERSIA.

So far as concerns Persia, the danger of absorption by Russia is less real than apparent; and the danger is less now than ten years ago, although it may seem paradoxical to hazard this assertion. Her natural defences are great; there is good fighting stuff in her troops. In the last war with Russia, when her army was in the dangerous transition state from Asiatic to European tactics, she was on, beaten when so able a general as Paskiewitch was sent to take command of the invading forces. And again Persia is a very different country from the feeble khanates of Khiva and Bokhara, with no history and little organization. The Persians have for 2,500 years shown extraordinary administrative qualities; they are quick, intellectual, and talented in many directions, and have exceptional national vitality. Such a people are not easily destroyed.

But, in addition to this, they have now a new ally, and one who holds the balance of power in the councils of Europe and Asia—Germany. By successive stages, in a quiet and unobtrusive manner, legations of the two countries have, within a year been established at Teheran and Berlin. The significance of this event is such that it is singular that it has not attracted more attention. Perhaps it has, in secret. Prince Bismarck wastes no powder. He never establishes close diplomatic relations except with a distinct purpose in view. That a first-class legation has been established at Teheran means that Germany proposes to have something to say in that quarter, as well as at Constantinople, where she has assumed a predominating influence since the last Russo-Turkish war. In the event of a war between Germany and Russia—which will be one of the probable results of the death of the Emperor William—it will be convenient to be able to annoy Russia on her eastern flank. At any rate, with England, Germany and Russia watching each other at Teheran, Persia gains a new lease of life, neither of these powers being prepared to see her devoured by the others. One result of this exchange of diplomatic courtesies is now evident in the request of Persia that Germany should exert herself with England and Russia to have Persian territory declared neutral and free from invasion in case of war between England and Russia. Once let this principle be established and, with a patriotic and progressive monarch like Nussr-ed-Deen Shah, this glorious old monarchy would bring to a successful issue the career of progress upon which she has entered.—*S. W. G. Benjamin, late U. S. Minister to Persia.*

## JUVENILE LITERATURE.

Never probably were the amusements of children more elaborately and expensively catered for than now. Not only is the manufacture of toys an important branch of modern industry, but there is a distinct and largely increasing field of juvenile literature, unknown some forty or fifty years ago. "Children's books" have no doubt, existed for centuries; but the coarse chap books of the eighteenth, and even the juvenile books of the early nineteenth century, contrast unfavourably with the really artistic productions which woo the attention of our modern juveniles. As with the illustrations, so with the letterpress. Royal Academicians sketch for our children, and some of our best authors do not disdain to write for them. The children of a past generation had their special literature; and the quaint little volumes with mottled covers and red backs were as dear to juveniles some fifty years ago as the gayest Christmas books are to their successors. Perhaps they were more highly valued, being less frequently obtained. One description of children's books has enjoyed, not years, but centuries, of unbroken popularity. The dear old nursery tales, common to all lands, and familiar at all ages, the fairy tales which delight English little ones, and can be traced back by the philologist to the very dawn of language itself, and which are found in the folk lore of all nations—"Jack the Giant Killer," "Puss in Boots," "Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast,"—these and their kindred legends will ever remain the best beloved of "children's books."

THE Dean of Canterbury presided at the farewell meeting in the Presbyterian Church in that city to bid Rev. Harvey Jellie God speed on his departure for Southampton. Two other Episcopal dignitaries, Canon Fremantle and Dr. Blore, wrote in terms of warmest regard.

THE Queen lately sent to Mrs. Oliphant a finely-bound copy, with her autograph, of "More Leaves from a Highland Journal." The eminent novelist had been invited a few days before by the Queen to Windsor, and had presented to her Majesty a copy of one of her last stories.

## British and Foreign.

A SERIES of meetings will be conducted by Sam Jones in Louisville, Ky.

THE Rev. David Thorburn, of Leith, has received the degree of D.D., from Edinburgh University.

THE Queen has given Mr. Hutchison, R.S.A., a commission for a marble bust of the late Principal Tulloch.

AN evangelical hall is to be erected in Pera, Turkey, at a cost of \$7,000, as one of the results of Dr. Somerville's visit.

THE Rev. Michael S. Johnstone, of Monigaff, in Wigtown Presbytery, has received the degree of D.D. from Edinburgh University.

THE English Peers are said to control 3,899 church livings—and sad work they sometimes make of their power of appointment thereto.

THE wife of Rev. Dr. Ray Palmer, of Newark, died recently, in her seventy-second year. She was the daughter of Marmaduke Ward.

FOUR young men of Jewish extraction, and members of the Hebrew Christian Church of New York City, have entered theological seminaries.

MARY W. JOHNSON, of Philadelphia, a member of the Society of Friends, bequeathed \$157,000 in various sums to about forty religious and charitable institutions.

MR. GEORGE MÜLLER, of Bristol, has been preaching to large congregations at Sydney. An autobiographical discourse in the Scots Church made a profound impression.

SIR CHARLES WARREN, the explorer of Palestine, is the new head of the London police. The appointment is one that will be hailed with intense satisfaction on grounds of morality.

THE Rev. Donald Fraser, who was minister of the Free High Church at Inverness before he settled in London, is expected to visit the Highland capital to speak on the Church question.

PROFESSOR MAHAFFY has left Dublin for Egypt, where he will spend a short time in investigation. He is about to publish two books on the Diadochi, the successors of Alexander the Great.

IN the State of New York alone, it is said, there are 740,000 children and youths who are without any religious instruction. A frightful amount of germinal heathenism for the next generation.

IT is said the Imperial Engineering College at Tokio, which is an essentially British institution, governed by an English Principal and taught by exclusively English teachers, is about to be suppressed.

THE Hon. H. B. Hill, Atlanta, Ga., says: I have been solicitor eight years. In that time I convicted seven hundred criminals. Six hundred of these committed their crimes while under the influence of whiskey.

DR. GEORGE SMITH has remitted \$1,375 to the testimonial fund raised in recognition of the services rendered to civilization and justice by Rev. J. D. Don's successful defence of the Kafirs in South Africa.

THE old chapel of Islington, of which Dr. Geikie was pastor before he became an Anglican, and which has also been ministered to by Mr. Spurgeon's father, is making good progress under the care of Rev. R. Berry.

PROFESSOR MITCHELL, Moderator of the Church of Scotland General Assembly, preached the annual sermon in connection with the Glasgow branch of the Jewish Female Mission to a large congregation in St. George's Church.

THERE are in the American Episcopal Church fourteen sisterhoods and two well-established orders of deaconesses—one in Long Island and one in Alabama. In the Church of England twenty-five sisterhoods and eight orders of deaconesses are reported.

THERE was picked up in London recently one of the fifty copies of Mrs. Browning's earliest poem, "Marathon," which was written when she was eleven years old, and was printed by her father. It is now in the hands of the keeper of printed books at the British Museum.

THE Rev. J. T. Wigner protests in the *Freeman* against the practice of giving out intimations from the pulpit. "Conceive," he says, "of Peter in Jerusalem, or Paul at Mars Hill, asked to give out half-a-dozen notices of excursions, bazaars, bands of hope, sermons, lectures!"

THE Rev. Adam Lind, D.D., who visited this country a few years ago, will attain his jubilee as minister of the Moss Street Church, Elgin, on 27th July next. Commemorative services are to be held on the first Sunday of August, and a public luncheon and soiree on the Tuesday following.

DR. SALMOND, in his opening address before the Otago Presbyterian Synod, took for his subject, "Sermons and Preaching." He declared that there was more good than evil in the Scottish eagerness for the sermon, and spoke approvingly of the change from doctrinal to practical preaching.

THE 642nd anniversary of the consecration of the parish church of Kirkcaldy occurred a few weeks ago; but there is nothing left of the ancient building save the unfinished tower. The church was dedicated to St. Bryce, who succeeded St. Martin in the bishopric of Tours. The old edifice was swept away in 1807, though happily the tower was spared.

THE Clerk of the Edinburgh Established Presbytery reported that there had been collected by congregations within the bounds during the past financial year \$279,162, an increase of \$56,210 over the contributions of last year. The number of communicants within the Presbytery, so far as returns had been received from congregations, was 47,129, an increase of 1,586 over that of last year. The baptisms were 3,135.