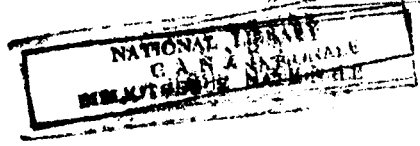


*Robert Bell*



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VOL. III

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# QUEEN'S QUARTERLY

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APRIL, 1896.

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VOL. III.

APRIL, 1896.

No. 4.

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## BALFOUR'S "FOUNDATIONS OF BELIEF."\*

PLATO'S dream of the time when the philosopher shall be king, or the king philosopher, is not likely to come true, at least for many centuries. Nor is the reason far to seek: the philosopher who would fain be king must give his energies, not to the discovery of truth, but to the practical art of governing men and applying ideas which, in their large outlines at least, are admitted to be true; and the king who is ambitious to be a philosopher must be willing to subject all the beliefs ordinarily assumed to be true to a searching scrutiny, which will tax all his powers and create an ideal world which he can only hope to see realised after ages of progress. The problem of the pure thinker, in other words, is so different from the problem of the practical statesman, that they are not likely to be solved by the same person. This, however, is evidently not the opinion of Mr. Balfour. He seems to think that the king may be philosopher, though perhaps he would be very loath to admit that the philosopher would make a good king. The fruit of this conviction is his work on the "Foundations of Belief", in which, finding the two main systems at present accepted by philosophers who speak the English tongue completely unsatisfactory, he proposes to start *de novo*, and to set up a "provisional philosophy", which, though it makes no claim to finality, will at least be more satisfactory than Naturalism or Idealism. Now, it is worth observing, that in thus taking upon himself the burden of construction

\*The Foundations of Belief: being notes introductory to the study of Theology. By The Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1895.

on an entirely new basis, Mr. Balfour has not shrunk from a task which to most of those who have devoted their lives to philosophy seems to be beyond the powers of any single man. Mr. Balfour no doubt proved himself a good king of Ireland, but he did not attempt to govern it by his own unaided powers. The art of government has been practised by Englishmen for centuries, and the statesman of the present day, though he has to face new problems, comes to them with all the advantages which result from the garnered practical wealth of ages. But, when Mr. Balfour adopts the role of philosopher, he casts aside all the results of past thought ; the speculations of the great thinkers of our race count in his estimation for nothing, and he attempts the audacious feat of trying to support the world on his own shoulders. That he has miscalculated his strength will not, I think, be difficult to show. The task which he has attempted is, in my opinion, impossible ; and doubly impossible for one whose main energies have been expended in a different region. Just as in the sphere of science, the man who makes discoveries is he whose mind is continually occupied with scientific questions, so it is unreasonable to expect that any real contribution should be made to philosophy by one who takes it up at odd moments as a relief from other labours. An amateur like Mr. Balfour may no doubt write a brilliant book—and no one will deny that Mr. Balfour's book is brilliant—, but it is pretty sure to be brilliant rather as an exhibition of skilful dialectic than as a solid contribution to the march of philosophic thought. In reading Mr. Balfour's pages one is continually struck by its cleverness and controversial ability : he is also struck, if he is familiar with the history of thought, with its one-sided statements of the theories controverted, and as a consequence with the inadequacy of its criticisms. Mr. Balfour has attacked Rationalism, Naturalism, and Idealism, and in no case has he attempted to explain why they have found adherents at all. His method of attack is controversial not historical, and all controversy of a purely negative character must be pronounced unsatisfactory. The only criticism of ideas which can be ultimately satisfactory is that which enters into them sympathetically, and shows that, when taken as ultimate, they contradict themselves. By following this method we do not virtually accuse past thinkers of a stupid and reprehensible blindness : we under-

stand both why certain ideas seemed to them satisfactory as an explanation of the world and why they must give place to other ideas which supersede by absorbing them in a wider synthesis. This historical method is the only one, as it seems to me, that we can now employ with any hope of success in formulating even a "provisional philosophy"; and Mr. Balfour, by falling back upon the controversial method, which may be effective enough in parliamentary debate, has secured beforehand that his philosophy shall be barren.

The main foe with whom Mr. Balfour tries a fall is Naturalism. Idealism, he fears, is not much more satisfactory, and Rationalism, as he is certain, is but a half-way house to Naturalism. Now it is significant that, in first treating of Naturalism, then of Idealism, and last of all of Rationalism Mr. Balfour has inverted the historical order. Rationalism is the creed of the eighteenth century deists, Idealism owes its origin to Kant and his successors, and Naturalism, as our author deals with it, is the philosophy of the scientific evolutionists who have combined the empiricism of Mill and his followers with an extension of the Darwinian theory of evolution to philosophical problems. Mr. Balfour follows this order of exposition for strategical reasons. The public he has in his eye is the average cultivated Englishman, who, as he knows, is only or mainly interested in philosophical problems because of their real or supposed practical influence; and hence he sees that, if he can create alarm in the minds of this class of readers, his victory will be almost won. Accordingly, the book opens with a criticism of Naturalism or Agnosticism; not, however, with an enquiry into its speculative basis, but with a picture of the serious practical consequences which must follow from its universal acceptance. What is the intrinsic value of this section of Mr. Balfour's book I shall afterwards consider; meantime, I merely point out that we have here in the order of exposition an exhibition of the author's method, which is to aim at telling and persuasive effects rather than to conduct an unimpassioned enquiry into the truth of the system of thought which he attacks. He is hardly less skilful in his treatment of Idealism. The reader is warned not to take this section of the book too seriously: Idealism is the creed of the philosophical expert, and can be understood only by those who

have had a special training; what is said about it may therefore be passed over without much loss. The ordinary reader is only too glad to escape from a region where, as he is assured, he will not feel at home; and, as he may be presumed to be now convinced by Mr. Balfour's able polemic against Naturalism that he is in safe hands, he gives the author credit for having demolished Idealism as well as Naturalism. Mr. Balfour is not leader of Her Majesty's government in the House of Commons for nothing. And the worst of it is, that a hasty reading of what Mr. Balfour is pleased to call the creed of Idealism is sure to leave in the ordinary reader's mind the conviction that its exponents must be a set of unpractical dreamers, who actually base their philosophy upon the absurdity that there is no other reality but a man's own ideas! If that is true, and Mr. Balfour assures him it is, he naturally concludes that Idealism may be safely set aside. When he comes to deal with Rationalism, Mr. Balfour has an easy task before him. The very name is associated in the popular mind with a denial of the supernatural, and therefore with a denial of those religious convictions which alone give sanctity to human life. And when the reader is assured that the rationalist is but a naturalist who wants the courage of his opinions, he is not hard to convince that the rationalist also has gone down before the vigorous lance of Mr. Balfour, and is breathing his last beside his brethren, the naturalist and the idealist. The successful champion has therefore the field to himself, and can now uplift the banner of the "provisional philosophy", secure of the sympathy of the ordinary reader. For that reader cannot but be comforted to learn that the new philosophy is one that from its familiarity immediately commands his sympathy; indeed, the only doubt which is now apt to arise in his mind, is whether Mr. Balfour can be right in calling by the name of philosophy a few fragments borrowed from popular theology. And if he has been disposed to find a certain comfort in recent historical criticism, which seemed to breathe new life into old abstractions, he must be rather taken aback to learn from Mr. Balfour that "the trail of the serpent is over it all"; for Mr. Balfour finds that the method of historical criticism is simply the method of naturalism applied to the sacred writings.

In what has been said I have had no intention of implying

that Mr. Balfour is not perfectly honest in all that he says, or that he has employed his dialectical skill with a conscious rhetorical end in view. That he is perfectly honest I am sure: he is fighting for the conservation of morality and religion, as he understands them, and he cannot be blamed for employing the weapons with which he is familiar and which he has found effective in another sphere. My point is, that from his whole training and habits of thought Mr. Balfour is unconsciously led to apply to the discussion of philosophical problems a method which is essentially inappropriate and subversive of every possible system of philosophy. He selects points of attack, instead of seeking to get at the substantial truth of the doctrines with which he disagrees, and he violates that historical method of investigation which is the only avenue to philosophical truth. I do not therefore propose to follow him in the order of exposition, which, for his own purposes, he has seen fit to adopt; I propose to consider the systems which he criticises in their historical order, and therefore I shall first examine what he has to say about Rationalism, next what he finds defective in Idealism, and then what he has to object to Naturalism. When these topics are disposed of, we may then go on to his peculiar view of Authority, and, lastly, to his own "provisional philosophy". These five topics—Rationalism, Idealism, Naturalism, Authority and the Provisional Philosophy—exhaust the contents of Mr. Balfour's book, apart from incidental remarks on the history of theological dogmas and on recent biblical criticism, and a discussion of naturalistic aesthetics, which is rather of the nature of an appendix than essential to the main argument.

#### I.—RATIONALISM.

Mr. Balfour prepares the way for his criticism of Rationalism by asking whether any of the great systems of philosophy of the past gives us a tenable theory of the universe. He of course decides that they do not, and he characteristically adds that we only go to them "for stray arguments on this or that question" (164). To go to them "for stray arguments" may be a very natural method of procedure in the parliamentary orator, but it is certainly not the method of philosophy. The arguments of the great philosophers "on this or that question" have no value whatever apart from the system of which they form a part, and if the sys-

tem has no value neither have the arguments. There is no more peniculous or more unenlightening method than to detach a particular problem from its place in a philosophical system, and to ask what is then its value. Philosophy is not a string of detached propositions, but an organic whole, and we can neither understand that great organism of human thought of which particular philosophies are partial expressions, nor one of its individual members as expressed in this or that system, if we break it up into parts, and treat these as if they had an independent meaning. This method, which I venture to call anachronistic, ignores the fact that each philosophy is the reflective crown and flower of the age in which it has birth. Take an illustration. Anselm put forward an argument for the existence of God, which since Kant's day is usually known as the Ontological argument. The idea of God, he said, is that of a Being than whom no greater can be conceived, and therefore it implies that God exists not only in our minds as an idea but as a real being. We read this argument in some history of philosophy, and we form a very poor idea of Anselm's logical faculty. How could any one, we naturally say, suppose that, because I have an idea of a perfect Being, and because my idea is of a Being who exists beyond my mind, therefore such a Being does exist beyond my mind? My idea of a hundred dollars, as Kant says, does not put a hundred dollars in my pocket. Now Anselm was by no means deficient in logical faculty: like other medieval thinkers he had a preternaturally keen logical faculty. Why, then, did an argument which seems so weak to us, appear so strong to him? We can only answer that question by putting ourselves at home with the whole point of view of the middle ages. We have to remember that to Anselm, living habitually in the region of the unseen and eternal, the existence of God was much more real than his own existence. For, as he thought, his own existence was contingent; the existence of God as the source of all reality including himself, was necessary. Did not God exist, *he* would have no existence and no ideas. Hence, finding in himself an idea of a Being than whom no greater could be conceived, he argued that the source of this as of all other ideas was God, and therefore that God was a real being. And surely Anselm is substantially right. Yet we cannot accept the argument as he states it, because we have become ac-



customed to the distinction between ideas in our mind and realities beyond our minds. The distinction, however, is one that will not bear the test of criticism, and ultimately we have to come back, not to Anselm's point of view, which is impossible for us, but to an analogous point of view, which is deeper and richer because it has passed through the crucible of doubt and come forth purified. Not to dwell too long upon this illustration, I think it may be said summarily, that Mr. Balfour's method of going to past thinkers for "stray arguments" is preposterous, unless he means, as he plainly does not, that we may find in them an outline of truth, which the growing insight of later thinkers has developed into a more rounded and more perfect form.

Let us return to Mr. Balfour. "We have at the present time," he tells us, "neither a satisfactory system of metaphysics nor a satisfactory theory of science" (171). Now, "faith may be provisionally defined as conviction apart from or in excess of proof." Hence, "it is upon faith that the maxims of daily life, not less than the loftiest creeds and the most far-reaching discoveries, must ultimately lean." If this be true, "we can no longer be content with the simple view, once universally accepted, that whenever any discrepancy, real or supposed, occurs between the two, science must be rejected as heretical; nor with the equally simple view, that every theological statement, if unsupported by science, is doubtful; if inconsistent with science, is false" (172). For these opinions "are evidently tolerable only on the hypothesis that we are in possession of a body of doctrine which is not only itself philosophically established, but to whose canons of proof all other doctrines are bound to conform" (172). But there is no such body of doctrine. "The determination to obtain consistency at all costs has been the prolific parent of many intellectual narrownesses and many frigid bigotries (173)." Now, Rationalism is a striking instance of the misuse of the Canon of Consistency. By Rationalism is meant "a special form of that reaction against dogmatic theology which may be said with sufficient accuracy to have taken its rise in the Renaissance, to have increased in force and volume during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and to have reached its most complete expression in the Naturalism of our own day (175). Rationalism consisted in the application, consciously or unconsciously, of one great

method to the decision of every controversy.....Did a belief square with a view of the universe based exclusively upon the prevalent mode of interpreting sense-perception? If so, it might survive. Did it clash with such a mode, or lie beyond it? It was superstitious; it was unscientific; it was ridiculous; it was incredible (178).” It is true that “the general body of rationalisers have been slow to see and reluctant to accept the full consequences of their own principles.” But the assumption that the kind of experience which gives us natural science is the sole basis of knowledge must logically end in Naturalism (179). It may be objected that Rationalism as it existed historically is not identical with Naturalism, but is an attempt to “run Modern Science and Theology together into a single coherent and self-sufficient system of thought, by the simple process of making science supply all the premises on which theological conclusions are afterwards based” (182). Theology is by it divided into Natural and Revealed, and both are based upon facts of the scientific order. “The logical burden of the entire theological structure is thrown upon the evidence for certain events which took place long ago, and principally in a small district to the east of the Mediterancan, the occurrence of which is sought to be proved by the ordinary methods of historical investigation” (185). But more than this is necessary. Such reasoning will not convince “a man trained on the strictest principles of Naturalism” (186). He will reply that “no explanation could be less satisfactory than one which required us, on the strength of three or four ancient documents .....to remodel and revolutionise every principle which governs us with an unquestioned jurisdiction in our judgment on the Universe at large.” “Is it not certain that the huge expanse of his theology, attached by so slender a tie to the main system .....will sooner or later have to be abandoned; and that the weak and artificial connection which has been so ingeniously contrived will snap at the first strain to which it shall be subjected by the forces either of criticism or sentiment (189)?”

It seems to me impossible to accept Mr. Balfour's definition of “faith” as “conviction apart from or in excess of proof.” Such a definition can be accepted only if by “proof” is meant arguments drawn from premises which rest upon a partial or limited view of reality. Thus, if proof is demanded of the exis-

tence of a Spiritual Principle in the universe, and the proof advanced starts from the absolute dualism of matter and mind, it is obvious that the conclusion cannot be legitimately reached. The true lesson from this is, that our starting point was false, and must be revised. All proof in fact consists, not in the formal process of drawing a conclusion from accepted premises—a method which obviously could never take us a step beyond the premises from which we start—but in a growing process of insight by which the preconceptions from which we start are transformed. Every inference thus gives in the conclusion something more and something different from what is contained in the premises. This view of inference has been practically recognised by all modern discoverers; and all philosophers of the first rank, from Descartes and Locke downwards, have more or less clearly denied that any genuine inference can be drawn by a syllogistic process. Thus Descartes remarks that the rules of formal logic, however valuable they may be in the exposition of truth already discovered, cannot in the least help us to discover new truth. And all recent treatises on logic clearly enunciate the principle, that inference is a process in which given data are transformed by the insight of reason. Mr. Balfour, however, is evidently still of opinion that proof consists in finding certain ultimate data, and from these deducing a conclusion. The whole notion of such data is absurd; for, obviously *ultimate* data cannot be transcended, or they would not be ultimate. Faith, then, as I maintain, can never consist in "conviction apart from or in excess of proof." If there is no proof, the so-called "faith" is a baseless hypothesis, and all such hypotheses are on precisely the same level. Thus, if the existence of a Spiritual Principle has no proof, it is a mere conjecture, and the opposite theory of a Material Principle as the explanation of the universe has the same value. On this view, indeed, all forms of religion are of equal value, *i.e.* they have none of them any rational basis whatever. Fetishism has the same degree of evidence as Polytheism, Pantheism as Monotheism. Mr. Balfour's definition of faith is thus simply a hardly-concealed universal scepticism. Nor is the case different, if we say that faith is "in excess of proof." For, what goes beyond proof has no rational basis, but is a mere unverified assumption. I maintain, then, that faith

rests upon proof, and draws its whole strength from proof, and that it is never either "apart from" or "in excess of" proof; but is a concise and accurate rendering of what is contained in the proof. No doubt we hold many things which we may not be able to set forth in precise terms, but proof does not depend upon absolute precision of statement, but upon mental cogency. The reason, as it seems to me, why the Christian faith has stronger claims to assent than other religions is just because the proof of it is stronger.

Having prepared the reader, by his definition of faith, for a loose and wavering application of the principle of reason,—the principle that what is self-contradictory cannot be true—Mr. Balfour goes on to say that we have no right to condemn science as heretical because it is discrepant from theology, or theology because it is discrepant from science; to do so is to be the victim of "intellectual narrowness" or "frigid bigotry." Now let us be perfectly clear as to what Mr. Balfour here means. If science contradicts theology, it is not to be pronounced "heretical." Is it not? If the theology is true, can the science contradict it without being false? If the theology is false, science must contradict it, if it is itself true? Why, then, does Mr. Balfour refuse us the right to condemn the false, and applaud the true? He does so, because, as his whole argument shows and his definition of faith implies, he believes that truth is not necessarily self-consistent. What we call truths of science are not truths but approximations to truth, and the same holds good of the truths of theology. Such a doctrine is manifestly pure scepticism. Will Mr. Balfour tell us how, after he has denied the principle of self-consistency, he can be sure that he is denying it? May it not be that, in the nebulous region of a "faith" that is "apart from, or in excess of proof," he is really *affirming* that principle? Nay, why may he not be both affirming and denying it 'in the same sense and at the same time', to use Aristotle's phraseology? We see now, I think, what comes of defining faith as Mr. Balfour does. What gives plausibility to Mr. Balfour's view is, that in a sense science and theology cannot contradict each other, because they never predicate about 'the same thing in the same sense.' When the scientific man affirms that the law of the conservation of energy admits of no exception,

his affirmation is in regard to a law which obtains between material masses, and material masses alone. If indeed the scientific man forgets or is unaware of the limitation within which the law is universally valid, and affirms that it is a law of all existence, mental as well as material, he will no doubt come into collision with theology. But, in my opinion, he will equally come into collision with science. For the scientific law is one in regard to the mode of action of masses of matter, and that law is contradicted if it is held to apply to mind, since in that case we should have an energy which never expresses itself. There is here, therefore, no contradiction between science and theology, but only a contradiction between a true scientific principle and a false theological or philosophical principle. Similarly, if the theologian affirms that there is a Spiritual Principle in the universe which is implied in all modes of existence, he does not contradict any principle of science. But, if he affirms that the solar system came into being all at once, and not by a gradual process of formation, he does contradict science, and his theology is so far false. But it is false, precisely for the same reason that the scientific man who says that the law of the conservation of energy applies to mind affirms what is false, viz: because it is contradictory, not merely of science, but of a true theology. A true theology must refer all modes of existence to a Spiritual Principle which is harmonious with their character, and a Spiritual Principle which is inconsistent with the process of formation of the solar system is a false hypothesis. There can, therefore, be no contradiction between science and theology, unless one or the other is false. Truth, in short, is a self-consistent whole: *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*, as Sir William Hamilton was fond of saying. When we cannot reconcile two propositions, both of which seem to us true, we may be certain that we are at a wrong point of view.

Mr. Balfour proceeds to apply his principle of faith and the compatibility of contradictories to Rationalism. The sin of Rationalism was in applying the method of science to religious ideas, and thus ignoring the difference of the two spheres. Now, it cannot be denied that the rationalists of the eighteenth century did tend to ignore the true limits of natural science, and the result was that they came to conceive of the universe as a cold,

dead, mechanical product, moved by cogs of wheels, as Goethe says, but destitute of the living Spirit of God. They did, also, as Mr. Balfour says, believe "the Universe to have been designed by a Deity for the same sort of reason that we believe Canterbury Cathedral to have been designed by an architect; and they came to believe in the events narrated in the Gospels for the same sort of reason that we believe in the murder of Thomas à Becket" (185). All this is true, and to anyone who has a genuine feeling for the complexity and spirituality of the universe Rationalism is most unlovely and repellent. But, after all, we must not treat Rationalism any more than other phases of the human spirit in an unsympathetic and unhistorical way. We may be perfectly certain that the good honest *bourgeois* rationalist of the eighteenth century, who prided himself on his "enlightenment" and his freedom from superstition could not quite divest himself of reason, though he did talk so much about it. In Germany the philosophical king of the Rationalists was Wolff, and it must be admitted that Wolff has a self-complacent dulness and imperviousness to ideas which it would be hard to match. Nevertheless, Wolff did not live in vain, nor did his kindred, the English deists, live in vain. Mr. Balfour finds that the end of them all is Naturalism, and Naturalism is for him the death of religion; yet he admits that their arguments, "as far as they go, are good." "The argument, or perhaps I should say *an* argument, from design, in some shape or other, will always have value; while the argument from history must always form a part of the evidence for any historical religion" (185). Now, if the rationalists, as our author admits, so far had their faces turned in the right direction, how can he say that they must, by following the path upon which they had entered, end in the abyss of Naturalism? Surely, they would rather have come to the sunlit heights had they but kept on! Mr. Balfour "cuts things in two with an axe." Rationalism must be either absolutely right, or absolutely wrong. It would be nearer the truth to say that it was both right and wrong. And why it came to be there facing both ways we may readily understand if we glance at its antecedents.

Rationalism, we are told, took its rise in the Renaissance. No doubt it did; but it also took its rise in the Reformation. When external authority and tradition were discarded as intoler-

able fetters on the human spirit, it was tacitly affirmed that in his own reason the individual can find support for all beliefs. But the Reformers, as we know, accepted very largely the traditional theology, itself an imperfect fusion of Christian ideas and dualistic forms of thought borrowed from later Greek philosophy. This acquiescence was inevitable, but it could not fail to have its fruits ultimately in a breach between reason and dogma. Now, the Renaissance, so far as it took a scientific form, was mainly a mathematical or mechanical theory of nature. Galileo, Kepler, Newton, were all occupied with the problem of determining the fixed relations in the way of quantity involved in the statical and dynamical aspects of the world. Thus we have, proceeding from the same principle, a religious and a scientific movement. But these two movements go on apart, and the representatives of the one have little sympathy for the representatives of the other. The party representing the theological interests, strong in their own religious experience, and unable to formulate it except in terms of a defective theology, were intolerant of criticism; and the representatives of science were either indifferent or hostile to a theology, which they felt instinctively to be irreconcilable with scientific truth. Now, Rationalism represents the partial triumph of the scientific or secular spirit, not over the religious spirit, which is invulnerable to its assault, but over the dogmatic theology borrowed from the past and associated with it. But Rationalism is not less, on the other side, a child of theology, *i.e.*, of that conception of an extra-mundane creator and artificer of the world which Protestant Theology to its loss borrowed from Scholasticism. Thus, our eighteenth century thinkers were partly the exponents of the scientific spirit, and partly of the dogmatic spirit; but between these they made no clear distinction, and the inevitable consequence was that the limitations of scientific theory were not observed, and hence the inadequacy of mechanical conceptions to express spiritual truths was not discerned. Nevertheless, the Rationalists did good service by preparing the way for a clear distinction between the laws of nature and the principle of religion, and they showed the necessity of bringing the contents of both into harmony with each other. It was in the attempt to secure this harmony that they employed the idea of final cause—no doubt in a very external and inadequate

way—and, though no real synthesis could be effected by their method, it is untrue and unhistorical to ignore either aspect of their doctrine. Naturalism, is therefore, to my mind, no more the end of Rationalism than Spiritualism, in the noble sense of that term; and it seems to me nothing less than perverse in a man of Mr. Balfour's culture to force every mode of thought except his own into the same Procrustean bed.

#### II.—IDEALISM.

Rationalism, as we have seen, was an inevitable stage in the evolution of modern thought, but it contained an unresolved contradiction, a solution of which was demanded. Such a solution was advanced in Germany by the great school of Idealists, whose systems arose in the further development of the critical philosophy of Kant, and in England by Coleridge and Carlyle, in an unsystematic way, and more recently by philosophical writers like the late Professor T. H. Green. Mr. Balfour, as usual, makes no attempt, in the section devoted to Idealism, to view it in its historical relations. That is not his way: his purpose is to show its untenability as a system of the universe, and therefore he attacks it as he would attack a political opponent in the House of Commons; and, as not unfrequently happens in such encounters, the picture he draws of his opponent is very different from what his opponent would draw of himself: so very different, indeed, that the latter would be apt to say that Mr. Balfour was a very poor painter, however successful he might be in unintentional caricature.

Idealism, as Mr. Balfour understands it, "reduces all experience to an experience of relations," or "constitutes the universe out of categories." Now, it is no doubt true that we cannot reduce the universe to "an unrelated chaos of impressions or sensations;" but, "must we not also grant that in all experience there is a refractory element which, though it cannot be presented in isolation, nevertheless refuses wholly to merge its being in a network of relations?" If so, whence does this irreducible element arise? The mind, we are told, is the source of relation. What is the source of that which is related? The "thing in itself" of Kant "raises more difficulties that it solves"; and, indeed, the followers of Kant themselves point out that this hypothetical



cause of that which is "given" in experience, cannot be known as a cause, or even as existing (144). But, "we do not get rid of the difficulty by getting rid of Kant's solution of it . . . and, indeed, it is hard to see how it is possible to conceive a universe in which nothing is to be permitted for the relations to subsist between. Relations surely imply a something which is related, and if that something is, in the absence of relations, nothing for us as thinking beings, so relations in the absence of that something are mere symbols emptied of their signification" (145). "Those, moreover, who hold that these all-constituting relations are the work of the mind, would seem bound also to hold that this concrete world of ours . . . must evolve itself *a priori* out of the movement of pure thought" (145). Again, Idealists, starting from the analysis of experience, arrive at the conclusion that the world of objects exists, and has a meaning only for the self-conscious 'I', and that the self-conscious 'I' only knows itself in contrast to the world of objects. "How, then, can we venture to say of one that the other is its product? Thus though the presence of a self-conscious principle may be necessary to constitute the universe, it cannot be considered as the creator of the universe; or if it be, then must we acknowledge that precisely in the same way and precisely to the same extent is the universe the creator of the self-conscious principle" (147).

So far Mr. Balfour in regard to the idealistic theory of knowledge. To that theory he objects; firstly, that conceptions or categories are relations, and imply something related, whereas Idealism admits nothing but relations, and therefore does not explain the world we know; secondly, these relations are purely the work of the mind, and from them the concrete world must be evolved by *a priori* construction; lastly, since the self-conscious subject has no meaning apart from the world, and the world no meaning apart from the self-conscious subject, the self-conscious principle cannot be the creator of the universe; or at least it is just as true that the universe is the creator of the self-conscious principle.

(1) Mr. Balfour's first objection is that Idealism resolves all knowable reality into relations of thought, and therefore involves the absurdity of relations with nothing to relate. This objection would undoubtedly be valid if it were true that Idealism resolved

the knowable world into relations or abstract conceptions. But it does nothing of the kind. Mr. Balfour has simply failed to grasp the meaning of the idealistic theory of thought or reason as the constitutive principle of all knowledge and all reality. What that theory maintains may perhaps be understood when it is stated somewhat thus. The sensationalist theory of knowledge reduces the whole contents of knowledge to individual units or feelings, all of which are separate and distinct from one another; and, having done so, it invents a peculiar mechanism of ideas, called "association," by which the individual units or feelings may seem to carry on the work of thought. Idealism denies that there are any such ultimate units or constituents of mind, and, as a consequence, it rejects the mechanical "association of ideas" as a device for plausibly explaining the connection of what is at first assumed to have no connection. It therefore maintains that in the very simplest phase of knowledge there is already involved the activity of the thinking subject, an activity which is not reducible to a number of unrelated units or a mechanical aggregate of such units, but implies a living, thinking, combining subject. The fiction of a "matter" of sense it rejects as an untenable hypothesis; for that fiction evidently rests upon the assumption of individual and unrelated units of feeling. When Idealism denies that there is any given "matter" of sense, it does not affirm that knowledge is reducible to abstract conceptions or categories: what it affirms is that the concrete content of knowledge exists only for a thinking or combining subject, and therefore that we cannot explain even the simplest phase of knowledge without taking into account both factors—the relating activity, and the determinate reality related. Mr. Balfour assumes that the denial of a given matter of sense is the same thing as the denial of all determinate reality. But the denial of the former by no means involves the denial of the latter. The thinking subject cannot have before him any object which exists for him as a known object without grasping it by thought, or interpreting his immediate feelings by reference to the idea, explicit or implicit, of a connected system of reality; but he does not create the object he interprets: he only grasps it as it really is. And Idealism maintains that the impossibility of having the consciousness of any object which cannot be combined with the consciousness of self, shows

that any object which cannot be so combined is a mere surd, the product of a false theory of knowledge. When the knowing subject sets aside all conjectures as to the nature of things and enquires into the actual nature of the knowable world, he discovers that it is a system, and is therefore intelligible or rational; and, though he is well aware that he has not a fully rounded knowledge of all that the real world involves, he is certain that, with a sufficient extension of knowledge, he would find it rational through and through. Perhaps what has been said will be sufficient to show that what Idealism denies is not that the world is concrete, but that it contains any irrational or unintelligible element. It is on this ground that the Idealist rejects any supposed matter of sense, *i.e.* a matter assumed to be absolutely opaque to a rational being.

(2) There will now be little difficulty in answering Mr. Balfour's second objection. Since the Idealist maintains that all reality can be resolved into conceptions, he must, objects Mr. Balfour, derive the world entirely from such conceptions, and therefore purely *a priori*. But the Idealist does not seek to derive the world from pure conceptions: what he maintains is that the whole concrete content of the world is essentially relative to and the manifestation of a Supreme Reason, and that the human subject, when he comes to apprehend the world as it really is, must ultimately come to the consciousness of this truth. At the same time it is possible to direct attention to the universal conceptions or relations of thought which form what may be called the soul or spirit of the real world, and so to make the whole system of such conceptions a special object of study. Such a study yields what may be called either Logic or Metaphysic, according as we consider these conceptions as activities of intelligence or as universal laws of reality. The value of such a study cannot be doubted by anyone who observes how many problems which perplex the human mind may be resolved by a clear perception of the relative value of a given conception in the determination of the true nature of reality. For example, the idea of causality is the category with which the scientific man habitually works. Every event or phenomenon he refers to its cause. Now, a critical examination of the conception so employed makes it manifest that what the scientific man is in all cases seeking to

discover are the special conditions of a given event. The event is assumed as a particular fact occurring in time; but the scientific man does not ask whether it could exist at all, were all intelligence banished from the universe. If therefore the conception of cause, as understood in scientific investigation, is employed to explain the whole nature of existence, obviously we must regard the world as simply a totality of events occurring in fixed ways, or under fixed conditions. Even mind must therefore be determined as a sum of events, and anyone may readily see that in this way all that is characteristic of mind will vanish. For a totality of events connected in fixed ways cannot know itself as a totality of events; and hence if we make an attempt to force mind into the frame of the causal relation, we get into innumerable difficulties, and are forced to go on inventing all sorts of hypotheses to cover over the fundamental contradiction of explaining how the sum of events can present the appearance of a self-active intelligence. This instance may help to explain why the Idealist attaches so much importance to the separate consideration of the conceptions by which the nature of the real world is made intelligible. These conceptions are just the framework which supports and gives meaning to reality: they are, so to speak, the articulations of intelligence. and it is no exaggeration to say that in firmly grasping them in their relation to one another, we are, in Kepler's phrase, "thinking the thoughts of God after him." For they are not peculiar, the Idealist maintains, to this or that man, nor to man as distinguished from God; but they are the universal forms of all intelligence, the manifestation of the very nature of the Supreme Intelligence, in whose image our intelligence is made. And these forms of intelligence are not derived by any abstract process of *a priori* deduction. No school of thought has insisted so strongly as Idealism upon the necessity of studying the development of the human spirit historically. It is only in the long and slow process of the ages, by the gradual growth of experience in all its phases, that we have become aware of the articulations of intelligence. For intelligence manifests its nature only in the application to concrete objects: it is always a unity, but it displays its own organism only in the gradual process by which that unity is specified. The development of human intelligence is precisely measured by the development of

knowledge, morality, art, and religion. As the world grows richer for man his intelligence becomes more complex; and the reason is that the world is the expression of a Supreme Intelligence, in the comprehension of which all spiritual life consists. But, though man thus gradually comes to know the nature of God, and therefore his own nature, this does not hinder the logician from disengaging the conceptions by which he has determined reality, making them a special object of investigation, and viewing them by reference to their place in the whole organism of thought. Thus reflecting upon the various modes by which the unity of all existence is specified, he is enabled to form a system of conceptions which expresses what the nature of intelligence is. From this system he does not attempt to deduce the concrete wealth of the actual world: he merely points out that the world must conform to the system of intelligence, for the reason that that system represents the modes of activity by which the world is unified. It is thus evident that the Idealist is not open to the charge of seeking to deduce the world from *a priori* ideas: he deduces nothing but the system of ideas itself, though he regards that system as an expression of the intelligence which he derives from and shares with God. To discover the nature of the world there is no method but the slow and gradual process by which science advances, and society develops.

(3) Mr. Balfour's last objection is that Idealism has no more right to maintain that the self-conscious principle creates the world than that the world creates the self-conscious principle. The objection is a very good instance of the importance of Logic as a criticism of the conceptions by which the real world is sought to be made intelligible. Mr. Balfour evidently starts from the separate existence of the world and the self-conscious intelligence, and then proceeds to ask which of them produces the other. In other words, he assumes that we can adequately conceive the relation of the world to the intelligence which makes it real by an application of the conception of causality. Now it has already been pointed out that the conception of causality is quite inadequate to the determination of the nature of intelligence, and it may now be shown similarly that it is equally inadequate to the determination of the relation between intelligence and the world. The world which is known to us has gradually

grown up by the exercise of our intelligence as interpreting particular experiences. But, because in the ordinary operations of the mind our interest is in the character of what is known, not in the conditions under which it is known, we come to suppose, naturally enough, that the world exists as an independent reality, which would be what it is even if there were no intelligence. It is only when we come to reflect that a self-dependent world—a world devoid of all relations to a spiritual principle—could never give rise to self-conscious beings, that we are forced to reconsider our first view, and to ask whether, apart from the spiritual principle, anything whatever could exist. When we do so reflect, we cannot help seeing, if we keep the problem clearly before our minds, that a non-spiritual principle can never explain a world in which there are spiritual beings. With this insight, we have to revise our first view of the world as a self-dependent reality, exclusive of intelligence, and to conceive of it as a world which exists only in dependence upon an intelligence. Now, when we have thus transformed our first naive conception of the world as a self-subsistent thing, there is no longer any meaning in asking whether intelligence creates the world, or the world creates intelligence. There is no world apart from intelligence, and therefore to ask whether intelligence creates the world is to ask whether intelligence creates itself. The only rational question we can ask is why we *distinguish* between intelligence and the world, not how intelligence *produces* the world. The former question admits of an intelligible answer, the latter does not. We distinguish between intelligence and the world, because we distinguish between the principle of unity and the manifestations of that unity. But we cannot separate intelligence from the world, because the world is just intelligence viewed in its concrete manifestations. Some such process as that by which a new view of the world is obtained is implied in all phases of the religious consciousness; and what Idealism does is merely to set forth explicitly the process which the religious consciousness unreflectively follows. If Mr. Balfour had only considered that the Divine Intelligence is manifested in the world, he would have seen that to ask whether either creates the other is to ask a question which cannot be answered, because it is unmeaning. There is no reality except intelligence, and hence it

cannot create a reality other than itself; and, on the other hand, the world cannot create intelligence, for this would mean that a nonentity created the one and only reality. The difficulty, therefore, which Mr. Balfour raises as fatal to Idealism is only fatal to his own assumption of an intelligence and a world which are regarded as two independent and separate existences, *i.e.*, as two universes having no relation to each other.

I shall not follow Mr. Balfour further in his criticism of Idealism. When a writer has not succeeded in apprehending the first principle of the doctrine he is assailing, his further criticisms are mere shooting in the air; and it is a thankless task to be pointing out over and over again that what he attacks does not affect the system to which he objects, but only his own misunderstanding of it. It will be more profitable to consider Mr. Balfour's criticism of Naturalism.

(Continued in next number.)

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#### SAINTE-BEUVE ON BALZAC.

I like his style in the finer parts—the efflorescence (I cannot find another word) by which he gives the feeling of life to everything, and makes the page itself thrill. But I cannot accept, under the cover of physiology, the continual abuse of that quality, the style so often unsteady and dissolvent, enervated, rosy and streaked with all colours, the style of a delicious corruption: Asiatic, as our masters said; in places more interrupted and more softened than the body of an ancient mime. From the midst of the scenes he describes does not Petronius somewhere regret what he calls *oratio pudica*, the modest style which does not abandon itself to the fluidity of every moment?

Another point on which I dwell in Balzac as physiologist and anatomist, is that he at least imagined as much as he observed. A fine anatomist morally, he certainly discovered new veins; he found, and as it were injected, lymphducts, till then unperceived, and he also invented them. There is a point in his analysis when the real and actual plexus ends and the illusory plexus begins, and he does not distinguish between the two. The greater part of his readers, especially of his lady readers, confused them as he did. This is not the place to insist on those points of separation. But it is known that Balzac had an avowed weakness for the Swedenborgs, Van Helmonts, Mesmers, Saint Germain, and Cagliostros of all sorts—that is to say, he was subject to illusion. In short, to carry out my physical and anatomical metaphor, I shall say, when he holds the carotid artery of his subject, he injects it at bottom with firmness and vigour; but when he is at fault he injects all the same, and always produces, creating, without quite perceiving it, an imaginary net-work.

## THE BOOK OF JONAH.

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THREE views have been maintained by commentators regarding this book, with all possible gradations between, to say nothing as to the view which would make it a mystic mosaic. It has been treated as pure fable; as allegory with an historic basis; as a veritable history. When treated as history pure and simple, as *e.g.* by the late Dr. Eadie in Kitto's Cyclopædia, the strained and apologetic manner of the article testifies to the difficulty felt in thus accepting the writing. The pointed allusion of our Saviour (Matt. xii. 40) to the prophet is confessedly the strongest argument used in support of the literalness of the narrative, though the manifestly parabolic character of very much of the Saviour's teaching does not justify the pressing unduly of that allusion in favour of a purely historical character. We do not purpose in this essay to discuss the views alluded to, or to formally comment upon the narrative; but to present certain considerations, which may form a theory as to the real character of this—to us—most marvellous teaching of the Old Testament Canon.

Let this be premised. The divine inspiration of the book is in no way affected by the view we may take of the form assumed in the delivery of the divine message. Christ taught by parable; the psalmist praised in allegory (*e.g.* Ps. lxxx. 8-16); prophets denounced and encouraged by visions; (Ezek. viii., ix.; Zech. i., ii., etc.) there is surely no irreverence in enquiring whether instruction may not be given in the form of "a tale that is told."

The Orient is emphatically the land of tales; and the tale-teller even now has not forsaken the bazaar and market-places of those eastern lands. Like to the old Celtic bards and Saxon ballad singers they formed a recognized order in social life; only we must not confound the tale with folk-lore, which the rather deals with traditions, beliefs and customs, appealing more to national sentiment and heroic purpose. The tale on the other hand was characteristically entertaining, character sketching, individual and domestic rather than heroic or national. A writer



quoted in *Encyclopædia Britannica* says: "The ancient Persians were the first to invent tales, and make books of them, and some of their tales were put in the mouth of animals. The Arhghanians, or third dynasty of Persian kings, and after them the Sasanians, had a special part in the development of this literature, which found Arabic translators, and was taken up by accomplished literati, who edited it and imitated it." There are indications that the book of Esther in the form in which it appears in our Hebrew Bible owes much to Persian sources, and may be as the book we are noticing, best interpreted from the same stand point. In that collection of wonders which delighted our early years "The Thousand and One Nights," we have a modernized illustration of the popularity of tales which point to other and far more ancient sources than the purely Arabian and Mohammedan form in which they appear to us. Our coldly practical temper can little understand the imaginative fervour of the Orient, fortunately we are finding access to its inner spirit ere under the disintegrating power of the nineteenth century civilization it passes utterly away. Now it appears to me that the Spirit of Christ which testified through the prophets was as likely to use the tale for the purpose of divine revelation as the parable, the allegory, or the symbol; and if we apply this suggestion to the book of Jonah we may at once set to work to discern its teaching without perplexing ourselves about historical accuracy or in apologising for its strangely miraculous events. We read it as a tale with a divine message. Not that the miraculous is considered by the writer as a stumbling block, he who accepts the raising up from the dead of Lazarus, or the still more stupendous miracle of the Saviour's resurrection and session at the Father's right hand, has no need of searching records of natural history for parallels to the fish that swallowed Jonah. A miracle is not to be explained by our ordinary observation of the laws of nature. Its very character puts it outside the region of our experience and observation; when brought within that sphere its specific character as miracle ceases. There is however—if we may adapt a musical term to a writing—a timbre or tone-color in this record that distinguishes it from pure narrative. The already noticed apologetic tone in which the most literal commentators treat the prophecy is an unconscious testimony to this peculiarity. Who would mistake, even when

sounding the same note, a tenor for a treble voice? Can we say unreservedly that the book of Jonah strikes the historic tone? Is there not about it the verisimilitude of the tale?

If these questions should be provisionally answered in the affirmative, it remains for us to enquire into the special teaching of the book, for we may be assured of this, if a divine revelation, it has more than entertainment for us; and it may be that rightly divining the message may add strength to the method of interpretation that would read it as a divinely told tale. Is there such a manifest revelation in the narrative as to justify the tale being told and embodied in the volume of Scriptures? Any "instruction in righteousness" therein?

The answer is not difficult, nor far to seek. There is no reason for doubting the identity of the prophet with the Jonah of II Kings xiv. 25. nor that the prophet pens his own message. Indeed, in the absence of any contrary proof we accept those positions without reserve. The division of chapters in our version may be taken as properly the quadruple division of the book, and chap iv. as the climacteric teaching, and that teaching may be summed up in the words of the late Dean Stanley:—"It is the rare protest of theology against the excess of theology—it is the faithful delineation, through all its various states, of the dark, sinister, selfish side of even great religious teachers. It is the grand Biblical appeal to the common instincts of humanity, and to the universal love of God, against the narrow dogmatism of sectarian polemics. There has never been a generation which has not needed the majestic revelation of sternness and charity, each bestowed where most deserved and where least expected in the sign of the prophet Jonah."

The prophet's soul was filled with a message for those outside "the covenant of promise"; there was in his heart as it were a burning fire shut up in his bones, he was weary with forbearing, but that deep national prejudice which in after years and under brighter skies so antagonized Paul and dogged him to the death, made a recreant and coward of the prophet; he tried to escape from the unpleasant duty even as Peter when Paul withstood him to the face, the deep compassed his soul, nevertheless as Goethe has it:—

“ A good man, through obscurest aspiration  
Has still an instinct of the one true way.”

He cries unto the Lord and resolves “ I will pay that which I vowed,” and emerges from the very “ belly of sheol ” to declare that :—

“ The love of God is broader than the measure of man’s mind ;  
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.”—

In this form the prophecy is a prevision of “ the dispensation of the mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.” Whoever reads sympathetically Paul’s glowing faith in the dogmatic chapters of Ephesians will feel that the question of historic accuracy has no more to do in illustrating the revelation of God in Jonah than a tenth magnitude star has in giving light to the earth at noon-day. It was a declaration amidst strictly Jewish surroundings that “ in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him.” A lesson so thoroughly superhuman, that we, under eighteen centuries of Gospel teaching, are but beginning to learn its breadth and its glow.

JOHN BURTON.

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### HUME AND ROUSSEAU.

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I.....hinted that I was convinced he (Hume) must be perfectly happy in his new friend, as their religious opinions were, I believed, nearly similar. “ Why no, man,” said he, “ in that you are mistaken. Rousseau is not what you think him. He has a hankering after the Bible, and, indeed, is little better than a Christian, in a way of his own!”—*Jeffrey’s Essay on Lord Charlemont.*

## BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION.

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THE wonderful advance of scientific discovery during the present century is nowhere more conspicuous than in the domain of botanic investigation, and nowhere have more valuable results rewarded the labors of persevering students. In the sixteenth century, theoretic Botany consisted of a strange combination of *a priori* principles derived from the philosophy of Aristotle—superstitious fancies and wonderful medical prescriptions. The huge tomes which have escaped the ravages of time, and embrace the botanic knowledge of the century, are as remarkable for their poverty of thought, as for the unwearied diligence of their authors in striving to identify the plants of Germany with those mentioned in the corrupt texts of Theophrastus, Dioscorides, Pliny, and Galen, and in collecting the medical superstitions of the earlier centuries. The idea prevailed that the plants described by the ancient Greek physicians must grow throughout Europe, and as each writer identified a different plant with some mentioned by Dioscorides or Theophrastus, the confusion of nomenclature that ensued became exceedingly perplexing, and earnest searchers after botanic knowledge were, at length, compelled to abandon the fanciful and often unintelligible descriptions of their predecessors, and to go directly to nature to collect and describe the plants growing around them. Carefully executed woodcuts were also produced and the means for identification secured. A long step in advance was made when the fanciful figures and superstitious fictions of the "Hortus Sanitatis" (Garden of Health)—the great repository of the popular knowledge of Natural History about 1500—were quietly ignored, and men looked to nature for their facts and for models for their figures. No scientific investigations respecting the nature of plants—their peculiar organization, or their mutual relations were indulged in; the only object aimed at being the identification of individual forms and the discovery of their medicinal properties. But much was gained when students began to look at plants with open eyes and to derive pleasure from the contemplation of their variety and beauty.

Careful examination of single forms gradually led to the perception of unsought-for truths; and points of resemblance between different plants, which had no relation to their medicinal powers, gradually forced themselves upon the thoughtful mind. The perception of natural affinities awakened an undefined feeling that plants existed in groups, such as Mosses, Ferns, Grasses, Coniferæ, just as the groups of mammals, birds, reptiles, fishes, and worms existed in the animal kingdom. The relationship was instinctively felt, but all enquiry as to its cause was unthought of and left for after generations to discover. The establishment of Botanic gardens in the sixteenth century, and the collection of specimens for the formation of herbaria, contributed largely to increase the knowledge of plants.

The scientific value of the work performed in this century consisted in the accurate description, by each botanist, of the individual plants which attracted his notice within the range of his observations in his native land. Later writers endeavored to gather up all the information that existed into a systematic form, including not only all the plants they had themselves examined, but also all described by others. Each systematist gave a universal character to his work, but its special value depended upon the accuracy and extent of his own personal observations, rather than upon what he derived from the accumulations of his predecessors.

The desire to discover and describe new and hitherto unknown plants acted as a powerful incentive to field work, and the number of new forms described, rapidly increased. Sachs informs us (*History of Botany*) that in 1542, Fuchs had described and figured about five hundred species, but "in 1623, the number of species enumerated by Kaspar Bauhin had risen to 6000." Botanists travelled over a large part of Germany, into Italy, along the Rhine, and even into the mountains of Spain, collecting and describing the flora of the regions through which they passed. Many valuable facts were accumulated, the art of description greatly improved, but no botanical terminology and no scientific method of separating the different members of plants and depicting their characters had yet been discovered or invented.

The work of systematic classification can scarcely be said to

have begun till the seventeenth century. The first attempts were exceedingly rude. The division of plants into trees, shrubs, undershrubs, and herbs, which had been handed down from the ancients was universally employed. Trees were regarded as the most perfect plants. The flower and fruit had not been examined with sufficient care to discover their value for purposes of classification, and the idea of species as distinct from genera or families is a refinement of later times. All attempts at a natural system of classification were retarded by the existence of two opposing and irreconcilable principles which struggled for supremacy. While the Botanists of Germany and the Netherlands indistinctly felt the existence of a natural affinity which they attempted to express in their classifications, Cesalpino and his followers, deeply versed in the doctrines of Aristotle, and imbued with the subtleties of the schoolmen, sought a distribution of the vegetable kingdom into groups and sub-groups which would accord with Aristotelian conceptions and satisfy the philosophic understanding. That these two elements were entirely incommensurable was strongly expressed in the fifteen different systems, including that of Linnaeus (1736), that were elaborated to embrace the whole vegetable kingdom. The different organs of the plant, such as, the root, calyx, corolla, fruit and others, were adopted as the fundamental element upon which to rear a classification upon philosophic principles. Linnaeus clearly saw the difficulty resulting from the existence of these two elements, and distinctly stated that a natural system of plants existed, but that the limits of groups could not be fixed by pre-determined marks. He succeeded in forming a list of sixty-five natural families or orders, without however, clearly defining their limits. But the idea of a common type lying at the basis of each group, from which all the species included in it might be derived, was now recognized, and became a guiding principle in all future systematic work.

Lengthy discussions on the seat of the soul in plants, and its powers or properties, cumber the volumes of the old Botanists, down to the last century. A single extract from Cesalpino, the most philosophic and learned botanist of his time, may interest the reader. "Whether any one part in plants can be assigned as the seat of the soul, such as the heart in animals, is a matter for consideration—for since the soul is the active principle of the

organic body, it can neither be 'tota in toto' nor 'tota in singulis partibus'; but entirely in some one and chief part, from which life is distributed to the other dependent parts. If the function of the root is to draw food from the earth, and of the stem to bear the seeds, and the two cannot exchange functions, so that the root should bear seeds and the shoot penetrate into the earth, there must either be two souls different in kind and separate in place, the one residing in the root, the other in the shoot, or there must be only one, which supplies both with their peculiar capabilities. But that there are not two souls of different kinds and in a different part of each plant, may be argued thus; we often see a root cut off from a plant send forth a shoot, and in like manner a branch cut off send a root into the ground, as though there were a soul indivisible in its kind present in both parts. But this would seem to show that the whole soul is present in both parts, and that it is wholly in the whole plant, if there were not this objection that, as we find in many cases, the capabilities are distributed between the two parts in such a way that the shoot, though buried in the ground, never sends out roots, for example in Pine and Fir, in which plants also the roots that are cut off perish." Thus he proves the existence of only one soul in root and stem. (Sachs, History of Botany.)

The progress of Science based upon experiment during the last century gradually displaced this learned trifling; we now find it difficult to believe that it ever existed.

During the last century, while the doctrine of natural affinity was becoming more and more impressed upon the minds of investigators as a true guide for the classification of organic objects, "the fact of affinity became itself more unintelligible and mysterious." The belief in the fixity of species, adopted and explained by Linnaeus, became an article of faith among men of science and theologians. Every species of organism was believed to owe its existence to a special creative act. Hence all attempts to explain natural affinity or relationship, only involved it in deeper mystery. Systematists were unable to resist the feeling that affinity existed, but what could it mean in the presence of the belief of an absolute difference of origin in species? Subtle intellects found a philosophic justification for holding both doctrines by misinterpreting Plato's doctrine of ideas. But thoughtful

workers felt compelled to doubt the truth of their own acknowledged principles. They followed the guidance of affinity in the prosecution of their work, but felt the impossibility of giving a scientific definition of it whilst they held to the constancy of species.

This condition of things had existed for more than a century when Darwin's "Origin of Species" appeared (1859). He showed from a vast accumulation of facts, many of them long well-known, that the belief in the fixity of species was not based upon accurate and careful observation, but was rather opposed to it. Natural affinity was now defined and its origin explained. A new light dawned upon the work of the Systematist. Affinity is now recognized as a true (genetic) blood-relationship. The natural system of classification expresses "the different degrees of derivation of the varying progeny of common parents," and is "a table of the pedigree of the vegetable kingdom. Here was the solution of the ancient problem."

The two following principles are now universally adopted as the basis of Natural Classification in both the vegetable and animal kingdoms:—I. The things classified are arranged (Huxley, *Anat. Invert.* p. 23) according to the totality of their morphological resemblances, and the features which are taken as the marks of groups are those which have been ascertained by observation to be the indications of many likenesses and unlikenesses. The Classification is thus a statement of the marks of similarity of organization; of the kinds of structure, which as a matter of experience are found universally associated. II. Not only the adult characters of living objects are taken into account, but their embryonic characters are regarded as of equal importance. We must know the differences and resemblances between full grown plants, and also the differences and resemblances between them during the period of their embryonic life, and the successive stages of their whole existence. In other words, we must know all the characters presented by each organism during its whole life.

A Classification based upon these principles will express genetic relation, that is, the genealogy of plants or animals, as far as can be ascertained by present methods of investigation.

J. FOWLER.



## “CHRISTIANITY’S MILLSTONE”—A REJOINER.

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DR. GOLDWIN SMITH’S article in the December issue of the *North American Review* will be regarded by mere railers at the Bible as a sufficiently sweeping arraignment of the morality and historical truthfulness of the Old Testament. Yet the most uncompromising believer in the supernatural character of the Old Testament cannot but recognize that Dr. Smith himself is no railer, and that his article is a sincere and reverent effort at setting Christianity free from a burden, in Dr. Smith’s opinion, too heavy for it to bear.

The difficulties which have to be faced by those who uphold the inspiration of the Old Testament are no doubt formidable,—both the ethical and historical. Many of us, however, who have discarded the theory of verbal inspiration or “inerrancy” do not feel it necessary or justifiable to rush to the other extreme and peremptorily settle a vexed question by denying to the Old Testament any inspiration. A final determination of the exact value of all the books which make up the literature known as the Old Testament may not be possible for this age. The Higher Criticism and archaeological research of this generation are, probably, Moses-like, guiding to a truer theory and interpretation of that literature than this generation will attain. Some general conclusions, however, are possible to us which further knowledge will only make surer and more definite. And these I do not think Dr. Smith has stated.

My aim then in this article is not to define inspiration, nor to attempt to justify all those statements and teachings of the Old Testament which Dr. Smith believes to be incompatible with a supernatural origin. I think indeed that Dr. Smith’s attitude to many of these is that of a special pleader and not of a judge, and that many of them have been shown to be susceptible of a very different interpretation from that given in his article. But my aim is merely to show, and partly from Dr. Smith’s own admissions, that there is a uniqueness in the history of the Hebrew people which can only be reasonably attributed to a special super-

natural guidance; and that the Old Testament literature is so bound up with the history of that people that it cannot be denied a share in this unique character.

Dr. Smith recognises the ascent of the Hebrew people from polytheism and idolatry to "monotheism of an eminently pure and exalted type," and he further declares this ascent to be "a historical mystery."

That is a large admission, and deserves to be considered.

This religious development is certainly a unique fact. There is no other instance known to us of a nation rising of itself from polytheistic idolatry to a pure and controlling monotheism, Mohammedanism being of course only an offshoot from Judaism and Christianity.

The Vedantic faith of India seems to have undergone a development the reverse of what took place among the Hebrews, in its earliest forms approximating to monotheism. The monotheists of the Brahmo-Somaj claim that in protesting against the polytheism of the current Brahminism they are reviving the primitive faith.

Greek and Roman polytheism underwent, it is true, a purifying process, but the purifying process was at the same time an evaporating one. The old beliefs were undermined by a philosophic scepticism which discarded all religion, and by an ethical development which somehow never secured any practical control of the people. In short, the philosophical and ethical speculation that purified the earlier grosser religion killed it, and the remarkable fact came about that when the ethical and religious thought of the Greco-Roman world was at its highest, the current morality was at its lowest.

How comes it that only among the Hebrews does "a pure and elevated monotheism" win its way to complete popular ascendancy? There does not seem to have been in them any inherent tendency to monotheism. In their earlier history they are continually falling back again into idolatry. One of their prophets, even in so late an age as the one preceding the Babylonish captivity, arraigns them as of all nations the most unsteadfast in their religious loyalty.

And yet a wayward and intractable people steadily wins its way upward. Ever nobler conceptions of God appear and pre-

vail. A people that took up new idolatries, as the fashionable world of today takes up fashions and fads, becomes fiercely intolerant of every suggestion of idolatry. What other pre-Christian people can measure in its history the difference between the Hebrews who danced before the golden calf and in the days of the kingdom followed after Baal and Ashtoreth and Chemosh, and the Hebrews after the bitter discipline of the Babylonish exile, when the central principle and the rallying point of the nation was a stern and passionate abhorrence of idolatry! Let the heroic struggle of the Maccabees bear witness to a hatred of idolatry shown by no other people.

Let two scenes from Josephus also bear witness. During the procuratorship of Pilate the winter quarters of the Roman army were transferred from Caesarea to Jerusalem, and a collision instantly occurred. The Roman standards—images of the emperor and of the eagle—had been hitherto kept out of the city, and on this occasion Pilate had sent them in by night. But when the people discovered what had been done they rose in fury, and pouring down in crowds to Caesarea, where Pilate was then residing, besought him to remove the images. After five days of discussion the procurator gave the signal to some concealed soldiers to surround the petitioners and to put them to death unless they ceased to trouble him; but they declared themselves ready to submit to death rather than to cease their resistance to an idolatrous innovation. Pilate was constrained to yield, and by his orders the standards were brought down to Caesarea. (*Josephus, Ant. xviii. 3 § 1.*)

The spirit of the people was again displayed when Caligula, enforcing the worship of himself through the empire, issued an edict for the dedication of the Temple at Jerusalem to himself and for the erection of a colossal statue of himself in the Holy of Holies; and further directed that two legions should be withdrawn, if necessary, from the Euphrates to put down resistance. No sooner had the Jews, through the prefect Petronius, become aware of the emperor's purpose than without distinction of rank, age, or sex, they flocked unarmed in thousands to Ptolemais to let the prefect know that they dreaded the wrath of God more than that of the emperor. When Petronius removed to Tiberias the like scene was repeated. For forty days the people remained

as suppliants before the prefect, neglecting the season for sowing till he became fearful of a famine, and postponed the work till he had further orders from Rome. During the interval the influence of Agrippa with the emperor procured a revocation of the edict. (*Josephus, Ant. xviii. 8.*)

Polygamous idolators, the Hebrews grew out of polygamy, out of idolatry, out of sensuous ritualistic conceptions of worship into the noble ideal which Micah sets forth in that still timely passage in which ritual and sacrifice are declared to be inferior to justice, mercy and humility. (*Micah vi. 6-8.*)

The Hebrews still stand as representatives of spirituality. No other sacred literature of antiquity furnishes us with manuals of devotion like the Psalms and the Prophecies. "Marvellous, too," as Robertson of Brighton finely says (*Lectures on the Epistles to the Corinthians, Lect. xxxii.*) "was the combination in the Hebrews of the Asiatic veneration—of religious awe and contemplation—with the stern moral sense which belongs to the more northern nations. You will find among Hindoos a sense of the invisible as strong, and among the German family of nations an integrity as severe, but nowhere will you find the two so united as in the history of the chosen people."

They reached a conception of the glory and greatness and holiness of God unsurpassed since, to which Christ could only add a tenderness and nearness. "We owe to the Semitic race," says Renan in his lecture on *The Share of the Semitic People in the History of Civilisation*, "neither political life, art, poetry, philosophy, nor science. We owe to them religion. The whole world—we except India, China, Japan, and tribes altogether savage—has adopted the Semitic religions."

The religious development of the Hebrew people was closely connected with the prophetic order, another unique feature in their history. On it I need not dwell. Dr. Smith has pointed out its remarkableness. He says: "But we shall hardly find anywhere a moral force equal in intensity to that of the Hebrew prophets, narrowly local and national though their preaching is." I think we are justified in substituting "nowhere" for "hardly anywhere." Moreover, to complain that the prophets were "local and national" is to blame them for not being Christian before Christianity had appeared.

After a discussion of the prophetic and priestly offices in Chap. V. of *Physics and Politics*, Walter Bagehot continues: “But the peculiarity of Judea—a peculiarity which I do not pretend for a moment that I can explain—is that the prophetic revelations are, taken as a whole, indisputably improvements; that they contain, as time goes on, at each succeeding epoch higher and better views of religion.”

Here confronts us then this fact—a religious progress not paralleled in the history of nations. Theirs is a history of moral decay, China excepted, and hers is a history of petrification. How came it that Israel pressed on, while other races fell back or stood still? As idolatrous, savage and sensuous as their neighbors, again and again falling back, yet lifted on and up as it were in spite of themselves. “The religion of the Bible,” says Newman Smyth, “makes head against the natural gravitation of Israelitish history.” (*Old Faiths in a New Light*, Ch. II.)

So a tree lifts itself up in defiance of gravitation, but a stone does not. In comparison with the stone there is in the tree a supernatural force.

Dr. Smith is content to call this development “a historical mystery.” Till a more positive solution is given, others will see in it God, and will assent to the claim of the author of Deuteronomy, who charges the people to keep the statutes and judgments of Jehovah, “for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?”

When in England the hedges are all abloom, and from countless larks lost in the blue music is raining on the lush grass of the meadows, Labrador still lies wrapped in winter’s shroud, the ice in her bays unbroken, and the dreary flocs drifting down past her desolate coast. Yet, Labrador and England stretch between the same parallels of latitude. To one who ignored the Gulf stream the difference would be “a climatic mystery.” As clearly as the British isles show the influence of that strange river in the ocean,

does the religious development of Israel show the working of a Gulf stream of divine influence. The exact nature and limits of that influence we may not yet be able to determine, but we can well accept the statement of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that God did "in sundry parts and in divers manners" speak unto the people "in the prophets."

Max Muller discusses the question how the Hebrews first obtained and so persistently clung to their peculiar monotheistic belief. After examining and dismissing various natural explanations, he concludes: "If we are asked how it was that Abraham possessed not only the primitive conception of the divinity as He had revealed Himself to all mankind, but passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the One God, we are content to answer that it was by a special divine revelation." (*Chips From a German Workshop*, I., p. 372.)

So the question whether God is in any special way revealed in the Old Testament is inseparably bound up with another question, whether God is in any special way revealed in the history of Israel—and that is a question much more difficult to answer in the negative. Whether or not the Old Testament has anything of the nature of a miracle in it, Jewish history has. And if it be clear that there was a supernatural element in Hebrew history, it is not so difficult to see a supernatural element in the Hebrew scriptures, which are in relation to Hebrew development at once a result and a cause.

So when men have fully ventilated the "Mistakes of Moses," waxed righteously indignant over the wars of the Hebrews and the stern commands of the Mosaic code, they have only severed side-roots of the divine character of the Bible. The tap-root is untouched. Newman Smyth rightly characterises such discussion as "the small dust of biblical criticism," and compares the one who "throws it in our faces and then asks us what has become of the Word of God" to the man "who should toss a spadeful of sand, scraped from the surface of the rock, into the air, and ask, as we rub our eyes, what has become of the world." (*Old Faiths in a New Light*, Chap. II.)

But the supernatural character of the Old Testament is established not only in its vital and inseparable connection with the supernatural development of Israel, but in its vital and inseparable

able connection with the New Testament and Christianity. I assume here a divine Christ and an inspired New Testament. I am attempting to defend the supernatural element in the Old Testament only. When the inspiration of the New Testament is denied, it is obviously a waste of effort to try to establish that of the Old. And when the supernaturalness of Jesus of Nazareth is not recognised, it is of little use to try to vindicate any supernaturalness in the writings of His apostles. The supernaturalness of Jesus is at once the most essential doctrine of Christianity and the most defensible. But mine is the limited and subordinate work of trying to show that Christianity need not repudiate the Old Testament.

It not only need not but cannot. The New and the Old Testaments are inseparable. The roots of the one run down into the other. The one is inexplicable without the other. It is impossible to separate the historical Christ from the Messianic hope.

This hope Dr. Smith dismisses in a paragraph. “The Evangelists, simple-minded, find in the sacred books of their nation prognostications of the character and mission of Jesus. . . . No real and specific prediction of the advent of Jesus, or of any event in his life, can be produced from the books of the Old Testament. At most we find passages or phrases which are capable of a spiritual application, and in that metaphorical sense, prophetic, etc.”

That is surely an extraordinary way of dismissing the most remarkable feature in Israel’s national life. The Jews of our Lord’s day seem to have thought that the Old Testament scriptures revealed clearly enough that a descendant of David was to be born in Bethlehem who was to attain dominion over all the world. (Matt. II., 4-6; XXII., 41-42. John VI., 14-15; VII., 41-42.)

But apart from specific predictions, how explain the forward look of the Hebrew people, an expectation of future dominion and glory, unaccountable in so insignificant a people, and still more unaccountable in any natural way in its fulfilment in the increasing ascendancy of the Jew, Jesus of Nazareth? That hope runs through the Old Testament like a spinal cord. Through centuries of national decay it shines with a steadfast light. Only

among a people fashioned by the Old Testament could Jesus Christ have appeared. Only such a people could have furnished him with his apostles. The Old Testament is the husk in which Christianity grew to ripeness. If the one be supernatural, so, though not necessarily in the same degree, must be the other. The Old Testament is not the millstone of Christianity, but the foundation of it. It contains Christianity in the germ. To recognise the supernatural in Christianity (as I assume Dr. Smith does or he might as well let it sink with the Old Testament) and to deny it in the history of the people from which Christianity sprang and in the literature which made that people what it was, is to ignore the Christianity of history.

These considerations are not a detailed reply to Dr. Smith's criticisms of the Old Testament, but when they are fully considered they make much of such criticism superficial. And familiarity with the divine method of development in nature and in human history makes much of such criticism not only superficial but out-of-place. Nothing ever appears ready made. Everything grows. The advance is from the imperfect and the rude. To deny that the God of the New Testament had anything to do with the Old Testament is as reasonable as to deny that the God who made man had anything to do with the creation of those

"dragons of the prime  
That tare each other in their slime."

The mesozoic world was certainly very unlike the world of to-day, but it was the indispensable forerunner of it.

The Old Testament is the record of the education of a race. The world has been made in stages. We need not wonder that the moral education of the race has proceeded in stages also. Children and child-races have many foolish and disagreeable ways. We do not expect polished manners in a healthy, vigorous schoolboy, nor have we even equal right to expect a perfect morality in the primitive Hebrews. Child races have to be taught as children in child fashion. They cannot learn everything at once. The teacher must for a time tolerate many faults. He must give teaching in a form which would be harmful or ridiculous if used to more advanced pupils. Much of the teaching will have only a temporary value. No one who accepts Paul



or the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews as his teacher need deny that “there is a disannulling of a foregoing commandment, because of its weakness and unprofitableness.”

The Old Testament did the rough-hewing of the Hebrew people. And the rough-hewing is not the same as the finishing process. The first business of a moral teacher in old Fiji was not to teach his pupils not to put their knives in their mouths when eating, but not to put shipwrecked sailors there. Humanity first, then etiquette. Long ago in his *Confessions*, St. Augustine observed that “Sins of men, who are on the whole making proficiency, which by these that judge rightly are blamed after the rule of perfection, are nevertheless commended in the hope of future fruit, as is the green blade from which the growing corn is looked for.”

Indians do not object to the wars of Joshua. The most refined and highly civilised Romans objected strongly to the Cross, but not to the imperfect morality, the polygamy, the slavery of the Old Testament. Only in Bible-saturated lands is the Bible criticised. It has itself created the light by which it is judged. The ethical objections urged against the Bible to-day are the most convincing proof that the Bible has succeeded. And now that the race has slowly climbed up out of savagery by the help of the Old Testament, some members of it would kick down the ladder by which it has ascended.

We have seen children reared in all the advantages of wealth, somewhat ashamed of their rough-handed, unschooled father, who could not admire Wagner nor understand Browning, but on whose energy nevertheless all the fair fabric of their culture rested.

It is open to question whether the kicking down of the ladder is not inexpedient as well as unjust. The ladder may be useful yet. The characteristic influence of the Old Testament is still of value.

The history of the race is mirrored in that of the individual; and as the race was led through the Old Testament to the New so ought the individual. The Old Testament is the true door to Christ.

Nowhere in the New Testament can be found such awe-inspiring representations of God as are to be found in the Old

Testament. The Old Testament is the literature of law and reverence. The Puritans and that "fanatical Scotch Calvinist" of Macaulay did not perhaps always yield themselves to the characteristic influences of the New Testament as fully as they might have done. But I do not know that they or their descendants need be greatly ashamed of the part the Old Testament played in their lives. What races to-day surpass them in the qualities precisely the most needed on this continent? They needed men of the "sweet reasonableness" of Christianity, but this age surely needs nothing so much as the qualities which may fairly be attributed to the Old Testament. Veneration for age or obedience to authority are not so excessive that even the old story of the mocking young men and the she-bears is altogether superfluous.

The Old Testament, however, is a book for children, for other reasons than because of its power to subdue and give what Goethe said was the best thing in life,—“the thrill of awe.” It is fascinating in its stories. These educate that precious sense, the sense of wonder (another faculty not too luxuriant to-day), as delightfully as fairy stories. But the fairy stories of the Old Testament have this advantage: they are saturated with moral teaching. They develop the conscience as well as the imagination.

Beecher was not exactly either a Puritan or a Calvinist, but he warned parents not to be fearful of letting their children go to the Old Testament. The children who were shut out from the Old Testament, he declared, would not be half as strong as they would otherwise be. (*Lects. on Preaching*, 3rd series lect. V.)

In a familiar passage the late Professor Huxley confessed his perplexity “to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters, without the use of the Bible. . . . By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized?”

When John Ruskin was twelve years of age, he and his mother had read the Bible through six times together, skipping nothing, and he had committed large portions of it to memory. And this morning exercise he has in later years told us he counts very

confidently the most precious, and on the whole, “the one essential part of my education.”

I can only briefly refer to two or three other remarkable features of the Old Testament.

The hygienic and moral value of the Mosaic code is evidenced in the persistence and energy of what is probably the most vigorous race on earth to-day, a race still trained on Old Testament principles and amongst which is little crime, no pauperism, and an entire absence of prevalent sins against marriage and parenthood. The Old Testament through the Jew has still some teaching for the New Testament peoples.

Some modern science dissents from the cosmogony of Genesis. But what other cosmogony would it condescend to attack? I do not suppose that the first chapter of Genesis was intended to teach geology. It had a purely religious aim. But the harmony between the broad outlines of that chapter and the general conclusions of modern science is remarkable enough to justify scientific men in considering that only divine revelation can account for such an anticipation of modern geology in a childish and unscientific age. “The ancient and venerable record,” says Fichte (quoted by Geikie in *Hours With the Bible*, I., p. 129) “contains the profoundest and the loftiest wisdom, and presents those results to which all philosophy must at last return.”

Remarkable however as is its cosmogony, the Old Testament is perhaps more wonderful for the things that are not in it than for those that are.

The other ancient cosmogonies are full of the crudest and strangest fancies,—worlds supported on the back of a tortoise, hatched out of an egg, fashioned out of a little mud which the Creator, to whom are ascribed all manner of forms from man to muskrat, brings up from the bottom of the primeval sea. How comes it that the Old Testament cosmogony is a great deal more unlike these than it is unlike modern science?

And how comes it that while astrology, that most foundationless of all great delusions, prevailed among all the civilized peoples of antiquity and even in Europe down almost to our own day, it never makes its appearance in the Old Testament save to be condemned?

The conclusion seems to me irresistible that while the Old

Testament uses the common language of men and does not profess to be a scientific manual, its writers, in regard to a multitude of matters on which the thought of their age was hopelessly astray, were influenced by a restraint which must be credited to a divine guidance.

Dr. Smith's article is representative of a criticism of the Old Testament which marks a reaction from the superstitious reverence of the past. Like all recoils from exaggeration this movement is itself an exaggeration. We may hope that we are nearing a time when without claiming divine dictation or authority for every statement in the Old Testament we can heartily and reverently recognise, that in a sense distinct from all other ancient literature, it does contain divine revelations and that it is the record and the chief instrument in the peculiar religious education of a race destined by Divine Providence to be the religious educators of the world.

Cornwall.

S. G. BLAND.

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"MUCH HE WHOSE FRIENDSHIP I NOT LONG SINCE WON."

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Quemadmodum in navigando, ubi stationem navis nacta est, si aquatum exieris, fit obiter quidem ut cochleolam colligas aut bulbulum; animo autem in navigium intento esse oportet, et continenter respicere, an gubernator vocet; et tum illa omnia relinquere oportet, ne vincetus, ad instar ovium, in navem conjiciaris. Sic quoque in vita, si pro bulbo et cochleola, uxorcula et puellus detur, nihil prohibebit. Cum autem gubernator vocarit, curre ad navim, relictes illis omnibus, nihil respiciendo. Quod si senex sis, cave unquam longius a nave recedas, ne quando vocatus deficias.—*Epicteti Enchiridion. Latine Redditum.*

## A GENERAL VIEW OF SOCIALISTIC SCHEMES.

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IT will be well at the outset to define what is meant by the term "socialism," as it is understood in the work of Mr. Rae, or as defined by other writers on the subject.

"By socialism we understand any theory or system of social organization, which would abolish in whole, or in great part, the individual effort and competition on which modern society rests, and substitute for it co-operative action;" (Century Dictionary); or

"All aspiration toward the improvement of society." (Proudhon.)

Others limit this to "All aspiration toward the improvement of society by society."

"True socialism is the final suspension of that personal struggle for existence which has been waged, not only from the beginning of society, but in one form or another from the beginning of life." (Kidd's Social Evolution.)

"The minimum of socialism is that the State owes a special duty of protection to laborers because they are poor, in order to secure to them a more equitable part in the product of general labor." (Limousin.)

"Socialism is the employment of the State for the instant accomplishment of ideal schemes, which is the invariable attribute of all projects generally regarded as Socialistic." (Cairnes.)

Sometimes socialism has been confounded with Democracy, or at least that socialism has been held to be the inevitable result of Democracy, but Mr. Rae shows very clearly from the history of Democracy in America for the past one hundred years that it has no necessary connection with socialism.

Society, says a recent writer, is in a state of transition. While it is passing through this unstable stage it will afford ample opportunity for the enthusiasm of the philanthropist to spend itself for the good of humanity, or it will be seized by the passionate multitude as the sure and early promise of the coming millennium. A great change has taken place in the last quarter

of a century as regards the methods of socialism. The school of Owen, Fourier and others is gone. The doctrine of co-operation, or of State help, is laid aside. Such is not now thorough enough. It does not strike at the root of the many ills to which society is heir. The kindly disposed philanthropist who strove to ameliorate the sufferings of his fellows may still pursue his charitable course, but according to present-day views he is far behind, and is no longer expected to be a factor in the changes that are to come in society. Socialists have in a large measure directed their forces to the overthrow of governments and rulers. They want a state in which power and property will be based on labor, because the wealth of a nation belongs to the hands that made it, and the State is merely the organized will of the people. There are two branches of socialism proper—Collectiveism and Anarchism—the one aiming at a strong centralized government and the other at the abolition of all superior government, i. e. anarchy in its gentler sense, because it would still maintain some form of government in each district or community. Both branches advocate—not the gradual amelioration of abuses—but a radical overthrow by the state of that which is now unjust, especially with regard to the rewards of labor. Socialism then means the political reorganization of society in such a way as will give justice to all toilers and that quickly. The idea is not that of change from good to better, but from bad to better; from injustice to justice; from the state as inherently wrong, to the state as inherently right. It has little or no sympathy with the State-socialism of Prince Bismarck and the German Emperor. Paternalism in the state is not its aim. Man in these latter days has been made free, and the next step is to give him the product of his own labor. To bring about this radical change in society social democracy advocates political and revolutionary methods. In no country have there been made more energetic attempts to launch socialistic schemes than in Germany. It is true that the principles of social democracy have been before the world ever since the time of the French Revolution in 1789, when Rousseau, the apostle of the new Evangel, taught that “man had a natural right to whatever he needed and he who had more than he needed was a thief.” The individual therefore is nothing and the state is everything. All private rights were to be done away with by

Baboeuf, and community of goods was to be the ground principle of society. Appropriation was to be strictly within the bounds of need. Mr. Rae draws a strong distinction between the Revolution in France and that in America. In the latter the people had always access to the soil, and what they wanted and obtained was not personal liberty and equality, but political freedom. In the former he says freedom has been really less desired than power. The Revolution in France introduced democracy with as strong a centralized government or central power as that which existed before the Empire fell. Democracy, however, as it obtained in France, or other parts of Europe, has greatly influenced and developed socialistic tendencies, for, when power is the possession of the many and property the possession of the few, there is continually the desire on the part of those who have the power to take strong measures to secure the property as well. There is no doubt that the overthrow of feudalism in France at the end of the last century was a benefit to mankind, and the demands of the people for greater power can often be justified, especially when the wealth of a country becomes the property of the few by unjust laws, or tyrannical customs. Therefore we may expect to find socialism more fully organized, (1) Where wealth and comfort are badly distributed, (2) Where social questions are already widespread and discussed among the masses, (3) Where previous revolutions left matters in a state of constant unrest. We find the most highly organized system of socialism in Germany. In 1875 six million persons in Germany, representing over one-half the population, had an income less than \$105.00 a year each, and only 140,000 had incomes above \$750.00. The number of land owners is indeed large, being in 1861 two millions out of twenty-three millions, but the relief such a comparatively large proprietorship might give is reduced to the vanishing point when it is learned that very many have not enough land on which to make even a scanty living. Hence the great object of socialism in Germany is to get control of the land. The leaders of the movement have attempted to arouse the interest and co-operation of the agricultural class. The towns are well inoculated with the new doctrine, but the farmers are harder to reach. Perhaps they read less and think more than their town cousins. At any rate no progress can be made until social-

ism has converted the peasantry. If there is to be a revolution in landed property it must be brought about by the dissatisfaction and revolt of the farm laboring portion of the people. The increase of late years in the Social Democratic party in Germany has been very marked. In 1871 there were 101,917, in 1890 there were 1,427,000. But their strength was almost entirely in the towns. In order to propagate their views they have nineteen daily and forty weekly newspapers with a total circulation of 254,000. The annual income of the party is about \$100,000. The catch word of the Social Democrats, as expressed by Liebknecht, is "Peasant-fishery and elector-fishery." Agitation is kept up and wherever probable, like the Patron movement in Canada, a candidate is brought forward for the Reichstag. Congresses are held and programmes announced of great diversity, to suit the wants of to-day, to-morrow and the day after to-morrow. To reach the final stage of socialism, namely, that the people may own everything, it may be necessary to pass through the preparatory stage of co-operative societies founded on state credit. The goal is public property, but the road to it leads through private property, via corporate property. The Gotha Congress of 1875 laid down the following programme: (1) "Labor is the source of all wealth and civilization, and since productive labor as a whole is made possible only in and through society, the entire product of labor belongs to society." Hence labor must be delivered from its dependence on capital, which monopolizes the instruments of labor, and hence also labor must be emancipated by the laboring classes themselves, as all other classes are by nature and custom opposed to them.

(2) "The Socialistic Labor party of Germany seeks by all lawful means to establish a free state in a socialistic society, to break asunder the iron law of wages by the abolition of the system of wage-labor, the suppression of every form of exploitation, and the correction of all social and political inequality. It extends its obligations so as to include the international labor movement in order to realize the brotherhood of man. This party demands as the basis of the state: (a) Universal equal and direct suffrage, secret and obligatory voting of all over twenty years of age, election day to be Sunday or a holiday. (b) Direct legislation by the people; peace or war to be decided by the people. (c) Uni-



versal liability to military service—no standing army, but militia instead. (d) The abolition of all laws against the free expression of opinion, free thought and free inquiry. (e) Administration of justice by the people. Gratuitous justice. (f) Universal compulsory, gratuitous and equal education of the people by the state. Religion to be wholly a private matter. The latest demand is to have an eight-hour system and a period of thirty-six hours' continuous, uninterrupted rest every week. At some recent meetings a few members desired to proceed to revolution without lawful means, but wiser counsel prevailed, and a moderate course of lawful means expresses the trend of the party's feelings. The majority saw that nothing could be gained by throwing bombs, for they had only twenty per cent of the population. Force must therefore give way to reason, and with united front all go forward to convert the indifferent. They must not even take the old course of fighting the Church, but maintain a policy of religious neutrality and toleration. If the state fall the Church and priestcraft will fall with it of course, but not until then. Propagandism by means of meetings, addresses, the press, and any and all means of giving information is the main method now, and that recourse to strikes or boycotting should never be resorted to unless after the greatest provocation.

In France socialism is not so united as in Germany, and is confined mainly to the large towns. Many of the French artisans are socialists. Revolution is their natural inheritance for the last hundred years, and their social condition and habits of life tend to make them susceptible to any proposed plan of improvement which may be taken up, followed awhile, and discarded for the next nostrum offered in the social pharmacopœia. The strongest bulwark against the progress of socialistic views in France is in her peasant proprietors, who have been often upheld before other countries for general admiration. A change for the worse, however, if reports be true, has been coming over the French peasantry in the fact that intemperance prevails to a much greater degree than formerly. They can be comparatively comfortable without excessive effort, and if they remain so socialism will have nothing in them. The different groups of socialists in France are believers in the scientific socialism of

Karl Marx and Lasalle. They are mainly represented in Communards, Co-operationists, and Anarchists. The socialistic movement in that country, as expressed by the majority of the Havre Congress in 1880, aimed at transferring all instruments of production to the possession of the Community by making use of the working class as an organized and independent political party. In this way it was thought much would be accomplished, but at a meeting two years afterwards the socialists broke up into two fragments—one, the Guesdists, accepting Karl Marx, *i.e.* universal revolution, the centralized socialistic state, the notion of surplus value, and the right to the full product of labor—the other, the Broussists, accepting decentralization and the municipalizing of industries rather than the naturalizing of them. They would have the Commune control its own police, soldiers and civic administration. Besides the groups mentioned there is the Parliamentary party, claiming to be truly socialistic, which was founded in 1887, and which sent thirty candidates to the Legislative Chamber in 1889. It advocates the transformation of industrial monopolies into public services, directed by their respective companies, and under the control of the public administration—progressive nationalization of property—abolition of standing armies and capital punishment, universal suffrage, minority representation, abolition of indirect taxes and customs, sexual equality, free education, primary, secondary and technical; progressive income tax, superannuation, sick and accident insurance at the public expense.

In Austria socialism has not made the same progress as in Germany, unless among the German-speaking portion of the population. So far it adheres entirely to peaceful methods, and repudiates anarchism. The progress of socialism in Austria is counteracted, no doubt, by the fact that the question is largely an agrarian one, wherein State help for labor is laid down as a demand along with a reduction of taxes and other reforms. Then again the Catholic socialistic movement in that country, led by clergy and nobility, divides the interest which otherwise would fall to the more radical German ideas.

In Russia the form in which socialism has been best known to the world is nihilism. The emancipation of the serfs some years ago was thought to be the death-blow of socialism for many

years. But this hope has not been realized from the fact that the amount each peasant has to pay for his right to the land is so heavy that unless he can make money in other ways than farming he is forced to give up his communal rights. Poverty is therefore forced upon the emancipated serf by the heavy taxation laid upon the peasantry while many of the upper classes go free. Then again, the Emancipation Act stranded many of the poorer gentry. The land being too poor to pay hired labor, discontent arose among the small land-owners, who were compelled to sell. This discontent found its way from many Russian communities into the army and the universities. Thus the ground was in good condition for the seed of a new order of things proposed by the young Hegelians, Herzen and Bakunin. This new doctrine was to do away with all authority in government, human or divine, in order to realize both the Revolution and Christianity. "Christianity," said Herzen, "made the slave a son of man, the Revolution has made him a citizen, socialism will make him a man." Siberian exile, the despotism of the Czar and Russian bureaucracy have only added fuel to the flames, and led socialism in that country to take the ultra form of nihilism. Nihilism is belief in nothing, an intellectual revolt against the incessant changes in the form of governmental administration, which indeed created constant unrest and dissatisfaction. The revolt was perhaps as much against the uncertainty of the law as against the severity of the law when exercised. Nihilism therefore passed into a vigorous and determined policy of destruction, and was eagerly propagated by Bakunin, whose life was bent on exciting revolution and disorder. "The nihilist," says he, "has only one aim, one science—destruction." Other socialists in Russia, however, for a time adopted the milder method of going among the people and working up the cause. But at length there came the system of terror inaugurated in 1871, when the most diabolical deeds were done against any opponents of the cause. Another party—the Black Division—is agrarian, aiming at the re-subdivision of the land. "The earth is the Lord's," and the Czar is his steward. The poor Russian peasant has great faith in the Czar, and very little in Government officials under the Czar. He therefore hopes and agitates for a time when the Czar himself will grant him more land with less rent and taxes than he now pays.

In America we have Bellamy's nationalization scheme, and Henry George's Agrarian Socialism. It appears from Mr. Rae's discussion that these are merely German importations free of duty, and therefore an analysis of them will not add much to our information. Bellamy's idea of nationalization in his popular book, "Looking Backward," is familiar to all. The state is to organize and conduct all industry, and every person is to be guaranteed a livelihood. All enjoyment, all culture, all industry, the whole complex character of our present-day life is to be under the care of the state. The individual effort which is such a strong factor in the development of true character, is wanting. Man, the individual man, can never thus attain his highest powers when deprived of self-reliance. Whatever strength socialism has in the States is due chiefly to the German element in the population. It is quite true that there is a widespread and growing interest in social reform, but not along revolutionary lines. This leads to the supposition that the conditions of life in the New World, if left to work out their own course, would not cause the dissatisfaction nor beget the political and social schemes which have characterized the overcrowded, ill-paid and neglected masses of the continent of Europe.

In discussing "Socialism and the Social Question," Mr. Rae takes strong ground, from what he observed in England, that socialism does not offer any better guarantee for the working classes to realize their ambitions than the present system of economics. He shows clearly that to take away the power of acquisition, and to lessen the responsibility of the individual, to exchange the zeal and interests of the responsible employer, for the perfunctory State official, would entail great loss as well as destroy the incentive to production. Relieved of all necessity to take thought or pains, men would not work as hard, nor work as well as they do now, and the result would be that in time there would be a return to industrial slavery. The motive power of progress is destroyed when the mind is set entirely on "The diffusion of progress," as socialism requires. It is shown that the "superiority of Great Britain is as much due to the administrative skill and economy of her employers as to the efficiency of her laborers." While socialism has entered English economic life, still it does not appear to affect any line of economics more

than what is necessary in the ordinary progress of society. If it helps to increase the numbers of owners of private property and it multiplies the opportunities of industrial investment open to the laboring classes, then it has a reason for existence, but it cannot be classed with revolutionary socialism. The main value of socialism is that it has led to a consideration of the economic position of the people, for while wealth has enormously increased it has been attended with comparatively little amelioration in the general well-being of the masses.

In his chapter on "State Socialism," Mr. Rae points out that while England has not kept pace with other nations in Governmental intervention, yet she has far outstripped all nations in the extension and establishment of popular rights, and in the protection of her citizens from force and fraud. She has done this, too, in some cases "from moral rather than economic ends," as shown in the Factory and Education Acts. The words of Mr. Goschen are quoted, namely: "We cannot see universal state action enthroned as a principle of government without misgivings, and yet government should see justice done between man and man," to show how earnestly thoughtful men are viewing the present order of affairs, and to show further that England, while not socialistic, is as little inclined to follow the method of *laissez-faire* as to leave the world to self-interest and competition.

These various socialistic schemes are the attempts of men to better their lot in life. This desire is natural and the aim praiseworthy. Yet any scheme that tries to place all men on an equality, or that would abolish private property, contends against the law of man's being. In order that man may make progress he must indeed be free, and have access to those natural opportunities without which he can do nothing. In this sense all should be free. But to make all share and share alike, or according to the needs of each, is to forget the fact that man is not born either with an innate love of work or with an altruistic nature. Let every man know that he must respect the rights of others, and that no progress can be made in any state without everyone being placed under many limitations. The highest good of all the people will only be reached when each feels he must do his part to make the state all that it should be. Mr. Rae, while conservative, is candid and fair in his treatment, frankly admitting

the need of reforms in the state from time to time. But these reforms should have the interest and co-operation of the people as a whole, and not of any section or class in the community.

While the different theories we have so hurriedly reviewed appear inadequate and based on false premises, still there is something to be said in favor of that wide movement known to-day under the general name of socialism. The cause may not be far to seek. The conditions of life in crowded cities, the great extremes in worldly comfort, the accumulation by one man in a short lifetime of many millions, while his neighbor prolongs a life of hardship and penury, are sufficient to engage the attention of all thoughtful men. The present social garment covers some too well, while many are naked. The wheatfields of the world can produce food for all; why then are so many of the human family on the point of starvation? When we have eliminated every collateral cause of poverty, as intemperance, laziness, mental and physical disability, the question remains still unsolved. Shall we say to those who are in wretchedness and want, "There is no relief; you are under a fatal necessity to be born, and live and die a pauper." We cannot as free moral agents speak after this fashion. We cannot as Christian men be indifferent, and like the Priest and the Levite pass by on the other side. The Church is not acting even in its own interests if it looks with coldness on disinterested and humane attempts to bring relief to the suffering. Nor are the schools of learning wise in their generation if they bring no other power than the keen blade of logic to meet the crying want of the masses of the people. Legislation may do a good deal by way of prevention to improve the conditions of society. While no word is left unspoken that can impress upon the mind and conscience of man the eternal law of progress for both the individual and community, namely, "No man liveth unto himself," at the same time there should be no legal privileges given to the demand of selfishness. Restrictions and prohibitions are often a necessity to safeguard the state. In an article on Socialism in the February number of the "Canadian Magazine," the Hon. J. W. Longley, of Nova Scotia, holds it to be the "Right of the whole people or body politic to regulate certain things in the interests of the whole state, and in order to make things fair and just to all cer-

tain individual rights must give way, be abridged, or swept away." This means nothing more, he says, than "Organized Government." To show how socialistic organized government is, illustrations are taken from the criminal laws and the laws protecting the rights of private property. The out-and-out socialist would destroy private property. But private property is not a creation of the state; it is one of its primary sanctions, for man's earliest ownership is individualistic, not communal. So then socialism can only interfere with private property when such interference is of benefit to the community, and by giving ample compensation to the individual who loses.

Almost the whole machinery of civic government is socialistic in this limited sense. The Public School System, our Health and Sanitation laws, exemplify the principle. By the appointment of boards of arbitration the state lawfully interferes in the disputes between capital and labor, prohibiting strikes and lock-outs and compelling submission to the awards of the duly constituted board of arbitrators. It seems a just thing that the state should take action to restrain on the one hand the power of the capitalist, or on the other the lawlessness of labor, so that the state may interfere between the actions of individuals as well as legislating for the general good. The Irish Land Act of 1881 is an example of state intervention between two individuals, in which agreements, formerly made in private between landlord and tenant, may be lawfully put aside by this Land Act. Why may not the state own railways and telegraph lines as well as the post-office and canals? The principle of state control of the post-office is socialistic, and there is nothing in the principle against railways, etc., being controlled in the same way. In Canada we have an illustration of Government control of railways in the Intercolonial. The only question is one of expediency or degree, and whenever society is satisfied that the ownership and operation of railways would be preferable to the present system, making things easier and better for the masses of the people, there is no revolutionary process to go through for the state to exercise such control. When we keep in view that the object aimed at is the well-being of the people generally—not the favoritism of the few—laws made in accordance with God's Law of Justice and the teaching of nature, there is nothing to fear, but much to hope

for in the advance of enlightened and progressive legislation. The cry of alarm with which socialism is met in some quarters is not the cry of men filled with righteous indignation, but that of men who begin to see the walls which surround and protect them giving way before the steady advance of fuller knowledge and wider responsibility.

In a fair estimate of socialism, then, it may be argued, not only that the state should take charge of railways, etc., but also that it should profit by the values gained through the holding of unoccupied land. This may be, and in part is, disputed ground. Yet it does not mean the destruction of private rights in land, and is commendable in so far as it would prevent the holding of uncultivated lands until the community has given a great value to the same, the profits of which go to him who in no sense had earned them.

Further, society might repeal all special privileges by which corporations have grown enormously rich, as oil trusts and coal trusts, etc. Evenhanded justice to all is not open to objection; many of the present-day trusts are. Along with these trusts might well go the franchises which were given to corporations, and by which immense profits were realized, (*e. g.* The Chicago Street Railway franchise was allowed to run for ten miles through the city for nothing. At the end of the first year there was paid a very liberal rate on \$20,000,000; then becoming a joint stock company with a capital of \$30,000,000, the original promoters became multi-millionaires.) The regulation and adjustment of the varied powers of society, so that the greatest good can be accomplished, whether called socialistic or not, is not an idea to fill any man with fear. There is this to be said, that socialism of that sort is not revolutionary, does not destroy private rights, and of course would not be accepted by the socialists of Europe. In the march of civilization all admit that change and reform are necessary. Without reform time brings the inevitable revolution. Those who to-day have the power will retain it longest when "they stoop to conquer," and when they are willing to advance along the line of least resistance in social life and well being. What mode of teaching can be as good in the present state of unrest as the words of the Great Teacher Himself, "to do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." Any



method of social reform that embodies justice is by that much in accord with the ethics of the Gospel. But when socialism under the name of anarchism wages a guerilla warfare against "princes, proprietors and parsons," as in France, advising men not to pay rent, because rent is theft, and to assist a brother when he resists his landlord, then Christianity can only condemn. When it would destroy the natural ambition of the individual by destroying competition, reducing all to a dead level of state help, and self-help for one, then, too, there can be but one verdict, that is condemnation. Every reader of current literature knows that the civilized world of to-day is much like Carlyle's "fermenting vat." The burden of huge armies in Germany and continental Europe, the burden of taxation in Italy, the unstable character of government in France, the retroactive policy of the Russian Government towards the masses, the growth of enormous combines in America, and the growing discontent wherever two or three laborers are gathered together, force upon us the lesson that he will best serve his day and generation who does not shut the eye to the approaching danger, but who frankly admitting the disease, as frankly tries to find the best remedy. What is that? It must be in the education, moral and intellectual, of the whole people. We believe it is expressed nowhere so well as in the mission of Christ through whom mankind may be educated, evangelized and blest as citizens of the present world as well as of that which is to come. Any remedy must conserve what is good in the individual and the state as well as destroy what is evil. There is no single panacea among all the multitude of social reforms that will do this great work. Agrarian laws or Socialistic Democracy, or Revolution may change the masters, but will not change the tyranny. It is not in man, unless in harmony with the Divine, "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God." From a survey of all schemes, utopian or otherwise, that may be brought into review there is not one that has in it the permanency or the power of Christianity to bless mankind.

JOHN HAY.

## CRITICAL NOTES.

### AESCHYLUS AND EURIPIDES AGAIN.

THE other day in reading a book written by one of the gentlemen who attended the annual conference of the Alumni at Queen's\*, I came across a passage which made me feel for a time as if the ancient landmarks of classical criticism had been at length removed, and that some new scholar, the latest of a race evidently increasing in numbers, had turned that world upsidedown since the days when Professor Jebb read the Agamemnon to us in Glasgow. The passage is one in which the author is making a comparison between the manner in which Aeschylus treats the murder of Clytaemnestra by her son, and that of Euripides in his drama on the same subject. Here it is in full (the italics are Mr. Begg's) :—

In Euripides we have at least one pathetic picture which shows an advance in moral feeling over anything of the kind in either Aeschylus or Sophocles. In the *Choephoroi* Orestes is made to kill his mother Clytaemnestra in the most cold-blooded matter-of-fact way. "Follow me," he said to his mother, "I wish to slay thee close beside his corpse (*Ægisthus*) here; for when he was alive too, thou didst use to deem him better than my father. Go sleep with him in death, since thou dost love this man, and him whom thou was bound to love thou loathest." And he killed her with as apparently little feeling as he would a beast..... But while, in the *Electra* of Euripides, Orestes performs the murder as a duty and at the instigation of his sister and of the gods, as he thinks, he does the deed reluctantly, and *while covering his face with his robe.*

*Orestes.* To what dreadful deeds,

O thou most dear, hast thou thy brother urged  
Reluctant! Didst thou see her when she drew  
Her vests aside, and bared her breasts, and bow'd  
To earth her body whence I drew my birth,  
Whilst in her locks my furious hand I wreathed?

*Electra.* With anguish'd mind, I know, thou didst proceed,  
When heard thy wailing mother's piteous cries.

*Orestes.* These words whilst with her hands she stroked  
my cheeks,

\*The Development of Taste. W. Proudfoot Begg, Glasgow, Maclehose and Sons.

Burst forth, 'Thy pity I implore, my son.'  
 Soothing she spoke, as on my cheeks she hung,  
 That bloodless from my hand the sword might fall.

*Chorus.* Wretched Electra, how couldst thou sustain  
 A sight like this? How bear thy mother's death,  
 Seeing her thus before thine eyes expire?

*Orestes.* Holding my robe before mine eyes, I raised  
 The sword, and plung'd it in my mother's breast."

The change is a most significant one. The murder of even a mother in revenge for murder had evidently been esteemed a sacred duty—demanded at once by the gods, and by him who had been sent beneath the earth, Agamemnon slain; but the great reluctance of Orestes in Euripides to do the deed—the feeling that it was opposed to all the better instincts of the heart, a thing unnatural and horrible—was not far from the belief that it was a deed, not demanded but abhorred and forbidden by the gods and the "laws of range sublime whose father is Olympus."

.....Euripides bears us a stage onwards in moral and religious culture.

This is nemesis indeed. Euripides, so long used by all sorts of editors and philosophical historians as an instructive contrast to the moral grandeur of Aeschylus and Sophocles, as a kind of beacon to show how art declines with declining faith, to be represented as "an advance in moral and religious culture,"! Euripides, it is true, has always had the support of some very great names, Milton, Goethe, Browning, and latterly even amongst professional scholars and editors something like a general reaction in his favour is noticeable. The humane and pathetic traits which abound in his work, his lyrical fluency and variety, his descriptive power, have been brought more into relief, and even the constructive art of his drama and his 'Peelus and Aeolus' find champions.

The general result has been stated by Professor Jebb in his article on Euripides in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* with the fine impartiality which is distinctive of his work in this way: "Euripides," he says, "made a splendid effort to maintain the place of tragedy in the spiritual life of Athens by modifying its interests in the sense which his own generation required. Could not the heroic persons still excite interest if they were made more real,—if in them the passions and sorrows of every-day life were portrayed with greater vividness and directness?"

Unquestionably in all this, some tardy justice is being

done to "sad Electra's poet;" but when it goes so far as to pronounce Euripides to be a moral and religious advance on Aeschylus, one feels the necessity of once more reviewing the old questions about the dramatic art of the Greeks and determining how far the new criticism is to modify our established opinions. And for this the passage from Mr. Begg's book may serve as a text as well as anything else. The translation which Mr. Begg uses is an old one (Potter's), and distributes the parts between Orestes and the chorus in a way somewhat different from that used in modern editions. He seems also only to *infer* from the reluctance with which Orestes describes himself in this passage as doing the deed that he was "not far from the belief that it was a deed not demanded, but abhorred and forbidden by the gods," while the fact is that both Orestes and the Dioscuri in other parts of the play express their opinion plainly enough as to the wisdom, or rather the want of it, in the oracle's instructions in this respect. All this might suggest that Mr. Begg's judgment is rather naive than critical. But, critical or naive, the real question remains, is this a permissible way of representing the difference between Aeschylus and Euripides?

When we read over the scene in which Aeschylus has with sublime daring brought Clytaemnestra and her son face to face in a situation so full of horror, we easily recognize that it has little in common with the modern drama and does not (as Mr. Begg's judgment proves) directly and at once appeal to modern sympathies. There is, it is true, a single expression of horror on the part of Orestes at the sight of his mother exposing the breasts that nursed him, one brief condensed phrase in the manner of Aeschylus;—"Pylades, what am I to do? Dare I slay my mother"? But after the reminder of Pylades, "Where, then, are the oracles of Apollo, and the vows thou took'st upon thee? Better all the world against you than the gods," there is not a word more to indicate vacillation or doubt, not a phrase which seeks to relieve by expression the strife which is going on within him between natural feeling and the sense of duty. For a moment indeed the intense tenderness of Clytaemnestra's cry at the sight of the dead body of Aegisthus,—“Thou art dead, then, dear manhood of Aegisthus,”—appears to surprise him and moves his hate of that

adulterous connection to express itself in bitter irony: "Thou lovest the man? In the same tomb, then, shalt thou lie. Thou wilt not desert him in death.....I will slay thee beside him, for in life thou did'st regard him more than my father; therefore sleep with him in death, since thou lovest this man and hatest him whom it was thy duty to love."

But after that the only feeling Orestes allows to express itself is the gloomy sense of destiny with which he proceeds to obey the law of avenging justice, expressed besides in the specific commands of the oracle. Clytaemnestra brought to bay defends herself with all the vigour of a powerful intellect and tries briefly but thoroughly every chord that might find an echo in the breast of Orestes, and weaken resolution there.

I nursed thee, let me grow old in thy house.  
But the hypocritical, though pathetic strain in the appeal is unmasked clearly enough in the answer of Orestes,

After slaying my father, dost thou really wish to live with me?  
Then she would put some of the responsibility on fate, the dread fate that overhangs the house of Atreus:

Fate, O child, had a hand in it all, too.  
but the reply is equally crushing; that fate did not end with her crime, but was rather continued by it:

And fate therefore deals out this death to thee.

It is thy own work, not mine, that thou diest.  
This sense of doom, of the eternal justice of the gods which overpowers all else in Orestes, is something against which Clytaemnestra herself feel she fights in vain. She has to do with a will fixed beyond the power of appeals to natural feeling. "I seem" she says, "to be vainly making my moan to a tomb," and the tomb of Agamemnon near by gives a double significance to her words. Orestes replies, "'Tis the fate of my father wafts thee to thy death." "Alas for me!" Clytaemnestra exclaims, at last letting go that strong grasp of life which calamities have not weakened, "This is the snake I bore and nourished in my dream." The answer of Orestes, and the conclusion of the dialogue, is a dogged reiteration of the fatal law: Thou did'st slay him whom thou ought'st not, so must suffer what thou ought'st not.

This severe manner of representing a tragic event, with its

powerful reserve and sublime condensation of stroke, is a mode of tragic feeling to which Mr. Begg's epithets of "cold-blooded" and "matter of fact" are quite inappropriate. It does not mean that Aeschylus felt the elements of pathos and horror in the situation less than Euripides, and the difference in the manner of the two dramatists is to be explained not by an inferiority "in moral and religious feeling" on the part of Aeschylus, but by the different and severer conception which he had of the heroic and tragic in dramatic art.

Both Aeschylus and Euripides represent Orestes as an instrument of fate, one acting in obedience to the eternal laws of justice, and this conception receives a particular form in the commands laid upon him by Apollo; but while this conception in Euripides is little more than an empty tribute to religious traditions, and appears for the most part only in its specific form of an injunction from the oracle of Apollo; in Aeschylus, the idea that bloody violence works out into bloody retribution by an inexorable law of fate, has a reality and truth which gives support to the specific religious ideas of the Greek regarding the sacred duty of revenge and the oracles of Apollo the Purifier. In this way Aeschylus seems to hold in a kind of unity what he can find out by searching regarding the eternal laws of life on the one hand, and on the other the traditional religious and moral ideas of the Greek with regard to crime of the kind in question; and therefore he represents Orestes performing his work of vengeance with sacrificial solemnity and deliberation. The legendary hero of the Greek stage with his conventional mask and costume is a perfectly fit exponent of the truths which Aeschylus sees and values in life.

For with this tremendous almost oppressive solidarity of the heavens over him, the character of the Aeschylean hero who is to walk beneath them is fixed. He is the subject of the destiny of his race; but within that conception he still has freedom in his rational acceptance and intelligence of it, and in working for a moral end, as Eteocles goes forth to what he knows is his doom, for the curse of the house of Laius is upon him, yet succeeds in saving the Cadmeian city. The specifically heroic character of his action consists in his entirely resolute and unwavering performance of his task. To Aeschylus a Hamlet

conceiving his task with as deep a sense of duty, yet hesitating and vacillating in the performance of it, would have been not only an unheroic spectacle (he is that to us moderns) but the most unfit subject conceivable for the heroic drama. Freytag (*Die Technik des Dramas*,) has expressed this Greek conception of the heroic very strongly: "The Greeks (he says) were very sensitive about any vacillation of the will; the greatness of their heroes consisted above all in steadfastness (*Festigkeit*). The chief actor must never represent a character which allowed itself to be led on any important occasion. If Philoctetes had yielded to the intelligent discourse of the second actor (Neoptolemus) he would have sunk entirely in the estimation of the audience; he would have been the strong hero no longer."

All this, however, does not hinder Aeschylus from showing in his own way as much sensitivity regarding the moral character of Orestes' deed as Euripides. Besides the expressions of the chorus, which as Patin remarks serves in Aeschylus to give expression to those more common-place feelings of humanity which are excluded from the heroic, the representation in the *Choephori* of the reaction of horror that seizes Orestes is a far more powerful and poetic vindication of the rights of nature than the pathetic traits in Euripides; and yet it is done in such a manner that the conception of heroic strength of will and purpose is not weakened. In spite of himself, after the deed is done, the mind of Orestes wanders and his senses are troubled. "I drive far wide of my course as if I were in a chariot with horses. Fancies hard to control overcome me and bear me away." But with a last effort he steadies his thoughts to declare, before he loses possession of himself, that he "slew his mother according to the demands of eternal justice," It is the Furies that are upon him, "the angry sleuth-hounds of his mother." "Ye indeed do not see them," he tell the chorus, "but I see them." This violent reaction of nature heroically repressed according to the dictates of Justice and Duty, altho' a little disguised for us under the Greek conception of the Furies, is just as real and true to human nature, just as vivid a stroke of the natural for the heroic type of Orestes in Aeschylus, as the pathetic expressions of Euripides are for the more ordinary type of manhood represented by his Orestes. And if there is equal

truth of nature, there is certainly more imaginative depth and profundity in the representation of Aeschylus, that is, after all there is a *deeper* truth.

So also the ethical question, the conflict of moral ideas, involved in the act of Orestes receives a profoundly serious and independent treatment from Aeschylus in the *Eumenides*, the play which closes the trilogy. The fundamental ideas of that play, Avenging Justice, which had before steadied the hand of Orestes, now invoked by the Furies against him; Apollo representative of conventional religion and sacred traditions now virtually on his trial before Athens and the Court of the Areopagus; the equally divided votes of the Court by which Orestes receives an ambiguous acquittal, reveal the difficulties amidst which Aeschylus struggled to reach a clear conception of moral law and reconcile the religious ideas of his time with his own sense of eternal law and right. And in all that there is certainly a profounder if more cautious and reverent criticism of the conventional Greek morality and religion than the summary double judgment of the Dioscuri in Euripides and their half-uttered impeachment of Apollo's oracle—'she was justly slain, but the oracle commanding you to do it was unwise.' The doubt as to the moral character of the deed, which Aeschylus except for one brief hint treats in a separate and independent form, Euripides allows to influence the character Orestes to the extent of impairing its heroic outlines, the strength of will and purpose characteristic of the heroic type, contrary to the higher, at any rate, the severer traditions of Greek dramatic art. With Euripides, however, we must remember, Electra is the principal figure.

Of course it is open to any one to say that this Aeschylean ideal of the heroic with its unflinching almost relentless action is narrow, imperfect, and more suitable to the gigantic legendary figures of Theban and Trojan story than to human nature. Imperfect it no doubt is, and for us must be modified in many ways; but nevertheless there remains in it something which is eternally true and has not substantially changed with any evolution of art, or of the moral and religious feeling which is the inspiration of art. Though less common, it is just as true to life as the familiar and pathetic in Euripides, and holds its place in modern art, wherever modern art is really great and heroic. Take away the super-



ficial disguise of dialect and costume and at bottom the Aeschylean conception of the heroic is the same as that which Dante makes us admire in *Farinata*, the same as that by which Carlyle explains and vindicates Cromwell, the same as that in the light of which Shakespeare interprets Brutus, and which guides Schiller in the gloom and pathos of his *Wallenstein*, the same as that by which Scott, in spite of himself, as he said, was constrained to exhibit with all the power of tragic pathos the characters of Redgauntlet the Elder and Balfour of Burleigh. The moral sense of destiny which guides Scott's hand in his picture of Burleigh in his later days, struggling with the Erinyes, 'far wide of his course,' fanatic zeal even unto slaying having darkened into insanity—is something which bears a striking resemblance to what Aeschylus sought to show us. This heroic ideal may be exhibited with many modifying circumstances, as working with clear moral sense for its ends, or as tragically entangled and obscured in the confusion and complication of circumstances, but the essential quality, the greatness of soul visible in the power of will, in the capacity for self-sacrifice and endurance to the end, remains as Aeschylus conceived it.

In the delineation of character, however, dramatic art has perhaps with Euripides made a step onward as regards methods. This step Professor Jebb (apparently following Mommsen's estimate of Euripides in his *History of Rome*, Vol. II.) seems to define as a higher individualisation of character, that is, the representation of character with more minuteness and abundance of traits than in Aeschylus; and he explains that Aeschylus had "to refrain from multiplying those minute touches which by individualizing too highly the characters would bring them closer indeed to daily experience but would detract from their general value as types in which all Hellenic humanity could recognize its own image glorified."

It is true that dialogue (the medium of this individualisation) is with Aeschylus a new invention—he had, poor man, as Carlyle says, of Burns, 'to make his very tools'—and that therefore, as Verrall has pointed out in that great exposition of his of the plot movement of the *Agamemnon*, there is in the art of Aeschylus a greater reference to and reliance on the actual stage action or performance to assist individualisa-

tion of character. But all the same there does not seem to be any need of excessive apology for Aeschylus under this head. His stroke is brief, but it has precisely the deep suggestive power of one who had the action more before his mind almost than the phrase in which he describes it. He does not express for expression's sake, but his condensed trait, the rare cry of nature which he allows to escape just at the right moment, the unwonted tenderness for example (strange-seeming in her as in a tigress, yet as natural) of Clytaemnestra's *τέθνηκα, φίλτατ' Αἰγίσθου βία* ('Thou art dead, then, dear manhood of Aegisthus'), or Orestes' *ἔδραμεν, ἢ οὐκ ἔδρασε;* ('Did he do it, or did he not?') brief and stern logic, yet already in its fierce compression on the way to frenzy, are as vivid touches of 'the natural' in his style as the more fluent pathos of Euripides. Such dialogue, too, as that which takes place between Clytaemnestra and Agamemnon in the first play of the trilogy shows a power of characterisation and an abundance of minute and profound individualising traits, regarding which we would willingly have had even fuller notes from Dr. Verrall.

The art of Euripides is inspired by a less heroic as well as a less religious idea of life. His affinities are all for what is familiar, natural and picturesque. In the *Electra*, from which the passage we have been discussing is taken, his treatment of the whole story is unheroic and has been generally regarded as indignant and grotesque. Electra, the daughter of Agamemnon, is introduced to us in rags and married to a peasant. Clytaemnestra is represented as a coquette from the beginning, dressing herself to look handsome in the absence of husband; Ægisthus is spoken of by Electra as a kind of Greek Mantalini, overshadowed by the superior prestige of his wife, but appreciating the advantages of his position and figure for the sake of ancillary amours.

Of course this manner which Euripides has of representing life, represents a truth as much as the manner of Aeschylus does, and it represents a truth which appeals far more readily to the ordinary mind, than the truth of Aeschylus, at any rate when traditional ideals do not stand in the way of its acceptance as would be the case with many of the Athenians. It is a middle region, between high tragic and pure comic feeling of life, in which

the natural and the familiar easily find a place; it is a region in which most of the situations lend themselves with equal ease either to comic or to tragic treatment; and it is a testimony of the severity and strength of the traditions of Greek art that Euripides held his hand in this respect as much as he did. Even in the *Alcestis*, where it is difficult to divest our minds of the extraordinary charm of pathos and moral depth which Browning's interpretation in *Balaustion's Adventure* has thrown around that drama, we can see that it only requires a touch to give some of the situations and much of the dialogue the character of comedy. Indeed this drama "which Browning pathetically calls "that strangest, sweetest, saddest song of his" is very generally described as having something of the character of a satyric drama, a *δρᾶμα σατυρικώτερον*, as Professor Munk terms it. At the very outset the encounter of Apollo and Death at the portals of the palace, is a situation ready made for the hand of Lucian, and he might have got some fair hints from their dialogue. Even Browning in his transcript, relying upon the modern sympathy for mixtures of the sublime and the comic, has been tempted to press, though ever so slightly, the comic suggestion of the situation, and to insert a picture of Death skulking behind the pillars and eyeing doubtfully his brother Diety.

Half in, half out the portal,—watch and ward,—

Eyeing his fellow : formidably fixed,

Yet faltering too at who confronted him.

Immediately after comes that powerful passage in which the conception of the two opposing powers is given with tragic seriousness and Miltonic splendor of imagination.

Like some dread, heapy, blackness, ruffled wing,

Convulsed and cowering head that is all eye, etc.

Neither passage has any positive basis in the text of Euripides, but both are, so to speak, potentially in the situation. Lucian would have taken the one and Aeschylus might have claimed the other. This means that situations of *this kind* have no profound reality for Euripides.

And indeed Euripides does not always hold his hand. In the *Bacchae* he inserts as part of the climax of the story, an incident the comic power of which, unnoticed apparently by editors, might have made Aristophanes pale with envy. The mes-

senger is describing how Pentheus came by his death torn in pieces by the Bacchantes whose mysteries he had with profane curiosity sought to gaze upon. The royal Pentheus insidiously led by Bacchus near the scene of the orgies, thinks he would like to have a better sight of them. "Stranger," he says to Bacchus, from the point where we are, I cannot manage to see the on-goings\* of these Mænads. If I mounted on a mound or some high pine, I could see very well their disgraceful doings." Then the messenger tells what a wonderful thing he saw the stranger do. "He seized a high sky-pointing branch of a pine, drew it down, down, down, till it touched the earth, curving like a bow . . . . thus he bent it with superhuman strength to the ground, and having seated Pentheus on its shoots, and balancing him carefully with his hands so that he might not be jerked off, he let the branch erect itself and mount into the air with its master seated on its back (the metaphor throughout is that of horse and rider.) Thus seated on high, he was rather a spectacle to the Mænads than the Mænads to him.....

The tragic consequences follow. But the comic trait and turn of phrase so evident in *κατήγγεν, ἤγγεν, ἤγγεν... νότοις δεσπότην ἐφήμενον... ὤφθη μᾶλλον*, is repeated again and again up to the very beginning of the description of the slaughter of Pentheus by his mother in her Bacchanal frenzy.

The extraordinary mixture of materials in the speech of the messenger from which the above passage is quoted, the idyllic loveliness of the first fifteen lines in which, though they may contain 'only a line and a half of pure description', the woodland charm is felt throughout; the malicious comic allurements of the style in the 'hoisting' of Pentheus; the fierce excitement of the Bacchantes, and the pathetic representation of their victim's death—pathetic and graphic, not really tragic—may be part of that licentious and florid inelegancy with which Paley reproaches the later plays of Euripides, but like the choric ode of the maenads in the same play it is unmistakably the work of a great poetic genius. And when that fact is once clear, criticism of any work of Euripides, the real tendency and significance of which may not yet be fully perceived, must be respectfully cautious.

\* (*μόθω*), a word, since Tyrrell, doubtful to editors, but very apt for my purpose here and partly approved by Sandys).

The *Bacchæ* is perhaps the last work of Euripides. Written and, it may be, first represented in the freer air of half-barbaric Macedonia, it is a work in which the poet seems to have felt a freedom of imagination, a liberty of hand impossible in the more classical and critical atmosphere of Athens. In such a play as the *Bacchæ* we are bound to recognize an entirely new form of dramatic art which in spirituality of invention, in the free play and exuberance of imagination, and in ease yet sureness of touch, has a considerable resemblance, as Symonds has remarked, to the art of *Midsummer Nights' Dream*.

On the "inevitable progression of art" which led Euripides to abandon the older heroic ideal of tragedy for something more familiar and human, that clever critic has written an interesting chapter in *The Greek Poets*. But that Euripides was justified in degrading the majestic traditions of

Thebes and Pelops line

And the tale of Troy divine

traditions which the work of Homer, Æschylus and Sophocles had consecrated, and using them however ingeniously as a cover for the representation of familiar contemporary life is another question. No doubt, however, there were many amongst the Athenians who did not feel or did not resent this lowering of ideal figures any more than those Christians who in our own day read with edification Dr. Talmage's dithyrambic descriptions of the mysteries of heaven. But with us moderns he must always suffer by the comparison wherever we can make it. For after two thousands years of experience we can better appreciate the value of truth even in a symbol, and especially of earnest efforts to adjust that symbol to the truth as compared with disbelief and despair of faith even when accompanied by a fine susceptibility for what is humane and beautiful and pathetic. Hence it is that Euripides wins our sympathies more easily in subjects like the *Ion* and the *Bacchæ* in which he does not seem to us to be divesting the heroic figures of Æschylus and Sophocles of the greatness which we inevitably associate with them. But all the same in these dramas—for we cannot accept the opinion of Muller and Paley that the *Bacchæ* is the old man's return to acceptance of the state religion, or even the more cautious expression of Sandys, that it is "in some sort and *apologia an eirenicon*"—he is still the same Eur-

ipides, still at war with Olympus, only more artfully and with polite apologetic bows to the priests of the Apolline cult, seated according to Professor Jebb's conjecture, in the front row of the theatre.

It has been offered as an apology for Euripides' degradation of those great Greek legends, that he was obliged by the traditions of the Greek stage to use these heroic figures, unsuitable as they might be to his way of interpreting life. But surely Phrynichus and Aeschylus had long before used the mask and cothurnus for the treatment of contemporary history. It might rather be said, if Verrall's view that Euripides was everywhere making war on the Olympian religion be, as I think, the right one, that this negative polemical element (always an alien element in poetry) working with too much strength in his dramatic art had a disastrous influence on it and hindered a freer and more natural development. For after all, that there is some fundamental want in the drama of Euripides is pretty well attested by the long line of critics who, though they may have missed a point, and an essential one, too, in the plot of *Andromache*, or mistaken the aim of the *Bacchae*, have always based their final judgment on the fact that there is something unsatisfying and incomplete in his representation of life. To some such fatal phrase it comes at length even with such liberal estimates of him as Mommsen and Jebb have given,—“Irreparable want of poetic completeness,” says the former; “want of harmony between form and matter,” the latter.

Nevertheless a distinguished English scholar whose critical acuteness and masterly grasp of the constructive art of the Greek drama are very evident, and whose accuracy is such that it has actually furnished us with a fresh interpretation of Sophocles' old comparison between himself and Euripides, has set himself once more to the task of overturning the traditions of criticism as regards Euripides. “Euripides” says Dr. Verrall, “was as truly interested in religion as either of his predecessors, and had a much truer perception than either of them of the line in which religion should and did advance.”.....Much of Euripides' work was written with the express purpose of exposing and destroying the doctrine of Olympus, a religious purpose, if ever there was one.....There is no proof that morality declined in

“ the age of Euripides, still less that this supposed decline had any connection with that intellectual advance which was the chief fact of the time. That the collapse of the old religion produced much general unsettlement of mind is true enough; but this collapse was inevitable and the first step in true progress ..... Aeschylus lived too early to see the truth; Sophocles, if he saw it, suppressed his convictions..... But when Euripides came, it was high time that he should come.”

To show, however, that Euripides everywhere consistently works with a deep hate of the Olympian religion which had come down mingled with some of the grim ferocities as well as levities of an earlier age, and to bring out more fully than has been already done, how Euripides contrasts it with the humaner conceptions latent in the natural feeling of a later age, is not quite the same thing as to prove Euripides a positive moral and religious advance on his two great predecessors. The destruction of ‘ the religion of Olympus ’ is a ‘ religious purpose ’ only in proportion as that religion had ceased to furnish the necessary moral basis for Greek life, and as the destroyer might reasonably hope to supply its place with purer ideas. Otherwise the work has a negative character better fitted to inspire the philosopher of a sceptical period than the poet. To say merely that the work of Euripides in its criticism of the traditional religion and in its susceptibility to the ideas of the humane and beautiful is a step which must be taken before higher religious ideas can be evolved, is not to make it in itself a basis for anything, moral or religious, except in the sense in which Diderot’s works may be said to be a moral advance on Bossuet’s and to contain the germ of, or be a step towards the teaching of Matthew Arnold. But this is hardly a profitable use of words. That Euripides was sceptical, and humane, and aesthetically susceptible to the ideas of the good and the beautiful we knew already; that his art is deeper and less open to criticism than has been thought we were quite prepared and indeed delighted to hear from so excellent an authority as Dr. Verrall; but that it amounts to a serious interpretation of life which can be placed on the same level as that of Aeschylus and Sophocles, or even higher, is a matter which yet requires proof. Such a proof would indeed be furnished by interpretation of the kind which Browning

has given in *Balaustion's Adventure*; but with the possible exception of the treatment of Herakles, the professional scholar seems hardly to regard that as soundly based on the text.

JAMES CAPPON.

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### BOOK REVIEWS.

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*Hedonistic Theories: From Aristippus to Spencer.* By John Watson, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy, Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. MacLehose and Sons, Glasgow. Price 6s. net.

In the January number of the *Critical Review* (Edinburgh, T. and T. Clark) Professor Watson's last book, *Hedonistic Theories*, is reviewed by Professor Iverach, D.D., of Aberdeen University. "We are glad," says this competent critic, "that Dr. Watson has been induced to publish this valuable work. It has a value as a historical and expository work, apart from the philosophical point of view from which he criticises the various theories of Hedonism..... We know nothing finer than the exposition of the 'Influence of the Sophists on Greek philosophy'." While thinking that Dr. Watson might have given some space to the continental advocates of Hedonism, Professor Iverach considers the treatment of English Hedonism in Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Bentham, Mill and Spencer to be "full, clear, adequate, and fair. It is a great boon to the student of ethics to have so masterly a sketch within his reach. For it will teach him much as to the process of ethical thought in England, it will also give him a splendid example of what a philosophic statement ought to be." Here Professor Iverach says a strong word also in praise of the style, "the absolute clearness of statement, the limpid simplicity of style, and the perfect lucidity of his thought." The criticism concludes with a well deserved tribute to the power with which Dr. Watson's treatment of his subject conveys the idea that "philosophy is not a thing of the closet and the chair, it is in most intimate relation with all human interests, and can help to make them all more intense, more real, and more worthy of a rational being."

"We know nothing finer." That is a strong expression to come from the pen of a 'canny' old-country Scotchman, sitting in high places; and we congratulate Dr. Watson that the merits of his work are so well recognized by distant and impartial authorities.

J. C.



## CURRENT EVENTS.

THERE has been no lack of stirring current events. What with the explosion of the plot against the Transvaal, with its revelations of Cecil Rhodes' undermining and the Emperor William's countermining; the poet-laureate pandering to Music Hall sentimentality, which can always see its own greatness but cannot see sin in a public crime which is apparently in its own interest; sober Englishmen shouting for war with Germany, the greatest power for peace and civilization in Europe, with which, too, we are bound to be friendly, by every consideration of kinship, religion and unbroken alliance for centuries; the rise of an ancient Christian monarchy in Africa, among the mountains of Rasselas, able to give a crushing blow to one of the great powers of Europe; the settlement of the Bulgarian question for a time, by the triumph of Russia over the pledged faith of its Prince and over the convictions of his spouse; the triumph of cool, consistent, remorseless Russian diplomacy in Turkey; the intensity of Spanish sentiment regarding Cuba; the new proofs given by the United States Legislature, the Senate leading, that the Republic's danger is to be found, not abroad but in the Capitol; the strengthening of the bonds between Britain and her Colonial Empire by events which were considered certain to disrupt them; the war fever in the States quietly giving place to an agitation for perpetual peace, or even alliance with the Mother Country; and the perpetually shifting scenes and new acts played in the comedy of errors which commenced at Ottawa nearly three months ago; not to speak of many other events which, in ordinary years, would have occupied all pens,—notably the submission of the French Senate to the Popular House, the swift transmutation of Madagascar into a French colony, our easy conquest of Ashanti and the horrible condition of things in Armenia;—one feels that the whole QUARTERLY is too small to contain all of interest that might be written.

The greatest sensations have come from Africa, and the trial of "Dr. Jim" and his colleagues will keep the Transvaal sensation alive in England for some time. British public opinion is still sound at the heart. President Kruger showed his faith in it and in British justice when he handed over his prisoners, to be tried by the power against which they had sinned most deeply. Time will be given before the trial is over for many facts to come out, at which we are at present only guessing; and there can be little doubt as to the verdict, no matter what exact penalty the law may warrant the judge inflicting on the criminals. It may safely be assumed that the real culprits are not in the dock. Secret wire-pullers held the strings in their hands. Men animated by the "*auri sacra fames*" managed the whole business. They had rigged the Johannesburg mining stocks and thought as little of raiding a free state. The action and language of John Henry Hofmeyr, a statesman without reproach, force us to believe that the

boss of the guilty gang was Cecil Rhodes. He was Hofmeyr's colleague and his nominal head, but apparently he betrayed the trust reposed in him by the truthful Dutchman. Rhodes has done such good service to the Empire that almost anything short of crime would be forgiven him. Unfortunately, though of a certain Napoleonic capacity, he is also Napoleonic—according to the testimony of Mr. Stead, an ardent admirer—in his arrested moral development. The conspiracy can only be described as a crime of the blackest dye. It exploded in the sudden invasion of a peaceful, friendly State, and it has sown a frightful crop of dragon's teeth. Futile bloodshed, reawakened distrust, hatreds and racial jealousies, new causes of estrangement between the Cape Colony and the two little Dutch Republics, as well as between British and Boers all over South Africa, are the dire results which can be seen already. Yet, interested parties are raising all manner of specious pretexts to obscure the one plain moral question involved,—is political crime to be tolerated by Great Britain? That is what demands a straight answer. It is idle to say that the Boers are dirty; ignorant; bigoted; conceited; inhospitable; unsound on the slavery question, and above all that they do not like the English! The Uitlanders, on the contrary, are it seems enterprising, progressive and enlightened! *They* have built Johannesburg, no doubt from philanthropic motives! They have grievances, too, against the government of the Transvaal! What rubbish all this is, as a plea for freebooting and filibustering, even were it all true! But it is very far from being the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Having seen a little of the Boers and a little of diamond mining camps and of gold hunters in South Africa, I would prefer to take my chance any day with the Boers, apart altogether from the fact that the Transvaal is *their* country. What better stuff has modern Europe produced than the Dutch of the 17th century and the French Huguenots! Their mingled blood runs in the veins of the Boers of South Africa. Cut off from the Fatherland by an interminable ocean and immersed among savage hordes, they kept both their blood and their faith pure for generations. With few preachers and no schoolmasters, without any literature save the Bible, or any conception of the strides of modern Science, they subdued the land, planted vineyards, raised flocks and herds, penetrated beyond the mountains into the far interior, restrained fierce, lawless tribes with wholesome rigour, and brought up their children in the fear of God. They were never understood in England. Officials and missionaries misrepresented their crude civilization, and harsh treatment was authoritatively meted out to them again and again. When they trekked across the Vaal River into unknown regions, beyond the farthest boundary of any colony dreamed of by Britain, they had every right, as well as the law of necessity, to establish a government of their own. The annexation of their country, which they had carved out from barbarism, was a crime as well as a blunder. History records nothing more splendid, in its simple, pious daring, than their solemn oath of Brotherhood to fight unto death for their freedom. Nothing in Gladstone's long public life shows his moral heroism

so truly as his acknowledgement of their independence, when a force great enough to crush them was on the spot, burning to avenge the defeats of Laing's Nek, Ingogo, Bronker's Spruit and Majuba. There is only one way to treat such a people. Righteousness and generosity will win them, but nothing else will. Rhodes seemed to understand that. His political success was due to the support of the Dutch or Afrikaner element in the Cape Colony. Through its influence and the steady immigration of Europeans into the Transvaal, consequent on the discovery of the rich gold reefs of Witwatersrandt, he would in time have gained all that he could possibly have desired. The great forces were on his side, but he would not wait long enough. Whether inordinate ambition impelled him, or his hand was forced from without, by circumstances as yet unknown to us, he concluded that the time had come to strike. By intervening unexpectedly with a carefully equipped, well-led force, round which to rally the discontented thousands of Johannesburg, he counted on achieving the annexation of the Transvaal to the British Empire and its incorporation in Charterland. Had he succeeded, still vaster schemes might have been tried. He, at any rate, would have been a 19th century Clive and Warren Hastings rolled into one. He would have succeeded, too, had he not miscalculated the resistance of the Transvaal Boers. Their enemies thought they had lost their old virtues of brotherliness, bravery and coolness, during fifteen years of peace under the corrupting influences of wealth and faction. But the hardy farmers turned out with their rifles, at the right moment, in the old style. One is at a loss whether to admire most, their bravery and generalship, or their generosity after victory.

Kruger and Joubert, with his stout militia, stand out well in the whole affair. So does Mr. Chamberlain. He has proved himself a statesman; one who instead of following antiquated methods, knows what the present time requires. He goes to the mark, straight as an arrow, taking the public into his confidence, instead of finessing and lying, like a mystery man or the average politician.

What a pity that Mr. Chamberlain had not been Premier, instead of either Lord Rosebery or Lord Salisbury, during the frightful Armenian atrocities which for more than a year have disgraced Christendom as well as Turkey! It is admitted that if the British fleet had been ordered to Constantinople, as it should have been, immediately after the Sassoun massacres, the other powers would have either concurred or made no opposition. Lord Rosebery had not the requisite nerve, and besides his Government was tottering to its fall. Russia saw her chance and took to quietly backing up the Sultan. When Lord Salisbury became Premier, the problem had become far more complicated and demanded greater statesmanship. His Government, however, was so strong that he had a free hand, but he has failed more signally than his predecessor. He should have taken one line or the other. Siding with Russia, Germany and France, he would have preserved the traditional alliance with Turkey, and possibly have obtained some consideration for the Armenians by friendly pressure. A nobler course would have been to side with humanity,

at all risks, and inform the Sultan that another massacre meant war. Either course would have been consistent and would have led to results. He took neither and has accomplished nothing, except to throw Turkey into the arms of Russia and proclaim to the world that England is helpless in dealing with the moribund Turkish Empire, though it is exposed to attack from the sea at every point. What sense was there in denouncing the Sultan at the Guildhall Banquet, and then—after getting a letter of entreaty from the poor wretch himself—scornfully saying that he could see no man in the Turkish Administration fit to govern, if he meant to take no action or knew that no action could be taken? Naturally enough, the Sultan made up his mind to look out for an ally elsewhere, Russia itself being preferable to so candid a friend, and for the future he may be depended upon to do everything in his power to annoy England and frustrate her policy. Meanwhile, the miserable remnants of the Armenians feel that it would have been better, had they been left severely alone both by the diplomatists of Britain and by the missionaries of the United States. No wonder that bye-elections in England already indicate that the prestige of Lord Salisbury has received a heavy blow, and that the old sarcasm about him, attributed to Bismarck, "a lath painted to look like a bar of iron," is declared to have in it a grain of truth. Englishmen do not take kindly to announcements of their own helplessness, in spite of comforting assurances from Vienna that "only a very strong nation can afford to announce that the power of its arm has a limit!" That the Queen herself should write a personal letter to the Sultan, interceding for those of his subjects who had escaped, when threats from countless platforms and the scarcely veiled menaces of the Premier had turned out to be only mock thunder, was a humiliation indeed.

What is the lesson taught by the whole miserable fiasco. It is written in letters large enough for the most dim-eyed to read. It means the absolute necessity of a good understanding between Britain and the United States, if a shred of belief remains that the English speaking people have a mission, and that their mission is nothing less than to establish freedom, social justice and peace upon earth. Our forefathers had this inspiring conviction. They made great sacrifices for it, and it made them strong. Now that we are rich and numerous and resistless in strength, are we to let it go? We believe that it is not lost yet. There is still a high faith in the heart of our race, but so long as the schism of the 18th Century gapes wide, it cannot get adequate expression. The phrases, "splendid isolation," "the British Empire able to defy the world," and others of the same brand may tickle the ear and impart a glow to the frequenters of Music Halls, but they give no satisfaction to hearts wrung by the stories of nameless atrocities deliberately inflicted on hundreds of thousands of Christians, to whom as a people we are under obligations of treaty or of honour, not to speak of humanity and a common faith. If dozens of men pass by when a girl is being outraged or a child trampled on, it were better for themselves to be struck dead at once than to live,

knowing that they had forfeited their right to live. Are not moral laws and moral dooms, just as inevitable, equally binding upon nations also? Yes; and just because Britain and the States recognize these, their responsibility is greatest. The one seemed ready to go to war with the greatest military power on earth, because its Emperor sent a telegram of congratulation to Mr. Kruger! The other seemed ready to go to war with its own mother-land for the sake of a "divisional line," thousands of miles away, with which it had no concern whatsoever! Both have been on the point of war about seals in the North Pacific Ocean! But, neither was willing to take risks for the Armenians! It may be asked, what should be done? We are all alike called on to repent and to bring forth the fruits of repentance. The real reasons that made the British people let go the grip they had taken of the Armenian question were, the President's message with the shouts of approval it elicited, and the revelation immediately after that even Germany was ready to enter into the lists against them, in a quarrel with which it had little or nothing to do. But for those weighty reasons, Lord Salisbury would not have been forgiven for his feeble attitude. But in spite of the reasons, the people of Britain feel deeply their humiliation. It is evident that the heart of the United States is turning in the same direction. A hopeful sign of the times is that on both sides of the Atlantic a crusade is now going on for the establishment of a permanent court of arbitration between the two nations. This in itself may not promise much. The ugly fact that, though three years ago, a court of arbitration decided that our vessels had been unlawfully seized, Congress has taken no step to pay the damages, in spite of repeated appeals to the national honour by the President, shows how defective the method of arbitration is, when national feeling is involved. But still, every treaty or even informal agreement diminishes the chance that a war may possibly be sprung upon us, and the very possibility should be eliminated or brought down to the irreducible minimum. Lord Salisbury's recent statement, therefore, that Her Majesty's Government is in favour of the principle of a permanent court of arbitration, representing the two great halves of what is one people, and also that proposals looking that way are now before the Government of the United States, is most welcome. That is a step in the right direction, at any rate.

What part ought Canada to take in this good work of conciliation? If nothing can be done by direct Government action, a double responsibility rests upon us as a people to be a living link, instead of a cause of irritation, between the mother and the eldest daughter. To inflame old wounds or to inflict new ones, is a sin against the country's best interests. Exchanging insolence or threats is childish, whereas the sign of assured strength is calmness. If the Mother Country is proud of the United States, as indeed she is, we may well imitate their self-reliance, their public spirit and their many other virtues, instead of snarling as if willing to wound but yet afraid to bite. This is all the more necessary on our part, because Major McKinley's star is again in the as-

endant. If he gets the nomination of the Republican party, he is just the man—because of his consistency and the dislike felt for him by the “bosses”—to inspire popular enthusiasm sufficient to ensure a Republican victory. That would mean another period of thoroughgoing protection, directed with unanimity and a special zest against Canada, partly to please the farmers and partly, according to Mr. Carnegie, for high reasons of state. Another defeat would serve the Democrats right. They had not the courage of their convictions or, at any rate, of their platform, and as that is never lightly forgiven by the people, it is all but impossible for them to win. One would like, however to see the Republican majority wielded by a man whose record regarding trade was less pronounced and his record regarding money more pronounced, than Mr. McKinley's; but while his heresies frighten commercial and financial men, they rather endear him to the masses. Heretics are generally popular. If he does not win on the first ballot, the “bosses” will probably have a dark horse in reserve, with everything arranged for him to win the race. It is almost impossible to overrate their power in manipulating conventions, and that power is not likely to decrease, tho' it may have to be concealed with ever-increasing art.

The defeat of the Italian army by the Abyssinians has, strange to say, played into the hands of Britain in Africa. Last year the French Government was publicly warned in the House of Commons by Lord Rosebery's Under-Secretary of State, that a projected movement of theirs from the Western Niger regions to the Upper Nile, would be an unfriendly act. The power that possesses lower Egypt could not tolerate it yet; as General Gordon pointed out long ago, the only way to stop it effectually is to hold Khartoum and to connect that key city with the equatorial lakes which are the fountains of the Nile. Contrary to his urgent remonstrances, the Soudan, in which a great commerce was developing, was given up to barbarism. The movement on the part of France put a different face on the matter. It looks like a dog in the manger policy to do nothing ourselves, but to be dissatisfied if another civilized country appears about to step in. The explanation is that the sources of the Nile must not fall into the hands of an enemy possessed of scientific knowledge. The power which possesses the mouth of any other great river controls the whole region that it drains; for though a thousand tributaries, great and small, may swell its volume, even if these could be dammed up or diverted, who could stop the rains all along its course? But the Nile is not dependent on tributaries or rains. It depends wholly on the great equatorial lakes; and as the power that controls the Victoria Nyanza could turn Egypt into a desert, it follows that the power which rules Egypt must extend to the Equator. Though this is now pretty well understood, the House of Commons would be most unwilling to sanction an expedition up the Nile, if it was likely to evoke a declaration of war from France. Consequently, although Lord Cromer urged it last Fall, it was delayed. The time was not propitious. The Armenian Question pressed for solution. France and Russia were close allies. England, having

elected not to take sides with either of the two Confederacies that divide Europe, found herself "splendidly isolated," with her old ally, Germany, angry enough to fight. The battle of Adowa changed everything. On the one hand, it was sure to set the dervishes in motion, to threaten Egypt as well as Kassala. On the other hand, it made every member of the Dreibund anxious that Britain should undertake a movement to the south, because of the indirect relief that would be thus given to Italy. Armenia had been dropped as beyond the power of Britain, and Russia now knows she may occupy the country whenever she likes. France is not likely to attack Britain, backed by Central Europe, for deciding to take steps to preserve Egypt from a possible invasion by the Khalifa's fanatics, even though she may intend to go a good deal farther south than even Khartoum. The expedition, at present, professes to have only Dongola as its terminus, but that is simply on the principle of one step at a time. Mr. John Morley attacks it, for it brings again into prominence the great blunder of his hief, in ordering the abandonment of the Soudan and delaying—till it was too late—an expedition to rescue Gordon. Much can be said in favour of retiring from Egypt altogether. Britain's task there is not only thankless, but it is purchased at the heavy cost of the enmity of France, and the sleepless enmity of a powerful next-door neighbour is not pleasant. Much can be said even in favour of retiring altogether from the Mediterranean. In time of war, Britain has now two other routes to the East, each of them infinitely less liable to interruption than the Suez Canal. But having discussed the whole matter, the mind of the nation is made up to hold on both to the Mediterranean and to Egypt. Mr. Gladstone himself was Premier when Arabi's insurrection was crushed and Egypt occupied. Well, the occupation of Egypt involves the control of the Nile all the way to its source; and as that means the extension of law and order over vast regions where the slave trade now flourishes and a religion of the kind that has shown its claws in Armenia reigns supreme, we can wish God-speed to the expedition. For the good of his own soul, indeed, it would be well if Lord Cromer made a public confession that he was wholly wrong and Gordon wholly right regarding the Soudan; or if not a confession, at least an *apologia*. It is easier to hold what you have already than to re-conquer, after the enemy has had ten years to destroy what had been painfully built up and to strengthen himself at every point. Besides, we have no General Gordon now, and even should Khartoum be taken, the administration of the Soudan is a job to tax any power, except perhaps Britain or Russia. India has been a splendid school for the former and Central Asia for the latter; and both Powers are thus able to command the services of agents trained to deal with savage and half-civilized fanatics. The world is now—thanks to science—so small that lawlessness in it is not to be tolerated any more than weeds in a garden.

While our sympathies are with every civilized power in a struggle with barbarism, the case is altogether different when a people with the capacity of improvement is defending its country against invasion.

The Trek Boers were and still are unattractive, but when their history is considered the marvel is that they remained white and Christian. So, the Abyssinians may be semi-savage, but seeing that they have been for twelve or thirteen centuries a rocky islet surrounded by a raging sea of Islam, the marvel is that they are still a nation, independent, and with probably as much of the spirit of Christianity as exists in the European nations, who traded on the Armenian massacres with the Sultan for influence with him, and—save the mark—for decorations of honour from his blood-stained hands. Italy miscalculated the forces opposed to her, and having found her mistake—should withdraw from Erythrea as England did from the Transvaal. King Humbert insists that a victory must first be gained. The national honour must be satisfied, not by acknowledging its error but by killing brave men, whose only sin is that they stand—in the name of God—for their king and the freedom of their native land! One is sorry for Italy, but she is on the wrong track. England has an account to settle with the man-stealing dervishes, and if that gives any relief to Italy, good and well; but surely she will never throw her sword into the scale against Abyssinia.

Canada has apparently been doing nothing, politically, for more than a year save wrestling with the problem of how to reconcile the two decisions of the Privy Council on the Manitoba School question. The Court decided the law of 1890 to be not only constitutional but even well suited to the Province. We are told that the same Court next decided that the law was worthless, and that the previous, admittedly bad school system must be re-established. Clearly, that cannot be the meaning of the second judgment, and as there is no doubt regarding the interpretation of the first, it ought not to be beyond the wit of man to ascertain the true meaning of the second. What has led to the long conflict of opinion on a matter apparently simple, and along what lines may a solution of the real problem at issue be found? The difficulty could not arise either in Britain or the States. The first is governed by a Parliament, and there being no written constitution, Parliament decides each case on its merits, and may by a vote disestablish a Church or abolish the Crown. The second is a Federation, according to a compact the terms of which the Supreme Court interprets, and when it gives a decision, the question at issue is ended. In neither country is jurisdiction on the same subject given to two legislative bodies. The constitution of Canada is more complex. It combines the characteristics of both countries, for it is a federation and yet is governed by a Parliament. Hence, when the Privy Council says that,—according to a clause in the written constitution—a provincial minority having had a privilege taken away which it once enjoyed, Parliament has jurisdiction to intervene and remedy the grievance, little wonder that eminent constitutional lawyers honestly differ as to what the attitude of Parliament should be. Dr. Weldon says that in every case it is discretionary for Parliament to intervene. Dr. Mills says that, if the Provincial Legislature refuses to act, though



courteously dealt with, then in the last resort, Parliament must intervene. These high constitutional authorities however agree that the present Parliament has not the moral right to intervene in the Manitoba case. That ought to be sufficient, for both are experts, they are on opposite sides politically, and there is no other authority of equal weight in Parliament, except Dalton McCarthy, and he is at one with them where they agree. Outside of Parliament, Sir Oliver Mowat is our greatest constitutional lawyer, and he has spoken strongly on the same side. How can the average member believe that it is his duty to pass irrevocable legislation, in the teeth of such authorities, on a subject on which his constituents have given him no instructions, and to do so, by means of all-night sittings of a Parliament feebly gasping out the sixth session of its existence? Why this unseemly haste? Are the people to be trusted neither on what is an important question, according to Sir Charles Tupper, nor on what is comparatively unimportant, according to Mr. Foster? Parliament does not lose one jot of its jurisdiction by resolving to investigate before acting. And if ever there was a question which demands more than a snap judgment, it is one which is so difficult that it has already broken all party lines, disrupted the Cabinet again and again, cleft the Conservative party in the country from top to bottom, and which may divide the Liberals, also, before it is settled. For finally settled it cannot be, with right respect to the two decisions of the Privy Council, until impartial investigation has been made, to learn whether a real as distinguished from a technical grievance was inflicted on the minority; and if it was, then to determine the nature of the grievance, and to suggest the remedy which would best meet the case. To try to force a settlement now is tyranny which should be resisted by all free men. Friendly conference, and if that fails, investigation by Royal Commission and a settlement on its Report; that is the line for statesmanship to take.

G.

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