

The Dominion Review.

VOL. III.

FEBRUARY, 1898.

NO. 2.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON CIVILIZATION.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

VI.

A FEW words in regard to the intellectual condition of the pagan Empire. The age of Augustus, we all know, was one of the most brilliant in history. It was an age of learning, elegance, and refinement. The brighter periods of literature have since taken name from Augustus. The age which gave to the world those two great luminaries in the hemisphere of letters, Bacon and Shakespeare, is still called the Augustan Age of English literature.

Greece was still a land of letters. Though plundered of her richest ornaments, and dependent for protection on Rome, Athens could still boast of schools and scholars worthy of her fairest days. Alexandria was also a seat of learning. Regarding the Germans, Celts, and Britons, although comparatively unenlightened, Moshien tells us "it is certain they were not destitute of learned and ingenious men." Among the Gauls, the people of Marseilles had long acquired a shining reputation for their progress in the sciences, and there is no doubt that the neighboring countries received the benefit of their instruction. . . . The Romans, indeed, introduced letters and philosophy into all the provinces which submitted to their victorious arms, in order to soften the rough manners of the savage nations, and infuse in them imperceptibly the sentiment and feelings of humanity" ("Ecl. Hist," i. 36).

After the age of Augustus there was an intellectual decline. "The schooled and lettered amateur," says Renan, "replaced the creative and original student." Intelligent society continued, however, and men like Lucilius, Pliny, Gallio, and the Senecas still lived to adorn the age. After the accession of Trajan this decay of intellect and degeneracy of erudition was arrested, and philosophy and letters were restored, in some degree, to their former lustre. Looking forward from the middle of the first century, Renan exclaims, "Plutarch, Epictetus, Dionysius the golden-mouthed, Quintilian, Pliny the Younger, Tacitus, Juvenal, Rufus of Ephesus, Aretalus, Galen, Ptolemy, Hypsicles, Theon, and Lucan will renew the palmy days of Greece—not that inimitable Greece which existed but once for the simultaneous delight and despair of all who love the beautiful, but a Greece abounding, which will mingle her own

gifts with the Roman genius, and produce works of novelty and originality, yet able to charm the world" ("Apostles," 268-9).

The accurate historian Hallam, speaking of the times of Marcus Aurelius, says: "There were men who made the age famous—grave lawyers, judicious historians, wise philosophers; the name of learning was honorable, its professors were encouraged, and along the vast surface of the Roman Empire was, perhaps, a greater number whose minds were cultivated by intellectual discipline than under the more brilliant reign of the Cæsars" ("Middle Ages," 451).

From the death of Marcus Aurelius the arts and sciences declined rapidly; philosophy became perverted, the Latin language corrupted, and the intellectual condition disheartening in the extreme. It was, we must here add, about this time that Christianity, although not yet established, began to be strongly felt in the Empire. However it may be explained, the fact is undeniable that the progress of this system of faith corresponded with decay of intellect, and its complete ascendancy was succeeded by a night of mental and moral darkness. "From the death of Marcus Aurelius," says Lecky, "about which time Christianity assumed an important influence in the Roman world, the decadence of the Empire was rapid and almost uninterrupted" ("History Morals," ii. 12).

It has been often said that Rome made herself rich by conquest and plunder. This is true; and the remark applies not only to all the great nations of antiquity, but to not a few of modern times, in which Christianity has been the popular faith. It would be unjust, however, not to admit that the policy of the pagan Empire toward the conquered provinces was generally characterized by wisdom and justice. Speaking of the reign of Hadrian and the two Antonies, Gibbon says: "By every honorable expedient they invited the friendship of the barbarians, and endeavored to convince mankind that the Roman power, raised above the temptation of conquest, was actuated only by the love of order and justice. During a long reign of forty-three years their various labors were crowned with success; and if we except a few slight hostilities that served to exercise the legions of the frontier, the reigns of Hadrian and Antonius Pius offer the fair prospect of universal peace. The Roman name was revered among the most remote nations of the earth. The fiercest barbarians submitted their differences to the arbitration of the emperor, and we are informed by a contemporary historian that he had seen ambassadors who were refused the honor which they came to solicit, of being admitted into the rank of subject" ("Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," ch. i. p. 22).

"If a man were called to fix the period," says the same author, "in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian . . . to the accession of Commodus" (Ibid, ch. ii. p. 73).

THAT
flagra
exagge
confine
demne
been r
of barl
to illus
better
wholly
has ca
literatu
Wha
thousa
estima
ninetee
Hav
and du
ing to
sceptre
of this
and a h
to exp
centuri
and glo
Alth
Empire
contrib
day," c
council
and the
part of
Early i
the Em
That
morally
It is no
or bene
their fa
hearts
society
custom
tenden
they es

VII.

THAT there were many evils in the pagan Empire, and great wrongs and flagrant vices, does not admit of doubt; but that they have been greatly exaggerated; "that in some instances vices and indulgences, which were confined chiefly to certain classes, and which were abhorred and condemned by the better class, as they are by the same class to-day, have been represented as the general practices of the age; that isolated cases of barbarity and anomalous features of society have been fastened upon to illustrate the general character and conduct of the Romans, while the better and brighter side of life in the pagan Empire has been almost wholly concealed by Christian writers, no one, I think, will deny who has carefully studied the history of Rome and is familiar with theological literature.

What a picture of *this* age could be presented, if some writer, two thousand years hence, should adopt the same method in forming an estimate of the character of the people of the United States in the nineteenth century!

Having noticed the condition of the world when Christianity appeared, and during the time it was extending its peaceful conquests, and preparing to mount the throne of the Cæsars and grasp from paganism the sceptre of imperial power, it is time to inquire whether the ascendancy of this religion was followed by a more brilliant genius, a purer morality and a higher civilization. If it were of divine origin, or if it were adapted to expand the mind and purify the heart, the Christians of the first few centuries had a right, looking forward, to expect and predict such grand and glorious results.

Although it had its origin in an obscure province of the Roman Empire, various causes, which it is no part of our present task to explain, contributed to the rapid progress of Christianity. "We are but of yesterday," exclaimed Tertullian, "and we fill all your cities, islands, forts, councils, even the camps themselves, the decuries, the palaces, the senate, and the forum." Its influence, as I have already remarked, in the latter part of the second century "was great and universally acknowledged." Early in the fourth century it was proclaimed the established religion of the Empire.

That the early devotees of the Christian religion were in some respects morally superior to the pagans around them, I am disposed to believe. It is not, however, necessary to suppose Christianity divine in its origin, or beneficent in its general tendency, to explain this fact. Attached to their faith with a devotion which new religions generally inspire in the hearts of their early converts, living apart, as far as possible, from the society of the pagans, believing that their forms and ceremonies, their customs, their pleasures, and even their learning were degrading in their tendency and displeasing in the sight of God, even if they lost much, they escaped many of the corrupting influences of the times; while such

a life unquestionably involved a sacrifice of many of the advantages of culture and was certainly unfavorable to the breadth and catholicity of thought, it drew the devotees more closely together, developed feelings of friendship and fraternity, and naturally made them watchful and careful of their conduct, lest an unguarded word or a thoughtless act should furnish the pagans with weapons against their faith. In the purity of the early Christians—although, as Mosheim frankly admits, it has been greatly exaggerated—there is nothing remarkable. And they who judge Christianity simply from the moral purity of the men who first embraced it use an argument by which many a false and injurious system could be made to appear of beneficent tendency quite as plausibly as the Christian system. If we would judge inductively the worth of any system we must wait until it has been tested by being brought in contact with the corruptions and temptations of social life; for its true value consists in its power to instruct men in the right and to furnish motives to impel men to the love of truth and the practice of virtue.

As we have examined the condition of Rome under paganism, when paganism had, for hundreds of years, been the established faith, and when there had, consequently, been time for the development of all its powers and tendencies, it is but fair to glance at the Empire when it was under Christianity, when all other religions were obliged to succumb to its irresistible march, when for more than ten centuries every opportunity existed for it to demonstrate its power to elevate the mind of man.

As we have seen, the gladiatorial games were the worst features of the old pagan society. Religious liberty was one of the very best. As Mr. Lecky has remarked, it was the nobler part which in the Christian Empire was first destroyed. Theodosius the Great, who suppressed all diversity of worship throughout the Empire, and who was very much under the influence of the clergy, compelled his barbarian prisoners to fight as gladiators. These disgraceful exhibitions were kept up fully a century after the establishment of Christianity. Combats of men with wild beasts were continued till the end of the seventh century. Only when these amusements had become almost obsolete through the difficulty of obtaining wild animals, were they formally condemned by an ecclesiastical council. That the denunciation of the gladiatorial exhibitions by the Fathers assisted in creating a sentiment against them is not to be denied, however.

The practice of the sale of children, which was condemned and prohibited under the pagan Diocletian, although censured by the Fathers, was encouraged and authorized under Constantine and continued long after the time of Theodosius, "nor does any Christian emperor appear to have enforced the humane enactment of Diocletian."

From the first, Christian writers condemned suicide, yet thousands were encouraged to undermine their constitutions and to shorten their lives by strange austerities, and we read that in the fourth century they challenged and insulted assemblies of pagans to provoke them to put

Christ
thous
upon
would
condem
stance
who c

The
the sa
crucifi
were
charac
relatio
pagan
was th
his m
alive,
forma
docilit
Fathe
that t
him to
the se
to mit
Christ
numbe
under
gion u
aboliti

Dur
the po
voted

To a
had i
which
in Egy
lunatic
hamme
tendon
to the

Just
causes
Church
ceeding
thousa
the mu

Christians to death. According to St. Augustine, they assembled by thousands and destroyed themselves by leaping from overhanging cliffs upon the rocks below, believing that was a kind of martyrdom which would render certain the salvation of their souls. Notwithstanding the condemnation by the Fathers of the pagan view, that there were circumstances justifying suicide, the Church did not hesitate to canonize women who committed suicide to protect their virtue.

The condition of slaves under the Christian system remained essentially the same for two hundred years. The abolition of the punishment of crucifixion and the law forbidding the separation of families of slaves were beneficent measures. There were others, however, of a different character. For instance, if a slave and his mistress had improper relations, the woman was executed and the slave burnt alive. Under paganism the woman was simply reduced to slavery. Another bad law was that of Gratian, which was to the effect that any slave who accused his master of any offence, high treason alone excepted, should be burnt alive, without any inquiry into the justice of the charge. Slavery was formally and distinctly recognized by Christianity, and it encouraged docility and passive obedience on the part of the slave. None of the Fathers condemned it as the Essenes did in the first century. It is true that the Church, by creating a new relation for the slave, by allowing him to participate in the religious service, and by giving prominence to the servile virtues which were encouraged by monastic life, did something to mitigate the hardships of slave life, yet the system continued under Christianity eight hundred years from the time of Constantine, and the number subject to it, historians have declared, was greater in the Empire under Christianity than under paganism. Shall we be told that a religion under which slavery flourished for nearly a thousand years led to the abolition of the institution?

During the reign of Christianity, no doubt, admirable institutions for the poor were founded, and monkish corporations were formed and devoted to deeds of love.

To a great extent this was due to the same pure benevolence which had its source in the human soul wherever civilized man is found, and which had prompted to similiar efforts on a less extensive scale, perhaps, in Egypt, India, Judea, Greece and pagan Rome. The credit of founding lunatic asylums, so often claimed for Christianity, belongs to the Mohammedans of the seventh century. No lunatic asylum existed in Christendom until the fifteenth century, and then in places in close proximity to the Mohammedans.

Just as the gratuitous distribution of corn was among the prominent causes of idleness and corruption in pagan Rome, so the charity of the Church, by multiplying beggars and promoting indolence, had an exceedingly injurious influence in the Christian Empire. Consider the thousands without means withdrawn from the fields of productive labor, the multitudes of saints wandering about the country begging money to

give to beggars, encouraging indiscriminate alms-giving, habits of improvidence, admiration for poverty, and antipathy to labor.

"The Monastic movement," Gibbon tells us, "was not less rapid or universal than that of Christianity itself." One small Egyptian city devoted itself almost wholly to ascetic life, and in its monasteries lived ten thousand monks and twenty thousand virgins. At the close of the fourth century, the monastic population of Egypt equalled the entire population of its cities.

The Empire swarmed with men whose only business was to wander from place to place, asking alms and collecting stories of miracles and peculiarities of the saints for the benefit of the Church. "A hideous, sordid, and emaciated maniac, without knowledge, without patriotism, without natural affection, passing his life in a long routine of useless and atrocious self-torture, and quailing before the ghastly phantoms of his delirious brain, had become the ideal of the nations which had known the writings of Plato and Cicero and the lives of Socrates and Cato" (Lecky's "Morals," ii. p. 107). To separate from his family if he had one, and to show no regard to the mother that bore him, were thought by the hermit as the most acceptable offering he could make to God.

The feeling that prevailed toward woman is illustrated by the story of a monk who was travelling with his mother, and coming to a stream which he had to cross, he wrapped his hands in cloth, lest in conveying her across the water, he should touch his mother, and thereby disturb the equilibrium of his saintly nature.

A law of Justinian prohibited parents from restraining their children from entering monasteries. Exhorted by the fathers, multitudes of women adopted the ascetic life. Some of the Fathers wrote treatises to show that those who entered monasteries contrary to the wishes of their parents were more worthy than those who did so unopposed by parental authority. St. Chrysostom said damnation awaited those who should attempt to prevent their children entering the institutions.

Practised with no object except to make sure of a place in heaven, the effects of this asceticism must have been very injurious on the general character of its devotees.

The estimate of woman was very low in the Christian Empire. "Woman was represented as the door of hell, as the mother of all human ills. She should be ashamed of the very thought that she is a woman. She should live in continual penance on account of the curses she had brought upon the world. She should be ashamed of her dress, for it is the memorial of her fall. She should especially be ashamed of her beauty, for it is the most potent instrument of the demon. . . . Women were even forbidden by a provincial council, in the sixth century, on account of their impurity, to receive the eucharist in their naked hands. Their essentially subordinate position was continually maintained.

"It is probable that this teaching had its part in determining the principles of legislation concerning the sex. The pagan laws during the

Empi
and t
fore
early
were
In ad
Catho
of the
rende
of pro
riage
maint
had fr
them
appea
find la
and a
these
close
the pr
wome
and th
sooner
338-3
"N
institu
confer

UNDER
was co
Christ
refuse
countr
sistent
Rome
and h
an imp
Christi
"As
life, an
all pat
and wa
("Hist
"Th
were e

Empire had been continually repealing the old disabilities of woman, and the legislative movement in their favor continued with unabated force from Constantine to Justinian, and appeared also in some of the early laws of the barbarians. But in the whole feudal legislation, women were placed in a much lower legal position than in the pagan Empire. In addition to the personal restrictions which grew necessarily out of the Catholic Christian doctrines concerning divorce, and the subordination of the weaker sex, we find numerous and stringent enactments, which rendered it impossible for women to succeed to any considerable amount of property, and which almost reduced them to the alternative of marriage or a nunnery. The complete inferiority of the sex was continually maintained by law; and that generous public opinion which in Rome had frequently revolted against the injustice done to girls, in depriving them of the greater part of the inheritance of their fathers, totally disappeared. Wherever the canon law has been the basis of legislation, we find laws of succession sacrificing the interests of daughters and of wives, and a state of public opinion which has been formed and regulated by these laws; nor was any serious attempt made to abolish them till the close of the last century. The French Revolutionists, though rejecting the proposal of Siéyès and Condorcet to accord political emancipation to women, established at least an equal succession of sons and daughters, and thus initiated a great reformation of both law and opinion, which sooner or later must traverse the world" (Lecky's "Hist. Morals," ii., 338-340).

"No society," says Maine, "which preserves any tincture of Christian institutions is likely to restore to married women the personal liberty conferred on them by the middle Roman law" ("Ancient Law," 158).

VIII.

UNDER Christianity patriotism, so necessary to the defense of the state, was continually discouraged. The heroes of Rome could inspire the Christians with no admiration, and they steadfastly, from the first, refused to take part in any demonstrations expressive of attachment to country; with a home and a country in another world, they were, consistently enough, indifferent to the secular interests of this. When Rome was invaded by the Vandal, the invasion was regarded "as a just and heaven-commissioned visitation," and "resistance a vain, almost an impious struggle to avert inevitable punishment" (Milman's "Latin Christianity," ii. 206).

"Asceticism, drawing all the enthusiasm of Christendom to the desert life, and elevating as an ideal the extreme and absolute abnegation of all patriotism, formed," says Lecky, "the culmination of the movement, and was undoubtedly one cause of the downfall of the Roman Empire" ("Hist. Morals," ii. 141).

"The genius and the virtue that might have defended the Empire were engaged in fierce disputes about the Pelagian controversy, at the

very time when Alaric was encircling Rome with his armies, and there was no subtlety of theological metaphysics which did not kindle a deeper interest in the Christian leaders than the throes of their expiring country. The moral enthusiasm that in other days would have fired the armies of Rome with an invincible valor, impelled thousands to abandon their country and their homes, and consume the weary hours in a long routine of useless and horrible mascerations. . . . Many of the Christians contemplated, with an indifference that almost amounted to complacency, what they regarded as the predicted ruin of the city of the fallen gods. . . . The immortal past of Thermopylæ was surrendered without a struggle to the Goths. A pagan writer accused the monks of having betrayed it. It is more probable that they had absorbed or diverted the heroism that in other days would have defended it" (Ibid, 142-3). How evident it is that the subversion of the Roman, to which the darkness of the Middle Ages was so largely due, was encouraged by the policy, if not sometimes aided, by the direct efforts of the Christian Church.

The asceticism which I have mentioned was frequently followed by the opposite extreme, and the greatest licentiousness prevailed. Love feasts became scenes of drunkenness and debauchery, and as such were kept up for centuries. Commemoration of martyrs became scenes of scandalous dissipation. Thousands of the clergy while professing celibacy kept mistresses in their houses under all sorts of false but pious pretexis. Monks and virgins lived together on terms of closest intimacy, hypocritically claiming that so great was their piety that they could innocently share the same bed. Women deserted their husbands to live with new lovers. Open prostitution was common. "The world," says Hallam, "grew accustomed to dangerous alternations of extreme asceticism and gross vice, and sometimes, as in the case of Antioch, it was the most vicious and luxurious cities that produced the most numerous anchorites. . . . Public opinion was so low, that many forms of vice attracted little condemnation and punishment, while undoubted belief in the absolving efficacy of superstitious rites calmed the imagination and allayed the terrors of conscience" ("Middle Ages," p. 163).

An Italian bishop of the tenth century said that if he were to enforce the canons against unchaste people administering the rites of the Church, that duty would be reserved for boys alone; and if he were to extend the canons against bastards, they too would be excluded. At one time the clergy almost universally kept concubines, and were systematically taxed therefor. One abbot was found to have seventeen illegitimate children in one village. Another abbot kept seventy concubines. The Bishop of Liege had sixty-five illegitimate children. The nunneries were brothels; infanticide within their walls was common. Incest was so prevalent among the clergy that it was necessary again and again to enact that no priest should live with his mother or sister. Unnatural vice was common, especially among the clergy. Indeed, Mosheim, Hallam, Lecky, and other impartial writers declare that no adequate

idea
"L
I
civil
gaine
civil
coerc
and t
penal
Chris
were
were
other
centu
differ
equal
Co
prohi
laws,
of the
pagan
temp
Hear
that
where
tempt
tion o
of all
be an
The p
destr
to ru
were
stan
power
argu
who
incur
mous
Wh
syste
every
Wh
Chris
which
300,0

idea can be formed of the depravity of the times of which I speak. (See "Lecky's Morals," ii. 348-355.)

I have already remarked that one of the best features of the pagan civilization—religious freedom—was destroyed as soon as Christianity gained an ascendancy. "From the very moment the Church obtained civil power under Constantine," says Lecky, "the general principle of coercion was admitted and acted on both against the Jews, the heretics, and the pagans" ("Hist. Rationalism," ii. 32). Constantine made it penal for any Christian to become a Jew. Any Jew who married a Christian incurred the penalty of death. Arian and Donatist parties were forbidden to assemble, their writings were burnt, and many of them were condemned to death. "'See how these Christians love one another,' was the just and striking exclamation of the heathen in the first century. 'There are no wild beasts so ferocious as Christians who differ concerning their faith,' was the equally striking and probably equally just exclamation of the heathen of the fourth century" (Ib.)

Constantine did all he could to extirpate paganism by violence. He prohibited every form of pagan worship. Constantius made additional laws, forbidding the pagans to perform in public or in private the rites of their religion. Under Theodosius—who began his reign in 379—the pagans were deprived of all offices, their worship forbidden, and their temples destroyed. The appeals of the pagans were made in vain. Heartrending indeed are the accounts of the persecutions of the pagans that lived in the country districts remote from the centres of population where the old religion had yet a stronghold. They pleaded that the temple was to them "the very eye of nature, the symbol and manifestation of an ever-present Deity, the solace of all their troubles, the holiest of all their joys. If it was overthrown, their dearest association would be annihilated. The tie that linked them to the dead would be severed. The poetry of life, the consolation of labor, the source of faith would be destroyed." But their pleas availed naught; their temples were reduced to ruins and their worship absolutely prohibited. These persecutions were urged on by the Fathers of the Church. Eusebius eulogized Constantine for his edicts against pagan worship. Augustine used all the power of his brilliant mind to fan the flame of persecution. He drew his argument in its favor from the Old and New Testaments alike. Any one who celebrated the rites of the pagan religion in his time, he declared, incurred the penalty of death, and this sentence, he said, was unanimously applauded by the whole Christian Church (Gibbon, chap. xxv).

When paganism was suppressed, the persecuting spirit of the Christian system exhibited itself in the attempt made to extirpate, by violence, every heresy that appeared.

What innumerable multitudes have suffered and perished that the Christian religion might flourish. The transubstantiation controversy, which raged at intervals all over Christendom, cost the lives of between 300,000 and 400,000 human beings. The famous image controversy

cost 50,000 lives. During the persecutions instigated in the ninth century against the Manicheans, there fell in Greece, it has been computed, 100,000 persons. The loss of life by the "Crusades" was not less, probably, than 5,000,000. There were seven distinct expeditions. "The European nations," says Mosheim, "were deprived of the greatest part of their inhabitants by these ill-judged expeditions." . . . "Here the face of Europe was totally changed and all things were thrown into the utmost confusion" ("Ecc. Hist.," vol. i., p. 257). Bernard, whose zeal contributed largely to arouse Europe to the second crusade, says that when the expedition started "scarcely one man was left for the consolation of seven widows."

For centuries the fairest regions of earth were reddened with human blood and strewed with human skulls. The extermination of the Albigenes; the expatriation of the Moriscoes, the unfortunate remnant of the Moorish nation, from Spain; the terrible persecution of the Jews during the Middle Ages, and their final expulsion from Spain and Portugal; the famous schism which preceded the burning of Huss and Jerome of Prague, and the wars of Hussites that followed (costing not fewer than 150,000 lives); the destruction of 12,000,000 unoffending aborigines by Cortez, Pizarro, and their priestly abettors; the massacre of St. Bartholemew, costing probably 40,000 lives (a low estimate); the killing of 50,000 in the Netherlands, in the reign of Charles V, and thousands more under the reign of his heartless son; the burning of 31,000, and the killing or torturing by other modes, 290,000 more by the Inquisition, in Spain alone; the burning, hanging, and otherwise destroying of hundreds of thousands, in obedience, as was supposed, to the Bible command, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live"; the persecutions in England, Scotland, and Ireland (not to speak of our own country) since the Reformation, are a comparatively few of the enormities that can be appealed to in illustration of the intolerance which has followed the ascendancy of Christianity, wherever it has gained a foot-hold and has prevailed, unchecked by opposing influences. No wonder Baxter exclaimed: "*Blood, blood, blood stains every page.*"

We will consider now as briefly as possible, the attitude which Christianity in the early ages assumed toward learning, and give some of the facts in the history of letters, that the real influence of this system on intellectual pursuits may be fairly seen.

No one will claim that "primitive Christianity" had any sympathy with science. There were, it is true, a few of the Fathers, who, like Justin Martyr, in becoming Christians could not blind their eyes to the merit of the noble literature in which they had been educated; but generally the Christians of the early ages felt only contempt for the learning of the day. Many were for abolishing all philosophy and erudition from the limits of the Church, and hence, as Mosheim says, "The beginning of that unhappy contest between faith and reason, religion and philosophy, piety and genius, which increased in succeeding ages,

and is
treme

F
sion
was e
ticula
it was
expres
Disrac

The
by bis
purpo
cultiva
duties
Serap
turies,
"and
indign
Many
could
ficatio
intelle
which
"dive
more a
to obt

The
decay
society
one wh
mortifi
theory
science
view, c
difficul
ture w
and the
dernes

and is prolonged even to our times with a violence which renders it extremely difficult to be brought to a conclusion" ("Ecc. Hist.," i. 59).

For pagan learning, the Christians generally had the strongest aversion. Among the monks, when they were under the vow of silence, it was customary with them in asking for any pagan work, to make a particular sign, which consisted in scratching the ears like a dog, to which it was thought the pagans should be compared. In this manner they expressed an itching for those dogs, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid. (See Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature.")

The fourth Council of Carthage forbade the reading of secular books by bishops. Jerome condemned the perusal of them except for pious purposes. The physical sciences were unqualifiedly condemned, as their cultivation was considered incompatible with the practice of religious duties. The Greek schools of medicine were closed. The Alexandrian Serapion, with its libraries and its museum, the accumulation of centuries, was destroyed under the archiepiscopate of Theophilus, A.D. 389, "and twenty years afterwards the empty shelves excited the regret and indignation of every intelligent spectator" (Ency. Brit., art. Alexandria). Many of the bishops in the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, it is said, could not write their names. Ignorance was not considered a disqualification for ordination. No importance was attached to anything of an intellectual character except the childish and unintelligible controversies which were carried on for centuries. "These disputes," says Hallam, "diverted studious minds from profane literature and narrowed down more and more the circle of that knowledge which they were desirous to obtain" ("Middle Ages," p. 453).

The monastic movement contributed to the decline of letters and decay of intellect. "I cannot conceive," says Hallam, "any state of society more adverse to the intellectual improvement of mankind, than one which admitted no middle line between dissoluteness and fanatical mortifications. . . . After the introduction of monkery with its unsocial theory of duties, the serious and reflecting part of mankind, on whom science most relies, were turned to habits which, in the most favorable view, could not quicken the intellectual energies; and it might be a difficult question whether the cultivators and admirers of useful literature were less likely to be found among the profligate citizens of Rome and their barbarous conquerors, or the melancholy recluses of the wilderness" ("Middle Ages," p. 453).

(To be continued.)

CONFUCIUS, THE AGNOSTIC.*

BY CLELIA.

CONFUCIUS, we are told, was the son, in second nuptials, of a septuagenarian father. He was born 551 B.C., and in due course of nature was left in sole charge of his widowed mother. It would be interesting to ascertain how often it occurs that a son begotten in old age inherits an old head on his young shoulders. This seemed to be the case with Confucius, unless we are to attribute wholly to his good and clever mother, who devoted herself to bringing up her son, his early gravity and prudence, application to study, and proficiency in history and law. His good disposition, combined with his mother's family influence, early procured for him government employment, and he rose rapidly to important offices. It was then the feudal age of China, and the country was rent and distracted by the quarrels and wars of dukes, marquises and princelets; though in respect of literary culture, freedom of thought and general civilization, that remote part of Asia, now 2,400 years ago, had advanced immeasurably beyond our Europe of even so late as four hundred years ago. For the old religions of China were then hardly believed in; there was religious toleration and freedom from that sacerdotal tyranny which lay so heavy on Europe even to our times. But for the barbarism that remained, Confucius perceived that the only remedy was still the removal of ignorance. So he devoted all the time he could spare from his employment and his studies to teaching. At the age of 34 he became Prime Minister to the Duke of Lu; but the country becoming distracted by civil war, which prevented reform, he refused all offices and maintained himself as a student and teacher for fifteen years, and gained great influence throughout China. Then he became Premier of Lu, and now also head of the criminal department. In this position, "he not only fearlessly repressed the iniquities and oppressions of many great barons, but dismantled their fortified castles, and so let light into some very dark places and cruel tyrannies." But, "his judicious administration and enforcement of impartial justice made him very powerful enemies, and he was too popular to please an indifferent ruler and venal courtiers." After six years, finding himself left with only the name of power, he resigned. Years of wandering followed, from state to state, till in his 69th year he settled down to the completion of his literary tasks, to teaching all who would hear him, and to await death.

In the prime of life, he had a celebrated interview with the then aged

*"Short Studies of the Science of Comparative Religions, embracing all the Religions of Asia." By Major-General J. G. R. Forlong, F.R.S.E., F.R.A.S., M.A.I., &c., author of "Rivers of Life." Bernard Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly.

Lao-tze, founder of Taoism, a transcendental and unpractical mystic religion, with renunciation for its standard of duty and absorption in Tao or "God the Absolute" for its reward. The revered recluse had already heard of Confucius's rising fame, and was pleased to see him and expound his faith to him personally. On his part, Confucius said, "I come to listen with all the respect due to age and great experience But on no account to contradict." After the interview "it is said that Confucius refused for three days to give any opinion upon the good old sage's eloquently stated views, and, at last, explained that 'he had simply listened with helpless gaze and open-mouthed wonder; amazed that so learned and experienced an old man should thus base the hopes of the race, and the conduct of mankind on phantoms and mere speculative ideas.'" The absorption in Tao or "God the Absolute," he described as "a flight into boundless space."

In short, Confucius's own attitude was that of "plain, solid and practical agnosticism," surprisingly modern European in tone. "When we are not cognizant of the facts and fully assured thereof, let us be silent and tell the busy multitudes not to waste their substance, abilities, and time, on what is very doubtful and dark, but to study Nature's Laws and Order, which are clear, divine and universal, and live in accordance therewith." "We must all give ourselves up earnestly to the duties due to our fellows, and respect their religious customs and spiritual leanings; but let us keep ourselves apart from these last, and curb rather than encourage speculative or pious theories concerning gods and spirits, good and bad, and the origin and end of all things." He humbly thought he was "part of a stupendous mechanism not given to man to understand," but which might indefinitely be called *Ti-en*, the Heavens or Sky-Power, and all that it enshrouded or mayhap governed.

This seed of "cold unemotional agnosticism" was sown successfully among a race, whom our author thus describes: "Like ourselves, they diligently in private and public practised ancient and well-defined rites and ceremonies, which comforted them in troubles and sorrows; rites and duties which their pious ancestors had severely enjoined, and which had an assured commercial value to themselves, their priests, and all purveyors of temple and funereal services." His statesmanlike instinct preferred not directly to attack and attempt the overthrow of this complex condition of affairs. "His life and work is a proof that to permanently and successfully move a people we must study their idiosyncracies, and move along with the current of their thoughts and feelings, and so guide the stream gently into such new channels as are capable of containing it." Thus he would not reject such phrases as "The gods revealing themselves to us," or "Divine inspiration," but he would explain them away as terms for certain of our own feelings. And he "occasionally speaks with deference of the all-prevailing beliefs in deities and divination." And thus he writes of sacrifices, etc.: "The dominant idea of sacrifices to heaven and earth is that they set forth

and extend a feeling of reverent love towards the world of spirits (powers of nature); whilst the summer and autumn sacrifices in the ancestral temple give expression to the affection which should exist between the members of a family. The placing of food beside corpses merely indicates the love entertained by the mourners, etc." We almost seem to hear a deferential Broad Church clergyman interpreting the Christian creeds in some higher sense, to pave the way for the evolution and progress of his flock.

Another reason for this tone was that Confucius was a great lover of antiquity and custom. Some one complained to him of the cruelty of sacrificing a lamb. He replied, "You love the lamb, I the ceremony." When his mother died, he retired from all public duties for three years, and so, by his example, restored and perpetuated a custom which had fallen into disuse. He disclaims all originality in his writings. He is merely an industrious student of the history and customs of his nation, and an eclectic compiler of all that tends to edification in the sayings and doings of preceding generations.

However he may touch upon other matters in these works, his great aim is to direct his followers' minds from idle speculations to the practice of virtue. His morality is the ordinary morality of sensible good-natured men the world over. It is not preached mingled with mysticism and poetry, but in plain terms as if by Benjamin Franklin. He says himself, "Nothing can be more natural or simple than the principles of morality I seek to inculcate. Neither is there anything new in my teaching." Therefore, as our author says, "It would tire the reader to rehearse the maxims baldly." A few will go a long way: "There is no use attempting to help those who cannot help themselves. Repine not at obscurity, but seek to deserve fame. Reprove yourself liberally but others sparingly," etc., etc. It is more interesting to us to observe that he put the "Golden Rule" in a negative form: "What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to them." This he reiterates several times in his works as "The principle with which, as with a measuring square, to regulate one's conduct." He objected also to the teaching of Lao-tze, that "Injury should be recompensed by kindness," saying that it was only fitting to "recompense injury by justice." This further differentiates his moral code from the Christian. "Monks and all anchorites he vigorously condemned as misguided men shirking life's duties and living on others."

Now, about the man himself. "He had an iron constitution, tall commanding presence, powerful frame, dignified bearing, darkish complexion, small piercing eyes, full sonorous voice, with a grave and usually benevolent expression." We have known him already as a dutiful son, an able and righteous administrator, a constant teacher of virtue, and it is surprising to learn that he was also an adept at gymnastic exercises and a skilful charioteer. He hunted wild game and defended the practice as calling forth skill, decision, bravery, and necessary manly virtues.

He w
by C
age:

In t
round
prayer
and m
the gr
round
favorit
him as
a wall
gatewa
by em

—T

He was a musician and a poet. Here is one of his sonnets, translated by General Alexander, improvised to a lute accompaniment in his old age :

Ah, woe is me ! whatever meets mine eye
Speaks to the soul and tells me all must die :
So it is ruled.

The very life which genial summer brings
Preludes the death which from cold winter springs ;

Ah me ! Ah me !

Can man e'er hope to light a quenchless flame,
To live for ever linked with endless fame ?

Oh, idle thought !

Summer returns, chill winter hides his head.
The sun once more tints the grey morn with red,
The ebon night is turned to brightest day,
Back to the river ocean yields its prey ;

So on for ever.

But when man leaves this world he comes no more,
Behind is all he loves—he knows not what before ;

All, all is dark !

In the 73rd year of his age, Confucius calmly breathed his last, surrounded by numerous loving and admiring disciples. He uttered no prayer, and betrayed no apprehension. He was buried with vast pomp, and multitudes reared dwellings beside his grave, and mourned him as the great Father. His tomb became a nation's sepulchre, and surrounded by befitting temples, halls, and great courts, it is still the favorite resort of hundreds of thousands of pilgrims, who almost worship him as semi-divine. His grave is a large and lofty mound, situated in a walled triangle, admission to which is given through a magnificent gateway and avenue of cypresses, leading up to a marble statue erected by emperors of the Sung dynasty, and bearing the inscription :

"The Most Sagely Ancient Teacher,
The All Accomplished,
and
All informed King."

—*The Agnostic Journal.*

RELIGIOUS TEACHING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A Paper read by Rev. Dr. Cochrane, of Brantford, at the Knox College Alumni Conference, Feb. 4, 1898.

The Duty of the State to Educate Children.

THE Public School as it exists in Canada and the United States is a State institution organized, supported and governed for the purpose of providing what we call a common school education, which all classes require, whatever may be their sphere in life. Its support comes from taxation levied upon every citizen no matter what his religious belief, or whether he has any such belief at all, or whether the parties have children to send to the Public schools or not. Nor is there any injustice in such compulsory taxation, for if the masses are allowed to grow up in ignorance, anarchy and vice will eventually undermine and destroy the body politic. Such being the case, the question arises, shall the Bible be used in the Public school, and, if so, to what extent? Shall it be simply a reading book, without note or comment upon the part of the teacher, or with such bare explanation of its meaning as is demanded to make its truth understood by the youngest scholar? Or shall it be read consecutively or in selected portions daily and its meaning explained, as in the case of other text-books, either by the regularly appointed teachers in school hours or by clergymen after the secular teaching of the day is ended, and under such regulations as are now in existence or others that may from time to time be framed?

If the State Teaches Religion It must Control Religion.

In countries where the population is wholly or largely Protestant, belonging to one church and attached to one creed, there is comparatively little difficulty in teaching religion and using the Bible as a regular text-book for instruction in doctrine as well as morals. Such was the case in Presbyterian Scotland half a century ago, although not so much at the present day, when other denominations have increased in numbers and influence. But the condition of affairs is radically different on the continent of America, where denominations are multiplied and the adherents of each conscientiously believe their doctrines and policy to be the best. And if it is granted that it is incumbent on the State to teach religion in the Public schools, it is equally the province of the State to control the religion of the people, determine what the true religion is, appoint and support out of State funds the clergymen, and guard against the intrusion of heresy.

But it is Not the Province of the State to Teach Religion.

This is the ground taken by those who advocate church and State connection, and certainly, if we admit the right of the State to legislate in the one case we

must lo
high mo
book,
acquain
desirabl
not see
The nu
the term
every d
church
of all d
that reli
greater,
without
and a fe
of the S
has, in
foremos
gate rel
of the U

Of th
otherwi

(1) T
the ent
but a st
because
religiou
as bu
schools

(2) T
and pol
as they
there is
our Pu
some e
their p
histori

must logically admit its force in the other. No one doubts for a moment the high motives that animate very many who insist upon using the Bible as a textbook, not to teach reading, but to make the mind of youth intelligently acquainted with the claims of religion. But that it is practicable, however desirable, to attempt such a thing in view of the diverse creeds that exist does not seem to be the growing opinion of the leading minds in church and State. The number indeed who insist upon religious instruction in the fullest sense of the term is exceedingly few, at least among Protestants, and becoming fewer every day, while in the old world there are indications that the days of State churches as they now exist are coming to an end. What the Canadian churches of all denominations have accomplished without fear or favor of the State proves that religion is not only purer, but Christian effort and liberality immeasurably greater, where the people not only choose their own pastors, but support them without the endowments of the State. The view held by Dr. Ralph Wardlaw and a few sturdy Scottish independents nearly a century ago, that "the province of the State in respect to matters of religion is, that it has *no province at all*," has, in the light and experience of later days, been adopted by many who were foremost in advocating the right and duty of the State to administer and propagate religion. This, indeed, was the view held by the framers of the constitution of the United States.

Divergent Claims of Opposing Sects.

Of the many theories held regarding State provision for religious teaching or otherwise in the Public schools of Ontario the following may be briefly noticed :

Rapid Increase of Opinion in Favor of Secular Schools.

(1) Those who advocate complete secularization of our Public school system ; the entire exclusion of the Bible and all religious exercises. While it may be but a small minority that holds this view, *that minority is increasing very much* because of the continued and persistent efforts of certain parties to have other religious exercises added to what the schools have at present. This they regard as but the initiative to denominational and dogmatic teaching, as in the Separate schools, and eventually to a system of State-aided schools for every denomination.

Dogmatic Religious Teaching Impossible in the Public Schools.

(2) Those who insist on the Bible being used to explain and enforce doctrines and polity, according to the creeds and discipline of the various denominations as they are represented in the Public schools. Now, it is freely granted that there is no better body of men and women in our country than the teachers in our Public schools. The great majority of them are, we presume, members of some evangelical church. They seek not only the secular and mental welfare of their pupils, but their higher interests. But how few have been trained in religious theology to fit them to be the guides of youth in matters of doctrine

and church government? The best educated among them would shrink from discharging such a duty, even in the most elementary manner. What would it be if teachers were expected to explain the dogmas of the several churches according to their individual religious preferences? How long would such a state of things be tolerated? The thing is possible in parochial church schools, supported by religious bodies, *but not otherwise*. There are those, I am aware, who, while not insisting upon dogmatic teaching in our Public schools, because of its almost impossibility in present circumstances, would have the "Life of Christ" (necessarily from a human standpoint) made prominent as the highest possible ideal for the pupil to aim at—as it certainly is. Now, we submit, to take the "Life of Christ" and teach it as simply the noblest specimen of mere manhood, apart from his divinity, is simply Unitarianism, which certainly is not the belief of the great mass of Public school supporters.

The Bible as a Moral Text-Book.

(3) Those who advocate the use of the Bible as a text-book for instruction in morality, or such moral training in some way as shall develop the moral faculty, and that in accordance with sound pedagogical principles. In our Public schools the regulations do not prescribe moral instruction, but the teacher is expected to imbue every pupil with respect for those moral obligations which underlie a well-formed character, such as manliness, reverence, temperance, truthfulness and honesty, and to conduct the religious exercises of the school with reverence and decorum. But those who advocate regular systematic training in morals *demand more than this*.

Morality Without Religion a "Miserable Failure."

With all deference to such arguments, may we not ask, Can we separate the morality of the New Testament from its spirituality? Can precepts be taught apart from doctrine, or the duty that men owe to society be enforced upon the conscience apart from teaching of the divinity of Christ, and the great truths that centre around the atonement? It is possible that a kind of morality, based upon expediency, can be taught independent of the Scripture, but not Bible morality, which is but another name for the revealed will of God. Doctrines and virtues are inseparably blended in the Word of God, the latter deriving all their vitality from the former. If morality is taught at all it must have respect to religion, unless we aim at nothing higher than mere natural theism. Such a kind of training, moreover, is as impracticable as impossible, for all attempts to draw the line between morals and religion, teaching men to love their neighbor and live justly in the present world, but live indifferent or insensible to the next, have been miserable failures.

Present Arrangement Satisfactory.

(4) Those who are satisfied with the present regulations of the Education

Depart
gious
religi
denom
exerci
Presby
ture in
the Go
tively
be left
the co
Teach
kind to
ture re
approv
denom
"God
or poli

It is
that le
opinion
waged
were n
now.
able to
Separat
every I
tion o
which

The
and op
texts, is
Depart
who ar

Unti
as to w
the Lep
whatev
bidding
benefic

Department—the reading of the Bible selections, accompanied with other religious exercises, and liberty given to the trustees of each school to give further religious instruction at certain prescribed hours by the ministers of different denominations—should they see fit. The arrangements made for the religious exercises in the Public schools of Ontario are just what the representatives of the Presbyterian Church and other denominations requested of the Ontario Legislature in 1882. Certainly the Presbyterian Church has no cause to reflect upon the Government of to-day, for it asked the reading of the Bible, either consecutively or by selections, with prayers, and that such religious exercise should not be left optional at the direction of trustees, but obligatory, while at the same time the conscientious scruples of parents were to be respected. Subsequently, the Teachers' Provincial Association of Toronto sent resolutions of an exactly similar kind to the Government, and on such representations the present book of "Scripture readings" was prepared and revised, and received at that time the hearty approval of all political parties "as a compilation such as Christians of every denomination could accept." Whether the cry raised at a later date about "Godless schools" and "a mutilated Bible" was prompted by patriotism, piety or political emergencies, it is not for me to say.

Separate Schools Destructive to the Public School System.

It is hardly necessary in this paper and at this late date to speak of the reasons that led to the setting up of Separate Schools in Ontario, nor to express any opinion as to whether, in the light of the present day, and in view of the conflict waged in other provinces on this question, it was either necessary or wise. There were not a few who then doubted the wisdom of the step, and there are more now. Had some of those who were foremost in granting Separate schools been able to foresee results their action might have been different. But accepting Separate schools in Ontario as a finality, are we prepared to grant the same to every Protestant denomination that calls for them? This would be the destruction of our Public school system and the alienation of the cordial support which it now receives from many churches.

Scripture Texts Should be Memorized.

The further demand made, that in addition to the reading of the Scriptures and opening religious exercises there should be the memorizing of Scripture texts, is a concession which I am sure will be readily granted by the Education Department, and if granted, should satisfy for the present all reasonable men who are not influenced by party prejudices.

Government Should Not Do the Bidding of Sectarians.

Until, therefore, the various Protestant denominations in Ontario are agreed as to what changes, if any, should be made in the present regulations—passed by the Legislature at their request—it is unwise to encourage agitation, come from whatever quarter it may. No Government worthy of the name should at the bidding of any sect change a policy proved in the main to be wise, impartial and beneficial to all concerned.

THE PARTING OF THE WAYS.

BY CHARLES E. HOOPER.

SINCE the term Rationalism is very apt to be misunderstood, while the reality—the intellectual movement—known as Rationalism is peculiarly liable to be misrepresented by bigoted opponents, we propose to indicate, in brief outline, how clear and strenuous an account of itself Rationalism can actually give. Men who measure the truth of opinions by their popularity, and the vitality of movements by their present influence, would doubtless call the standpoint of Rationalism—that is, of rationalist conviction, not merely of the vague rationalistic spirit which does already dominate the world—an extreme position. They would class our doctrine with those many quixotic, chimerical, or vicious theories which err from missing the philosophic mean of judgment. Would they be right?

A philosophic mean may lie either between two confused opinions or between two sets of opinions neither of which is self-consistent. Suppose A to maintain that "we know nothing which is not experience," and B that "we know nothing which is not thought." Their views seem hopelessly irreconcilable; but presently C comes along and propounds the amendment: "We know nothing which is not both given in experience and cognized by thought." We are not here concerned with the abstract correctness of C's statement, but, supposing it to be correct, it is evident that he has found the philosophic mean between A's and B's extreme positions. Again, we may suppose A to hold twelve opinions the general purport of which seems utterly opposed to the general purport of twelve opinions held by B. But now C puts in an appearance, and shows that six of A's opinions are, though differently worded, practically identical with six of B's, and these six may be taken as true, while A and B must each consent to throw away six opinions as worthless. There, again, would be an instance of the philosophic mean. When, on the other hand, any single point at issue can be clearly stated, the truth inevitably lies at one or other extreme of a logical contradiction, and no philosophic mean is possible. Now, we propose to show that the main points at issue between Rationalists and non-Rationalists are susceptible of perfectly clear statement, and that therefore it behoves every logical thinker to range himself on one or other side in the great controversy. We certainly do not wish to exaggerate differences of opinion: it is well that educated people, Rationalists or non-Rationalists, are now able to agree as to numberless ascertained truths of science, and it is well, indeed, if the progressive sections of either party find that their views as to the practical duties and present ends of life are really converging towards the same human-catholic lines. But these considerations do not affect the fundamental divergence between the schools.

There is a logical, a cosmical, a working theory on either hand. Yonder towers the Old. Here springs the New. The intervening gap—the dim transition between the ages—is filled with platitudes, hypocrisies, inconsistencies and ineffectualities.

There is, in the first place, a difference of opinion as to the right method of reaching conviction. The non-Rationalist, no matter whether he be of the more orthodox or the more liberal type, accepts various theories, such as those of the Bible's inspiration, Christ's divinity, God's personality, the soul's separability from the body, as in some sense certain. He may confess that they are only certain to faith, or he may profess to have rational grounds for believing them, and may even interpret them in a rationalistic sense of his own conceiving; but in no case will he allow them to be seriously questioned, and if, at times, he cannot help half doubting them, he regards himself as one tempted, or decadent, or morally delinquent. The Rationalist, on the other hand, no matter whether he feels himself entitled to deny these theories categorically (on the ground that they originate in mythical traditions or metaphysical fallacies), or only to doubt them permanently (on the ground that we can have no real knowledge of things unrelated to experience), is, in either case, equally confident that they are not certain; and although a convinced Rationalist may have felt keen pangs in relinquishing the prepossessions of his former faith, he thinks that he was perfectly right to relinquish them; that he would have been wholly wrong in stifling his doubts, had it been possible to do so. Here, then, are two diametrically opposed frames of mind, resulting in two groups of statements which are logically contradictory, if not also logically "contrary." On the one hand, it is maintained that so-and-so is absolutely certain; on the other, that it is utterly uncertain.

When we forsake the subjective for the objective—reason for nature—the issue is less clearly defined, and perhaps ought not to be made a test of Rationalism, as such. Yet here the general opposition of Rationalism to non-Rationalism is equally real. For the typical modern Rationalist, science, or, strictly speaking, philosophy, which connects science into a fairly coherent whole, is a veritable revelation. Under its influence, there grows within him a grand conception of interlinking, self-sufficing Nature; and whatever materialistic, idealistic, or other turn the conception may take, he is perfectly satisfied that this stupendous, pervading Reality can no more be figured as, or surmounted by, a Deity possessed of sublimated human intelligence than by a Yahveh who could take bodily exercise in the Garden of Eden.

On descending from the plane of pure nature to the circumstantial plane of history, the Rationalist still stands in definite opposition to the non-Rationalist. The non-Rationalist has not really recovered from the still present effects of the old arbitrary division of history into sacred and profane; the latter half made to fit nature, the former to fit supernature. He may reject almost all, or may ac-

cept almost all, the conclusions of the higher criticism as applied to the Bible but he will not, even in the latter case, admit that the residuum of "inspiration" is simply the inspiration of men who were, in their way, ethical geniuses. The Rationalist, on the other hand, welcomes Biblical criticism as the great confirmation of Nature's supremacy; of her manifestation throughout recorded time, and through those very embodiments of fanatical superstition which strove to hide, and, for a time, succeeded in hiding, her true lineaments.

Lastly, the Rationalist's divergence from the view-point of non-Rationalism, of which we take Christianity as a pertinent type, is not merely an opposition as to the right method of arriving at conviction, and not merely an opposition as to assumed matters of fact, abstract or historical. It is an opposition in the values attached to diverse ends or ideals. We Rationalists do not deny the current assumptions anent Christ, historically and theologically considered. We deny the supreme importance of the Christ-ideal. Certainly we think that the relation of the Christ figured in the gospels to the Jesus who dwelt in Palestine involves very problematical elements; while the Christ whom the modern earnest Christian conceives is a vision still more remote from the probable reality. But, whether visionary or real, the noble and pathetic figure of the Messiah is one to which we cannot render unqualified admiration and reverence. The fulness of light cannot flow from a biographically-revealed Man any more than from a theologically-conceived God. We may worship heroes and saints in a way: but beyond the heroes are the ends for which they fought; behind the saints are the "kingdoms of God," whence flowed their sanctity. From the womb of the past we behold emerging the grand human ideals of freedom and self-completeness, sympathy and social completeness, truth and philosophic completeness—ideals between some of which there are passing, apparent antagonisms, yet which tend to be both theoretically and practically reconciled, as man faithfully follows the light of reason into the deeper arcana of that Nature which culminates, for him, in an endless vista of progress. We hold, then, that these, or analogous ends, are the abiding elements of natural religion—if it may so be styled—from which the parti-colored raiment woven by faith in supernatural power and superhuman goodness must eventually be stripped off. Our ideals are rational, natural, *human*, except that they always lead the way for humanity, and are never wholly attained; *secular*, except that their own beauty and grandeur must eventually transform Secularism itself into a cult.

The sympathetic reader has doubtless inferred that we do not take the term "reason" in that drily intellectual and anti-inspirational sense which is sometimes supposed to characterize Rationalism. Reason, in its full sense, includes natural inspiration; that is to say, all inspiration which is, or partakes of, genius, and reveals truth as genius alone (whether poetical, or scientific, or ethical genius) can reveal it. But reason also includes the limiting, scientific and

logical, motives, which bid us ascertain what really is known, bid us think in accordance with this genuine knowledge, bid us refrain from employing figures of speech, when facts rather than values are in question, and thus tend to keep the inspiration of genius within due bounds ; or, perhaps, to transform the inspiration which might be madness or akin to madness into the inspiration which is genius or akin to genius.

In so far as supernatural religions have aimed at cultivating the worthy ideals of reason, they themselves are worthy of respect, and it is open to anyone to maintain that Christianity, as originally propounded, is superior to the other great faiths of the world (as originally propounded) in this particular. Yet it is obviously false and dishonest to attribute to the influence of reformed or revived Christianity alone that powerful reinforcement of political justice and re-awakening of human sympathy in recent times, to which the progress of science, philosophy, art, and literature, and the voice of great Freethinkers, abused yet obeyed, have contributed so much.

It has now, we think, been shown that Rationalism wields a positive evangel, and that, in this evangel, it is directly opposed—logically contradictory in more than name—to non-Rationalism. The contradiction covers four great provinces of thought and feeling : (1) The method of reaching convictions ; (2) The mode of regarding nature ; (3) The mode of interpreting history ; (4) The ideals pursued and revered.

As Rationalists, we hold that in each of these provinces Rationalism is taking the one and only rational course ; but to show this—to vindicate Rationalism inductively—was not the object of this paper. We have simply striven to demonstrate that Rationalism is clear and consistent in itself, and clearly inconsistent with non-Rationalism. A critical epoch of civilization has appeared. There is a parting of the ways. One must be followed ; the other, forsaken.

The message of Rationalism may be slighted and scorned—who knows for how long ? Nevertheless, we who bear the message fear not for its ultimate acceptance. When the religions of to-day are numbered with those of Egypt, Assyria, Greece, and Rome ; when the now far-echoing cries of the devout apologists for a creed which cannot stand by itself, and the many ingenious reconcilers of science with myth-born speculation, are no more heard ; in that day Rationalism will be the faith—the religion—of humanity, and humanity will be better for it.—*The Literary Guide, London, Eng.*

THE REAL ROBERT BURNS.

CARLYLE'S essay on Burns was written in 1828. It contains some good writing, and one passage which has become famous—perhaps we should say classical; namely, that on the important though oft forgotten fact that the aberrations of a great character must be judged in relation to its orbit. On the whole, however, Carlyle's essay is no longer satisfactory. For one thing, it is too preachy. Burns would have been a different man in many respects in a different environment; he might not have consummated the folk-song of Scotland if he had enjoyed (or suffered) a university training; and he might not have been burnt out at thirty-seven if he had possessed as much prudence as genius. All this may be said briefly, as it should be said, if said at all; but time is wasted in saying it with didactic elaboration. What might have been is a most unprofitable theme for speculation. What was is the only thing that really concerns us. We have to take Burns, as we have to take every man who figures in history, and estimate him by what he was and what he did in the actual circumstances. It must also be noted that Carlyle's judgment of poetry was very defective. He appreciated power, which is an element of sublimity, but he had little appreciation of beauty. In that very essay on Burns he sees absolutely nothing in Keats but "weak-eyed maudlin sensibility." And the man who wrote that of such a sheer poet as Keats simply proclaims his own fatal incapacity.

Curiously enough, the more sedate Wordsworth struck a truer note of Burns criticism than Carlyle. Many poems have been written on the great Scots lyrist, but none is comparable with Wordsworth's "I shiver, Spirit fierce and bold." This first line is singularly felicitous. Wordsworth at the grave of Burns touched, as it were, the very heart of the dead singer.

Many years afterwards, in 1859, James Thompson (B. V.)—this time another Scotsman—wrote a splendid characterization of Burns:

"The heavens for the heavens, and the earth for the earth!
I am a Man—I'll be true to my birth—
Man in my joys, in my pains.'
So fearless, stalwart, erect, and free,
He gave to his fellows right royally
His strength, his heart, his brains;
For proud and fiery and swift and bold—
Wine of life from heart of gold,
The blood of his heathen manhood rolled
Full-billowed through his veins."

"Heathen manhood" is admirable. It describes Burns to a nicety. He had the aboriginal blood, which Christianity could only condemn, but which the saner old Philosophy might have disciplined.

Matt
essay o
Criticis
religio
concern
that of
but wh
"Tam
duction
triumph
"Faust
power"
matche
archer
some fo
immort

By th
moved
one Sco

Now
essay o
Burns—
son—by
behind.
aspect o
to every
moderat

Mr. E
and an
forceful
produce
lations
critics;
indulge
monoton
for him
him the
and dall

Neith
sentimen
He is fre

Matthew Arnold has some discriminating criticism on Burns in the essay on "The Study of Poetry" in the second volume of "Essays in Criticism." Arnold naturally could not stand the "Scotch drink, Scotch religion, and Scotch manners," with which so much of Burns's poetry is concerned. Chaucer's world was far richer and more significant than that of Burns, who had the greater force, though perhaps less charm; but when "the largeness and freedom of Burns get full sweep," as in "Tam o' Shanter," or still more in "that puissant and splendid production" "The Jolly Beggars," his poetic genius achieves a signal triumph. Arnold says that the famous Auerbach's Cellar scene in "Faust" seems "artificial and tame" beside the "breadth, truth, and power" of Burns's chief masterpiece, and that on this ground he is only matched by Shakespeare and Aristophanes. But his "lighter and archer masterpieces" were what Arnold thought "poetically most wholesome for us." And surely no one could praise too highly "those four immortal lines" which so stirred the soul of Byron:—

"Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken hearted."

By the way, though Burns triumphed in the Vernacular, and generally moved with awkwardness in English, these four lovely lines contain but one Scotticism, the more abrupt "so" lengthened into the softer "sae."

Now comes another Englishman with a brilliant and well-nigh final essay on Burns. Mr. W. E. Henley completes the Centenary Edition of Burns—which he has produced in collaboration with Mr. T. F. Henderson—by a critical biography and appraisal, which leaves Carlyle far behind. It is as full of matter as an egg is full of meat. No important aspect of the poet's life or work is neglected. The essay will be a delight to every lover of Burns, and its republication in a separate form at a moderate price renders it accessible to the poorest book-buyers.

Mr. Henley is himself a poet of no mean distinction. He has an eye and an ear, and a mind behind them. His style is singularly vivid and forceful. It bears traces of his studies in the older literature of England, produced when writers were not overwhelmed by unmanageable accumulations of printed matter, nor overawed by a multitude of professional critics; when they were able to give free play to their spontaneity, and indulge in happy audacities of expression. Mr. Henley disdains the monotonous structure and tame proprieties of journalistic English. Not for him the lazy lappings of a canal stirred by a slow-drawn barge. For him the rush of the river, alive and surgent, and in spite of all curves and dallings ever sweeping onwards to the goal.

Neither is there any cant about Mr. Henley; in other words, he is no sentimentalist. He is content with nature. He takes facts as they are. He is free from what George Eliot called the fool's hectic of wishing

about the unalterable. He is also free from the common foolish proneness to the canonization of a fictitious personage, instead of the fraternal admiration of a true man of flesh and blood, gifted with genius, but not touched with the frailties of humanity. Mr. Henley knows that men of genius are not turned out of arbitrary moulds. They are lofty varieties of our common stock. And they have always what the French call the defects of their qualities. For here, as elsewhere, Nature asserts her great law of compensation, lest differentiation should destroy the embracing unity.

Mr. Henley gives us the substantial truth about Burns in his "Life, Genius, and Achievement." He has steeped himself in Burns's poetry, yet his wide and varied culture saves him from the provincialism of so many of the poet's countrymen, who are apt to look upon Scottish nature as something unique, and Scottish poetry as something specially sacred, and Burns as the one miraculous nightingale of Mount Zion. Mr. Henley is also free—perhaps this is because he is an Englishman—from the romantic folly of those who raise statues to Highland Mary and the cowardly folly of those who seek to disguise the real Robert Burns into a quite respectable person who had the occasional misfortune of mixing with questionable company. On the other hand he is not so presumptuous as to apologize for Burns. He avoids flattery, and he avoids patronage. What he tries to see, and to present, is the truth, and if not the *whole* truth yet nothing *but* the truth. And, after all, what does Robert Burns want with idolatrous lies or polite misrepresentations? Don't try to make him an impeccable lay-figure. Let him stand as he was, a Scots peasant, with a sturdy figure and strong passions and a fierce delight in life, but also with a sensitive heart and a fine brain, and eyes that glowed with love and poetry, and lips that trembled with deathless song.

Burns was first of all a Scots peasant. Mr. Henley takes that as the keynote of all he has to say on Burns the man. What he depicts is "the lewd, amazing peasant of genius," or as he more happily expresses it "the inspired faun." When Burns was born, in 1759, the Kirk of Scotland was still an oppressive tyranny. It was largely occupied with "narrowing the minds" and "perverting the instincts" of the people. It and the "wild Whigs" had "crushed the taste for everything but fornication and theology." Into this world Burns came, and as he was the most popular poet of Scotland, so Mr. Henley justly asserts that he was "the most anti-clerical." He gave "proper" people much cause to blaspheme, but he brought back the Vernacular poetry in the Kirk's despite; he did a service for the people such as was done in other spheres by Hutcheson, Hume, and Adam Smith; and he "showed that laughter and the joy of life need be no crimes, and that freedom of thought and sentiment and action is within the reach of him that will stretch forth his hand to take it." And if he "pushed his demonstration to extremes," as Mr. Henley admits, it must be remembered, as he

isely points out, that "most men do as they must—not as they will." With all his "faults and failings" he was "ever a leader among men." In the long run he led for the truth that maketh free, and his service to Scotland is simply immeasurable. "She could scarce have been the Scotland she is," says Mr. Henley, "had he not been."

Mr. Henley's portrait of Robert Burns the man seems to us as honest as it is powerful. He paints him, as Cromwell insisted on being painted—warts and all. Nothing is set down in malice, and also nothing is extenuated. We understand that dire offence has already been taken at his picture of Burns by certain perfervid Scotsmen, who adore a legendary poet, the creation of three or four generations of foolish image-worship. Mr. Henley, however, is not to be frightened by their denunciations. Indeed, he has hit back vigorously at some of his critics in the first number of *The Outlook*. "Scotland," he says, "is, in fact, delivered over to the possession of the Burns Club, and to the worship of a man whose living aspect has so far destinned that to attempt to realize him as he was is to amaze the neighborhood, from Maidenkirke to John o' Groat's. The Burns of fact, the Burns of history and life, has disappeared; and in his room there is shown a kind of transparency"—not a bit like the real Burns, or the real anything. "Half-read M.P.'s and clerks, and divines and provosts flushed with literary patriotism," who boast the immortal memory of Robert Burns on the twenty-fifth of January, may rail at Mr. Henley to their hearts' content. They will not ruffle his equanimity. He knows the facts, and he has other tastes than theirs. He declines to recognize their figmentary Burns, just as he declines to admit the superlative excellence of "The Cotter's Saturday Night"—for a wilderness of which he would not give the "Holy Fair," still less "Hallowe'en" or the "Jolly Beggars."

Robert Burns was first of all a Scots peasant. "He was absolutely of his station," Mr. Henley says, "and of his time; the poor-living, lewd, grimy, free-spoken, ribald, old Scots peasant-world came to a full, brilliant, even majestic close in his work." Even when he went to Edinburgh, and achieved such a triumph by his genius and personality, he saw an old capital that was "gay, squalid, drunken, and dirty," as well as "lettered and venerable." "It was a centre," says Mr. Henley, "of conviviality—a city of clubs and talk and good-fellowship, a city of harlotry and high jinks, a city (above all) of drink." It is impossible to deny that Burns drank too much and too freely. And the worst of it was that the fashionable tittle just then was whisky "fire-new from the Highlands." Had Burns been born a generation earlier, when the drink was more commonly beer or claret, Mr. Henley thinks he would have stood a better chance. It is pretty certain that he took part in many such convivial scenes as the one so deliciously described in "Tam o' Shanter, and no doubt when the whisky was in his talk was glorious; but he had to pay the penalty afterwards just like meaner mortals. Probably it would have been better for him had he kept to farming.

The post they gave him in the Excise took him too much away from home and its restraining influences, and threw him too much into company which he consumed his genius in delighting. Mr. Henley frankly notices some of Burns's social offences during the Dumfries period, and just as frankly says that "the explanation in these and other cases is that he was drunk." Burns was "great in his strength," Lord Rosebery says, "great in his weaknesses." He was largely endowed with what Mr. Henley calls "the primordial instinct." His amours were many, and the charms he admired were what his brother Gilbert called "sexual." "A delicious armful"—his own expression—was his ideal of a woman. Like all highly imaginative men, he had a large capacity for deceiving himself; but Gilbert said he "was no platonic lover, whatever he might pretend or suppose of himself to the contrary." The famous letters to Clarinda are in one sense tragi-comic. Burns is sentimentalizing prodigiously, but his eye is fixed all the time on the lady's voluptuous figure. Mr. Henley boldly says that "he longed for the shepherd's hour to strike for the chime's sake only." But, after all, there is a difference between the fancy and the heart. We agree with Mr. Henley that "Burns was first and last enamored of the woman he made his wife." The heroine-in-chief of Burns's story is not the half-legendary Highland Mary, who was either "something of a lightskirts" or "a kind of Scottish Mrs. Harris." Mr. Henley decides for "the loyal and patient soul whom he appreciated as the fittest to be his wife," the Jean "who endured his affronts, and mothered his children (her own and another's), and took the rough and the smooth, the best and the worst of life with him, and wore his name for well-nigh forty years after his death as her sole title to regard."

Burns's great lust of life was unhappy in its environment. Mr. Henley holds that he was too hardly used and desperately driven in his youth, and too splendidly petted and pampered in his manhood, to endure the life by which the tenant-farmer has to earn his bread. Then there was his potent temperament; and "when Pan, his goat-foot father, would whistle on him from the thicket, he could not often stop his ears to the call." He was a misplaced Titan; too great for his circumstances. Mr. Henley sees in him a certain general likeness to Mirabeau.

"Born a noble, and given an opportunity commensurate with himself, Burns would certainly have done such work as Mirabeau's, and done it at least as well. Born a Scots peasant, Mirabeau must, as certainly, have lived the life and died the death of Burns. In truth, it is only the fortune of war that we remember the one by his conduct of the Revolution, which called his highest capacities into action, while we turn to the other for his verses, which are the outcome (so Mary Riddell thought, and was not alone in thinking) of by no means his strongest gift."

Robert Burns was no man's but his own. His faults were faults of temperament and excessive temptation. Apart from them he was high-minded, generous, and tender. A thousand good things may be said of him on this side. He loved his fellow men, and gave them his heart

and brain unstintedly. He had a romantic affection for the old Stuarts, but he was essentially a friend of the people. He sang for them, and he was of them to the heart's core. And then his splendid personality! The Duchess of Gordon said he was the only man who carried her off her feet. Learned professors as well as illiterate peasants fell under his irresistible charm. Soott never saw such an eye as Burns's in any human head, though he had seen the most distinguished men of his time. "His voice alone," said Maria Riddell, "could improve upon the magic of his eye." It was "sonorous" and "replete with the finest modulations." Mr. Henley thinks he had "well-nigh the finest brain conceivable," and if it made him nothing else, it made "the most exquisite artist in folk-song the world has seen." He has thrilled and delighted thousands of hearts, and will probably continue to do so for centuries. He had the good sense, as Mr. Henley observes, to deal with the life he knew, and that life is, after all, the essential life of men and women always and everywhere. Empires rise and fall, dynasties come and go, religions appear and vanish, but human nature abides unchangingly. Mothers croon over their babes now as they did millenniums ago in India and Egypt, Cupid still wields his bow and arrows, the maiden dreams of her lover who sighs for her adorable presence, husband and wife climb the hill of life together and sleep together at its foot, and friend clings to friend with a glad tenacity that often defies death and disgrace. And to all these imperishable elements of human life Burns gave beautiful and sometimes matchless expression.

Burns died at the early age of thirty-eight. He knew well enough (he never tried to conceal them) the faults that half-wrecked his life. "But the precisian," as Mr. Henley says, "has naught to do at this grave-side." Sermomising is so easy, and nature is so despotic.

"The strength was great, but the weaknesses were greater; for time and chance and necessity were ever developing the weaknesses at the same time that they were ever beating down the strength. That is the sole conclusion possible. And to the plea, that the story it rounds is very pitiful, there is this victorious answer: that the Man had drunk his life to the lees, while the Poet had fulfilled himself to the accomplishing of a peculiar immortality; so that to Burns Death came as a deliverer and a friend."

Mr. Henley's criticisms on Burns the Poet seem to me entirely sound. Burns was not a sudden miracle, as some think; he was the last and greatest of the Vernacular school. He was not a founder, but a consummator. The spirit, the ideals, the very forms of the school, were all ready to his hand. Again and again he takes an old verse and improves it, setting his mark upon it for ever; or an old refrain, and makes it the *motif* of a splendid new song. He did not know the secrets of English; but "he had the sole ear of the Vernacular muse; there was not a tool in her budget of which he was not master." And singing in the Vernacular, he won his immortality.

—*The Freethinker.*

G. W. FOOTE.

LIFE HERE AND HEREAFTER.

BY W. STEINITZ.

(The following letter from the pen of the great chess-player will be read with interest. It is from the New York Sun. It is pleasing to see the great dailies opening their columns to such discussions.)

REASON without faith must feel hopeless to answer the questions whether there is a future life and what force, if any, governs our existence. In their discussion in the *Sun*, however, more practical points have been made concerning our life on this side of the heavens, and doubt of the utility of religion, unless a future state of existence can be proved, has been expressed. This subject involves the great questions whether the virtues or morals, which undoubtedly have received more support from religion without philosophy than from philosophy without religion, can be based on rational grounds; or else whether anarchistic irresponsibility, which would abolish all rights of the community and all rights of the individual, should be substituted for our notions of morality. There may be no need of inventing a God in order to protect the morals, as was ironically suggested by Voltaire, but as long as we cannot find the key to the mysteries of time and space and other natural laws, the most liberal tolerance ought to be extended to honest search after truth in all directions, and especially to civilized religious creeds which have preserved and are still upholding the cause of honesty and humanity against egotism in its various forms, down to anarchy and the worship of the golden calf, and the cause of purity and chastity against free love. Faith has thus been quicker than reason in impressing on mankind the truth of natural laws, which can be demonstrated to operate at least in our visible existence. Either Huxley or Tyndall once compared the force above us with a chessmaster who plays a mysterious game against humanity, and, with inexorable laws, inflicts the severest penalties on those who do not understand his play. Let me add that the same chessmaster also bestows the highest awards in this life upon those who have the good fortune to interpret his laws intelligently, and the simple solution to his game seems to be a plain theory which the common sense of *vox populi* has already sufficiently indicated in such well-known proverbs as "Honesty is the best policy," "All for one and one for all," "Virtue is its own reward," etc. To put it in other words, I beg to offer the following propositions, merely as suggestions or hypotheses for the present for further public investigation.

Life is a fight, as Darwin says, in which the strongest wins (as in a game of chess), but the goodnatured and the purest breeds are the strongest, at least in what we call intelligence. Nature is generous to the generous and cruel to the cruel. There is sufficient evidence of such

laws in natural history. The most powerful and most intelligent animal of continental life is the elephant. Considering the enormous size and weight which his comparatively small brains have to support, his sagacity is phenomenal. He lives in herds and acknowledges a sort of interdependence in which the individual harmonizes his interest with that of the community. He feeds on the fruits of the earth and does not kill any living being for the sake of food, which, by the way, is an argument in favor of vegetarian diet among men, especially as all carnivora are comparatively stupid beasts in spite of their strength in other directions. Likewise we find among ants, bees, beavers, and others of their kind the same combination of extraordinary intelligence, with good nature and social life constituted on the principles of reciprocity, at least, and not on isolation, as is generally the case among beasts of prey. The sociable animals seem to enjoy life better and to die a happier death, with rare exceptions, which may prove the rule. Anyhow, whether dissolution be the solution of the end of our existence, or whether we believe in a transmigration of souls, what thinking man would prefer the life of a tiger to that of an elephant, or the life of a spider to that of an ant?

In regard to purity of breed I would point to the fact that a female dog which has once thrown puppies of a different breed will always throw at least one pup of the same breed, even when mated only with her own kind. Here is evidence of a permanent impregnation, and this would point to the necessity of chastity and of a more careful selection in marriage of men and women, and not to the free love which is preached by Anarchists and extreme Socialists. Race horses and race dogs, as well as singing birds, furnish additional proof that good nature and pure breed are the attributes of intelligence, and instances can be multiplied in zoology.

Moreover, the close connection between good nature, purity of breed, and intelligence in human affairs can, I believe, just as easily be demonstrated in the history of prominent individuals and nations, but I can only indicate the line of evidence which, in my opinion, ought to be traced in the investigation to which I appeal.

There are what may be called criminal families among high and low, among rich and poor. What becomes of them? Answer. Let me repeat, nature is generous to the generous and cruel to the cruel. The Borgias and Medicis have vanished to the root, and suffered dreadfully, according to historians, before they disappeared. The ruling house of Bavaria must be held responsible for the atrocities of Gen. Tilly during the Thirty Years' War. The cruel fate of their descendants must excite the pity of Anarchists. On the other hand, the most prominent men of our time are scions of obscure families who have no bad record in history.

More notable still is the influence of morality on nations. The oldest and purest breed of mankind is probably that of the Jews. They never had any political power and could not do much harm. On the contrary,

their creed, and this ought not to be lost sight of, has preserved their morals through ages of persecution. The proud words in the House of Commons over forty years ago of Benjamin Disraeli, afterward Lord Beaconsfield, himself a scion of the same race, "The Jews are the oldest aristocracy on the face of the globe, with a pedigree of 2,000 years," were probably only intended in the sense of an eulogium on their intellectual and moral qualities. And undoubtedly, considering their small number and distribution in all parts of the world, their success in all walks of life in all countries, but more especially under free and tolerant institutions, is marvellous. The Irish have also suffered in a similar manner through centuries, and religion has been the guardian of their morals. Their descendants are the most prosperous in different free countries.

Millions of money are cheerfully spent for the purpose of introducing and raising the purest blood of race horses, hunting dogs, cattle and poultry in different countries, but jealousy and intolerance act to the contrary with human races. On the other side of the Atlantic attempts are made to expel the Jews, or, worse still, to commit them to a form of slavery in the shape of social and political degradation. The anti-Semitic movement will find little sympathy in this great republic, where over thirty years back streams of good blood and millions of gold were justly sacrificed in order to elevate to equality before the law the descendants of cannibals, to state the full truth, with all due respect to the colored races, who under the influence of religion (first) and subsequent freedom have risen to higher stages of civilization. All parties in this country are now proud of the triumph of humanity and tolerance over race prejudice and selfishness, and perhaps no more bloodshed may be necessary in the fight of different views about the principles of life. Anyhow, enlightened agnostics or materialists, as well as sincere religious believers, ought to give the example of mutual toleration and respect, and they ought to remember that the greatest philosophers have found it as difficult to prove as to deny the existence of God or of a future life.

Among the correspondence published on this subject by the *Sun* is a long letter from Mr. Lewis, an Agnostic, who gives the Agnostic's reply to the question of a previous correspondent, "What are the ideas of Agnostics concerning a future state?"

"Agnostics have no ideas or notions about a future state, other than that they cannot altogether eliminate from their mental vision the misleading pictures they had presented to them in childhood, or altogether forget what beautiful things have been written about heaven and what painful things about hell. Having no way of knowing anything about consciousness after death, the Agnostic does not concern himself or speculate about it. All his notions of it have come through human agencies which he has reason to believe are unreliable and of no value.

'Hope' asks: 'I would like to know if an Agnostic who has lost a loved one can reconcile himself to the thought that all is indeed over for the dear departed?' The thought that a loved one has gone never to be seen again brings sorrow and pain into the heart of the one bereaved, and the desire to again be with the loved one in mutual consciousness will assert itself. It is inevitable. But it is just here that the grieved one is apt to mislead himself. Do we in our human affairs get the things most dear to our hearts just because we wish for them and their acquisition would make us supremely happy? Are there not many things beyond our reach? It is hard to reconcile one's self to the thought that the loved one will not be seen again, but the Agnostic does not say he will not. He hopes he will, but he does not count on it as a certainty, for there is nothing in the stern reality of things that says he will. There are words to that effect, but they prove nothing. The Agnostic tries not to be misled by words. Truth is apart from all words. They may lead to its discovery, but they can't establish truth. The Agnostic thinks of his friend and companion as he was in this world, and leaves it a question, which he is not apt to dwell upon, as to whether they will meet again. Nor does the Agnostic 'theorize' as to 'how we got here.' He did that when a Christian, but has outgrown it. The only force apparent to us that has 'control over our existence' is nature. It is unnecessary to think of heaven in order to observe the laws of nature. According to our use of natural laws are we strengthened or weakened. The Agnostic feels that nature is all there is, and while he is a lover of its wonders and beauties, he cannot reconcile the ravages of storms and plagues, heat and cold, earthquakes and war, and cruelty to the helpless and innocent, with the existence of an all-powerful and merciful God. The Agnostic does not believe it to be necessary to concern himself about going elsewhere in order to make it worth while being here. As a human being, he rejoices in being such, and—a right-living, humane person, with kindness towards all and malice towards none—the Agnostic believes that, if there is a heaven, he will not be debarred entrance to it because of his being true to his convictions on earth."

Another correspondent, "W. B. D.," writes:

"'Hope' says he is 'looking for help, an assurance of the divine origin and end of all things.' This assurance he will never receive, if he accepts the verdict of his reason after giving to the subject his most profound consideration. There is not on earth to-day one incontestable proof that the world is of divine origin or is under divine guidance, nor is there a solitary indubitable proof that man survives the grave: Theology and science alike may safely be challenged to demonstrate the contrary. It is the habit of man to demand from nature an answer to every question he may propound to her; and when nature is silent,

man, in the sublimity of his self-sufficiency, answers it for her, and pronounces the answer right! We are but the shuttlecocks of fate, and every man's experience verifies the truth of the assertion. We are the helpless victims of heredity, environment, and circumstance. How we got here, what we came for, and where we are going, are questions that baffle fools and sages. As an Agnostic, happy in his Agnosticism, unfettered by dogma, superstition and bigotry, I counsel 'Hope' to dispossess his mind of the agonizing doubts engendered and nurtured by the Church; to live according to the dictates of his reason and his conscience, doing his duty by himself and his neighbor, and he will know that ineffable content that men call happiness."

J. E. Lanner puts in a plea on behalf of the lower animals to a share in any possible heaven:

"Why should there be a heaven for man alone? What claim has he upon the unknown power while all the other forms of life have none? It seems to me supreme selfishness for us to say we are to enter a life eternal because we are forms superior to other forms which nature has created. Ecclesiastes 3: 19-21 contains more sound common sense than all other passages in holy writ:

"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts, even one thing befalleth them; as one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they all have one breath, so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go into one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast downward to the earth?"

"The average Christian solves a mystery with a mystery, the latter of which is as unthinkable as the former is mysterious, and after all is said, it remains a mystery still. Victor Hugo said, "My future does not concern me," and he spoke words of wisdom and truth."

"An Agnostic" says:

"Why is it that Christians and pagans, spiritualists and materialists alike are so reluctant to leave this wicked and painful world, and to enter an alleged other world, where some pretend to believe all is peace and delight? Paul, by many artifices, kept away from those who sought to kill him. Most men, it is true, meet death bravely at last, but neither faith nor non-faith in any dogma has the slightest effect on their resolution or resignation, whichever it may be called."

And "Eternity" gives this pleasing picture of eternal work in the future life:

"It will be just such another life of work and victory and noble endeavor on one of the millions of planets circling round the star suns as the present life is. That is the heaven where we will all be born again, some on one planet, some on others. The human soul never dies, but it is born over and over again, each time on a different planet; in each life doing the work that God, through his

manag
and r
lower a
"E
and "
be afr
mentio
the or
singin
work?
a futu
truer o
spectul

-Jame

managing angels, assigns it to do, rendering that life service each time better and more wisely, each time rising in the scale of rank and wisdom, or else going lower and lower till that soul is destroyed for its evil."

"Eternity" apologizes for introducing us to a heaven of eternal work and "fighting with the wild forces of nature." He says we should not be afraid of it, for "God himself is constantly at work." He makes no mention of the seventh-day rest, and roundly denounces the heaven of the ordinary preacher. "We would not be able to stand a heaven of singing and music and idleness for a year!" Of course not; but eternal work? He says his notion may help "Hope" to a better conception of a future life; but we should be inclined to think it would help him to a truer conception of the utter futility and childishness of all such idle speculations.



DEATH.

AH! friend of man, thou true, thou kindly friend,
 Thou art in truth to us, the sons of woe,
 The kindest, strongest friend we here may know;
 For even as a mother in her arms
 Of soft and peaceful comfort takes the child
 That through a long and fevered night hath wept
 And whined and tossed on couch of pain and grief,
 And o'er him breathes the breath of peace and rest,
 And gently lulls him into silent sleep;
 So in thine arms of peace the child of woe,
 Cradled in pain and nurtured in the home
 Of toil and bitter sorrow, thou dost take,
 And over him thy cool and holy breath
 Doth flow as in a silent stream of peace,
 And sleep eternal, deep, untroubled sleep,
 Soft, gently, pining not, nor giving thought
 Of what hath been, or what will ever be,
 Closeth his eyelids like a cloudy veil.

—James McBeth, in "The Opening of the Gates."

THE CORRELATION AND CONSERVATION OF ENERGY.

BY PROF. YOUMANS.

TOWARDS the close of the last century the human mind reached the great principle of the indestructibility of matter. What the intellectual activity of ages had failed to establish by all the resources of reasoning and philosophy, was accomplished by the invention of a mechanical implement, the balance of Lavoisier. When nature was tested in the chemist's scale-pan, it was first found that never an atom is created or destroyed; that though matter changes form with protean facility, traversing a thousand cycles of change, vanishing and reappearing incessantly, yet it never wears out or lapses into nothing.

The present age will be memorable in the history of science for having demonstrated that the same great principle applies also to forces, and for the establishment of a new philosophy concerning their nature and relations. Heat, light, electricity, and magnetism are now no longer regarded as substantive and independent existences—subtle fluids with peculiar properties, but simply as modes of motion in ordinary matter; forms of energy which are capable of mutual conversion. Heat is a mode of energy manifested by certain effects. It may be transformed into electricity, which is another form of force producing different effects. Or the process may be reversed; the electricity disappearing and the heat reappearing. Again, mechanical motion, which is a motion of masses, may be transformed into heat or electricity, which is held to be a motion of the atoms of matter, while, by a reverse process, the motion of atoms—that is, heat or electricity—may be turned back again into mechanical motion. Thus a portion of the heat generated in a locomotive is converted into the motion of the train, while by the application of the brakes the motion of the train is changed back again into the heat of friction.

These mutations are rigidly subject to the laws of quantity. A given amount of one force produces a definite quantity of another; so that power or energy, like matter, can neither be created nor destroyed; though ever changing form, its total quantity in the universe remains constant and unalterable. Every manifestation of force must have come from a pre-existing equivalent force, and must give rise to a subsequent and equal amount of some other force. When, therefore, a force or effect appears, we are not at liberty to assume that it was self-originated, or came from nothing; when it disappears we are forbidden to conclude that it is annihilated; we must search and find whence it came and whither it has gone; that is, what produced it and what effect it has itself produced. These relations among the modes of energy are currently known by the phrases Correlation and Conservation of force.

An eminent authority has remarked "that these discoveries open a

region
the i
idea
huma
cation
more
into t
the p
metho
minds
study
high
custo
stick
ceptio
univer
the di
throu
itself
a new
and r
progr
Dr.
to vit
the fa
most
in fun
which
spher
they r
is bro
nu'rit
being
activ
are co
the sc
with t
must
The
unlike
nervo
perfec
which
does n
that v
is exp

region which promises possessions richer than any hitherto granted to the intellect of man." Involving as they do a revolution of fundamental ideas, their consequences must be as comprehensive as the range of human thought. A principle has been developed of all-pervading application, which brings the diverse and distant branches of knowledge into more intimate and harmonious alliance, and affords a profounder insight into the universal order. Not only is science itself deeply affected by the presentation of its questions in new and suggestive lights, but its method is at once made universal. There is a crude notion in many minds, that it is the business of science to occupy itself merely with the study of matter. When, hitherto, it has pressed its inquiries into the higher region of life, mind, society, history, and education, the traditional custodians of these subjects have bidden it keep within its limits and stick to *matter*. But science is not to be hampered by this narrow conception; its office is nothing less than to investigate the laws and universal relations of force, and its domain is therefore co-extensive with the display of power. Indeed, as we know nothing of matter, except through its manifestations of forces, it is obvious that the study of matter itself is at last resolved into the study of forces. The establishment of a new philosophy of forces, therefore, by its vast extension of the scope and methods of science, constitutes a momentous event of intellectual progress.

Dr. Carpenter has shown the applicability of the principle of correlation to vital phenomena. His argument is of interest, not only because of the facts and principles established, but as opening an inquiry which must lead to still larger results; for, if the principle be found operative in fundamental organic processes, it will undoubtedly be traced in those which are higher; if in the lower sphere of life, then throughout that sphere. If the forces are correlated in organic growth and nutrition, they must be in organic action; and thus human activity, in all its forms, is brought within the operation of the law. As a creature of organic nutrition, borrowing matter and force from the outward world; as a being of feeling and sensibility, of intellectual power and multiform activities, man must be regarded as amenable to the great law that forces are convertible and indestructible; and as psychology and sociology—the science of mind and the science of society—have to deal constantly with the different phases and forms of human energy, the new principle must be of the profoundest import in relation to these great subjects.

The forces manifested in the living system are of the most varied and unlike character, mechanical, thermal, luminous, electric, chemical, nervous, sensory, emotional, and intellectual. That these forces are perfectly co-ordinated—that there is some definite relation among them which explains the marvellous dynamic unity of the living organism, does not admit of question. That this relation is of the same nature as that which is found to exist among the purely physical forces, and which is expressed by the term "correlation," seems also abundantly evident.

From the great complexity of the conditions, the same exactness will not of course, be expected here as in the inorganic field, but this is one of the necessary limitations of all physiological and psychological inquiry, thus qualified the proofs of the correlation of the nervous and mental forces with the physical, are as clear and decisive as those for the physical forces alone.

The physical agencies acting upon inanimate objects in the external world change their form and state, and we regard these changes as transformed manifestations of the forces in action. A body is heated by hammering; the heat is but transmuted mechanical force; or a body is put in motion by heat, a certain portion being transformed into mechanical effect or motion of the mass. And so it is held that no force can arise except by the expenditure of a pre-existing force. Now, the living system is acted upon by the same agencies and under the same law. Impressions made upon the organs of sense give rise to sensations, and we have the same warrant in this, as in the former case, for regarding the effects as transformations of the force in action. If the change of molecular state in a melted body represents the heat transformed in fusing it, so the sensation of warmth in the living body must represent the heat transformed in producing it. The impression on the retina, as well as that on the photographic tablet, results from the transmuted impulses of light. And thus impressions made from moment to moment, on all our organs of sense, are directly correlated with external physical forces. This correlation, furthermore, is quantitative as well as qualitative. Not only does the light-force produce its peculiar sensations, but the intensity of these sensations corresponds with the intensity of the force; not only is atmospheric vibration transmuted into the sense of sound, but the energy of the vibration determines its loudness. And so in all other cases; the quantity of sensation depends upon the quantity of the force acting to produce it.

Moreover, sensations do not terminate in themselves, or come to nothing; they produce certain correlated and equivalent effects.

The feelings of light, heat, sound, odor, taste, pressure, are immediately followed by physiological effects, as secretion, muscular action, etc. Sensations increase the contractions of the heart, and it has been lately maintained that every sensation contracts the muscular fibres throughout the whole vascular system. The respiratory muscles also respond to sensations, the rate of breathing being increased by both pleasurable and painful nerve-impressions. The quantity of sensation, moreover, controls the quantity of emotion. Loud sounds produce violent starts, disagreeable tastes cause wry faces, and sharp pains give rise to violent struggles. Even when groans and cries are suppressed, the clenched hands and set teeth show that the muscular excitement is only taking another direction.

Between the emotions and bodily actions the correlation and equivalence are also equally clear. Moderate actions, like moderate sensations,

excite
emoti
throw
violat
wring
minim

The
activi
as ex
nothi
Ment
syste
princ
physi
ence i
forma

the co
lation
action
the ci
total
while
cerebr
is dep
and ca

upon
of ph
and g
phosp
menta
effects
opium

With
effect
consta

How
heat,
for ae
forces
these
profou
each o
than
insolu
than t

excite the heart, the vascular system, and the glandular organs. As the emotions rise in strength, however, the various systems of muscles are thrown into action; and when they reach a certain pitch of intensity violent convulsive movements ensue. Anger frowns and stamps; grief wrings its hands; joy dances and leaps—the amount of sensation determining the quantity of correlative movement.

The intellectual operations are also directly correlated with physical activities. As in the inorganic world we know nothing of forces except as exhibited by matter, so in the higher intellectual realms we know nothing of mind-force except through its material manifestations. Mental operations are dependent upon material changes in the nervous system; and it may now be regarded as a fundamental physiological principle, that “no idea or feeling can arise, save as the result of some physical force expended in producing it.” *The directness of this dependence is proved by the fact that any disturbance of the train of cerebral transformations disturbs mentality, while their arrest destroys it* And here, also, the correlation is quantitative. Other things being equal, there is a relation between the size of the nerve apparatus and the amount of mental action of which it is capable. Again, it is dependent upon the vigor of the circulation; if this is arrested by the cessation of the heart's action, total unconsciousness results; if it is enfeebled, mental action is low; while if it is quickened, mentality rises, even to delirium, when the cerebral activity becomes excessive. Again, the rate of brain activity is dependent upon the special chemical ingredients of the blood, oxygen and carbon. Increase of oxygen augments cerebral action, while increase of carbonic acid depresses it. The degree of mentality is also dependent upon the phosphatic constituents of the nervous system. The proportion of phosphorus in the brain is smallest in infancy, idiocy, and old age, and greatest during the prime of life; while the quantity of alkaline phosphates excreted by the kidneys rises and falls with the variations of mental activity. The equivalence of physical agencies and mental effects is still further seen in the action of various substances, as alcohol, opium, hashish, nitrous oxide, etc., when absorbed into the blood. Within the limits of their peculiar action upon the nervous centres, the effect of each is strictly proportionate to the quantity taken. There is a constant ratio between the antecedents and consequents.

How this metamorphosis takes place—how a force existing as motion, heat, or light, can become a mode of consciousness—how it is possible for aerial vibrations to generate the sensation we call sound, or for the forces liberated by chemical changes in the brain to give rise to emotion; these are mysteries which it is impossible to fathom. But they are not profounder mysteries than the transformation of the physical forces into each other. They are not more completely beyond our comprehension than the natures of mind and matter. They have simply the same insolubility as all other ultimate questions. We can learn nothing more than that here is one of the uniformities in the order of phenomena.

The law of correlation being thus applicable to human energy as well as to the powers of nature, it must also apply to society, where we constantly witness the conversion of forces on a comprehensive scale. The powers of nature are transformed into the activities of society; water-power, wind-power, steam-power, and electric-power are pressed into the social service, reducing human labor, multiplying resources, and carrying on numberless industrial processes; indeed, the conversion of these forces into social activities is one of the chief triumphs of civilization. The universal forces of heat and light are transformed by the vegetable kingdom into the vital energy of organic compounds, and then, as food, are again converted into human beings and human power.

In a dynamical point of view there is a strict analogy between the individual and the social economics—the same law of force governs the development of both. In the case of the individual, the amount of energy which he possesses at any time is limited, and when consumed for one purpose it cannot, of course, be had for another. An undue demand in one direction involves a corresponding deficiency elsewhere. For example, excessive action of the digestive system exhausts the muscular and cerebral systems, while excessive action of the muscular system is at the expense of the cerebral and digestive organs, and again, excessive action of the brain depresses the digestive and muscular energies. If the fund of power in the growing constitutions of children is overdrawn in any special channel, as is often the case by excessive stimulation of the brain, the undue abstraction of energy from other portions of the system is sure to entail some form of physiological disaster. So with the social organism; its forces being limited, there is but a definite amount of power to be consumed in the various social activities. Its appropriation in one way makes impossible its employment in another, and it can only gain power to perform one function by the loss of it in other directions. This fact, that social force cannot be created by enactment, and that when dealing with the producing, distributing, and commercial activities of the community, legislation can do little more than interfere with their natural courses, deserves to be more thoroughly appreciated by the public.

But the law in question has got higher bearings. More and more we are perceiving that the condition of humanity and the progress of civilization are direct resultants of the forces by which men are controlled. What we term the moral order of society, implies a strict regularity in the action of these forces. Modern statistics disclose a remarkable constancy in the moral activities manifested in communities of men. Crimes, and even the modes of crime, have been observed to occur with a uniformity which admits of their prediction. Each period may, therefore, be said to have its definite amount of justice and morality. It has been maintained, for instance, with good reason, that "the degree of liberty a people is capable of enjoying in any given age is a fixed quantity, and that any artificial extension of it in one direction brings about

an equiv
tions sh
despoti
themse
restraint
restraint
by the e
problem
law by v
are gove
Thus
science
sway; i
—the m
in the
Not only
presides
those r
warmi
and rel
is its do
world o
feeling
across
hundre
impulse
the ner
parts o
Nay, m
this wo
and mi
It re
our kn
intelle
verbal
though
science
world
there i
true de
midst
adapte
unders
standi
into fi
discov

an equivalent limitation of it in some other direction. French revolutions show scarcely any more respect for individual rights than the despoticisms they supplant; and French electors use their freedom to put themselves again in slavery. So in those communities where State restraint is feeble, we may expect to find it supplemented by the sterner restraint of public opinion." Man and society, therefore, as viewed by the eye of science, present a series of vast and complex dynamical problems, which are to be studied in the future in the light of the great law by which, we have reason to believe, all forms and phases of force are governed.

Thus the law characterized by Faraday as the highest in physical science which our faculties permit us to perceive, has a far more extended sway; it might well have been proclaimed the highest law of all science—the most far-reaching principle that adventuring reason has discovered in the universe. Its stupendous reach spans all orders of existence. Not only does it govern the movements of the heavenly bodies, but it presides over the genesis of the constellations; not only does it control those radiant floods of power which fill the eternal spaces, bathing, warming, illumining and vivifying our planet, but it rules the actions and relations of men, and regulates the march of terrestrial affairs. Nor is its domain limited to physical phenomena; it prevails equally in the world of mind, controlling all the functions and processes of thought and feeling. The star-suns of the remoter galaxies dart their radiations across the universe; and although the distances are so profound that hundreds of centuries may have been required to traverse them, the impulse of force to enter the eye, and impressing an atomic change upon the nerve, give origin to the sense of sight. Star and nerve tissue are parts of the same system—stellar and nervous forces are correlated. Nay, more; sensation awakens thought and kindles emotion, so that this wondrous dynamic chain binds into living unity the realms of matter and mind through measureless amplitudes of space and time.

It remains only to observe, that so immense a step in the progress of our knowledge of natural agencies cannot be without effect upon the intellectual culture of the age. To the adherents of that scholastic and verbal education which prefers words to things, and ancient to modern thought, which ignores the study of nature, and regards the progress of science with indifference or hostility, it matters little what views of the world are entertained or what changes these views may undergo. But there is another, and happily an increasing class, who hold that it is the true destiny of mind to comprehend the vast order of existence in the midst of which it is placed, and that the faculties of man are divinely adapted to this sublime task; who see that the laws of nature must be understood before they can be obeyed, and that only through this understanding can man rise to the mastery of its powers, and bring himself into final harmony with his conditions. These will recognize that the discovery of new principles which expand, and elevate, and harmonize

our views of the universe—which involve the workings of the mind itself, open a new chapter in philosophy, and touch the very foundations of knowledge—cannot be without a determining influence upon the future course and development of thought and the spirit and methods of its acquisition.

KEEP OUT OF THE PAST.

BY ELLA WHEELER WILCOX.

KEEP OUT of the Past, for its highways
 Are dark with malarial gloom ;
 Its gardens are sere and its forests are drear,
 And everywhere moulders a tomb.
 Who seeks to regain its lost pleasures
 Finds only a rose turned to dust ;
 And its storehouse of wonderful treasures
 Is covered and coated with rust.

Keep out of the Past. It is haunted.
 He who in its avenues gropes
 Shall find there the ghost of a joy prized the most
 And a skeleton throng of dead hopes.
 In place of its beautiful rivers
 Are pools that are stagnant with slime ;
 And these graves, gleaming in a phosphoric light,
 Hide dreams that were slain in their prime.

Keep out of the Past. It is lonely,
 And barren and bleak to the view ;
 Its fires have grown cold, and its stories are old—
 Turn, turn to the Present—the New ;
 To-day leads you up to the hill-tops
 That are kissed by the radiant sun ;
 To-day shows no tomb, life's hopes are in bloom,
 And to-day holds a prize to be won.