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## RECIPROCAL RELATIONS OF MAN AND THE UNIVERSE.

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### V.

THE skeptic who, in the infancy of human thought, had the temerity to suggest that things worked out their observed relations of correspondence through the activities residing within them, was met, naturally enough, with derision. Yet every step that science has taken has been in the direction of disproving the popular and confirming the unpopular view. It has been gradually but steadily vindicating reason as against analogy, and establishing a causal as against an arbitrary connection between related facts.

From this point of view we may now consider Kant's own formulated antinomies. The first thesis is :

"The universe has a beginning in time, and is also inclosed within limits in space" ; the antithesis of which is : "The universe has no beginning and no limits in space, but is eternal in time and infinite in space." Has science anything to say on this question, and, if so, which side does it espouse? Undoubtedly science has to do with it, and it also clearly takes sides upon it. Quantitative chemistry, scarcely born in Kant's time, has practically demonstrated the infinite duration of the universe in establishing the indestructibility of matter. Astronomy, to which Kant's own immortal "Theorie des Himmels" helped to give its rational impetus, has now so expanded the conception of space that it has become habitual to regard the universe as absolutely without limits. If any one doubts this, let him make an effort to go back to the old dogmatic conception, and figure to his mind a beginning or end to its duration or boundaries to its extent. He will find this impossible, and this impossibility is wholly due to the increased knowledge of the universe which science has given to the world. It was once possible, it is still possible to the ignorant, to set bounds to time and space, but inductive science has swept away such crude scaffoldings, and opened up to the human mind, as it were, a view of the infinite.

It is no longer a transcendental question. It is a scientific one, to be solved, like all other scientific questions, by the accumulation of facts. Nothing in concrete science is demonstrated *a priori*. The practical truths of the universe are established *a posteriori* - by massing the evidence. In many of the questions now regarded as settled,

the evidence has long been conflicting, and in some much still remains to be established; but, notwithstanding such residual facts, the preponderance of evidence on one side is sufficient to render the general truth practically proved. Such is the character of the greater part of the scientific truth of the world. But the question involved in Kant's antinomies differ from ordinary scientific problems in two respects. On the one hand, infinity must be proved, which demands special evidence: but, on the other hand, there are no facts opposed to infinity, all the evidence being on one side. Not one circumstance can be named which points to a beginning or end of either time or space, while every fact and every law that human observation and reflection have brought forth point to the boundlessness of both. Only ignorance of these facts, and failure to exercise the rational faculty, can prevent the mind from conceding this truth.

We will pass over the second antinomy relative to the divisibility of matter, since in formulating it Kant seems to have mistaken the skeptical for the dogmatic side. Popular belief has usually rejected while science has steadily tended to establish the reality of matter, which is the same thing as to establish the existence of the ultimate indivisible atom.

The third antinomy, which is the representative one, has the following thesis: "Causality according to the laws of nature is not the only causality from which the phenomena of the universe may be derived. It is still necessary to assume a causality through freedom for their explanation." The antithesis is: "There is no freedom, but everything in the universe takes place according to laws of nature."

The issue is here squarely stated, and here it is that accumulating knowledge of the nature of things is working steadily and uniformly against the dogmatic and in favor of the empirical side. Absolutely no facts are being discovered in favor of freedom, while everything is ranging itself on the side of universal law. From one department after another, and in inverse proportion to the complexity of the phenomena, and hence in direct ratio to the ease with which they are comprehended, science is eliminating all the facts which require the hypothesis of freedom for their explanation. From astronomy, from geology, from physics and chemistry, these eons have been successively expelled; they are now being driven from their fortifications in biology to their citadel in psychology. Even here they are vigorously attacked by the school of Bain and Spencer on the one hand and of Flourens and Ferrier on the other, and the interval between physics and ethics is spanned by the heartless clinics of Maudsley.

We need not go further and state the fourth and last of Kant's antinomies, viz., that relating to the existence or non-existence of a "Necessary Being." The first and third antitheses established constitute the premises for the establishment of the fourth. Eternal matter with its eternal activities suffices to account for all the phenomena of the universe, which are as infinite in causation as in duration or extent. All departments of science confirm this truth.

## VI.

LIKE many other once useful hypotheses, that of *theo-teleology*, which was suggested

by the fact of *anthropo-teleology*, has outlived its usefulness, and, where still called in, becomes a burden to the advancement of science. In astronomy, the nebular hypothesis, which Kant founded and Laplace demonstrated, has completely superseded it. In chemistry and physics, the atomic theory, formulated as a philosophy by Democritus and established as a science by Dalton, renders it redundant. In biology, the law of adaptation, clearly stated by Lamarck, and that of selection, cumulatively demonstrated by Darwin, and the inter-operation of these and heredity, thoroughly set forth by Spencer and Haeckel, have freed this field from teleological trammels almost as completely as those of the less complex sciences have been freed from them. And thus is science marching relentlessly forward, and reclaiming one field after another that had been so long given over to dogmatic conceptions, until there is now scarcely room to doubt that its conquest must ultimately become complete.

But what is it that has thus been accomplished? It is nothing less than the establishment of the antitheses or empirical propositions of Kant's antinomies. They have been removed from the domain of transcendental philosophy, subjected to scientific methods, such as are applied to all other problems, and proved as other propositions are proved, by the inductive method. The eternity of matter and motion and the infinitude of space have passed into scientific postulates, while the uninterrupted and unlimited causal dependence of all phenomena in their relation of antecedence and sequence is the fundamental axiom from which all scientific investigation now proceeds. *The entire self-sufficiency of the universe* is the great truth which advancing intelligence is daily perceiving more clearly.

But we are more especially concerned here with the two rival modes of thought. It is incorrect to suppose that the causal process is wholly excluded from the minds of those who think habitually upon the dogmatic side. The expressions *teleological* and *genetic* only represent the two extremes. All teleologists reason more or less, but it is within the safe limits of known premises. They, too, recognize natural laws as operating within certain spheres, whose extent is measured by the amount of each one's knowledge. In some, the field of natural law is confined to the every-day physical phenomena around them—the running of water, the falling of bodies, the action of the winds, etc. In others, with a wider outlook, it may include all the phenomena of astronomy, physics, chemistry, and the present known facts of geology. Still others, somewhat better informed, may reject geological cataclysms, but account for all vital phenomena on teleological principles. Not a few believe biology to rest on a mechanical basis, but deny this of psychology. And there are even some physicians who, from their familiarity with mental changes brought about by direct dealings with the brain, have been thoroughly convinced that thought is a product of nervous organization, but who, nevertheless, cannot be brought to regard social phenomena as reducible to law. To all these various grades of dogmatism must be added that still more complex compromise, nowadays considerably in vogue, which one of its eminent defenders (Professor Asa Gray, "Darwiniana," chapter 13) has called "Evolutionary Teleology,"

and which consists in conceiving the universe as so planned *in advance* as subsequently to work out without further interference, and in a strictly genetic and mechanical way, all the results that science has been revealing.

These various shades and grades of teleology, always mixed with some rationalism, have led Professor Haeckel to characterize the whole school as the *dualistic* school, while from their consistent adherence to one uniform principle he very appropriately denominates the other the *monistic* school. One of the most extreme cases of "dualism" which has yet been placed on record may be found in the inaugural address of Professor G. J. Allman before the Sheffield meeting of the British Association in 1879. After having entered into an elaborate argument to prove that irritability is simply a property of protoplasm, and that therefore the phenomena of *life* must be reduced to this physico-chemical explanation, and after establishing his position with all the force and positiveness that the most extreme monist could demand, he concludes his address by warning his audience not to infer that the phenomena of feeling and thought are in the least involved in this demonstration. Irritability, which is the basis of all motor phenomena, is clearly a property of the chemical substance protoplasm; but sensibility, the basis of sensor phenomena, is something wholly distinct and independent. He thus quite ignores the obvious fact that along with every manifestation of irritability, every contraction or extension of the protoplasmic substance, whether in the primordial utricle of Mohl that lines the cellulose membrane of vegetable cells, or in the soft protoplasmic substance of the Myxomycetæ, or of the Amœbæ, or in the muscles of creatures of high organization, there must go some form of recognition of external presence which, however vague or feeble, is nevertheless the rudimentary form of sensation and the *stratum* of consciousness and mind. While there certainly exist innate proclivities in different minds to adopt one or the other of these modes of explaining natural phenomena, proclivities which are almost constitutional, nevertheless the germs of rationalism exist in all minds, and may be developed by expanding the mental horizon. Increased knowledge, if able to influence the habit of thought at all, must necessarily influence it in the one way of diminishing the number and strength of teleological beliefs, and increasing the area over which genetic conceptions hold sway. The schism, therefore, though fundamental, and impossible ever wholly to be obliterated from the human mind, is not so hopelessly fastened on mankind as for ever to exclude the truth. After all should have been compelled to accept mechanical causation and reject teleology, this fundamental intellectual divergence would find other but more innocent grounds of difference. The history of men's opinions respecting the truths of astronomy and geology shows that the most obdurate will not always resist the march of established facts. The intellect is honest at least, and will yield at last, although it may require mountains of proof. In this fact lies the hope of the success of rational ideas and genetic conceptions.

It is further worth remarking that, while nearly or quite all teleologists admit genetic explanations in certain fields, whose extent varies with each individual's intelligence

and information, no one is adjudged a true causationist who recognizes the possibility of teleological explanation anywhere. This is not a line arbitrarily drawn by the ruling party, like the color line in the United States, according to which the least African blood in a man's veins makes him a "colored man." It is a natural division in which both parties acquiesce. This, again, illustrates the fundamental psychological character of the classification. It is established on the line between the natural and the supernatural. The question whose answer determines to which class any one belongs is not, To what extent do you admit the supernatural? but, Do you admit the supernatural at all? If so, you are a dogmatist. For, if you are capable of admitting it to a small degree, you are equally capable of admitting it to a large degree. The effect of this is to limit the number of naturists and proportionally to diminish their influence. Nevertheless, all teleologists are not to be regarded as equally bad. So little rationally consistent is the human mind that the chief progress which rational ideas have made has been by increasing in each individual the degree of his always partial rationalism at the expense of that of his still partial dogmatism, until the former at length comes so far to predominate over the latter as to control the greater part of his thought and action. It is then that many persons of sincere theological convictions are able to embrace at the same time a large share of the philosophy of Evolution. They may be wholly incompatible, but nevertheless each stowed away in separate chambers of the brain in such a manner—unintelligible to consistent causationists—as not to molest each other.

The only adequate explanation of the possibility of this widespread dualism is to suppose that, in the main, teleological ideas (or rather the natural attachment to them) are inherited, while genetic ideas are chiefly acquired. But a constitutional predilection for any class of ideas may become hereditary if made a part of education. The scientific method of thought prevails far more of late than formerly for this reason, and will doubtless continue to increase by heredity as science is more thoroughly and universally taught in the schools. It is therefore natural that, while theology is taught in the churches and science in the schools, the two modes of thought should co-exist in all minds which have not deliberately and independently worked out a searching analysis, and made a candid and thoughtful comparison of their respective claims. No dualist can have done this, and all teleologists are at the same time dualists. Very few dualist-teleologists are so from inheritance. Nearly all can remember when they were dualists. also. It is the special characteristic of this class—thus far, at least, in human history—that they must be independent thinkers. The unthinking masses are necessarily teleological in their mental make-up. With all the disadvantages, therefore, of the wholly emancipated rationalist, he can ever feel the proud consciousness of owing his principles to his own individual efforts to set himself right with the surrounding world, and that it is reason and not education, much less heredity, to which he owes his intellectual liberty. The tables may yet turn, and rationalism constitute the rule, but it is safe to predict that, when this day arrives, teleology will have disappeared entirely,

and the rival of the present rationalism, if it has one, will be some still truer and purer form of causational philosophy.

*(To be continued.)*

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### WHAT SCIENCE IS DOING FOR THE LABORER.

—O—  
*(From the Nineteenth Century.)*  
—O—

It seems at first sight to be an economic danger, this education of the laboring man and woman to be far too good for laborer's work. Let us cast our thoughts, however, over a wider horizon, and see how the decades that bring this peril are also bringing the remedy. Science is steadily sweeping away all the humbler classes of employment. Hardly any man has now to toil up ladders with the hod of bricks upon his shoulder. The donkey-engine does the purely animal part of the work. The reaper is replaced by the machine, and the ploughman is fast receding as the steam plough makes its appearance. We rarely see long lines of men, laden with coal bags, running up planks as in the olden days. The need of men to do the work of horses is steadily diminishing. It is true that science has by no means conquered the whole domain. There is still much scrubbing of floors to be done by men and women on bended knees, and coal is still hewn out with pick and axe and the use of muscle, with but little use of brain. And yet, even in our fertile century, science never works by revolution, but only by progress. One domain after another has gone. Where are now the armies of water-carriers, and chair-porters, and night-men and sawyers whom our grandfathers used to require? Imagine, if ships had still to be moved by galley rowers, how many millions would be doomed to a beast-like toil.

Some parts of the big domain of unreflective labor will long be left untouched, but the process is going forward, and it is clear that, while education is rendering the lower classes unfit for the humblest sorts of occupations, science is steadily sweeping away those very occupations. It would be too much to hope that these processes should be at all times strictly proportioned to one another. But in the general drift of things they are compensatory, and if we only give to science a reasonable time it will leave us none of that labor to be done which requires an uneducated laborer.

Then comes the uneasy question, What is to become of the classes thus deprived of occupation? The working classes themselves often curse the progress of invention, and are tempted to look upon it as no friend to their welfare. There are now, it is true, no longer any machine-breaking frenzies, but the difficulty often arises in an acute though silent suffering. Unfortunately, society has always to travel to permanent good through transitory ills. When an army of compositors is dismissed because some one has invented a linotype machine, there is excuse for some bitterness of feeling; and

yet there was a time when a whole army of manuscript book copyers had to give way before the advent of the compositor.

But the difficulty is always evanescent, for here, too, there are compensating influences at work. For if science is abolishing occupations at the lower end of the scale, she is creating new ones at the top. Think of the hundreds of thousands of men who in England are now employed in callings that had no existence sixty years ago: the telegraphers, and photographers, and machinists of a hundred kinds. In the last decade or two, what an army of skilled men have been demanded by the invention of the bicycle, the telephone, and the electric light! As compared with the beginning of the century, think of the long array of marine and locomotive engineers, the chemists, the journalists, the draughtsmen, the teachers, the postmen, railway porters, and street-car conductors. What a multitude of callings there are which are either new or else newly stocked, so that, while the population has quadrupled, their ranks have been multiplied a hundred-fold. But it is the entirely new employments that strike the mind most forcibly, and any one who runs his eye down a census of the occupations of the people will satisfy himself that in England of the present day one-fifth part of the adult male population find their livelihood in avocations that had no existence when the century began.

Thus, while science takes away with one hand, it liberally bestows with the other; but what it takes away are the low-class occupations, and what it gives are the high-class ones, demanding intelligence and cultivating it. The general tendency is therefore humanizing.

But, of course, it never happens that the coal-heaver, when thrown out of work by the introduction of a steam crane, can go away and get a place in one of the newly-created superior callings. He is not such a fool as to waste his time in applying for an opening as an electrical engineer. But there is a gradual creeping up that is always taking place. And yet the transfer is much less effected by the promotion of individuals than by promotion of generations. No doubt it sometimes happens that the intelligent plumber steps into the new opening for an electrical engineer, and leaves a gap which some one of an inferior calling steps into, the gaps being filled in succession until perhaps the riveter, thrown out of employment by the introduction of hydraulic machinery, finds a vacancy at last and steps into it. But it more frequently happens that the plumber educates his son to be an electrical engineer, the carter apprentices his boy to the plumber, and the dock laborer sees his young folks aspiring to be carters.

Thus the general drift of the whole social scale is steadily upward in proportion as science provides intelligent occupations at the upper end and abolishes those that are more or less brute-like at the lower, and so humanity as a whole is the gainer. There is, therefore, no reason to feel uneasy at a prospect of over-education.

## CONFUCIUS AND HIS TEACHINGS.

BY MAJOR-GEN. J. G. R. FORLONG, F.R.S.E., F.R.A.S., ETC.

[Condensed from "Short Studies in the Science of Comparative Religions." By Major-General Forlong. London: Quaritch.]

### V.

WHEN, as Minister of Crime under Duke Chau, a father besought him to punish his son for lack of filial piety—one of the most heinous crimes in a Chinaman's eyes—Kung-fu-tsze committed both to prison, saying: "Am I to punish for a breach of filial piety one who has never been taught to be filially minded? He who neglects to teach a son his duties is equally guilty with the son who fails in them, and so is the king or lawmaker who neglects his duties yet seeks order and obedience."

Though Prime Minister and the leader of armed forces, he went minutely like a mere land and revenue officer into all agricultural matters. These he said are the base of a nation's greatness and happiness, and his youthful practical experience here enabled him as head of the state to effect many beneficent improvements; but one of the most essential and also most burning reforms he made was in the disposal of the dead. Everywhere he found cemeteries occupying the richest fields and gardens, and poisoning the home and water supplies. He had them gently removed where possible, and placed on rugged uplands unfit for the plough; and he also instituted quiet and reverent rites instead of the frivolous and mischievous ones which then prevailed.

In this manner Confucius was continually instructing the people, and he also set them a good example of masculine vigor, and never allowed himself to forget the practical, or to too long dwell on abstract speculations. He engaged not only in lighter studies but gymnastic exercises, and even wild game hunting, saying, when this recreation was demurred to as unbefitting his position, that war and clearing the land of wild beasts was one of the duties of our ancestors and must not be put aside; for it called forth skill, decision, bravery and other necessary manly activities, without which we cannot thoroughly master the higher intellectualities. He was not only a skilful and brave charioteer—an accomplishment held in high estimation—but no mean poet and musician; and many of his sweet melodies, cheerful and grave, have come down to us. He always resorted to his lute and composed lays when he sought pleasure or consolation in times of adversity and depression; and held the doubtful opinion, that "it is impossible for a vicious man to be a good musician," and the undoubtful one that "the bow which is always bent loses its elasticity and becomes useless."

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 mild and benevolent expression. Like all strong healthy men he keenly felt the increasing weaknesses and ailings of age, as is seen in many of his improvised sonnets, to dolorous lute accompaniments, see General Alexander's volume, as—



“ 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.”

This somewhat depicts his habitual mood when, in his 70th year (481 B.C.), he lost his son, then two loved disciples, and up to his death in 479, when we find him tremulously singing, but with still unflagging interest in his high and holy aims as a teacher.

“ All that is pure and great  
 The world would fain regret,  
     And I—what have I done ?  
 Ah ! who, when I am gone,  
 Striving as I have striven,  
     Will work at this sad task ?”

These were but the soliloquies of his old age, when, however, he still pined unselfishly for the happiness and improvement of his fellows and of his country, without any speculations as to the dark future. Yet, though avoiding all theologies and their dogmas, he was always a man of strong religious feelings, but kindly regarding the present and the future, and with a full conviction of a great past. He besought the spirits or powers of heaven and earth to treat him and all benevolently, but beyond this we hear of no prayers nor any superstitions except a slight occasional weakness towards omens and prognostications. He had no bigotry, prejudices or vanity, but, revering the past, its rites and ceremonies, he was particular in regard to these and all the etiquette due to rank, age and office.

Professor Douglas rightly says : There is no room in his religion for a personal deity, and therefore the pious philosopher ever speaks vaguely of “ Heaven ” or an “ Over-all ” power ; yet seems to recognize an Unknown, perchance Unknowable something at the back of phenomena, intelligent, but more often demoniacal than

beneficent. He felt, however, that it transcended proof and our reasoning powers, and was not therefore a subject for the public teacher or the busy toiling people to dwell upon. On this account, perhaps, if not from his heredity and spiritualistic upbringing, he advises people not to meddle with or try to thwart diviners and divinations, they having so strong a hold on the ignorant masses. He ever strenuously sought to recall people from the hypothetical speculations of spiritualists, to the plain, urgent and real duties which they owed to their fellows as well as to themselves. He said there was quite sufficient in the front of all phenomena for our present thoughts, powers and activities, without going behind into that phantasmal region, out of which philosophers as well as spiritists and simple pious souls reared their dismal airy castles, and on which ignorant devout dreamers built up oppressive creeds, rites and dogmas.

He often urged men not to act or even speak on what they did not fully understand and accurately grasp as true knowledge, saying that the "uncertain did not concern them in the practical affairs of life." What they and all required to know and at once, was goodness and the virtues; how to truly serve and if possible show love to their neighbors, nay, to all men, and hatred of evil, wrong and injustice.

It is impossible, he said in effect, "to love our neighbor as ourself;" but we could and must act towards others as we would have them act towards us. "What I do not wish men to do to me, I also wish not to do to them." Though giving this world-wide golden rule in a negative form, Kung-fu-tsze required it to be considered as a positive and most comprehensive injunction, embracing, as Hillel said and Jesus repeated, all "the Law and the Prophets."

Confucius adhered to the maxim of ancient Chinese sages: "Never neglect to rectify an evil or redress a wrong because it is small . . . nor to resist slight acts of injustice, else they will grow, and great wrongs may overwhelm thee or others." The golden rule which only appears once in the teaching of Jesus he reiterates three times, and again in his "Great Learning," where he exhaustively expands it as: "The principle with which, as with a measuring square, to regulate one's conduct." When a favorite disciple said he observed it, Confucius simply replied, "Ts'ze, you have not attained to that." Confucius acknowledged four applications of the rule, in not one of which he himself was able to take the initiative. He felt it was impossible to love another as well as we do ourselves.

## VI.

THE REV. DR. MATHSON, of the Scotch Church, describes the religious teaching of Confucius ("Religion of China," p. 97) as "a true and pure morality without theology. He held up the vision of an infinite in the finite, the establishment of a kingdom of heaven on earth, the existence of a perfected society, the organization of a divine order out of the elements of time. He pointed to the prospect of a paradise below; to the advent of a pure civil government; to the possibility of a reign whose law would be a universal blessing; and in the suggestion of that hope was supplied

the one feature which was lacking to give the religions of the East a power over the present life." This writer might have added that high aims and strivings are best for us all, and lead to results not otherwise attainable. Without a Confucius, China could not have been the early civilized and imperial nation she became.

Many trivial as well as important matters constantly show that China seeks to be guided by her great sage. Thus during the discussion on Art. VIII. of Lord Elgin's Treaty of Tien-tsin, in the face of a weak Christian protest, China nobly and frankly insisted on inserting that she here grants toleration of Christianity because it teaches as Confucius also taught, that "we should do as we would be done by."

Confucius was very strong on the necessity of fully thinking out all teaching to its ultimate consequences, and inveighed against the many dangers of unlearned meditation. "Learning," he said, "when undigested by thought, is labor lost, but *thought* unassisted by learning is perilous"—a conclusion apparently suggested to him by the foolish though devout speculations of Tāo-ists and other *quasi* pious sects.

Monks and all anchorites he vigorously condemned as misguided men shirking life's duties and living on others. On one occasion, when a recluse urged the misery and disorder of all things, the impossibility of rectifying the world, and therefore the advisability of withdrawing from it, Confucius said: "It is impossible to do so. That would be to associate with birds and beasts; let us rather associate with suffering men and labor to remove the evils, for these require the strenuous efforts of all of us, and if we act on right principles we may prevail. Anyhow, we may not abandon suffering humanity." His faith in the regeneration of men was very strong, and especially did he believe in the force of superior example. He averred that "not more surely does the grass bend before the wind than the masses to the will and example of those above them; therefore see well to all the duties of thy station, and be diligent and attentive to business. . . . Exercise economy in thine own living. . . . seek the good of all. . . . love virtue and walk aright, discussing all questions thoughtfully, with a feeling of thy responsibility to others as well as to thyself. All this requires cultivation and wisdom."

The reader should here turn to Art. XI., "Short Texts," and read our summary of the "vastly ancient" religious and ethical teachings which Confucius said he inherited in the literature of his country, and endeavored to hand down with all necessary explanatory comments. It begins in the heroic age of the Emperor Fuh-si, "founder of temples, sacrificial rites, and worships, as well as agriculture and other arts," though no contemporary records belong to Chinese history till the 24th cent. B.C. It may be called

#### MAN'S FIRST TURANIAN BIBLE,

for it is truly the Sacred Scriptures of China from 3,500 to 700 B.C. Most of these "divine teachings" (not to be confused with the Confucian Bible of 6th cent. B.C.), belong to the early ancient classics, beginning, say, in 2600 B.C., "when competent European scholars find authentic historic proof of Chinese civilization," this mostly in the Shu and Shih Kings of the 24th to 12th cents. B.C. The quaint, but always

clear, practical and straightforward method of teaching stands out in sharp and strange contrast to the Scriptures of all Aryan and Semitic peoples.

Confucius wrote no Bible, nor anything detailing his ethical and social faith or system, though he is said to have written a hundred volumes amplifying and annotating ancient writings. The most important attributed to him are the "Five Classics," or Kings, and he certainly wrote the Chun Tseu or Khun Khiu, as this name is spelt in the S.B.E. series. It is "The Spring and Autumn" chronicles of his native state from 722 to 480 B.C. To him may be attributed also the short classic, the Hsiào King, on "Filial Piety," for it was early compiled from his conversations with Tsang Tsze, his favorite disciple, and is called by Prof. Legge "an attempt to construct a religion on the base . . . . of filial piety." The Five Classics are :

I. The YIH, or Book of Changes ; begins with matters of 3370, and belongs in parts to 2950 B.C. It still exists in the Confucian form of the 6th century B.C.

II. The SHU, or Book of History, embraces records from 2357 to 7th cent. B.C.

III. The SHIH, or Book of Poetry, is taken from records of 1769 to 1123 B.C., of the Yin or Shang dynasty.

IV. The LIH, or Book of Record of Rites. Originally in two parts.

V. The CHUNG-TSIEU, or Spring and Autumn. A *nom de plume* for "Chronicles of Lu."

The Yih ought properly to be the third classic, but its early chapters treat of the "heroic times" of the Emperor Fu-hsi, of 3370 B.C., called the Founder of Religion, Temples, Sacrifices, Arts and Sciences,"—all of which were greatly advanced by B.C. 2950. M. Chevannes, in his "La Chronologie Chinoise," demonstrates that in 2,500 B.C. Chinese astronomers had brought the tropical lunar and diurnal years into harmony by means of a cycle of 76 years, thus enabling us to prove and test the absolute correctness of many essential points of Chinese history."

Professor Legge says the rest of the Yih is not so old as the Shu ; that the Yih is a veritable cryptogram, deciphered for the first time by Wan-yang (Prince of Wang) and his brother Wu-yang in the 12th century B.C. The Chinese revere it on the principle that "man worships best what he least understands." It has, however, yielded some good matter.

The Shu is acknowledged to be a veritable body of historical documents, beginning with the Emperor Yāou, of 2357, and ending with 721 B.C. All except its earliest chapters are contemporaneous history, and it contains genuine records that Confucius has faithfully handed down, but unfortunately some parts were burnt in the disgraceful book burnings of 250-220 B.C. Though wonderfully recovered, the chronology here and there has been much disarranged, and portions found in 140 B.C. entombed in a well are in an obsolete character which baffles scholars.

Of the Shu, its translator, Rev. W. H. Medhurst, says : " In political economy and moral philosophy, its lessons of practical wisdom are applicable to all ages and nations.

Something may be learned from it so long as . . . there are high and low, rich and poor, a love of reciprocal justice, affection, respect, and obedience. It is the best specimen of natural religion yet known, . . . and is deficient in all that respects the spiritual and eternal." Necessarily so, for it professes to be simply a collection of his torical records ; yet it affords a striking evidence of the growth towards a monotheistic belief among the ancient Chinese.

The Shih King, or Odes, said Confucius, "cannot fail to expand and refine the mind," showing how preferable harmony is to striving, covetousness, and enmity. Its great teaching is : Purify your Thoughts." This King contains in all 305 "odes and songs," and all but five (for strictly sacrificial rites) belong to 1200-600 B.C.

The Lih King, or Classic of Rites and Ceremonies, consists of forty-six sections, on subjects most congenial to Confucius, while the whole compilation bears his impress, though some parts belong to his own and even later times. Gen. Alexander calls it "the Genesis of Chinese History," for it gives us the most ancient royal laws upon justice, religious rites, land tenure and revenue, marriage, the etiquette in regard to all social duties as between parents and children, eating and drinking, deportment, etc., and a whole chapter on music. Prof. Legge describes it as "the most exact and complete monography which the Chinese nation could give of itself to mankind, yet with nothing approaching to theology"—dogmatic teaching of religion being totally absent from Confucianism.

The Chung-Tsieu is an elaborate work, embracing the annals of Confucius's native state, Lu, from 740 to 480 B.C., and four large and important classics :

1. The Ta Hsio, or "Great Learning," attributed to Tsang Tsze, the favorite and learned disciple.
2. The Chung Yung, or "Doctrine of the Mean," by Tsze-Sze, another disciple.
3. The Lun Yu, or "Analects," discourses compiled by several disciples, guided by Confucius.
4. The Discourses of Mencius.

The first of these seeks to train man up to "transcendent virtue," and affirms his virtuous state at birth, which contact with the world has contaminated. The causes and consequences of our conduct are elaborately dilated on. The second book sets forth the highest moral purity by maxims and precepts in homely and plain language, illustrated by parables and aphorisms. In the third book we get the most valued maxims, proverbs, theorems, mottos, and formulas of the great sage, sentiments which his zealous disciples have for 24 centuries been in the habit of committing to memory and have treasured up as life-long guides.

The fourth of these classics, or Discourses of Mencius, is a compilation of about 300 B.C. of the Great Master's teachings by his most accomplished disciple, whose ambition it was to explain, amplify, and enforce doctrines which he considered were all-sufficient for the political regeneration of the empire and the establishment of society on a secure moral basis. Mencius, like Lao-tsze and Confucius, belonged to the

province of Shang-tung, the literary centre of China during these busy writing centuries of the 6th to the 3rd centuries B.C. The noble parentage and youthful characteristics of Mencius recall to us much in the early life of his master, and both were much indebted to good mothers, who devoted all their lives to the development of the characters of their talented sons. Mencius claimed nothing as his own, and his teachings remind us of those of many Western sages—Plato and others.

The above is but a slight sketch of the Sacred Scriptures of Confucianism. In our next chapter we shall give a chronological summary of the teachings of Confucius, gleaned from his Classics and Discourses, which we may therefore call

#### THE CONFUCIAN BIBLE OF THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C.

### VII.

#### THE CONFUCIAN BIBLE.

##### A SUMMARY OF THE TEACHINGS OF CONFUCIUS.

1 HE who desires to establish a nation securely must educate the young and diffuse intelligence; an ignorant people can neither be healthy, orderly, good, contented or peaceable; nor a firm and good king be esteemed a kindly ruler.

2 The parent is the base of the national system and must inculcate virtue, loyalty and patriotism. The king crowns the edifice as "father of the people," and he should excel in all virtues, and in his rule temper justice with mercy, love and sympathy. He is the chief servant—the enthroned guardian of the state, and should consider the achievement of justice his all-sufficient profit; and the prosperity and happiness of the nation as his best and enduring reward.

3 A ruler or father who neglects his duties is as much to blame as the disloyal and unfilial son; therefore in punishing him neglect not the prime offender, who ought to have better brought up his household.

4 Evil is not inherent in our human nature; the babe is innocent and even prone to virtue: it is circumstances, violence and vicious surroundings that beget like conduct and inclinations.

5 We are the resultant forces of "the Heavens" and Earth; the male and female principles of nature, an efflux from the eternal source of law and order, to whom virtue has an irresistible charm; and virtues will not stand alone, but ever seek out and find many neighbors.

6 Nature or "TI-EN is the supreme idea of law and order." It betokens intelligence, and is worshipped as *Shang Ti*. We are but puny "parts of a stupendous mechanism," which is "self-sustaining and without beginning or end."

7 We can but see and study the laws of cause and effect; but of *Creation* we can know nought, only *Expansion*. Our knowledge is bounded by the phenomenal; that which can be comprehended by our senses, cultured by experiences, reason and thought, and carefully stored up in our memories.

8 Discuss therefore phenomena, and the laws of Nature, and waste not time on the vain speculations of religions ; as on primeval and final causes, creation and its end, Primordial Matter and Spirit, Gods, Life and Souls, Time and Space, infinity, immortality, heavens and hells.

9 Knowing so little of this life, and what life is, how canst thou comprehend death and the Beyond? All except the teachings of experience and reflection is to us unknown, and perchance ever unknowable ; be here therefore silent, neither opposing nor supporting. Even the divinations of sorcerers may come true ; and having a hold on the ignorant and imaginative, should be respected though not countenanced.

10 Sufficient for our ordinary powers and activities are the varied and well-known phenomena of nature. Be content if thou understand the visible and palpable, and can execute well thy homely and social duties. These are prominent and never hid as is the Whither, Whence, and Wherefore of life.

11 He who wishes to fulfil the highest purposes of life should begin by ordering well his own house and conduct ; thus best will he aid and inspire the life of the future. If unable to influence his fellows and the known, how can he influence the unknown and the "heavens"? But by acting rightly man masters his own destiny, aids and guides the feeble, ignorant and wavering ; and himself has nought to fear concerning the unknown.

12 The future is impenetrable ; no gods have spoken ; no dead arisen, whilst Nature has ever moved on unconcernedly and in eternal silence, producing and disintegrating : callous apparently of the feelings, joys, or miseries of all creation, and crushing relentlessly all who oppose her ways.

13 Thus are our paths full of dangerous perplexities, and give full scope for foresight and all virtues. Goodness is as a rule the produce of intellectuality, and vice the offspring of ignorance ; but e'en wisdom oft times halts in the paths of rectitude and virtue. Nevertheless seek after learning, individual and national, and esteem wisdom above all treasures, wealth, and power.

14 If thou really desirest and would bravely find knowledge, open thine ears willingly to all men's views ; have ability to study and comprehend their scope, and the will, courage and honesty to follow truth at all times, and however first distasteful and unpopular.

15 The good and wise man is calm, tolerant, and no partizan ; the ignorant man hasty, ungenerous, and not catholic. He acts best who unselfishly, with piety and purity, strives to be true to his best and highest instincts ; and holds up to himself the highest aims and ideals. This path leads to no priest or temple, but to the gates of heaven—the highest satisfaction of the heart and mind, and yields that inward reward which belongeth only to the good and true.

16 Good deeds as well as vices follow after us, and live in our children to several generations. Nature's moral laws are as stern as her physical ; so if thou hast been

foolish in the past, bemoan it not ; she never overlooks or forgives ; the past is gone, and for thee is irrevocable ; bestir thyself afresh, and be wiser in the future.

17 The world needs workers, not monks and anchorites—mistaken pietists, who in forsaking their fellows, identify themselves with the animal creation. Our duties demand that we live with and for mankind, playing well our part, alike by sample and by precept.

18 Help with diligence the oppressed, the weak and ignorant according to thy full capabilities and influence. Be brave, manly, sincere, modest and generous, and if thou wouldst rule others, learn first to rule thine own thoughts, words and actions.

19 Exercise economy, and restrict thine own pleasures, so that seeing thee, the mean man may become liberal, and the selfish and miserly bountiful. Admonish loyally and kindly even thy friend, yet pause if thou find him angry or impracticable.

20 Instruct high and low to honor their parents and superiors, to sympathize with and help their neighbors, oppose oppression, all wrongs and injustice with firmness, yet without violence or anger.

21 Treat the aged with deference, if not reverence, and disturb not the serenity of their lives. The wisest and strongest will become weak and foolish, withering away like the leaves of the forest. Honor thou their memories with befitting tombs and rites as prescribed by our ancestors.

22 If thou art a teacher, consider well thy high calling, and lend not the weight of thy name to foolish theories—those speculations which unlearned ones are prone to. It is thy duty to curb, teach and direct men aright, so that they waste not their substance, time and abilities.

23 Knowledge is only that which you know accurately. Whatsoever you have not fully and clearly mastered, consider you do not know, and refrain from teaching. Frankly confess the limits of your knowledge ; to know that you do not know is the beginning of wisdom.

24 Not more surely does grass bend before the wind than the masses to the will and example of leaders ; therefore think out well what thou wouldst teach, and beware of unlearned meditation ; for undigested studies can be of use to none, and thought unassisted by learning is perilous.

25 Neither as ruler nor citizen turn thy cheek to the smiter. Recompense injury with justice, not kindness ; else wilt thou recompense evildoers and establish laws which would disintegrate society. The Law of *Reciprocity* and the "foundation of order" is : "Do unto another what you would he did unto you ; and do not that which you would not have done to yourself."

26 Weigh well the difficulties which surround thy path, then shall no difficulty overcome thee. There is a bravery which surpasses that of the soldier, the huntsman, and the mariner. To be brave under every trial of life, small or great, even if the heavens seem against us ; acting well our part with stalwart will, and bearing our burdens with cheerful hearts.



## CHARACTER.

BY CHARLES CATTELL.

APPLYING this term in its widest sense, it implies the qualities which go to make the distinction between one man and another, and which, consequently, varies with its qualities. Hence there are persons whose characters are described as good, bad, and doubtful. Much dispute has arisen as to the way in which character is formed. Is it a divine gift, an impression of nature, or the result of habit?

Emerson writes a long essay on Character, illustrating his meaning, which admits of more than one interpretation. His highest view is, that character is moral order seen through the medium of the individual, its tendency being to raise all others to that individual's own level, and he says: "Thus men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong. The natural measure of this power is the resistance of circumstances." Emerson illustrates the idea by a reference to candidates for office in the State. A candidate must not only be learned, acute, and a fluent speaker, he must also, in the first instance, have been "appointed by Almighty God to stand for a fact." Descending from this lofty platform, he says: "Our public assemblies are pretty good tests of manly force. Our frank countrymen of the West and South have a taste for character, and like to know whether the New Englander is a substantial man, or whether the hand can pass through him." This homely test can be applied to tradesmen, statesmen, and others. Emerson, however, treats the qualities which make up this ideal man, with his special aptitudes, as mysterious—"It lies in the man; that is all anyone can tell you about it." Like the poet, he is born, not made. Our view, compared with Emerson's, will appear exceedingly prosaic. We desire to ascertain how a particular character is derived, from what causes, believing it to be the result of causes.

The result of our inquiries may be thus expressed. Character appears to us to denote a state of mind, the result of continued sense impressions, which modify it and give it certain directions in the conduct of life. Tempers, habits, power of selection, choice, and determination, are the result of a process which ever goes on, and when the mind is definitely fixed in purpose, there arises harmony between past, present, and future actions—regularity. This power to act consistently we hold to be acquired, and without it, past, present, and future acts would have no established connection; in a word, no

such thing as character would be known. Thus, it will be seen, we indicate the source of character to be nature, that is, natural gifts, modified and developed by the influence of surroundings.

This view, it has been held, does not admit of actions being amenable to any moral law. We submit that this *origin* of character does not destroy the connection between cause and effect, between actions and motives; it does not deprive a man of the power to appreciate moral discipline. That being so, our ideal man is open to all the same influences as those acting upon a man whose character may be attributed to other causes or a supernatural origin. For instance, such influences as are commonly brought to bear on human conduct, as praise and blame, rewards and punishments, affect every sentient being more or less. Custom has established these methods, because they are found to influence character, forming, as they do, a part of man's surrounding circumstances. The proclamation at English criminal sessions is against offences committed "at the instigation of the Devil;" but that item does not count in mitigation of sentence. Yet it is surely as rational to attempt the correction of a man who is "the creature of circumstances" as of one who is "moved by the Devil," and praise or blame is a "circumstance" calculated to influence such a "creature."

When we endeavor to establish the truth that actions result from causes, it is absurd to hurl at us the charge of destroying all moral responsibility. The experience and good sense of society is every year more rapidly approaching our now somewhat ancient belief: that other and improved circumstances are the most powerful remedies for social evils arising out of detrimental or bad conditions. The establishment of institutions for inebriates is one of the latest evidences of this movement.

Taking an extended view of life, it will be found that character is natural or artificial according as it results from the exercise of the rational faculties and the development of man's nature, or from the influences of schools and professions. Nothing is clearer than that our feelings become speedily enveloped in some outward forms, and the part many play in life is moulded by these outward forms. Even the best of our feelings are greatly modified by the forms enforced by custom, law, or religion.

The tendency of our whole life's conduct is frequently determined in the earliest time by the merest accident. Our desires, which so greatly influence us, often arise from imperceptible sources. From infancy to manhood—commencing in the nursery, to be continued in the school, the workshop, and the world—may be noted peculiarities of character whose pedigree is untraceable. Things by which we are surrounded from the earliest times become lessons

learnt, and lead to the formation of habits and character before the reasoning faculties come into play or assert their full power over conduct. It is well known and often observed that association gives us impressions, states of mind, turns of thought, and fixed habits, which new ideas acquired in later years fail to disturb. In cases where a radical change is effected in after years, it is attended by much trouble in unlearning the past.

To affect character in general, the desired change necessitates not only a new geographical position, but also a complete revolution in the circumstances of our lives.

If our conclusion as to the way in which character is formed be accepted, it should magnify the importance of giving in early life a wise and benevolent direction to the intellect and moral character, to give a bias to the right conduct of life. It must also be obvious that all impressions that retard the development of the highest character must be guarded against, in so far as human control can operate. Too much reliance upon "things coming right in the end" may ruin the prospects of a life depending on education and training, if they are inadequate or misdirected. In this matter, as in others, it may be regarded as a truth that the reaping depends, first, on the seed, and then on the soil in which it is sown.

Our notion of the highest, the most admirable and honorable character is that of a *gentleman*, being preferable to that of Christian, as the latter may or may not connote honor, truth, and justice. Our gentleman is not the wealthy or frivolous person usually so named, but a genuine man who can be neither bullied nor bribed. He is our ideal of truth and honor; his title is read in his treatment of others, whether he works at the forge, drives a team, or lives on his own estate. His characteristics are good nature, manhood, respect for others, a benevolent feeling, not ruled by fortune, place or power. A gentleman is known by his being upright, downright, and straightforward, like Montaigne, the sceptic, of the sixteenth century. During the civil wars, Montaigne's probity, honor, and courage induced the nobles and gentry in his neighborhood to place their jewels and papers in his hands for safe keeping. Self-reliance and rectitude disarmed his enemies and caused him to be trusted by all.

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## SHAKESPEARE AND THE BIBLE.

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“ I am nothing if not critical.”—IAGO.

A RIGHT reverend worm of the dust known as Bishop Wordsworth once, in the intervals of professional soul-saving, endeavored to exploit Shakespeare in the interests of the religion of Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. It was worthy of an official of that Church which buried Charles Darwin in Westminster Abbey, and consigned the ashes of doubting Thomas Huxley to the grave “ in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection ! ” Bishop Wordsworth’s attempt to show that Shakespeare received his supply of inspiration from the same August Tap as the anonymous, and sometimes ridiculous, authors of “ The Holy Bible ” was foredoomed to failure. Comparisons are proverbially odious ; but this particular rivalry works out so much to the advantage of the writer whom an admiring Frenchman called “ the divine Williams,” that our readers will perhaps pardon us for referring to the matter somewhat in detail. The right reverend soul-saver argues that Shakespeare was an Evangelical Christian because, forsooth, he made frequent use of the Bible !

The Atheist Shelley also made use of the Bible, but we have not yet heard that he was a fit person to run a Sunday-school. Shakespeare was a world too wide for any theology. He never fretted and fussed about the salvation of his soul. He was no more a Christian than Lucretius or Omar Khayyam, Montaigne, or Rabelais. Let us see how Shakespeare did use the Bible. He puts plenty of Biblical allusion in the mouth of Sir John Falstaff. Listen ! “ In the state of innocency Adam fell, and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in a state of villainy ? ” Bardolph’s face reminds him of hell-fire and Dives that lived in purple. His face is like the Devil’s kitchen, where he does nothing but roast malt-worms. Then, how Sir John ridicules hell-fire : “ I think the Devil will not have me damned, lest the oil that is in me should set hell on fire.” When he dies, trusty Bardolph exclaims : “ Would I were with him, wheresome’er he is, either in heaven or in hell ; ” and Mistress Quickly replies : “ Nay, sure he’s not in hell ; he’s in Arthur’s bosom, if ever man went to Arthur’s bosom,” substituting, with subtle sarcasm, the legendary English hero for the mythical Jewish one.

Mrs. Page tells Mrs. Ford to dispense with such a trifle as going “ to hell for an eternal moment or so,” thus prophetically poking fun at Dean Farrar’s nonsense concerning the eternity or otherwise of everlasting punishment.

In *Measure for Measure* the Clown burlesques St. Paul’s twaddle about the subordination of women : “ Provost : ‘ Come hither, sirrah. Can you cut off a man’s head ? Pompey : ‘ If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can ; but if he be a married man, he is his wife’s head, and I can never cut off a woman’s head.’ ” Elsewhere Shakespeare warms us in lines of passionate bitterness :

“ In religion,  
What damned error but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text.”

King Richard II. compares himself to the Second Person of the Trinity, and exalts his own misery above that tearful and ill-used person. He has "three Judases, each one thrice worse than Judas." So Judas did to Jesus—"he, in twelve, found truth in all but one; I, in twelve thousand, none."

In *Henry VI.*, the Royal Hunchback flippantly says: "For you shall sup with Jesus Christ to-night." In the same play (i. 3) the Duchess of Glo'ster says with lady-like reserve:

"Could I come near your beauty with my nails,  
I'd set my ten commandments in thy face."

In *Twelfth Night*, when Olivia says of her brother, "I know his soul is in heaven, fool," like a dum-dum bullet comes the rude answer: "The more fool you, madonna, to mourn for your brother being in heaven."

Shakespeare, like Professor Huxley, ridicules miracles. In the scene in *Twelfth Night* between Malvolio and the Clown, he represents a caricature of the idea that madness is occasioned by demoniacal possession and is curable by exorcism.

Not contented with mere iconoclasm, Shakespeare explains miracles:

"No natural exhalations in the sky,  
No scope of Nature, no distempered day,  
No common wind, no 'customed event,  
But they will pluck away his natural cause,  
And call them meteors, prodigies, and signs,  
Abortives, presages, and tongues of heaven."

The explanation loses nothing in force by being put in the mouth of a Cardinal of the Great Lying Church. Helena says, in *All's Well*, i. 3:

"Our remedies oft in themselves do lie  
Which we ascribe to heaven."

Timon tells us, with caustic spleen, that gold "will knit and break religions." The dying words of Hamlet, "The rest is silence," and the speech of the Duke in *Measure for Measure* while silencing Claudio's imaginary fears of death,—

"The best of rest is sleep,  
And that thou oft provokest,  
Yet grossly fear'st—  
Thy death—*which is no more*,"—

amply prove Shakespeare's heterodoxy. We might continue in this strain almost indefinitely; but enough has been said to convince the reader that Shakespeare, far from being a Christian, was a Pagan of the highest order.

When we compare Shakespeare's plays and poems with the Bible, the absurdity of supposing that our greatest poet drew inspiration from that Oriental medley is apparent. In whatever way we may draw comparisons, Shakespeare stands head and shoulders above the authors of "the source of England's greatness." The finest attempts at poetry in the Bible—comprising, be it remembered, the works of many minds in many centuries—touch the dead level of insignificance when put side by side with the sky-soaring grandeurs of the Bard of Avon. Shakespeare's magnificent efforts cover the

whole gamut of human emotions. But the writers of the Bible knew only the coarser passions. Shakespeare's language was as a quiverful of steel arrows; but these anonymous Jewish and Greek scribes could only pour out floods of lust and anger, could only utter hoarse cries of insensate fear and revenge. Compare the elementary barbarisms of the so-called "sacred volume" with the opulent originality of Shakespeare. Compare *Romeo and Juliet* with the Song which is not Solomon's, *Lear* with *Job*, or the Songs and Sonnets with the Psalms. Reading the works of the greatest Englishman, we enter a new world, ever filled with eternal meanings. We see love-sick Antony and Cleopatra in a garlanded barge lying on a bed of roses; we sympathize with brave Othello, stricken with jealousy, cruel as the grave; we laugh with Falstaff, and sorrow with Lear. It is a world of sorrows and joys; of laughter joyous and terrifying, and tears of happiness and despair. It is the epitome of human endeavor, the mockery of human accomplishment.

Compared with Shakespeare's deathless dreams, the barbaric lyrics of the Bible are merely the invocations of savages. If they had not been associated with an endowed system of religion, they would centuries ago have consumed to nothingness in the echoless temple of universal silence.

*Freethinker.*

MIMNERMUS.

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### INGERSOLL'S LAST POEM.

BY G. J. HOLYOAKE.

Few of the friends of Colonel Ingersoll were aware that he had the faculty of very good verse in him. Everybody knew there was poetry in his speeches, but that he could write poems was little imagined. Yet, on his visiting the birthplace of Burns, many years ago, he wrote some lines upon the matchless Scotch bard which were of such beauty, finish and originality that, where so many had written eulogies, his was conspicuous.

Not long before his death he gave to Mr. E. M. Macdonald, editor of the *Truth-seeker*, New York, a poem of sixteen or seventeen stanzas, entitled "The Declaration of the Free." It is certainly the most brilliant and expressive of all Agnostic poems. The versions of it which have come to this country seem here and there erroneous in terms. As Colonel Ingersoll will always be regarded as a great authority on Agnosticism, verbal inconsistencies may be usefully pointed out. In one stanza he says:—

"We have no God to serve or fear,  
No hell to shun,  
No devil with malicious leer,  
When life is done,  
And endless sleep may close our eyes,  
A sleep with neither tears nor sighs."

Now, how does the poet know this, which he so distinctly and positively asserts? The principle of Agnosticism is that we do not assert as true that of which we have not,

and cannot have, actual knowledge. In the line, "we have no god to serve or fear," the word "have" should be *know* to make it logical.

Again, in another stanza the Agnostic bard says :—

"We have no master on the land,  
No king in air ;  
Without a manacle we stand,  
Without a prayer ;  
Without a fear of coming night,  
We seek the truth, we love the light."

There may be "a king in the air," for all we know, and it is quite beyond the neutrality of Agnosticism to say there is not. Again the word "have" should be *know*.

In another stanza—

"When cyclones rend, when lightning blights  
'Tis naught but fate ;  
There is no god of wrath who strikes  
In heartless hate.  
Behind the things that injure man  
There is no purpose, thought or plan."

The tumult of the skies may be "naught but fate." That is more than we know. Though it is reasonable to suppose that no God of mercy sets cyclones going or directs the lightning to blight, it is not within the province of an Agnostic to be certain about it. Instead of saying, "'Tis naught but fate," it would be consistent to say, "It *seems* naught but fate." Let us hope that there is no "God of wrath." Reason and morality justify us in thinking so, but not in saying so. The great difference between the philosopher and the theologian is that the lover of truth is not confident unless he has evidence to go upon ; whereas the disciple of theology is confident without it. Such lines as the following go beyond the limitations of certainty within which the Agnostic professes to keep :—

"Behind the things that injure man  
There is no purpose, thought or plan."

It would be enough to say, "There *seems* no purpose." To say there is none is to assume the same infinite knowledge which is the affliction of the priest.

In the two concluding stanzas of this noble poem, as in others, the whole philosophy of Agnosticism—its moderation, its questioning, its candor—is perfectly and gracefully expressed :—

"We do not pray, or weep, or wail ;  
We have no dread,  
No fear to pass beyond the veil  
That hides the dead.  
And yet we question, dream, and guess,  
But knowledge we do not possess.

"Is there beyond the silent night  
An endless day ?  
Is death a door that leads to light ?—  
We cannot say.  
The tongueless secret locked in fate  
We do not know—we hope and wait."

All Ingersoll's genius is seen in these lines—his penetration, his pathos, his matchless simplicity and force.—*Literary Guide*.

## FINNISH MARRIAGE CUSTOMS.

THE Finnish epic poem called the "Kalevala," the oldest portions of which were probably composed three thousand years ago, throws interesting light upon the primitive social and marriage customs of the Finns. The three chief characters of the "Kalevala" are the minstrel, Wainamoinen, Ilmarinen, the magic blacksmith, and Lemminkainen, the wizard. The blacksmith pays court to the Daughter of the Rainbow, who is called "the fairest daughter of the Northland." An account of their bridal and of some of the amenities of married life in those days, is thus given by a writer in a late number of the *New York Times*: "The wedding feast prepared, the beer brewed, the guests feasted, Osmotar, daughter of Osmo, gives the Rainbow bride advice:

"Thou must acquire new habits.  
Must forget thy former customs.  
Like the mouse, have ears for hearing,  
Like the hare, have feet for running."

"But the quick ears and nimble feet are for the service of her husband and his family. The 'Bride of Beauty' must rise early, light the morning fire, fill the bucket from the 'crystal river flowing'; feed the kine and flocks 'with pleasure'; gather fagots from the woodland, bake the barley-bread and honey-cakes, wash the birchen platters clean, amuse the sister's baby, entertain the stranger, 'tend well the sacred sorb-tree' and other vegetation; spin, weave, make clothes, beer, 'lend the needed service' when the 'father of my hero husband' bathes. The week ended, she must 'give the house a thorough clean-

ing.' And all the while she must wear the whitest linen and 'tidy fur shoes' for her hero husband's glory. And she must not gossip in the village, tell of neglect or ill-treatment, to bring shame to her kindred and disgrace to her husband's household. Ostomar, daughter of Osmo, counsels the bridegroom also:

"Never cause the Bride of Beauty  
To regret the day of marriage;  
Never make her shed a teardrop,  
Never fill her cup with sorrow."

But strict marital discipline must be maintained. Those were the days when there were no women's clubs, but clubs for women.

"To thy young wife give instruction,  
Kindly teach thy bride in secret,  
In the long and dreary evenings,  
When thou sittest at the fireside;  
Teach one year in words of kindness,  
Teach with eyes of love a second;  
In the third year teach with firmness;  
If she should not heed thy teaching,  
Should not hear thy kindly counsel  
After three long years of effort,  
Cut a reed upon the lowlands,  
Cut a nettle from the border,  
Teach thy wife with harder measures.  
In the fourth year, if she heed not,  
Threaten her with sterner treatment,  
With the stalks of rougher edges.  
Use not yet the thongs of leather,  
Do not touch her with the birch whip.  
If she does not heed this warning,  
Should she pay thee no attention,  
Cut a rod upon the mountains,  
Or a willow in the valleys;  
Hide it underneath thy mantle,  
That the stranger may not see it;  
Show it to thy wife in secret,  
Shame her thus to do her duty;  
Strike not yet, the disobeying.  
Should she disregard this warning,  
Still refuse to heed thy wishes,  
Then instruct her with the willow,  
Use the birch rod from the mountain,  
In the closet of thy dwelling,  
In the attic of thy mansion."