

FREELIGHT.

MARCH, 1872.

REASON IN FAITH.

"Give a reason for the faith that is in you."

It has been said by sceptics, by religionists, and others, that FREELIGHT enunciates no principle. Well, the principle is, that "TRUTH MAKES US FREE;" that "where the '*Spirit*' of the Lord is, there is liberty;" that "the letter killeth," &c. In this faith, we are open to reason from all quarters. The reconciliation of reason and faith (two divine principles) cannot be promoted without fair statements opposed to the ordinary views of men—of believers and doubters.

The old belief contains *much* unbelief. No man who knows what the spirit of Revelation is can deny that "we are all included in unbelief;" but the comfort is, "God will have mercy upon all." The *letter* (against which we contend), the *letter* of the Book is death; the reverse of the letter is life. It is to advance beyond the errors of sects that we strive. Every sect—even every "infidel" sect—is a portion of that vesture for which "lots" were cast, according to the prophetic record. Every sect has a truth—such as it is. Trinitarians and Unitarians are both right, and both wrong. The Catholic is right; but the Protestant has truth—so has the Rationalist. There is a Trinity in Nature; but God is divine Unity—HIS NAME ONE.

There is a great Universal Church, but it was established long before Christianity—"Before Abraham was, I Am." The Romish Church is but a sect, and a very base sect; but what has any other church in the universe to boast of? Protestantism is on a par with atheistic negation in the fact that it seems "a foul and pestilent congregation" of *sects*, that hate and despise each other.

The Rationalist, disgusted with theology, concludes there is no use in religion. There is his error. He is right enough in opposing the low and degrading spirit of sect; he is wrong in imagining that Providence (which, indeed, he very dimly discerns—if at *all* as an entity) has nothing to do with our divisions. "He is a God of battles." Until this great truth is established, no man can see the Universal God. God is in everything. He gives Judaism to the world—with its "beggarly elements"—but only that it may be swallowed up in Christianity; and the second development of belief implies a third, with "the Holy Ghost, the Comforter." Who worships the Holy Ghost? It is a Ghost, not as yet a Spirit—the Spirit of *all* truth! The Swedenborgian worships the Son—and *that* is an advance on the old theology; but there he stops. The worship of Jehovah is but a Jewish idea. Jehovah—if the prophet be correct—gave judgments "whereby a man could not live." Unbelief points derisively to the fact. But how can we live by unbelief? Judaism itself is *something*, however unfit for the present state of society; but unbelief is simply *nothing*. The stage of Christianity was reached many centuries ago; but the SPIRIT beyond is in the van of Humanity. The faith in the Holy Ghost seems really to be seen most luminously in the mighty thought of the great German thinkers. Hegel has taught the very idea which the Universalist holds as ultimate truth. Even Anglican clergymen find that the best armoury for the defence of Religion is the armoury of Teutonic thought, which has given a death-blow to Sensationalism and Negation.

It is the worship of the Holy Spirit that is now desiderated by the wise, and we grope in the dark while we are searching in labyrinthine theological ways. "God is a Spirit, and we must worship him in spirit and in truth." That is the declaration of the Universalist. It is probable the Athanasian Creed will be abolished; let those words be substituted. They contain more than the creeds. Faith must be reasoned before the wise can embrace any tenets. There must be reason for the faith we own. There is no true allegiance to Heaven without reason—a faculty that separates man from all other animals. Reason and Humanity transcend the vapours of theological minds that have no knowledge of the meaning of the word Spirit, and who will not or cannot see that "Truth is the body of God" and spiritual aliment. "God," asserts Schlegel, "is the keystone which holds together the whole human consciousness. As to the threefold life of the inner man, it consists of spirit, soul, and God as the third, in whom the first two are united, or, at least, must seek their union." A pregnant truth.

It is no longer possible for Realists to ignore the capacious and comprehensive views of the leaders of philosophy; and nearly every literary man of note echoes the voice of German Idealism. We can't escape from its influence. It pursues us like a divine, universal light. It is a spirit, leading us to faith. But it is also obvious that affirmations like these are as destructive of popular theology as of the doubts, born of sense, so utterly transcended. This is well known to the school of materialistic Pyrrhonists, whose empirical conclusions are thus set aside.

The theologians will not be taught. Scientists, for the most part, rest in science. "The liberal mind deviseth liberal things" beyond the shadows of the senses; and Materialists, therefore, call Transcendentalists, Universalists, and Spiritualists—Mystics. Yet Mystics, in the ordinary sense of Mysticism, have no acquaintance whatever with the sublime philosophy of pure reason; and therefore they are not emancipated, at present, from superstition. It is a spirit always that emancipates our minds.

Dr. Hutchison Stirling, in one of his finest criticisms, quotes from Hegel, calling these words a "bitter draught," viz.: "Man as he is outwardly—that is, in his actions (not, of course, in his mere bodily externality)—so is he inwardly. . . . What a man does, that he is; and to the lying vanity that warms itself with the consciousness of inward excellence let us oppose the Gospel text, 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Our great men have willed that which they have done, and done that which they have willed. He who wills something great, must, as Goethe says, 'know how to restrict himself,'" &c.

Yes, Milton also bids us to "scorn delights, and live laborious days." This is just what every Christian of the final type of Christianity has to do. Every Church must come to the Cross, sell all that it has, and give to the poor. Universality may not mean Communism—may not mean what Proudhon says, that "*Property* is robbery;" but there can be no doubt whatever that Universality means a system of government in which "the State must become a Church, and the Church a State," co-operating for all.

We see again and again painful illustrations of the fact that a State without divine sanctions will not have authority sufficient to put an end to the evils that afflict society. There was a time when the Church of Rome could interdict war, because it retained power over the souls of men. Catholicism outgrown, the Pope is an empty name, and does not represent "God upon earth." A Church universal, exercising the functions of a State, is the panacea for the miseries that afflict the earth. It must be truly spiritual, truly

liberal, however—a Church dedicated to humanity—a Church not only practical, but affording encouragement to Art, Poetry, Science, Ethics—a Church of the whole human race, teaching the philosophy of God. We maintain that here, and here only, can Reason and Faith meet and shake hands. It is impossible to remain in the fetters of a negation of God under the mask of religion. By the fruits of religion we may know it. "Hatred stirreth up strife." There is *hatred*, there is *fear*, instead of love, at the bottom of popular theology. It does not appear that it ever appeals to conscience and enlightened reason, but to the basest passions. We are often disposed, when we see the votaries of superstition on their knees to images of saints, to conceive that we are in the "doll era" of religion. Fanatics can't see their mistake; and God "winks" at the same, no doubt, as *we* smile at our children nursing playthings; but masculine faith has *no* dolls.

No; Universalism inculcates the necessity for work, as much as the abortion called "Secularism" can. It means that God *will* have us work at any cost—that the very thief works negatively, as the unbeliever in God (he must pardon the analogy!) works also negatively, for a result that we soon perceive to be a portion of Destiny. When Necessity—the atheistic idea—is converted into Providence, it ceases to be mischievous. The thief has a mission to indicate the wisdom of the utterance that we should not labour for *ourselves*, seeing that "moth and rust do corrupt, and thieves break in and steal;" that we must work for the general good, not for individuals. The unbeliever has a destructive mission with analogous results. Unbelief is sent by Providence to "break in and steal" the wretched accumulations of centuries of mere bigotry and superstition. But it will fail because it ignores the great facts of history, as popular theology ignores the facts of science. Every truth, every *untruth*, must do something for the evolution of God's plan here and hereafter, which He reveals to us according to our capacity. Browning says, "He has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;" and every whisper of God is felt through the conscious universe, raising beyond the doubt and division the "sword of the Spirit," which Truth must for a season wield—a moral life, through which we pass to the Universal Temple.

OLOF RUDBECK'S "ATLANTICA."

BY WILLIAM MACCALL.

FROM the Swedish of the historian Fryxell we translate an able account of one of the most curious books ever published. Who was Olof Rudbeck? He was a Swede of great natural genius, and of very various pursuits and attainments. Born in 1630, he died in 1702. It is remarkable that his son, who was likewise a gifted man, had the same taste as his father for dreaming in the domain of Legend and History. But dreams such as those of the Rudbecks are harmless, and may sometimes be suggestive.

The work which more than anything else—more than discoveries in Anatomy, more than the acquaintance with Botany and Mechanics, more than musical genius—made Olof Rudbeck famous all over Europe, was his "Atlantica." The circumstances connected with this strange production are the following:—

A few hundred years after the advent of Christianity, Southern Europe was overrun, and to some extent conquered, by many nations coming from the North and the East, and among which the most distinguished called themselves Goths. Some of them maintained that they had gone forth from our own Fatherland. The renown of the great conquests and of the fulminating exploits of the Goths came with Christianity and its apostles to the North, and was more and more spread abroad among the Swedes. It suddenly excited the desire, the endeavour to claim for the Fatherland the glory of all those warriors—of all those achievements. To attain this object, men began, in reference to Sweden's Past, to reject what the older native chronicles had stated, and to construct an entirely new history. In the reign of Gustavus Vasa, therefore, Johannes Magnus produced a work of this kind, which represented Magog, Noah's grandson, as the oldest king of the Goths. To fill up the long interval between him and the later real kings, not only were the names of the Gothic kings in Southern Europe given, but the numerous names of wholly legendary kings, and among them a mighty multitude of Eriks and Charleses. Some sharp-sighted inquirers saw the untrustworthiness and absurdity of these representations and suppositions. But a history so ancient and a line of kings so long were regarded as

redounding to the glory of Sweden; and it was therefore thought that neither the one nor the other should be questioned by any Swedish man. It was by the help of this reckoning that the sons of Gustavus Vasa called themselves—the one, Erik the Fourteenth; the other, Charles the Ninth; although it could not be shown that among the older kings there had been eight Charleses or thirteen Eriks. Thus, in the main, matters stood when Rudbeck arose.

Up to and even beyond his fortieth year he had paid to History no special attention. The occasion of his devoting himself at a later period to this department of study is said to have been the following:—Among the Greeks there was an ancient tradition of a vast land surrounded by water, lying of old far in the ocean and to the west of Spain. According to the tradition, this immense realm had sunk into the deep, leaving here and there, soaring above the billows, only some rocky fragments in the shape of islands. This legend was chosen and developed by the Greek philosopher, Plato, as groundwork for a fabulous but ingenious narrative, in which he tried to present the image of a people and a community such as, according to his idea, every people and every community should be. His model State he placed by phantasy in the great legendary island just spoken of, and he described it, in colours of surpassing brilliancy, under the name of Atlantis.

This poetic production of Plato Rudbeck read in his youth, and its images stamped themselves deep in his poetic mind. But no particular result thereof had for a season manifested itself. About a quarter of a century after, however—that is to say, in the year 1672—Rudbeck's friend Verelius required a new map of Sweden, and Rudbeck promised to prepare it. But when Rudbeck began to occupy himself more closely and continuously with this object, he thought that the names and the positions of the Swedish localities had a striking resemblance to the descriptions which he had in his youth read in Plato's "Atlantis." Like a flash of lightning darted through his head the thought that the island so magnificently described by Plato could be no other than Rudbeck's own Swedish Fatherland. Learning and genius furnished him with innumerable reasons, or seeming reasons, for his faith. Having arrived suddenly at complete conviction, he foresaw in imagination his discovery preparing for himself and his Fatherland immortal honour. More and more he now renounced his former occupations. Even his favourite "Elysian Fields"—a work with many thousand faithful representations of the vegetable kingdom—was finally abandoned to his son. He himself plunged with the whole energies of his soul into investigations regarding the most

remote legends and monuments of the Foreworld — Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, and Northern—so far as they related to the subject which so intensely absorbed his thoughts. With the help of his genius, his inventiveness, his memory, and his imagination, he quickly gathered together materials for the new and astonishing system. The work relating to it is usually called "Atlantica." It looked as if the printing thereof were to be hindered by want of means. But Rudbeck borrowed a considerable sum, in order as soon as possible to let the offspring of his genius see the light of day. The first part was printed in the year 1675. Then followed the second and the third. The fourth was already in the press when it was destroyed by the great fire at Upsala in 1702.

The following, briefly given, are the contents of this extraordinary book :—

The Swedish peninsula was inhabited before the Flood. About seventeen or eighteen centuries after the Creation of the World, the inhabitants of Sweden had attained considerable culture. They had already a regular chronology, as their runic calendar proves. The oldest sepulchral mounds round Upsala belong to this period, as is proved by the depth of black mould which has gradually gathered on their summits. After the Flood, Japhet's sons, Magog and Meshech, fled to the North. The former founded in Sweden the old Gothic, and the second in Finland the Finnish kingdom. The word *Magog* is kindred to the old North word *Gogur* or *Gyger*, which means *giant* or *hero*; and this indicated that he was ruler over a people of gigantic strength and stature. His dominions were divided between his two sons, Sven and Getar, who founded the Swedish and Gothic kingdoms. The Scandinavian peninsula is plainly the Atlantis of which Plato speaks. There is a district in Upland called Oland; and this is only a perverted expression for Atland. The position of Upsala completely answers to Plato's description of the principal city in Atlantis. The five rivers he speaks of are plainly the five streams near Upsala—the Teusta, the Skyta, the Samna, the Junkil, and the Blackbrook. The walls surrounding the chief city, which he likewise mentions, are the heights enclosing the plain, and which are still called the Walls of Upsala. When Plato speaks of wine in Atlantis, he means either mead or the drink which is prepared from currants, which grow in considerable quantities in Norrland, and which are larger than elsewhere. When Plato speaks of elephants in Atlantis, he means our Northern elks. At first Rudbeck asserted that our wolves were meant; but, in accordance with a suggestion of G. A. de la

Gardie, he proposed elks instead. Apollo is only a perverted mode of pronouncing the old Swedish word Hög-Balder, or Ha-Balder—that is to say, the Sun's Highest God. Sweden is consequently the land described by Plato—that abode for men of higher piety, righteousness, heroism, and strength than can anywhere else be found on the earth. Information regarding this Atlantis the Greeks had obtained partly from the narratives of Phœnician navigators; partly from Anacharsis, who visited Solon; and partly, in a more original shape, from old Orpheus. For the travels of Orpheus had not, as is commonly stated, been limited to Southern Europe, but had extended to the far North, yea, even to the Bothnian Gulf, for that is the sea which, in company with the Argonauts, he visited. The sea which is here spoken of under the name of Ponthos is not, as is commonly supposed, *Pontus Euxinus*, or Black Sea, but the Bothnian Gulf, or the so-called *Botten*. The latter word becomes in a nearly related language *Bund*, which is manifestly the same as Ponthos. But it is also kindred to the word *Band*, or *Bälte*; and thence comes the name Baltic Sea, the land itself being called *Balthia*, which means the pious, the righteous Balder's Island. It is further stated that Orpheus in his travels came to the river Acheron. Thereby is not meant, as has hitherto been believed, a stream in Greece. Acheron is no doubt the same as the Swedish word *Afgrunden* (abyss), whereby is intended the Northern Maelstrom, to which Orpheus came; and so on.

The most of the information furnished by Greek and Roman writers relates to the North, though the names have been somewhat distorted:—Härkalle, for instance, to Hercules; Märkisman, to Mercury; Sjörän, a Seanymph, to Siren. From the North, from this Atlantis, have gone forth over the whole world, not only science and civilisation, but also the most renowned conquerors, the founders of ancient States. The Gauls, who, with Brennus at their head, entered Rome, were, in fact, Kallar, Karlar, Carles, or men led by a certain Brander. Old Troy was built by our forefathers; and the founders thereof—Dardanus and Erichon—were Goths, whose real names were Thordön and Erik. The wise Minos, the legislator of Crete, was in reality the same as our Gothic Mimer. Even Phœnicia was founded by Gothic emigrations from Old Atlantis. The land of Bashan signifies Bjesse—that is to say, the Land of the Giants; and the famous Phœnician author, Sanchuniaton, was really called Sann-Kunnige-Atte. The Red Sea is called the Erythræan. It was commonly said by the ancient nations that it obtained this name from Prince Erythra, or from the word Erythros, which signifies Red. But

the word Erythræan really arose as follows:—When our ancestors were marching from the Mediterranean and from the lands bordering thereon, and beheld this branch or gulf of the ocean, they exclaimed: "That is the *Yttra* (extreme)," namely, "That is the remotest sea," and thence came the name *Erythra*. Before Abraham's time, there went from the Northern Atlantis the man who founded the kingdom of Egypt. This was an old Niord, who is called *Man*, or, in Tacitus, *Mannus*, and from Manhem has his name. He went to Egypt, and established there as many tribes as our Swedish Manhem. This king *Mannus* was in Egypt called *Menes*, and built there a city which, after him, is now called *Memphis*, but whose true and proper name in Swedish is *Manby* or *Mimby*. Some think, also, that he built the second Egyptian city, Thebes, so illustrious for its hundred gates. The name comes from the old Swedish word *Tä*, wherewith our peasantry still designate a gate, a door, a street. The Egyptian Thebes was therefore originally called *Täbo*—that is, the City of Gates. It was the copy of the North's *Täbo of the Gods*—that is to say, of *Valhalla* with its numerous gates; and so on.

Such, nearly, was the mode of demonstration, and likewise in part such were the contents of this remarkable work. The developments were marked in a high degree by the merits of learning, invention, genius, and imagination. There was, besides, manifested in an uncommon measure the artistic skill to build out of things the most singular and unlike, an organic image, and to give to this image an impress of life, of probability, and even truth; so that in those days it could readily deceive and infatuate all unpiercing and unpractised eyes, as was actually the case. Over the whole of Europe the book excited extraordinary attention. The moment the sheets left the press they were lent about among those who were curious to see as speedily as possible the notable contents. As soon as the book was completely ready, there were many people who had it lying on the table beside the Bible for daily reading and wonder; and from an immense number of learned men and lovers of learning, both in Sweden itself and in foreign countries, came to Rudbeck the most flattering epistles. Even those who did not agree with the work, or who did not venture to judge of its contents, were yet impressed by the elegant and masterly style and the brilliant images, and not less by the marvellous ingenuity of conjecture, and at the same time by the ability and skill, which marked the developments. Many readers were so filled with rapture that they believed in the truth of the whole. This was especially the case in Sweden. To the delight furnished by erudition was added a patriotic delight. The Swedes were beside

themselves with joy at seeing that the beloved Fatherland had a history so old and so glorious, that in this respect it stood above all the other countries of the earth. They thought that too much admiration and gratitude could not be shown towards the man who had made such a wonderful discovery—a discovery which honoured Sweden so much. The renown which Olof Rudbeck himself thereby acquired, and the service which he at the same time achieved for the Fatherland, were esteemed by many as comparable to the most brilliant exploits of the Thirty Years' War, and to the miraculous expeditions of Charles Gustavus. To doubt the author's statements was regarded as a sin against patriotism—a reprehensible attempt to tear away the laurels with which Rudbeck had crowned our history. Queen Christina said that Sweden could not give him any reward sufficiently ample. Madame Brenner, the most illustrious poetess of the time, celebrated "Atlantica," and predicted that its erudition would remain as unassailable as its glory was imperishable. The learned Morhof, professor, of Kiel, was stirred at the beginning to a rapture of a most extraordinary kind. In a poem in praise of Rudbeck, he employed the following, among other things, to give utterance to his feelings :—

"Out of nothing God created the earth : so out of nothing hast thou brought the history of earth into being. Jupiter's head gave birth once to the single Minerva : thy head has brought a multitude of gods to life again. A crown of oak was formerly given to him who saved a citizen : a crown of laurel to him who slew a foe. Rudbeck ! something better dost thou merit—a crown of stars—for restoring its gods to the Fatherland."

Spite of this jubilation and of the general expression of delight, various doubters arose. Many of the most learned and sagacious men of the time discovered the incoherency and brittleness of the texture into which, not without boasting, the fine image of the "Atlantica" had been woven. Among the adversaries abroad were such men as Bayle and Leibnitz ; and, boldest of all, the admirer just named, Morhof ; and here at home, Rudbeck had as foes no inconsiderable number of men of science, who, joining maturity of judgment to perspicacity, possessed besides a knowledge of the subject to which Rudbeck could not pretend. Of these were Hadorph, Puffendorf, Ornhielen. They were incomparably superior to Rudbeck in reference to the real merits of Sweden's true history. But Rudbeck had in his favour the Court, national vanity, and the general fashion of thinking at the time ; likewise many of the younger professors of the University, who with ceaseless and

vociferous applause hailed him and his ideas. From these circumstances, and perhaps chiefly from fear of the arbitrary King's displeasure, no active opposition was offered. Rudbeck's historical propositions were adopted and followed as those alone valid, those alone true. But when this absolute force no longer asserted itself, and when freedom of investigation was restored, the glittering, gaudy edifice fell down at once and completely. It was disapproved, decried, and so quickly forgotten, that now scarcely anyone can be found to read through a work which constituted the delight of its age.

It was on the said historical work that Rudbeck expended the greater part of the last thirty years of his life. At last even this species of activity was interrupted by the great fire at Upsala in 1702. On this disastrous occasion perished in the flames many and precious fruits of his labours: for example, the main part of his "Campi Elysii," and of the third and fourth volumes of his "Atlantica;" likewise were destroyed his house, and all the valuable collections which it contained. But even in such gloomy and desperate circumstances he showed a strength, a resolution, and a courage which for a man of seventy-two years were in the highest degree remarkable. The old man went up to his dissecting-room, which was situated in the highest storey of the Gustavian Institution; herefrom he gave his commands how the engines were to be employed, and how the measures for overcoming the fire were to be taken. According to tradition, his naturally powerful voice was even at this time so strong, that it was heard through the roar of the flames and the shouts of the people, as far as Svartbäcken, or Blackbrook. He was told that the fire had begun to attack his own house; but he remained in his class-room to save first of all that and the other noble buildings of the University; and in effect the Gustavian Institution was saved; but of the rest of the city the largest and best part was laid in ashes, including, as has been said, whatsoever most valuable Rudbeck himself possessed. The valour and activity of his mighty soul still survived. A few days after the fire he prepared a plan for rebuilding the city—a plan aiming to combine greater comfort with greater splendour. The youth in his soul paid no regard to the age in his body. Hitherto he had had an almost uniformly good health; but the same year, in autumn, he sickened seriously and violently, and died after a few days of suffering.

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

A SATIRE.—BY JOHN A. HERAUD.

I.

Who hate the Satirist are most in fault,
 And merit punishment for their revolt.
 Offenders they against the ancient pact
 Of truth and goodness, or in word or act,
 And deprecate what justly they deserve,
 From want of conscience, or from lack of nerve.
 The wise and virtuous to his office pay
 Due reverence, and approve his lawful sway ;
 Amend the wrong they may by chance commit,
 And thank him for his censure, and his wit.

II.

There are whose judgments, by long usage seared,
 Have error still habitually revered ;
 Who deem impunity has sanction given
 To crimes that reek offensive up to heaven.
 Rome's Pontiff thus, accustomed to exert
 A power for evil, names his guilt desert,
 And, to secure acceptance of the lie,
 Claims for his chair infallibility.
 Such arrogance in wickedness excels,
 And earns perdition in the lowest hells.
 Fallen Lucifer ! they stir themselves for thee,
 To make thee of their guilds and cities free.
 Found there thy church, and be its liveliest stones
 Fiends who have listened pleased to martyrs' groans.
 Drop thou the mask that likened thee to Christ,
 And be thyself—a demon exorcised :
 While earth, delivered from thy tyrant rule,
 Rebuilds the temple of the Beautiful.

III.

Thrice-happy England, from her earliest day,
 Maintained free worship safe from foreign sway,
 Only brief while consented to commune
 With Papal heresy, and loathed it soon ;
 At length reformed, cast off whate'er would bind,
 And freely spake an independent mind ;

Yet left of Roman leaven a trace, though faint,
 Her doctrine and her discipline to taint.
 Faint though the trace, yet traitors in thy midst
 Thereby would seek to undo what then thou didst,
 And rivet on the conscience of thy sons
 The chains their fathers suffered to denounce.
 Fair Albion! from thy altars sternly fling
 The renegadoes that around them cling,
 As doth the ivy round the oak, to feed
 Upon its life, and triumph in its need.
 (A trite familiar simile? Agreed!)
 Yet own we what the Reformation lacks,
 And bind again the harness on our backs,
 The work imperfect left to make complete,
 And Faith re-wed to Reason—union meet.
 For surplice or for service let those fight
 Who in mere ceremonial take delight:
 Aim we at Truth and purity of life,
 Freedom from animosity and strife;
 Not slaves of creeds, not idol-worshippers,
 Not superstitious—misinterpreters
 Of Scripture texts, an improgressive school
 Of pedants, butts of honest ridicule—
 But scholars pressing onward to the goal
 Which God has destined for the deathless soul.

IV.

Vain all reaction, or in Church or State;
 The stream of tendency will not abate
 In bulk or force; but, constant as it flows,
 It gains in volume; if obstruction grows,
 It makes another channel, and at will
 Winds on its way, and works its way, until
 It gain the same direction which at first
 It meant to travel, whether best or worst.
 Abortive are the efforts often made
 By those who take to writing for a trade,
 In journals subsidised for party views,
 To stay its course, which ever it renews.
 We laugh while these in leaders rave and rant,
 Still discontent, not knowing what they want;
 While Progress, still refusing to recede,
 Gains point by point, with less or greater speed,
 Of the great charter that records the claims
 Of a brave people, and their highest aims.
 What are these aims? All evil, Tories say—
 They are inevitable, any way.

If not for good, think you that Providence,
 From age to age, would prosper the offence,
 And in the future grant it such free scope,
 Its triumph is a reasonable hope ?
 But what are good and evil ? Relative ;
 And what seems one or other may outlive
 Its present estimate, and prove in fact
 Its opposite, developed into act.
 What will be, must be ; and the wiser mind
 Accepts as best the fate by God designed.

V.

Prone to extremes, some Churchmen shape their creed
 To suit the views of those who never read,
 And teach the vulgar faith that still hath erred
 From the beginning of the spoken Word.
 Unskilled to criticise the Bible text,
 By doubt, or thought, or logic unperplexed,
 Still in the killing letter they believe,
 And of the saving spirit nought conceive.
 One merit theirs,—they make no offering
 To either sacrament, or priest, or king,
 That smacks of idol-worship ;—apt of speech,
 By sermon and by lecture taught to teach,
 Great pulpit orators, though somewhat coarse,
 Wanting in taste, but opulent in force,
 They please the multitude ; and, we are told,
 Attract the poor and ignorant to the fold,
 Whom the more cautious speaker would repel,
 Although with dainty phrase he pleaded well.
 Like preaching in the chapel we may meet,
 More forcible perhaps, and less discreet.
 The fervent ministers of various sects,
 While each his hearers' prejudice reflects,
 Like the paid advocate, abound in zeal
 You may not understand, but you must feel.
 With fluent rhetoric and well-practised voice,
 They win you to despair or to rejoice,
 Yet in their boldest flights can seldom choose
 But echo the opinion of the pews.
 Hence rise new sects, by other teachers swayed,
 With novelties of practice ready made,
 And special creeds, the offspring of caprice,
 New Shibboleths, new rites, and new degrees—
 Angels and prophets, not impostors all,
 And crazy women grown hysterical.

VI.

High Churchmen these in their own fancied church,
 They leave all other creedsmen in the lurch,
 And triumph o'er the sects with hate of schism
 Might well become an older despotism.
 Less proud, less arrogant, less confident,
 The sacerdotals of the Establishment,
 But less instructed in the way to please
 By means of modern fads and phantasies.
 These stand alone upon "the ancient ways,"
 Nor credit aught the spirit of our days,
 Or in the church or out of it, now says:
 Cling to old usage, canons obsolete,
 To articles and dogmas incomplete,
 And prayers, and creeds, and homilies that bear
 Marks of a time more barbarous than sincere,
 While lingering superstition awed, to blind,
 The action of the independent mind,
 And thus imposed, even on the good and wise,
 The expedience of dishonest compromise.
 Not Rome herself more stubborn to resist
 The light of science, and prefer the mist
 Of authorised presumption, when the night
 Shrouded the nations, and no star shone bright,
 Ere Bacon wrote, and showed us how to chase
 Each harboured idol from its lurking-place.
 Would they might learn no Joshua now can stay
 The sun and moon on their appointed way;
 With cosmic laws that nothing interferes,
 And God in nature speaks to eyes and ears;
 That still the dawn advances to the noon,
 And, when the sun departs, succeeds the moon.
 In cycles thus the ages still advance,
 Each better than the former—not by chance,
 But by decree of the All-wise, who made
 All for his glory—still to be displayed.

VII.

Yet Science hath her perils; and the schools,
 That nourish sages, spawn with quacks and fools.
 'Tis right, of course, our senses to consult,
 And not presume upon a cause occult,
 But on experience of the facts to build
 The theories, in which our youth are drilled;
 But 'tis not right to trust in them alone,
 And "the most sovran Reason to dethrone,"

Nor to neglect the principles and laws
 Which she discovers, or supplies, or draws
 From contrast or comparison, or by
 The fine abstractions of philosophy.
 Knowledge from Wisdom must not be divorced,
 Or it will grow empirical—be forced
 To crawl on earth, and serpent-like to eat
 The dust that makes a cloud about our feet,
 And upward ne'er be privileged to look,
 And read the heavens like a starry book.
 Yet there be men, of reputation high,
 Who never lift their vision to the sky ;
 Not sciolists, but diligent in search,
 Each, birdlike, worthy of his place and perch,
 Yet in a cage to live who are still content,
 Nor would be free even of the firmament,
 Nor wish to use their wings without the bars
 Of their guilt prison, lest they suffer scars
 From untried forces, which they fear await
 The adventurer beyond its little gate.
 So coastmen once looked on the wide, wide sea,
 And deemed it dangerous impiety
 To venture on the ocean, far from shore ;
 But valiant souls joy in the billows' roar,
 And in the winds that with the waters play,
 And o'er the waves assert a victor's sway,
 Ploughing the foam from sight of land away.
 Explorers these of worlds and realms unknown,
 Founders of states and empires of their own.

VIII.

Only not all are so to matter wed,
 They hold that nought has been demonstrated,
 Till tested or by hearing or by sight,
 Touch, taste, or smell, to prove that it is right.
 The soul 's immortal may not be averred
 Until a rap 's beneath a table heard,
 Then what is called a "speerit" is supposed—
 Whether or not within the board enclosed—
 To give the rap, or raps, one, two, or three,
 Answer to questions asked intently
 By members of the seance, who thus stoop
 Of wooden oracles to be the dupe,
 Well pleased ; for each response, when it is gained,
 Proves "a foregone conclusion," entertained
 By the inquirer, ere he asked advice ;
 The echo of his thought, rapped once or thrice,

In fact disclosing but the conscious state
 Of his own mind—its verbal correlate.
 If all that Plato wrote, or good men feel,
 Avail not man immortal to reveal,
 Though one should even from the dead arise,
 Proof yet were wanting to the truly wise.
 And shall we, then, by means so poor as these,
 Combined with frauds and droll hypocrisies,
 Seek for solution of the honest doubt
 Which thinking minds cannot exist without,
 And give excuse for superstitions worse
 And meaner than have earned the ages' curse?
 Yet know I well a spirit-world there is,
 Surrounds the seen, an unexplored abyss,
 Where forces free as our own souls hold sway,
 And cause the effects that haunt us night and day,
 And make the natural universe to be,
 And all the things that we can hear or see,
 At His command, who gave Creation birth,
 Ere Light was granted to the heavens and earth.
 Still as the shadows change the senses give,
 The Self remains in which awhile they live,
 An intuition never fugitive,
 Immutable, supreme, and keeps her post
 Amid the flux of objects never lost.
 And when the pageant shall have passed away,
 The conscious witness of the finished play
 To scenes more real shall depart, where she
 Shall find her home and true felicity.

IX.

But demonstrations so sublime as these
 Do not, like vulgar proofs, the million please,
 Whose taste I know the empirical prefers,
 And, not at all from pious fraud averse,
 Esteems one conjuror worth nine or ten
 Of dull, if clever, scientific men.
 Nor is it long since kings themselves made claims
 To healing gifts, and graces of high names,
 And rights divine, and correspondent powers,
 That did much injury to this world of ours;
 Surrendered with reluctance, though they knew
 Such claims were full of peril, and untrue.
 And there be men whose slavish souls incline
 To deem of kings and priests as yet divine,

Who "love the darkness rather than the light,"
 And wish in day for the return of night;
 Owls, whose weak eyes shrink from the blaze of noon,
 And seek the shade, pre-conscious of the moon,
 Where they may sleep while all the world's awake—
 Their life a dream, their action a mistake.
 Alike the crafts of kings and frauds of priests
 Sink freemen to a level with the beasts,
 If once permitted to prevail, and rule
 The nations whom they labour to befool.
 Yet from the demagogue who would deny
 He owed allegiance to authority,
 Or disavowed his Maker, I would turn
 Contemptuous, and his impious counsels spurn.
 Were Ignorance and Presumption to succeed
 To impose on us their government and creed,
 No tyranny the earth that ever cursed
 Were half so bad—of all its forms the worst.
 But still I cherish, as the dearest hope,
 The Future in its limits will find scope
 For that great kingdom which had heavenly birth,
 And is the kingdom of our God on earth,
 Wherein the wise and good shall each one be
 A king and priest in one theocracy,
 And whereto all the revolutions tend
 That shake the nations; this their common end;
 And this attained, mankind at length shall rest,
 Self-governed each, and each thus governed best.

X.

Meanwhile the Many, incompletely taught,
 Must needs misjudge, unpractised in true thought.
 Witness the Stage, dependent on their taste,
 An undeveloped wild, a moral waste—
 With things abortive, monstrous or grotesque,
 Bohemian gilt, Old-Bailey Arabesque,
 Teeming for ever, till the judgment reels,
 And shame alone the schooled spectator feels.
 No longer now the poet shapes the scene,
 Or the ripe actor shows what it should mean,
 The playwright from a foreign writer steals,
 And nymphs half clad expose their calves and heels;
 While the true dramatist, disgusted, shuns
 Collision with the Vandals and the Huns
 Now in possession of the sacred place,
 Nor shares their gains, nor suffers their disgrace.

And the sad veteran artist, stranger grown
 To boards he once was proud to call his own,
 Bears his enforced retirement as he may,
 And ponders in his closet o'er the play,
 Read, but not acted, and a spirit seems,
 Consorted with the spirits of his dreams,
 Alike unbodied to the public eye
 And banished to the realms of phantasy.
 No longer pleased with passion or with wit,
 Burlesque alone commands the crowded pit;
 Nor should I wonder if in times to come
 Even Scripture-themes were served as those of Rome,
 Or elder Greece, and, like the gods of old,
 Our Christian saints be made to rhyme and scold,
 Enacted not in reverence, but for fun,
 To dance a breakdown, or to crack a pun.
 But though nor tragic rage nor comic vis
 Attract or kindle modern audiences,
 A drama yet remains, to nature true,
 Domestic, spiced with jest and manners new,
 A medium courted by the middle class,
 Wherein they view themselves as in a glass,
 Pleased with their portraits, howsoever odd,
 Resembling more the monkey than the god.
 Darwin may smile, whoever else may drown,
 They cannot sure their origin disown.

XI.

If such the public judgment, much the need
 Of public teachers, qualified to lead
 Opinion, and instruct the vulgar mind
 In what is truly art, rude or refined.
 Alas! where are they? Critics ready made,
 Who never went apprentice to the trade,
 Decide on works they never could have writ,
 And crudely guess at genius and at wit.
 Poet and actor learn, as they advance,
 To smile at such, and pardon ignorance.
 Boldest when newest to "the ungentle craft,"
 They shoot at hazard many a random shaft,
 And wound the worthiest often as the worst;
 Some long continue as they were at first,
 But others mend as their acquaintance grows
 With that they judge, acquiring like repose
 As that they contemplate, until they be
 Transfigured into its divinity.

Thus Taste is generated, the fair child
 Of Genius, and by knowledge reconciled,
 Thenceforth the critic, arrogant no more,
 No longer stoops to censure, but adore—
 Hints not at faults which live but in his mind,
 But shows the beauties whereto fools are blind,
 And frames the poet's verses that he quotes
 In prose whose fervid eloquence denotes
 A kindred spirit in the judgment-seat,
 Whose voice is fame, decisive and complete.
 Thus North erewhile on Wordsworth's sonnets penned
 Those grand critiques wherein were seen to blend
 The scholar and the master ; judgment ripe,
 And fancy wild—strains of a pastoral pipe
 That sounded like the harp or violin,
 And monthly charmed the listeners with a din
 Of various sounds, contrasted or compared,
 Whence music issued : higher never dared,
 The harmony the pedant ever dreads,
 Where Reason with Imagination weds.

XII.

Oh, many are the wrongs, in many ways,
 To Genius done, that dazzles, with the rays
 She sheds, the sight that should appreciate ;
 To Wisdom, that oppresses with her weight,
 And overwhelms what she doth elevate ;
 To Virtue, that apart removes the man
 Above the reach of party, class, or clan.
 Too great are these, of too sublime a strain,
 Not to offend the ignorant and the vain ;
 Butts they for vulgar malice, jest profane.
 And there be even souls of higher mood,
 Sometimes even numbered with the wise and good,
 With whom intolerance, into habit grown,
 Endures not tenets that transcend their own.
 These sneer at doctrines they dispute, and hate
 Those that excel their powers of debate,
 Slaves of convention, or in Church or State.
 And some of prejudice are so compact,
 They bear no change, admit no novel fact ;
 On principle, all modern truth eschew,
 Stedfast in opposition to the new.
 We would not utter curses on the men,
 But rather them deliver from the den

Of their delusions, who with such oppose
 The Future in the present that still grows.
 But on the same delusions let there fall
 The maledictions that should most appal,
 And purge the world at once of all of these—
 Ignorance, Intolerance, and Prejudice.
 These sins must perish. Man redeemed must be
 From such—from all: then only truly free.

HOW TO AVOID THE DOCTOR.

BY WILLIAM HITCHMAN.

Mens sana in sano corpore; or, How to Avoid the Doctor—is not the combined offspring of “Prayer by Telegraph.” Rather, it is the happy faculty of duly performing all functions of Body and Soul in the most perfect manner possible—“the healthful spirit of God’s grace,” or physical soundness and moral goodness of heart and intellect as embodied in Shakespeare’s *wish* of happiness, used in drinking an invisible devil—

“Come, love and health to all;
 I drink to the general joy of the whole table.”

Innocence and abstinence would have kept man healthful. “Working in wood,” as Locke (himself a physician) aptly says, “is a salutiferous recreation, conducive to a sane mind in a sane body.” Yes, truly; and, agreeable or otherwise to refined modern taste, the proudest aristocrat in Europe owes his truest lineal descent, scientifically, to poor relations—in fact, naked, unkempt savages “working in wood,” in no wise genteel, seeing that they kept neither a gig nor a pig—the latter is an Irish definition, the former an English description, by way of explication, in the matter of “a real” gentleman. Nevertheless, when the mansions of our noble ancestors consisted of mere holes excavated in the ground and roofed in with enormous stones, Lords and Dukes were exalted, healthy backwoodsmen, whose splendid “arms” (not emblazoned on carriage doors) first cleared the huge jungles, felled the dense forests, conquered beasts of prey, and, in very truth, laid the foundations—wide, deep, and strong—of Britain’s present and future greatness. Hygiene, *then as now*, was not the characteristic distinction of a whole nation—considered practically as the best means of preventing disease, or

preserving health and promoting longevity. Little, indeed, did the mightiest chieftain of old conceive or know, in the exercise of his unscientific imagination, that the free light, however beautiful, which he may have seen on the gigantic back of his monstrous cat, as he rubbed it on a frosty night, was the identical power, in *Correlation of Forces*, which produces the physical phenomena of Health—*digests the outer in the inner world*, circulates the pabulum of human existence, and conveys the commands of free will, in cerebro-spinal or voluntary nervous system, for the purposes of life on earth, at the same time originating and receiving sensation. Molecules have danced in the sunbeams of historic and pre-historic times, leaving the sphere of mortal vision to feed some fainting rose, and thus become a portion of its own nature; anon, each flower dies, but its atomic particles die not—like unto the fabric of man himself, they rise again, to constitute, it may be, not vegetable, but animal forms of Life, Health, and Disease. How—in the midst, not of ancient, strong barbarism; rather, unhealthy modern civilisation—shall both parts of the noble prayer of the satirist be fully realised in this our year of grace, 1872, viz., “A sound mind in a sound body”? Natural Philosophy tells us, from generation to generation—and, alas! hitherto mostly in vain, for aught it concerns the British people—by obeying the laws of Health and observing the conditions of Vitality, as exemplified in the science of Biology; emphatically, those nutritive processes termed mastication, deglutition, chymification, chyfication, absorption of aliment, separation of effete matter—in short, circulation of pure, wholesome blood. In vain, again, will mankind seek to preserve their vigorous organic constitution, from age to age, without more adequate knowledge of the chemical functions of the body in general and the lungs in particular—in other words, thoracic movements; for the truth is, whether no blood circulates at all, or only venous fluid, the issue is precisely the same—failure in contractile power of the heart, whose synonym is Death.

Respiration, or the function of breathing, consists of two acts, viz., inspiration, which takes place about twenty-six times in a minute, taking in thirteen cubic inches each time; and expiration, which alternates with the preceding act, the quantity of air expired being usually the same as that which is inspired. For what purpose? To finish digestion! In other words, to free the organs and tissues of carbon and hydrogen, which accumulate throughout the system, and become noxious to the last degree. To effect such removal, we inhale air which contains oxygen, in sufficient quantity to form a combination with both carbon and hydrogen, which is then exhaled in the

form of carbonic acid and water. Why do I reiterate this kind of chemical exordium, or introductory statement, to the general reader of *FREELIGHT*? Because one is thereby enabled to point out how to *AVOID THE DOCTOR*—an exquisitely beautiful provision for the maintenance and preservation of a sound mind in a sound body, which really imparts life, health, and motion to the human frame, and its connection with man in form of generation of animal heat, or normal temperature, as principal cause (or *primum mobile*, to quote a Baconian term) of the circulation of nutritive fluid derived from food. In short, respiration and circulation are thus united in order to complete the assimilation of chyle, or milk-like juice, in the lungs, the initiatory stage of which is proper mastication of aliment from the external world. Now, when the function of breathing is imperfectly performed—from want of air, water, and exercise—the supply of oxygen is quite inadequate, and perfect digestion and ultimate assimilation are therefore—physiologically speaking—*impossible!* However well chosen the food and drink—in whatever manner intrinsically nutritious—notwithstanding costly French cookery, or singularly minute attention paid to fashionable quaintest habiliments, hot or cold water externally, Turkish baths and shampooing—with whatever care the public may seek to avoid the medical Doctor by punctilious observance of natural skin, normal temperature, indoor exercise, sleep, or regulation of waking hours—if men, women, and children are physicked even by a professional Baronet, they will come to grief and depressed nervous power, in spite of blue pills or white globules, with debility, emaciation, and misery, physical and mental, unless fresh Air, the prime factor in Physical Puritanism for drawing-room or dungeon, is sufficiently renewed by proper scientific ventilation, *i.e.*, for Home Sickness, without risk of exposure to currents either of cold or impure atmosphere, and defective vital capacity of the heart and lungs. Is *this* kind of free light held to be of difficult public acquisition? Is such teaching to be called technical, monotonous, or commonplace, when neither appreciated nor practised, if accurately understood? Should such a view prevail in the same ratio as it has hitherto done in this country, then nothing more will result from the *absence* of scientific “monotony” than poisoned blood—funeral-like modes of fashion, as now, wanting nothing also to perfect funereal

* For example, Typhus and Typhoid Fever, Measles and Scarlatina, Typhus and Erysipelas, Measles and Small-pox after vaccination, owe their co-existence in the same individuals to this contagion of ignorance, *i.e.*, standing in air which has passed over the patient from open windows and doors.—W. H.

melancholy but sables and the hearse, which will themselves be speedily forthcoming to land their victims in the nearest terminus.

Health is dependent upon a good trinitarian goddess—Air, Food, Water. Funeral-like fashions! Certainly; without possible exercise to the trunk and arms, so as to expand the chest, strengthen the back, and avoid spinal curvature—metropolitan and provincial. Daily gymnastics, in order to respire by human skin, should constitute a part of daily physical and mental education, no matter whether it rain, hail, or shine externally. In any event there need be no special inclemency of weather in a good warm bath, conjoined with the habitual practice of cold friction by means of flesh-brush, hair-gloves, rough coarse towels, or even nice clean soft sponges, “all the year round.” Derangement of health is drawing nigh where the system of Hygiene I earnestly advocate is habitually or frequently neglected, and is first manifested by paleness of one cheek and flushing of the other, with burning sensation, headache, constipation or diarrhoea, and cold extremities—a body ripe for the occupation of eruptive fever of *whatever denomination*. Poisons of this kind have no smell; in fact, they are organic—have life, growth, development, and decay; produce their like before they finally die, and sow the seed of disease, misery, and death for mankind at large by everlasting reproduction. Consider for a moment, gentle reader of “The Thinker’s Magazine,” the question of public health, ever remembering that the frightful catalogue of endless diseases is made up entirely of mere individual disorder from time to time. What, therefore, is the natural inference? Why, neither more nor less than this—Sanitary Knowledge, or the Philosophy of Health, concerns him or her quite as much as it does any statesman or medical practitioner throughout the kingdom; and until each man, woman, and child are more correctly acquainted with the blessings of Hygiene—which, being duly interpreted, involve the Supreme Will of God—and, what is of incomparably greater importance than knowing, act upon that science of Life, with a view to avert the special tendencies to Death—so long will epidemic pestilence, in contempt, as it were, for mere nosological names or synonyms, sweep them down as with the ruthless scythe of a destroying angel, or the “Word of the Lord.”

The study of Spiritual Philosophy, we all know, even though it concern the highest department of Human Nature, is not the whole duty of man as a mortal and immortal being. Neither is Materialism the Goddess of Reason. Physical investigation brings us essential advantages and bodily comforts; but Natural Science alone will never

right the wrongs of Poverty, Ignorance, and Crime. No; and the readers of FREELIGHT may depend upon it that a sound mind in a sound body will never be enjoyed in England, or the world at large, until well-devised sanitary knowledge is more fully appreciated as the question of questions, in a moral and material sense, viz., National Health; nay, still more—as I have previously observed—freely adopted, and really carried out, not by force of penal law in fine and imprisonment, but spontaneously and wisely, as the blessed and glorious achievement of an enlightened and happy by reason of being SELF-GOVERNED and God-loving people.

The adulteration of food and sophistication of drink open up too vast a field for our present purpose—Note of Tocsin—although I am in full possession of copious important and interesting details. Government, it is said, is about to reform, not only the sanitary, but the “licensing” laws—a desirable thing for sound minds in sound bodies; possibly, however, far more easy of theoretical suggestion than actual accomplishment. My plan, simply mentioned, is to this effect: either sell no alcoholic compounds at all, or have them duly certified by a competent Board of scientific chemists to be what they *seem* to be! Surely that man is not a man, but a devil in deed and in truth, who, “when asked for bread, giveth a stone.” Some of these sophistications, comparatively speaking, are perfectly harmless, in the sense of operating their own cure; whilst others are absolutely poisonous substances, deleterious alike to mind and body, and productive in general of fatal disease;—their avenues lead evermore to insanity, darkness, and death. Severe as the law now is in regard to such murderous tanners and dyers, adulteration is *not* prevented. And why not? Because it results in the construction of mansions in country and mansions in town, whose foundations are the graves of its countless victims.

Is it not a Cadmean victory? God knoweth. ALCOHOL—so to speak, or write—is the spiritual Phoenix—a bird of ill omen—which springs from the ashes of Sugar; in fact, this crystalline sweetmeat of Nature is physically murdered in order to obtain it, and in this way: saccharine juice is exposed to a temperature of 80 degrees; the albuminous or nourishing principle of the human body then putrefies, the natural sugar parts with its carbonic acid, and is thus *unnaturally* converted into alcohol by the veriest destructive presence—action, called by scientists, Catalysis; the sweet taste is gone utterly, and what remains is well described by Shakespeare as a nervous poison, in Act ii., Scene 3, of deathless “Othello”:

“O, thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil!”

Verily, in the mortal life of fleshly Humanity there will never be any considerable measure of lasting, or useful reform, until each individual is resolved to practise Self-culture—morally and materially. Ere the dawn of that day, Man will not do, but still die; and none shall raise the gloomy veil of darkness from the face of Britannia, in order that her radiant beauty may shine forth in beams of joy and gladness, like an angel of heaven-born Freelight, for ever and ever.

FRENCH DRAMATISTS.

BY W. NICHOLLS.

ALTHOUGH the inflated school of dramatic literature which obtained in France during two centuries finds but little favour with modern playgoers, it must not be forgotten that the greatest authors of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries wrote for the stage, and that, turgid and bombastic though it be, and little in sympathy with modern notions, that style alone is likely to hold its own against all others in French dramatic composition, and is, moreover, destined to take rank amidst the standard classics of the nation, to endure as long as the French language lasts, and certainly to outlive the more brilliant, but less sterling, productions of the present stage.

The sonorous rhythm, the grandiloquent verse of Pierre Corneille (the father of the French drama), of Racine, Voltaire, and others of the pedantic school, are voted dull and heavy. Corneille's verse—dignified and rigid almost to ferocity—is, however, not unfrequently defective and disfigured by barbarisms. His first comedy—*Milèto*—brought out in 1629, is founded on a love adventure—an incident in his own life. Needless to capitulate the various dramas emanating from his pen. His renown rose with his *Medea*, and culminated on the production of the *Cid*. *Horace*, *Cinna*, and *Polyeucte* are justly considered to be *chefs-d'œuvres*. *Le menteur*, recently played in London by the *sociétaires* of the Théâtre Français, is so admirable a comedy as to have acquired more popularity than has been accorded to any of his other works. Foote took his *Liar* from this clever transcript of the manners of Corneille's days. His nephew, Fontenelle, considered the most universal genius of the age of Louis XIV., wrote some dramatic works, little esteemed. His brother Thomas, with whom he lived, wrote many plays, and, according to Voltaire, would have enjoyed a great reputation had he been without a brother.

Racine was inferior in genius to the great Corneille, but more touching, more elegant. He could delineate the passions better than his predecessor, who in love passages was singularly uninspired; in him the voice of Nature spoke not. Racine, by assiduous application, in less than a year mastered Euripides and Sophocles. Like the peripatetic philosophers, he loved to study *al fresco*, and would oft-times bury himself in the solitude of the woods and study his favourite Greek authors. He was the intimate friend of Boileau, Molière, and La Fontaine, geniuses of the reign of the Grand Monarque. *Andromaque* caused on its first production as much sensation as the *Cid*, and is to this day privileged to share with *Phèdre* and *Les Plaideurs* the delight of French audiences. *Phèdre*, his last tragedy, was described by Voltaire, whose dicta, however, must not be looked on as tests of infallibility, as the *chef-d'œuvre* of the human mind—the type of perfection in verse. For tragic sublimity it is almost unsurpassed, and offers in its delineation unusual scope for the genius of a Rachel or a Ristori. Madame de Sévigné, strange to say, looked coldly on *Britannicus* and *Bajazet*, and even withheld her admiration from *Iphigénie* and *Phèdre*, in favour of *Esther*, a tragedy drawn from Holy Writ, but very inferior in every respect to these. *Athalie*, full of pathos and strictly harmonious, was coldly received in Racine's lifetime, but, as Boileau predicted, was appreciated in after ages. *Les Plaideurs*, quite in the school of Aristophanes, is his only comedy.

Crébillon, styled the Æschylus of France, is little read and less played now; but some of his tragedies are not without merit. Of course he drew from the classics, like his contemporaries. *Idoménée*, *Atrée*, *Electra*, and *Rhadamiste* were successful. *Catilina* was tumultuously received at first, but the public on reading it found that it was a very unfaithful picture of the manners of ancient Rome, and withdrew their eulogiums.

The immortal Molière alone, amongst French playwrights, lives in the affections of Englishmen. So witty and humorous was he—so cleverly did he paint the manners of his day—with such felicity did he depict character—so genial and bright are the colloquies of his heroes and heroines—that to his works must we look for the genius of French comedy. *Tartuffe*, *Le Malade Imaginaire*, *Le Médecin malgré lui*, *L'Avare*, are all impregnated with his peculiarly unctuous and racy humour.

Marmontel wrote one successful tragedy, *Denys le Tyran*.

Beaumarchais's name must not be omitted. His first production was a five-act drama, called *Eugénie*; his next, *Les Deux Amis*; but

his claim to immortality rests solely on his *Barbier de Séville*, and its continuation, *La Folle Journée, ou le Mariage de Figaro*. On account of its political allusions, *Le Barbier* was for a long time suppressed; but on the withdrawal of the interdiction, such was its success and attraction that four hundred persons went to the theatre early in the morning, and passed the day, and dined in the boxes, in order to witness its first representation. We read that it was acted for two years running, twice in every week, and produced 50,000 francs to the theatre and 30,000 to Beaumarchais, who used to say that if there were anything more foolish than his play, it was its success. He also wrote an opera called *Tarare*, and the comedy of *La Mère Coupable*.

Voltaire's tragedies are insufferably heavy, and marked, when compared with his models, by an inferiority of style and an inordinate *amour propre*, as who should say, "I am Sir Oracle!" Frigid in tone, turgid in its hyperboles, pompous in its diction, his verse cannot now be read with satisfaction. His *Brutus* and *Zaire* are beyond a doubt his best dramatic works. But the cold classicism, the wearisome unities, the absence of that "touch of Nature" we are perpetually citing as the only true key to the heart, and which we find only in our beloved Shakespeare, make Voltaire the Sceptic's plays repellent.

La Harpe wrote three tragedies—*Warwick*, *Timoleon*, and *Pharomond*. Destouches, author of *Le Philosophe Marié* and *Le Glorieux*; the gay Regnard; the amiable Desmahis, who wrote *L'Impertinent*; and the actor-author Desforges, were also reckoned sound dramatists.

We gladly turn, notwithstanding our admiration for certain beauties to be found in the authors above-named, from the artificial rhodomontade and grandiloquent fustian of the last two centuries to the more genial and refined, if less studied and masterly, conceptions of the younger French dramatists.

The Scribes, Dumas (*père et fils*), Casimir Delavignes, and Sardous, of the nineteenth century—the founders of a school of art too light and ephemeral to be handed down (with few exceptions, such as the *Verre d'Eau* or *L'Ecole des Maris*) to posterity—find extraordinary favour at the hands, because admirably suited to the somewhat depraved tastes, of the present histrionic *connoisseur*. The modern playgoer in Paris, it is true, supports two theatres for the performance of what may be termed the legitimate; but he belongs to a race that, in general, loves to be amused without the trouble of thinking or the bore of being instructed. The fertility of invention possessed by those who now supply the French theatres with materials for their companies is astounding—positively prodigious. Amidst the mass

of rubbish, the accumulation of dross, from which it is an Herculean task to extract the ore, there is some valuable stuff to be found, if we will only take the trouble to look for it. It is, perhaps, too much the fashion to cry down French pieces as being immoral and impure. Execrable, vile, prurient though they be in too many instances—scoffing at married life, placing woman in a false position in society, displaying gross ignorance of all manners and customs beyond their own limited circle—there is yet much to claim our esteem, and even our admiration. De Musset's charming *Proverbes* are innocent of coarseness or *double-entendres*. With Georges Sand—that intensely powerful authoress—it would be unjust to find fault on the score of immorality. Victorien Sardou is a clever writer, although he falls occasionally into the conventionalities of Parisian and the caricatures of provincial life. Dumas *père* has been sadly reviled, but is he not, after all, a master of effect, and one of the most successful of dramatists? And it is questionable whether his son—the second Alexandre—is so black as he is painted. He has a good object in view—the rehabilitation of fallen women, and, be it remembered, the highest authority for his avowed championship. Frédéric Soulié has written some most captivating dramas, one of the most interesting of which is *La Closerie des Genêts*, from which is taken our *Willow Copse*. Ad. D'Ennery, Félix Pyat, Eugène Sue, &c., have all contributed largely to the sensationalism of the stage.

The moribund Boileau said: "It is a great comfort to a dying poet that he has written nothing injurious to morality." Perhaps the time will come when an unbiassed judgment will be passed upon the younger Dumas, and that the *Dame aux Camélias*, the *Demi-Monde*, and the *Visite de Noces*, although marshalling before the eyes of purity women whose touch is contamination, according to the rigorous laws of society, have yet a noble purport in them, which time may haply develop into a real good. If so, they will contrast favourably with the aimless mawkishness of what is termed the teacup-and saucer school of English Dramatic Art.

SUNDAY LECTURE SOCIETY.

It is very much to be regretted that the admirable movement inaugurated by the above-named society a few years ago has not been more generally developed. The following announcement describes the objects of the society:—"To provide for the delivery on Sundays, in the metropolis, and to encourage the delivery elsewhere, of lectures

on Science—physical, intellectual, and moral—History, Literature, and Art, especially in their bearing upon the improvement and social well-being of mankind." The lectures are delivered at St. George's Hall, Langham Place, every Sunday afternoon at four o'clock. On February 4th, Professor W. A. Hunter lectured on "Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Christianity, compared as Moral Systems." The lecturer began by stating that Stoicism and Epicureanism came at the close of the great outburst of Greek intellect during the Socratic and Aristotelian periods. Both systems stood in a somewhat similar position in regard to religion. The Stoics believed in God, in Providence, and prayer. The Epicureans were accused of atheism: but that was a mistake. They believed in the gods, and their supreme felicity; but what they denied was that the gods were affected by the sordid cares and vulgar passions of men. It was impossible to express, said Epicurus, how great unhappiness men had drawn upon themselves by ascribing such attributes to the gods as resemble those of human nature, and especially those of anger and vindictiveness. In fact, Epicurus held substantially the same view as Aristotle, and as was in modern times eloquently expounded by Spinoza. Both Stoicism and Epicureanism, though from different points of view, disbelieved the doctrine of immortality, and the only sanctions they could appeal to were those derived from the nature of man.

The lecturer then took up the ethical question, What is the chief good? What is it that ought to be the overruling, if not the sole, principle of our conduct. The Stoics answered that virtue was the only good. Pleasure was not a good: pain was not an evil. The Stoic aimed at being above the desire of pleasure—above the dread of pain; and sought full and perfect happiness in virtue alone. The compensation offered to the votaries of this system, for such a remorseless persecution of pleasure, such an unnatural indifference to pain, was a kind of sublime self-satisfaction. "You shall far excel other mortals," says Seneca, "nor shall the gods themselves far excel you."

The next question was, What is virtue? The Stoic answered, Virtue is, to live according to nature. The lecturer pointed out that "nature" was as hard to understand as "virtue," and that the Stoical formula, although not meaningless, was vague and flexible, and occasionally led to very absurd conclusions, as when Epictetus said that it was against nature to shave. The system of Epicurus was nearly the antithesis of the Stoical. Epicurus said that pleasure is not only a good, but the root of good; that all other things are desired for the sake of pleasure, but pleasure for its own sake only.

If we rationally avoid pleasure, it is not on account of the pleasure, but of some pain annexed to it or flowing from it; if we invite pain, it is not for the sake of the pain, but for some pleasure to be gained, or greater pain to be avoided. This is substantially the ground taken up by the Utilitarians. It is foolish, they say, to try to escape the charmed circle of pleasure. Even the Stoics held out happiness as the end of all their self-mortification. They quarrelled with the ordinary pleasures of life, which they regarded as a hindrance to their moral progress, just as they said the body was a clog on the soul. This was a great mistake. The eagle might fancy that if he could only get rid of the resistance of the air his passage would be swifter than the wind; but let his prayer be granted, and he would fall to the ground. On account of this doctrine, Epicurus has been subjected to silly and gross slanders. The essence of his theory was to subject the pursuit of happiness to philosophical regulation; and yet he was often criticised as if he meant that every man should run rambling about among pleasures and pains, doing whatever at the moment seemed good in his own eyes. Now, Epicurus taught that pleasure was of two kinds: (1) of rest—consisting of a certain calmness and absence of all pain and disturbance; and (2) of motion—a certain pleasant titillation of the sense, as in eating or drinking. Epicurus held that happiness could be found solely in the pleasure of rest, and not of motion or fruition at all. Pleasure is freedom of the body from pain, and of the mind from anxious fears. Then, in regard to mental pleasures—these for the most part depend on mere opinion; it is our own foolish ideas that make us run after civic honours, riches, and the like. The desires that spring from vain opinion are not to be obeyed, but suppressed. The remarkable fact was that the Epicurean theory of pleasure tallied very nearly with the Stoical. When one took them away from their general theory, and asked what pleasures they would have us avoid, there was almost no difference in the answer; and yet grave historians tell us that the Stoics were scarcely lower than the angels—the Epicureans scarcely higher than swine. It was a curious, although not singular, example of the effect of habitual misrepresentation, that the word "Epicure" should come from the name of a man who was simple in his habits and abstemious to a fault, and who was a vegetarian and a teetotaler. "For my own part," says Epicurus, "when I feed upon simple bread and water, and sometimes, when I would entertain myself somewhat more splendidly, mend my cheer with a little cheese, I find abundant satisfaction therein, and bid defiance to those pleasures that the ignorant and sensual vulgar

so much cry up in their magnificent entertainments; and if I have brown bread, barley broth, and clean water, I think my table so well furnished that I dare dispute felicity with Jove himself." Thus Epicurus must be blamed, if at all, not for being too indulgent to pleasure, but too severe. The explanation, however, of this extreme austerity was the desire to furnish the mind with principles that would enable a man to bear up under the hardships and degradations of slavery. As all prisoners of war were made slaves, there was no security that this terrible fate might not overtake the wealthiest citizen. So much for pleasures and pains. According to Epicurus, virtue was an indispensable condition to happiness. With virtue a man might fail to be happy; without virtue he could not fail to be unhappy. We also find in Epicurus a clear statement of the theory that society originated in a social contract. Two conceptions, the law of nature and the social contract, have exercised a vast influence on modern political philosophy. The law of nature mainly contributed to the growth of International Law; the "social contract" has been equally useful in vindicating representative government and the rights of man.

The lecturer passed over the basis of Christian Ethics, which was well known to rest upon the doctrine of future rewards and punishments. Its roots were in theology, not in philosophy; its sanction was an extramundane system of penal law, not the nature of man. The lecturer then proceeded to examine what differences were to be found in the three moral systems with respect to the virtues they inculcated or the vices they condemned. Speaking roughly, the Stoics insisted on the active, the Christians and Epicureans on the passive virtues. Stoicism developed the heroism of action; Christianity the heroism of suffering. One of the most important questions in ancient society was slavery, for both Greece and Rome exemplified slave aristocracies, rather than democracies, in the modern acceptation of the word. The Epicureans taught that the slaves should be kindly treated, "as remembering that they also are men." The Stoics advocated the equality of man, and held that all distinctions between them were repugnant to the law of Nature. This was their way of saying that slavery was legal, but not moral. Through their influence this idea made its way into Roman law. Christianity also accepted slavery as an institution, and enjoined slaves to obey their masters; but the doctrine it proclaimed of the fatherhood of God, and, therefore, of the brotherhood of man, was unfavourable to slavery; and ultimately, eight hundred years after Christianity was made the State religion, slavery expired.

The lecturer then touched on beneficence, charity, and the natural affections, and pointed out the great advantage that Christianity had over Stoicism, although not so much over Epicureanism. The stress laid upon the gentle virtues, and the freedom allowed to the family affections by Christ, gave his doctrine from the first a great hold over women and slaves. It never occurred to the Stoics or Epicureans that in neglecting women they overlooked an enormous moral power. In Greece and Asia Minor the position of women was low. The only women who were attractive were those who gave their respectability in exchange for freedom and education. The women the Greeks respected they did not admire, and the women they admired they did not respect. Christianity, by elevating the moral and depressing the intellectual pole, altered the relative position of the sexes. From the Christian standpoint women were the equals, and not seldom the superiors, of men. The very defects of Christianity were favourable to its success with women. The absence of "valour"—or rather of "military bravery"—from the Christian list of virtues redounded to the advantage of women. They could, as easily as men, turn the other cheek to the smiter. Among the deficiencies of the Christian Ethics, the most important is the absence of any theory of property. Upon the question of Socialism it is dumb. This arose from the one-sided character of Christian Ethics. Christ regarded men, not as endowed with rights, but as liable to duties. He taught men to leave their rights to look after themselves, and see only what they owed to God and man. The other conspicuous defect is the want of toleration, and slender regard to the intellectual virtues.

In conclusion, said the lecturer, in casting our eye backwards, the uppermost feeling must be one of profound regret that such a tremendous spiritual power as the Church enjoyed for one thousand years should have done so little for mankind; that it should have spent so much of its energy in attacking unreal or trivial crimes—such as heresy, magic, witchcraft; that it should have caused such mountains of misery in setting up factitious virtues, like the celibacy of the clergy, and the gratuitous penances of monastic life; and that it has left so little to admire unreservedly, except big churches and pictures of the Madonna. If it put down infanticide—at least as an open practice—it created a new motive for the destruction of children by making their birth a sort of crime; and the lecturer had failed to learn what evidence there was that more children were killed in Rome than in London. If the Church has anything to boast of, it is the unsparing severity of its crusade against unchastity. But if we take our pauperism, our drunkenness, and the other social evils, it may be questioned whether we do not suffer more than the

ancients did from infanticide, unchastity, and suicide put together. And what is very remarkable is that Europe is threatened, through Christianity, with a separation of the sexes as great as that which it first removed. This is an urgent danger on the Continent. Owing to the diffusion of scientific conceptions among men, the belief in the miraculous has sensibly decayed; and whereas the early Christians appealed to miracles as the unanswerable attestation of their doctrine, some modern apologists ask us not to throw away the divine morality of the Gospels on account of the alleged miracles. But women have not kept up with men. The result is deplorable. It is impossible for a man who has been, as he thinks, emancipated from superstition, to entertain a genuine respect for a woman who, without any reasoned convictions, blindly follows the traditions of the priests. How can boys keep up their respect for their mothers when they find men openly deride their sacred teaching as a set of old wives' fables? Men go into a world of business and science, of the least tincture of which the mother is generally as innocent as a babe. If we desire to avert the disaster that befel Greece, we must seek a remedy. At one time the sexes were very much on a level—of ignorance; but when the day of the efflorescence of Greek thought came, the men went forward, leaving the women behind at home. What philosophy was to the Greeks, science is to Europe; and, as philosophy dissolved the old myths, science has operated with disintegrating effect on the miraculous element of Christianity. If we desire to avert the calamity that overtook Greece, let us not forget one of the best lessons of Christianity, and let us have the sexes on a level of respect, dignity, and honour. How is this to be done? By men lagging behind, and keeping the women in countenance? Heaven forbid! We cannot afford to give up science. There remains one course only. Women must join in the march.

[We give this lecture intact, from the *Examiner*, and may hereafter express our opinion on its tendency.—Ed.]

THE SHADOW OF LEVI.

A MYSTICAL ROMANCE, IN THREE PHASES.—BY EDITH HERAUD.

PHASE THE FIRST.—CHAPTER THE FIRST.

THE CURSE OF LEVI.

ARABIA, land of many memories! whose soil is hallowed by the footsteps of holy men that have rested on it—a land of desolation and sterility, intersected with bright spots of fertility and verdure—land of the famous Israelitish passage, whose very stones are rife with

records of the event—Arabia, Arabia! long may thy haunts be sacred, and set apart as memorials of the past! To this land, bristling with traditions of the inspired patriarchal ages, we would convey the reader.

Our story leads us to the vicinity of Mount Sinai, round the foot of whose lofty summit the country is skirted by a wide tract of desert land, through which the traveller must pass to arrive at the sacred pile. A fine, imposing spectacle it is, this Mount of Sinai, upreared to its dizzy elevation during one of Nature's grandest ebullitions. There it stands, the huge mass, formed of granite, its gaunt precipitous sides unrelieved by soil or vegetation. It is not a single peak, but a group of mountains, between two blocks of which runs a sort of cleft or valley, terminating at the upper extremity in a conical green hill. Three peaks arise in succession from this valley, the last of which is the famous Mount of Sinai—a spot rendered holy by the glory of God, which in the time of the great lawgiver abided on it—a majestic, isolated-looking pile, rearing itself above its fellows, knitting its giant-brows into a frown, which, as if in proud consciousness of sublimity, scowl down distrustfully on the lower world. Truly a wonderful sight! The barren nakedness of the mountain-sides, instead of detracting from, adds to the grandeur of the scene. The entire absence of vegetation causes the jagged outlines of the rocks to stand out with a weird prominence which suggests to the mind all sorts of fantastic images. Verily, one could well believe in the old legends of haunted fanes and spectral visitations while gazing up at the enormous pile. Viewed from certain standpoints, the mountain-sides assume an appearance at once magnificent and bewildering. As we write, our eye is directed to them with a mingled feeling of awe and admiration. The greater part of the mountain is wrapt in gloom, while the lesser is bathed in a ruddy golden hue, the effect of which is heightened by the bright, perspicuous nature of the atmosphere. Afar off, one peak stands out prominently in the sunlight, tinged with purple-violet tints, while another rears itself aloft, seemingly mingling with the intense blue of the horizon. A scene of grandeur and of beauty—beauty that seems miraculously evidenced, considering the indigenous sterility of the soil. But the wonders of Nature are inexhaustible, and infinite possibilities are not to be estimated by finite capacities; so let us gaze in awe at this scene of magnificence, issuing forth, as it were by enchantment, from the womb of barrenness, not presuming to propose to ourselves a solution of the enigma, but accepting this and all other of Nature's unexplained marvels as so many divinely-appointed indications of the Creator.

Near the vicinity of this mountain, many years anterior to the date of the present narrative, a tribe of Jews had settled, dwelling in tents (as indeed was necessitated by the nature of the climate), and otherwise keeping up the *régime* of the old patriarchal system. With the members of one family belonging to the tribe, whose patriarchal pre-eminence had from the first days of the settlement been acknowledged by the elders, our story is principally concerned. For what distinctive feature the family of Levi had from the earliest period been invested with this superiority does not remain upon record. Probably some especial virtue manifested by one of the original settlers secured to his lineal descendants this mark of distinction among their people. Whatever it was, it is certain that the holder's moral characteristic was not, together with his other dignities, transmitted to his posterity, one of whom made himself odious by the perpetration of a hidden crime. The crime was suspected by the elders, but was by them never pressed home to the criminal's charge. By this means the guilty man escaped the immediate consequences of his folly, and his family patriarchal integrity was preserved. But the eye of Heaven had looked down upon the monstrous action, and awarded its own punishment. From that day a curse, in the shape of a deep black shadow, fell upon the house of Levi. The shadow was imperturbable; they could not remove it or flee from it. It hung over their tents, intercepting the bright sunlight, and casting its terrible reflection within the hearts of the inmates. It penetrated the lining of the canvas, running along the sides of the slender dwellings, impregnating with gloom alike the chamber of progeniture and the chamber of death. The soul that flitted into the world and the soul that flitted out of it were, at the moment of coming and going, alike encircled by the shadow, which never rested till it enclosed a victim in its embrace. It respected neither times nor seasons, needs nor circumstances. Physically it was ever before the eye, not to be cajoled or frightened away—an abiding calamity, holding its place persistently in the homes of the doomed family; morally, it manifested itself in various ways. It was evidenced in sorrow and sickness, in chagrin and disappointment, and the sudden blotting out of fondly-cherished hopes. From the hour that the shadow first rested on their tents, nothing throve with the family of Levi. The man of guilt was gathered to his fathers, and the patriarchal mantle descended to his offspring. But the curse expired not. There it was, resistless and implacable, casting its shadow externally and internally, stunting in their first growth all the natural spontaneities of the doomed people;

frustrating all their schemes of happiness, steering all their enterprises to an unfruitful issue, prompting them to the commission of fatal errors which involved them in the network of their own destruction. The old generation passed away, and a new one succeeded; but the curse remained, which thus became a perpetual heirloom to the descendants of the culprit. Many essayed to flee from it by escaping into foreign lands, but the curse pursued them; thus demonstrating that it was not confined to any particular locality, but was attached to the persons of the accursed race. After many years the wanderers returned, broken-hearted and dispirited, resigned to the terrible fatality which held them in a vice. Ultimately they settled down to work out, in the midst of their own people, their punishment and their doom.

At the time of the commencement of the present story, the ostensible head of the family of Levi was one Reuben, a young man just completing his thirty-fifth year, and who, since the death of his father (an event which took place some years previously), had been recognised as the chief of the Jewish community. With the exception of his sister Rachel, who had been born so many years his junior as to claim from him rather paternal than brotherly solicitude, Reuben was an only child, and had been brought up in the full knowledge of his peculiar antecedents and the penalty of crime. But since the accession of Reuben to the family honours there had been an apparent abatement in the working of the curse. For ten years, though the shadow was still visible within and without their tents, the lives of Reuben and Rachel had been free from moral and physical disaster. This respite from calamity induced the brother and sister, the former especially, to entertain the most felicitous hopes, and to believe that at length the curse was departing from their genealogical tree. But there were others outside the family of Levi, wise men and elders of the community, who, directing their attention to the shadow which clouded the canvas, shook their heads sagely, exclaiming, "It abideth, it abideth. It resteth only; it expireth not. It gaineth great strength to hurl the thunderbolt. More furious will be the hurricane for the preceding calm."

So thought not Reuben, and on the strength of his newly-acquired hopes he had allowed himself to become enamoured of, and betrothed to, a young Jewish damsel—by name Esther, a sometime playmate of his sister's—and had even gone so far as to make preparations for the marriage ceremony. So far, all went well, and the stars seemed to smile down propitiously on the proposed union: but the shadow remained; and the influence of this shadow, at the opening of the

present chapter, began to make itself felt in the hitherto sanguine heart of Rachel.

It was noontide. Rachel sat in her tent, musing. Her handmaiden, Sara, a somewhat prepossessing damsel, stood at a short distance from her, making preparations for their mid-day meal. The handmaiden looked up wistfully at the thoughtful countenance of her mistress, and, pausing in her work, said :

"Reuben is late returning home to-day. The sun is past his meridian, and the meal has long been ready."

Rachel roused herself from a kind of torpor into which she had fallen, and casting her eyes in the direction of the tent entrance, at which the figure of her brother was expected to present itself, she answered :

"Yes, he is late. The sun marks his progress on the dial. Ah, Reuben! May the God of our fathers watch over and protect him from all evil!"

"Protect him from all evil?" echoed Sara, with a startled look at her mistress. "What evil portendest thou is about to befall thy brother this day?"

"I know not," said Rachel, withdrawing her eyes from the tent entrance; "but I have a foreboding of ill impending over him, which has taken possession of me since yesternight. It may be a weak woman's fancy, but it refuses to be exorcised by any mental effort of mine. I wish he would return, Sara."

"My heart echoes thy wish," said Sara, whose person and manner bore unmistakable signs of staunch fidelity to her mistress. "But why should Rachel opine evil to Reuben? Is he not the betrothed of Esther, the Rose of Sinai? Shines not the sun upon their coming nuptials, and is not the day appointed for the ceremony set apart as one of rejoicing to our whole tribe?"

Rachel's eyes wandered from the features of her handmaiden, on which they had fixed themselves, to the dark shadow which rested on the light wall of the tent—an abiding reality, visible alike to the inner and the outer perceptions, scowling down ominously on the descendants of the first transgressor—a living testimony that the curse of blood was inalienable, perpetuated through the ages, running along from generation to generation, till the sands of time should end their course and lose themselves in the incalculable cycle of eternity. The direction of Rachel's gaze enabled her handmaiden to divine her thoughts. Replying to them, she said :

"The shadow—the curse of Levi! True! But the shadow has rested for ten years, and the curse has long since ceased to work evil

in our tents. It is the opinion of thy handmaiden that the curse will never add another to its holocaust of victims."

"I wish I could believe the same, Sara," said Rachel. "But my mind misgives me. I have never believed in the permanency of the rest which for ten years has been accorded to Levi. The annals of our race inform us that the curse has ever overtaken us in the moments of our greatest joy. The cup of happiness presented to our lips has been dashed down in the moment of its tasting. My brother is intoxicated with his cup of happiness, which is full unto the brim. Should the curse, after sleeping for ten years, awake at this juncture to overwhelm him with confusion! Ah me! My heart sickens with its prognostications. I wish my brother would return."

"Cease all such prognostications," said Sara, "and remember, though it be true that a heavy curse rests on Levi, awarded as the penalty of grievous wrong, yet is there also watching over you and Reuben a special Providence, which, while ye walk in the path of rectitude, will never desert ye. Believe thy handmaiden—the curse expireth, and the days of thy complete deliverance are at hand."

"It is a vain hope," said Rachel. "I believe, with the wise men and fathers of our tribe, that the curse expireth not: it only sleepeth. At any moment it may awake and hurl its thunderbolts upon us. I fear not for myself—it is my brother Reuben. I cannot deny the omen. I feel, I know that some great evil is now befalling him."

"The God of Israel forbid!" said Sara, with a fervent exclamation. "The curse worked woe enough in former years; 'tis time its course was run."

"The crime was huge that brought the curse upon us," said Rachel. "Maybe some corresponding act of virtue would work out our deliverance. Oh that I knew the way! But my brother returns not. See! the sun is declining, and long ere this our mid-day meal should have been over."

"Thy brother returns," said Sara, looking towards the entrance; "returns to ease thy mind of all its omens—returns to—Ah! what is this?"

The latter exclamation was elicited by the ghastly appearance of Reuben, who at this moment entered the tent wearily, and, omitting his customary salutation to his sister, threw himself upon a settle.

Rachel stood pale and statue-like, stretching out her slender arm towards her brother, awaiting in breathless expectation the terrible revelation which her heart only too truly anticipated was about to take place.

Rachel waited; but the revelation came not. Reuben could not

speak. Burying his face in his hands, he yielded to the bitter agony of his spirit, and groaned aloud.

Sara, the handmaiden, interfered. "What! Reuben, Reuben!" she said; "art ill, or has some calamity befallen thee? In the name of the Holy One of Israel, speak to us! See, thy sister Rachel is speechless with amazement!"

Reuben roused himself sufficiently to raise his head from its drooping posture and gaze up at the pallid features of his sister. She had divined his trouble. He read it in the fixed, glassy eyes, whose lids were fringed with the large sympathetic drops that had started to them on his first entrance. He read it in the ashen, quivering lips, from which the words strove to issue, but were yielded back, choked in their utterance. He read it in the whole demeanour, rigid, strange, and vague. Laying his hand heavily on Rachel's shoulder, Reuben gasped forth:

"You have a prescience; you divine the horror. My God! my God! my God!"

"Esther is——" The words came convulsively forth. Her tongue shaped itself to utter the few syllables, and then clove to her mouth, refusing further office. Rachel might have been a stone statue for all the power she owned to move and act. Reuben seized her hand, and raising his voice with a terrible agony, exclaimed:

"Esther—Esther is dead!"

The words rang through the tent, penetrating the canvas, bearing their echoes to the neighbouring Israelitish dwellings, never pausing in their passage till they died away in a low wail at the foot of Sinai. It was the wail of a heart crushed and broken, its fond hopes shattered into infinitesimal atoms. Will those atoms ever reunite and resuscitate themselves into another living hope that shall outvie in brilliancy the lost one? Great is the Eternal One. His ways are inscrutable, and His laws mysterious in their working. He evolveth good out of evil in His own place and season. We must await the issue. The good to be evolved out of this evil, time will show.

"Dead!" gasped Rachel, withdrawing her eyes slowly, her worst apprehensions verified.

"Dead!" iterated Reuben. "She attended her dying friend in the tent of Abram, and caught the sickness. She is dead—dead—dead!"

In a paroxysm of grief, Reuben stretched himself along the floor of the tent, filling the air with heavy lamentations, and refusing to be comforted.

Rachel gazed wistfully at the prostrate form of her brother writhing in its great agony. After a few minutes' pause she muttered softly to herself: "'Tis useless now; his grief must have its vent. Poor Reuben! it hath fallen upon thee heavily—heavily! Ah! true indeed, thy own heart alone knoweth its own bitterness."

Beckoning to her handmaiden: "Administer to him, Sara; I am going forth to pray. God grant that when I return the fit will have passed from him!"

So saying, she raised the opening of the tent, and emerged into the sunlight.

INTER-NATURE.

BY FRANCIS K. KINGSTON.

HOWEVER positive any of us may appear to be regarding our views and opinions—our ideas—of anything, and however emphatic in our assertions of those ideas, we must never be unmindful of the fact that those same ideas and our assertions of them do no more nor less than relate to things as they may be represented within us, in accordance with the fiat of Universal Providence.

What ought to be, *is*; but we only partially know *what is*.

There is an hypothetical residuum embodied in all our ideas, and in all our expressions of them, which differentiates all of them from those of Omniscience.

Within the infinite domain of this residuum abides the loadstone which magnetically inspires us with the spirit of inquiry.

Contained in this balance of truth is that eternal something which is left for us to know about everything—that eternal something which makes all our ideas and our expressions of them in some degree or other less than complete or absolute.

Do what we will, for example, we cannot keep our minds absolutely clear from all myths—from all the husks and skeletons, the decayed tissues and the rags and tatters of defunct and misapprehended forms and embodiments of thought. Myths are ghosts which *will* not be wholly disestablished.

Our myths are always with us. But what are these myths but thought-fossils, expression-moulds, symbolical of ideas which have had their day—of ideas which were the parents, the co-efficient seeds, of the ideas which grow in us?

Is not language the incarnate saviour of thought?

Does not language die to breed thought ?

What is the dead side of language but an ever-present myth ?

Every day is the deathday of the past myth, and the birthday of the future myth.

Language is a concretion of the elements of thought, which are abstracted from the universal matrix. Every form of thought-metal is abstracted from the universal father-mother vein of Nature.

All language, regarded in its aspect as the embodiment or mode of expressing thought, is always metaphorical, symbolical, typical.

As we are grafted on the stock of the universe by our parents, so do we try to graft our expressions of thought on the universal tree of thought.

How our thought-pictures will "take" when we try to graft them on any form of stock must depend upon how appropriately the mythological colours with which we paint them are commixed.

The unfamiliar form of thought must be made apparent by sensibly distinguishing the links of association which connect it with that which is familiar. Our minds can only proceed to the unknown from the known. All additions to our knowledge must be developments of our existing idea-germs.

Our efforts to convey thought, through language, to thought, are so many experimental graftings. When the wished-for bud appears, we think our grafting has "taken," and we hope for further developments.

But all language, and the thought embodied in it, is part and parcel of Nature.

Omnipresent Nature is an ever-moving transformation scene, and Inter-Nature is the universal force which moves it.

What is not Nature is Inter-Nature.

What does not move is moved.

None of us can do more than represent some part of the scene which is represented in us. We cannot relate more about the scene than is related to us in some embodiment or other of thought in us.

Our affirmations and denials of light here, or of shade there, are but statements of the relative aspects of the absolute as they may have been made apparent in us.

Omniscience is as essential to the absolute perception, mensuration, analysis, or configuration of anything, as of all things.

A point in Nature is as indefinable as the infinite is immeasurable.

To us all points are centres of the Universe of Nature, and Inter-Nature radiates to and from all points of Nature.

Nature and Inter-Nature are inseparable, co-equal, co-eternal,

co-essential, co-intelligent, co-operative. Inter-Nature is the omnipresent centre of inter-difference, the never-absent point of interchange of intelligence, the universal membrane of spiritual endosmosis. Inter-Nature is "the soul," "the spirit," "the breath of life," "the one force," "the one will," "the one being" which permeates Nature, and of which Nature is the "body."

Nature is bi-sexual and bi-polar.

Motion is the Alpha and the Omega of the existence of Nature. Nature never ceases to labour in the work of creation, and Inter-Nature never ceases to reanimate Nature.

God, or the Universe of Providence, is a self-supporting organism whose infinite and eternal body is Nature, and whose infinite and eternal soul is Inter-Nature.

Universal self-recreation is the eternal work of God.

"Move on!" is the one mandate of Providence to every particle of the universe.

The universe is one action of one will.

Our actions are but subordinate expressions of one will guiding itself in the reproduction of creation.

Our Faith and our Hope arise from the intelligence with which Providence endows us.

As Providence makes us intelligent, so are we in charity with the balance of the universe.

LECTURERS, PREACHERS, AND ELOCUTIONISTS.

W. J. FOX—MARTINEAU—IERSON—PAGE HOPPS—VOYSEY—DR. M'NEIL
—R. MONTGOMERY—FREETHOUGHT.

THE Lecture—scientific, humorous, and political—has "exercised" the minds of the British public to some extent. Whether the power *has* exerted immense influence or not, it challenges comparison with that of the Press.

Probably a lecture or a sermon delivered with energy and propriety may make a far greater impression for an hour than a leading article in a leading paper. The audience, however, if fit, must be comparatively few.

It must be recollected that even sermons from orthodox pulpits are criticised and torn to pieces by a logical generation, just as much as a "leader" in the *Times* can be. The "genteel audience" listens in decorous silence to the privileged clergyman, and no one for an

instant ventures to reply ; but that reticence is apparently resented as soon as the congregation can be free.

It is curious to see a congregation in church with perfectly rational and unprejudiced eyes. No human being in his senses could imagine that the tremendous problem of eternal hell or heaven occupies the minds of one of the fashionable congregations in "genteel chapels."

The young ladies dislike, envy, or admire the detestable chignons—execrated by students of art—the hats, the satins or silks of each other. The somewhat sparsely sprinkled male genus, if young, can never forget to look at the fair sex ; and the elderly people almost all look so weary and bored—so apparently indignant with Providence at being compelled to make such a sacrifice of valuable time for the sake of propriety—that one pities them and commiserates the unappreciated pastor.

Sometimes, however, if the clergyman be a brilliant star, with a reputation for eloquence, listlessness departs. The mere lecturer in the pulpit, when he is a man like the late W. J. Fox, has no such congregation of vipers ; he is listened to with attention by fellows with hard heads, and he is not sparing of sharp antithesis and incisive rhetoric.

I did not often go to the chapel in South Place when Fox was there, but far more frequently to those lectures of his in Holborn on Sunday evenings. He said some brilliant things in those oratorical displays, which, after the lapse of a quarter of a century, would now be considered ornate—extravagant. Two or three sayings of his I append. Speaking of the awful convulsion in France towards the end of the last century, he exclaimed : "Apologise for the French Revolution ? Why, we must apologise for human nature if there had been none !" (Applause.) "I think Fox is a beast !" said Thackeray to me on one occasion ; and being asked why he thought so, he replied, "Oh, because he patronises God Almighty !" Perhaps the acknowledged master of irony exaggerated the characteristics of this popular speaker.

There was a good deal of mannerism in Fox ; sometimes, however, in the midst of fiery flights of eloquence, when he was carried to the red heat of passion, you forgot that he was a man who seldom indeed lost his "critical consciousness." Speaking of the horrors of the battle of Waterloo, he said, alluding to the motives that prompted English hostility to Napoleon, "Such a victory as this would have been dearly purchased to put an archangel on the throne !"

What a contrast to Fox the quiet, thoughtful, scholarly Mar-

tineau. Mr. Martineau's mind is full of the philosophy which keen thinkers evolve for the instruction of studious souls. The diction of this preacher is admirable; the elegance and poetical feeling as well as the logic of his sermons must be conceded; but he is defective in elocution—sometimes half inaudible.

It is generally considered that Mr. Martineau, Mr. Ierson, and Mr. Page Hopps are the three leaders of Unitarianism. The former has devoted a long life to patient research and earnest study. He appeals to a high order of intelligence; only scholars really understand him.

Mr. Ierson, with rather more vivacity and almost equal attainments, must be the successor of Mr. Martineau when that veteran has left the theological stage to enjoy rest, here or hereafter. There is modesty in the expression, but manly, trained, and disciplined thought in the sermons of Mr. Ierson. He is no dogmatist—does not speak “as one having authority.” He wishes us all to reflect without prejudice or fear. He would excite but little animosity in an orthodox bosom, for he has charity, and believes in the sincerity of others.

Mr. Page Hopps is a man of poetic and delicate feeling, a philanthropist in his eloquence, and a most outspoken and honest enthusiast. Enthusiasm and reason are not incompatible with the convictions of this “able minister of the New Testament—not of the letter, but of the spirit.” For the most part, however, there is little vitality in the argumentative discourses of the Unitarians, and thus it is that Sensationalism leaves them behind.

Mr. Voysey—still the *Reverend* Charles Voysey—is Unitarian, and something more. We might call him a Theist, as we should call Theodore Parker a Theist. He has utterly left behind him every vestige of the old creeds of Christendom. He considers theology a failure. The mind of Mr. Voysey is very rationalistic; he does not attempt to be eloquent; he makes his statements plainly and concisely. From his appearance you would hardly think he is the resolute man he must be, and he is of low stature, as you can see in spite of the canonicals which he retains. Surplice and “Reverend” seem anomalous coupled with his name.

Among the best elocutionists in the pulpit, Dr. M'Neil (formerly, it is said, an actor) must be confessed to shine in the general darkness; but elocution is his chief gift. This orthodox clergyman does not reveal much new light of any sort, and it is on record that he attributed the facts of Mesmerism to “Satanic” agency! Poor man!

The late Robert Montgomery was an "amusing" preacher; evidently a vain and an egotistical person, but not entirely devoid of talent. He introduced anecdotes (as "Evangelical" preachers do) that often raised a smile when he was preaching. He once told a story of a gipsy from the pulpit, and said the man was asked what he thought of God before he was converted to Christianity. The answer was, "I thought he was a sort of infinite gentleman living at a distance!"

Few clergymen know anything of the art of elocution—to tell the truth, few *actors* do now—and it is no wonder, therefore, they produce no impression on the hearer.

The absolute Freethinkers—men of pronounced and outrageously negative views—are almost all violent men, who have no patience with the dogmas of the Church. Robert Owen was an exception. He was a bad speaker, and possessed little more than average intelligence. Philosophy he was ignorant of; with literature he had slight acquaintance; but there was never a more honest, self-denying man. It is known that Owen became a convert to Spiritualism when very far advanced in life; and it is to be hoped he felt consolation in the contemplation of a future life which he had not believed in previously. Anything is better than the wretched Materialism which converts life into a farce, and all philosophy and religion into a quagmire. Yet we are assured that there *are* Atheists quite satisfied to believe nothing.

In the "Secular" halls there is a woeful dearth of the sympathetic element. The men assembled there consider, of course, that Nature has treated them very badly. They are nearly all Revolutionists. There is a look of disgust of life—of hostility to the things that are, if that be, as a figure of speech, conceivable—on most of those faces. Their only Future being the future of earth—which they are not very likely to see fulfilled—Atheists of this description have good cause to grumble. But why do they remain in existence? If the "*quietus*" can be made with a "bare bodkin," surely they ought to die. If they have the courage of their convictions—if life be so very bad, and no hope can reasonably be entertained of the melioration thereof—why live?

Doctrines of eternal hell and annihilation who *can* believe? The men who address these Freethinkers have sometimes ability. In the years that are gone the present writer listened to some rather able men on the "Freethought" platforms. Mr. G. J. Holyoake still lives, and commands a certain degree of respect on account of his relatively moderate views and the logical turn of his mind. In a

recent discussion with Mr. Bradlaugh, who is an Antitheist, Mr. Holyoake, who is the sceptical advocate, was generally considered to have the best of the argument. Mr. Bradlaugh is popular among the working classes, and is anxious to represent them in Parliament. He would, perhaps, have made a better Old Bailey barrister than anything else—especially in the days when barristers were addicted to strong language. The Freethought party will never make much way until they give up their miserable negations, and, recognising the fact that there is method in Nature, “apply their hearts unto wisdom.” In freethought such as Mr. Conway’s there is a good deal to excite respect and sympathy. Mr. Moncure Conway is an ideal Freethinker, of Emerson’s school. With the Negationists of God we ought no more to sympathise than with the Revolutionists of the Commune. The God-Negationist will never succeed—and he ought not to succeed while there is love and reverence in the soul of man. Bigots of all sects there are; and he is one. The liberal mind rests on the grand truths of the universe, on the spiritual suggestions of true religion, and on the moral intuitions within.

R. B.

NATURE'S MURDERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF “THIS CHRISTIAN LAND,” &c.

WHAT infinitesimal creatures are we, playing and working upon this terrestrial ball that is given us to play and work upon! With what a tranquil indifference does the huge foot of Nature trample us down by thousands into the dust! It is a bright Spring day, perchance, when it comes to our turn to be despatched; the light-hearted air and the smiling sky are as gay after as before our execution. We are the children of our planet, as it in turn is the offspring of mighty stars and the grandchild of yet mightier central suns. We must not look to it, therefore, for succour when we are afraid, for it is a child like ourselves. We and it are equally helpless.

Yet to this insignificant stellar item called Earth we are indissolubly bound. We cannot loosen a rivet of our chains to escape from doom. Being so bound, we perforce must find our chief occupations in the concerns of our prison-house. Herein, no doubt, is to be found our truest life. But yet we brood over our state and circumstances, and

find ourselves growing sad. We have met with a riddle too hard for us to explain, or our little splinter of life has shown us an inexplicably rough side, and so we despond.

It is alone in studying by themselves the complex minutiae of our existence that we can possibly come to have any doubts or fears about the system of the universe. The larger the elements of Nature we are enabled to contemplate, the less chance is there of our growing despondent, or afraid, or atheistic. The largest portion of the infinite which we are able to gaze upon is the unbounded galaxy of starry worlds. What do we see there but perfect peace, absolute harmony, certain control?—

The sum of all so calm! Abortive aim
 May fail, and atoms writhing seek release;
 Untorn by doubts and fears and frustrate flame,
 The universe knows peace.

Unhappily, we cannot always fill our vision with this large and serene aspect, but turn instead to trouble ourselves by inquiring into the purposes, the why and wherefore, of the details of life that surround us—more often than not, only to discover them to be sphinxes impenetrable to our questionings, and of a sad countenance withal. One of the most common of such puzzles is the apparent cruelty of Nature.

We see men, women, and children suffer and die; we behold agonies and contortions; we hear moans and gaspings for breath; we feel that we are helpless to avert the heart-breaking events that pass before us; and we turn our eyes away from the tranquil accord of the silver spheres that swim through the ether, and cry out bitterly that Nature is cruel, and that we have no hope in heaven or earth. We see what we consider an unfeeling element in Nature, and grow morbid about it. Being liminary creatures, we cannot be wholly saved from such doubts. The imperfect naturally stumbles before the perfect, which is the same in effect as if the perfect jarred upon it. We are sensible of the shock, and unable to discover that it is caused by the smallness of ourselves, not by any spitefulness on the part of that which has jostled us. A drop of rain falling upon it might evoke the atheistical curses (if such be in its language) of a minute insect; splashing rudely upon the face of a man, he recognises only beneficence in it.

The most reasonable reasoning is by analogy. There are two analogies upon which we may always lean in our attempts at criticism of the scheme of Nature. The one may be taken from the instance

just given of the querulous scepticism of the half-drowned insect, or from the fact that we are constantly experiencing in ourselves sensations which we call calamities at the time they fall upon us, but which, when our spiritual surface becomes more extended, are plainly seen as no calamities at all. So we are enabled to educe a law which never fails, and which Pessimism cannot put aside. As the faculty of comprehension enlarges, the phantom obstructions of a limited vision recede; in other words, as light on the path increases to infinity, stumbling-stones diminish to *nil*. To give another very homely instance: "The burnt child dreads the fire," perhaps scolds it, just as the Atheist, with a like childishness, vituperates Nature. But to the grown man it is a most trite truism that fire is a beneficent element.

The other staff upon which we may lean is this: Undisturbed harmony presupposes a power of maintaining harmony. We look out upon the heavens, and behold a harmony and order absolutely intact. There is, therefore, somewhere the power of preserving that harmony, and there can be nowhere a power of disturbing that harmony, for else such influence would be manifest by desperate irruptions of disorder. We feel, we know, that the heavens constitute a mighty system of order, and we do wrong to our native perceptions of analogy if we allow that there can co-exist with such a system another whose motive is disorder, yet which does not show itself in disturbance on the other.

So much for the proof of beneficence of aim or end in the universal system. Let us turn a moment to detail, and consider the existence of the unfeeling element in Nature. This is not a question of ultimate object, but of present government. We see from astronomical records that ever and anon a star is burst into fragments. But the surrounding spheres maintain their obedience to orders none the less: there is no flaw in the system: the infinity of harmony which we see makes ridiculous the idea of a co-existence with it of any possibility of error. But would it not be still more ridiculous to imagine the great suns as leaving their places and neglecting their duties to fly toward and fuss about this little broken star? Every atom of our reason tells us that as the stately orbs bend only to law and follow that in their serene orbits, so must the fractured wanderer be subject to rule, and have swerved not from it even in the disintegration of its particles.

When we try to apply these universal deductions to the smaller world in which we have a more personal interest, we are apt to lose our calm contemplation of the all-embracing law. When it comes

to our turn to be fractured (all for our good, as we learn in time), we expect the whole universe to be leaving its place to condole with us, and to be tumbling about us in tears. But no; the grand regularity is immovable; we dash ourselves against it petulantly, and cry that it is unfeeling because we are hurt.

There is pain assuredly, and we cannot always see the beneficence of it. But that is no argument for its maleficence. Just as well might my dog attempt to prove that I am a cruel and unfeeling man because he has to miss for a day or two now and then his run out of doors. But I could not take him in with me to South Place Chapel, for instance, and so he is left at home to whimper. Why does he feel aggrieved in this manner? Because he cannot read my mind, so as to see that I am both sorry and compelled to leave him behind. When I am out of sight perhaps he will give vent to a single atheistical bark expressive of a doubt of my beneficence, and then kind Nature will put him to sleep, and he will awake, having forgotten his doubts, to greet my return. Now, we doubting the Supreme are much more ridiculous than a dog criticising his master. All the while, too, kindly Nature is wooing us, ungrateful, with her cheery sunlights and refreshing airs and tender human loves. Amid all the charms which life lavishes upon us, we hear the atheist's occasional snarl. It does not affect our own song of thanksgiving, for we feel it to be only incidental, and a mark that a certain stage of perception, a certain expanse of soul, a certain spirituality of vision, have not yet been reached. When, however, it is attempted, by dint of much word-chopping, to turn this growl into an argument, it does indeed become contemptible. We are apt to suspect mania in a cur that rejects good food that is offered to it, and bays its master incessantly without apparent cause. When the Pessimist can find for us anything in the whole system of Nature stronger than true love, we will join his ranks. Set high pure love and hatred side by side: who does not feel that the hatred cannot mar the love, or that the love may some day melt the hatred?

Few pains that come before our notice are not owing to mediate or immediate violation of the paternal law; and if we find ourselves making progress under such a system of law, we ought not to grumble at the birchings which were necessary to push us so satisfactorily onwards. Sometimes it would even seem as if the penalty imposed by natural law were not severe enough. At the present day we might question whether the dreadful increase since primitive times in the pains of maternity be severe enough for its purpose, viz., to lead society away from its vices and luxuries and

indolence to a simpler and more frugal life consonant with law, and therefore less subject to pain. When a man is found starved, we hear doubts expressed as to the goodness of God. But can we blind ourselves indeed to the fact that there was plenty within reach of the starved man, and that it was we who withheld it—we in whose breasts was implanted the beneficent brotherly feeling, just in order that such a calamity might not come to pass?

To come to the more wholesale of Nature's murders. When a great famine carries off its tens of thousands of victims; when an earthquake engulfs whole communities in an awful, inevitable chasm; when the lightning's bolt slays in cold blood and with short warning a crouching family of wretched mortals, cleaving their brains as with a flashing sword; when ghastly death snatches with horrible torment at the person of one we love;—then it is that some of us cry, in our agony, "There is no God!"

Now, multiplied murder is no more shocking in reality than a single murder. The horror of an earthquake is only more apparent—not more real—than the horror of a single death. It is really no more dreadful for a thousand to die at once than one by one. The larger calamity produces doubtless a larger impression upon us; but the shock is felt in our emotional nature only; philosophically there is no ground for it.

The more we ascend in the direction of purity and virtue, the more clearly we see signs of a spiritual life beyond this. The mere transference from this life to that cannot surely be deemed a calamity, seeing that the soul which changes its sky is still under the same divine law as before—certainly not more remote from, if scarcely appreciably nearer to, the divine sources of beneficence.

We are thus reduced to find our horrors in the protracted struggles of organic death. Here we find science and emotion slightly at variance again. The death-bed contortion which seems so terrible is merely muscular. If we had spiritual eyes to see the spirit of the dying man, we might find him calm. Recollections of evil would be the only agents able to disturb his soul's serenity. Nature, the murderer, is yet full of contrivances for alleviating pain. Insensibility, delirium, exhaustion: these either quell the fury of the angry nerves or reduce the disturbance to a mere mechanical wrestling and writhing—a creaking of the machine from whence the high consciousness has departed.

It is a necessity of our existence in a material world that there should be physical symbols of decay or change to accustom us to the idea of it. Mr. Robert Buchanan has a noteworthy poem which may

help us to appreciate the value of the apparently terrible realities of death, and of the circumstantial sufferings which attend the dying bed. The poem we speak of is entitled "The Dream of the World without Death," and treats of an imaginary time when the angel men name Death has been beckoned back, and sits a mighty shadow at the gates of heaven. So men pass out of the world without going through the process we call death. The world, the poet finds, has grown very quiet, for an oppressive mystery is upon it. There is not a kirkyard to be seen; he thirsts for a green grave, and wearies for the white gleam of a tombstone. Ever and anon he hears a cry come from a human dwelling, and feels the cold wind of a lost one's going. A man strikes his brother, and he falls, fading in a darkness. Women melt away from the side of their children still unconsciously smiling. Corruption and decay and dissolution have been abolished; yet men and women fear the very air into which their friends vanish. There are wailings for last embraces, and for closings of dead eyelids, and for slipping of flowers into shrouds, and for all the tender offices towards the dead.

Few of us probably are so blind as never to have had a glimmering sense of the value of pain as an educator. Shadow is a necessity of light. Storm shows the beauty of calm, and work of holiday. The average Atheist sees clearly the small stumbling-blocks of Nature's system, and feels painfully the cross winds that blow around us. But he does not see into the serene ether which lies always beyond the contrary currents; he is not able to correct his doubts by a large vision and light of Nature's spiritual side. The fact is, he is this perception short.

We might call life a constant creation: we are always growing. We cannot picture for ourselves, in our highest dreams, any system but what has been given us which could afford us this growth. To those who say life itself under any circumstances is a burden, we can only give for counsel, Take physic, or sleep a little longer than usual for a while, or try change of air, or work harder. See if your despair comes from Nature's laws, that man cannot alter; or from society's rules, that are subject to change. There is no doubt that we are often led to look with despondent Pessimism upon Nature, by finding ourselves subject to the depressions, ennui, and morbid pains which are in reality due to what we call civilisation.

Suppose, like Mr. Buchanan has shown us with regard to death, we should endeavour to remove pain from the world. What should we have left? A sweet dozing pleasure which would soon cease to move the pulses to joy, and would subside gradually into negation. Were the awful elements of life removed, if what remained were not

an absolute void, it would be at least a stagnance. We should lapse into lethargic sleep, removed from the beneficent stabs and stimuli of life. From being men, we should gradually retrace our steps and revert to childishness. We should, by disuse of our faculties, unwind the whole coil of experience. The soul, having nothing to feed upon, would dwindle into nonentity.

Who was it said that if he were offered the choice between Truth as a complete gift, and truth to be earned by effort, he would certainly choose the latter? Who would not agree with him? Let us have confidence. The material universe that we see has its perfect laws, and is at peace; far above the ceaseless sound of the revolutions of change there is a voice heard which cries, Death is a higher life. All the murders are no murders at all, but translations. When the moral universe shall follow its own laws with as much fidelity as the obedient orbs of heaven follow their harmonious courses—so soon as the murder of conscience ceases in the soul—there will be in the moral universe too, far above all doubts and cloudy visions, the peace that passeth understanding.

THE WISDOM OF LOVE.

"Losing daily more and more of that which is the soul and centre of humanity, conscience, and the moral law."—DR. HUTCHISON STIRLING.

THE decadence of the religious idea in modern society has often been a source of lamentation in the Jeremiads of the theologians. It is true that science and logic, with inexorable method, have weakened the hold of theology on the human mind, but they have not crippled the iron power of conscience in man; they have not been able to substitute a new force for the inner law of life.

"Philosophy is the love of wisdom; Christianity is the wisdom of love," according to Jean Paul's antithesis. It is evident, however, that popular theology has no idea of any "wisdom of love" transcending dogma. If you attack theology, asserting divine religion in the teeth of the sects, you are treated as all prophets, including Jesus himself, have been treated since the world began. Theologians, priests, and their followers can see no further than they do; and to them "the fear of the Lord," which is the *beginning* of wisdom, is the *end*. The priest always hates the prophet. He always fears philosophy, science, and even, to some extent, poetic light. Art is

tolerated when devoted to sacred objects in temples dedicated to God; but "the *earth* is the Lord's," and only the whole lustre of the universe can be sufficient consecration to HIM.

In a clever little publication, written by Jesse Gostick, the following universal views appear, viz. :—"What is a human being? Every human being is a *divine person*. The body is only a house in which the divinity dwells. As a good driver controls a horse, as a good farmer controls the produce of a farm, as a good engineer controls an engine, and as a good architect makes a building, so must every soul control the appetites of the body. Every man is his own devil." But this is heresy, if it be not positive infidelity, to priests. Why should a man, according to *their* canons, which are as the laws of the Medes and Persians, controvert *their* views of truth? Ostracise the fellow, and consign him to outer darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth! You see, clearly enough, priestcraft wants theology, *not* divine belief, to be received! The man of genius, poet or philosopher, the man of science, *can't* believe in theology. But the good man knows by experience and by conscience that religion is true. Kant, with all his deep thought, stands in awe of the moral sense in us. It is to *that* always that God appeals, and without it we are beasts.

The WISDOM OF LOVE is apparent to every soul that is willing to do true and honest work for humanity. The Religion of the Cross, then, becomes a necessity, for as soon as we try to elevate mankind, we suffer. It is impossible to go beyond mists and clouds up the mountain without incurring the scorn, ridicule, or execration of the world; sceptics and bigots alike assailing you.

Dr. Hutchison Stirling, a wise and just thinker and a true philosopher, indicates a great truth when he says that conscience "is the soul and centre of humanity." There is no other proof of God, according to the ethics of Transcendentalism. And this conscience is only preserved by love of our fellow-creatures, or the "fulfilling of the law," as religion proves. The love of wisdom is a noble thing. All sincere love of principle must preserve the poise of the faculties. All unprincipled submission to human verdicts, irrespective of God, will unhinge the life of our life. Therefore, the very Negationist is less odious to Christ than the Pharisee—the "hypocrite." Love of wisdom is the precursor of the lofty religious sentiment. "Apply thy *heart*" unto it, not only thy reason! Put *heart* into philosophy, and it is alive. The head only will not make a noble man. But the heart "is depraved above all things, and desperately wicked." So it is, without the Spirit. "It is the Spirit of the Lord that giveth

understanding;" and sceptics have it not. Spirit, heart, and reason constitute the true interior life of humanity. The spirit of the wise man is as a good pen that God can use. Be sure He writes therein. The heart of a good man will not err; the mind of a philosopher will also serve for divine ends. Spirit, mind, and heart, then, are instruments for the regeneration of society. The more we suffer nobly, the more our highest faculties are developed; and, depend upon it, were the doctrine of hell-fire true (which, in the *literal* sense, is impossible), hell would soon purify the very worst of beings, for not a pang is sent without a purpose by the Highest. What becomes, then, of the rant of fanatics as to the eternity of torments, in the light of this divine "wisdom of love?" The Universalist smiles at the petty shafts which unbelievers and materialistic theologians aim at his mission—which is, to reconcile conflicting opinions, never to shut up heaven against men.

Our friend, Dr. Hitchman, says we want "sound bodies; the soul is safe enough." Yes, dear Doctor! but the "cure of souls" can never be neglected with impunity. It is our duty to try and elevate those sad spirits which deny immortality, or do not *wish* for it, or think the possibility very remote. It is our duty to demonstrate that theology has been a failure; that the threats and thunderbolts of the Churches, like the fabled Jove's tremendous power, have done nothing to promote the true spiritual interests of mankind, which can only be consolidated by broad and sublime views of Providence, in which, as a corollary, Charity is inculcated as the divine eternal law.

R. B.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CONVERSION ?

" Even the discord in thy soul
 May make completer music roll
 From out the great harmonious whole."

MISS PROCTOR.

ALL who think at all, must perceive, in a degree more or less vague or clear, that there exists a harmony above all the conflicts and discords of the world, and that to live in accordance with that harmony is our greatest aim. Many are the ways by which men learn to know this, and by which they strive to attune their lives accordingly. Their duties and occupations, their kinds and degrees of experience, vary; the tune, as it were, of their lives must vary also; but the Central Harmony which they seek after, this does not vary.

The human race has found many forms of utterance by which to express the want of this harmony, the means of obtaining it, and the joy of possessing it. In our own day, these three conditions of mind are most frequently defined as—First, Sense of Sin—which may be explained as a state of discord with the will of God. Second, Conversion—that is, the awakening desire to know His will. Third, Eternal Life—that is, dwelling in harmony with that will. Three views, in fact, of the vast harmony which encompasses us ; which is most readily realised when we watch the beauties of nature—hardest to realise in the crowded cities and haunts of men ; and yet which is, in fact, nowhere so profoundly visible as in the human soul, when we can have a glimpse therein—a harmony which all who work conscientiously strive to represent, however inadequately, in their work. For who has not his own corner in which he may work and move so as to promote strife and hatred, or so as to help on peace and love, and add his smaller or larger mite of assistance to the needs of man ?

Sense of Sin—Conversion—Eternal Life : these three states of mind stand in close relation ; if we consider the second, it will help us to understand the other two. Conversion is commonly explained as a turning from sin to God, and this it is—but this is not the whole. We do not turn from sin to God until we have felt there is a God to whom we *can* turn. Men often tell us that their hearts naturally lead them away from God—some after one thing, some after another—and this is partly true. Naturally we are attracted by innumerable things round us—all the wants and desires of life—and we work for these things ; but naturally also we feel that there is a Power whence all these things are. But then the wants of life are so manifold, often so hard to obtain, and at all times so pressing, we must see to them if we would live ; and so the natural attractions of the earth hide the natural attractions of the unseen, until some circumstance arises by which these are prominently forced upon us ; then, oftenest by degrees, but sometimes also suddenly, at some turning-point of our life's history, falls upon us the perception of an abiding Harmony far above our daily cares, our changing desires, and passing wants. Now, this perception of harmony springs from the perception of the discord in which we have been living—from discontent with the actual. Discontent is the forerunner of improvement, and—similarly with conversion—sense of sin must precede conversion. So conversion is the turning towards holiness, resulting from sense of sin—or, in other words, the desire for harmony arising from perception of discord—and becomes the first phase of our entrance on that upward aspiration towards the Unknown Source whence all

existence flows. Then we know that in the Harmony towards which all aspirations tend consists our life eternal.

The peculiarity of the examples of conversion which are representative of the prevalent theology of the day is the form in which conversion finds expression, viz., anxiety for salvation. "What shall I do to be saved?" is its universal question—salvation the predominant idea. How then can conversion be aspiration after harmony? Are harmony and salvation the same?

Is the desire to live in personal security the same as the desire to live in tune with the universal harmony? Say, is a part the same as the whole? The whole includes the part, and so the universal includes the individual. Each one of us having influence chiefly on himself, his own action must and ought to be his first care; but if he makes that his end instead of his means, he makes salvation the chief object of his religion. If he thinks his salvation the final feature as regards himself, truly he may say he has read the Gospels by a flickering rushlight, which showed him but words here and there.

The sense of our duty towards ourselves—our soul's welfare, as it is expressed by one line of thinkers; our individual development, as it is expressed by another—being necessary to personal existence, is naturally strongly implanted in us, and may therefore easily tend towards selfishness and narrow our charity, or may cause mental contentions and tumults, hard friction of duty against duty, of self-sacrifice *versus* self-gratification or self-development—a way altogether rough and perplexing, unless we catch some rhythm of the Great Harmony of which we have each our note to keep attuned.

H. B.

AMBITION, POWER, AND WISDOM.

"THE passion for power is one of the most universal, nor is it to be regarded as a crime in all its forms. Sweeping censures on a natural sentiment cast blame on the Creator. This principle shows itself in the very dawn of our existence. The child never exults and rejoices more than when it becomes conscious of power by overcoming difficulties or compassing new ends."

So wrote Channing, in his Essay on Napoleon. Ambition, however, whether national or individual, is the cause of nearly every crime under the sun, unless it be ambition to promote human weal.

The passion for self-exaltation at the expense of others will never have anything but a corresponding end, viz., the ultimate

abasement of the votary of ambition; for there is no desire in earthly ambition to serve the interests of the race.

The national crimes for which we suffer in our generation assuredly illustrate the fact that the sins of our fathers are visited on us. Such is the universal law. It is no use to deny that whatever follies and evil deeds have tarnished the career of our predecessors, we have to endure something on account of their misdeeds. Sceptics may arraign the justice of Nature, but we cannot shut our eyes to facts.

It *does* seem very unjust that, because your father—let us say—drank wine to excess, you must have the gout. Much better for him and you that the unlucky author of your pangs had never seen wine in any form. But then you would not have been the individual that you are; and Nature has need of you in her ranks.

It is unjust and cruel, certainly, in an ambitious nation to seize the land that belongs to the savage aboriginal inhabitants, and enslave them. Equally unjust is it for the tiger and the serpent to kill their prey; but a certain amount of superabundant life must be got rid of, and the savages and helpless beings who are sacrificed to a more powerful race could do little or nothing to promote the interests of man.

Our soldiers and sailors are enslaved by an ambitious monarch, or in order that national strength may be maintained, and many are destroyed in war. But it is obvious that if there had been no war, swarms of men would have existed in excess of the means of support. "Horrible and heartrending" as war is, famine is worse.

Ambition in men and nations will never secure the permanent interests of the world; but thereby the density of the population at least is diminished. It is no use to blink the fact, that if Providence had not sent wars, famines, and diseases—if population had never been checked—we should not now have daily bread, but we should be cannibals perforce. "These things must needs be."

It is ridiculous to imagine that war will cease until we are moral and wise. To create morality and wisdom, therefore, would be the means to abolish war. But how prevent ambition in the individual and the nation? Religion may do something to repress selfishness in the man, so that he will not covet his neighbour's house, "nor anything that is his;" but all nations arrogate to themselves the right to make war.

All nations to the end of time will act on the "good old plan"—will try to hold their own, and think it no sin to cut off a piece of neighbouring territory from a weaker power. This avarice is the

principle against which humanity ought to protest; but we are all included in this common sin of the desire to be powerful at the expense of our neighbours. Here is the root of what is called by religionists an ugly name—original sin. If you take but an apple, in the base and covetous spirit, eager for enjoyment, instead of resolving to work for others, you commit a crime against society. I have no doubt, therefore, of the wisdom of the old allegory. We always go out of Paradise when we pluck some forbidden fruit; but it is best for the world in the end—much as we may individually suffer—that the order of things is not yet reversed. Power achieved by the individual—whether a Napoleon or a Cromwell—that man must be hated by many. The bitterness of hatred excited by Napoleon, and the detestation of the nation to which he belonged, in England, at one time, may now seem hardly credible: The Battle of Waterloo was fought, and the man we abhorred was punished. His misdeeds have been visited on France half a century after his death, and probably the name of Napoleon will be execrated in France itself for some generations.

Wisdom will always look for reasons in the manifestation of Providential history. It will never assert that there is no use in the afflictions to which we are exposed. We cannot penetrate to the very thoughts of God; but we *can* see "*parts of his ways.*" It is always by suffering that we learn. The absurd conclusion that devils interfere with God's divine order and mar his almighty intentions, or that the evils wherewith we struggle are not of divine appointment, cannot weigh for an instant with Universalists. The fanatic and the sceptic positively know nothing. They never *will* know anything until they accept the great doctrine of Providence in Good and Evil. There must have been Providence in the world "ere human statute purged" the various strata of existence. But the barbarous man can only perceive demons at work in the phenomena of Nature, and he thinks to propitiate the devils by a sacrifice, or some such folly. The idea of any sacrifice, save that of corrupt inclinations, as an offering to God, will never regenerate the world. No nation has the wisdom or charity to sacrifice itself when another nation is anxious to secure a prize which both covet. War is the inevitable consequence. You see two tigers then trying to wrest a bone from the enemy. The bone is won, and the vanquished tiger lies prostrate. Look at France now, thus subdued. Do you think it will be long before she attempts to have her bone again? You are very stupid if you do. The avarice of Germany in taking so much necessarily provokes a deadly struggle in the course of a few years. Should there be

another Napoleon, France may win, and dictate terms to Germany. But then the old quarrel would continue, with the same result, until nations can be induced to see that the interest of one is the interest of all, and that every war is certain to produce general misery.

Wisdom still revolves the problem how, in the event of a millennium (and I believe in "new heavens and a new earth"), Providence could dispense with our present "visitations." It does not seem possible for our earth to become so productive that no population could be too immense for its resources. Science may do wonders; yet there is a limit to its achievements. That, finally, the race of man is to become extinct, I do not deny. All analogy proves that the duration of our race is not unlimited. But we are not mere matter, and there is a true world of spirit, we may be assured. In the world to come, concerning which the inspired Prophet of Nazareth was reticent, seeing that his generation was hardly able to believe in "earthly things," we shall certainly get rid of most of the evils that we now endure. But there is no evidence whatever that there is not a degree of evil in eternity. I feel that if God "chargeth his angels with folly," their folly must be corrected. There must be many mansions indeed among the blessed. It is no part of my religion to believe that God will be satisfied with less than absolute perfection. As soon as here we attain a certain degree of moral strength, God "leads us into temptation," though he means at last to "deliver us from evil." Paul, we are told, protested against a certain "thorn in the flesh," and was told that God's strength was manifest in his weakness. So it is. There never was a crime committed by men or nations, deeply as posterity may rue the same, but Providence devises a remedy in the future, and to that end always works. "It is impossible but that we must sin" whilst we are fallible. There is no infallibility save in the Infinite. God evidently does not intend for a long time to kill Satan—or rather to transform him into "an angel of light." Satan does the work of Providence. What is the Devil but Nature? Whenever God withdraws the Spirit from a man, he is "delivered over to the Devil," or Nature, to be tempted. Christianity has been delivered over again and again to the corrupt passions of base priesthoods, as typified by Christ's temptation, and sects have continually stolen portions of the Master's raiment; yet still it triumphs, because the Wisdom above us intends that out of the egg shall come true life. The "natural body" of our present religion will die; the spiritual and immortal body—a great Universal Church—will be the Phœnix of deliverance. So far from there being Mysticism in this assertion,

it is the plainest, simplest fact of reason and revelation. There must be a divine Power, a sacred Authority, recognised by all, in Church and State, to subdue and to exorcise the demon of division. There will be no bigotry, no persecution, no strife, and no negation when the Grand Temple of the Highest—"not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens"—is erected. Enter, and say with the poet, "its greatness overwhelms thee not," for thou art a priest and a minister therein.

A TRUE UNIVERSALIST.

REV. J. SELBY WATSON'S "GEOLOGY."

THIS convicted man certainly must possess some talent, as the reader will agree with us when the following lines by the said Mr. Watson are perused, viz. :—

"But how did Life begin, and how were caused
 Its forms and changes? Did the Power that first
 Gave it commencement interpose afresh
 His moulding influence to produce each mode
 Of its much-varied form when it arose?
 Or were the seeds of every living thing,
 Both plant and animal, diffused abroad
 In the beginning, through vast Matter's mass,
 To warm to life whatever each should meet
 With fructifying atoms? Did the germs
 Of hugest whales and reptile shapes immense,
 And mighty quadrupeds, and mightier man,
 Lie dormant many an age after this globe
 Was gathered to consistence, and but then
 Begin to quicken, when at length they mixed
 With particles congenial, that awaked
 Their inert life to vigour?"

One cannot help feeling a degree of commiseration for this man; but it is *doubtful* if he was insane. The evidence of insanity is rarely complete. We once said to a poet and thinker, "Dr. Haslam asserts no one is sane but God." The rejoinder was—half in jest, half in earnest: "And I don't think *He* is, to have made such a world as this." But we could not be judges of the wisdom of the universe; and in *all* things should consider the truth of the injunction, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." Charity is wiser than Reason.

ON BOARD THE LARGE SHIP.

"All the forces of Christianity are concentrating themselves into a fervent, all-comprehending philanthropy."—CHANNING.

"My precious limb was lopp'd off;
I, when they eased my pain,
Thank'd God I was not popp'd off,
And went to sea again."—DIBDIN.

"I'll spin you a yarn about a dream that I had a long time ago, younker," quoth the elderly mate, who had once been a common sailor, but who by his integrity had worked his way up in the world, so that even the captain of the clipper in which he sailed consulted him on every occasion. He was between fifty and sixty, and he had lost his right arm by an accident on board.

THE MATE'S DREAM.

I call it a vision, like that which the Prophets had, d'ye see? It's a long time ago now, a few months after I had lost my arm. I was thinking of the pain I had endured in amputation, which tries the nerves even of a British sailor who believes in the Lord in his poor way, when off I dropped.

It was an immense ship—Noah's ark was nothing to it! Oh, the lots of passengers—black, white, yellow, and every hue that you can think of! One of them said, on a sudden: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of;"—he didn't add, "in your philosophy." I suppose he thought I was ignorant; but I've read "Hamlet."

Well, I was in the state cabin. There was the ship's captain at the head of the table, for all the world like Jesus Christ, as the painters fancy Him, at the Last Supper. Instead of talking, the captain did nothing but mend pens. I heard him say *that* was his business; and I thought every pen cried out when it was mended, as I did, poor fool, when I found myself face to face with the surgeon's knife. I'm afraid I'm *almost* a coward. Lord bless you! the pain isn't half so bad as you think it is. I dare say in dying it's much the same, and soon over!

So I went up to the captain, and said, "My lord,"—I was very respectful—"am I to manage the ship while you mend pens, my respected Sir?"

"The ship is safe enough, man," says the captain, quietly. "While I am in it, don't call out for nothing! Every passenger has

asked me to give up mending pens, to please them; but I know better, mate. Now take the pens round, and give every man one."

I did this, though I couldn't see the reason at first. We must obey orders.

First of all, an old lady without a tooth in her head took up a pen. "I don't like new pens," says she; "and, mate, the ink here is no use; it is as thick as mud; I can't write at all!"

"Didn't think you could, ma'am," I says. And says she, "Don't be rude!"

"Not for the world," I replied. "The captain *thought* you could write, and said you were a saint of an old church at Rome. But I'm sure, ma'am, you're no saint!"

"No saint, Sir?" says the lady. "You ruffian! I am a saint, in spite of your Protestant crew. I leave the ship as soon as I can, and it may founder for me."

"Don't say that, ma'am," says I; "it's wicked, and we shall be lost. We must have your saintship, and Lord love your fair face!"

"Go, profane mocker!" she cried. And I went, almost laughing then.

The next one I gave a pen to was a solemn old file in a wig. He was another sort of customer. "Mate," says he, "that old lady has no more sense than a babe unborn. Listen to me; I've got a good sermon to preach to you. But as for this pen, it's atrocious!"

"The captain mended it, Sir," says I;—very respectful I was.

"No such thing; don't tell me. The captain had nothing to do with it. Do you tell me *he* mends pens? Oh! where do you expect to go to, eh?"

"To the nearest port," I answered.

"No; you'll go to the bottomless pit, mate, if you say there's nothing too mean for the captain to do. I suppose he's *not* servant of all?"

"He says he is, Sir," I replied.

"The captain the servant of all? No, no; I know better! Take your pen somewhere else, bad man!"

"I'm *not* a bad man," says I, "and you've raised my bile. I tell you that you know nothing about it. And so, good day to *you*!"

Then a black man, with a grin on his ugly face, took hold of a pen, and said, with a laugh: "Bless your ignorance! The pen has never been made at all. It isn't a pen in reality. No one can write with it!" And the poor pen stood up, as I stand here, and began spitting in his face! So the black man looked rather ashamed,

though he added, "I told you it wasn't a pen. How can a pen spit? and there's no ink here! Take it away; there's no use in pens."

"Isn't there?" says I. "But how can you write without them? Black man with the grin, you're an ignorant ass, and the captain despises you!"

"Does he?" cries the black fellow, with a sneer. "Tell the captain, with my compliments, to be d——d!"

Then a young, pretty girl comes to me, looks at the pens, and sighs. "I fear I can't write with them, mate," says she, "they look so old. I've been at geological work with Mr. Sceptic, and we don't use them in our business. Still, I thank you."

"Try, miss," says I, "if you will be so good. It might please the captain, and it couldn't harm you."

"I don't say that it would, mate," she replied; "but whenever I use the pens that are made like these, it seems to me I can't write at all."

"Never mind, miss," says I. "Bless your pretty face! we can all only do our best. The writing will be made out by the captain. He's clever!"

"I've no doubt of *that*," was the answer; "but I doubt."

Half a dozen pens were thrown away, and I took them all back to the captain, who mended them again, until there was suddenly a great and terrible storm, and the passengers (the black man and all) fell down on their knees to the captain, and besought him to take the helm.

"I tell you, poor creatures, I'm *always* at the helm," said the captain; "but you don't believe me, because you see me here mending pens. So long as that is done, we are safe. I command you now to go into your berths and take the needful repose, relying on me."

Some did, and some didn't. Some I heard groaning all night, and very sea-sick; but there sat the captain unconcerned — mending, mending ever.

"Well," says I, at last, "captain, I like to see you mending pens; but I must tell you frankly, the big ship's in danger. There are rocks and shoals ahead, and the devil is busy!"

"In that case, come up with me," cries the captain; and on deck we went; and the poor passengers cried because he battened down the hatchways, and they thought they might be stifled. "Now, tell me," says the captain, quietly, "do you suppose I really let anyone (devil or not) meddle with my ship, and isn't it flat blasphemy to say so? The devil is a fool, and he can't hurt us! Let all of you mind your own business. Here, mate, are some more pens; let the passengers have them."

So the storm departed, and the crew had their grog, and we sang a sort of hymn ; and I called to mind what Dibdin sang long ago :—

"Thank'd God I was not popp'd off,
And went to sea again."

That was my dream ; and I don't pretend to give you the interpretation. It *does* seem to me a strange thing that no one *really* trusts the captain.

—

"An allegory, mate—an allegory !"

"Yes ; I dare say it was," quoth the mate, "and a very curious one. I am not one of the Methodist people, and don't like many prayers myself ; but after one has lost a limb, d'ye see—when a fellow at last knows what pain and loss are, he thinks of his shipmates."

"You are a good fellow, mate."

"Not I. Once I was nearly a sad drunkard ; but I lost my mother ; and, poor soul ! she loved me. And, 'Sam,' says she, when she was dying—it's forty years ago come next autumn—'do be sober, for my sake.' And her kind words, and the grief for her loss, cured me, I fancy. And here I am, an old bachelor, mate of one of the first clippers afloat—I who was a charity boy once. But I often think of the dream. I can't mend pens myself very well with one hand—maimed and helpless you might think me ; but not so. I can do my duty, and that's all that anyone can ; and I'm ready when hands are piped aloft."

V. B.

ZERO IS NO "THING" OF SOLIDS, LIQUIDS, GASES.

"A LOVER OF FREELIGHT" desires to be informed "*how*" William Hitchman, M.D., explains the origin of this world in accordance with his freelight principles of "Organic Philosophy," and our correspondent may accept this necessarily brief reply :—

The ultimate, or so-called "indivisible" atom, or solitary monad of Universal Nature, is *itself* neither more nor less, in Reason, Logic, and Science, than a simple sphere of two forces in a "reign of Law"—Attraction and Repulsion, of which our planet is the aggregate resultant, conformably to the material *particularity* of that Absolute Universal Spiritual Energy, or Divine Majestic Power, which wills *no* water on the surface of the moon, but stupendous mountains and gorgeous volcanoes in its interior—a "natural" progressive formation

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that shall yet exhibit seas and atmosphere; when it *will* present organic life, like our earth, and a possible residence for the "Lover of Freelight" and others of his descent. Each organic "soul," being bipolar, as a *self*-ponent subject, is temporarily vouchsafed its individual survey of Integrity and Corruption—"dark with excessive bright," as sings glorious old Milton, in regard to Good and Evil, of a lost Paradise; or, in his own words of exquisite poetic beauty and lofty conception of *true* spiritual feeling, "sufficient to have stood, though free to fall." It is perfectly true, that at one of the stages of his organic career, an Emperor, or a Prince, closely resembles a fish, a reptile, a bird, and the lower animals—in fact, each human being exhibits an intermaxillary bone, *characteristic of the most perfect ape*, whether destined to become highest Caucasian of Europe or lowest Negro in Africa. If Dr. Charlton Bastian *realised* lowest forms of organisms, under certain physical conditions, as stated by a "Lover of Freelight," he merely *obeyed* natural laws, ordained of God, who gives life to insects out of dust as much by "the Will of His Power," as in the creation, evolution, or "spontaneous" development of each species of animated nature—races of men and inhabitants of this globe—generally. Spirit, not Soul, is the *immortal* prerogative of the genus Homo.

MRS. CAROLINE BRAY'S APOLOGY FOR EVIL.

No doubt there is truth in Mrs. Bray's plea for Nature, but when she rests her case upon Mr. Wallace's logic, I fear her argument will be thought to have but a frail foundation. In regard to the reason of the inferior man and animal, let the enemy of the rabbit—the fox—free in the warren, and the rabbit would not acquire new powers of defence, but soon be exterminated, and would not find much reason to bless its enemy. Unquestionably the noble oak tree throws out root and branch in consequence of its battle with the storm; and so will the faculties of man in relation to his surroundings—that is, all our limbs and faculties are more or less developed by exercise, and by battling with our enemies and struggling with surrounding difficulties and the evils that beset our path; and thus we may infer "a soul of goodness in things evil," as there is beauty even in the eye of the ugly toad, who may be looked upon as a set-off and contrast enhancing the sense of the beauty of other creatures, as after a fit of the gout a man may for the moment, in the sense of relief, enjoy life with a keener appreciation of the value

of health; and pain, as well as pleasure, may tend to mould our conduct and lead us to choose what is best. And many, no doubt, will pronounce life, as Mrs. Bray does, to be more pleasant and desirable than otherwise. But we must take a broader view of things, and not conclude from the opinions of the small minority living in fair health of mind and body, and under comfortable circumstances; for, as a whole, "man is born to sorrow as the sparks fly upward," and "never is but always to be blessed," and must toil and labour for a mere pittance: hence his hope to escape from the existing evils to a happier future. Such has been the thought and judgment of the world in all times and in all countries; and can the whole world's thought in such a matter of fact and feeling be illusion—a species of madness? for so we must conclude if we accept Mrs. Bray's apology for Nature. For it is hard to believe that an almighty and purely beneficent Being would have instituted such a state of things; and hence it has been supposed that a demon stepped in to mar the good work. But what the Pantheists' view of evil is I am not aware, for I do not suppose they hold with Mr. Charles Bray in supposing an intelligent directing power in Nature, and yet ignoring anthropomorphism altogether, mental as well as physical, since, as I have said, a God not in any sense or degree anthropomorphic is contradictory and unintelligible, and would be in fact no God at all. Surely that is clear, or we are playing with words without meaning.

H. G. A.

[We insert the views of "H. G. A." again under protest.—Ed.]

"THE THREE RELIGIONS."

I. OF SACRIFICE. II. OF PRAYER. III. OF THE HEART.

I. The first religious worship (of Sacrifice) would seem to have consisted chiefly in offering gifts and presents—as substitutes for self—to be burnt, in order that the incense therefrom might ascend as a perfume to propitiate God's favour or appease his wrath; and these gifts were called *sacrifices*, because of the great self-denial that was often needed and practised when any very precious objects were thus voluntarily offered to be burnt.

II. The second religious worship (of Prayer) realises that God does not require gifts and presents to be offered and burnt to propitiate or appease and change Him, but that it is we who require the Holy Spirit of God to change us. And in order to propitiate God to

effect this change in us; long prayers (in place of the sacrifices that were previously offered to be burnt) have been offered, with much vain repetition, day after day throughout the year, and year after year, without alteration or cessation, just as much as though God either never heard them or never answered them, and was never expected either to hear or answer them in this world.

III. The third religious worship (of the Heart) realises that the mere lip service of others and the vain repetitions of long prayers are no substitute for, or gift of, the heart; and that the worship of God in spirit consists in a man's realising that he ought to offer himself—*i.e.*, his heart—as a sacrifice, not to be burnt with fire, but to be consumed with love, and devoted to effect and execute upon earth (so far as lies within his power) all that a loving and merciful Father in heaven would have beloved children and servants do, for bringing peace and good-will to reign amongst men.

Abraham taught to a family the duty of making this living sacrifice of the heart, or dedication of self, to God's service. Moses, in the wilderness, taught this duty to a nation. Jesus taught this duty to the world; and those who believe this to be their duty, and strive to act thereon, are his disciples, and He is their Christ. And such Christians walk with and commune with God in the same spirit as Abraham, Moses, and Jesus walked with God; and therefore they become the children of Abraham, the followers of Moses, and the brethren of Jesus, worshipping the Lord of Heaven and Earth as their common Father, whose name they would hallow and whose will they would do, in order that God might be known and seen to reign on earth as well as in heaven. And when men thus live the life which Jesus as a child and son of Abraham taught men they ought to live (and lived himself), looking up to the Lord of Heaven and Earth as their God and our Heavenly Father, then they will become like Christ—Christlike, Godlike—and so they will have resumed the image of God, in which man was created; and then the work of Christ, foreshadowed in the Scriptures, will have been fulfilled, and God will become all in all.

But meanwhile Jesus is an instrument to bring men to God, as Abraham and Moses are instruments to bring men to Jesus Christ, the beloved of God and man.

[We agree with the Rev. Mr. Headley on some points, and thank him for his sensible article; but the final Christ is evidently a Church that will supersede all ideas but that of the union of God and man.—Ed.]

LITERARY PENSIONS.

THERE are certain utilitarian minds to which literary pensions seem a mistake. We protest most earnestly against Utilitarianism that does not consult a large and wide spirit of humanity. If the State gave ten times as much as it doles out to literature, the best writers would be encouraged to persevere in those departments of thought (and they are in reality the most important) which practical men ignore. It is to be feared that, as a rule, "indirect crooked ways" have often been the means of procuring these pensions; and men "too proud" to be importunate, after a life of toil, go down to the tomb unrewarded. "Too proud to importune" the haughty, desert may go and starve.

It seems that Miss Hunt, the daughter of the poet Leigh Hunt, has recently died, and £75 a year by her death is at the disposal of the Government. On whom is it to be conferred? Perhaps on a lady. Perhaps on the daughter of a distinguished man who was not too proud to solicit substantial recognition of his services to literature. Still, we think the actual living merit, especially if the claimant be old and poor, should be considered first. Frequently we hear of a person who can get a thousand pounds for a work receiving a literary pension whilst still in the enjoyment of those powers which delight the public. This is not fair to other, older writers. One hardly likes to specify individuals as proper recipients of the limited bounty referred to. There are unquestionably many, old and weary with care and work, to whom the Government or the public should be considered bound to contribute something as a scanty provision for the winter of life. Suppose there is a man of real poetic gifts—a man who has done something for the exaltation of our national literature—a philosophic and ardent student, who has spent a lifetime in the advocacy of grand and imaginative ideas—who is old and without adequate means;—that poet and metaphysician should no longer be neglected. Such a man is our contributor, Mr. Heraud.

We have no wish to say harsh things of popular writers whose very pleasant but shallow lucubrations will be forgotten in ten years or less. "Verily *they* have their reward." But the "vertebrated" thought of an almost organic thinker, the unity of whose conceptions thinkers like himself have gladly confessed, is one of the army of progress, and progressive minds are bound to urge such claims on the consideration of those in authority.

Whatever the imputation on our motives—and we do not deny a personal interest in such a man—we shall not be deterred from asserting our conviction that John A. Heraud—now more than seventy—is entitled to a pension.

Reviews.

A MANUAL OF ANTHROPOLOGY, &c.*

BY CHARLES BRAY.

DOUBTLESS, the majority of readers of FREELIGHT need not to be in any wise enlightened as to the peculiar *views* of the author of the work thus denominated, and which, entertaining as a novel, purports to give the British public neither more nor less than a veritable handbook about themselves; or, as our German friends have it, “System der *Empirischen* Anthropologie, oder der Lehre von der des menschlichen Geistes.” At all events, we are assured that it is the “Science of Man, based on modern research;” but the lovers of Philosophy here or elsewhere, we think, will be apt to regard the production, even in the great Fatherland itself, as much *too* exclusively *Handbuch der Psychischen Anthropologie*—certainly not *the* Spiritual Philosophy of Man. Mr. Bray has already favoured us with his opinions of “Necessity,” the mental “*correlates*,” as he supposes them to be of physical Force, and, further, taught the inquiring mind how to “educate the feelings,” &c. In fact, we remember to have read similar words and phrases so long ago as the year 1841, and felt then, as now, that it is a misfortune, if not a fault, for an able writer and shrewd observer to *contract* his thoughts, as it were, in a material *network* of mere anatomical and phrenological speculations as to the mental nature or psychical attributes of nervous matter. Thirty years have been added to the history of Humanity, and we find ourselves breathing the atmosphere of 1872—re-marking in sorrow, not in anger, at the same time, that the sage of Coventry has not yet emerged from the cloud *without* a silver lining, but, incomparably worse, “makes no sign”—it hangs about him still; and if not the equivalent of a millstone to his fleshy mind, such persistent darkness

* London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer. 1871.

of distorted medium—so extremely materialistic, and, as we think, unfairly “spiritual”—needs the application of purer and more ennobling *freelight*; for surely the true Science, really conversant about all those grand and gorgeous—nay, rather, great and good—“inferences” of which he treats in the work before us, is to *him*, and ever must be, in such painful circumstances, a veritable sphere of *unknown* being—seeing that known manifestations of this department of our constitution are *only* deducible from that righteous kind of Ontology which is known, in the world of intellectual Philosophy, as Metaphysics Proper. From hence flow, to each thirsty soul, as from a fountain of refreshing water in otherwise pathless groves—

“All that is most beauteous imaged there
 In *happier* beauty; more pellucid streams
 In ampler ether, a diviner air,
 And fields invested with purpureal gleams.”

Matter is said now to be just as mystical and transcendental as Spirit. What vile philosophical mendicancy! In justice to the learned author, we introduce him at once in *propria lingua*, in order that he may speak for himself. “Strike if you will, but hear,” exclaimed Themistocles. “Animal bodies are machines for the conversion of mind *which has become automatic*,” &c. (p. 253); or, as Huxley says, “Eloquence is the body resolved into carbonic acid, water, and urea”—in other words, each human adult excretes about an ounce of pure “eloquence” daily! Do we mock? Far, indeed, from it; urea, *alias* “eloquence,” is separated from the blood of man by the kidneys, and is the principal outlet for the nitrogen of the organic body, after the materials which compose human tissues have experienced oxidation under the influence of respired air. *Democritus risu pulmonem agitare solebat*. “The world began,” Mr. Bray assures us, “scientifically, in a nebulous mist, and man is the nebulous matter of life.” “In the beginning,” he protests (p. 226), each living function was an animal—“all stomach”—part was added to part, functions then *descend* to one animal after another, and afterwards rise in the scale of being, until, alas! they lose their voluntary character, and become “automatic,” even as now—Shade of Pythagoras!—“functions of brain pass into instincts.” Such is the physical history of mankind! *It involves nothing more than self-acting machinery*. Man, we are taught, as the highest, best, and latest achievements of the physical sciences, is “one hundred thousand years old,” and the automatic machine yclept Nature has been only “one hundred million years” in making this two-legged animal

without feathers! In this event, we need no Diogenes to pluck a cock and bring *him* into the School of Plato; but adding to the ancient definition of "broad flat nails," the truly questionable "discoveries" of modern research—namely, our lofty ascent (not "descent") from hairy quadrupeds furnished with long tails and pointed ears—we realise, it may be, a Cadmean victory; but, withal, the recent teaching of the Science of Man as *developed* in the last exposition of Anthropology, A.D. 1871, and the "*mortal*" privilege, however transient, of returning thanks to advanced thinkers in an *ex parte* school of intense Materialism for glad tidings of growing knowledge, which enable the lover of God and Immortality to droop his angel-wing for ever; no stone has been left unturned: *Ecce Homo!* Here is Bray's Man! Having learned the true "origin" of each species of animated being on this the third planet in order from the sun, what is their *coming* destiny? "Rest and be thankful," as Earl Russell might say? Nay, first-class manure; or, to quote our author, whose story of adventures is romantically interesting, "Death to man is *extinction*—extinction of his individuality, personal identity, the *ego* which is the centre of the universe," &c. (p. 253). What prodigious labour on the part of Nature for so small a mouse! Writers on Spiritual Philosophy, from the earliest period to the present time, AVAUNT! We end, as we began, in fraternal esteem, and would gladly extend our sincere dissection of this book did space permit; as it is, "No remedy; the rain kept driving."

W. H.

THE NEW ERA OF ECLECTICISM.

This magazine, edited by Dr. Sexton, contains articles that will interest not only the medical profession but the general public. We have much pleasure in extracting, from the number for February, the following, from an article on "Medical Conservatism":—

"In chemistry, in electricity, in natural philosophy, and in every other branch of science, new discoveries are being made almost daily, which in nine cases out of ten admit of some practical application to the ordinary affairs of life. Progress goes rapidly forward, waving aloft her banner, upon which the word 'Exoelsior' is written."

"The New Era," which is wonderfully cheap, is published by Mr. Burns.

THE BAND OF FAITH MESSENGER,

EDITED BY GOODWYN BARMBY,

Is a singular publication, the object of which is to promote organised efforts for the regeneration of society. We admire Goodwyn Barmby, and are happy to take his hand of fellowship. We extract the following from an article called "Finality in Religion," by the Editor, who seems to be a mystical Pantheist and Universalist :

"There is no finality in religion, as a whole. Ever fresh developments spring from it ; a constant evolution goes on beneath its inspiration. But to every special process there may be allowed an end, in the sense of accomplishment and consummation ; and such process remains one of the great factors of the past in the eternal progress of the future. It is in this sense that the Messianic Idea is exhausted when it is completely realised, while the Divine Idea is for ever inexhaustible. While a dispensation may be perfected—while a mission may be accomplished—while a special process may be so fully realised that it may be considered final, and need not be attempted again—there is no finality in religion itself. . . . Little minds take little methods, and fail as literally as they literally regard things. Except through a wide sweep of events, we cannot assign its character or destiny to a dispensation. Things that swiftest grow, swiftest disappear. Perpetuity is the sign of perfection, and the noblest name of God is—the Eternal."

Mr. Barmby is a man of noble ideas, and we wish him success in his undertakings. Probably the world, however, is hardly ripe for the reception of religious truth so wide and profound.

 Correspondence.

DR. WHITAKER'S "DISPUTATION."

To the Editor of FREELIGHT.

SIR,—I have lately met with the following curious passage in the work of a divine who spent his life in defence of the Church of England against Romanism. I think it merits reprinting in your journal. D.

"There are some who imagine that the whole Old Testament perished in the captivity. This suspicion perhaps arose from considering that when the Temple was burnt, all that was in it must have been consumed in the same conflagration. Hence they believe

that the sacred volumes of Scripture must have been destroyed in the flames; but that after the captivity, Ezra, instructed by the Holy Spirit, published them afresh, as it were again recovered. In this opinion was Clemens Alexandrinus (*Strom.*, lib. i.) and Irenæus (lib. iii. c. 25), who writes thus:—‘In that captivity of the people which took place under Nebuchadnezzar, the Scriptures being impaired, when, after the expiration of seventy years, the Jews returned to their own land, and after that again in the time of Artaxerxes, King of the Persians, God inspired Ezra, who was of the tribe of Levi, to renew all the discourses of the prophets, and restore to the people the law which had been given them by Moses.’ Similar are the words of Leontius (*De Sectis*, Act 2):—‘Ezra, coming to Jerusalem, and finding that all the books had been burnt when the people were taken captive, is said to have written down from memory those two and-twenty books of which we have given a list in the foregoing place.’ Isidorus (*De Officiis*) and Rabanus Maurus (*De Inst. Cleric.*, c. 54) write to the same effect. They affirm, therefore, two things: one, that the whole sacred and canonical Scripture perished in the Babylonian captivity; the other, that it was restored in its integrity by Ezra, instructed and inspired in a wonderful manner by the direct agency of God.”—“*A Disputation on the Holy Scripture, against the Papists, especially Bellarmino and Stapleton, by Wm. Whitaker, D.D.* Cambridge: Parker Society. Translated and edited for the Parker Society by the Rev. Wm. Fitzgerald, A.M.”

In reference to the above subject, there is a curious passage in the Second Book of Esdras, as comprehended in the Apocrypha, which may well “startle and waylay” the thinking reader. It is contained in the 14th chapter of the book. In this Esdras states that “the law is burnt, therefore no man knoweth the things that are done of Thee (God), or the works that shall begin.” Like Moses of old, however, Esdras, being in a certain field, heard a voice from a bush calling him by name, whereupon a significant colloquy ensues. After the words above quoted, Esdras proceeds to further address the Lord as follows:—“But if I have found grace before thee, send the Holy Ghost into me, and I shall write all that hath been done in the world since the beginning, which were written in thy law, that men may find thy path, and that they which will live in the latter days may live.” Esdras is then directed to withdraw himself from the people for forty days, and to select five scribes who are ready to write swiftly, and with them to return into the field. He does so, and then proceeds as follows:—“So I took the five men as he commanded me, and we went into the field, and remained there. And the next

day, behold, a voice called me, saying, Esdras, open thy mouth, and drink that I give thee to drink. Then opened I my mouth, and behold, he reached me a full cup, which was full as it were with water, but the colour of it was like fire. And I took it and drank; and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit strengthened my memory. And my mouth was opened, and shut no more. The Highest gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote the wonderful visions of the night that were told, which they knew not: and they sat forty days, and they wrote in the day, and at night they ate bread. As for me, I spake in the day, and I held not my tongue at night. In forty days they wrote two hundred and four books. And it came to pass, when the forty days were fulfilled, that the Highest spake, saying, The first that thou hast written publish openly, that the worthy and unworthy may read it. But keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be wise among the people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge. And I did so."

The Douay version of the Roman Catholic Bible does not contain these two books of Esdras, which are supposed to form the third book of Ezra; neither were they translated by Luther; but they are included in the Septuagint. The topic is one that demands investigation, and we should be obliged to any competent contributor who could furnish information on it, to do so.

"WOMAN'S RIGHTS."

To the Editor of FREELIGHT.

SIR,—I am sorry to see in your "Notices to Correspondents" that you are not for "strong-mindedness" in women. Can you really blame those ladies to whom that appellation is applied, for their efforts to free their sex from the state to which we have been brought by our weak submission to masculine rule? It is of no use to veil one's eyes to the fact: married women in England *are* slaves as far as the law can make them so; they have not even any *maternal* rights; they have nothing of their own—no responsibility, no hope of improvement, be they ever so unhappy. Girls are like sheep, who are obliged to enter the slaughter-house (matrimony) because no other way is open to them. I think our weak-mindedness accounts for the small esteem in which we are held. If we had held fast to the independent position to which every human being has a right, there

would not be so many women kicked or brained to death by their husbands, with no other result than three months' imprisonment to the murderer. Our magistrates follow the Mosaic precept: "If a man smite his maid (wife), and she die under his hand, he shall be punished; but if she continue a day or two, he shall not be punished, for she is his money."—Yours sadly (though not for myself),

AN ENGLISH WIFE.

[We shall not add "under protest" here; but we disagree with our correspondent.—ED.]

BETWEEN FREETHOUGHT AND CALVINISM.

To the Editor of FREELIGHT.

SIR,—The notion that we are created for enjoyment is obviously false. Nature implants certain propensities in us, which we indulge, usually to our detriment. If we refuse to indulge the same, Nature makes us suffer. What possible use in the agony that a child endures in teething, or in the pangs of childbirth? Were the old theology true (which of course I don't believe), how much better that the fatal apple in the Garden of Eden should never have hung on the tree! The Shakers consider (absurdly enough) that our first parents were forbidden to propagate, and their sin of disobedience has been visited on us; but surely, in that case, sex should not have been created? I deny benevolence in Nature. The sole thing that Nature seems resolved to do is to extract from us all the work whereof we are capable. Nature cares for us about as much as a boy does for a donkey when he beats the brute. A friend of mine recently wrote these words—callous enough, it may be said:—"When a man dies, let him go to heaven, and God bless him! or to hell, and be damned!" Seriously, I see no reason, even as a Freethinker, why the hell-fire doctrine should not be true; and I have wavered between absolute Atheism and Orthodoxy. Anyhow, Deism is ridiculous. It accounts for nothing; and I really think Calvin is more rational than Voltaire, Paine, and Voysey. I stick to the cruel facts of Nature.

ALMOST A CALVINIST.

THE SCEPTICAL POSITION.

To the Editor of FREELIGHT.

SIR,—The divine order of the world is obvious. This globe is inconceivably and ludicrously small in Nature's immensity. Man is of no more consequence, in the infinite scale of Nature, than a

butterfly is to us. I am a Theist, and do not deny the immortality of the soul; but I own I cannot arrive at *certainty* thereupon. But for the belief in a Creator, it is impossible to think we can be of any importance in the system of the world. The universe is infinite. Our earth is a grain of sand in that infinity. It appears to me that Nature is ever busy, forming new worlds. Shall everything pause because of our puny existence? According to Darwin, we are but developed apes; and probably there are spirits immensely above us.

It appears to me that Darwin's theory, if true (and I perceive that clever lady Miss Eyton seems to think it is), throws some light on the subject. We suffer and die; but Analogy suggests that, as the ape is the result of an inferior existence to its own, and as we have reason to suppose that from Protoplasm all existence comes, there is a clear probability that a race of spiritual beings may be evolved from humanity. Whether God's plan will be consummated on this globe or hereafter, I know not. I am not anxious to survive as a spirit unless I can be of use somewhere. The sceptic who sees no use in anything is illogical in arguing for scepticism. If there be a God, he surely must know what is best for all. G. S. P.

The Confessional.

[We are about to introduce a rather singular feature in FREELIGHT. We find among all classes the want of Confession. Opposed as we are to the Roman Catholic Institution—so called—we think that Confession is good for the soul; and we invite our readers to assist each other by counsel such as experience may provide.]

“A Half-Sceptical Believer” writes:—“I can't think half the world will be condemned for ever. May not the Roman Catholic doctrine of Purgatory be true?” &c.—Perhaps this world is Purgatory.

“A Jew,” who inclines to be a Christian, but is half a Free-thinker, singularly enough doubts the soul's eternity. He considers immortality “a mere dream.”

“A Lady” thinks we ought to do something in the way of providing some remedy for Prostitution; and informs us, “in great grief,” that her niece, a governess, has become “a street-walker.”

“A Widow” writes:—“My husband was a sceptic, and is dead. He was once a Roman Catholic, and when we were married I was a Swedenborgian. He was a fine and very noble-spirited thinker; and

I cannot but think, whatever priests may say to the contrary, he is now happy. Surely the doctrine of Universalism is true."—What other hope have we?

"A Former Secularist" declares that he became disgusted with secularistic ideas some years ago, and is now in the Unitarian ranks, a member of Mr. Martineau's congregation."—We highly respect the unquestionable talents of Mr. Martineau, and congratulate "A Secularist" sincerely.

"A Wretched Wife" complains of a husband, "a man of genius, who is a cynic, and quarrels with every friend." He is "of an unhappy temper, and is suspicious of the motives of everyone; yet he affects to be religious."—"That way madness lies." Poor wife!

"A Fallen One."—We cannot advise. The Stage may be very well, especially as you now "do not dread censure from anyone." But be assured there are modest women among actresses, and such antecedents as yours are against you, except in the lowest walks of a profession that *ought* to be perfectly reputable. We have no theatrical influence, and doubt whether, at thirty, you would succeed.

"An Indignant One," who attacks Mr. M'Grigor Allan's article, maintains the thesis that anything is preferable to marriage with a man who insults her sex. She has lately broken with a lover who is a devout Catholic; and, being "one of Mr. Voysey's admirers," she despises "Faith."—Learn wisdom. "Apply thy heart" to it.

"A Man" who says he is "a victim to the tyranny of passion" must be a man. We certainly should not advise him to become "a priest of Rome." How can he imagine that merely joining a priesthood would secure immunity from evil?

To Correspondents.

"H. G. A." writes: "You are almost as wild as — against Atheists, who are a very good and happy people, as far as I have known them. We judge and misjudge too much through our special constitutional states and leanings." Still, with all charity, we think the path of the Atheist is *hard*, and pity him, while we protest against a degrading *no*-system, with its chaotic and irrational dogmas.

"J. E. L." considers, "When women have succeeded in finding their true position in life, and when their eyes have been opened to the necessity for real and earnest work, men will then see women in their true character; they will cease to regard them as nonentities. The difference between men and women, I believe, can be explained by education," &c. . . . Still,

surely men will never occupy the sphere of women, nor women that of men. The influence of women should be moral and spiritual—domestic, and *not* political; but they must be more and more man's solace and aid.

We recently received a letter from a correspondent, who wrote, "I don't think Dickens, any more than Thackeray, believed in a future. I wonder where you expect to go to?" &c. There is no reason to suppose Dickens disbelieved in a future state; and Thackeray wrote (admirably):—

"Forgive me if in all Thy works
I see no hint of damning,
And think there's faith among the Turks,
And hope for e'en the Brahmin.
Cheerful my mind is, and my mirth,
And kindly is my laughter;
I cannot see this smiling earth,
And think there's hell hereafter."

We go (says Swedenborg) into the state of our love. We *must* do so—but not for ever (as Swedenborg conceived). There must be many states ("many mansions") before we reach the ultimate home.

We find ladies in general fastidiously delicate about the condition of certain outcasts. There is a morbid fear in women that if we only *mention* the great "social evil," we are committing a gross error. Even the actual Free-thinkers shrink from the discussion of that painful subject. But Christ conversed with this class of the community. We want a body of men, and of women too, willing to sacrifice themselves in order to redress the evils that afflict society. Oh, the hypocrisy of "virtue!" Oh, the *caut* of "respectability!"

"AN AGONY" will not be printed. Our correspondent mistakes **FREELIGHT**. It is a man's magazine.

"An Atheist" is mad, surely, when he says the Infinite *can't* be a Being! Infinity and Being are one. The Editor of **FREELIGHT** desires to be free from *all* sectarian influences. He repudiates the desire to blink the truth and substitute shadows for substance. The want of the world is a manly hope in God, and the conviction that "His service is perfect freedom." **FREELIGHT** ought to be impartial. Let us declare, our sympathies are with the grand ideal thought; but let the Materialists and Negationists say their say.

"A Sceptic in Virtue."—Is he "credulous of vice?" We oppose every form of negation; our simple standpoint is, "Love of God, manifested by love to man."

"A Correspondent" asks what we think of the "Theists, Unitarians, Mystics." They are branches of the great tree of life. When they assert they are the trunk, it is obvious they imitate the Papacy. Christians and the men of negations alike fulfil the Creator's will. "There is no Last nor First."

An eminent theologian (whose name we are not at liberty to give) has thus written to the Editor, viz. :—"I have looked through **FREELIGHT**, and see evidence of the fairness with which you open its pages to opinions deviating on either side from your own. But, under management ever so just,

these discussions, as carried on by ordinary men, seem to me to give no light, and to foster some of the least eligible features of character, and they affect me with the same repulsion with which I turn from the religious newspapers. They belong indeed to the same stratum of intellect and taste" (here we cordially agree with our able correspondent), "only followed out to the antipodes. I have not the slightest shrinking from searching scrutiny of ultimate questions by a Spinoza, a Kant, a Herbert Spencer. But those who are most forward to enlighten us on these things in our weeklies and monthlies would be better employed, as it seems to me, in learning from the great masters exactitude of thought and purity of language, than in trying new experiments with the immature resources at their command." We are aware of the remarkable talent and logical acumen of the very brilliant scholar and thinker whose strictures we reply to. But *all truth is never to be found* if we do not seek to fathom the heart as well as the head of our era. It is said, "the heart is depraved above all things," though our correspondent may modify that theological view; but the influence of the heart is enormous—that of the head comparatively small. Charity, charity, and again charity!

An impertinent person, writing from a large town in the North, is pleased to be facetious about FREELIGHT. He considers certain metaphysical articles in the magazine absurd and unintelligible. We doubt not they *are* so to this individual. "Did you call me a 'windbag?'" asked a conceited political personage of a thinker. The Editor knows "windbags" from trumpets.

ERRATA.—In No. 4 of FREELIGHT, page 286, line 22, add the following—"And they who strive to become like Christ and to do his work are Christians." Page 313, line 4, instead of "hosts will follow the eagles," read "eagles with their hosts of followers will seek," &c.

We rejoice to find our own peculiar views stated by Mr. Heraud this month, in the lines we annex, viz. :—

"And is the kingdom of our God on earth,
Wherein the wise and good shall each one be
A KING AND PRIEST IN ONE THEOCRACY."

"A Materialist."—We utterly oppose your horrid idea that we suffer to no end, and that death is simply annihilation. The resurrection of the body and literal hell-fire we deny, because God is a SPIRIT, and we are formed in the very image of God. Try and think wisely.

"A Lover of Truth."—Yes; the words you name, "Truth and the Universe," are as high as any; but the Pantheistic Universalist names God with reverence, and he will not own that he is "a becoming," for he is a Being. We cannot return MSS.

"A Lady who Loves Faith" is informed we *entirely* agree with her about the inspiration of the Bible; but throughout "the letter killeth," just as the little truth of science two centuries ago can only be called absurd by our Scientists; and *our* science will be ridiculous to our posterity.

Several contributions postponed.

