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ADDRESS

BY

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(MRS. JOHN BIDDULPH MARTIN),

AT

ST. JAMES'S HALL, PICCADILLY,

24th March, 1893.

SYNOPSIS.

OF all the subjects which engage the attention of scientific inquirers, none is of such vital importance as the one which enables us to understand our birth and being. With the great advances in science of the last half century, we are gradually completing the history of the various races which inhabit and have peopled this globe. From a simple cell to the complete being, the origin, development, and progress of man are gradually becoming revealed. The difficulties which bigotry and ignorance have put in the way of a proper understanding of man are being overcome, and the mysterious awe which enveloped the subject is being dissipated by scientific research. We no longer look upon man as something apart in the universe, as a being specially created and consecrated. We recognize our animal origin; we dissect the various organs of the body; we study the functions of these organs; we dilate upon the passions and desires to which they give rise; we speculate upon the ultimate use to which they may be put. As we acquire a clearer and more definite knowledge of our animal origin and a knowledge of organisms lower in the organic scale, the

question suggests itself, in what are we similar to and in what do we differ from these lower beings? We have organs analogous to those of other animals, we exhibit fear, rage, aversion, love, curiosity, wonder, sympathy, fidelity, pain, pleasure, æsthetic feeling, as do they. In fact our passions, desires, instincts, have their foundation in, and are dependent upon, our animal organs. When an animal can put to various use a single organ, it is said to have advanced in organization; when it loses the use of any organ which it formerly possessed, it is said to have retrograded, degenerated. It is the use to which man has adapted his various organs which give him such a high position in the organic scale. His various senses have become modified, specialised in a thousand different ways.

But does this modification of structure give him the right to be called other than animal? Passions, desires, instincts, are dependent upon animal organs, but, it may be asked, is there not evidence that man does exist apart from his organs, although imprisoned in this house of flesh: is not the *ego* independent of nerves which vibrate, of muscles which contract, of the blood which circulates, carrying its living food? "Is man's nature not his blood?" No, certainly not, but men's blood is their nature. Theophrastus (born 372 B.C.), in his treatise on Ethics, discusses whether a man's character can be changed by disease, and whether virtue depends upon bodily health, and to-day we know that it is so, but we do not act upon our knowledge. It is the malnutrition of the various tissues of the body that causes deterioration of the individual, acquired and hereditary. The nature is controlled by the blood, not the blood by the nature. The man suffering from heart disease, the melancholic, the hysteric, the joyous optimist, each in his turn betrays to the physician the organ that is diseased. From the innermost fibres of the central cord and brain to the skin outside and the chemicals circulating within the blood, influences which affect one or all have their corresponding psychical effect. A healthy soul depends upon a healthy mind in a healthy body. The most refined and elevated emotion has its foundation in some animal organ. Pleasures and pains are derived from the satis-

faction of man's organic needs as is the case with other animals.

Evolution of the animal into the man, how much does this convey to the thinker? Man was not then always human: when did he first deserve the title of human being? He was an animal like other animals, but there came a time when man commenced to know good and evil, when he could *control* his animal instincts in accordance with his perception of good and evil. It is when self control is developed that a man or woman will not yield to animal inclinations, at the expense of bringing misery to others. The human is developed when a man or woman can subordinate his or her desires to a higher good. "I will not yield to temptation" may be said to be the first answer given by the human being to the animal being.

It is a well-known physiological law that the animal man re-asserts himself very powerfully when the human has ceased to exert a restraining influence. Man, civilised man, humanised man, starts with the same organic passions as other animals, but in him they have become refined, elevated, exalted. He is capable of experiencing pleasures and pains of the intellect which animals cannot experience. This is a distinguishing feature of a human being, to be able to take pleasure in those things which appeal entirely to the intellect. In a low order of beings only those things excite pleasure which satisfy animal needs. The highly organised sensitive human being who is at the top of the organic scale appreciates and derives pleasure from the cultivation of the beautiful—from poetry, music, painting, architecture, sculpture, and other humanising pursuits. In progressive higher forms of human beings the pursuit of happiness will be still more idealised. Degraded individuals see beauty in, and derive pleasure from those things which are degraded; elevated human beings take pleasure in those things which elevate. Each thing will be appreciated according to the standard of the individual. The ideals of religion have exerted a powerful influence in developing the human man, but there were other forces at work bringing about progress in the organization of animal man anterior to religion.

Darwin has, in his great theory of natural selection, supplied an explanation of how progress in evolution was attained. He endeavoured to show why lower forms of animal life give way to the higher. Natural selection is based on the survival of the fittest. Nature selects in each condition those which are fittest to survive. Where there was extreme cold those

survived who were best able to resist cold, and those individuals which survived would be those by whom the species would be perpetuated. Where enemies were dangerous, those who were best able to defend themselves would survive, and those who survived would be able to procreate their kind. These being attacked by similar enemies, who had improved in their turn, only the strongest and best able to defend themselves would again survive. Where food was scarce, those who were the most cunning and clever would survive. So each organ, each attribute, would here become perfected, not from a pre-meditated design, but because nature eliminated those who were not fit to cope with their environment. As the environment changed it produced corresponding physiological changes. The animals who were not thus modified would not have survived.

With the acceptance of this theory, many have jumped to the conclusion that progress is the natural order of things, that everything must needs move in the direction of progress. Hence it is believed that only the fittest survive. Now Darwin himself, quoting Wallace, argues that man, after he had partially acquired those intellectual and moral faculties which distinguish him from the lower animals, would have been but little liable to bodily modifications through natural selection or any other means. For man is enabled through his mental faculties to keep, with an unchanged body, in harmony with the changing universe. He has great power of adapting his habits to new conditions of life. He invents weapons, tools, and various stratagems to procure food and to defend himself. When he migrates into a colder climate he uses clothes, builds sheds, and makes fires; and by the aid of fire, cooks food, otherwise indigestible. He aids his fellow-men in many ways, and anticipates future events. Even at a remote period he practised some division of labour.

The lower animals, on the other hand, must have their bodily structure modified in order to survive under greatly changed conditions. They must be rendered stronger, or acquire more effective teeth or claws, for defence against new enemies; or they must be reduced in size so as to escape detection and danger. When they migrate into a colder climate, they must become clothed with thicker fur, or have their conditions altered. If they fail to be thus modified, they will cease to exist. But, although Darwin and Wallace agree that civilised man will be little modified by natural selection, it does not seem altogether

clear that man retains an unchanged body with a changing environment. Although man can, by his intellect, as Wallace states, protect himself against cold by building fires, his physical condition is modified by these changes; he is not so hardy, his power of endurance is weakened, and, in his sensitive state, he is as much modified as the animal who acquires thicker and coarser fur in colder climes.

Nor are we content thus to debar Natural Selection from acting freely, but we build hospitals, asylums, and poor-houses; and medical experts do all they can to keep alive the unfit brought together in these institutions, and destined, should they survive, to perpetuate a deteriorated race. It is a mistake, moreover, to imagine that Natural Selection always acts in the direction of progress. A negro survives in the interior of Africa where the European succumbs: is the negro, therefore, the fittest to survive? An unfavourable environment may foster the undesirable individual whereas it would kill the ideally fittest. Therefore, the individuals who would survive to procreate their kind in this unfavourable environment would be those whom we might consider, from the ideal standpoint, the unfit. We are very careful about the soil and the aspect in which we put a choice tree or plant, but common or hardy trees and plants will grow and multiply without skill and care. Are they, however, the fittest to survive? Whether certain individuals will survive and others succumb in certain conditions will depend upon the power of resistance to, or affiliation with the particular surroundings which those individuals possess. The man of coarse fibre and low mental capacity will survive in low and debasing conditions which would kill the highly-developed sensitive man. The former therefore, surviving and multiplying, would not depend upon his fitness in the direction of progress.

To understand this fact a little better, it is only necessary to ask what determines the environment in our modern industrial system? Money—the purchasing power. Of a dozen men who are working at a trade, one will evince superior talent and receive higher wages than the other eleven, because superiority should be rewarded. Assuming that he receives three pounds a week or more because of his superior ability, and on this he supports his family, the other eleven would only receive a-half or third of this sum, on which they will have to support as large families or probably larger ones. Now what kind of surroundings will these eleven families have? In

the second generation this one superior man who has enabled his family to have superior advantages will be represented by four or five children, whereas the other eleven who have had the disadvantages of an inferior environment, will be represented by fifty or more. Moreover, in a polity ruled by a majority vote, the latter will determine who shall and who shall not be put into office. In a social system which gives superior advantages to the few who acquire the wealth, how does humanity benefit as a whole if those individuals do not perpetuate themselves? Will the standard of humanity be raised into progressively higher and higher forms? If wages are low and money scarce, the majority will be forced to eat inferior food, wear insufficient clothing, to live in insanitary dwellings or shops, or to work at trades prejudicial to health. If the persons who are overworked and underfed are those who are continuing their kind, the quality of the race must necessarily deteriorate.

But apart from the fact that comparatively the few control the wealth, and are therefore enabled to command the superior environment, there are other forces at work determining the survival of the unfit. The underfed are more fertile than the overfed. It is significant that plants grown on poor soil run to seed. Cultivation has the effect of modifying the reproductive system, and highly cultivated plants have to be reproduced by cuttings, as they become otherwise sterile. Nevertheless, if such plants be neglected and deprived of excessive nutrition, they show a tendency to regain their former function. Such rich fruits as the banana, pomegranate, orange, etc., are sterile, yet poor specimens will yield seeds. Gardeners even check the nutrition in order to have large or abundant fruit, *i.e.*, to stimulate reproduction—hence, for example, they root-prune their apple trees. If plants of a temperate climate be transferred to a tropical one, it is necessary to cut or mutilate their stems and tap-roots to make them yield seed.

Not only have the rich the superior environment which would insure the survival of the fittest, but the very power which money gives them of commanding rich and luxurious food contributes to sterility among them.

The overworked and underfed portion of the community have the largest families. Statistics show that among rich leisured classes, families are comparatively small, whereas among the poor, families are large. It has been remarked that with animals, those feeding on poor pasture were more fertile than stall-fed animals which were

supplied with abundant food. In poor overcrowded dwellings the relations between the sexes are less conventional, and the stress of poverty favours early marriages, thus insuring the survival of those who from an ideal point of view are unfit. The prudent or more highly developed do not marry at early ages, and if their marriages are too long deferred, they are sterile.

Progress in evolution is accomplished by the elimination of the unfit, but how can the unfit be eliminated until it be ascertained who are the fit? When we have some conception of the ideally fittest, of the ideal man and woman who are influenced by ennobling beliefs, high aspirations and godlike motives, we may then ask whether these are the individuals who are surviving and propagating their kind? If we find that this is not the case, we may know we are not moving in the direction of human progress. The modern scientific breeder accomplishes as much in a decade as nature would achieve in a thousand years. And so might the scientific adjustment of society accomplish in a quarter of a century as much towards uplifting and improving humanity as nature backed by *laissez faire* doctrinaires would perform in centuries. The Ribstone pippin, the Queen Isabella strawberry, the luscious peach, the Maréchal Neil rose, the modern race horse, the Jersey cow are not the result of blind chance. How long would it have taken natural selection to arrive at this perfection? If the horticulturist or the breeder, on the assumption that all roses or all horses are equal, had not picked out the best for his purpose, would there be the present variety and perfection of roses or of horses? Recognising that intelligence, skill and care have contributed to these results, some governments have established schools of agriculture to perfect these and similar arts.

What wonderful solicitude is shown in the breeding of choice animals, and what utter indifference in the breeding of boys and girls, whereas it ought to be the other way. Man is subject to the same laws; good food, pure air, contact action have as much influence upon man.

Political economists have said that the conscientious, the right-minded, will not marry until they are in a position to do so, and herein is the *crux* of the social problem. The more highly developed human beings yield less and less readily to the dictates of sexual passion alone. The human beings in whom the higher control centres are well developed, will be able to consider consequences and will not marry at the risk

of entailing misery and degradation on their offspring. But still, if this high conception of honor prevents their marrying, these qualities which they possess are not perpetuated. On the other hand, those individuals who are not guided by reason, who are moved alone by animal instincts will increase and multiply, and consequently, those survive who are unfit from an ideal standpoint. High motives deter the fit from marrying until they are in a position to do so. Among the better classes, marriage is being deferred more and more; the standard of living is becoming higher among them, and more time is given to education; whereas the unfit, who are not deterred by any qualms of conscience, or apprehension of consequences, go on multiplying. And as the more highly developed are not perpetuated, or if perpetuated it is in fewer numbers, the thoughtless, improvident, degenerate, and diseased, multiply upon us.

An educated man made the remark a short time ago, "The cause of so much misery among the poor to-day is over-population, it is their reckless indulgence in large families. I am too poor to marry, I can't afford to have a family, I wish I could, and yet I am called upon to pay taxes to educate and help to support others' paupers." This was a man accustomed to a certain standard of living, who therefore did not care to have offspring who would not have the same advantages as he had himself enjoyed, or to have a family which might become a burden on others. This example of the conscientious not marrying until he could afford it, illustrates a result which is most disastrous in its effects on the quality of the human race.

A man may possess a noble character and have a magnificent physique, but if he do not perpetuate these qualities they do not survive. A man may be diseased, stupid or reckless, but withal he marries and raises a large family: his qualities are perpetuated, but it is not the survival of the fittest. Many men break their health down by overwork, and the terrible strain is seen in the physical condition of their children. Many men have not over-exerted themselves, and have had no scruples about living on the charity of their relations or friends, and hence their children do not suffer from the depleted physical condition of their fathers; but are these children the survival of fittest? Moral checks which would appeal to the superior intellectual mind, do not influence the unfit. In the majority of cases they have not a nervous system sufficiently developed to appreciate these motives. The

improvident poor, finding so many agencies at work to relieve them from the consequences of their criminal folly, have the less inducement to deny themselves the gratification of their appetites, and conscientiously fill the hospitals with diseased men and women, and the asylums with cripples, scrofulous, syphilitic children, epileptics and idiots, at an annual outlay to the community of many millions in money, without one single remunerative item to show on the other side. It was traced out by painstaking research that from one woman, called Margaret, who, like Topsy, merely grew without pedigree, as a pauper in an almshouse on the Upper Hudson, about 86 years ago, there descended 673 children, grand-children, and great-grand-children, of whom 200 were criminals of the dangerous class, 280 adult paupers, and 50 prostitutes, while 300 children of her lineage died prematurely. And it is estimated that the expense to the State of the descendants of this woman was over a million and a quarter dollars. Had the 300 children who died young, lived to grow up, the loss to the community would have been still greater. Such loss does not represent merely the actual outlay, but the absence of the return, which, if spent for legitimate purposes, might have been expected from it.

Take another instance of such waste, copied from a newspaper:—"A woman, named Abigail Cochrane, who has just died at Kilmalcolm, at 84 years of age, was a pauper from the cradle to the grave. She was born at Greenock in 1807, and was imbecile from her earliest youth. It is estimated that she cost the public purse between £2,000 and £3,000." And how many such totally useless animal weeds are the rate-payers, healthy and useful citizens, supporting throughout the country at the present time?

If the marriages of the unfit began and ended with themselves, there would be no necessity for the social scientist to evince any alarm; but when the fruits of these unions choke and sap the vitality of the fit, it is time the question of scientific propagation were discussed. It is essential to know why do some and why do not others have their higher-control centres developed, because only those should be born who can reason whether an act is right or wrong.

There is a well known biological law that the structure last formed is the first to disappear or to degenerate. The longer a habit has become organic in the individual or the race, the more difficult it is to overcome. Animal passions and instincts which have been transmitted for

thousands of years are firm and stable. Human instincts which are the latest to appear in the evolution of the race, are unstable and disappear the first. Scratch the Russian and you find the Tartar; scratch the human and you find the brute.

Hughlings Jackson formulated the biological law that in disease, in the disintegration of the nervous system the last formed first disappeared; the human faculty, the will, the god in man disappeared leaving the animal in full possession. The last structures formed in the evolution of man are the higher-control centres, the psychomotor areas, and being the last organized are more unstable than older structures, therefore more affected by their parents. In the maturing man and woman the last organ to attain complete development is the brain. When parents are overworked their offspring are sluggish, or exhibit feebleness of mind, and are the very ones who in their turn will marry without considering consequences. And if they do not become absolute parasites on the fit and strong, they will do little towards raising the standard of humanity. It is a very noteworthy fact that fatigue products retained in the blood produce in the offspring the same effects as those which they cause in the parent. In the individual they produce sluggishness and mental torpor, and if these overworked individuals marry, they reproduce offspring who exhibit imbecility or disinclination for exertion, which may go to the extent of producing absolute paupers or those who rise little above the level of the brutes. It is intolerable that in this nineteenth century conditions should endure which will allow individuals to multiply in this depleted, devitalised condition. When we remember that individuals such as these will not be moved by high aspirations and will not be affected by noble examples, the apathy exhibited on this subject appears terrible, and all the more so when it is considered how much of the degradation of human beings might be avoided. Except, perhaps, the crime of allowing individuals to become devitalised, there is no greater crime than to permit such devitalised beings to continue their species.

Physical wrecks in their turn breed physical wrecks. Much has been said about the terrible effects upon offspring produced by drunken parents, and the relation between drunkenness and physical deterioration is worthy of consideration. When persons are overworked, fatigue products, which are poisons, accumulate in the blood. These poisons in the blood alter the

circulation, which, in its turn, affects the nervous system. Now the craving for drink arises from the fact that beers, wines, and opiates, raise the acidity of the blood, and thus counteract the effect of the fatigue poisons. The effect of these poisons upon the individual brain is the same in the offspring of these individuals. The one great cause of drunkenness is the over-use of the bodily functions. Though it may be said the chances are that the children of the drunkard will be inebriates, epileptics, idiots, or neurotics, the causes should be examined of which drunkenness is the effect. In this manner we may be able to check the increase of inebriates, idiots, neurotics, epileptics, but the drunkards themselves and their offspring will not have their reasoning power or control centres sufficiently developed to appreciate the crime of perpetuating their diseased condition in their offspring. It is a terrible misfortune that those who are most degraded by their environment will be the least able to appreciate why they are so.

The marriages of the immature also curse humanity by producing individuals who exhibit every stage of mental defect, from absolute idiocy to those who are simply stupid. The case may be cited of a girl who was left in ignorance of the simplest laws regarding her being. She was a victim to this ignorance; she became a mother at fourteen. Her child is an imbecile. The father and mother of the girl love this grandchild and deplore the fact that it is an imbecile. They are too ignorant to realize what caused this human failure. Marriages among the wealthier and better educated of the community is tending to be deferred. Among the poorer and most destitute the age of marriage has a tendency to become earlier. From these immature marriages offspring will be born who again will do little to raise the standard of humanity, who will not be deterred from procreating their kind from any considerations of right. Children born during the period of the maximum vigor of the parents have, as a rule, the greatest physical and mental vigour. What must be the result then in children born of devitalised parents? In the marriages of those individuals who have no natural affinity for each other, where other inducements than love determine their union, the offspring exhibit analogous physical defects. The case is the same in the offspring of parents who are too similar in defects of constitution.

Disease in the parents may affect the children, so that the result may be imbecility, insanity, or criminality, according to the manner and extent

that the transmitted diseased blood acts upon the brain of these individuals. It is problematical whether the result of these criminal marriages will be an imbecile or a criminal. When the higher restraining centres which exert an inhibitory influence in the various organs cease to act, or are not developed, there is an abnormal activity or an unbalanced functional activity which may lead to immoral or criminal conduct.

That power which modifies, checks, regulates our animal passions, develops the spirit of God within us, is the Soul. The Lord Buddha comprehended this great truth and founded his religion on the power of "I will." The higher control centres, as they become superimposed one on the other in the hierarchy of the nervous system, illustrate the mental evolution of the animal man into the human. From youth to manhood there is a slow development of the higher control centres. The child exhibits lack of self-control. Why? Because these higher centres are not yet developed. Without the higher control centres man is simply a brute; his lower appetites reign without any check.

The tendency of individuals is to satisfy animal instincts, but when the higher controlling centres are well developed, these desires are restrained by the Spirit of God within His Temple, which says that the consequences will be thus and thus, hence there is a direct check upon particular actions. Every influence which develops nerve centres controlling function develops consciousness; as man and woman have their higher nerve centres more developed than other animals, their actions are more determined by conscious choice. When they have attained this mastery a conscience is developed. The passions of the civilised man may be as strong as those of the savage, but his power to control and regulate them is infinitely superior. The reason why the lower propensities are abnormally developed in idiots, savages, the insane, or other individuals, is that the brain never has exercised or has ceased to exercise a restraining influence.

Ancient philosophers recognised this great truth. They saw the struggle going on in man to gain self-mastery over his animal nature. Classical artists pictured man, half man, half beast, to symbolise the struggle. Where man had conquered his lower appetites and propensities he was human man; where the struggle was still going on he was half man half beast. We to-day can see in the museum at Olympia, chiselled by Greek sculptors, "A Centaur about to carry off a woman, whom he holds with his left hand and

THE GREAT ACCUSER : A PARABLE.

NEAR the bottom of the descending passage of the great pyramid, set into the solid masonry, may be seen a white stone upon which are rudely engraved certain hieroglyphics. Upon washing away the dust of ages, upon either edge of the tablet there was found an outline of the sacred cow. On the right horn of each was the red comb of the cock, and on the left horns a bunch of peacock feathers. By pressure here and there along the margin of the tablet a yielding point was at length found and the tablet swung slowly into the passage, revealing a rude sarcophagus. The coffer contained a mummy, bearing on its blackened surface the same emblems found on the tablet, and a small roll of papyrus gave the following explanation.

During the construction of the great pyramid there continually hung upon the steps of the workmen one who came at last to be known as the Great Accuser. Vanity sat upon his brow like a crown of peacock feathers, and he claimed to be of higher caste than any of the real workmen, and that by divine right he should be placed over them and at the head of the Temple. He was repeatedly informed that every avenue was open to him, and that in the Order of the Pyramid he was highest who served best. The Great Accuser engraved many tablets and wrote many scrolls, reminding the reader in every line of his own greatness and God-given mission to lead and to command. Nothing came amiss to him, for he claimed that genius such as his had many needs, and so it really seemed. In early youth he had been under instruction of the "brothers of the shadow," and had become Grand Master of their art, whose motto was "*suppressio veri, suggestio falsi*." Steeped to the very lips in lechery and lying, bold and shameless in his daily life, knowing every sinuosity of sin, he could the better accuse the innocent and paint to the last vulgar detail his own debaucheries while falsely charging them on others. He made no concealment of his vices, but shamelessly gloried in them. If thousands only spoke his name, he cared not whether fame or infamy trimmed the lamp that fed his vanity. He forced his way into the courts of the temple, donned the robes of the high-priest, and substituted Bacchanalian rites for the sacred fire of Truth that flickered and went out in his presence. When women, lured ignorantly to his snares, protested their allegiance to hymeneal altars and refused the sacrifice, he roared with laughter, and praised their virtue in the "tests of initiation."

Scorning the execration he had won, he determined to be crowned hierophant. "Give me your suffrages," he cried, "ye scum of all the earth. I, only I, am fit to lead and rule. Refuse my wish, balk my high ambition, and I will blast ye all, and hurl stone from stone of your old pyramid."

The pyramid rose, pile upon pile, till into its mighty mass were wrought the secret art, the music of the spheres fixed in stone. Patiently the workmen toiled, leaving all gates ajar, that the poor deluded soul might enter, if he would, knowing well the outcome of their toil, and that none could be refused, even at the eleventh hour, who knocked in the right way.

It was then that his mission as the Great Accuser grew upon the would-be hierophant. Alike to him were youth and age, man or woman, friend or foe. Turning to the record of his own dark soul he hurled the filthy fragments broadcast, massing the residue of venom on those to whom he had often knelt in homage and lauded to the skies, and whose only sin consisted in refusing him suffrage when he sought the crown of hierophant. Rule he could not, not even himself; then ruin dire! If not fame, then infamy! So he became the Great Accuser, making each step of his, as deeper in his moral mire he sank, an accusation against another.

Here the papyrus was defaced by time, and no more was learned.

Tradition says that every age, when man seeks higher knowledge, is thus beset by those who play at fast and loose; demanding all for self, and bent on rule or ruin, they become at last the Great Accuser; the karmic record of their lives distorting, like a crooked mirror, every shape, and changing even the face of an angel into a filthy image of his own. Karma-Nemesis never slumbers, and never dies. Just as the name of Judas goes down the corridors of time as one of the twelve apostles, even so when the pyramid is completed, a peacock's feather engraven on stone in a dark recess preserves the lasting record and the awful Karma of the Great Accuser.

Know ye not that it was written by one of old, "Whosoever shall fall upon this stone, shall be broken, but upon whomsoever this stone shall fall, it shall grind him to powder." And again, "He who would be greatest among you let him be the servant of Truth."

High concentration of steady feeling makes men and women dare everything and do anything.
Bulwer Lytton.

SYMPATHY.

THE sentiment which prompts us in any misfortune or sorrow to seek sympathy or condolence from our friends, and which renders it a pleasure to them to afford us the consolation which we seek, is essentially a product of civilization: that is, of a state of social existence in which, as the word itself denotes, we recognise the obligations under which we are mutually to each other as members of a community. It is hardly necessary to say that this feeling obtains independently of any religious conviction, and is common to all ages and all countries. The Christian religion teaches the duty of mutual help and assistance in a pre-eminent degree, but there is no creed under which the cultivation of the feelings which prompt us to sympathise, however unavailingly, with the sorrow of our friends is not recognised as a virtue.

To assert that these feelings are shared by the lower animals would be little short of rank blasphemy to any believer in the doctrines of evolution or the survival of the fittest. Every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost, is, in the great struggle for existence, the law for all organised beings. No doubt there are some instances on record of animals long accustomed to each other's society who have evidently been disconsolate when parted, but after all this is only a selfish feeling, such as a child might feel on losing its playmate. There is indeed a touching story of a blind old rat being led by a young and active one by means of a stick grasped in both their jaws, but this is one which requires a very great amount of corroboration before it can be accepted as true. The ordinary instinct of the rat nature would certainly tend towards killing and devouring his venerable and infirm relative, as "the poor sequestered stag" is driven away by the herd, and, in fact, of his own accord seeks some solitary glade in which to die or to heal him of his hurt. So the great object of the belated traveller pursued by hungry wolves is to kill some of the pack that the survivors may find a more easy meal in their hunting-companions; and even if a flock of birds will return to look at those of their number which the sportsman has laid struggling on the ground, their motive may with some confidence be ascribed to a very imprudent curiosity rather than to any charitable feeling.

When we come to consider uncivilized man, we find nearly the same condition of things; incessantly labouring to sustain life, the savage has no time for sentiment, and the companion who lags on the war-path or in the chase must be left

to perish. The practice which prevails among some tribes of killing, and even, it is said, of eating the aged and infirm members of the community, though sanctioned by the theory that it is well that they should go to the happy hunting-grounds while still strong enough to enjoy themselves there, no doubt gained all the more ready recognition through the exceeding convenience of the custom. It is, therefore, among highly civilised communities only that sympathetic feelings are found, and when we reflect how very illogical the sentiment is, we see that we have here an illustration of the fact that the course of human nature is as much regulated by the dictates of the emotional as of the reasoning faculties. The Book of Job, acknowledged to be one of the oldest in the world, affords a proverbial example of the vanity of consolation in our affliction. Job found little comfort in the condolence of his friends, and probably would have preferred that the silence of seven days by which they first expressed their sympathy had been yet further prolonged; but the friends of the afflicted have none the less continued throughout all these ages to imitate the example of Eliphaz and his companions, and with about the same result. It cannot, indeed, be denied that the condolence of our friends, however unavailing, does bring a certain amount of gratification to the object of it. There are few minds cast in the heroic mould of a Prometheus; and not many who, if their religious training does not permit them like him to hurl defiance at the author of their woes from amid the crash of conflicting elements, can wrap themselves in a garment of philosophy, and, accepting the evil that has come upon them with resignation, or even with the conviction that it is sent in mercy by an all-wise Providence, declare themselves independent of the sympathy of their friends.

If such a Stoic were found, it would be very difficult to give a direct answer to his question,—What is the use of your sympathy? When I have lost my friend or my fortune, am I a whit the better for your telling me that you are very sorry? Can you bring back either to me by mingling your tears with mine? The answer, if we can find one, is complex, and we must reply that the alleviation which is conveyed to the afflicted by the expression of sympathy on the part of their friends, works by the agency of the physical and the emotional part of a man more than through the chilling medium of his reason. "She must weep, or she will die," sings the poet, and in less heroic language, the weaker sex when

in distress is proverbially the better for "a good cry." None the less the sterner half of mankind, though by habitual exercise they have learnt, in this country at least, to suppress the outward expression of their emotion, and in so doing have, perhaps, blunted in part the emotions themselves, yet may find that the friendly expression of sympathy relieves the over-charged currents of nerve-force, of whose mysterious action we are still so ignorant, and whose repression beyond a certain point is prejudicial to physical welfare.

This suggestion, however, only brings us face to face with a yet more perplexing question, namely, why a mental emotion finds relief in physical expression. Darwin himself confesses his inability to define or account for the shade of facial expression by which we can in actual practice readily distinguish or express the finer emotions, and we must be content to allow that tears bring relief, without inquiring too closely how far the habit of shedding them is natural or conventional, or whether, if we had been educated to beat our breast and tear our hair, we might not find equal relief in such a substitute for weeping.

It may perhaps be that there is a sort of egotism in the giving and receiving of consolation in distress,—the object of this friendly solicitude feeling, to a certain extent, flattered in the thought that his griefs are worthy of the interest evinced in them by his friends. Even while seeking for comfort, he participates in the feeling of self-importance, which is an element in the readiness which we are all so prone to exhibit in conveying a piece of news, especially when it is of a startling or disagreeable character, while the friend whose sympathy is sought feels equally flattered in being selected as a confidant capable of administering consolation.

Even were the immortality of the soul a fiction, I should be sorry not to believe in it. I confess that I am not so humble as the atheists. I do not follow their thoughts; but for myself would not barter the idea of my immortality for the happiness of to-day. I delight to deem myself immortal as God himself. Independently of revelation, metaphysical teaching gives me a confident hope of eternal happiness, which I would not willingly abandon.

Montesquieu.

JOHN S. MILL ON OVER-POPULATION.

So complete is the confusion of ideas on the whole subject (of the laws of population), owing in a great degree to the mystery in which it is shrouded by a spurious delicacy, which prefers that right and wrong should be mismeasured and confounded on one of the subjects most momentous to human welfare. People are little aware of the cost to mankind of this scrupulosity of speech. All experience shows that the mass of mankind never judge of moral questions for themselves, never see anything to be right or wrong until they have been frequently told it; and who tells them that they have any duties in the matter in question, while they keep within matrimonial limits? Who meets the smallest condemnation, or rather, who does not meet with sympathy for any amount of evil which he may have brought on himself and those dependent on him by this species of incontinence? While a man who is intemperate in drink is discountenanced and despised by all who profess to be moral people, it is one of the chief grounds made use of in appeals to the benevolent that the applicant has a large family, and is unable to maintain them. Little improvement can be expected in morality until the producing large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness, or any other physical excess. But whilst the aristocracy and the clergy are foremost to set the example of this species of incontinence, what can be expected from the poor?—"*Principles of Political Economy.*"

“ . . . Thus she doth equal laws and justice teach
To woman, outraged and polluted long;
Gathering the sweetest fruit in human reach
For those fair hands now free, while armed wrong
Trembles before her look, tho’ it be strong.
And homeless orphans find a home near her,
And those poor victims of the proud, no less,
Fair wrecks, on whom the smiling world with stir,
Thrusts the redemption of its wickedness
In squalid huts, and in its palaces
Sits lust alone, while o’er the land is borne
Her voice, whose awful sweetness doth repress
All evil, and her foes relenting turn,
And cast the vote of love in hope’s abandoned
urn.”

Shelley.

COURTSHIP IN ANCIENT INDIA.

HOW SAKTIKUMARA CHOSE HIS WIFE.

DR. PETERSON, in a paper on "Courtship in Ancient India," read before the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, said that researches showed that customs then were widely different from the present system. The authorities and poems which he quoted were eloquent of a condition of things in which the girl, to a great extent, still had the free disposal of her own hand. The state of society described in the Kamasutra was, as was to be expected, reflected in the literature. He proposed to close his paper with an illustration of this form taken from Dandin's "Dasakumaracharita," a work written, so far as he could judge, in the ninth or tenth century. In the story, Mitrugupta, one of the ten princes who give the book its name, has fallen into the hands of a goblin, who puts four questions to him and assures him that if he does not answer them he will be eaten. One of the questions is, "What is the most pleasing, and at the same time the most profitable possession of a 'householder?'" Mitrugupta answers, "A good wife;" and in support of his answer he tells the story of Gomini:—

In the country of the Dravidas there is a town called Kanchi. A young merchant, by name Saktikumara, lived there who was worth many crores. He, being eighteen years of age, fell a-thinking. "The man who has no wife and a man who has a wife that does not suit him are neither of them happy. How am I to find a good wife?" It seemed to him that if he took a wife on the report of others it must be a mere chance whether he made a happy marriage or not. Accordingly he disguised himself as an astrologer and wandered from town to town with a small parcel of rice tied up at the end of his garment. All the people who had girls to marry brought them to him, believing that he, as an astrologer, could read their fortunes from their appearance and the marks on their bodies. Whenever he saw a girl of his own caste, with the proper features and marks, he would say to her, "My good girl, could you make me a good dinner out of this handful of rice?" From house to house he was laughed away with scorn. In the course of his wanderings he came to a town on the banks of the Kaveri River, in the country of the Sibis. There he saw a girl with hardly any ornaments on, who was shown to him by her foster-mother. She had lost with her father and mother all her fortune, and her house was poverty-stricken. But his eye clave to her. And he said to himself:—"A form like this cannot give the lie to her disposition. And my heart cleaves to this girl. Still I must put her to the test before I marry

her. For he who acts without reflection has many occasions to be sorry afterwards." Accordingly, with a kindly smile he said to her: "My good girl, do you think you could make me a dinner, with all the usual accompaniments, out of this handful of rice?" She made a sign to the old nurse, who took the rice out of his hand, washed his feet, and made him sit down on a terrace that had been well washed. While the nurse was doing this, the girl dried the rice for a little in the sun, turning the heap over every now and then. When it was sufficiently dry she beat it gently with the hollow rod so as to separate the grain from the husk. Then she said to the nurse: "Mother, take these husks to the goldsmiths, who use them for burnishing their ornaments, and with the cowries you get for them bring some pieces of wood. See that they are hard and neither too moist nor too dry at the heart. Buy also an earthen cooking-pot so big, and two drinking vessels." When she had arranged for this she put the rice into a mortar of kakkuba wood, which was neither too deep nor too shallow, and which bulged out in the middle. With a long heavy pestle of khadira wood, bound at the head with iron, and sloping a little inwardly at the middle, she pounded the rice, gracefully exercising her arm with the up and down stroke, and every now and then with the fingers of her other hand sifting the rice. Next she winnowed the rice of all impurities, washed it more than once in water, and after due worship paid to the hearth [she threw a little rice in the fire] she put the rice into five times its own quantity of boiling water. When the rice softened and leaped in the pot, the moment it was past the condition of buds on a tree, she lessened the fire and, putting a cover on the pot, tilted it over and drew off the water. Then she stirred the rice for a little, and when the whole of it was equally well cooked she took the pot off the fire and set it down face downwards. The wood was still sound at the core. She poured water on it and, extinguishing the fire, made charcoal. This she sent to the dealers in that article, bidding her nurse bring, with the cowries got for it, vegetable, ghee, curds, oil, an amala berry and tamarind, as much as she could get. With these she made two or three relishes. . . . He was satisfied, and married her according to law. Enslaved by her merits, Saktikumara put her in charge of all his house, and made her lord of his life and body. In her he found the three things men desire—religion, wealth, and pleasure. Said I not well that a good wife is her husband's choicest treasure?

Our repentance is not so much regret for the harm that we have done, as fear of the consequences that may be entailed on ourselves.

La Rochefoucauld.

PHILOSOPHICAL NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Character is a perfectly educated will. *Novalis.*

Words are like leaves, and where they most abound
Much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.

Pope.

Better to be despised for too anxious apprehensions than ruined by too confident a security.

Burke.

A noble act is one which is prompted by a good heart, and which it requires energy to carry out.

Montesquieu.

If we overcome our passions, it is rather because they are weak than because we are strong.

La Rochefoucauld.

Happiness is not based on the appreciation of others, but on the consciousness of one's own honest labour.

Prof. Virchow.

There are probably more ill-balanced minds in what we call the world than among those who are in less fortunate circumstances.

Vauvenargues.

A man should never be ashamed to own he has been in the wrong, which is but saying in other words that he is wiser to-day than he was yesterday.

Pope.

There is no man to whom fortune does not come once in his life, but when she finds him not ready to receive her, she comes in at the door and goes out at the window.

Montesquieu.

At the house of the ordinary man and woman the number of friends increases with the increase of fortune; at the house of scholars one only knows by the number of enemies the esteem one should bestow on them.

Pope.

In proportion as a man suffers the smooth course of his thoughts to depend on anything external, whether on the greenness of the field or the gaiety of the street or the constancy of friends, so comes he nearer to the chance of shipwreck.

Morley, Rousseau.

THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF SCHOOL-CHILDREN.

THE improvement of the physical status of the coming generation is so essentially a plank in any Humanitarian platform, that all contributions to our knowledge of its present condition must be cordially welcomed. At the Seventh International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, held in London in August, 1891, a committee was appointed with the object of obtaining complete vital statistics bearing on the condition of school-children, and the means of physical and mental improvement.

The Charity Organisation Society, in conjunction with the British Medical Association, had already entered on this almost unexplored field of statistical inquiry, and presented a report on the condition of over 50,000 children contained in 106 schools, who had been examined and reported on. The results of this examination have been laid before the Royal Statistical Society of London, in a paper read by Dr. Francis Walker, F.R.C.P.

The inquiry has necessarily been carried out under difficulties, since no authority existed for eliciting the family history of each child; and nothing more than a superficial and cursory examination of the children, as they stood paraded for the purpose, was possible.

But a trained eye could, even under these disadvantageous conditions, detect with some precision cases of aberration from the normal type, and each such case was asked to fall out of the ranks. In the end, 9,186 children, *i.e.*, 5,579 (= 20 per cent.) boys out of a total of 26,884, and 3,607 (= 15 per cent.) girls, from a total of 23,143, were thus noted as presenting some abnormal deviation.

The abnormal cases fall under four main groups or classes, *viz.* :—

1. DEVELOPMENT CASES; *i.e.*, peculiarities of cranium, palate, ear, growth, &c.
2. NERVE-SIGNS; *i.e.*, general balance, or balance of limbs or head, eye movements, &c.
3. NUTRITION CASES; *i.e.*, children thin, pale, or delicate.
4. DULL CASES; *i.e.*, cases reported by the teachers as mentally deficient.

The development cases were found to be in the proportion of 13.4 per cent. of boys as against 9.6 per cent. of girls, while in the cases

of low nutrition the burden was proved to press more heavily on girls. Defective development and low nutrition are ascertained to be closely correlated, and, in the opinion of Dr. Warner, if the frequency of "development cases" could be reduced, we should probably have a smaller proportion of weak, thin, and delicate children.

It is somewhat contrary to our pre-conceived ideas that boys should be more nervous than girls, yet of the cases under examination the nerve cases were found to be nearly half again as numerous in the case of boys as in that of girls. "If" says Dr. Warner, "in methods of training children, more care were taken to prevent and remove abnormal nerve signs, the brain condition of the children would probably be more receptive to mental training."

Another unexpected result of the examination is that when the schools under review are grouped according to social class, it is found that the percentages go against the children of the upper class in every category.

In the matter of nationality a great difference was observed in the case of Irish as compared with English children, to the disadvantage, in almost every particular, of the former: abnormal cases were noted in Irish children in nearly twice as many instances (30 per cent. to 17 per cent.), as in English children.

The Jewish children, 2,961 (boys, 1,389; girls, 1,572), were those seen in the free schools of Whitechapel. Here the percentage that had to be noted fell to 15.7, and "development cases" fell from 10.8 per cent. for the English to 7.5 for the Jews; and the only percentage against the Jewish children is for "growth, small." Among the Jewish boys there was a rise of 1 per cent. for "nerve-cases" as compared with English boys, but these cases were slightly lower among the girls. The numbers reported dull were 3 per cent. lower than with English for Jew boys, the percentages being equal for English and Jewish girls. Cases of "low nutrition" were half as numerous as among the English, falling to 2.7 per cent.

The well-known care bestowed by the Jewish community on their poorer co-religionists, is seen to bear fruit in a lower percentage of cases of defective physical and mental conditions alike. It would seem that in superiority of development and nutrition lies the secret of the generally accepted belief, thus confirmed from an unexpected source, that the Jew is, as a rule, superior to the Gentile in intellectual subtlety. Defective development is stated to be the predisposing cause

of the majority of cases of defect in nerve-balance and mental power, and the conclusion is drawn that the scientific researches of public medicine might well be devoted to the removal of the cause which entails consequences so disastrous.

These investigations suggest a variety of considerations. Inquiry into family history could not, by the nature of the case, be made; the influence of nationality was but partially worked out. The children subjected to examination were all town-bred, and all dwellers in the same urban area (London); while the number of children examined, 50,027, though considerable in itself, hardly afforded materials for estimating aright the relative importance of the numerous combinations of defect into which the primary groups can be resolved.

A similar inquiry on a minute scale, obtained in spite of some amount of bureaucratic obstruction, has been attempted in Austria, and the importance of the inquiry has been fully recognized in the United States. If the Americans take up the subject with the energy that they are accustomed to throw into statistical inquiry, and especially into the collection of vital statistics, the investigations initiated in England will no doubt be worthily supplemented.

When the defects, mental or bodily, towards which our children are chiefly predisposed, shall have been accurately determined, and when it has been ascertained whether the tendency to such defects is on the increase or the reverse, the ground will have been cleared for applying the remedies which science will be ready to suggest.

FREE-THOUGHT

AS AFFECTED BY

NATIONALITY AND POLITICS.

THE progress of education and intellectual development has been accompanied in all phases of the world's history by a contemporary extension of dissent from the orthodox religion. From the days of Socrates downwards there has been ever a minority of thinking men to whom the generally received form of religion has been unacceptable, but who, in their independent search after truth, have incurred the hatred of the dominant religious power, assisted in many cases by the civil authorities. Fanaticism has often deepened this hatred into active persecution, generally ineffectual, and

often productive of a bitter reaction, but sufficient to stamp with an opprobrious meaning the name of free-thinker—a title which should be reserved as one of the highest honour. Many causes combine to produce a result so disastrous to the progress of man, and especially this, that the idea of free inquiry has always been looked on with the greatest distrust by spiritual as well as civil rulers as tending to subvert their own authority, and the constituted order of things. The system of repression founded on this feeling of apprehension has, in many cases, but created the evil it was intended to suppress. It is only of late years, and not yet to the full extent, that the fact has been realised that religious independence and liberty are compatible with social order. The result has, however, been in many ways to influence the direction of free-thought, and to give to the systems which it has brought into being a direction different from that which they might otherwise have taken. Hence arises a colouring in all such systems which varies according to the country in which they are developed.

At the present time there can be few who ever think or read on religious subjects who do not occasionally feel moments of the utmost perplexity. The immense advances made in physical science, and the universal manner in which the latest discoveries of the laboratory and of the observatory are brought before the notice of all, have opened questions which for a former generation had no existence. On the other hand, the history of the Christian religion—a religion founded on peace and good-will, and intended for universal application—is little but a record of bigotry and mutual hatred among the rival sects into which its professors have degenerated, each arrogating to itself the sole possession of the mysteries of the true faith, and maintaining its purity with fire and sword either against those who differ on minor points, or those who reject its teaching altogether. Neither supremacy nor persecution seems to have had any other effect than the promotion of a narrow spirit of intolerance. Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that some of the brightest intellects of this and of the last century should have turned away from all existing systems of religion, and in vain wearied themselves with the question—“What is Truth?” In all these cases the result must be some form, under whatever name disguised, of a theism more or less simple. The cold and selfish creed, if it can be so called, of a professed atheist, is illogical in itself, and incapable by its inherent egoism of formulating a system.

On the other hand, the theistic idea is constantly promoted by the discoveries of science. Every day the tendency is towards the simplification of external phenomena by their relegation to unswerving law; the abnormal is merely the non-understood, and there is a grandeur in the conception of a Final Cause under whose direction the whole system of the universe is directed in an undeviating chain of causation, not inferior to that which assumes the incessant interference of supernatural agency in minute matters. Either theory may be held while it is believed that a sparrow does not fall to the ground unnoticed.

It is when we endeavour to explain the action of the human mind by reference, on the one hand, to logical inference from the phenomena of nature, or, on the other, by the demands on a faith which must acknowledge itself to be beyond the bounds of finite reasoning, that difficulties become less easily superable. Perplexed with endless doubt, the mind usually seeks irresponsibility in a system of fatalism, on the one side, or, on the other, in blind submission to some form of religious dogma.

However much the mental process and the result may be identical in all cases, the matter is not always entirely subjective, and local causes give often a very marked peculiarity to the phase which independent thought is apt to assume in different countries. There can be no more striking instance of this than is afforded by the aspect of independent inquiry in America, or in England, as compared with its manifestation in France; and it is worth while to consider the causes which have principally conduced to this result. These are of two classes, namely, the difference of individual temperament, and the difference of social and political conditions. As regards the former, the restless Latin temperament, the ready expression of thought in a language the best suited in the world for brilliancy of epigrammatic expression, contrast forcibly with the more stolid Anglo-Saxon intellect and habitual reserve of all the deeper feelings. There is nothing more remarkable than the great contrast in this respect between the two races; an Englishman will cherish thoughts and sentiments which to the friend of a lifetime may be altogether unknown and even unsuspected, nor is such reserve incompatible with the closest friendship. It has merely the result that friendships are more easily formed between persons of entirely different dispositions than is possible among the French, to whom such reserve would be a sort of treason. To an Englishman travelling in France, the readiness with

which strangers will enter into conversation with each other, or with him, on questions social or religious, which English friends hardly ever discuss between themselves, must often appear very striking.

But political causes have had a much greater share than any other in producing a difference between the east of independent thought in the two countries. The emancipation from a dominant form of religion, every day assuming more oppressive powers, which occurred in England during the sixteenth century, was in part due to the growth of political life in the nation, and was succeeded in the following century by a political movement which, to as full an extent, stirred the country to its base. The Civil War of 1642, though attended by events melancholy in themselves, left good behind it in a nation prepared for the gradual reception of the highest degree of political and religious freedom. Such freedom could not be without result. Much as all must regret the establishment of so many shades of faith, differing but little from one another, and separated by barriers of inappreciable importance, their co-existence has, at least, had the effect of impressing, to some extent, the duty of mutual forbearance, and has tended to keep within the pale of Christianity many in whom a dominant and inflexible dogmatism must have developed either a suppressed or open revolt.

It has been otherwise in France, where little more than a century ago, the social, political, and religious condition of the country was scarcely more advanced than that of the twelfth century. There a nation of serfs, oppressed by a luxurious and thoughtless court and aristocracy, groaned under a State church which admitted of no opponents, and which enlisted on its side the rich and influential, by pointing out the necessity of keeping down, by force of an unceasing repression and extinction, the smouldering fire which was ever ready to overwhelm both in an irrepressible conflagration. It was on such soil that the teachings of Voltaire and Rousseau fell as on prepared ground. Widely differing in their views, and stirred by bitter animosity towards each other, they both proclaimed themselves the apostles of humanity. But the speculations of Rousseau, his milder form of deism, and sentimental nature-worship, paled before the withering and scathing flash of Voltaire's destructive genius. The latter proved his sincerity by acts of humanity, whose virtue cannot be denied by his bitterest opponents. While Rousseau was elaborating a selfish system of sentimental deism,

and belying his doctrines by acts which showed a want of ordinary feelings of humanity, Voltaire was exerting himself everywhere with the restless energy peculiarly his own, for the benefit of those whom the grinding tyranny of Church and State was treading under foot; or, less effectually, for the maintenance or restoration of peace between rival nations. From attacking the abuses of the Church, it was but a step to attack the Church itself, and the cynical and trenchant wit of Voltaire sowed the storm which was reaped in the whirlwind of the Revolution. He himself did not live to see that day. It dawned not more than twelve years after his death, when all that was established in Church and State by the traditions of centuries was swept from its moorings and dashed into a thousand fragments amid the waves of the Revolution. From the supremacy of Ultramontanism in religion to the worship of the Goddess Reason was not a greater transition than from the political traditions of Louis XIV. to the horribly grotesque mockery of the forms of government under the Jacobins, and in each case the result was inevitably identical. From a state not so much of so-called liberty as of universal licence, men reverted speedily to the old *régime*. Church and State became in form, but not in reality, what they had been before; from such a rending of the very foundations there was no complete restoration, and for a century, France has been engaged in the laborious effort of renewing her equilibrium. Hence it has followed that the forms of dissent in France have never been free from an attempt to engraft on religious formulas a political and social programme, of which Comtism is the most widely spread and complete. In the meanwhile, the inflexible rigidity of the Roman Catholic Church renders its dogmas incapable of acceptance by the majority of those who do not trouble themselves with the elaboration of an independent formula, and though nominally members of the Church, they are no more, nor profess to be more. But, from the nature of the case, if not for it they must be against it, and hence the greater freedom with which the French express themselves on subjects of religious opinion than do the English. With the latter, there is hardly a shade of conviction which is incompatible with nominal allegiance to a Christian sect, and in such liberty there is but a very small minority of professed Materialists, whose opinions, save from one or two brilliant exponents, neither seek nor find any prominent or aggressive expression.