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THE BARRIERS OF PERSONALITY.

BY GEORGE M. McCRIE.

M. Th. Ribot, in his psychological memoirs, classes as an illusion the old idea of an ego-entity at the foundation of our psychical activities. In that new psychology, wherein so much that is novel is disclosed, the purely limitary ego cannot be found. And this because the province of the ego has been infinitely extended, so as to include the totality of ideas, pleasures, and pains of which we are the continual subject.

Some thinkers go even farther at this stage of the philosophic path. With them, not only is the ego the mood of the moment, the passing emotion—it is also, as it were, the stimulus, the veritable object, which rouses into activity all the host of subjective feelings which make up the *I* of human existence. In this view, between objective world and subjective spectator, no dividing line is discoverable; the world of the objective, and I who move in it as subject, are separated by no ascertainable division.

But, however far we may travel on this road, whatever our conclusions in the above respects may be, it is to be remembered that these and similar conclusions—which may appear strange, and even untrue, to those who have not minutely studied the questions at issue—in no way touch the true barriers of personality. On the contrary, they define and confirm them. For, however extended my ego-personality may become, however enlarged its view, until it includes, not only all my moods and phases of being, but also all of which I am cognisant—*my individual and proper personality* it still remains, unconfused and unconfounded with the personality of any other being. Across the "insuperable threshold" of self none can ever pass. In the old words—none of us "can by any means redeem his brother; nor give to God a ransom for him." "The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."

The individual is the true unit. It cannot be otherwise, if only we think of the matter rightly. Neither in experience, nor in any reasonable system of thought, has this self-testimony of consciousness been conclusively assailed. To avow scepticism regarding it is but indirectly to affirm its truth. The *I* of consciousness, whatever its nature or limits may be, is inexpugnable.

Monism, consistent monism, accordingly, does not deny but asserts this essential individuality. Only in this way can the two cardinal truths be preserved, of the strict unity of the cosmos on the one hand, and of the individuality of the subjective organism on the other, when it is recognised that each individual fashions his own surroundings and makes or mars his own fortunes, irrespective of any external or supernatural decree. "Self is the lord of self—who else should be the lord?" When the late Prof. T. H. Green walked with his students on the river-bank at Oxford he was accustomed to ask them, on coming to one of the bridges, how many bridges there were before them. "One," would be the reply. "Oh, no," was his rejoinder, "as many bridges as there are spectators, as many bridges as there are brains to fashion them!" And this, which doubtless seemed a hard saying to his followers at the time, was the soberest truth after all, scientifically and philosophically. The Professor, despite some ultra-refinements in his thought system, was essentially a monist. True dualism, in the same circumstances, would have consisted in postulating *one* veritable objective bridge, of which the individual subjective impressions were so many copies.

The individualism which lies at the root of all true monism is the surest barrier against every form of anthropomorphism, against the idea of a Deity sitting outside the universe he has constructed and seeing it go. Old-fashioned philosophy sets out with the idea, ready-made, that there are three main objects of inquiry—God, Man, and the World; and this really unphilosophical prepossession once started with, the way of error is easy. The monist of to-day, on the other hand, finds God and the world in the "inner infinite" of his own breast. The kingdom of heaven, as Christ himself expressly declares, is not *here*, or *there*, but "within us."

Monistic individualism sets man on his own feet and enjoins him to work out his own salvation, unaided by any priestly mediation, undeterred by any priestly malediction. Of all the perverse ideas that ever possessed the mind and heart of man, surely the fiction of sacerdotal intervention and sacramental efficacy is the

most malign. But it utterly disappears, like the shadow of some evil dream, when it is realised that man's potentialities are at his own disposal, and that his career is his own to make, for good or for evil. The lines of Omar Khayyám finely emphasise the truth that self is at once its own recompense and its own retribution:

> "I sent my soul into the invisible,
> Some lesson of that after-life to spell;
> And by and by my soul returned to me,
> And answered '*I myself am heaven and hell.*'"

Individualism is ever stronger than collectivism. Any social scheme which consults the interests of the group, at the expense of the unit, which composes it and without which it would not exist, is foredoomed to failure. Marcus Aurelius, indeed, has said that "what is good for the swarm cannot be bad for the bee"; but that is beginning at the wrong end. In social reform we must begin, not with the group, which has no *locus* apart from its component elements, but with the unit. To revert to our first illustration, when the bee is as it ought to be, in all its several relationships, the swarm may be trusted to look after the things of itself. As Shakespeare puts it, trueness to one's self involves, necessarily, a corresponding trueness in all the relations of life.

Comte's idol of humanity was the apotheosis of the swarm—and the deification of the ghosts of all past and dead swarms. What a ghastly dream! So, under the Juggernaut car of socialism, all individual life would be trampled out of human semblance. No motive for exertion, no supreme ideal can touch or quicken, which does not come hot from the individual heart. All effort, to be worthy of the name, must be from the self outwards. Every heroic and valiant deed which history records sprang, like Minerva from the head of Jove, from the burning resolve of one man. The intense energy of a Paul, a Luther, a Savonarola, simply refuses primarily to arise in a horde or band of men. The collective genius of a corporation, the joint energy of a council, refuses to be translated into any equivalent whatsoever. In such a concourse of minds there is no height of instinctive wisdom, no divination, no prophetic burden; there is only the dull average of the individual minds which compose it.

"*Je mourrai seul*," said Pascal, and the saying is typical of that "aloneness" of the individual life which is always more or less present to minds of the highest calibre. For immortality, in whatever light we may view it,—an immortality to come, or that "larger hope" of the "immortality that now is,"—would be a mockery, a contradiction in terms, if it were not for the ineffaceable lines of personality, lines which may not be broken, and which may scarcely fade:

> "Thou yet shalt leave thine own enduring token,
> For earth is not as though thou ne'er hadst been,"

was not spoken of the society, or of the community, but of the individual soul. Whatever we may think of immortality, it must always be of an immortality strictly personal and individual, or of none at all. The beatific vision of St. Paul was only the natural and assured sequel of individual life here, a continuance of individual existence in Him, in whom, to use his sublime words, "we live, and move, and have our being."

Tennyson, in his "In Memoriam," attempts, in the last recess of thought, to get beyond this individual immortality. He seeks, in the hereafter,—

> "Upon the last and sharpest height
> Before the spirits fade away:
> Some landing-place to clasp and say—
> 'Farewell, we lose ourselves in light!'"

But such an absorption, for such it would be, of the individual in the All is a pantheistic dream, and, from the Christian standpoint, untrue. Whatever our views on these subjects may be, we shall always be thinking logically and correctly in asserting that, if anything be permanent, individuality is permanent. All other immortality is but a multiple of this primary unit.

THE MEANING OF "SELF."

Mr. George M. McCrie is a zealous apostle of Dr. Robert Lewins's philosophy of Solipsism, the basic principle of which has been tersely expressed in the sentence, "*things* are *thinks*."[1]

Solipsism, the theory that all is self, is a monism which maintains the identity of the cosmos and the individuality of the subjective organism; and in this sense Mr. McCrie speaks of "the barriers of personality."

There is a truth in the doctrine of solipsism which cannot be denied, for it has only to be understood to be recognised as a truth. The tree at which I now look is at this moment myself. All sensations, the prick of the pin not less than the light-impression of a distant star, are myself; they are the elements of my soul. They are substance of my substance and life of my life. And the ideas which have been distilled out of these sense-elements, my notions of the nature of things, of their interrelations, their import and usefulness, my ideals, demons and gods, all these are products of the activity of my self. Spider-like I spin them out of my own being. They, too, are parts of myself; but they are self-wrought. I am their creator and begetter. As we read in the Dhammapada, one of the most sacred books of Buddhism, "Self is the lord of self—who else should be the lord?"

This is the truth of solipsism which we do not deny

[1] See Dr. Robert Lewins's article, "The Unity of Thought and Thing," in *The Monist*, Vol. IV, No. 2.

and which we gladly recognise before criticising the onesidedness of its doctrines. This is the truth, but it is one side only of the truth, and we must look at the other side, too.

What does "self" mean? Let us beware of the use of words to which different people attach different meanings. Self in this respect is a most dangerous word. Let us define its various meanings and let us distinguish them.

The etymology of "*self*" (German *selb*, Gothic *silba*) is reported in our dictionaries to be doubtful; they agree, however, that the first part contains the reflex *se*, a root which appears also in *same*, while the last part, i. e. *lf*, on the authority of *Kluge*, is said to possibly mean "lord" or "master," the improbability of which (for the word *silb*, "possession," is Old Irish) *Kluge* seems to feel himself, for he adds in parenthesis, as if trying to justify his bold conjecture: "Thus Sanskrit *patis*, 'lord,' is etymologically the same as the Lithuanian *pats*, 'self.'" The most obvious explanation, it appears to me, would be the derivation of the *lf* from *life* (German *Leben*, "to live," and *Leib*, "living body," compare the Gothic *bilsiban*); and this explanation is so simple that I wonder why Kluge did not mention it, for it cannot have escaped him; there may be some objection to it unknown to me. At any rate the word "self" is used in the sense of the etymology from *se* and *life*; for in this all are agreed that it means "this same organism, or the person of whom we speak."

Now, Mr. McCrie maintains "the strict unity of the cosmos on the one hand, and of the individuality of the subjective organism on the other," and declares that "across the 'insuperable threshold' of self none can ever pass." Strange, however, that while, according to the doctrine of solipsism, nothing exists except self, which is my soul, my soul being my bodily organism, Dr. Lewins denies the immortality of the soul and insists upon its final annihilation in death. If *the All* be identified with *self*, or, in other words, if we choose to call the sum-total of all that exists "self," how can we escape the conclusion that there is no real death; that death is only an illusion, and that self must persist after death, for it is the All, and as such it is as indestructible as matter and energy.

The trouble with the word "self" is that it is used in various meanings, and being a term of extraordinary significance in philosophy, religion, ethics, and practical life, people regard their definition as a matter of faith; they do not consider it calmly and quietly, but when confronted with disagreeing opinions grow excited and are unable to discuss the subject on account of their very zeal, which, sincere though it is, beclouds their minds and does not allow them to understand themselves.

Self means our personality: thus far, as we have seen, all are agreed; but what is our personality?

Our personality has originated from sensations. Sensations, our experience teaches us, are commotions of what we call our body, which is an extremely complicated and differentiated system of living substance. When we say, "animal living substance is sentient," we mean that every sensation felt is the subjectively perceived condition of what objectively is, or might be seen to be, a motion; which motion may be due to an internal change or to an external impression.

The simplest living substances of which we know are those indifferentiated specks of sentient matter called amœbas, and scientists have spent a good deal of time and trouble in observing these mysterious creatures, which are representatives of the most primitive animal life.

All living substance is exposed to contact with its surroundings. There is water, there is the air, there are objects of various description. The impressions which they make upon sentient substance we call in a broad term "experience." Moreover, living substance itself is in a constant change. It absorbs the oxygen of the surrounding medium in which it lives, and removes the waste product of the oxidation. It assimilates other materials and discards what it cannot retain. Every impression causes a commotion, and every commotion leaves a permanent trace. The commotion, we assume, is felt, the feeling being exactly analogous to the form of the commotion, and its trace is a disposition to reproduce that feeling. The trace preserves in the living substance some of the essential features of the commotion, and when the trace is again excited by an irritation, of whatever kind it may be, the feeling experienced at the time of the original commotion is revived, although, it may be granted, weaker and dimmer. We observe that living substance shrinks from impressions which exercise a directly disturbing influence upon its structures, thus causing pain, and that it seeks those which gratify its wants, thus affording pleasure. How can these facts be otherwise interpreted than by the assumption of memory, which finds its obvious explanation in an endurance of the traces of former impressions?

According to the theory of evolution we assume that the beginning of the existence of our soul dates back to the first appearance of life upon earth. Every experience remains, every reaction leaves a vestige that is preserved and thus the form of life is more and more differentiated. The chicken that develops in the egg is, to explain the secret in a word, the product of memory. Its ancestors have received innumerable sense-impressions and reacted upon them in special ways. The entirety of the various memory traces which, in addition, by a selection of the fittest varia-

tions have developed into organs, constitute a system of organised structures, called the body of the creature which, when the shell breaks, creeps out ready made. The eye of the newly hatched chick with all that belongs to the eye presupposes that its ancestors exercised the function of seeing. Their seeing is here revived and their exertions are resurrected in a living presence.

In the same way man is born into the world as the product of the memory of his past: but in addition to the inherited structures of his existence, his personality receives the benefit of instruction by example as well as by education. The baby imbibes the ideas of his parents, teachers, and companions; and all the traces received in his impressible mind are embodied as living parts of his personality.

Whosoever you may be, my dear reader, do not be oblivious of the fact that your soul consists of the quintessence of many other souls who continue to live in you although their lives may have reached that consummation which we call death—so much dreaded by pusillanimous minds. What you call your self is the temporarily individualised presence of innumerable noble yearnings and immortal aspirations. Give up the conceit of a separate selfhood which flatters your vanity and sets you in a false position. Learn to comprehend the duties which the recognition of the nature of your being in its relation to your ancestors and to posterity imposes upon you. This wider conception of self is not only truer, it is also nobler, more aspiring and comforting. It liberates the individual from the narrowness of selfhood. You are the product of the past and you owe all you are to the past—nay, you are the past itself as it is changed into the present. And the future will be your work; you are responsible for it; nay, more than that: you will reap what you sow, for as you now are the past in its present incarnation, so you will also be the future that, according to your deeds, grows from the present. We build up our own souls and have to create our own immortality.

Such in brief are the facts, and we have now only to agree about the meaning of the name "self."

Shall we call "self" the original impressions with all they can mean? If we understand by a ray of light the ether-vibration—viz., the objective process—and also the physiological commotion together with its sensations, viz., the subjective product of the process, we can truly say that this is reality and there is nothing beyond. Self in that case is identical with the cosmos so far as the cosmos has impressed itself upon a sentient creature, and is, as it were, reflected in its soul.

Shall we call "self" the total organism in its temporary individual shape, the material of which it consists at a given time, its muscles and nerves, its heartbeats and longings, and its thoughts? This self certainly is a heap of attributes which are subject to a constant change. It will be dissolved and its elements will enter new combinations. The substance will assume new forms and its thoughts, too, will be transferred to other minds where they will be thought again and prove, if they be erroneous, a curse, and if they be true, a source of illimited blessings.

Shall we call "self" that, which, according to our notion, is the essential part of this organic system of matter, feelings, thoughts, and aspirations? Are there lower parts of self and higher parts of self? And are there perhaps also true and false, good and bad, healthy and diseased elements in our self. Does not this organism of ours often contain elements that are foreign to its normal and natural constitution? Are the bacilli a part of the organism, are they ingredients of the self, or are they intruders which are in conflict with the true self? If we thus distinguish in the organism itself foreign elements and hostile factors which cannot properly be called parts of the self, we must of course distinguish between self and not-self and can no longer, as Dr. Lewins proposes to do, identify self and the All.

There is another conception of "self," but I omit it here because Dr. Lewins and Mr. McCrie presumably agree with me that it is an illusion. It is the assumption of a metaphysical self which is supposed to be a being independent of the elements that constitute the self. It is the unity of a self conceived as an entity.[1] The assumption of a metaphysical self involves us in so many contradictions that its conception has been given up. A few isolated thinkers only still adhere to it, because, so it seems, they find comfort in the idea of considering the essence of the soul as intrinsically mysterious.

In practical life the word "self" is frequently used in contrast to all that which is not self, be it society or the world at large, including its various existences and its ordinances.

If we agree on the facts, the definition of words is a mere matter of convenience, and I cannot say that Dr. Lewins's and Mr. McCrie's terminology appeals to me as being useful. On the contrary, it confounds all issues and is liable to distort our comprehension of facts.

The very title of Mr. McCrie's article is misleading. He speaks of the barriers of personality, while in fact, there are no barriers to personality. He says "across the 'insuperable threshold' of self none can ever pass;" this statement denies the occurrence of one of the most

[1] I always understood Dr. Lewins to deny the reality of a metaphysical self, which is nothing but a hypostatisation of the unity of a personality; but there are a few remarks in Mr. McCrie's article which make me doubtful. Immortality truly must be "personal and individual" as Mr. McCrie says, for every preservation of soul is the preservation of some special, i. e. individual, and definite soul-structure. But the unity of a personality in its isolated separateness such as a man's self and bodily organism appears in the ego-consciousness has nothing to do with it.

undeniable facts—that of growth. As a matter of daily experience, every one of us, with a few rare exceptions, is constantly enlarging his self by new experiences. Evolution and progress mean nothing if they are not a crossing of the present threshold of our personalities and physical, mental, and moral growth of self. It is true that every growth is an addition to self and every crossing is a conquest. The new territory at once becomes the domain of self. In that sense, of course, self can never transcend its own existence. But if that is meant, how can solipsism deny the existence of anything that is not-self? Did the newly conquered territory rise into being out of the realms of non-existence?

Our self, as a separate limited being, the barriers of which cage us in like prisoners, does not exist. Says Dr. Lewins in a letter to the *Agnostic Journal* with reference to Goethe's rhapsody on nature:

"All difficulties are got rid of by solipsismal Selfism, in which what Goethe says of 'nature holds good—viz., that we are 'unable to step out of her'—an assertion that Goethe, Dr. Carus, and the editor of this journal fail more or less completely to realise; as is the case also with Kant. For it really means 'out of the Self, or ego'—as Miss Naden writes of 'Nature' in her German poem *Das Ideal*:

'Doch was bist *Du*, als nur das Wiederhallen
Vom alten Seelenklang?'"

This same Dr. Lewins who quotes Miss Naden's beautiful verse denies the immortality of the soul. It appears that he "fails more or less completely to understand" Miss Naden, for Miss Naden arrays herself on our side, not on the side of Dr. Lewins's solipsism, when she explains our self to be "the re-echoing of former soul-utterances."

If self alone were existent, the world of self, its sense-woven images, its ideas and aspirations would be meaningless. They would be dreams, and the question whether an idea is true or false would be a matter of no concern. True would be what suits the self, false what the self abhors. Of course, the ultimate criterion of truth lies in the agreement of all experiences among themselves, and thus every self carries in itself the touchstone of truth; but it is not the subjective element of self which affords the ultimate test, but the objective element, that feature of our experiences which is the same in the experiences of other selves, the formal element of existence which, when systematically formulated, appears in our thoughts as reason.

Mr. McCrie quotes approvingly Prof. T. H. Green's opinion that there are as many bridges as there are persons looking at the bridge; but is this not a conundrum, which, if the real state of things were not quite plain, would throw the whole world of thought into confusion? Let me ask Professor Green what he understands by a bridge, the sense-image which appears in the eye and which is seen to lie at a certain distance outside of the person's body, or that objective something, the presence of which is indicated in the vision of the bridge. There are—as a matter of course—as many bridge-images as there are persons looking at the bridge, but as to the thing itself, there is but one bridge, and any one who denies it tries to mystify himself and others.

Self, in the sense of the soul-structures which dominate our organism as the regulative element of our personality, is the noblest conception of self, and we may call it our true self. This self can be made immortal; it can be transferred into other selves and can, to adopt the simile of Miss Naden, echo in the future life of mankind through all the ages to come.

The self, in the sense of such soul-structures as depict faithfully the cosmos, cannot be identified with the All, but must be conceived as a part of the All. The very nature of self as a true representation of reality presupposes the existence of something beyond, and upon the correctness of the representation depends the intrinsic worth of self.

The self in the sense of an isolated existence which has to live in loneliness and to die in loneliness (a horrible idea!), a mystical soul-monad or an ego entity is an illusion, but the true self is the embodiment of truth, the incarnation of the Logos that pervades all existence, as that feature which we may call world-reason or the harmony of facts, it is the saviour from error and evil; it is the lord; indeed, it must be the lord. Who else shall be the lord? The true self is the appearance of the moral law in the flesh. It is the revelation of God.

P. C.

BUDDHISM IN JAPAN.

BY NOBUTA KISHIMOTO, M. A.

VI. THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM ON THE PEOPLE.

Buddhism, on the one hand, destroyed to a considerable extent the cheerful temperament of the Japanese people, while on the other hand, it deepened their thought and meditation. As we have seen in a preceding article, our early ancestors, before they came in contact with Buddhism, seem to have been very optimistic, fond of feasts and merry-making, and enjoying this earthly life to its utmost extent. They lived mainly in the present. They did not think about the past, while the fear of the future was not yet strong. Their religion was to live happily with gods and men in this present life. What they called sins were mostly what we now call ceremonial sins, sin being almost always identified with some sort of physical uncleanness. Even at present the Japanese are regarded as physically the most clean of all the peoples of the world. When Buddhism came, it taught the

sinfulness of passions, called attention to the evils and sorrows of the present life, and also set people a thinking about the existence both of the past and the future life.

Optimism tends to be shallow and superficial, while pessimism tends to be deep and thoroughgoing. Thus Buddhism changed the buoyant disposition of the early Japanese temperament into the contemplative mood we have now. This, in one sense, may be called one of the bad effects of Buddhism, but from another point of view this is one of its good effects. Men cannot always be satisfied with a cheap and wholesale optimism. Progress is impossible with such optimism, either in science or in art. Then, the deepening of the national temperament is one of the good effects of Buddhism, and this effect is particularly recognisable in the general tone of the Japanese literature.

Further, it is often said against Buddhism that monks and priests are idle and unprofitable members of the community, like drones living on the industry of others. This, in one sense, is true. But we must remember that if Buddhism introduced into Japan certain numbers of these "drones of society," it also introduced various arts, such as painting, sculpture, and architecture. These were the necessary accompaniments, so to speak, of Buddhism. Most of the famous paintings, sculptures, and buildings of the present Japan are religious, but principally Buddhistic. Moreover, the Buddhist monks and priests were not altogether idle and unprofitable. It is true that they were living on the gifts of the believers. But the Christian pastors, too, live on the gifts of the Christians, just as much as the Buddhist clergy do, yet no one calls them idle and unprofitable. Apart from their moral and religious functions, it was mostly the monks who, in their pilgrimages or in search of quiet spots, built roads and spanned bridges, thus making travelling and communication easy. It was often the monks who encouraged the people in the cultivation of the arts of peace and life. Often they themselves led the people in the transformation of the waste land into the fertile rice-fields. Thus, at least in Japan, the Buddhist clergy cannot be denounced as altogether idle and unprofitable.

It is said that Buddhism does not do justice to women, but at the same time it is a remarkable fact that Buddhism works against class-distinctions. It is generally admitted that Buddha had in view the male alone, at least when he first established his Order. According to original Buddhism, marriage is evil and there are two reasons for it. First, marriage means pleasure or satisfaction of desire, and as such it tends to indulgence. Secondly, it is the source of existence, the source of the "four miseries," birth, sickness, old age, and death. As women beguile men and lead them to indulgence and hell, they are regarded as more sinful than men. "Women are sinful," is the prevailing belief among the Japanese women themselves. But as Buddhism recognises no distinction of castes or classes anywhere, it is one of the strong equalising factors of society. All monks are on the same footing; the wealth and power of the family from which one comes has no influence in the Order. If anything distinguishes one monk from another, it is his virtue and wisdom. Worldly distinctions have nothing to do within the gates of the monastery. Not only within, but also without those gates, the influences of this strict teaching of equality was felt indirectly and yet quite powerfully. As in India, so in our feudal times, the separation between the castes or classes of the people was sharp and rigid. Confucianism favored this distinction, but Buddhism was against it, both in theory and in practice. It allowed anybody from any class to join the Order. It denounced worldly fame and prosperity as both illusive and delusive.

There are many instances in our history of priests and monks wielding worldly power and causing trouble in the politics of Japan. Unable to enter here into any detail I will quote two examples only. Towards the beginning of the twelfth century, an able and wise ex-Emperor is said to have declared almost in a desperate tone, "There is nothing I cannot do just as I wish, except three things, which are beyond my power, the eyes of dice, the flood of the Kamo river, and the monks of the monasteries." During the middle of the sixteenth century, that is, towards the close of the "age of wars," when the great General Nobunaga tried to pacify and consolidate the whole country of Japan, he found that the political influence of a party of the wealthy and worldly clergy was a great obstacle. This induced him, on one hand, to introduce Catholic Christianity and to break down the monasteries which were transformed into fortresses. These two facts may suffice to indicate how much political troubles were caused by the priesthood. But at the same time we must remember that it was this same Buddhist priesthood that preserved the learning and literature of the nation during the more than four hundred years of our disorderly and almost anarchical "age of wars." In those times all the soldiers and knights were occupied solely with their battles and intrigues, and the common people were partly too ignorant, partly did not enjoy the necessary ease and leisure. Thus the priests and monks, most of whom were free from all warlike professions and whose monasteries were situated in comparatively safe and quiet places, devoted themselves to the study of philosophy and literature, and this service of the Buddhist Orders to the Japanese civilisation ought to be properly recognised.

We have to add that in certain circles the Buddhist monks and priests are despised instead of being

respected. When a boy is very naughty, the worst and commonest threat on the part of the parents is to tell him, "If you do not improve, I will make of you a monk."

There are several reasons for this disrespect of the Japanese people towards the Buddhist clergy, the most important ones are as follows: As a rule, the great mass of the Buddhist clergy is supplied either by those boys who have nobody to help them, or by those boys who are too unruly to be kept at home in the family. To become a monk means not only to forsake the pleasures of the world, but also it means to be thrown out of society. Hence under ordinary circumstances nobody likes to become a monk or to send his children to a monastery. Thus the monks recruit themselves mostly from the lower classes, even criminals often being pardoned on the condition of becoming monks. Another reason is that while monks and priests are expected to be abstinent from intoxicating drinks and from eating fish, flesh, and vegetables with strong flavor, such as onion, leek, garlic, and the like, they are often accused of indulging in them. They are expected to abstain from all sorts of vices and impurities, but many of them commit deeds of which laymen would be ashamed. Even supposing they are not more immoral than laymen, they being monks and priests are for every fault doubly to blame, and if really more immoral, how much more! The phrases "fish-smelling monks" and "Doctors' intemperance and monks' immorality" are proverbial.

Notwithstanding these charges, we must admit the healthy influence of the Buddhist teachings of an earnest moral discipline and of universal charity. As to moral discipline, the educated people try to lead righteous lives in order to attain to wisdom and enlightenment, while the illiterate are anxious to escape the corporal punishment in the numberless hells. As to universal charity, the present Japanese owe a great deal to Buddhism. Temples and monasteries are asylums not only for men but also for birds and animals. Priests have often been the means of rescuing the lives of men doomed to death. Buddhism taught us to be kind and merciful to men, to animals and even to plants. Alms were freely and generously given not only to monks but also to beggars, and our charity has been carried to such an extreme that there are many beggars in Japan at present.

The love of flowers and sense for beauty among the Japanese cannot be said to have originated with Buddhism; it is inborn in the race. Yet there is no question that Buddhism elevated and refined our taste. In a word, Buddhism, while it pessimised the general tone of the Japanese mind, has also softened it and baptised it with the deep inspiring spirit of humanitarianism and love.

SCIENCE AND REFORM.

NORTHLAND VISITORS.

The result of the Mongolian war once more illustrates the meaning of Horace Walpole's remark that the Temple of Victory ought to be erected in a grove of Norway pines. For the last three thousand years the history of international contests has been a chronicle of wars ending with the victory of northern nations over their southern neighbors. Persia conquering Egypt, but vanquished by Greece, Greece by Rome, Rome by the iron-fisted barbarians of the Hercinian forest, Turkey by Russia, South-Spanish Moors by North-Spanish Goths, North Italian Savoy absorbing its southern neighbors, Prussia bullying Austria and finally attaining the *hegemony* of the German Empire, the same experience in a hundred variations, and curiously confirmed by the apparent exception of the South American war, where Chili, a high-latitude nation, overpowered her northern neighbors in a fair trial of strength. Is frost an indispensable factor of physical vigor? The study of biological evidences would hardly seem to justify that conclusion. In the frosty latitudes of both continents the giant cats of the tropics are represented only by the dwarfs of the feline species. North of the thirtieth parallel the ox-killing boa shrinks to the size of a mouse ki'ling blacksnake, the tapirs and elephants are stunted into wild hogs, as the condors into carrion crows, and palms into grasses. Our next relatives, the frugivorous apes of the equatorial regions, would perish in a snow-storm, and their few northern congeners, the Gibraltar macaque and the Mexican marmoset barely exceed the size of a squirrel. Nor can we doubt that a winterless climate is perfectly compatible with the maximum physical strength of our species. Sesostris, who conquered "all Asia" to the northern limits of the Scythian steppes and Europe to the valley of the Danube, can hardly have commanded a nation of weaklings. Milo of Crotona would probably have floored the champions of the Visigoths and Teutons as easily as he stunned or killed his Thrasian rivals. The water-drinking longshoremen of the Turkish seaports are the stoutest bipeds of the modern world, and the key to the mystery of Norman conquests can be found in the circumstance that frost is an antidote and enables the inhabitants of the colder latitudes to indulge, with comparative impunity, in all sorts of dietetic vices that have palsied the sinews of their southern neighbors.

A CONSISTENT LIFE.

The career of Hermann von Helmholtz was a practical antithesis of that of thousands of mystics, who only two hundred years ago devoted a life-time to the pursuit of hyperphysical phantoms and were haunted by spooks like Spanish horses by gadflies. Professor Helmholtz was not a specialist in the narrow-minded sense of the word and did not permit his manifiold scientific labors to interfere with social duties and sanitary recreations, but he ignored supernaturalism as persistently as St. Gregory Thaumaturgus ignored the domain of physical science. With all his freedom from party bias he could be drawn into political controversies, but the moment the conversation turned on dogmatic questions he became silent or changed the topic with a frown of contemptuous impatience, and in all his voluminous writings there is not the slightest allusion to the established creed of his native land.

FIRE-STORMS.

There is a story of a Pennsylvania Quaker who, in the mild manner of his sect, remonstrated with the teamsters of a petroleum camp for spilling a hogshead of coal-oil on his hay-field. "The day of judgment, friends," said he, "may come suddenly, in spite of all our prayers, but there is, for all that, no sense in promoting the conflagration to this extent." The settlers of our northwestern lumber States could not have come nearer to a complete success, if they had taken a contract to prepare fuel for the flames of the *Dies Irae*. For hundreds of miles along the tracks

of the Minnesota and Michigan railways the woods are littered with piles of dry brushwood and resinous chips, which under the glare of the midsummer sun become almost as combustible as gun-cotton. To illustrate that fact, let any one dry an armful of pine brush or search his garret for the remnants of last year's Christmas tree and cram a dozen of the withered twigs into his chimney grate. Ten to one that the next minute he will hear the alarm-bells of the fire-department: the flames having shot up over the roof like the eruption of a volcano. By a very moderate estimate a billion tons of such fuel are scattered over our northern lumber States, and no eleventh-hour precaution can prevent the peril of an occasional conflagration. A camp-fire started by prowling tramps, or the spark of a locomotive, may ignite a pile of the parched brushwood, and a mere breath of wind will suffice to fan the first blaze into all-devouring flames. The vacuum created by the rising of the heated air is filled by whirlwinds, and with an unlimited supply of fuel the conflagration may spread on the wings of a tornado, like that which a week ago out-raced the express-train of the Minnesota Northern railway. In the extensive government forests of Northern Europe, tragedies of that sort are obviated by the careful removal of dead brushwood, as well as by the isolation system which surrounds a lumber-camp with a circle of incombustible leaf-trees. The demand for the enforcement of similar precautions has been silenced by bribes, but the laws of nature cannot be circumvented in that manner, and in the course of a few decades of similar improvidence the forest region of our northern border States may become as barren as the treeless hills of the Missouri Bad Lands.

TELL-TALE PHOTOGRAPHS.

Some of our metropolitan banks use "Kodaks," operated by a hidden expert, while handling the checks of suspicious customers; but a correspondent of the *Scientific American* describes a still more ingenious use of photography for the detection of crime. In the course of transit between New York and Louisiana, a package of bank-notes had been rifled of its contents, and one of the broken seals had been melted by the application of a smoking candle and re-sealed by thumb-pressure. With a view of identifying the thief, Mr. Carvalho, the detective of the responsible express company, took wax-impressions of the thumbs of all the officials through whose hands the consignment could possibly have passed. These impressions were then photographed on an enlarged scale, and one of them clearly agreed with the seal manual of a messenger who had evidently failed to study the possibilities of the Bertillon system.

CIRCUS ECHOES.

The idea of making history a mere date register of coronations and battles was quite foreign to the writers of antiquity—viz., the chatty chronicles of Livy and Suetonius,—but originated in the mediæval convent-schools, whose teachers could not afford to divulge details about the joyous public life of Greece and Rome. They might interlard their chronological lectures with allusions to the inhumanities of a despotic Cæsar but carefully abstained from mentioning his munificence in the endowment of public pleasure resorts, lest their pupils, like young Hazlitt, should come to the conclusion that those old heathens must have had more fun in a fortnight than a modern tithe-paying Christian in fourteen years.

F. L. OSWALD.

BOOK NOTICES.

Small Talk About Business, by A. E. Rice, is a little book of sixty pages full of good common-sense advice for business people, There are about seventy points discussed, such as "Avoiding Speculation," "How to Win Credit," "Women Holding Property," "Teaching Wives the Ways of Business," "Teaching Children the Ways of Business," "Giving and Taking Receipts," "Examining Real Estate Titles," "How to Send Away Money," "Trifling With Signature," "Being Careful of Strangers," etc., all subjects being treated in a concise and practical way. (Fremont, Ohio: Fremont Publishing Co. 1892. Price, paper, 40 cents; cloth, 75 cents.)

AHASUERUS.

BY VOLTAIRINE DE CLEYRE.

Pale, ghostly Vision from the coffined years,
  Planting the cross with thy world wandering feet,
  Stern Watcher through the centuries' storm and beat,
In those sad eyes, between those grooves of tears,
  Those eyes like caves where sunlight never dwells
  And stars but dimly shine, stand sentinels
That watch with patient hope, through weary days,
  That somewhere, sometime, He indeed may "come,"
And thou at last find thee a resting-place,
  Blast-driven leaf of Man, within the tomb.

Aye, they have cursed thee with the bitter curse,
  And driven thee with scourges o'er the world;
  Tyrants have crushed thee, Ignorance has hurled
Its black anathema;—but Death's pale hearse
  That bore them graveward, passed thee silently,
  And vainly didst thou stretch thy hands and cry:
"Take me instead"; not yet for thee the time,
  Not yet—not yet; thy bruised and mangled limbs
Must still drag on, still feed the Vulture, Crime,
  With bleeding flesh, till rust its steel beak dims.

Aye, "till He come,"—HE—FREEDOM, JUSTICE, and PEACE,
  Till then shalt thou cry warning through the earth,
  Unheeding pain, untouched by death and birth,
Proclaiming "Woe, woe, woe," till men shall cease
  To seek for Christ within the senseless skies,
  And, joyous, find Him in each others' eyes.
Then shall be builded such a tomb for thee
  Shall beggar kings as diamonds outshine dew!
The Universal Heart of Man shall be
  The sacred urn of "the accursed Jew."

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