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SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.*

BY FELIX L. OSWALD.

THE neighborhood of Meran, in the Austrian Alps, with their wealth of ancient pine-forests and the dry, cool breezes of an airy highland, enjoys a rarely paralleled combination of natural chances for the attainment of longevity. Almost in sight of the same Alps, the city of Mantua, with its girdle of festering lagoons, is avoided by tourists on account of its exceptional unhealthiness.

Suppose a boy, well instructed in all the principles of rational hygiene, were to be adopted by an intelligent Mantua physician, while his twin-brother were to stray to the highlands of Meran and find a home in a village of cheese-peddling rustics, with their crass sanitary prejudices. Which of them would stand the best chance of survival? A magnificent climate, offset by prejudice, on the one side; climatic disadvantages, redeemed by social and educational influences, on the other.

In America nature has given us an opportunity to study the results of a similar experiment on a very large scale. Along the southern borders of the United States, some five million descendants of the Latin race have been brought under the more or less direct influence of Saxon civilization. In the temperate zone of South America about the same number of Latin colonists enjoy a climate tending to revive every dormant instinct of manhood and energy, but often in situations leaving their spiritual taskmasters free to perpetuate the superstitions of the Middle Ages in full security from the interference of heretical strangers.

The instance of the so called Republic of Ecuador illustrates the baneful significance of that predicament, and shows to what extent the priests of anti-naturalism are still ready to sacrifice freedom and happiness on the altar of their idol. By a thorough monopoly of educational institutes, by a jealous control of the press and of what might be called the vocal instruction of the masses, a million descendants of Inquisition-ridden ancestors have been kept from as much as suspecting the fact that the night of mediæval insanity has anywhere been broken by the dawn of a new era. But, on the other hand, the educational history of the Republic of Chile proves how precari-

ous is the tenure of power enjoyed by the managers of such latter-day theocracies. The prerogatives of the clerical vampires haunting the valleys of the Equatorial Andes, may be forfeited by such accidents as a slight change in the proposed direction of the South American West Shore Railroad, or the discovery of placer-mines extensive enough to attract a large number of foreign adventurers.

In 1840 Chile was still as much in the power of the priests as Portugal or Castile. The constitutional provision making Roman Catholicism the only legal creed, had been accepted with a majority of fifty-two in sixty-eight votes. President Bulnes and the dictator Preire were mere tools in the hand of the archbishop of Santiago. A so-called "National Library," collected at considerable expense and enlarged by a yearly appropriation, was catalogued in 1852 and found to contain chiefly theological text-books.

From that lethargy the dormant, but by no means deficient, energies of the nation were roused by the party-conflicts which in 1856 culminated in the election of Don Manuel Montt, a scholar and free-thinker, who owed his nomination to the influence of a junta of patriots arraigned against the more and more intolerable despotism of the church-party. In Peru the arrogance of the same party has been passively endured for a series of centuries by the ethnological kinsmen of the colonists, who twenty degrees further south risked life and property in the struggle for moral emancipation, and whose practical commonsense has since risen superior to the semi-liberal traditions guiding the founders of our own commonwealth. Instinctively, if not by dint of historical studies, the reformers of Chile have recognized the fact that the "separation of Church and State" is doomed to remain an empty name unless accompanied by the far more important separation of Church and School, and for thirty-five years they have directed their incessant efforts to the accomplishment of the task of wresting the education of the young from the hands of the priests. The adoption of a law interdicting the interference of the clergy in affairs entrusted to the Government commissioners of public instruction, was celebrated as a signal national triumph, and even the bribe of free-tuition does no longer tempt intelligent parents to send their chil-

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dren to the clerical colleges. As a counter-measure to the possible influence of that bribe free text-books are furnished to the pupils of the public schools from a fund raised partly by voluntary contributions. Since 1870 not less than 424 private schools have been founded under the auspices of the Liberals; museums and public libraries have been opened in sixteen of the larger provincial towns, civil marriages have been legalized, and the revised code of 1882 repeals numerous civil disabilities formerly attaching to dissenters and illegitimate children. Every attempt to rivet the broken shackles of clerical despotism has proved that south of the thirtieth parallel the disciples of Ignatius Loyola risk to stray out of their latitude, for it is a curious fact that the strongholds of clericalism are still in the northern provinces, along the borders of torpid Peru.

But nowhere else on earth has the history of civilization more clearly demonstrated the fallacy of an axiom which Henry Buckle pretended to deduce from the moral contrast of Hindostan and northwestern Europe: the rule, namely, that the energy of nature and of man stand in inverse proportion. Buckle's theory, as defined in the opening chapters of his great philosophical work, seems to have been about as follows: Wherever Nature is grand and impressive, in countries of majestic mountains, in the regions of earthquakes and violent storms, man is cowed into abject inactivity and grovelling superstitions. On the other hand, where Nature is tame, man ventures to use his reason and begins to discover his ability of coping with the hostile powers of the elements, thus developing habits of self-reliance. That hypothesis seems really strikingly confirmed by the instance of India with its heaven-kissing mountains and dust-kissing natives, or of Great Britain, without a single inaccessible hill-top or unbridgeable stream, and a bustling, self-reliant, nature-subduing population. But what about Russia, where Nature is miserably tame and man not less miserably indolent and superstitious; what about Scandinavia where the most impressive phenomena of physical geography have failed to daunt the pluck of the natives; what about ancient Greece, with its snow-capped Olympuses, deep seas and by no means infrequent earthquakes?

But the conclusiveness even of the last-named instance is eclipsed by that of the Republic of Chile. From north to south the country is an incessant battle-ground of the Phlegraen Titans, the veritable "Land of Earthquakes," as Prof. Mervin calls it, a land not much larger than the state of Texas, yet saddled with twenty-seven undoubtedly active and four more "suspected" volcanoes. During a period of three years the records of the Government observatory of La Serena in the province of Coquimbo show a list of 156

heavy shocks, besides countless "temblores"—tremors, which are described as more frequent than the rain-showers of our northern latitude. Since the arrival of the first Spanish colonists (1550-60) i. e., during a period of little more than three hundred years, the history of the country records the occurrence of not less than sixteen memorably destructive earthquakes, all attended with a considerable loss of property and life. That of 1570 obliterated the town of Concepcion, where 2,000 persons perished under the ruins of the falling walls; that of 1647 demolished Santiago and shook down prodigious avalanches of mountain-debris, causing the destruction of 58,000 head of cattle. In 1730 Valparaiso, La Serena, Coquimbo, and several hundred villages were devastated in less than ten minutes, and during the volcanic convulsions of 1822 the entire coast of Chile for a distance of fifty geographical miles north and south of Valparaiso was upheaved or rather permanently uplifted between five and six feet. Storms of appalling violence sweep the coast every year from August to November, and the scenery of the great main-chain of the Andes as seen from every hill along the shoreline of 1800 miles, could hardly be grander: Snow-peaks of 20,000 to 23,500 feet piercing a deep-blue sky, dizzy precipices and apparently bottomless gorges of the volcanic foothills, backed by three successive ranges of steep, stern Sierras: all in all the very ideal of a country to test the correctness of Mr. Buckle's hypothesis. Even the *fauna* of the wilderness adds its terrors to that array of appalling factors: there are giant-cats in the woods and bellowing sea-lions on the coast, and the Chilean Andes, alone of all South American highlands, are haunted by a species of bear, the *ursus ornatus*.

Yet all those deterrents are more than offset by the energy-encouraging influence of a single circumstance: the moderate range of the yearly temperature, which at Santiago, for instance, has never been known to rise above 90° Fahrenheit, nor to sink below 47°. Throughout the long coast-plain there are not more than twenty days in the year, when the state of the weather does not make outdoor-work a pleasure. The highlands abound in minerals and constantly invite the adventurous to a region of invigorating atmospheric influences. The physical energy of the natives is not seen only in their material progress: the construction of wharves and railways, but was signalized during the recent war with Peru in a way not apt to be forgotten by the neighbors of the plucky republic. In nearly every battle the Chilenos dropped their rifles and rushed in to decide the contest at close quarters, with their formidable hunting-knives. That preference for hand-to-hand conflicts has always been a characteristic of physically superior races. Lieutenant Gillis,

who passed many years in South America, states as his deliberate opinion that in the strength of their arm muscles the Chilean rustics have no match among the nations of the modern world.

Even now, Chile is an object of aversion among her indolent South American sister-republics, as Prussia and Old England were among the European sisterhood of states, but in the long run climatic influences will prevail against the results of political intrigue. Santiago, the Mars of the Spanish race will transfer his favorite temple from Compostella to southern Chile; and it is a safe prediction that before the middle of the next century a city at the foot of the southern Andes will have become the political metropolis of a very large territory. Sooner or later border-quarrels or commercial rivalry will precipitate the long-expected struggle for supremacy between Chile and the Argentine Republic—a struggle which will end by giving the numerically inferior, but in more essential respects superior, race the hegemony of all the territories included in the temperate zone of South America.

And North American invaders of that zone may yet be destined to share the experience of the conquistador Valdivia, who pursued a prosperous march along the shores of the Pacific, till he crossed the Rio Rapel, where he encountered the border-guards of the Araucanos. The same warriors who had stopped the invasion of the Incas, here attacked his camp with a resolution which soon obliged him to recross the river to save his force from total destruction. "Not one of the Spanish commanders," says the historian Corrasco, "had ever witnessed a similar attack. Many of them had seen hard fighting before, having served both in Morocco and Italy, but the natives of this country appeared to know neither fear nor fatigue."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LIVING THE TRUTH.

THEY are but few who do the thinking of mankind, and the great masses are led by the few sometimes in the right, sometimes in the wrong direction. It matters little whether this is to be regretted or not, it remains a fact and must be faced. Yet this state of things makes every independent thinker the more valuable. Every man who is an independent thinker is a power in his sphere, and will contribute a share to the further evolution of thought in humanity.

We have met here from the far East and the far West, from the North and from the South to strengthen independent thought, to encourage thinking people all over the country, to arouse the indifferent and to gain the assistance that is needed in the great work of progress; for the harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

We have come here not only to enjoy in a prophetic vision the ideal future of mankind, to consider how eventually thoughtlessness will be lessened, how ignorance and superstition will disappear, but also to work for that ideal. And it is a serious, a great, a sublime undertaking to which our efforts are devoted. We have come here to meet some of the thinking people of our country, some of those who work for the liberation of humanity from the fetters of error and indifference.

I do not hesitate to say that indifference is worse than superstition. I am always glad to meet a thinking man who is earnest in his defense of some old creed, if he is only honest. However much I may differ from his views I shall always treat him with the respect due to sincerity. Difference of opinion must never induce us to set aside justice; and after all a man who is sincere and has an independent conviction, even though his conviction be utterly wrong, does a greater service to progress than the indifferent man who will always belong to that party which happens to be the fashion of the day. Indifference more than error hinders progress.

I see the thinkers of mankind, few though they are, divided into two camps. The champions of the one trust in progress and work for constant amelioration; the champions of the other believe that innovations are extremely dangerous, and the best thing for humanity would be to remain stationary. Those of the latter class will concede perhaps that in the domain of industry and in the sciences progress must be made, but they do not believe in the progress of religion. Their religion is to them perfection, it represents in their minds absolute truth, and progress of absolute truth, progress of something that is already perfection, is, as a matter of course, gilding refined gold.

The battle waxes hot between the two parties, the former is strong through its alliance with scientific aspirations, but the latter is still in the majority. It is in possession of the great mass of indifferent people; and the champions of progress may often become despondent so as to give up all hope of a final victory. Ignorance seems stronger than knowledge and folly more powerful than wisdom. In a moment of such despair Schiller is said to have exclaimed: "Against stupidity fight even Gods in vain."

Who among us when confronted with unconquerable superstitions, has not had such sentiments at one moment of his life or another? And now I ask, can we know which party in the end will be victorious? Can we know the means by which alone a victory is to be achieved? Let me in a few words indicate the answer which I trust is very simple in the general plan of its main idea, and yet so very complex in its ap-

plication that we could philosophize on the subject as long as we live. Indeed, mankind does philosophize on the subject and has never as yet got tired of it. And I suppose it never will, for here lies the object of all science, of all knowledge, of all philosophy.

What will conquer in the end? Truth will conquer in the end. By what means will truth conquer? By being truth, or in other words by morality. That party will conquer, be it ever so weak in numbers, be it ever so badly represented, that is one with truth. But it is not sufficient merely to know the truth. Truth must be lived.

Only by living the truth shall we be able to conquer the world. Therefore it is necessary to recognize the all-importance of morality. The ethical problem (as I have often said on other occasions) is the burning question of the day. To know the truth, to preach the truth, and also to denounce the untruth of superstitions is very important; but it is more important to live the truth.

If you have two men, one of whom knows the truth but does not live it, while the other lives the truth but does not know it; who must be regarded as nearer the truth? Certainly he who ignorant of the truth lives it, and not he who knowing the truth does not.

What is truth? Truth is agreement with the facts of reality. Truth accordingly is not a mere negation of untruth, not a mere rejection of superstitions. Truth is positive, it is the correct recognition of facts as well as of the laws that live in the facts and have been abstracted therefrom by science. Morality is the agreement of our actions with truth, and the most important truths for the regulation of men's actions are the laws which rule the relations between man and man forming the conditions of human society.

The strength of the many organizations that still hold to antiquated superstitions lies in the fact that after all they try their best to obey the moral laws. And the weakness of many free-thinking persons as well as organizations, lies in their neglect of ethics. They do not feel the urgency of demanding strictness in morals; they are perhaps not exactly immoral but they are indifferent about the claims of morality.

Dr. Westbrook, the honored President of this body, has the great merit of having pushed the ethical question to the front by proposing a prize for the best practical guide in establishing secular morality, i. e., morality not based upon supernatural revelation but upon the facts of life. It is in this spirit that he presides over the Secular Union and may he long live to advance the work he has begun!

Here lies the secret of success. The church has grown into existence and has attained its power because it was the ethical teacher of mankind in the

past. On the one hand it appears that the church refuses to progress, and on the other hand progressive thought has heretofore too much neglected to become practical or in other words to push the moral applications of truth.

We stand now before a crisis: Either the churches will reform; they will cease to believe in superstitions; they will acknowledge truth and the correctness of the scientific methods of reaching truth; in one word they will become secular institutions, institutions adapted to the moral wants of the world we live in; in which case they will remain the ethical teachers of mankind; or those institutions which represent progressive thought and have recognized truth and the rational means of reaching truth, will more and more inculcate the practical applications of truth; and if they do, *they* will become the moral teachers of mankind.

Truth must conquer in the end; but knowing the truth is not as yet sufficient; it is *living* the truth which will gain the victory.

P. C.

SCIENCE AND ETHICS.

TO BASE ethics on facts, to derive the rules of our attitude toward facts from experience, to shape our ideals, not from the airy stuff of something beyond the ken of science, but in accordance with laws derived from reality, this is (as I said in my first lecture) the line of demarcation between the old and the new ethics. Mr. Salter by rejecting science places himself upon the antiquated ground of intuitionism. I know that he rejects the old fashioned supernaturalism, but indeed his view (if expressed with consistency) ought to appear as supernaturalism. He says:

"Conscience is not knowledge,—for knowledge is of what is, and conscience is the thought of what ought to be."

And in other passages (p. 304):

"These moral laws of our being are so close and constitutional to us that the very existence of virtue is bound up with a recognition of them."

"Who can give a reason for the supreme rule? Indeed, no serious man wants a reason. The supreme command appeals immediately to the human mind; it is an assertion of the human mind."

"Amiel, 'the sweet-souled Genevan mystic,' says: 'It is not history which teaches righteousness to the conscience; it is conscience which teaches righteousness to history. The actual is corrupting; it is *we* who rectify it by loyalty to the ideal.'"

Might these expressions not occur in any work of an intuitionist? Is not in this way, by considering conscience as something that lies beyond the pale of science, beyond the knowable realm of natural facts, mysticism introduced as an essential element of morality? And indeed, Mr. Salter does not approve of it that "morality is thought to be without mystery." There is a dualism lurking in Mr. Salter's ethics, as

if the moral order were something radically different from the order of this world :

" Though it [morality] warns us and commands us, it does so in that supreme act in which we warn and command ourselves ; it is the utterance of the God in us, of the 'prophetic soul' in which we all share, and signifies that we are part and parcel of another order of things than that which we can see and handle, and are rooted in somewhat firmer than the earth, and more ancient, more venerable than the heavens "

There is no objection to defining morality in poetical terms as "the utterance of God" (i. e., the immanent God) or as the "prophetic soul," but it is not another order of the world. Morality is based upon, it is creating a better state of things by conforming to the order of this very same world in which we live.

The moral law is not considered by Mr. Salter as the highest natural law, higher than other natural laws ; but it is said to be above or outside of nature. Mr. Salter says :

" The moral sentiment dwarfs Nature, it goes out to that which is beyond Nature."

In consistency with his view that the moral sentiment goes out to that which is beyond nature, Mr. Salter rejects science as a basis of ethics. He says :

" Agnosticism is no more than a confession of the *limitations* of our knowledge. But what we do not know is hardly a basis for action . . . Nor is science, teaching us positively what we do know, a sufficient guide for us. I will yield to none in my admiration and wonder before the world which science has revealed to us. How has space widened and time grown infinite, and how does one law seem to hold in its grasp the mighty movements of systems and the least tear that trickles down a child's face ! It is a *universe*, majestic, solemn, in the midst of which we live, and it would seem to suggest to us great and solemn thoughts as to what our own lives should be.

" But when I turn from Nature to consider human life and the order of human society, my reverence in one way lessens rather than grows deeper. The science that reports faithfully, philosophically the varied facts of our human existence is not altogether a pleasant page to read. History, which is one branch of the science of man, tells of animalism, of brutal selfishness, of towering wrongs, of slow returning justice, often of a blind infuriated justice, that punishes the innocent and leaves the guilty free. And observation—statistics, which is nothing else than scientific observation—reveals almost as many things that ought not to be as things which should be. Statistics of crime are just as much science as would be statistics of peace and order,—statistics of prostitution as truly scientific as those of family purity, of poverty as truly as those of comfort and competence.

" What science teaches must invariably be accepted as fact, but it may none the less provoke moral repulsion and rebellion. We may say to some of the facts, 'You have no right to be!' Yes, the very end of our scientific observation may sometimes be to render such observation in the future impossible,—that is, to destroy the facts. Plainly, then, science is not ultimate. It tells us simply what is ; it tells us nothing of what ought to be. What ought to be,—that is reported to us by a higher faculty than that of scientific observation ; it is an assertion, a demand of the conscience.

" Here, then, is to my mind the true basis of our movement,—not the old religions ; not religion itself, in the popular under-

standing of that term ; not agnosticism, though as matter of fact some of us may be agnostics ; not science, though the facts of science, every one of them, should have our recognition. It is something deeper and more ancient, I might say, than any of these : it is the rock of conscience, the eternal laws that announce themselves in man's moral nature . . . Conscience, in a word, ushers us into an ideal realm."

The ideal realm is nothing that stands in contradiction to the facts of life. Ideals which do not conform to the laws of nature derived from facts, are mere dreams.* Ideals must be based on science, in order to be realizable ; and ideals that are unrealizable, impossibilities, are mirages, but not ideals.

Mr. Salter has a wrong and too limited conception of science ; he takes science to mean knowledge, viz., a mere understanding, of facts, but he excludes from his definition "our judgment upon facts." He says :

" In the strict sense of the word, science—the science of man as truly as any other—knows nothing of right and wrong, but only of what is ; of facts, and the law of their connection. To the pure understanding, virtue and vice do not exist. These notions arise in virtue of our judgment upon facts ; and the organ of that judgment is other than that by which we learn of and explain the facts themselves : men call it Conscience."

The sole purpose of science is the application of science. As Mr. Salter rightly says : "For man is not only to know, but to do and to achieve." We study nature, and science exists for doing and achieving. In order to do and to achieve we must know. Knowledge is the basis of any achievement, not only in practical business for manufacturing, invention etc., but also for moral life. There is no conscience without knowledge, there is no *Gewissen* without *Wissen*. Conscience is not a faculty that exists prior to knowledge of facts, but it develops from a comprehension of facts, from a knowledge of the consequences of human action. Mr. Salter says (p. 37) :

" It is strange, when we bear in mind the ideal nature of morality, to hear that morality must be based upon facts. Morality is not really a question of facts, but of the right of facts to be, of their correspondence with a standard of the mind. . . . Base morality on facts ? Which facts ? There are innumerable facts, an induction from which would only give us immorality. The good facts, then ? But plainly, this is moving in a circle. In truth, there is nothing on which to base morality. We do not so much find it, as demand it in the world.

Can anyone derive from evils and the consequences of evils, rules of iniquity ? The facts that ought not to be, speak loud, very loud ; they speak with no uncertain voice, and morality is preached mainly on account of such facts as, like the innocent Abel's blood, cry out to heaven ! Suppose that a murderer has no conscience to guide him, will not the results of his crime teach him a most impressive lesson ? The results of his crime will set him thinking, so that he will ask himself : Was it right to slay my brother ? The

* See *The Ethical Problem*, pp. 19 and 23.

evils of immorality and the consequences of these evils are a most powerful stimulus for asking the question what is right and what is wrong? Man has to face the facts of life and has to find out the right way of salvation by experience. His experience appears first as a dim instinct, often erring and sometimes hitting upon the right thing. Yet there is no other guide, no supernatural revelation, no intuitional faculty (in the sense of intuitionism), no direct commands that might 'appeal immediately to the human mind.'

Mr. Salter may not call himself an intuitionist, but he takes the standpoint of intuitionism. He does not call his world-conception supernaturalism; but it is supernaturalism. While the Unitarians, following Theodore Parker, are seriously at work to "rationalize religion," while many Jewish rabbis recognize the truth of monism and therewith acknowledge the immanence of God, the leaders of the ethical societies remain upon the dualistic standpoint of extranaturalism.

It is true the leaders of the ethical societies have dropped the old fashioned terminology of supernaturalism. Yet their ethics is as supernatural as the old conception of an extramundane deity. The idea of God is replaced by the ethical command, but the latter has remained as mysterious and transcendent, extramundane and extranatural as was the Jehovah of old-fashioned dogmatism.

P. C.

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE AMERICAN SECULAR UNION.

THE National Congress of the American Secular Union met last Friday, October 31st 1890, in Portsmouth, Ohio, and remained in session till Sunday night. Dr. R. B. Westbrook of Philadelphia acted as President, Miss Craddock as Corresponding Secretary, and both were re-elected for the following year. The Opera House, where the Congress was held, was crowded on all occasions, perhaps with the sole exception of Saturday when the business meeting was held; and we can say without hesitation that the whole convention was a great success.

On Friday Mr. Treutheart, President of the Secular Union of Portsmouth, greeted the guests and explained in most sympathetic words the need of secular reform in and out of the churches. Judge F. C. Searl read a poem of welcome, and Dr. Westbrook replied to both. Miss Ida C. Craddock delivered an address on "The Methods of Extending the Work of the Secular Union." She spoke of the different parties in the Union, the Radicals and the Conservatives, and proposed plans for educating the young. It must be remembered that the work of the Corresponding Secretary is of great importance as the Adjutant-General of the President and as the connecting link among all the Unions over the Country. Upon the good tact and circumspection of the secretary, to a great extent, did and will depend the fate of the whole organization. Miss Craddock displayed great ability and a woman's quick wit on all occasions.

On the succeeding days, addresses were delivered by Dr. Westbrook, who discussed the question: "Shall the Bible be read in the Public Schools?" He presented the negative of the subject with great vigor and competency. Mrs. M. A. Freeman of

New York spoke on the Battle for Bread. Her address was rather an unfolding of dissolving views than a lecture and, considering the beautiful language, might fitly be called a poem in prose. Mrs. Lucy N. Coleman, the well-known abolitionist, related reminiscences of days long past. She was the woman Nestor of the Congress. She did not deliver addresses but talks, and there was no one in the audience who did not gladly listen to the words which welled like a never-ceasing spring from her lips, refreshing every heart; for her whole deportment and the sound sentiment of her utterances possessed the charms of womanhood which in advanced years surpasses even the beauty of youth.

Other addresses were delivered by Dr. Henrietta P. Westbrook, wife of the President, Judge Waite of Chicago, Thaddeus B. Wakeman, Miss Voltarine de Cleve, L. K. Washburn, of the Boston *Investigator*, Charles Watts, and John R. Charlesworth. A short address by Dr. Carus is published in the present number. The discussion of ethical problems apparently claimed the greatest interest. Mr. Wakeman spoke impressively on the new world conception which has to become a new religion. Mr. Watts with enthusiastic fervor preached as a priest of this new religion, and although disclaiming all belief in prayer finished with a poetical orison to Nature's God, that carried the audience.

Miss Voltarine de Cleve, who was introduced by the President as one of the most talented and at the same time most radical young ladies of the country, discussed the Ethical Problem with great seriousness and philosophical depth. The results of thoughts which she presented would have been more startling, if the audience had been able to follow her argument. She presented and criticized mainly two views of ethics; first, the egoistic interpretation of ethical impulses, and secondly the happiness theory of a refined hedonism. She rejected both these pet theories of the present age and replaced them by what might be called the ethics of natural necessity. Miss de Cleve professes to be an anarchist, but in her lecture she dealt the deathblow to that kind of anarchism which is based upon the sovereignty of the ego. She understands by anarchism the abolition of rule, and demands the substitution of administration and regulation. The passages in Miss de Cleve's lecture on the littleness of the "me" in comparison with the great universe, were most pointed and effective. Not in the "me" must the basis of ethics be sought, but in the universe. What is your little "me," she asked, but a bundle of traditions? And it grows whether you will or not, not according to your pleasure, or in consequence of your yearning for happiness, but because it must.

It must not be forgotten that among the guests were representatives, also, of the old creeds. Professor I. O. Corliss, the Corresponding Secretary of the National Religious Liberty Association, read an address in which from the Christian standpoint of the latter-day adventists he demanded the abolition of any Sunday-enforcing regulations, and Dr. David Phillipson, a liberal and well-known Rabbi of Cincinnati, delivered an eloquent address in the defense of the Bible, which was most enthusiastically received by this radical audience. He presented the other side of the question in opposition to Dr. Westbrook. But however different both views appear, they are not irreconcilable. Dr. Westbrook confined his objection solely to the indiscriminate use of the Bible as a schoolbook, declaring that the children were provoked by the methods employed to read the passages skipped; while Dr. Phillipson did not defend the orthodox interpretation put upon the Bible but praised it for its literary, historical, and ethical importance.

CURRENT TOPICS.

A VERY entertaining book just published is "The Art of Authorship," a collection of literary prescriptions by 178 writers, who have won success as poets, novelists, or historians. No doubt, it will be eagerly bought by ambitious persons who aspire to lit-

erary fame. Their disappointment will be heavy when they learn from the testimony of so many expert witnesses that there is no "Art of Authorship," and that the power to write anything worth reading is a gift, strengthened by study, and polished by work. The prescriptions were cleverly obtained by an inquirer who supposed that the mystic ingredients of a history, novel, or poem, could be procured as easily as a recipe for making piecrust. Had he found the formula for genius, we could bind a boy apprentice to a poet or a novelist, as confidently as to a blacksmith or a tailor. Unfortunately, he failed; but like Boswell, he has given us a book full of delightful egotism. To catch 178 authors with merely a hook and line, using a little flattery for bait, is a performance greatly to be praised, because the innocent victims when they responded had been beguiled of all suspicion that they were "interviewed" for print. It is well that this fisher for gudgeons caught so many authors, but it would have been better had he caught the "Art" of authorship. What a prize would have been won, had some skillful angler of the sixteenth century captured Master William Shakespeare, and extracted from him the knack of making Hamlets and Othellos; but the very speculation leads us into the Slough of Despond, where the frogs croak in our ears for ever, "A poet is born; not made."

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There is fine character study in that "Art of Authorship," and it is a consolation to discover that the great writers, even the "immortals," are but mortals like ourselves, all subject to the same hopes, and cares, and vanities. For instance what a fine quality of spirit sparkles in the reply of Marie Corelli, a novelist not yet much known to fame. The searcher for the "art of authorship," was thoughtless enough to ask if she had given herself any literary training "in early life," and he got this well deserved rap on the knuckles for his awkwardness; "I think it is but fair to tell you that I am in early life still: I suppose you would not call a woman of four and twenty very old." The mistake about her age was easy enough to make, for Miss Corelli moralizes far beyond her years; more like the bearded Plato than a woman of twenty four. Nothing can be more patriarchal than the following rebuke, "To write for the sake of gaining a livelihood only is a terrible mistake, one that hundreds of authors commit every day." True, alas too true; and the only apology for the reprehensible practice is that even the immortals must have bread. The worm who spins the silken thread is entitled to his mulberry leaf; and the novelist who spins yarn of another kind, must have his mulberry leaf also, or the yarn will be unspun. There is high-toned satire, 18 carats fine, in the boast of Miss Corelli: "I write for the love of writing, not for the sake of money or reputation—the former I have without exertion, the latter is not worth a pin's point in the general economy of the universe." That latter sentiment is nearly cynical enough for Diogenes himself; and it excuses the mistake so innocently made about Miss Corelli's age. Any man or woman who can scorn the love of money and of reputation too, ought to be at least four times twenty four years old.

* * *

The answer of Professor Huxley looks very much like his portrait; there is such rugged independence in the lines. He says, "I never had the fortune, good or evil, to receive any guidance or instruction in the art of literary composition. It is possibly for that reason I have always turned a deaf ear to the common advice to 'study good models,' to 'give your days and nights to Addison,' and so on." Then he advises the young author not to ape Addison or any of the great writers, but to make his own style, as they made theirs. It may be a surprise to Professor Huxley to find from the testimony of this book that some good writers have modelled their style on him. As great a man as Haeckel says, "I have not even read much; mostly Goethe, Lessing, Humboldt, Schlei-

der, Huxley and Darwin. I have always endeavored to acknowledge Nature as the first and best mistress." John Strange Winter testifies thus: "All work in the world is no use without the little touch of divine genius, which is born, not made; and without the work and care, and thought, the genius is like the talent hidden in a napkin." With a twang of self-righteousness, perhaps involuntary, R. M. Ballantyne says, "The power with which you credit me, whatever may be its value, I regard as a direct gift from God." James Russell Lowell expresses the opinion that "Man's style is born with him"; and this also appears to be the belief of H. H. Boyesen, who says, "The gift of style is largely inherited and instinctive." He is reinforced by Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who got his genius by inheritance, as a man sometimes gets a farm. He says, "I came to literature by heredity." Julian Hawthorne must have thought the subject under enquiry was the quantity, and not the quality of words, and how to fill the greatest number of pages in the shortest time, for he boastfully says, "The other day I wrote a novel of 70,000 words in less than three weeks." This fabulous performance equals the feat of the three Irishmen, who testified that half of them came over in one ship, and half in another; and even that in less Hibernian than the following statement which appeared lately in a London paper: "Yesterday morning a two-days convention was held in Exeter Hall." That novel written the "other day in less than three weeks," must have been fearfully and wonderfully made.

* * *

The importance of the exact word in a sentence is vividly shown by Mark Twain, who tells us that "The difference between the *almost right* word and the *right* word is really a large matter. 'Tis the difference," he says, "between the lightning bug and the lightning." Mr. R. D. Blackmore, the author of Lorna Doone, seems to think that the right word is often the result of accident, for he believes that "A good deal depends upon luck, as well as care." There may be a grain of truth in this, but the contingency is not to be depended on, except by those who write novels of seventy thousand words in three weeks. Of course, it was to be expected that there would be much difference of opinion among so many witnesses as to the value of the great literary "models." The keenest controversy is excited by Macaulay, whose literary style is enthusiastically praised by some, and sharply criticised by others. His partisans are in the majority, although Aubrey De Vere says, "I cannot sympathize with the admiration often expressed for Macaulay," and George Meredith speaks of "the wonderful sweep of a sentence from Gibbon, from whose forge Macaulay got his inferior hammer." To make his criticism more impressive, he continues thus: "Warn against excessive antithesis—a trick for pamphleteers." This, though intended for Macaulay, will fall harmless, because one charm of his beautiful style is the felicitous use he makes of antithesis. If, in the exuberance of his fancy, he sometimes carries antithesis to excess, it is the excess of light. Among the authors who testify in "The Art of Authorship," the witnesses for Macaulay have greater fame in letters than those on the opposite side. For example, Edward A. Freeman, the historian of "The Norman Conquest," says: "I have learned more in the matter of style from Lord Macaulay, than from any other writer living or dead. Nobody ever had to read a sentence of his twice over to know what he meant; that I guess is the reason why every conceited young babbler thinks it fine to have a fling at him." Will Mr. George Meredith kindly make a note of that?

* * *

Hume, as a model of literary style, has many admirers among the one hundred and seventy-eight authors. This admiration is deserved, for the style of Hume is a marvel of clearness and condensation. Let us compare his description of a certain Puritan trait, with Macaulay's reference to the same characteristic. Hume

says, "Even bear baiting was esteemed heathenish and unchristian; the sport of it, not the inhumanity gave offense." Here the antithesis strikes the mind with sudden and concentrated force, but let us examine the manner in which Macaulay says the same thing. "But bear baiting, then a favorite diversion of high and low, was the abomination which most strongly stirred the of the austere sectaries. The Puritan hated bear baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." Now, there is the same thing said in two different styles, and the test of their comparative excellence is the individual taste of the reader. How he likes to have his history served up to him is for himself alone to say. Rhetorical rules cannot decide the question for him any more than they can determine how he likes his breakfast done. That the bear baiting statement as elaborated and adorned by Macaulay, is more popular than the ungarished antithesis of Hume, is proven by the fact that Macaulay's version is continually quoted, while that of Hume is very seldom heard. For all that, many competent critics will prefer the shorter and more compact sentences of Hume.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

NOTES.

We have received a copy of the Constitution of the Brotherhood of Moralists organized at Hannibal, Mo., on the 29th of May, 1887. The objects of the Order are, (1) "to promote the honest and fearless search after all truth that pertains to the overthrow of superstition and the moral elevation of man; (2) to oppose by rational appeal, the following social and political evils: Dishonesty, licentiousness, intemperance, polygamy, free-love, anarchy, and communism; (3) to eradicate from the minds of as many as possible all beliefs in so-called divine revelations, special providences, spirit-manifestations, witchcraft, prophecies, and miracles, as vain delusions of superstition and the sources of sectarian hatred and strife. Its aim, therefore, is to "inculcate the principles and promote the practice of rational morality." An appeal is made by Miss Ella E. Gibson of Barre, Mass., for contributions for the support of an eight-page monthly paper, of which she is appointed editor, to be devoted to the interests of the "Brotherhood," a term which here has no reference to sex.

A series of lectures is to be delivered by Mr. Alexander Johnson before the Study Class in Social Science, in the Department of Charity, at the *Plymouth Institute, Indianapolis*, during the Autumn, beginning with November 3. Mr. Johnson is Secretary of Board of State Charities and was invited to give the lectures before the Chicago Institute. They have been remodeled and treat of matters of great importance. The first lecture will deal with "Theories and Definitions" of Social Science and Charity. The subjects of the succeeding lectures comprise "Ethics and Economics," "Poverty and Pauperism," "Subjects, Agents, Motives, Ends," "Public Charity—The State—The Country," "Quasi—Public and Private Charity," "The Church in Charity" and "Associated Charities." The Plymouth Institute is intended "to give young men and women who are busy during the day an opportunity to study into the things that make for a larger life," in line with the "University Extension" movement in England, and it provides numerous classes and lectures for the advancement of its members.

We have received the following numbers of *The Humboldt Library* (The Humboldt Publishing Co., New York), Nos. 117 and 118, "Modern Science and Modern Thought," by S. Laing; No. 121, "The Modern Theory of Heat, and the Sun as a Storehouse of Energy," (illustrated), by Gerald Molloy, D. D., D. Sc.; No. 120, "Utilitarianism," by John Stuart Mill; No. 124, "Quintessence of Socialism," by Professor A. Schäffle; No. 125, "Darwin-

ism and Politics" by David Ritchie, M. A., and "Administrative Nihilism," by Thomas H. Huxley, F. R. S.

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