



The Open Court.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

Devoted to the Work of Conciliating Religion with Science.

No. 189. (Vol. V.—7.)

CHICAGO, APRIL 9, 1891.

{ Two Dollars per Year.
Single Copies, 5 Cts.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MAGIC.

BY L. J. VANCE.

WE are apt to think of magic as though it were conceived in mischief, and brought forth in iniquity. We have come to regard magicians as little more than tricksters or sleight-of-hand performers, who now call themselves by the high-sounding titles of 'Signors' and 'Professors.'

The notions of magic and of magicians which are entertained now-a-days come from two sources—the one, oral and traditional, the other, literary and historical. In other words, modern ideas of magic are derived, in whole or in part, from folk-lore or from books.

As to those ideas of magic which come from the first source—folk-lore—a few words may here be said. There is a stage of the human mind in which the agencies of magic are accepted as the ordinary incidents of everyday life. Thus, children at a certain age do not hesitate to believe that there are giants fifty feet in height, that there are dragons breathing fire. To the untutored intelligence of a child, any one kind of man or animal is quite as possible as any other kind. A giant as tall as a tree seems no more intrinsically improbable than a Tom Thumb or a Gulliver Brobdignag; nor is it more unlikely that a dragon should breathe fire and smoke than that a snake should carry deadly poison in its mouth. We remember when the story of Aladdin and his Wonderful Lamp was first rehearsed to us; when such incidents as the changes of a man into a Geni, or of a horse into a house, or of flying through the air, were not regarded as impossible. Now, the semi-civilized man looks upon the agencies of magic at least as "probable and common as duels and concealment of wills seem to be thought by European novelists." So says Mr. Lang.

The natural history and evolution of magic are subjects of more than curious and literary interest. It is now a matter of scientific importance to explain how magic arose, and why man believed in his will and power over the supernatural.

It may be urged that the ins-and-outs of ancient and modern magic are pretty well known. And so they are in certain ways. But, neither M. Maury in his valuable "History of Magic," nor M. Lenormant

in his erudite account of "Chaldean Magic," nor Mr. Lecky in his celebrated chapter (Chap. 1) in "Rationalism in Europe," exactly follow the same lines of argument that I would present here.

In folk-lore, in the science of Tylor, Lang, and others, we believe that an explanation will be found. To state Mr. Tylor's theory briefly, and by way of anticipation, man argued himself into a belief in magic, by confounding the image with that which it represents. Thus, there springs up a set of practices and beliefs which we moderns regard as magical.*

Let us take an example where the connection between object and figure is supposed to be real. One of the commonest acts of magic in ancient and modern times is the act of making an image and shooting at it, melting it away, drying it up, sticking pins into it, that the original may be hurt or injured. The practice was known to Plato, and is to day in vogue among Southern Negroes, as Mr. Cable informs us.

Here we find that semi-cultured man reasons himself into a theory of magic by association of ideas. He argues, in brief, that like affects like. In his mind, the slightest resemblance between any two things is enough to make them stand in the relation of cause and effect. Now, just as the ginseng was said by the Chinese and North American Indians to possess certain magical virtues because the roots resemble the human body, so the Zulus sacrificed black cattle in order to bring black clouds of rain.

But there are many, many kinds of magical beliefs and practices which cannot be explained at all on the "like to like" theory. Thus, the world-wide belief in the miraculous powers of Shamans and "medicine-men" proceeds from quite a different train of reasoning.

At this point, let us state briefly some of the objects of this inquiry. It is not necessary to examine every odd and end of magic. For, magic is so simple, yet so subtle, so plain, yet so deceitful, that many curious bits of art and artifice do not need or deserve any explanation. We are now concerned with the natural history of magic. We are thus called upon to show the state of mind out of which magic has been evolved. We must find, if possible, the general principles which underlie all magical reasoning. Our object, then, is to prove that the putting of these principles into every

*"Early History of Mankind," p. 117.

day practice is only the exercise of art magic, an art to which, as Lang remarks, nothing is impossible.

Our first question will be, What is the place of Magic in the mental development of man? Our answer is that, "magic belongs to the lowest known stages of civilisation." (Castren.)

For the purposes of this discussion, let us give some of the mental characteristics which belong to the lowest known stages of culture.*

1) First, man in the lowest known stages of culture never distinguishes between himself and things in the outside world. In that stage, again, the mind confuses all things, animate or inanimate, organic or inorganic, personal or impersonal. Gods and men, animals and plants, stars and trees, all seem on the same level of life, of feeling, and reason.

2) Then, there is a stage of human intellectual development known to students as "animism." In that stage, as Mr. Tylor and others have demonstrated, man ascribes the attributes of the human "soul" to all things, living or non-living. One of the first principles of savage belief is the continued existence of the dead. Thus, to the semi-cultured mind, the world is more alive with human souls than it is with human bodies. In Miltonic phrase, "millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen"; but the savage believes that spirits of dead men are able to interfere in mundane affairs. They can give the living much trouble and so it is best to be on the right side of these powerful spirits.

3) In the third place, there is the wide-spread system of belief known as fetichism. In that stage of savage thought, material objects are supposed to be the abodes of spiritual beings, or fetiches. A spirit resides in every object; it can also interfere in mundane affairs. Hence, the savage does all he can to get on the right side of his fetich. From this belief there arose the worship of plants and animals. Later on, plants are not worshipped, but they are endowed with magical properties, as charms.

4) The savage notion of spirits is not all of one piece. There are hostile spirits—devils, witches, beast-shades, etc. They cause death and disease. "Over a great part of Africa, in South America, and Polynesia," says Mr. Tylor, "when a man dies, the question is at once: 'Who killed him?' The Alipones hold that there is no such thing as natural death, no man would die unless he were killed,"—by some evil spirit or conjurer.† From the savage notion that a man's spirit or strength may reside in his spittle, in his heart, in his nails, or in a lock of his hair—from this notion, there arises another, namely, that a man may be witched or conjured against his will.

5) Connected with all the preceding peculiarities of savage thought is the belief in sorcery. "The world and all the things in it, being conceived of vaguely as sensible and rational, are supposed to obey the commands of certain members of each tribe, chiefs, jugglers, conjurers, or what you will."* These magicians, like Owen Glendower, are not "in the roll of common mortals." They can influence spirits, can talk with the dead, and can visit the Land of Shadows. They work miracles, cause or cure diseases, and can bring thunder, lightning and rain. There is little or nothing these fellows cannot do, *if they have a mind to do it*. The miraculous powers of the Shaman or conjurer is based on the savage view of himself and of the outward world.

6) To all this should be added the fact that the savage is credulous and curious. The cunning medicine-man plays also upon the hopes and fears of his fellows. His claim of supernatural powers, of being able to work miracles, is admitted by savage men all over the world. The reason is that, the miraculous attainments of the Shaman or medicine-man are not believed to be rare or unusual. On this point, the testimony of Jacob Baegert is interesting. Baegert was a Jesuit father and missionary among the Indians of Southern California. He thus describes the claims of the conjurer. "There always existed among the Californians, individuals of both sexes who played the part of conjurers, *pretending* to possess the power of exorcising the devil, whom they never saw; of curing diseases which they never healed; and of producing pithahayas, though they could only eat them. Sometimes they went into caverns, and, changing their voices, made the people believe that they conversed with some spiritual power. They threatened also with famine and disease, or promised to drive away small-pox, or similar plagues."† The whole passage is valuable, because it furnishes a key to one kind of magic. Baegert naturally came to this conclusion: "The object of these impostors was to obtain their food without the trouble of gathering it in the fields; for the silly people provided them with the best they could find *in order to keep them in good humor and to enjoy their favor.*"

No wonder that savage magic seems to the civilised mind, foolish and childish. Such is ancient magic. How could it be otherwise when we take into account the elements of thought and belief out of which it was fashioned? It is difficult for us moderns to realise the frame of mind which gave rise to magical trains of thought. That is to say, magic was the natural product and outcome of the beliefs above named: the belief in the continued existence of the dead; the

*The voluminous evidence for these mental processes of savages will be found in the works of Lubbock, Tylor, Waitz, McLennan and others.

† *Early History of Mankind*, p. 124

* *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, Vol. I, p. 47.

† *Smithsonian Rep.*, 1863, p. 352.

belief in power of good and evil spirits or ghosts; the belief in fetiches; the belief in the animated character of all things; the belief in the miraculous powers of medicine-men, and so forth. Such beliefs are clearly reflected in the magic of the savage—a magic which could satisfy only the untutored mind.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

MR. GOLDWIN SMITH ON MORALITY AND RELIGION.

MR. GOLDWIN SMITH discusses the ethical question in an article in the last *Forum*, entitled "Will Morality survive Religion?" He presents no definite solution but sufficiently indicates one, and that is a denial of the question; between the lines we read the answer, Morality will not survive Religion. He says:

"The withdrawal of religious belief must, however, one would think, have begun to operate, and some observers may be in a position to say what the effect is and how far philosophy or science has been able to fill the void. As the twilight of theism and Christianity still lingers, nobody expects a sudden change. Least of all does anybody expect a sudden outbreak of immorality among philosophers, whose minds are elevated by their pursuit and in whom the coarser appetites are sure to be weak; so that the sensitiveness which men of this class are apt to show, whenever a connection is suggested between religious and moral agnosticism, is out of place."

Mr. Goldwin Smith illustrates his position vividly by presenting to us "some specimens of the moral as well as of the religious agnostic." The murderer Birchall is described in the following words:

"As he was the son of a clergyman and had been well brought up, he must have been thoroughly enlightened, and cannot have been led into crime by anything like the brutal ignorance of moral law which is often the heritage of the gutter child. Nor does it seem that evil passion of any kind was overpoweringly strong in him. The attempts of the enemies of capital punishment to make out a case of moral insanity were in this case more faint than usual. It even appears that there was an amiable side to his character. His college companions liked him. He seems to have been a loving husband, and there was something touching and almost heroic in the effort which he successfully made, while he was awaiting execution, to master the fear of death and to write his autobiography for the benefit of his wife. The autobiography, it is true, is nothing more than the vulgar record of a fast undergraduate's life at an inferior college; but this does not detract from the nerve shown in writing it, and in illustrating it with comic sketches, beneath the shadow of the gallows. He only happened to have occasion for his friend's money. It is possible that if Birchall, instead of being sent to college—where a youth of his stamp was sure to be idle, and, being idle, to become dissipated—had been set to regular work in an office under a strong chief, he might have gone decently through life, though he would have been a very selfish man. But he was a thorough-going agnostic in morals as well as in religion. Evidently he felt not a twinge of remorse for what he had done. No doubt he cursed his own carelessness in having, when he was destroying all the proofs of identity on the corpse, overlooked the cigar case, the name written on which gave the fatal clew; but the recollection of having killed a confiding friend for his money evidently gave him no more concern than as if he had slaughtered a bear for its skin. Bred a gentleman, he admirably preserved his dignity and impressiveness of

manner when standing at bay against his pursuers, and he showed the same qualities for the two months during which a whole community was staring at him through the bars of his cage, when the least sign of weakness would have been at once proclaimed. When he was sentenced, he remarked, with a philosophy which appears to have been genuine, that life is short for all, and that there is not much difference between a term of a few months and one of a few years. He might have added that he would make his exit from life more nearly without pain than ninety-nine men out of a hundred."

A similar striking case is found in the person of William Palmer, the Rugeley murderer, who also, Mr. Goldwin Smith says, "was evidently a perfect moral agnostic. He behaved at his trial as if he had been watching a game of chess, showed not the slightest sign of remorse, and met death with perfect apathy, if not with Birchall's genteel composure."

Mr. Goldwin Smith adds:

"As moral agnostics these men were low specimens of a character of which the great Napoleon was the highest. . . . He (Napoleon) was simply 'The Prince' of Machiavelli, that prophet of moral agnosticism.*"

The present situation is described in the following words:

"Religious agnosticism is gaining ground, not so much perhaps in America as in Europe, because America is less speculative than Europe and because free churches do not provoke sceptical criticism so much as establishments; but everywhere religious agnosticism is manifestly gaining ground. Are we to expect a corresponding growth of moral agnosticism? We shall not have a crop of Birchalls and Palmers, still less of Napoleons; but may we not have a crop of men who will regard morality as a superstition or a convention, and will do what suits their own interest? Greece, after the fall of her religion, had the moral anarchy depicted by Thucydides and ascribed by him to that fall. She had the moral agnosticism of the Sophists. Rome, after the departure of the religious faith to which Polybius, in a famous passage, ascribes her public morality, had the immorality of the Empire. On the decline of the Catholic faith in Europe, ensued the moral agnosticism of the era impersonated in Machiavelli. In each case, into the void left by religion came spiritual charlatanry and physical superstition, such as the arts of the hierophant of Isis, the soothsayer, and the astrologer—significant precursors of our modern 'medium.'"

*I beg to differ in some respects from this view concerning Napoleon's character. Napoleon's success is not due to his unprincipled egotism and unscrupulousness; it is due to the actual services he rendered to his nation and to humanity in general. He may be considered as a "scourge of God" but even as such he was the most indispensable man of his era. He was a scourge to Germany, but his achievements in having swept out of existence so many antiquated institutions and principalities, especially in having broken to pieces the old rotten Roman-Teutonic Kaiser-humbug, so as to make a regeneration of Germany possible, alone made his career a great blessing to Germany which outweighs all the innumerable injuries and suppressions he caused her. Let us not look to the vices of a man to explain his success. I am inclined to declare *a priori* that a successful man must have some virtues which are the causes of his success, and if he has great vices, it is, to say the least, probable that his virtues will eclipse his vices. The effects of the virtues will remain, the effects of his vices will disappear in time.

Does Mr. Goldwin Smith believe in Machiavelli? I do not believe in Machiavelli. The great king who wrote the "Anti-Machiavelli" has refuted, not only in words but also in deeds, the theory that unprincipled rascality is the best policy for a king to maintain himself upon a throne. It is due to Frederick the Great's maxim that "the king is the first servant of the state" which proved a live presence with almost all his successors, that a scion of his family now occupies the imperial throne of Germany.

We feel inclined to say, this is a very pessimistic diagnosis of the future, but we are told :

"There is nothing pessimistic in this; no want of faith in the future of humanity, or in the benevolence of the power by which human destiny is controlled. The only fear suggested is that society may have a bad quarter of an hour during the transition, as it has had more than once before."

A 'bad quarter of an hour' for humanity may mean the ruin of nations! Was the pessimism of Tacitus unjustified because other nations arose in a grander glory after the ignominious ruin of Rome that followed its moral decline? Pessimism means to us that we ourselves and our nation will see this 'bad quarter of an hour,' and if it comes it will be terrible to all concerned. It will come like a deluge to sweep away the innocent and the good together with the guilty.

Pessimism in any other sense is not justified. The world is such that if the nation to whom by natural advantages the future of humanity seems to be entrusted, shows herself unwilling or unable to fulfil her mission, other nations will arise and take her place. We Americans especially are more inclined than others, and I do not deny that in some respects our hope is justifiable, to consider ourselves as the children of promise. But at the same time we are apt to forget that our mission implies duties. It is not enough to say, "We have Abraham to our father." The children of promise must be worthy of their duties; if they are not they will be rejected. Yet as to the whole, as to the evolution of mankind, there is no need of being pessimistic. "For I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Evolution will not be checked because we prove unfit to carry the torch of progress. We shall, in that case, go to the wall and the torch will be handed to others.

And here we come to the point of disagreement with Mr. Goldwin Smith. He says :

"Evolution is not moral, nor can morality be educed from it. It proclaims as its law the survival of the fittest, and the only proof of fitness is survival."

Evolution, it is true, is in a certain sense, "a quasi-mechanical and necessary process"; it "will fulfil itself without effort or sacrifice" on my part, or on your part, or on the part of any individual. Yet in another sense, evolution is not a merely mechanical process;* nor can it fulfil itself without the effort or sacrifice of mankind. The question is not whether my help is in-

* Every motion is mechanically explainable, or in other words, every motion can be described in mechanical formulas, i. e. there is a uniformity of motions which can be formulated in the laws of mechanics. Evolution considered as a movement sweeping onward over the life of mankind is a mechanical process. But the mechanical aspect of natural processes is only one side; it does not cover the whole of reality. Not even the fall of a stone can be considered as a purely mechanical process. See the author's remarks on the subject in "Fundamental Problems" (p. 215 et seqq.), "Can the World be Mechanically Explained?" and his article "Some Questions of Psycho-Physics," *The Monist* No. 3, p. 401.

dispensable for evolution to fulfil itself, the question is whether my soul will enter into the evolutionary movement, or to use a biblical term, whether I shall enter into life eternal, as an element representing an upward or as one representing a downward pull. To speak of a single individual as helping evolution is something like helping God in governing the world. The individual does not come into consideration at all from an ethical standpoint, but that alone which is represented in the individual.

Mr. Goldwin Smith still recognises, particularly with regard to the gentler virtues, the influence of religion upon our code of ethics. He says :

"There is no saying how much of theism, or even of Christianity, still mingles with the theories of agnostics. When the agnostic assumes that the claims of the community are superior to those of the individual, when he uses such a term as 'conscientious,' and even when he speaks with reverence of an 'eternal source of energy and force,' careful scrutiny of his expressions might discover a trace of theism."

Certainly, there is a trace of theism in any kind of morality, even if the expression "the eternal source of energy" be rejected. We at least do most emphatically reject it as a dualistic and a meaningless phrase. Nevertheless, morality means obedience to some law higher, grander, and nobler than our individual interests. The recognition of the authority of this law is the kernel of all religion, it is also the truth contained in the idea of God.

Mr. Goldwin Smith says :

"The saying that if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent him, was very smart but very silly. Nothing can be done for us by figments. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he keep his allegiance to the truth."

With this we perfectly agree. Nothing can be done for us by figments. But if all the nations that cease to believe in, and at the same time also cease to obey, the authority of the moral law, irredeemably go to the wall, can that moral law be considered as a figment? We may consider the personification of the moral law as a figment, and we have good reason to do so, but if by God is understood that objective reality in the world which by the penalty of extinction enforces a certain kind of conduct, we may expect no serious contradiction when we maintain that the existence of God can be scientifically proved.

It is a matter of course that the God of science is not like the God of the heathenish religions, not even like the good Lord of pagan Christianity who can be bribed by flattery and prayer, and still less like the benevolent and philanthropic God Father of Deism. He is an inflexible law, immutable, irrefragable, eternal; stern toward transgressors and kind toward those who keep his commandments. If Mr. Goldwin Smith will consider God in this sense as a natural law, or rather as the law of nature, as that in nature which is as it

is, in the Pentateuch called by the expressive name *Javeh*, as that which we cannot model at pleasure, but to which we must model ourselves in order to live and to continue to live—he will find that God is at the bottom of evolution also; he will find that morality indeed can and must be educed from it. It is true that evolution proclaims as its law the survival of the fittest. But who in the long run of millenniums are the fittest if not those that conform to that stern authority, to the law of nature, to the order of the cosmos, to that all-power of which we are a part which has created us and still maintains our life,—to God.

If Mr. Goldwin Smith means to say that ethics without religion is a failure and will remain a failure, we agree with him perfectly. He says :

“With misgivings, conscious or unconscious, about religion, came the desire of finding a sanction for morality independent of theology; in other words, moral philosophy.”

He adds that all those moral philosophers “whose philosophy has been practically effective, from Socrates downward, have been religious and have regarded their philosophy as the ally and confirmation of religion.” This, I grant, is true if religion is used in the broad sense we use it, and not in the sense of a creed which declares that religiosity consists in a blind belief of traditional dogmas.

Mr. Goldwin Smith quotes approvingly a passage from his late friend Mr. Cotter Morison, whom he calls “the most thorough-going of agnostics.” Mr. Morison says :

“Virtue may, and possibly will, bring happiness to the virtuous man; but to the immoral and the selfish, virtue will probably be the most distasteful or even painful thing in their experience, while vice will give them unmitigated pleasure.”

This is true, and being true it suffices to explode any kind of hedonism which would fain make us believe that happiness is the consequence of virtue, and that virtue must be explained as that which gives pleasure or produces happiness. The quotation is valuable because it comes from an agnostic. Agnostics not being able to found ethics upon something which they do not know and which they consider as unknowable, have attempted to explain morality as that which is conducive to happiness. If ethics cannot be deduced from happiness or that which causes happiness, how can we explain it?

Mr. Goldwin Smith calls attention to the fact that all other attempts of teaching or explaining morality contain religious elements, and he is right. He says :

“Where they take as their foundation the authority of conscience, the categorical imperative, or the command of nature, it is clear that they are still within the circle of theism.”

He adds these two propositions which, it appears, he believes to be equivalent: “Nature,” he says, “is an unmeaning expression without an author of nature,

or rather, it is a philosophical name of God.” The former proposition we reject as a decided *non sequitur*; the latter we accept. As soon as we consider nature, the world-order, the laws of the evolution of life in their moral importance, we are confronted with the true kernel of religious truth; their recognition is the kernel of the God idea, for God if it means anything is the moral authority whose will must be done.

Agnosticism is an untenable and a practically useless philosophy. Mr. Goldwin Smith says, “The profession of safe acquiescence in ignorance may sound very philosophic.” But it is not; and he has our full assent when he says :

“The generation after next may perhaps see agnosticism, moral as well as religious, tried on a clear field. By that time, possibly, science, whose kingdom seems now to have come, will have solved in her own way the mystery of existence; at least so far as to provide us with a rule of life, personal and social.”

We also believe that the kingdom of science seems now to have come. But if it comes, in what way and by whose authority does it come? It comes in the ordinary course of evolution by the authority of the God of the religion of science. It comes after all as a survival of the fittest in spite of Mr. Goldwin Smith's denunciation of the law of evolution. This is so palpable that no words need be lost about it. Yet Mr. Goldwin Smith's argument is so strong that we shall have to add a few further explanations.

Mr. Goldwin Smith says :

“The tiger has been as much evolved as the lamb; and the most noxious of human beasts, if he can hold his own in the struggle for existence, at whatever expense to his fellows, has as good a right to existence as Socrates.”

Here we have to make two objections.

First we have to repeat what we have said again and again on other occasions: that this famous comparison so often employed to contrast the immoral evil-doer with the moral martyr does not correctly represent the nature of the problem. The tiger is not more immoral than the lamb; on the contrary, if the tiger represents the active energetic fighter who in the struggle for existence holds his own, while the lamb represents the passive sufferer who is too weak-headed to face his foe, the tiger is more moral than the lamb and it serves the lamb right that he succumbs to the victor. There is no morality in ovine indolence. Morality is not, as it is often supposed to be, merely the omission of certain grosser or more refined crimes, of different sins, bad habits, and peccadilloes; true morality is not passive, it is active, it consists in the achieving and doing of that which is our duty to do for ourselves and for mankind, which latter is only a wider range of our nobler self.

Our second objection to Mr. Goldwin Smith's argument is that “human beasts” can *not* hold their own.

They are constantly being eliminated by the natural selection of evolution.

We agree with Mr. Goldwin Smith when he says: "It is absurd to say that a life of self-denial and endurance, ending in martyrdom, is happiness"—for the law of morality cannot be educed from man's yearning for happiness—and in a certain sense we also agree to the clause he adds—"unless there is a compensation beyond." Morality as a factor in life and in evolution, as a law of nature, cannot be understood unless we rise above the sphere of the individual. Egotism is not morality, and moral actions are those which are consciously or unconsciously performed with an outlook beyond the narrow interests of the individual in time and space. Moral motives are superindividual. I purposely do not call them altruistic, because altruism does not seem to me the proper moral view; it simply replaces the interests of the own ego by those of other egos. The superindividual aspect however makes humanity and its ideals, the natural laws of social justice and the moral law of the world, parts of the individual and it is not the individual but these superindividual parts of his soul which will survive.

Mr. Goldwin Smith is not yet free from the individualism of our time. He seems to expect that morality and happiness shall be doled out to the individual in equal proportions. He introduces the following instance:

"A man acquires a great estate by fraud, enjoys it wisely, uses his wealth liberally, makes himself popular, takes good care of his health, lives long, dies respected, and leaves healthy offspring. Freed by his opulence from wearing toil and injurious exposure, he exhibits all the energy, vivacity, and sociability which are held out as the rewards of a right course of living. Morality says that he is miserable, but how can evolution condemn him?"

Evolution does condemn him. Evolution will in the long run eliminate such types as he is, as certain as it will eliminate the tigers from off the surface of the earth.

Mr. Goldwin Smith continues:

"Evolutionary philosophers give excellent precepts for healthy and comfortable living; but these precepts apparently the man fulfils, and thus he fulfils all righteousness. They may talk to him, indeed, of a more perfect state of society to be some day brought about by ethical science, in which he would be out of place; but he, having only one life, takes the world as he finds it, and makes the best of it for himself. Why should he sacrifice himself to the future of humanity?"

Why should he sacrifice himself for the future of humanity? Because the future of humanity is his own future. Why shall a boy sacrifice the hours of his childhood for the future days of his manhood? Why! Because the man is the continuance of the boy. The objection may be made that the comparison does not hold good; the future generations of mankind are not we ourselves, while the adult man is the same person as the boy. What, however, does "the same

person" mean? The word "person" represents a history, a continuance, nothing more. Persons are not unchangeable units; there is not one atom of the boy left in the man. Materially considered the adult man is as exactly as much and not more different from himself when he was a boy, as the present generations of mankind are different from the past generations, for in both instances the continuity is preserved in exactly the same degree and measure.

It is said that a man "having only one life takes the world as he finds it, and makes the best of it for himself." The truth is man has *not* "only one life."

"The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar."

Man's life, his humanity, does not consist of the material particles of his body. The properly human in man consists almost entirely of his relations with other men. His very language is superindividual, and if we could cut out the superindividual from his brain, there would remain a mere brute. How the superindividual naturally grows in man and how it will continue to exist beyond the grave need not be again explained.* There is a great truth in the idea of immortality, although there need not be an immortality either of bodily resurrection or in a purely spiritual heaven beyond.

The immortality of the soul is a truth; the immortality of the individual is an error. We must cease to consider the ego of the individual as a reality. It is no reality and the belief in it is an illusion; it is the veil of Maya. The antiquated view of regarding the personality of a man as an entity, as a kind of mysterious soul-unit, produces most intricate sham-problems; but these problems will disappear as soon as the veil of Maya has been lifted from our eyes.

As soon as we lose sight of the truth that mankind is one great whole and that the individual is a man only in so far as mankind lives in him, we shall not be able to understand and to account for morality. The superindividual in man, whatever it may be called, is as much a reality as is the shape of his body, and it is the superindividual elements in man which constitute his soul. The recognition of the immortality of man's soul, not in the old sense, but in a scientific sense, will be found to be the only satisfactory solution of the ethical problem and at the same time of the religious problem.

P. C.

THE SUNSET CLUB IN "DARKEST ENGLAND."

BY M. M. TRUMBULL.

"GENERAL" BOOTH'S plan for the redemption of the poor was the theme of debate at the Sunset Club on the 19th of March.

Two ministers of the gospel were the chief debaters, one for "General" Booth, and one against him. The argument of the advocate who opened in the affirmative, was weakened by its mag-

* See *The Ethical Problem* pp. 34 et seqq. and 44.

niloquence. It was the effervescence of rhetoric. Every gallon of it contained three quarts of sentimental froth; about the right proportion in a pulpit exhortation to a lot of "miserable sinners," but rather too hysterical for the Sunset Club. There was also too much realistic detail in it, revelations of deeds done in the slums, hideous things which all men grieve about, but which it is in questionable taste to describe in all their bare deformity.

The first speaker, in analysing "Darkest England" into its component elements, very properly put physical infirmity among the chief causes of the evils exposed by "General" Booth, hereditary punishments, the sins of the fathers visited upon their children even unto the third and fourth generation. In describing those victims of heredity who constitute so large an element of "Darkest England," he said with pardonable bombast, "They were damned into the cradle, instead of born into light life; not landed into life, but shipwrecked into life." I have no disposition to quarrel with a literary style, when its phrases are so expressive and so true; and here it was that the speaker made a good strong plea in vindication of Booth's plan. "The first thing about it," he said, "is this, that it tries to relieve physical discomfort, thus making ready for real and lasting reform." That is the broadest and best road out of "Darkest England," and if the plan of "General" Booth only "tries" to open that road, it is worthy of all praise, whether its means are effectual or not.

The ardent advocate of "General" Booth's plan asserted secondly, that it contemplated the intellectual improvement of the poor, and on this part of the subject he said, "Failure is always a species of ignorance"; an opinion with a good deal of truth in it, and very well expressed. He also took high ground when he said "Any successful plan must include an intellectual element," but unfortunately he did not maintain himself there, for he completely failed to show any "intellectual element" in "General" Booth's plan. "An evening's entertainment and instruction" is altogether too indefinite and vague, for it may mean the delirious excitement and spiritual intoxication produced by the Salvation Army, shouting, psalm-singing, and beating tambourines and drums. Surely there is nothing "intellectual" or educational in that.

And as a third reason for applauding "General" Booth, the speaker said, "His problem deals with a change of environment so far as the environment has produced the misery." Really this deserves approval if its meaning is to bring the "submerged tenth" up out of the cellars in Tom All Alone's into brighter and more comfortable homes. This doubtless is the meaning of it, although disfigured somewhat by inelegant and ill-fitting metaphor. "In place of bad air and bad surroundings," pleaded the advocate, "give them sunshine, God's great scavenger, which searches out the least bit of filth." That is figurative but not poetical, and besides, it is otherwise vague, uncertain, and insufficient. "God's great scavenger" cannot work with much effect in "Darkest England" until the laws of England give more equal opportunities to all the English people.

In addition to a change in the conditions, the advocate said that the plan of "General" Booth contemplated a change in the men also. "This plan," he said, "understands full well that if you save the man he will save his own circumstances. Not Paradise itself can make a bad man good, Adam and Eve sinned in Paradise." This was a little inconsistent with the claim just previously made, that the reformation was to come through a change in the physical circumstances which made the sin and misery, and of which the unfortunates in "Darkest England" were the creatures and the victims. Paradise will not make men good, but it will cure them of the diseases and the sins that come from poverty.

A great many social wrongs and political errors have grown out of the theological mistake that Adam and Eve sinned in Paradise. The fabulous command that put restraint upon their freedom was the sinner, and it was brave and virtuous in Adam and Eve

to risk their lives for liberty. In this Paradise which we call Earth, there is not now and there never was any forbidden tree of knowledge; nor any tree the fruit of which we may not eat if we can get it. To the most precious thing within this world of ours every man and every woman may aspire, and the aspiration itself is virtue. Any mandate that seeks to limit the knowledge of good and evil is void according to the highest and divinest law, the law of progress to perfection. We know very little as yet, but there is nothing we may not know.

The learned counsel on the other side, as the lawyers have it, was a reverend iconoclast who toppled over the whole scheme of "General" Booth, and buried that famous commander in the ruins of it. For a minister of the gospel he was painfully logical; he did neither gush nor glow, but went straight at his work with hammer and anvil like a blacksmith. In the debate he had a great advantage by reason of experimental knowledge of the subject gained in London; and his testimony was like that of an expert. He spoke with contemptuous pity of "General" Booth, whom he described as a man without any business ability, untruthful, and dishonest. "I have no great esteem for him," he said, "I know too much about him. But let me say this: There is a construction of his character which is a charitable one. He knows no better. He has not those high ideas of honor and ethics which this problem needs." This estimate the speaker did not seek to prove by any thrilling figures of speech, but by information which appeared strong in the qualities of evidence. With vigorous, if not very classical, emphasis, he remarked: "The confession that 'General' Booth is not a business man and not practical, damns the whole scheme."

Further along, this critic had no hesitation in stigmatising the enterprise of "General" Booth as a mercenary scheme to enrich the Booth family, and he declared that the book which had appealed so strongly to the charity of England, "was founded largely on exaggeration and false statements." With sarcasm rough as a rasp, he said: "If you will take pains to notice you will see that every prominent office is in the Booth family. It is the lieutenants who starve."

The despotic features of the scheme, and the imperialistic refusal of "General Booth" to render any account of the fund placed in his hands, were exposed by the speaker and rightfully condemned. Charitable funds placed in the hands of any man to be used as he thinks fit, and never to be accounted for, are dangerous enemies to honesty. Give them time enough and they will surely breed corruption. They have already made a social autocrat of "General" Booth, and he grows callous to public opinion. "The fact is," said his critic at the Sunset Club, "'General' Booth is at the end of his tether. He needs more money and enthusiasm. I hope no such infiction will visit Chicago as the endorsing of any religious society to make it a social despotism as Booth would have the Salvation Army made."

I am sorry to see that the speaker threw contempt and ridicule upon what he called "the soup and salvation" plan of improving the condition of the poor. Perhaps it would be better to give the soup alone, but if the donors of the soup insist upon administering salvation with it, is it not better to accept the mixture rather than lose the soup? There was high-grade political morality in the scorn of the speaker for any system of charity that weakens the spirit of men. He said: "Independence, manliness, firm nerves, and strong muscles, these are not gained through soup-kitchens and salvation-uniforms. These things are the product of toil and battle upon the hillside. These things are the problem of man facing the problem of his own destiny *with what help his individual fellow-man can give him.*"

I have put the last part of that sentence in italics because in those words the problem lies. How much help is it wise to give, and how shall it be given? The bounty of alms may sometimes encourage idleness, and the receipt of them weaken the moral

nerve, by injuring self-respect; but after all there is a class of unfortunates who are entitled to charity as of right, and there is a fortunate class who are bound as of right to give. When there are no privileged classes, when the opportunities of all are equal, when even the accidents of life are evenly shared, then it will be time enough to moralise on the vice of charity in preserving and perpetuating a dependent class. Charity, even in the form of alms, is one of the great civilising and humanising forces of the world, and the practice of it is to some people such a luxury that they would rather give to an impostor than not to give at all. It may be misapplied in many cases but let us not discourage it, there is no danger that we shall have a surplus of it for several years to come.

After all, it may be a question whether "Darkest England" is over there in the East of London in the "Vitechapel" neighborhood, or West of Buckingham palace in Belgravia, where the Dukes, and Earls, and the Feudal Barons live. These conquered the English at Hastings, and have held them in subjection ever since. They have appropriated the land, mines, forests, and all the natural opportunities of the English people, and before the conquered can use any of them they must pay tribute of rent in some form or other to the conquerors. In that city of palaces lying south of Hyde Park, where an idle aristocracy squanders in luxury the spoils of the English, there is "Darkest England."

NOTES.

Moncure D. Conway who is so well known to our readers by his excellent contributions to *The Open Court* has contributed an interesting article to the April number of *The Century* on "Washington and Frederick the Great" from which we quote the following episode: "When John Brown went to conquer the South with twenty three men he believed that the less he trusted arms of flesh the more Jehovah might be depended on to unsheathe his sword. The only other sword Brown considered worthy to be used by the Almighty was that which Washington was said to have received from Frederick the Great. One of Brown's men (Cook) came as a spy to Bel Air, and was hospitably shown the Washington relics for which he inquired. Brown told Colonel Washington, after taking him prisoner, that he wished to get hold of the sword 'because it has been used by two successful generals.' The superstition cost him dear. In order to get the sword Brown detached six of his men to go after it—five miles away. He thus lost half a day, and all chance of escape. Seventeen lives were offered as on an altar before this mythical sword."

JUST PUBLISHED!

THE DISEASES OF PERSONALITY.

BY

TH. RIBOT,

PROFESSOR OF COMPARATIVE AND EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY AT THE COLLÈGE DE FRANCE AND EDITOR OF THE "REVUE PHILOSOPHIQUE."

AUTHORISED TRANSLATION.

157 Pages. Price, 75 Cents. Cloth.

A portion of this intensely interesting monograph was published in the columns of *The Open Court*. Although of the highest critical and analytic character, and containing advanced and original views, M. Ribot's book forms an excellent introduction into the study of modern psychology, treating of its central and fundamental problem—that of the personality, the ego.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY,

169-175 La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois.

THE MONIST.

A QUARTERLY MAGAZINE.

OF

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND SOCIOLOGY.

CONTENTS OF NO. 3 (APRIL, 1891):

- THE FACTORS OF EVOLUTION. By JOSEPH LE CONTE.
- THE PHYSIOGNOMY OF THE ANARCHISTS. By PROF. CESARE LOMBROSO.
- MISONEISM AND PHILONEISM. By PROF. CESARE LOMBROSO.
- THE QUESTION OF DUALITY OF MIND. By R. M. BACHE.
- IMMORTALITY. By DR. G. M. GOULD.
- SOME QUESTIONS OF PSYCHO-PHYSICS. A Discussion: (1) Sensations and the Elements of Reality, by PROF. ERNST MACH; (2) Feelings and the Elements of Feeling, by DR PAUL CARUS.
- EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENCE.
 - 1) France—ARRÉAT.
 - 2) Italy—LOMBROSO.
- BOOK REVIEWS: Taylor's *Origin of the Aryans*; Harris's *Introduction to Philosophy*; Geddes's and Thompson's *Evolution of Sex*; Morgan's *Animal Life and Intelligence*; Mantegazza's *Physiognomy and Expression*; Booth's *In Darkest England*; Carus Sterne's *Allgemeine Weltanschauung in ihrer historischen Entwicklung*; and Post's *Allgemeine Rechtswissenschaft*.
- PERIODICALS: Epiomes and critical reviews of the contents of *Mind*, *International Journal of Ethics*, *Revue Philosophique*, *Zeitschrift für Psychologie und Physiologie der Sinnesorgane*, *Schriften der Gesellschaft für psychologische Forschung*, *Philosophische Monatshefte*, *Minerva* (Italian), *Voprosy filosofii i psichologii* (Russian).

SINGLE NUMBERS, FIFTY CENTS.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION: \$2.00 a year, postpaid, to any part of the United States, Canada, and Mexico; to foreign countries in the Postal Union, \$2.25; single numbers, 60 cents; postpaid to New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, \$2.50 a year.

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY,

169-175 LA SALLE STREET, CHICAGO, ILL.

LONDON: Messrs. Watts & Co.,

17 Johnson's Court, Fleet Street, E. C.

THE OPEN COURT.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING CO.

TERMS THROUGHOUT THE POSTAL UNION:

\$2.00 PER YEAR. \$1.00 FOR SIX MONTHS.
 AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND TASMANIA, \$2.50 PER YEAR.

All communications should be addressed to

THE OPEN COURT,

(Nixon Building, 175 La Salle Street.)

P. O. DRAWER F.

CHICAGO, ILL.

CONTENTS OF NO. 189.

- THE NATURAL HISTORY OF MAGIC. L. J. VANCE. 2763
- MR. GOLDWIN SMITH ON MORALITY AND RELIGION. EDITOR..... 2765
- THE SUNSET CLUB IN "DARKEST ENGLAND." GEN. M. M. TRUMBULL..... 2768
- NOTES..... 2770