

The Open Court.

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SHORT DISCUSSIONS AND CRITICISMS.

BY JOHN BURROUGHS.

IX.

THE old theology asks us to believe that the relations between God and man were radically different at some former period of history than now, that they were more intimate and personal. Is it probable that man's relation to the air, the water, the earth, has ever been any more intimate and vital than now; that his food ever nourished him in any other way than it does now, that offspring were ever begotten by any other method, or that the relations of men to each other were ever essentially any different from the present? If God is not a constant and invariable power he is nothing. Does gravity intermit? Are not the celestial bodies always on time? Are not life death generation always subject to the same laws? The moral and religious nature of man rises and sinks; he seems more conscious of God and of divine things in some period of history than in others, in some races than in others, but this is a fluctuation doubtless governed by natural causes, if we could penetrate them, and is not the result of any change of plan or purpose of the Eternal. God walked and talked with men in the patriarchal days, because men interpreted their own thoughts, dreams, desires, motions, as the voice of God. We define and differentiate things more nowadays, though probably the old prophets were strictly correct, for is not man himself a manifestation of God? With the devout and religious habit of mind comes the boldness to ascribe all our thoughts and promptings and happenings to God. It is the not-ourselves that rules and controls us and in which we live and move and have our being, and whether we call it God, or by any other name the fact remains the same. The religious mind gives it one name; the scientific mind another; the former makes it personal and sustains a personal relation to it; the other makes it impersonal and names it law or force. Indeed the dispute between the saint and the scientist is not as to a matter of fact, but as to a matter of feeling. One reaches through consciousness, what the other reaches through intellect, and the results differ just as the media differ. There is fear, love, hope, and other emotions mingled with the one experience, but there is none of these things mingled

with the other. Indeed one is an *experience* while the other is a rational process.

X.

THE region of the unconscious in one, so much more deep and potent in some men than in others, is our hold upon the eternal. The disclosure of thoughts, of knowledge, of power that we did not know we possessed—these things may be said to be from God. The Biblical writers ascribed all spontaneous thoughts to God. Such were a revelation. When these men looked deep into their hearts they found God there and they conversed with him freely. What we call communing with ourselves, the religious mind calls communing with God. Every writer, every orator knows what it is to see depths and views open in his mind that are a surprise to him, and that but a moment before he was ignorant of. This is inspiration. All scriptures are given by inspiration, because they come not by way of the reason and the understanding, but by way of the conscience and the spiritual sense; all poetry the same. We call it God or we call it genius, just according to our training and habit of mind. The mind does open sometimes and refuses to open at others. Undoubtedly a man has or has not a capacity for great and high thoughts. How the thoughts arise is as great a mystery to him as to another. In our speech of to-day we do not ascribe these things to God—that is to any objective agency or power external to ourselves; it is a purely subjective phenomenon, as much so as the seeing of visions or the dreaming of dreams. Mohammed thought he saw and talked with Gabriel and once with God; St. Paul believed he heard a voice and saw a light from heaven: we call them mental hallucinations; the man's own conscience, or fears or hopes, or thoughts seen externally; but they were as real to them as any outward object. The other day a man in Philadelphia died from the effects, as he alleged, of witchcraft. We know he was not bewitched, that is, that the cause of his trouble did not lay in any power or thing external to himself; it could never be real to another mind, but it was terribly real to him. To all intents and purposes he was bewitched even unto death.

All that lies back of our conscious powers, all the *not me*, the pious soul calls God. And indeed how little we are in and of ourselves. Look at yonder wa-

ter wheel doing its work. All the *not me* in that case is the water that flows, and gravity that makes it flow, and without them the wheel is nothing. In our own case we draw quite as largely upon the universal, upon that which is not ourselves. Call all the *not me* God and we have some idea of the closeness and imminence of God to the old Hebrew prophet. Science shows all this *not me* to be impersonal force; it shows how much of it is race, or family, or climate, or environment, or physiology, or geology; how the mind itself is a part of the body; how the conscience itself arose, how the church, the state, and all institutions. A certain order of minds stamp this force with personality. All the early minds did, but science leads us farther and farther away from an anthropomorphic God. It is singular that we should have outgrown anthropomorphism so far as to deny personality to the separate forces of nature, but ascribe it to nature as a whole.

XI.

The view which the old theology takes is an artificial view; it imposes upon the world arbitrary and artificial conditions as if one were to paint the grass blue and the sky green. It says the world is a lost and condemned world, that God is estranged from the race of man, that through some act of disobedience of Adam six thousand or more years ago, sin and death entered the world, and that a way of escape from eternal ruin has been provided for mankind by the life and ignominious death of an innocent and just person, Jesus of Nazareth, etc. This I say is an artificial view, an utterly unscientific view, as much so as the belief not so very old that witches could cause storms and tempests, or as the view of Justyn Martyr that the earth becomes fertile when dug by a spade because the spade is in the form of a cross.

Theology looks upon sin as something entirely apart from a man's natural defects, and upon religion as something entirely independent of his good qualities: both are from without, one the work of a malignant spirit, the other the gift of a good spirit, but both arbitrary or mechanical, and in no way related to the ordinary course of nature. How different the natural or scientific view! When we look upon the world with the eye of a philosopher we see that it is indeed the theatre of opposite and contending forces, but that the good, that is the good from the point of view of the best interest of the race, is slowly triumphing; we see the race struggling up into a higher and better life the long, dark and devious route which man has come is disclosed, but his evolution has gone steadily forward. We do not find sin, in the theological sense, we see defects and imperfections, we see vice and disease, the ends of nature crossed and thwarted, but no more and no differently in the case of man than in

the case of the animals and plants; we see in fact, that death is everywhere the condition of life. We do not find that the theological system takes hold of fact as reality at any point. It is a matter entirely extraneous, or apart from the laws and condition of things. There is no place for the scheme of redemption. It looks just as artificial as the Ptolemaic system of astronomy. It is an invention of theology. On our maps we paint the different states and countries different colors and make the boundaries very prominent, but in nature we know these things are not thus differentiated. The different climates are not thus sharply separated; neither are day and night divided by right lines. But our theology is as artificial as our maps or as our division of time.

How easy to see that these systems have come down to us from an entirely different state of things, an entirely different condition of mind from that which prevails to-day; a state of mind which viewed all things externally, in an arbitrary and artificial light, which looked upon nature as the theatre of strife between beneficent and malignant spirits, which saw satanic agencies everywhere active, which saw all forces as supernatural forces, which begat a belief in magic, divination, alchemy, astrology, witchcraft, which believed an old woman could turn herself into a wolf and devour flocks of sheep, which looked upon an eclipse or a comet, not as a natural event, but as a supernatural. Nearly all these dark superstitions have perished; the condition of mind that begat them has passed away, but the superstition of the magic of Christ's blood and all those pagan notions of heaven and hell, have survived; but the intense realisation of them of the old days of witchcraft, is fast fading away. They are coolly held as intellectual propositions and that is about all. The light of science, where it is fully admitted is as fatal to them as sun to mildew. Science begets a habit of mind in which these artificial notions cannot live, just as the study of medicine begets quite a different theory of disease from that of the Indian practitioner.

The study of nature kills all belief in miraculous or supernatural agents, not because it proves to us that these things do not exist, but because it fosters a habit of mind that is unfavorable to them, because it puts us in possession of a point of view from which they disappear. The opposite of the natural man is not the spiritual man,—for the natural man is often the most spiritual,—but the *artificial* man. The man upon whose mind has been foisted an artificial system of belief, a view of things, a view not encouraged by nature, but in opposition to nature.

An artificial man, a man to whom all promptings of nature and suggestions of reason were looked upon as the whisperings of the evil one,—such was and still

is the good old orthodox believer. He cherished an artificial system of belief, a system which attributed curious plans and devices to God outside of nature, to save fallen man—a system of belief, the most perfect expression of which is found in the creed and elaborate ritual of the Catholic church. All the other churches are more or less compromises with nature, with the natural man. They concede some rights to him, the right of private judgment, the most precious of all; but the Romish church concedes nothing; it is the expression of absolute outward authority, it is as arbitrary and unnatural as anything can well be. It is the complete expression of a church, of a religious organisation, of a system of things which takes a man's salvation out of his own hands and puts it into the hands of an ecclesiastical hierarchy. At one extreme stands naturalism or science, at the other stands the Catholic church, while the other churches occupy intermediate grounds. Indeed there is a regular gradation from Rome down or up, to nature, the Anglican church probably standing nearest Rome, and the Unitarian nearest nature.

XII.

I apprehend that the success of Christianity has not been owing to the fact that it is true as a system of doctrines, but that it is true as a system of ethics. It is a good working hypothesis. It restrains vice, it stimulates virtue. The doctrines are false, but they gave force, and, as it were, dramatic representation to the ethics; they embodied it in living concrete form, as in a parable or allegory, so that they have a new power over men's hearts and minds. But always have the doctrines been held as primary, and the ethics as secondary, though the two were inseparable. The orthodox churches to-day set more store by the doctrines, when the pinch comes, than by the ethics. It is more necessary to believe certain things, than to be a certain type of man, to lead a certain kind of life. The American Board of Foreign Missions, refuse certain candidates for labor in the foreign field, who hold an extra belief in the extent of God's mercy to the heathen. If you believe in probation after death, says the board, you are none of ours, no matter what your daily walk and conversation may be.

By making the object of religion some other world, some other state of existence than this, a great leverage seems to have been gained. It gave room for the imagination to work, for the ideal to play a part. The enchantment of distance, the fascination of the unknown, the lure of the absolutely pure and perfect, (which of course would not satisfy us when attained any more than their opposite) have been great helps in elevating the race. The conscience of the race has slowly become attuned to these high promises and

ideals. The present life is vulgar and mean, and to a large part of mankind seems hardly worth the having. The world of which we form a part is always more or less a prosy commonplace world, we are crushed and dwarfed by its materialism or its dull cares. Heaven must be some other world, some far away elysium field. This hope, this lure keeps the heart from failing. That this "poor life is all," how such a conviction would cause millions of souls to sink back in the slough of despond; because this life is poor to them, they have not the power to transform it and see it shot through with celestial laws. This earth is no star in the heavens to them, but a very vulgar and prosaic clod.

THE LITTLE GLASS SLIPPER.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

THERE was a great commotion in the school. Little Debby Smith of Bloomingdale had come out boldly denying the faith, and affirming a positive disbelief in the fairy god-mother and the little glass slipper. It was terrible. The whole neighborhood was scandalised; but the primary department of the school felt that the very foundation of things was unsettled. Some went so far as to accuse Debby of denying the inspiration and even the existence of a personal Cinderella. Lulu Weeks wrote on the blackboard of her class room, "Debby is a skizm"; but when asked by Debby to define what a "skizm" was, she couldn't do it. At recess things had come to such a pass that Kitty Brown told Debby to her face that what she had said was Heresy. This brought matters to a climax and at once four or five of the children cried out: "Heresy! Heresy!"

Then Ada Martin said something ought to be done about it; and eventually something was done. Ada, and Mary Booth, and Si Knapp hunted up Debby and fetched her out in the yard to answer concerning her false doctrine. At first Debby was not at all inclined to answer, but preferred to go on eating her luncheon. Perhaps she would have gone on if it hadn't been that Willie Wickers pulled her lunch basket out of her lap and spilled her sandwich and cake. At this Debby began to cry, and to claim that she was being persecuted. I am sure I do not know how it would have ended if Mabel Johnson had not offered her services as moderator. She proposed that Debby should be allowed to eat her lunch in peace, and that then all the children should hear what she had to say as to her belief or disbelief in Cinderella, and if found to be an infidel on the subject, none of them should play tag or puss in the corner any more with her. This course seemed wise and just to the children, because, you see, it was about what the grown folks did. At all events poor Debby gathered up the fragments

that remained of her luncheon, much the worse for dust, and with tears in her eyes sat down and finished it.

When the last mouthful was down Clara Hobbs asked Debby to define her position, so (as Clara forcibly observed) that the children all might know whether she was a fit person to play puss with or tag. Poor Debby! I pity her, don't you? And don't you think all right minded people ought? Of course it is a very solemn thing to have doubts concerning Cinderella, and yet (as some look at it) it is much more solemn having the doubts to deny them before children. Some have doubts, but go about proclaiming their beliefs on street corners, at recess to be seen of children, so as to "make themselves solid" with them, and most who do this achieve a fair business success at it. However let us get back to Debby. There she was up before the sanhedrim of the school required to define her position. This she now proceeded to do.

I believe (she said) in the plenary inspiration of Cinderella as a whole. I believe implicitly in a personal Cinderella and in the personality of the wicked sisters. I am convinced that there was a prince, and I hold sacred the doctrines of the rats and the mice and the pumpkin; but I deny most strenuously that there was any little glass slipper.

At this, I tell you, there was an uproar. Some howled "Heresy"! loud as they could. Some said they wouldn't play with Debby any more, and some were for setting Willy Wicker's dog "Shep" on her. Happily better counsels prevailed, and all they did was to resort to "lip." There was plenty of this, such as it was. Kitty Brown enquired (wisely enough, as I look at it) how Debby could believe in the story of CINDERELLA AND THE LITTLE GLASS SLIPPER, and yet deny that there was any little glass slipper at all. Kitty made some remarks "in this connection" which were very able, but which lack of space prevents my quoting.

Dora Jones said she thought great care should be taken lest injustice be done, and very earnestly besought Debby to reconsider her position. This Debby refused to do, she would not modify her expressed views even to the extent of admitting that, while there might not have been a *little* slipper, that at least there was a *slipper of some sort*. No, Debby was firm. No slipper of any sort was her doctrine, and by that she proposed to stand.

Whatever we may think of her doctrinal standards we all must admire her pluck. Don't you look at it that way?

Curious how many divergent, and some may say even discordant "views" were elicited as to the meaning of the story of Cinderella. I suppose now you

will be glad to learn that my time is up, and therefore I am unable to give them all in full. Of course ultimately poor Debby was convicted of heresy, and now she wanders at recess and after school tagless and pussless, a sad warning to those who deny the truth as it is in Cinderella. As to what that truth really is few know anything; but those few, happily for themselves, know it all. I think Pollikins Roe, who is really a very bright little girl, put it better than the rest; she said to me privately that as for herself she had no opinions on the subject; that she thought the story of Cinderella was of no value except for the principles it contained; and that it was quite beyond the capacity of any child or any number of children to decide how much truth there was *in the incidents*.

Minds are to each other as some power of their homologous conditions. To translate traditional beliefs into intellectual equivalents, to render feeling in terms of tongue are tasks that children of all ages have tried their minds at.

At this epoch, as I believe, never before, are faith's presumed foundations being broken up. What shall the righteous do? Godly men are changing churches, going out, or being put out of churches. Alas! they change, they go for reasons as frivolous as those of the children in Bloomingdale school.

Is it not absurd to adhere to the letter and ignore the spirit? Is it not frivolous to have "views" as to the fairy prince, to "believe" in rats and mice and pumpkins, and yet to deny glass slippers? to speculate, and philosophise, and guess, whilst all the while the old steadfast truth has them in derision, and mocks when their fear cometh.

The follies of our fathers, as well as the sins, have been visited upon us. Our minds are wounded. Let us heal them,—treating our brain hurts as surgeons do the flesh, binding them up with antiseptic solutions of principle against the spores of bigotry, the microbes of prejudice. These are in the atmosphere without and the blood within.

Go to the National Gallery in London, and there look upon one of Turner's masterpieces—what do you see?—a blur, a blotch, a meaningless mass of paint without form and void. But as you move suddenly you are aware of a change. What was in you dark has become illumined. A step,—a glance, and lo! you have justified to yourself the ways of Turner to men.

Facts are figments; steps towards or away from opportunities; but the truth is in a vision, a focus, a vantage you share with none other.

Outside of that focus there was no Turner; within it you became one with him in art. He had revealed himself.

So look upon the marvellous landscape of nature;

the earth's beauty, the ever widening scenes of science, the illimitable vista before, the brief, imperfect past, not as if this were all, but as knowing that there is a focus where the hand of the master may be visible.

So also look upon the story of Christianity. Get your inspiration, not from Clio, but from Themis. Think no longer that the truth must rise or fall with the reasonableness or the folly of historical statements. The grandest of all truth is in a parable—a lie. Yet be sure, with the greater as the lesser story, with the Bible as with Cinderella, the merit is in you, and the sole merit any statement can have is in the principles it gives.

Truth has ever needed a revelation. Euclid "revealed" geometry—Copernicus, Newton, Volta, Bacon,—how glibly come the names of the great revealers.

Religion is as truly a science as geometry; but it is the science,—not of assumed facts of history, but of known relations of soul,—of the relations of the individual to the eternal, of the differential to the Constant, of the concrete to the abstract, of the example to the principle, of man to God.

You have the power within you to freely fix your own focus to see and know,—to take your inheritance of amorphous character and crystallise it,—make it, not indeed perfect, but isomeric with perfection.

SCIENCE TEXT-BOOKS.

BY E. P. POWELL.

The Open Court has freely discussed the sexual nature and sexual relations as a necessity to a rational conception of the family or a scientific conception of society. But we have not yet reached an era when school books consider it essential to do the same thing. I have before me as good a school Physiology as I have ever seen "for the use of Grammar and Common schools." The author specifically avows his purpose to give our young people something rather more directly practical than is usually found in school physiologies. "The book is intended for pupils from twelve to fifteen years of age;" that is for those who are just reaching puberty and are involved in that terribly serious problem of chastity or debauchery. It is pre-eminently the age when sexual matters must be understood, and the child wisely advised, or degeneration moral and physical will set in. Where shall such advice come from, or from what source shall the simple fundamental laws of the scientific development and use of the body be looked for if not from a school physiology "intended for pupils from twelve to fifteen." Yet you may read this book through without discovering that the author is aware of the existence of sexual organs or sexual characteristics. The subject is not alluded to. Evidently Nature made the

body so that a learned and moral physician considers it necessary to ignore parts of it in a supposed discussion of the whole. But the subject of alcoholic drinks has been treated with enlargement and emphasis. An appendix is added devoted to the more full elucidation of the question of temperance and abstinence. Every wise educator as well as observant citizen comprehends that excess in the use of stimulants as well as the use of narcotics is owing very largely to the antedating abuse of the nervous organism and to devitalised conditions caused by sex abuse. Our text-books are fighting a symptom and not the disease when they belabor alcohol. What our physiologies ought to do is to teach the wise use of every organ of the body; and supremely of such organs as involve life or death, regeneration or degeneration, vital vigor or a prostration of the whole nervous system, and an appeal to stimulants, that ultimate in worse wreckage.

I am delighted when I read the chapter on "The Nervous System" to find so discriminating and yet thorough a discussion of the government of thought sensation motion by these filaments. "The nervous system in a man may be compared to the general of an army." Nerves and nerve cells it clearly is needful that the boy of twelve should understand. Our author begins at the brain and carefully unfolds the truth as he creeps along down the spinal cord. Excellent laws of diet and sleep and hygiene are laid down; but that the boy is a boy and the girl a girl, with specific sexual powers embodied in the nerve organism, and involving more of misery or joy than accrues individually and socially from any other source is not directly or indirectly referred to. I understand that this is not the fault of this author alone. It is the custom of our school books and schools. The custom is based on a much more general habit covering our family life. It is conceived to be indelicate to discuss a certain part of the functions with which Nature has endowed us. If we could insure absolute ignorance on the sexual question until puberty the mistake would not be so gross. But we know very well that any omission of this sort on our part is amply filled up by false and vicious information gathered freely in the common intercourse of our school system. That is while we decline to teach science, nescience and lies are inculcated. Not one child in one thousand in the United States reaches twelve years of age without prominent and very dangerous views, if not habits, involving the sexual organs, and the whole nervous system. Society is undermined by the consequences of this combination of knowledge and ignorance. Wrecks not only fill our idiot and insane asylums, but others drag on as devitalised fragments of our social organism. Wives and husbands stumble ahead with broken health and beget distracted children. The possible improvement of the

human race as well as the amelioration of nervous disorders depends on right knowledge being substituted for false knowledge at the outset.

While our whole common school curriculum needs readjustment to modern acquisitions of knowledge, it is peculiarly needful that our physiological teaching tell the primary truths of our whole organism, and not of part of it only. It is a mistake to suppose any such omission is required in order to secure chastity. The subject can be discussed if discussed in due time. But it is all important that so far as the truth is told, it be the truth without prevarication or exaggeration. We do not want a chapter of perfervid morals in place of science. Exactly that is what we are getting of late in the discussion of alcohol, a passionate tirade against stimulants. Several physiologies now in use in the United States are by statute teaching what is supposed to be temperance. I am a total abstainer myself; but I will not allow my children to consider such rant as knowledge. I see no reason for the cowardice that tries to ensure the young from vice by forestalling exaggerations and biased statements, if not absolute falsehood. The simplest straightforwardness is always surest and safest as it is most scientific.

I sympathise with Mr. Huxley somewhat in his pessimistic views as to the possibility of engrafting science teaching upon any school system now existing. It is quite as difficult here as in England. The incapacity of the average teacher is supplemented by the conglomerate nature of the average text-book. By far the larger part of our science text-books are gotten up to order by professional text-book makers. These men will as soon prepare you a chemistry as a geography; or a zoölogy as quickly as a botany. I am bound to say their work is equally valuable in all directions. That which is inserted is as astounding as that which is omitted. The interference of State Legislatures has been well intended but has secured some queer results. Professor Cope in the January *Naturalist* calls attention to the condition of affairs in Indiana. Every teacher is compelled to attend State Institutes and discuss certain topics assigned for the occasion. This year the study is botany; and here is how the work is perfected. In January the flower and fruit of the strawberry is the subject; the topic for November is the dog-tooth violet; for December tulips. Any one who understands the fundamental principle of science teaching knows it is the study of things, and not of books. But here there is no thought of botany as anything but book study. The dog-tooth violet blossoms in April and tulips in May. Still it must be seen that there is a general consciousness that what we need in our schools is science. The struggle of legislators is promising. The evolution will become a rational fact in due time. Sins of omission as

well as commission will be excoriated. I do not doubt but that we shall shortly have a physiology that is aware that nature did not make a mistake in making us male and female.

SOCIALISM AND ANARCHISM.

SOCIAL reformers and the enthusiastic prophets of a new mankind tell us that when their dreams are realised a radical change will take place in the nature of man. The coming man will lose all the vicious features of the present man; universal happiness will reign all the world over and humanity will become a homogeneous mass either of independent sovereigns or of well adapted members of society. The former extreme is called anarchism, the latter socialism or nationalism; and the exponents of either view expect from the application of their panacea a cure for all social diseases and the institution of a millennium upon earth.

How vain are the endeavors to construct an ideal Utopia either of an individualistic or socialistic humanity! Does it not prove that sociology is still in its infancy? Instead of studying facts, we invent and propose schemes.

The mistake made by anarchists as well as by socialists is that individualism and socialism are treated as regulative principles while in reality they are not principles; they are the two factors of society. Neither of them can be made its sole principle of regulation. You might as well propose to regulate gravity on earth by making either the centrifugal or the centripetal force the supreme and only law, abolishing the one for the benefit of the other.

Individualism and socialism are factors and cannot be made principles. This means: Individualism is the natural aspiration of every being to be itself, it is the inborn tendency of every creature to grow and develop in agreement with its own nature. We might say that this endeavor is right, but it is more correct to say that it is a fact; it is natural and we can as little abolish it as we can decree by an act of legislature that fire shall cease to burn or that water shall cease to quench fire. Socialism on the other hand is a fact also. "I" am not alone in the world; there are my neighbors and my life is intimately interwoven with their lives. My helpfulness to them and their helpfulness to me constitute the properly human element of my soul and are perhaps ninety-nine one hundredths of my whole self. The more human society progresses, the more numerous and varied become the relations among the members of society, and the truth dawns upon us that no advantage accrues to an individual by the suppression of the individuality of his fellows. First he, in so doing, never succeeds for good, and secondly the mutual advantage will in the end always

be greater to all concerned the more the factor of individualism in others remains respected. Human society as it naturally grows is the result of both factors, of individualism and of socialism.

The anarchist proposes to make individualism, and the nationalist to make socialism the main principle of regulation for society. Are not these one-eyed reformers utterly in the dark as to the nature of the social problem? The social problem demands an inquiry into the natural laws of the social growth in order to do voluntarily what according to the laws of nature must after all be the final outcome of evolution. By consciously and methodically adapting ourselves to the laws of nature, we shall save much waste, avoid great pains, and acquire the noble satisfaction that we have built upon a rock: and no innovation is possible except it be a gradual evolution from the present state and the result of the factors which are at present active.

Socialism and anarchism are the two extremes, and all social parties contain both principles in different proportions. The republicans and the democrats represent the same opposition of centripetal and centrifugal forces in their politics. Party platforms are exponents of the forces that manifest themselves in the growth of society. They may be either symptoms of special diseases or indicators of a wholesome reaction against special diseases. A movement may be needed now in the direction of anarchism and now in that of socialism. We may now want a regulation of certain affairs in which the public safety and interest are concerned: for instance, in giving licenses to physicians and druggists, in the supervision of banks, in railroad matters, etc., etc.; and then again we may want a greater freedom from government interference. The temporary needs as they are more or less felt will swell the one or the other party.

It would be a misfortune, however, if one of these partisan forces could rush to the extreme and realise the social or anarchical ideal before its opposite had been deeply rooted at the same time in the hearts of the people. Social institutions not based upon liberty, or government interference to the suppression of free competition, would be exactly as insupportable as anarchy among lawless people who have no regard for the rights of others. But there is no danger that either extreme would entirely disappear to leave the whole field to the other alone. The law of inertia holds good in the psychical and sociological world no less than in the physical.

As the present man is the man of the past only further developed, so the coming man will be the present man only wiser, nobler, purer. There is no chance for a radical change of the nature of man or of the constitution of society. However there is a chance and more than a chance, there is a fully justified

hope and a rational faith that man will continue to progress. Nature's cruel work of incessantly lopping off the constantly new appearing vicious outgrowths of human life through the survival of the fittest, and by an extirpation of the unfit, will in the future be performed by man himself, from the start, as soon as he has discovered the conditions under which these outgrowths become impossible.

Human society will in the future be more anarchistic in the same measure as it will be more socialistic. Not that socialistic institutions or laws will through an external pressure abolish competition and impose upon the individual more socialistic relations; nor that the abolition of laws will restrict government interference so as to give more elbow-room to individual liberty. Individual liberty will increase at the same ratio as the social instincts of mutual justice will become more than at present a part of every individual man. This has been the law of social progress in the past, it has made the republican institutions of the present possible and this law will hold good for the future also. Anarchism could be realised only where the laws of justice were inscribed in the hearts of all men, so that every man were a law unto himself; and perfect socialism can be realised only where every individual's greatest joy consisted in the ambition to serve the community. The former would be a state of altruistic individualists and the latter one of individualistic altruists. Both states are ideals and both are represented by more or less consistent parties which for the attainment of the same aim propose opposite means. These parties are exponents of certain forces that manifest themselves in the growth of society. It is well to understand both ideals and to sympathise with both, although the one as much as the other may be equally impossible, for evolution is a constant and a simultaneous approximation to both ideals.

P. C.

CURRENT TOPICS.

It seems that the "lost cause" has fallen under the humiliating patronage of Lord Wolseley, a general in the British army, "England's only general" they call him over there, a compliment which if well deserved hodes ill for England. His Lordship, fresh from the battle fields of Hyde Park and Wimbledon, is earning an honest penny by writing for the magazines a platitudinous and second hand review of the American civil war. Lord Wolseley is a confederate partisan who has not yet learned "that the war is over," and he takes revenge on the union soldiers by petulantly telling them that they really ought not to have won it you know, after he had prophesied that they must fail. By the way, his Lordship is one of the wisest of those military soothsayers who prophesy portentously after the event. If a battle was won by haste, he can show that haste was wise, if lost, that rashness was to blame. Lord Wolseley's essays are merely wrappers for dynamite cartridges by which he hopes to shatter the reputation of the union army. In a recent article on General Sherman, Lord Wolseley produces from the cellar of mouldy fables that faded

picture of the confederate "victors in a hundred fights against vastly superior numbers," and that other bit of maudlin gloom which represents the surrender at Appomattox, when "Lee's gallant but starving army, hungry and without resources, but not beaten in battle, laid down their arms."

* * *

It does not appear at all strange to Lord Wolseley, who has never yet commanded in actual war,—for he will hardly dignify by that name the conquest of a few Egyptian savages;—it does not appear at all paradoxical to him, that the "victors in a hundred fights," should foolishly surrender to the vanquished in a hundred fights; but men who have seen war in reality will think such a phenomenon impossible to be. Lord Wolseley is almost piously sentimental concerning the "sincere patriots" of the South, and yet he pretends that they were always confronted by "vastly superior numbers" How came that? It is the boast of confederate partisans like Lord Wolseley that the South was unanimous in sentiment, and that her valor was only equalled by the devotion of her sons, who left everything behind them, and rallied round their flag. Then those very same historians immediately try to prove that very few of the said sons went into actual fight. Lord Wolseley cannot be allowed the double boast that thousands sought the battle but that only hundreds fought it. Equally inconsistent is his claim that the confederates were starved in a country that supported the union troops luxuriously when they marched over it. The confederate soldiers will not thank Lord Wolseley for his patronage. To tell brave men that their conquerors were cowards is flattery in reverse. Our theatre of war was too vast for the military comprehension of Lord Wolseley, but he is fairly competent to give us a critical review of the Easter Monday sham Battle of Brighton, or perhaps to show us how the disastrous Battle of Dorking was lost through the fussy incompetence of the Horse Guards.

* * *

I see that the old Vikings of the north have some descendants living yet. One of them by the name of Peary, an American Lieutenant, has taken a little ship and started northward for the conquest of the pole. This is a more praiseworthy expedition than some of the piratical excursions of his ancestors, the old sea kings; but a wail of gloomy portent comes from portions of the American press, pitying the foolhardy enterprise and the rash navigator who dares to tempt the fate of Hendrik Hudson, of Sir John Franklin, and DeLong. Out of the depths of their fear they exclaim, "Why does not the American government put a stop to those Arctic expeditions, which inflict hardship, impose danger, and imperil human lives in a search for something which it is not possible to find; and which if it could be found would have no money value?" These questions come out of the timid and mercantile elements of our souls, and they regard not the importance of even unprofitable courage in the formation of national character. The Anglo-Saxon trait of conquering difficulties for the glory of conquering them is intensified in the American. It has given to him that individuality and self reliance which have made him invincible by the wild beast or the wild man. Led, often by the spirit of adventure alone, he has blazed with his axe a path for empire across the continent from sea to sea. Danger was the very spice of life to the American pioneer, and to him adventure was a stimulant like wine. Under its influence he has explored the continent, torn out the heart of the mountains for their silver, and turned the rivers into new channels to get the gold hidden in the sand. Strengthened by it he has chased the sperm whale nearly to the pole, and inspired by the charm and fascination of it, he will not stop until he has planted his flag at the very pole itself.

* * *

There seems to be an epidemic of heresy abroad in the land, and the Newtons and McQuearys and the Briggses and the Brookses

think that they can cure it by inoculating the churches with it, as if it were a matter of small pox to be prevented by the injection of some virus. It resembles a panic in the army; the fight gets hot and one or two drop out, perhaps limping, then some others follow, and then more, until at last the magnetism of alarm makes a stampede all along the line. Much of it is due to pretentious phraseology such as "advanced thought," "modern learning," "higher criticism," "exegetical acumen," whatever that is, and other fashionable phrases of like dignity. Men are willing to be accused of intellectuality or of a taste for higher criticism, and a church trial often gives them the notoriety they seek. Some of the heresy is due to a growing disbelief in punishment, especially Divine punishment of the eternal kind. This feeling was eloquently expressed by an American delegate to a Presbyterian convention in London when he was pleading for a revision of the creed. He said; "I don't know how it may be with you Englishmen, but the American people will not submit to eternal punishment. It's no us preaching it. I tell you they won't stand it." If the stampede continues at the present rate of travel for a few years more, the rival powers will change places, and we shall see men tried for orthodoxy before ecclesiastical tribunals, and condemned. M. M. TRUMBULL.

A SONNET.

BY F. J. P.

Once in the college years gone by, I read
In Hesiod of the young Earth's Age of Gold;
When men, who tired of life, did but enfold
Their eyes from light with their own cloaks, and fled
Silent and painless, homewards to the Dead.
Boy though I was, the legend took firm hold
Upon my soul; for could I not behold
Ev'n then how Grief to Joy is always wed?
How Life is vex't with cares, with sin, disease?
How high resolves and prayers are turned to dust?
And how—there lay the charm—how sweet it must
Have been to die in such soft quiet ease?
But since those days the world seems changed to me;
Duty reveals what then I scarce could see.

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