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THE TEST OF PROGRESS.

THE word "Progress" is one of the most commonly used terms and yet its meaning is extremely vague with most people. Progress is the ideal of our time and the glory of this generation. But what is progress? Can we give a definite and clear answer to this question, or is "progress" one of the many words by which people feel much but think little?

Progress is the act of stepping forward, it is a march onward. But who can tell us the right direction of an onward march? Did it ever happen to you when travelling on your ideal highroad of progress that you met a man who marched in the direction which you left behind? It happens very often, and if you inquire of the wanderer, Why do you go backward instead of forward? he will assure you that he marches onward while you yourself are retrogressive. Those who preach progress are by no means unanimously agreed as to the right direction. Make a chart of all the directions propounded and it will look like a compass dial. All directions possible are represented and there are not a few who believe that the development of our present civilisation proceeds in the wrong direction; they call us actually backwards to stages which lie behind us in a distant past and would consider a return to them as real progress. These retrogressive reformers are not so much among the ultra-conservative classes as among the ultra-radical enthusiasts who in one-sided idealism find perfection in the most primitive states either of absolute anarchy or absolute socialism, or whatever may be their special hobby.

The question, What is progress? is of paramount importance to ethics. For if there is no progress, if the direction of the onward movement is either indeterminate or indifferent, then, certainly there is no ethics. And if there is a special and determinable line along which alone progress has to take place, it is this alone which has to be used as a compass for our course of action. This line alone can be the norm of morality. From this alone we have to derive our moral rules, this alone can give us the real contents of the otherwise empty and meaningless term of moral goodness and this alone must constitute our basis of ethics.

Our time should know what progress is, for our

generation surveys the origin and growth of life so much better than did any previous generation. We now know that all life follows certain laws of evolution and has begun from the very beginning as slimy specks of living substance developing to the present state. The man of to-day is the product of that evolution, and man's progress is nothing but a special form of evolution; it is the evolution of mankind. Our scientists have discovered the fundamental laws of evolution; so they may be able to give us a satisfactory explanation of progress. The law of evolution we are informed is adaptation to surroundings. The polar bear adapts himself in the color of his skin and in his habits to his environment; while the insects of Madeira lose their power of flight and have to a great extent become wingless. There is a survival of the fittest everywhere, but natural selection does not always favor the strongest and the best. The ablest flyers on the islands are swept by the winds into the ocean and the weak only will survive, those who are lacking in a special virtue, but not the bravest, not the strongest, not the best!

May we not imagine that there are periods or societies so radically corrupt (and history actually teaches that there were repeatedly such eras) in which the spirit of the time made it actually impossible for good men to exist and to act morally. The evil influence of tyranny, of corruption, or of hypocrisy swept the brave, the courageous, the honest, the thinking out of existence and allowed only the weak, the degenerate, the unthinking to remain? It is true that whenever a nation fell under such a blight, she was doomed. Other nations took her place and there were quite a number of peoples entirely blotted out from the face of the globe. We have progressive as well as retrogressive adaptation (as Professor Weismann informs us), and adaptation in many cases is no sign of progress in the physical world, let alone the moral progress of human beings. We may say that the law of adaptation explains survival, but it cannot afford a criterion of progress.

We will ask the philosopher what progress is. The philosopher takes a higher and more general view of life, he may give us a broader and better information as to what is the characteristic feature of progress. Progress, we are told, is "a passage from a homogeneous to a heterogeneous state." . . . "It is a contin-

ually increasing disintegration of the whole mass accompanied by an integration, a differentiation, and a mutual, perpetually-increasing dependence of parts as well as of functions, and by a tendency to equilibrium in the functions of the parts integrated." Complexity, it is maintained, is a sign of a higher evolution, and it is true—in many respects higher forms of existence are richer, more elaborate, more specialised, than lower forms. But is therefore complexity the criterion of progress; can we use it as a test wherever we are in doubt in a special case. Does it show us the nature of progress, its meaning and importance? It appears that this explanation is not even generally true, for there are most weighty and serious exceptions which overthrow the validity of this formula entirely. Is not the progress in the invention of machinery from the more complex to the less complex? Invent a machine to do a special kind of work simpler than those at present in use; it will, the amount and exactitude of work being equal, on the strength of its simplicity alone be considered superior and it will soon replace the more complex machinery in the market.

Mr. Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of evolution, overlooked the main point when he attempted to explain evolution as he proposed in terms of matter and motion. Evolution means change of form, and this change of form has a special meaning. Evolution is not a material process and not a mechanical process, and the attempt to solve the problem of evolution on the ground of materialism or mechanicalism (i. e. to express its law in terms of matter and motion) must necessarily be a failure. Mr. Spencer, it is true, recognises the importance of the formal element, for his view of increasing complexity involves form and change of form. Yet he selects a mere external feature (one that is not even a universal) as characteristic of evolution and he neglects the very meaning of the change of form. This meaning remaining as an irresoluble residue in his philosophical crucible might find a place of shelter under the protecting wings of the Unknowable; but this meaning of the change of form is the very nerve of the question and all other things are matters of detail and secondary consideration.

The evolution of the solar system, being a mechanical process may find in the Kant-La Place hypothesis a purely mechanical solution. But the evolution of animal life is not a purely mechanical process. There is in it an element of feeling which is not mechanical. I do not mean to say that the nervous process which takes place while an animal feels is not mechanical. On the contrary I consider all processes which are changes of place, biological processes included, as instances of molar or molecular mechanics. But the feeling itself is no mechanical phenomenon. It is a

state of awareness and in this state of awareness something is represented. This state of awareness has a meaning, which may be called its contents.

I do not hesitate to consider the meaning that feeling acquires as the characteristic feature not only of animal but especially also of intellectual life—of the life of man. It is upon the meaning-freighted feelings that soul-life originates. Let every special feeling, representing a special condition or object, be constituted by a special form of nerve-action, and we should see the soul, the psychological aspect of nerve-forms, develop together with the organism. A higher development leads naturally, as a rule but not without exceptions, to a greater complexity of nerve-forms. Yet it is not this complexity which constitutes the evolution of the soul and the progress in the development of the organism. The test of progress can be found in the meaning alone with which the feelings that live in the action of these nerve-forms, are freighted.

What is this meaning?

The different soul-forms (so we may for brevity's sake call these feelings, living in the different nerve-structures) represent special experiences and through these experiences the surroundings of the organism are depicted. The soul accordingly is an image of the world impressed into living substance and depicted in feelings. This however is not all, the soul is more than that. It is also the psychical aspect of the reaction that takes place in response to the stimuli of the surroundings. And this reaction is indeed the most important part in the life of the soul. The former may be called by a generalised name cognition or intelligence, the latter activity or ethics. The former has no other purpose than to serve as an information for the proper direction and guidance of the latter.

We do not consider the world as a chaos of material particles. We do not believe that blind chance rules supreme. On the contrary we see order everywhere and law is the regulating principle in all things and processes. The world is not a meaningless medley, but a cosmos which in its minutest parts is full of significance and purport. And this truth has found a religious expression in the God-idea. The world considered in its cosmic grandeur is divine, and when in the process of evolution the soul develops as an image of the world, the divinity of the cosmos is also mirrored in the soul. The higher animal life rises, the more does it partake of the divine, and it reaches the highest climax in men and finally in the ideal of a perfectly moral man—in the God man.

The test of progress must be sought in the growth of soul. The more perfectly, the more completely, the more truthfully the world is imaged in the soul-forms, so as to enable mankind, the individual man as

well as the race, to react appropriately upon the proper occasions, to be up in doing and achieving, to act wisely, aspiringly and morally, the higher have we risen on the scale of evolution. It is not the complexity of soul-forms which creates their value, it is their correctness, their congruence with reality, their truth. Evolution sometimes leads to a greater complexity. In the realm of cognition it does so wherever discrimination is needed. But sometimes again it will lead to a greater simplicity. Complexity alone would have a bewildering aspect, it must be combined with economy, and the economy of thought is so important because it simplifies our intelligence; it enables us not only to see more of truth at once but also to recognise the laws of nature, the order of the cosmos, and its divinity.

The test of progress, in one word, is the realisation of truth extensive as well as intensive, in the soul of man. The more truth the human soul contains and the more it utilises the truth in life, the more powerful it will be and the more moral. In this way the soul partakes of the divinity of its creator, call it nature or God; it will come more and more in harmony with the cosmos, it will more and more conform to its laws, it will be the more religious, the holier, the greater, the diviner, the higher it develops and the further it progresses.

CHRISTIANITY, ITS SPIRIT AND ITS ERRORS.*

BY VLADIMIR SOLOVIEFF.

[CONCLUDED.]

III.

While the advent of the kingdom of God does not reveal itself as a *Deus ex machina*, but through a conditionally universal-historical, divine-human process, in which God acts only in union with man, it follows, that we must regard as a rude counterfeit of Christianity the view, which attributes to man a purely passive rôle in the performance of the divine work; and which supposes that all his duty in relation to the kingdom of heaven consists in submitting to the divine facts, as symbolised by the visible church; and in a listless expectation of the final advent of the kingdom of God; meanwhile devoting all his activity to worldly and profane interests which have no connection with the divine work in question. As a plausible reason for this view, we offered the comparison that God is everything, and that man is nothing. But, this false submission in reality is a revolt against God, who in Christ has loved and exalted humanity, from whom Christians never ought to separate—for “unto them is given the power to become the children of God.” The sons of the kingdom are free, and are

summoned to a self-conscious and spontaneous share in the work of the father. If among these there also are some, who spiritually have not attained the ripe age, then this only represents a fact, which must be taken into account, but which does not lead up to any final, universal principle.

The followers of the above-mentioned error confound the building up of the divine action in the kingdom of God in the growth and development of the god-man organism with the revelation of divine omnipotence in the phenomena of nature, and in the events of terrestrial life. But, by this very assertion, they expose their fallacy, involving themselves in contradictions. If indeed they regard it as unlawful to interfere actively with the fore-appointed decrees of the kingdom of God, in such case they ought not to meddle with anything whatever, because everything depends on divine will. They do not, however, proceed in this way, but with all their energy and inspiration they anxiously strive to build up all possible kinds of worldly enterprises personal, national, and others. And why must this discrimination be made? Why in their worthless actions do they deem it indispensable to assist God where he is omnipotent, but will not assist him in his exalted work? Manifestly because they are contented in the former, but not at all in the latter. To interfere with the work of God they think is not *their* duty, and therefore they have no business with him. And yet Christianity in reality consists only in this, that the divine work should be accomplished along with this purely human work. This divine-human solidarity also constitutes the divine kingdom, and it approaches only according to the measure in which it is realised. It is clear, that these pseudo-quietists preach to us an adulterated Christianity. They in fact surrender the more actively to Mammon, the more passively they submit to the words of the other master, whose sanctity and greatness only serve them as an ostensible pretext not to trouble about his will.

We have now pointed out the errors usually connected with the denial of every development and progress in the work of the Christian religion. Because many evolutionists hold to a one-sided, mechanical conception of evolution, excluding the action of the highest force, and all teleology; and because many teachers of the historical progress conceive the same, as the infinite self-improvement of man without God and over against God,—from all this they hastily draw the conclusion, that the ideas of evolution and progress themselves possess a kind of atheistical and anti-christian character. This is not only untrue, but those ideas, on the very contrary, are specifically Christian, or, more precisely, hebraic-Christian, and have been revealed to the conscious knowledge of nations

* Translated from the Russian periodical *Voprosni Filosofii i Psichologii* by Albert Gunlogsen.

by the prophets of Israel, and the apostles of the Gospel. Heathendom, whether oriental or occidental, in its highest expressions, as in Buddhism and Neoplatonism, advocated an absolute perfection, unconditional, outside the progress of history, which to heathendom appeared either as infinite, interminable, destitute of totality, and liable to the changes of hazard, or gradually passing to worse.*

Only the Christian (namely, the Messianic) idea of the kingdom of God, consistently reveals itself in the life of humanity, imparts a meaning to history, and determines the true concept of progress. Christianity presents to humanity not only an absolute ideal of perfection, but also points out the road for the attainment of this ideal, and, consequently, it is essentially progressive; and therefore, every view, that denies to Christianity this progressive element, necessarily is an error that, under a Christian name, simply hides a kind of heathen reaction; because the aim of any such views, although not always self-consciously, will be, to detach humanity from the work of God, and to confirm them in that ungodly activity of the world, that Christ came to destroy. These pretended Christians, on their own part, are trying hard, although in vain, to undermine the victory of Christ, in different ways advocating those worldly conditions and institutions, that have nothing in common with the kingdom of heaven. Whence could be justified the prevalent conservative direction of actual, unalloyed Christianity, which, at the same time, strangely enough, in principle, is that of conservatism and radicalism? On the soil of the Christian religion, neither the conservation nor the destruction of any temporal institutions *as such* can interest us. If indeed we care for the *work* of the kingdom of God, we shall be compelled to receive that which worthily serves this end, to reject that, which is antagonistic to it, to avail ourselves not of the dead criterion of any abstract *ablutions*, but (according to the Apostle Paul) of the living criterion of the spirit of Christ—if really we ourselves partake of this spirit; and if we do not, it would be better for us, not to call ourselves Christians. Those, who legitimately wish to bear this name, ought to work, not for the conservation and confirmation of *any* existing social groups and forms, but, on the contrary, to exert themselves for their regeneration, and transformation in the spirit of Christ, and for their genuine transfer into the sphere of the kingdom of God.

In this manner the idea of the kingdom of God necessarily leads us (I mean every self-conscious and sincere Christian) unto the obligation to work, for the

realisation of Christian principles within the collective life of humanity,—for the transfiguration within the soul of the higher truths, contained in all our social relations and social forms,—in other words, the above idea ought to lead up to definite *Christian policy*. Here, once more, we stumble against a new, erroneous aspect of Christianity, or rather, against a diversified aspect of a masked anti-Christian reaction. “Christian policy,” they allege, is a “*contradictio in adjecto*.” Between Christianity and politics there can be nothing in common; *my kingdom is not of this world*, etc. But, because the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, it does, not at all, follow, that it cannot work in the world. Otherwise, it would be legitimate to maintain, that because absolute power is not derived from the people, (but conferred by the grace of God), therefore it cannot direct the people. On the very contrary, according to sound logic, precisely because the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, but *from above*, it follows, that it has a *right* to rule and to guide humanity. One of two things: either the societies, that call themselves Christian must renounce this name, or they will be compelled to recognise their duty, of reconciling all their political and social relations with the principles of Christianity, to transfer them to the sphere of the divine kingdom, and, precisely in this consist the Christian politics at issue.

If, as affirm the partisans of pseudo-Christian individualism, all political and social forms are foreign or even antagonistic to Christianity, it directly follows hence, that true Christians ought to live without any political and social forms. But, this would be a manifest absurdity, as demonstrated by their life and activity. But, if on the one hand it is impossible to annihilate the social and political forms of life, and on the other, that these forms, in their given efficiency, do not answer to Christian principles, and are still far from the heavenly kingdom, it follows that the task of Christian policy is precisely to improve, to elevate these forms, to transubstantiate them into the kingdom of heaven. It is true, that one has misapplied, and still greatly abuses this Christian policy. The kingdom of God on earth is described as a solidarity and partnership of men, who receive and profess a number of given dogmas. Recently one of the partisans of a manifestly counterfeit Christianity of this kind, declared in print, that it is impossible to have any intercourse with “the liberals,” on the ground that they do not “profess Christ coming in the flesh,” as required by the Apostle John. But, I know not upon what this assertion is founded. I know, indeed, rabid conservatives, who are totally strangers to any profession of Christ; and I know liberals who are not liable to this reproach; but this is not the real matter at issue. Our zealot of the faith, manifestly, in an

* An apparent exception to this is represented by the view concerning the progress of the world, which we find in the Persian book, entitled the *Bundehesh*. But this monument, although containing old Zendic religious elements, still by its whole composition relates to much later times (XIIIth century after Christ), and manifestly supposes the strong influence of Christian ideas.

evil hour has had recourse to the Gospel of John. The alleged text, as it is known to every one, who has concerned himself about this subject, is directed against the error, then rampant, of those who recognised the supernatural nature of Christ, but who denied his actual incarnation; only beholding in his bodily manifestation, and historical personality an apparition. This false view afterwards struck root, and spread abroad in the different sects of the Gnostics. But I emphatically maintain, that I never have known any liberal, who was guilty of this heresy. Finally, the text from John, as usually, every word in holy writ, possesses a general signification, beside its direct, historical sense. It is not directed against the liberals, but against that counterfeit 'Christianism, which, on the one hand, leads to a faith that is dead, and, on the other, to superficial interpretations of the personal sanctity, and individual salvation of the soul. While isolating all human problems from the soul of Christ they thus really deny the whole force of his incarnation, that was accomplished in reality, not for his sake, but for the sake of humanity. While reducing Christianity to an abstract dogma, and denying its realisation in social and political life, they manifestly show, that they themselves, in fact, do not profess Christ, as coming in the flesh, and therewith render themselves liable to the anathema of the apostle, that one of them, rather incautiously, thought fit to recall to mind. At all events, the apostle of love could not refer all Christianity to only a dead faith. He surely knew that truth, so beautifully expressed by his fellow-disciple, James, in the words: "and even the devils believe, and tremble." Truly, an alliance with the liberals cannot be so dangerous as an alliance with the devils.

The same author, moreover, asks: "to whom does Vladimir Solovieff teach all this?" To this I am able to answer briefly and definitely. I have not a doctrine of my own; but in view of the spreading of the obnoxious errors of Christianity, I deem it my duty, from different points of view, in different forms, and by different roads to clear up the fundamental idea of Christianity,—the idea of the divine kingdom, as the fulness of human life, not only individual, but also social and petlical, united in Christ to the fulness of divinity; yet, as regards alliances, I absolutely avoid only alliance with the demons who believe and tremble.

RELIGION IN INQUIRENDO.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

UPON the island of Inquirendo Mathematics, having been personified by the inhabitants, is worshiped as a god, and the following conversation took place in the library of Mr. Mayland, an eminent citizen, be-

tween him, Festus Idler, (a mathematical moralist,) and Oliver, a high-churchman of the denomination of "Decimals."

"It is absurd," said Idler, "to suppose that an infinite Mathematics would delight in what passes with the populace for his worship. Apart from doing sums correctly all that man thinks himself able to do in order to become acceptable to Mathematics is mere superstition and religious folly."

"Then," replied Oliver sadly, "you do not believe in a revealed arithmetic?"

"I believe in doing sums correctly," answered Idler, "and as to what you are pleased to call revelation, I deny that such a thing exists, or can exist."

"No man cometh unto the truth except through revelation," said Idler. "There is none that doeth sums correctly,—no, not one. Neither doing of sums availeth anything nor not doing sums, but a new creature."

"There you err," exclaimed Idler impatiently, "all you have to do is to follow the rules."

"That," responded Oliver with the utmost complaisancy, "that is a most pernicious doctrine; doing sums is of the mind,—in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of Mathematics."

"You insist then," continued Idler, "that it makes no difference whether you get right answers to the sums or not? Is that your theory?"

"Quite the contrary," replied Oliver placidly; "if your mind be right in the sight of Mathematics you will get the right answers."

"Always?"

"Always."

"But take the case of an ignorant person; can he be expected to do a sum in double rule of three or cube root off hand?"

"Only believe," answered Oliver solemnly. "What saith the arithmetic?—that it is the science of Numbers,—which is the truth as it is in Numbers. Have faith in Numbers and all these things will be added unto you."

"How can that be, Mr. Oliver?" Idler asked impatiently. "How is it possible for the powers of the mind to be so enlarged as to enable an ignorant person to perform a complicated operation?"

"Ah, therein lies all the mystery. Only believe, only have faith."

"But," persisted Idler, "the mathematical organ differs in different people; some have it so developed that the doing of sums correctly seems to be innate with them, whilst others have no turn, so to speak, towards Mathematics. Are all to be judged by the same standard?"

"The arithmetic is plain," replied Oliver. "The way-faring man, though a fool, need not err,—what

could be plainer than this declaration: only like Numbers shall be added?"

"But yet it is our daily experience that men who are not fools do err. I have a friend who can perform all the operations of the four ground rules with facility, but who seems absolutely incapable of even comprehending decimal fractions. Is that his fault?"

"What he lacks is faith," said Oliver staunchly. "If he prayed in the right spirit his prayer would be answered. By the right spirit of course I mean the mathematically appointed way,—the way laid down in the arithmetic."

"And that is?"

"That all the examples must be worked out upon a consecrated blackboard."

"And is there in your opinion no other way?"

"There is no other way," said Oliver solemnly, "given among men."

"Do I also understand that you insist upon the use of the decimal system exclusively?"

"I am not prepared," answered Oliver, "to deny the efficacy of common fractions. Understand me, please, I am not bigoted, and even go so far as to believe that one may use a slate; of course one sanctioned by some orthodox denomination."

"How about doing sums in one's head?"

"Ah, my friend," said Oliver mournfully, "that is the most fatal of all errors. Mathematics, it is true, is plenteous in mercy, but I find no warrant in the arithmetic for any reliance upon our own powers."

Idler, of course, was far from being convinced, and perhaps tired of an argument which he perceived to be futile, he appealed to Mr. Mayland as to what he called "his views."

"You will, I trust," said Mr. Mayland, "pardon any appearance of dogmatism if I assure you that I have absolutely no views. I attend the church of Our Dividend, because I find myself there in congenial company, and in a reverent atmosphere. I use the decimal system exclusively, but only that this method of calculation is, on the whole, the most serviceable. Let those who choose employ a slate, use common fractions, or if they can, do sums in their head. I confess (he added smiling) that I have always been inclined to envy one who possessed the power to arrive at results without the mechanics, as I call it, of either blackboard or slate."

"Why," exclaimed Oliver, unable to contain himself, "this is rank heresy."

"Not at all. As you have yourself said, Mr. Oliver, neither doing sums correctly nor not doing sums availeth anything, but a new creature."

"Precisely!"

"Then," continued Mr. Mayland, "we shall agree entirely if only we can define accurately what is meant

by the term, new creature. Mathematics has revealed himself in the mind, and only in that portion of the mind which, as we are all agreed, is his especial abiding place. The use of the arithmetic and the doing of examples are only means to an end, tests,—not of mathematical perfection, but of the final relation of the individual to all Truth. Mathematics is not,—as the churches would have us believe, the science of quantity; He is the science of the relations of quantity. It is also quite inconceivable that Mathematics should make the eternal destiny of a being made in his likeness depend upon an intellectual process when the faculty necessary to the performance has been denied.

"Mathematics is indifferent to either space or time; He exists manifestly independent of these. He is infinite, for principles have no quality of quantity. He is eternal, for Truth is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

"Science means known truth;—how therefore can a doer of sums know beyond what he is able, or how shall Justice act otherwise than justly, or require of a mortal that,—on pain of damnation,—he establish a relation to the unknown,—in fact to the unknowable! I say this, because Mathematics is Justice; for Justice is nothing if not absolute, and the absolute is nothing if not mathematical.

"Of the personality,—as we understand the word,—of The Abstract nothing can be effectually affirmed; of the attributes and requirements of The All-Being the all-sufficient is known:—the universal AXIOMS.

"Equity is Justice revealed, lighted with wisdom, as the dark is not added to but illumined,—may be,—as it has been called 'Justice touched with emotion,' and is certainly the correction of that wherein the law, by reason of its universality, is deficient."

Oliver observed that this was all science falsely so called, and Idler added that Mr. Mayland's remarks were "more rhetorical than definite."

So difficult is it for a human being to think without the aid of symbols.

Mr. Mayland's argument applies, (so it appears to me,) quite as well to the faculty of conscientiousness as to that of calculation.

CURRENT TOPICS.

A CAUCASIAN complaint comes up from Washington against negro competition in the office holding trade. The bill of particulars which accompanies the complaint reads thus: "The Indiana and Ohio negroes who want to live at government expense, and that means about all of them, have developed a very shrewd plan for getting places. These citizens have made up a list of places they want, and have sent two of their men from each state to the president in person to ask for them." Well; who in the United States does *not* want to live at government expense? In cherishing this laudable ambition the negro shows that he is very much like a white man; and his plan of making up a "slate"

and presenting it to the president is good evidence that his bump of imitation is well developed. He has adopted this maxim of the white man, "If you see what you want, ask for it." For my own part, I wish he may get it. When the negro does not act like a white man he is proscribed; and when he does, he is condemned for his knack of adaptation. When he was made a voter it was the understanding that he was to be only a chip in the fascinating game of politics; yet now, in violation of the implied agreement, he sits at the table among the players and calls for cards.

* * *

It was my fortune to live in the South before the war; and we haughty cavaliers down there, had a habit of lounging in the shade, smoking our pipes, and deploring the laziness of the negro. Because of his propensity to idleness and luxury we "despaired of his future," much as we desired his moral elevation. At the same time, what little work was done in the South, he did it; and idleness was the prerogative of the white man. After we have made him a citizen shall we deny him the perquisites of that sublime dignity, the right to sell his vote, and to hold an office? After peace broke out, and the negro had become a fellow citizen, a friend of mine in Iowa was a candidate for office, and we had what the newspapers called a "spirited contest," meaning an excess of bribery on both sides. There was a "colored element" in the town, and heretofore this had always been reliable for our ticket, but that year it insisted on the same reward for voting as the white man got. Moralising over this reprehensible conduct, my friend the candidate, who had lost an arm in the war, said: "I call this very ungrateful; I lost an arm fighting down there to make these people free men and fellow citizens, and now I have to bribe them just like white men." And as it was with Julius Cæsar, "Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms, quite vanquished him; then burst his mighty heart."

* * *

It appears by the papers that M. Eifel, the French tower builder, has offered to build an Eifel tower in Chicago, for the Columbian Exposition, and the Directors with headlong daring have returned a favorable answer, in reckless disregard of the law. They seem to think that they are living in the magnanimous United States of old. They forget that should they make a bargain with M. Eifel for a tower, and he should come over to build it, he would be arrested on his arrival at New York, and be sent back under the contract labor law. To the ordinary business mind it seems that if an Eifel tower is to be one of the attractions of the World's Fair, M. Eifel is the very best man to build it; but no sooner is that thought of by the Directors than we hear the little tin trumpet squeaking that the proposition of M. Eifel should not be entertained, because "it would humiliate the profession in this country," and because "the buildings, grounds, and structures should be peculiarly American." Nobody proposes to import the "grounds," nor even the buildings, but only the genius and skill of M. Eifel in the construction of an Eifel tower. It is an irksome thing for our Commissioners in Europe who are soliciting foreign patronage for the Fair, to explain away and apologise for the ungracious attitude assumed by some portions of the Chicago press towards those people of the old world, who if not repelled by our own incivility, will from business motives as well as from friendly motives help the Fair. Either we should abandon the insular, provincial, and concealed style, or cease to call the exposition by such a large and generous name as "The World's Fair."

* * *

The death of James Russell Lowell grieves me like the loss of a battle. Poet laureate of New England, the leaves of his country will grow brighter as the years roll on. His was the song of the Norsemen and its theme was liberty. Into a purer melody he put the bugle call heard long ago in the Scandinavian forests, and among the woods and marshes of the Weser and the Elbe; the same invin-

cible hymn that animated freedom at Naseby, at Bunker Hill, and Gettysburg. I will not cheapen him by the title "typical American," that slang praise we give to so many counterfeits. Rather will I exalt him as a type of what the American shall be. He was my senior by a few years, just enough to make him a leader of my thought, and I followed him in sentiment for forty years and more. I feel bewildered for a moment; the flag bearer fallen, and the banner out of sight, but I remember that when liberty needed help, Lowell brought Hosea Biglow on to the field, a reinforcement equal to an army corps. What Burns made the Scottish dialect, Lowell made the Yankee dialect—classic, in the speech of Hosea Biglow. In the withering irony of Biglow our apologies for slavery shriveled up and died. The speech that Biglow made in the House of Commons—of course through the medium of an English member, who recited by way of an argument the poem, "Johnathan to John,"—was a moral force in England at a critical time for us, and the warning it contained was copied into every English newspaper:

"Shall it be love, or hate, John?
It's you thet's to decide;
Aint *your* bonds held by Fate, John?
Like all the world's beside?"

* * *

Lowell saw with moral instinct that the civil war was a contest between liberty and slavery for the greatest stake that was ever fought for in this world, the absolute possession of the United States with its future for a thousand years. With the breath of poetry he blew down tall ramparts where the shams of politicians lay entrenched in catch phrases, emphasised by military follies like General Halleck's order No. 3, wherein it was attempted to surrender, not the arms and ammunition, but the moral stamina of the soldiers. The very religion of the great conflict glows in the Hartford Commemoration Ode, perhaps the most splendid thing that rose out of the war gloom; that stately and pathetic poem wherein the Harvard boys who fell in battle are crowned and glorified:

"We sit here in the Promised Land
That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
But 'Twas they won it, sword in hand,
Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk."

* * *

He saw from the first onset of the opposing forces that the rebellion was "a lie in arms"; and that brave men must put it down:

"To front a lie in arms and not to yield,
This shows, methinks, God's plan
And measure of a stalwart man."

* * *

To Lowell the Union victory was a spiritual purification; and without that, the mercantile and political benefits of a restored Union would have been to him as dross. He loved his country, and he wished to behold her free from the sin and shame of slavery. The glory of that four years of sacrifice is all condensed into these last words:

"Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
Thy God, in these distempered days,
Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
And through thy enemies hath wrought thy peace!
Bow down in prayer and praise!
No poorest in thy borders but may now
Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow."

M. M. TRUMBULL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ETYMOLOGY OF "SHEENY."

To the Editor of *The Open Court*:

I NOTICE that in your last number General Trumbull reads a mild lecture to the *Century Dictionary* for not knowing what he knows very well, namely, that the word "sheeny" is derived from the French *chien*. Now I hold no brief from the *Century Dic-*

tionary, but I did have occasion a year or two ago to interest myself scientifically, in a feeble way, in the origin of that particular word. (A lawyer acquaintance had written me about it; there was some sort of suit for defamation of character). Now my conclusion was the very one found in the dictionary, namely, that the origin of the word is "obscure." Moreover the very first derivation that I had occasion to consider was that from the French *chien*. I think General Trumbull may safely assume that that hypothesis was fully present to the mind of the Century lexicographer when he pronounced the origin of the word "obscure," and that it was rejected because he felt that it would not pass muster. At any rate I can think of three or four weighty reasons why the word cannot be so derived. At the same time these reasons would have to hide their diminished heads in presence of any real evidence that it *is* so derived. General Trumbull would confer a favor upon our National Dialect Society if he would publish any *facts* he may know (guesses, hearsay, and opinions don't count,) which go to show when, where and how the word "sheeny" as meaning "Jew," actually came into use.

Until such facts are in evidence it strikes me that the dictionary man's confession of ignorance should be set down to his credit. The golden rule of etymology to-day is: If you don't know, say so. A few years ago the rule was: If you don't know, guess, or cull a guess from your predecessors.

Sincerely yours,

Ann Arbor, Mich.

CALVIN THOMAS.

REPLY BY GENERAL TRUMBULL.

To the Editor of *The Open Court* :

Will you kindly print the following answer to Prof. Calvin Thomas:

I am sorry to see that Professor Thomas holds "no brief for the Century Dictionary." He ought to hold one and have a good fee, because he pleads the cause of the Dictionary very zealously although not in a convincing way.

As to the word "Sheeny" Professor Thomas tells us that he had occasion a year or two ago to interest himself scientifically in its origin "in a feeble way"; and this by a curious coincidence appears to be the way the dictionary man interested himself in it, as more fully appears by his definition of the word.

Professor Thomas pretends that I may safely assume that the Century lexicographer considered "Chien" and rejected it. I assume the very contrary of that, because had he thought of *chien*, he would not have said "origin obscure"; and certainly would not have given such a makeshift definition as "a sharp fellow, hence a Jew."

"Now, what I want is, facts," demanded Mr. Thomas Gradgrind, and Professor Thomas equally geometrical, demands in italics any "facts" that I may know that go to show when, where, and how the word "sheeny" as meaning "Jew" actually came into use; and he warns me in parenthesis that "guesses, hearsay, and opinions don't count." This is hardly fair, considering that the wild, haphazard "guesses" of the dictionary man did count with Professor Thomas, and very numerously too. What facts did the Century lexicographer give to show that "Sheeny" meant "a sharp fellow"? What facts did he give for his "hence"?

I am rather sorry that Professor Thomas has subjected me to such a rigid cross-examination, because it smokes me out; and that was an unkind thing to do. I had fondly hoped that through my definition of "Sheeny" I might pass for a scholar learned in the languages; and Professor Thomas's demand for "Facts" drives me to the humiliating confession that I plagiarised my definition from a little boy; which the same I am free to explain.

My next door neighbor was a German Jew, and among his children was a boy about nine years old. One day he was quarrel-

ing with a Christian boy of his own age, and the Christian called him a sheeny. The Israelite replied, "I am no more a dog than you are." Impressed by his retort, I asked him what he meant. He said, "He called me a sheeny. Sheeny is French for dog, and in Europe it is used as an insult for the Jews." "Who told you that?" I said. And he answered, "My mother told me." I have no doubt that his mother was right. Under the Norman kings occurred the persecution of the Jews in England, and as no true Norman would use a Saxon word when he could use a French word, he said *chien* and not "dog" when insulting a Jew. Sir Walter Scott makes Brian De Bois Guilbert say "Dog" when addressing Isaac of York, but the exact word he used was *Chien*, or "Sheeny."

Granting even that little boy's definition of the word "Sheeny" to be incorrect, I think it is ten times more logical and etymological than that given in the "Century Dictionary."

M. M. TRUMBULL.

NOTES.

The last number of *The Open Court* contained a misprint. We read on page 2911, first column, line-fifteen from bottom, this sentence: "We cannot look upon reality as being endowed throughout with the potentiality of psychic phenomena." It should read, "We cannot *but* look upon reality as being endowed," etc.

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