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THE IMPORTANCE OF CLEARNESS AND THE CHARM OF HAZINESS.

GEORGE HENRY LEWES dwells in the very last chapter of his "Problems of Life and Mind" (he wrote it hardly more than three weeks before his death) on the potency of symbols. The essay is entitled "The Sphere of Intellect and Logic of Signs." The intellect is defined as "the symbolised logic of feeling." Man's power of thinking in abstracts goes as far as and not farther than he is able to express himself in verbal symbols. Accordingly, says Lewes, "language is to the social organism very much what the nervous system is to the body—a connecting

sciences and also in philosophy. But the disadvantages are not smaller that arise from a vague and ambiguous usage of terms. The mind is bewildered and loses itself in the poetical subumbræ of profound mistiness.

We must not, however, be blind to the fact that the haziness of vague thoughts possesses a peculiar charm, which makes half-truths more acceptable to the unthinking many than truth. It is only the thinker who enjoys the survey of perfectly clear ideas; he alone can appreciate their value; he alone understands the beauty of lucidity which solves at once in one simple formula all the problems of a certain class and

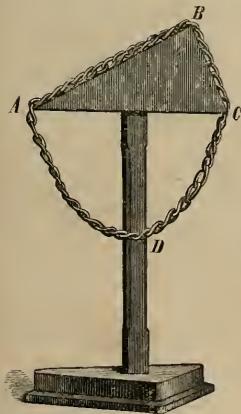


FIG. 1.

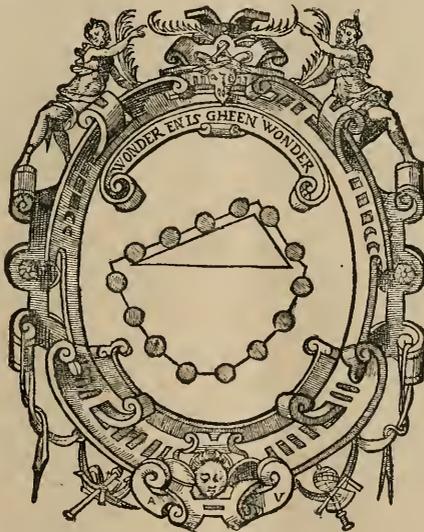


FIG. 3.

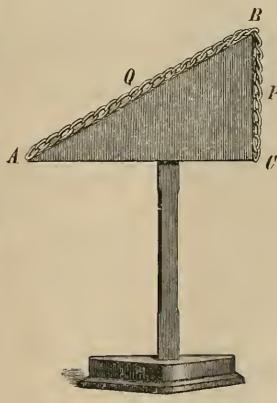


FIG. 2.

medium which enhances all its functions." Mr. Lewes adds:

"How the advance of science is connected with the methods of notation (which is an extension of the primitive process of naming) is manifest in the fact that the Greeks were arrested in their course precisely at the point where their notation failed them. They had a very imperfect system of arithmetic and no separate algebra. . . . The facilities of notation enable thought to be carried on with an ease and extension which have an analogy in the facilities afforded to commerce by the manifold symbols of credit,"—or we may add, by the facilities afforded manufacturing through the invention of tools and machines.

Such are the positive advantages of a clear, perspicuous, and well-defined terminology in all the

allows our minds to penetrate into their difficulties, laying bare their most intricate complications so that we can look through them as if their substances had been magically transformed into purest crystal. The average man is, as a rule, far from being able or willing to appreciate the light which clearness of thought alone can give. He prefers the bewildering effects of the shadows that originate in the chiaroscuro of a half-revealed truth. The twilight is more suggestive than the sunshine of noon and will much better satisfy the wants of a fertile imagination.

Prof. E. Mach says in his great work *Die Mechanik in ihrer Entwicklung, historisch-kritisch dargestellt*:

"Every truly enlightening progress brings in its train a certain feeling of disappointment. We recognise that that which appeared to us as marvellous is not more marvellous than other things which we know instinctively and look upon as self-evident. More than that, we recognise that the contrary would be much more marvellous, that we have to deal with the same fact everywhere. Our problem is recognised as being no more a problem, it dissolves in nothing and is gathered to the shadows of history."

This passage is a comment of Professor Mach's upon the theories of the Flemish mathematician Stevinus who was the first to consider the mechanical properties of the inclined plane. Professor Mach describes Stevinus's explanation of the equilibrium between the two parts of a chain of unequal weight upon inclined planes of unequal inclination but equal height as follows:

"Stevinus proceeds somewhat in the following manner: He imagines a triangular prism with horizontal edges, whose cross-section ABC is represented in Fig. 1. For the sake of illustration we will say $AB=2BC$; AC is placed horizontally. Over this prism Stevinus hangs an endless string to which 14 balls of equal weight are attached at equal distances apart. We can advantageously replace this string by an endless uniform chain or cord. This chain will either be in equilibrium or it will not. If we assume the latter to be the case, the chain, since its conditions are not altered by its motion, must, when once set in motion, continue to move forever, that is it would present a case of perpetual motion, which Stevinus deems absurd. Consequently only the first case is conceivable. The chain remains in equilibrium. The symmetrical portion ADC can then be removed without disturbing the equilibrium. The portion AB of the chain balances, accordingly, the portion BC . (See Fig. 2.) Consequently, on inclined planes of equal heights equal weights act in the inverse proportion of the lengths of the inclined planes."*

Stevinus attached so great an importance to this intuitive insight into a statical law, that he placed this mechanical conundrum, which answers a riddle as it were by sleight of hand, as the frontispiece to his book† with the inscription: *Wonder en is gheen Wonder*. (See Fig. 3.)

Stevinus's ingenuity certainly is great, and it cannot be doubted that he brings, in this almost paradoxical and startling way, a truth home to us so directly as to let it appear almost as a mysterious revelation. And it is the very mysticism of this method which charms us. We are bewildered and pleased at the same time. Yet it would be wrong on our part to regard such a statement as a definite solution or to consider its mysteriousness superior to lucidity of thought on account of its charm and fascination. We cannot conquer mysticism through mystification. We might as well propose to cast out devils through Beelzebub the chief of the devils, as to solve a problem by conjuring up an unexpected surprise which after all is the same problem only deeper rooted in our mind, more familiar to us but rather more than less mysterious.

* The three figures of this article are reproductions from Professor Mach's work, cited above.

† *Hypomnemata Mathematica*. Leyden, 1605.

Stevinus, in his way of explaining the problem, refers a fact with which we are not sufficiently familiar to predict with any certainty the sequences of certain conditions, to another fact which is so deeply rooted in our experience that we are no more conscious of it; it has become instinctive knowledge. Stevinus's solution mystifies, it takes us by surprise. We are confronted by a truth which we know by constantly repeated experience without ever having given a thought to it. The explanation is deeper than our insight, and thus our comprehension feels flattered by being brought face to face with something that even when cognised remains a mystery. It appears like a revelation of unknowable truths. This is the reason why half-truths make the impression of profundity; while to him who has never gauged the difficulties of finding the truth and cannot appreciate the grandeur of the simplicity of truth, the full truth will be a disappointment; it will appear as a flat and stale and trite truism.

Professor Mach adds about Stevinus:

"If Stevinus had developed the whole phenomenon clearly in all its aspects, as Galileo subsequently did, his reasoning would no longer strike us as ingenious; we should have obtained, however, a much more satisfactory and clear perception of the matter."

The philosophical problem is, as Mach rightly states: "How does our instinctive knowledge originate?" And he answers: "Our observations of nature impress themselves, even if they are not understood and not analysed, in our concepts, which in their strongest and most general features imitate the natural processes." In other words: all knowledge is nothing but description of facts; and comprehension is the recognition of the same feature in different facts; it is the orderly arrangement of described facts, which will result in an economy of thought. This is a very simple idea, and also its correctness is palpable. This truth, the truth of positivism, has been dawning since Kant or even longer, since Locke and Hume. Nevertheless, it is still disregarded or even rejected, because it appears to the average mind as a disappointment. It throws light upon many problems and destroys the profundity of all philosophies which have not as yet attained this lucidity. It does away with the most favorite and fashionable philosophical systems, it relegates all unknowables to the realm of idle phantasms and lays bare the bottom rock of all cognition which are found to be the facts of experience.

EVERY MAN IN HIS PLACE.

BY F. M. HOLLAND.

China does only what the most Christian of nations would do, in refusing to receive Minister Blair; and we should have no right to complain if she should shut out Gospel ministers also, for it was not a missionary spirit which permitted Chinamen to be mur-

dered with impunity in this country, and which finally passed laws forbidding any more of the hated race to come and live among us. The worst of it is that we have already begun to pursue a similar course towards the Italians. They, too, have been massacred without redress; and laws for the wholesale exclusion of that nation also are demanded eagerly. No one defends the Mafia, but if anything could excuse such secret societies among us, it would be the lynching of Italians who had either not been put on trial, or else been found not guilty. If that verdict was unjust, those who gave it should have been the first culprits punished. If those eleven prisoners had been Anglo-Saxons, charged with killing an Italian, there would in all probability not have been even a mob. We honor Columbus and Dante, Raphael and Michael Angelo, Cavour and Garibaldi. Is it not possible that the nation which produced them can send us men worthy of a place among us? The charge that Italians are prone to crime is fully off-set by a second accusation, namely, that they, like the Chinese, are too thrifty and saving to be allowed to compete with Americans. A thrifty class is not a criminal one, and no residents of our northern cities are more thrifty, and at the same time more obedient to the laws, than the compatriots of Columbus. They ought to be shut out, it is said, because they are too willing to vote; but the Chinese were shut out because they were too unwilling to vote, a disposition not to be wondered at. It may be very proper to raise the conditions for naturalisation, and take more pains to see that they are complied with in every case. Closer inspection of immigrants might also be instituted with advantage. There is nothing to say against regulations designed to keep people away, on account of individual defects, from the polls, or even from our shores. What I object to is wholesale legislation directed against an entire race, on account of defects not found in all its members. To say that many millions of human beings are unfit, on account of the place where they were born, even to live among us, is trying to turn this great democracy into an aristocracy of race.

The same race prejudice, which has shut out Chinese and would shut out Italians, is already becoming so bitter against the Jews, that it is well to notice the fact that a Jewish festival or fast-day is known in the public schools of Boston, by the absence of a large part of the brightest scholars, while the stupid ones are in their seats. Consistency requires Russia to drive such people out, and us to invite them in.

It is ridiculous for English travellers in Germany to call the Germans "foreigners"; but the original inhabitants of Nebraska have been denounced as aliens by settlers who have come but recently into that state. Congress has no time to pass a law which the real friends of the Indian declare necessary for his legal pro-

tection; but there is plenty of time for voting all the tariff protection and pensions and public buildings for which white men ask. We have just had a war to punish our people for taking it for granted that any white man, however unfit for any other trust, is good enough to look after Indians. At last, however, the principle of Civil Service Reform seems likely to make its way into the region where it is most needed. Another gratifying piece of news is that our government is going to train Indians for soldiers, and to begin their education by familiarity with that part of civilisation which they can best understand, because it is most like barbarism.

It is true that this is one way to serve our country, and it must not be forgotten that it was kept closed by race-prejudice, for two disastrous years of our great war, against those of our northern citizens best fitted for withstanding the deadly climate of the South. Who can tell how many precious lives were sacrificed on the altar of a wicked spirit, whose worshippers are still finding fault with "niggers"? It was an injury to the whole nation to keep the colored man out of his proper place among our soldiers. So it is still to keep him out of his proper place among salesmen in our stores, conductors on our cars, and mechanics in our trades-unions. The prevalence of every low idea of religion and morality among millions of Americans is insured by the prejudice of even the most liberal of white congregations against colored clergymen, who are thus obliged to preach orthodoxy or not preach at all. But I am not speaking so much in the interest of the blacks as of the whites. The welfare interest of all our people requires that each man be allowed to take the place for which his own individual merits fit him, whatever the color of his skin or the place of his birth. It was once said to the abolitionists, why don't you go and do your talking down South; but I believe that there is more prejudice against colored people here at the North than anywhere else to day. It would not prevent an intelligent, well behaved girl from getting a place anywhere in the South, as dress-maker or lady's maid; but it did just this in Iowa, where the poor creature could get no employment, except to do such menial drudgery as soon brought her to an untimely end. A Philadelphian who recently visited South Carolina declares that he found less feeling against colored office-holders among those Democrats, than in his own State. Kansas has never, until very recently, elected any but Republican candidates; but a colored one got only one-eighth of the white Republican vote two years ago. A drop of African blood might prevent a family of the highest culture and character from hiring a suitable house in Boston; and colored people have much to complain of in all the Northern cities. The race is subjected to

worse treatment at the South than the North, on the whole; but this is not due to needless prejudice, but to experience of the danger of letting freedmen rule. More just and impartial measures would be safer for the South than her present policy; but there is nothing to be gained by Congressional legislation for party ends.

What we really need, both South and North, and in the interests not only of colored people, but of Indians, Jews, Italians and Chinamen, is to recognise that the right of any man to live and prosper among us depends on what he is actually doing, and likely to do, for our community, not on who were his parents or where he was born. Some attention to race and family may help us to form a preliminary estimate of a man's probable capacity; but no merely theoretical opinion should hinder our giving full weight to actual facts; and we should always keep in mind that many a man fails to inherit the general characteristics of his family or race. We outgrew long ago the fancy that only a king's son ought to be at the head of a nation, and that a peasant's son ought never to be anything but a peasant. Why fancy that the son of a foreigner cannot do good service as an American citizen? Some foreign nations have recently contributed valuable elements of our population; why take it for granted that there is any race likely to come here, which ought to be kept out? It is well enough to exclude such immigrants as are undesirable on account of individual defects; but wholesale legislation against all the members of a race or nation is utterly iniquitous. Justice, as well as policy, demands that each man be allowed to serve mankind to the utmost of his powers, and in the highest place he is able to fill. If he is kept out of his place by prejudice against his color or race, there is a grievous wrong, not only to him, but to all who might otherwise receive his help. This principle, of course, demands the abolition of restrictions on sex as well as race; and we cannot say that prejudice has been completely driven out by justice from our people's hearts, until we see women in many a rich, easy pulpit which men now hold.

ETHICS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BY WILLIAM EDWARD RUSSELL, A. B.

THE character of the legacy of one generation to its successor can be approximately foreknown by a study of the ethical instruction given to the members of that coming generation.

While the voice of the people is almost an unit in advocating education, it is a dire misfortune that common usage has limited the term to mean, mainly, intellectual development. Moral education, vastly more important, is deemed an adjunct worthy only of minor consideration. For the fruits of this sinful error, we

need only to turn, for convicted examples, to our penitentiaries and jails; for a more harmful class, to the dishonest and conscienceless knaves, cloaked by respectability, who openly make war on human happiness with the weapon of quickened intellect; for results, to the almshouses, pauper hovels, and dens of misery.

On History's page we find the record of a corresponding increase of vice with intellectual development unless that development is tempered by moral education; we note, further, how far more insidious and dangerous are the glossed vices of intellect than the coarse sins of ignorance. The dramatist adds to the evidence of history by giving us a Mephistopheles and an Iago. The Blind Poet makes the climax to the sad picture of intellectual wickedness by the monster Beelzebub.

But surely such apathy to the importance of moral education does not characterise religionists! Nay, and yet the sad results outlined before are due, paradoxically, more to religionists than non-religionists: each sect realises fully that moral education is the foundation-stone upon which it must build the superstructure of its religious doctrines, and each sect arrogates to itself the privilege of laying that foundation in the halls of the Sabbath-school and church. Sad error, to expect a few hours once a week to supplant the worldly impressions upon an unceasingly active and imbibing brain during the six whole preceding days!

True, says the Sectarian, I admit that the crumbs of ethical instruction taught by us to the children of our faith does not offset, as a rule, the wickedness that thrusts itself upon and around them at all times; but what else can we do! We cannot permit the prerogative of laying the foundations to our doctrines to be assumed by others who may build them in opposition to our faith. True, say I in reply, and now that we understand each other, allow me to suggest a basis of a simple system of ethics for public school instruction which will compromise the difficulties named by each of us.

In leading up to the basis, which you will find very trite, so far as theory is concerned, but unfortunately too near in application, permit me to generalise briefly upon some of the points at issue.

What is religion? What is *your* religion? Is it, according to the excellent and brief definition of the editor of *The Open Court*, your "aspiration to live in accord with truth?" Do you answer yes, with the modification that "truth" be considered not an abstract term but as synonym of the condensed result of your own tenets? May I then suggest my own definition of true religion as being: A conscientious realisation and acceptance of responsibility to God, Fellow-man, and Self.

Whatever else your sectarian views may prescribe, you, along with all religionists, must perforce agree that the prime work of your organisation is a counter-acting influence against sin. While methods may differ in nature and adequacy, there is at least, in such a purpose, a common cause and interest, a common enemy to fight. Waiving the origin of original sin, and judging from known effects, to what can we ascribe the most, if not all, of the prevalent sin? An answer seems unnecessary, since to each thinking mind the evils that curse the world flow directly or indirectly from the one great satanic attribute of humanity—selfishness. To this monstrous viper can be traced the cruelty of despotism, the persecution and oppression of the weak, the blood-thirsty wars of conquest, the brute-like antagonism in the daily battle, each man against his brother, so-called by the sophistry of selfish philosophy the “survival of the fittest.” The woes of nations, the woes of families, the woes of individuals spring in great part from the same black fountain.

In fighting this prolific parent of misery and vice, united effort on a common platform will serve to lay the solid rocks with which the cement of special sectarian instruction will combine to build a sure and lasting foundation.

Wherefore then delay in adapting the ethical instruction in our public schools to that common platform upon which all sects can agree? What is that platform? Simply nothing more nor less than the Golden Rule, “Do unto others as you would have them do to you.”

Oh what a vast amount of misery would have folded its sable wings and flown away ere this, had the practical application of this well-named rule been a matter of conscientious endeavor and anxious work in the instruction of the young! Why shall we endeavor to impress upon youthful minds abstract ideas of right and wrong and duty, abstruse in their nature and puzzling even to mature intellects, when each child has *inherited* a trait of character which can be so easily made the criterion for a system of ethics superior to all codes laid down in text-books. The innate selfishness of the child, as yet unhardened by the cruel contest of life, will present, under the Golden Rule, a precise and ever ready standard in concrete form to guide all actions. During this impressionable period of life, when the philosophy of individual interest has no weight, the simple admonition, wisely taught, to do unto others as they would be done by, will find a ready soil and a grand harvest.

Who can imagine a more beautiful sight than innocent childhood bestrewn with the virtues of kindness, sympathy, generosity, and crude justice.

How is the Golden Rule to be taught? By those

various ingenious methods which are used in inculcating other ideas. First, and in fact mainly, by emulation. The experience and testimony of instructors and students of child-life agree that the natural pride of each child gives a subjective *abetting* force which makes emulation the strongest factor of progress. The methods based upon fear are happily being abandoned to a great extent, since it needed not a sage to discover that by such was produced in the child a natural antagonism.

If the prizes, preferments, words of commendation from teacher, parent, and public, now given to intellectual progress, were also given to moral progress under the Golden Rule, we would have a rising generation that would place the brand of shame upon the gross meanness and vileness of their ancestors. Second, by example. The far-reaching responsibility that attaches to those who mould future mankind must have an additional requirement. One of the most important qualifications of a teacher should be a conscientious gentleness and sympathetic nature. Who can wonder that manhood should so oft be contemptibly mean, when childhood so oft receives its moulding impress at the hands of a sour, disagreeable, unsympathetic and revengeful teacher.

“The pitiful wreck of the present
Bears the past's bitter-sweet on its breath.”

Such a simple system of ethics in the public schools would not only remove the objection as to antagonising various religious beliefs, but what is vastly more important, would build a foundation for a moral character for each of the thousands of children who now receive intellectual education at the expense of the state, but are not included in the folds of the Sabbath-schools and churches.

Shall the state place in the hands of its future guardians mind-knowledge, and, in thousands, leave the heart, the citadel of right and wrong, to grow up with pestiferous and rank weeds! Shall we be unmindful of the causes of the fall of other republics! Shall liberty be a term with a real practical meaning rather than a topic of spread-eagle laudation on anniversaries! Shall the legacy to the coming millions be a blessing fraught with happiness and peace, or the same continued vendetta handed down from time immemorial! Shall life be worth the living! Then hasten ye men of purpose, ye leaders in the van of true progress, the day when the doctrine of peace, good-will and truth will have for its rising champions the thousands of the onmarching generation.

CURRENT TOPICS.

A RESTAURANT keeper in Chicago has been fined twenty-five dollars for serving prairie chickens out of season; that is to say, before the time when prairie chickens may lawfully be killed. The malefactor, a public officer of high rank, paid the fine cheerfully,

thinking it a small price to pay for the large advertisement that at his cook-shop game could be had in season, or out of season, law or no law. In order to be fair all round, and to give others the same benefit, warrants were issued against a dozen of the great hotel keepers, for the awful crime of supplying game birds to their guests. These prosecutions are at the instance of certain sportsmen, and sportsmen's clubs, organised for the protection of game from "pot-hunters," by which expressive epithet is meant persons abandoned enough to kill game for food instead of sport. It is curious that those bird killers for sport have the approbation and assistance of the public and the press. Some really pathetic editorials have appeared censuring the ignominious "pot-hunters," and declaring that, "no true sportsman would kill game birds before the First of September." This is true, and an amendment might be added, to the effect that no true sportsman would kill birds either before the First of September or afterwards; except for food, or because the birds injured the crops, or did some other mischief; and every one of those reasons is despised by the "true sportsman." It is the eccentricity of government that a man may not kill prairie chickens, say, on the 31st. of August, even for food, although he may kill a wagon load of them on the 1st. of September, merely for wanton sport, and for the pleasure of throwing them away, as many sportsmen do after they have glutted their propensity for killing. The "true sportsman" must of necessity be cruel, because he kills for pleasure, and wounds as well as kills.

* * *

After long searching for the "Typical American" we hear so much about, I think I have discovered him in the patriot who either has a pension or is after one. There are other American types, but this one is the most numerous and picturesque, and he is rounded into graceful symmetry by the most bountiful government under the sun. There is a "Free Lunch" counter at Washington; and the man behind it is generously inviting every American who truly loves his country to step up to it and refresh himself with a pension. So urgent is this invitation that a man of patriotic feeling is almost compelled to claim a pension as an act of patronage to his own beloved land. Last week I received a very flattering invitation to step up to the lunch counter. It came in the form of a circular from a Pension Attorney informing me that so anxious is the government to recruit the Pension Corps, that, "Soldiers or officers dishonorably discharged or dismissed from the service can now get pensions." This was a strong temptation to enlist in the noble army of pensioners, for the advantage of such good company. Deserters are also invited to step up to the counter in these words, "Charges of desertion can often be cancelled." As a further encouragement I am informed that "much of the red tape of past years has been done away with"; and, in short, that, "*Now is the time* to attend to any claim against the government." There was once a soldier in the English army, Sir John Falstaff by name, and when informed by Prince Henry, that he, the Prince, was reconciled unto the King, his father, and had become a power in the government, exclaimed, "Rob me the exchequer the first thing thou doest." Although I do not share in the general opinion that Falstaff was a coward, I do not think him an admirable soldier, nor a good example; neither do I think it a soldierly thing to demand of the prince or the party in power, "Rob me the exchequer the first thing thou doest."

* * *

I once had for a client an Irishman who had been arrested for assault and battery. He justified the assault on the ground of "self-defense," and said, "Tim and meself wor havin' discourse, and as he wouldn't listen to raison, I persuaded him wid a brick." This curious illustration of "self-defense," and the amiable definition of skull-breaking I have always thought resulted from a poetical tendency to figurative speech, or to the habit of thinking in Irish, and speaking in English; but I was rather surprised on

reading this morning's paper to find out that this apparent Irish incongruity is in reality deliberate and premeditated American. It appears from the account that Barnum's renowned circus being advertised to show on Monday, twenty carpenters were employed to build the platforms and put up seats; and it further appears that these were all non-union men. While they were at work a number of delegates representing "Organised Labor" appeared upon the circus ground, and "with sticks and stones and marrow bones," proceeded to drive the non-union men from their work, in the orthodox union way. There was nothing in itself remarkable about that, excepting the strange coincidence of thought and expression between my Irish client and the union delegates, for I find that in the ethics of "Organised Labor," those delegates are called "Persuaders"; and they assaulted the non-union carpenters in "self-defense." In addition to the "persuading," a boycott has been ordered, and all the penniless and down-trodden laborers are advised not to go to the circus, an exhortation which to penniless men appears to be superfluous. This boycott will be a fair test of the courage and constancy of working men. If they can resist the fascination of the circus they will prove themselves to be truly of heroic mould. I am "an old man and full of years," but there is not a boy in town who loves a circus better than I do; nor is there one who will follow the band and the clown farther than I will; and therefore I remark, that if those working men have sufficient moral strength and self-denial to spurn the circus, the triumph of Labor is at hand.

* * *

The International Socialist Workmen's Congress at Brussels was controlled a little too much by class prejudice and sectarian intolerance; the sect in this instance being the socialist fragment of that uncertain and capricious aggregate known as the "working men." The aim of the Brussels Congress appeared to be the promotion of special interests at the general expense; and it was guided by the sublime precept, "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost"; the prayer in the latter part of the sentiment being entirely unnecessary, because the devil gets him anyhow; according to the rule once followed in the British navy, when, the boatswain having piped "all hands," the last man up got a scratch from the cat o' nine tails; and as there always was a last man up, there was always work for the cat. The Brussels Congress travelled away backwards to the dark ages of caste when it required that every candidate for office should pledge himself to advocate "the protective legislation demanded by working men." This, instead of uniting mankind politically and socially, divides the human race into antagonistic orders dwelling in hostile camps. It concedes the doctrine of special interests, and justifies that class legislation which already oppresses the working men. The demand of working men for "Protective legislation" in their own special behalf is a declaration of social war, for it must provoke a counter demand for protective legislation by all other men in resistance to it. The Brussels Congress, and every other Congress that seeks for beneficent reforms must expand the demand for protection to working men into the larger demand of protection for all men. They must proclaim, not only in their preaching, but also in their statesmanship, the unity of the human race and the common brotherhood of all. Some of the acts and speeches of these Brussels Congressmen "make the judicious grieve," for they create the disagreeable suspicion that such orators denounce tyranny because they are not the tyrants, and threaten the rich because they themselves are poor.

* * *

In one of Lever's novels there was a croaking old impostor whom I always greatly admired; I forget the name of him, I think it was Corny Delaney or something like that. Corny, a petted servant in the family of an Irish gentleman, spent his time in denouncing his employer, grumbling at everything, and giving

notice that he would quit next Tuesday. For forty years Corney had complained of the oppression to which he had been subjected by his employer; for forty years he had been saying, "Things is gone to the bad intirely, but thank God, I'll be laying the place next Tuesday"; but he never went, and he never intended to go, for he had an extremely comfortable job. Well, I often think of old Corney when I am listening to some of the down-trodden orators of my acquaintance; as, for instance, Mr. Sanial, the Representative from New York in the Brussels Congress, who on being elected President for the day, made what the papers call a "stirring address," in the course of which, referring to the United States, he said, "Amid all that wealth, misery increases so fast that 'the land of the free and the home of the brave' is in reality a hell." Like old Corney, who used to talk in the same way, Mr. Sanial did not mean one word of it; and like old Corney, although he is always threatening to "lave the place" next Tuesday he never goes; and he does not intend to go. When the Congress adjourns, he will come back to New York and in the shady bowers of some aromatic beer garden he will smoke his pipe and sip the amber brew which I have heard poor Bayard Taylor call the nectar of the Gods. Mr. Sanial will then and there declare not only that there is no hell in the United States, but that there is none anywhere. Mr. Sanial and his class are not to be taken seriously; they are useful steam escapes for discontented men.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"THE QUESTION OF MONOGAMY."

To the Editor of *The Open Court*.—

WHEN the cat in the fairy-tale asked the ugly duckling if it could emit sparks the poor thing had to admit it could not. I am in the condition of the ugly duckling. Mr. C. S. Wake asks if I can emit sparks, or in other words challenges me "to give a single example of a really monogamous savage tribe," and then adds that if I could give half a dozen examples it would not sustain my contention that primitive man was monogamous.

The whole cry against the Darwinian theory of the descent of man from some ape-like creature was that neither he nor any one else could give a single case from history or geology of an ape-like creature ever having been developed into a human creature. The "missing-link" has yet to be found, although, without doubt, as Wallace informs us, in the Euro-Asiatic continent, a country as yet little explored, it will be found, when more extensive research has been made in the miocene and pliocene layers of the earth's crust, where are supposed to be buried ample remains of primitive man. The verification of the theory that primitive man was monogamous does not rest upon the ability to give one or more cases of existing monogamous tribes; that he was monogamous is a legitimate deduction which accords with a sound physiology and psychology. The most clear-sighted and best informed anthropologists of to-day do not accept the doctrine of some of their brethren that in the first human communities the sexual impulses were gratified without order or separation into pairs. Professor Letourneau of the Paris School of Anthropology, in his recent work, "The Evolution of Marriage," agrees with Darwin in rejecting promiscuity, etc. In chapter third of his book, he asks: "Has there been a stage of promiscuity?" and then adds: "Some sociologists have affirmed without hesitation that community of women represented a primitive necessary state of sexual association of man-kind. Surely they would have been less dogmatic on this point 'if, before approaching human sociology, they had first consulted animal sociology. The mammals nearest to man, those whom 'we may consider as effigies of our nearest animal ancestors

"the anthropoid apes, are sometimes monogamous and sometimes 'polygamous, but, as a rule they cannot endure promiscuity. 'Now, this fact manifestly constitutes a very strong presumption 'against the basis of the theory according to which promiscuity 'has been, with the human species, the primitive and necessary 'stage of sexual union."

If reliance can be placed upon so distinguished a medical authority as Freeman I. Bumstead, the fact of the non-existence of syphilis prior to 1494 cannot be open to question.

My deduction from this fact may seem "more than weak" to Mr. Wake, but, perhaps, it is with the discovery of a new truth as it is with the discovery of all new inventions, it is the perception of something which true reason denies because the premises do not justify it. Imagination has seized upon the true conclusion. Shakespeare's imagination seized upon the truth of evolution when he said: "The home-staying youth hath ever homely wits." What is this but the law of the struggle for existence, that no creature can be improved beyond its necessities for the time being?

Now as to my "treble mistake," I fail to discover it. The first of England's Contagious Disease Acts was passed in July, 1864, and was superseded by the Act of 1866, which with all its various amendments, was in 1886 repealed. These are the only Disease Acts ever adopted by parliament. That they did more harm than good is made evident by their absolute repeal. It is the duty of a government, as Gladstone said, to make it easier for men to do right than to do wrong, and the Disease Acts, encouraged men to vicious practices, by inducing the belief that they could escape its penalties.

SUSAN CHANNING.

MR. HERBERT SPENCER ON CRUELTY TO CHILDREN.

To the Editor of *The Open Court*.—

The English Society for the prevention of cruelty to children recently secured the quasi-conditional support of Mr. Herbert Spencer, who has publicly confessed that:

"To bring punishment on brutal and negligent parents seems on the whole, a beneficial function, for though by protecting the children of bad parents (who are in the average of cases themselves bad), there is some interference with the survival of the fittest, yet it is a defensible conclusion that in the social state philanthropic feeling may, to this extent, mitigate the rigor of the natural law."

While I have the greatest admiration for the synthetic philosophy of Herbert Spencer, I cannot understand how a man of his profundity cannot take account, in his system, of certain social conditions, (particularly that of public opinion, though in the majority of cases it is in error) which are potent factors in evolution.

For example, the *laissez faire* doctrine is very much like the fatalism of some religious sects, but not that government interference particularly is for the most part pernicious, but certainly an attempt at insinuating merciful proceedings for the better care of our sick, our insane, our children, and even animals, are in every way justifiable. Nor do you, in arousing a healthy public sentiment in these matters, interfere with the course of nature, for so long as man aspires to be better and to do good to his fellow kind, such endeavors will be perfectly natural, even though blunders may be committed, and often as much harm as good may result, and we have reason to be profoundly grateful that such dispositions are not only natural, but that they will exist to the end of time, in spite of pessimism or narrow "let alone" policies.

S. V. CLEVENGER.

BOOK REVIEWS.

HISTORY OF CIVILISATION. Being a Course of Lectures on the Origin and Development of the Main Institutions of Mankind By *Emil Reich*, Doctor Juris. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Company.

Our attention was called by a friendly author and reader of *The Open Court* to Dr. Emil Reich's "History of Civilization," which was published several years ago without meeting with the success it deserves. The book contains a series of lectures which were delivered in 1886, first at the lecture-hall of the University of Cincinnati and afterwards, when the interest of the public during the course rapidly increased, at the spacious Hall of the Scottish Rite Church. The lectures were published by permission of the Board of Trustees and of the University of Cincinnati in a handsome shape with several valuable and well executed illustrations and can be recommended as one of the best books in its line, well adapted to give our youth a correct idea of what history is, how history should be studied, and what we know of the most important phases of the development of the different nations as well as mankind in general.

The book gives history itself, commencing with China and India, then explaining the civilisation of Egypt, the growth of Monotheism in Israel, describing the social, the political, and the religious life of Greece, the development of Greek science, philosophy, and art. In Rome the origin of political and social institutions is traced, the spirit of Roman law is sketched, the legislature, the senate, and the magistrates. An interesting chapter is Dr. Reich's treatment of the alleged profligacy of the emperors. The author shows that most of them are highly improbable stories not worthy of credence. He does not try to white-wash a Nero, but he convincingly explains why the accounts of his having poisoned Britannica, murdered his own mother, and burned Rome are insipid inventions which upon critical examination are full of contradictions and without any positive evidence whatever. The next chapters are devoted to the origin and growth of Christianity. Reich treats the subject neither from the so-called orthodox nor the so-called negative point of view, but from the standpoint of an historian, and he approaches his subject avowedly with a profound reverence. He confesses that we are absolutely at a loss how to account for the development of Christianity up to the year 150 after Christ. For the time following this year our knowledge becomes more substantial and we begin to see some of the causes at work. Our author sketches briefly the history of the Church and after two chapters of a controversial nature which might better have been dropped, as having nothing to do with the subject, he winds up with a short description of the Middle Ages and of Modern Times. Concerning the Middle Ages Dr. Reich tries to correct the almost generally prevailing error that they were the Dark Ages. Men of the Middle Ages were trying to do exactly the same thing that we are endeavoring to achieve; that is to say, to live honestly and peacefully if we can and to remonstrate against everything inimical to this, our chief desire. We look down upon our fathers and are wont to glory: "My Lord, I thank thee that I am not like one of them." We parade their superstitions and other errors, but if a later historian will in later years collect our superstitions and errors, how shall we stand before the judgment of the future? The chief difference between the Middle Ages and Modern Times is found in the more extensive cultivation of science, and the history of sciences resembles, as said Goethe, a fugue, inasmuch as the voices of the different nations set in after due intervals and finally combine in one harmonious structure. The Italians with Galileo and others took the lead, the English with Harvey and Newton followed. The French, our author adds, and we do not agree with him, "never abounded in genius of the first order": he mentions, however, Lavoisier, La-

place, Lagrange, A. Comte, and others (certainly names of first degree!). The Dutch had great luminaries in science and law, and they had a Spinoza in philosophy. The Germans had Copernicus, Kepler, Kant, Goethe, and others. The Americans have almost from the beginning of their independence displayed a marvelous power of inventiveness, characterised by Franklin, and it is to be hoped that the future of their republic will manifest a still larger expanse of industrial and mental activity.

We have to call special attention to the two preliminary lectures which prove that our author takes the modern, that is the positive, standpoint of historical research. He objects to history as a description of battles and sieges and truces, and points out the necessity of tracing the growth of humanity, of its institutions, its ideas, its habits, and the leading motives of their actions. Scientific history is of very recent growth. As the first historian who treated history philosophically Dr. Reich recognises the Italian G. B. Vico. A further step was taken by a German, Herder. Next follow Comte and Littré, and Buckle is characterised as the first historian who actually treated the subject of a history of civilization in a scientific way.

Dr. Reich's book does not contain and does not pretend to contain anything new; the treatment of the historical sketches is neither exhaustive nor is it in all parts equally reliable. Nevertheless it is a work of great merit for the author is a well disciplined scholar, an able and instructive lecturer, and he is fully abreast with the positive spirit of the modern conception of history. The illustrations make the book attractive to young minds in whom it will rouse an active interest for historical inquiries.

KPC.

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