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THE RIGHTS OF ANIMALS.

BY THOS. C. LAWS.

THAT animals have rights as well as men is an opinion which is growing in strength as mankind grows in civilisation. We may distinguish for ethical purposes two distinct classes of animals—those which are wild and those which have become domesticated. Whether these latter were first kept as pets as we now keep most of the varieties of dogs, and were afterwards found to be useful, or *vice versa*, is a question difficult to answer. On the one side it may be urged that nearly all savages keep some animal or another as a pet, whereas there are very many who have none maintained on account of its utility. On the contrary we can urge the presence of milk-producing *aphides* even in the nests of ants; the uses to which the Esquimaux put their sole domestic animals, the dog and the reindeer; and the prevalence of slavery among lowly developed human tribes. It is possible that the domestication of animals for use as beasts of burden and of labor is an offshoot of that slavery. Slavery sprang out of war: may not domestication of animals have sprung out of that other form of war, the chase? But, however interesting such question might be it is not altogether necessary here, and we shall, therefore, content ourselves by adopting the broad division of animals into wild and domestic.

It may seem strange to some to hear the rights of wild animals spoken of. Yet have they no rights? Again and again we hear reprobated the inhumanity of him "who needlessly sets foot upon a worm." Oftentimes does some harsh cruelty, say some barbarism in the hunting-field, meet with universal condemnation. We have in most civilised countries laws regulating the slaughter of seals, of fish, of certain birds, and the taking of their eggs, the shooting of rabbits and other animals. Does not this imply a recognition of the rights of wild animals, crude, limited, and partial, it is true, but none the less existent?

Throughout the entire animal and vegetal kingdoms there goes on a continuous and relentless struggle for existence. It has been by the maintenance of its supremacy in this struggle that humanity has obtained its position as in some sense "lord of creation."

That position has only been gained by constant struggles and constant victories over climatic and physical obstacles and over various other species of animals. If it must maintain its position in the future—and self-conservation is the first law of all life—it can do so only by keeping in check the increase and spread of animals other than of its own kind. This law of life then gives to man a *prima facie* right to the destruction of the inferior animals. How far, however, can such destruction be justified, and by what means shall it be carried out? That first principle of all morality, the law of equal right, applies to animals as much as to mankind. In the one case, as in the other, the operation of the law is limited by certain obvious qualifications. A tiger in the neighborhood of an Indian village is a positive danger. If it have already done no damage, it is still a potential, though not as yet an actual, source of danger. It may kill somebody at any moment, and nobody is debarred by any ethical law from taking the animal's life. We do not need to wait until the rats have made off with the contents of our flour-bins before setting traps and laying poison. The object of their domiciliary visits is well-known, and must be immediately frustrated. Had we any means of training these beasts into getting a livelihood without murder and theft, the matter might be very different. But it is absurd to think of converting a jungle or a sewer into a training-school for carnivores or rodents. To spiders and flies, as well as many other insects, most people have an aversion. Yet there can be little doubt that flies and their allies help to keep healthy the *banlieux* of our cities, by destroying decaying animal life deposited in open places out of the jurisdiction of the governing authorities. And it is this very function which renders them unbearable in houses. Few animals could be more adapted than they for carrying the germs of contagious diseases, which rarely injure themselves, but may attack and perhaps kill, persons touched or bitten by them. In the future, perhaps not distant, spiders may become active rivals to silkworms, but the housewife is none the less justified in ridding her house of these pests. Even a spider's thread has been found to be contaminated with organic poison.

But even where animals are not directly hostile to human life, there are often strong reasons for destroying them. We may learn from the experience of Australia that the unchecked increase of rabbits may render fertile land almost as useless for agricultural purposes as though it were quite sterile. Animals which threaten the destruction of our crops are but a degree less inimical to mankind than the larger carnivora. These latter put an end at once to man's existence: the former threaten his life by cutting off his means of subsistence. The positive check of brute force is perhaps the only way of keeping down the numbers of these enemies to mankind.

Animals further are useful to mankind in ways which can only be served by their death. Their flesh provides him with food,—a question with which we shall deal presently,—their skin produces hides; various secretions are used in the arts. Spermaceti and whalebone can be obtained only by the death of the whale; beaver-fur and sealskin by the slaughter of the castor and seal. It is not improbable, of course, that efficient substitutes may hereafter be found for these articles, but until they are discovered, it is useless to decry the use of products which have become almost articles of necessity. But nothing can justify the wanton cruelty which is practised in the name of Dame Fashion. In some cases it is necessary to pluck the feathers which shall deck the bonnet of a lady of fashionable society direct from the breast of the living bird. The fur known as astrakhan is taken from the foetal animal, so that to procure it mother and child must be put to death. It is surely time that something be done to put a stop to this brutality and torture—this modern massacre of the innocents. What harm has the bird of paradise done that its life should be sacrificed for a handful of feathers? You are more considerate over your murderers to whom you do accord a trial, than over the small and defenseless birds whom you condemn to death untried because it is the fashion! To retell an old Norse parable, let us suppose that some grim giant towering aloft like Jötunheimer were to crush to death us pigmy human beings for mere amusement, or in order to wear our skins or limbs in his belt, what would be our opinion of him. We profess horror at "th' untutored savage" when we hear of some poor heathen Indian chief scalping his enemies, and are shocked when, in the year of grace one thousand eight hundred and ninety-three, a French soldier is sentenced to death by a court-martial for throwing a bundle of rags at its president, yet we listen without flinching to the death-cries of a million tiny harmless birds whose wings and feathers go to point a moral and adorn a tale to every humanitarian observer who walks down the streets of London, Paris, or Chicago.

Of the uses to which animals are put perhaps the most important is that of food. About animal food, as about many matters in relation to animal-kind, many racial prejudices exist. It not uncommonly happens that certain animals are treated with a superstitious reverence or disgust. The Dahomeyan is threatened with death if he kill a particular species of snake known locally as the *Danh-gbwe*. Among the Weeze of Africa the antelope is never eaten as it has a reputation for causing the fingers and toes to fall off. Only the chiefs may decorate their dwelling with the skins of the lion and lynx. The hare is treated with superstitious awe by fishermen in Shetland and some other parts of Scotland, by those of North Yorkshire, and by many tribes of Afghans. It is reckoned unclean in the Qûran, although by some of the Moslem tribes of Afghanistan its blood is drunk as a "strengtheners of wind." Among other such superstitions we must class the distinction made in the Qûran, the Bible, and the Talmud between animals clean and unclean, the disgust which a Jew bears to pork, a Hindu to animal fat, and an Englishman to frogs and *escargots*. The blood superstition still exists among the Jews, whose *chosha* cannot be eaten until blessed by the rabbi, nor blessed by the rabbi unless deprived of all blood. The love of animals is inculcated in the Buddhist canon, and carried out to such an extent—as is also the case with the older, orthodox Hindu laws of Manu—as to prohibit the killing of any living being or the use of its flesh for food. In our country and time we have a widespread movement in favor of vegetarianism.

But little doubt can exist that this vegetarianism proceeds upon a wrong hypothesis. Of the substances used in the human economy there is no disputing the fact that those which are most "organate"—most complex and of the highest chemical order—are best suited for food. One cannot eat phosphorus and calcium: one requires these elements in some form which being highly organate, shall be capable of giving up the right substances at the right place when acted on by the juices of the body. It is among animal products that these compounds are found in greatest abundance. Hematoglobulin, a proteid of the blood, is built up of some eighteen hundred molecules. To some extent, it is true, these complex substances are obtainable from vegetal sources, but they are of a somewhat lower character than those obtainable from animal matter. Further it is observable that these more complex substances contain a greater proportion of latent energy than those which are less complex, and it is worthy of note that the carnivora are all animals of greater vitality than those animals which live upon herbs. One need only compare a dog, a lion, or a tiger, with such animals as the sheep and cow. And in the same district the human tribes which live upon flesh are far

more active than the herb and fruit eaters. Compare, for example, the dull, dwarf Obongos of the equatorial forests of Africa with the cannibal Fans of the same region. It is for this reason, perhaps, that we meet with cannibalism only in oceanic islands and along equatorial sea and lake shores, swampy for the most part, where the larger land animals are wanting, and where food is hence restricted to vegetables and fish, a form of animal food most nearly resembling vegetal food in its nature. In the future it is quite possible that the slaughter-house may be superseded by the chemical laboratory, where organate compounds similar to those supplied by animal life may be produced synthetically.

But this justification of animal food does not justify that brutal form of "sport" known as the chase. Where, as in India, it is necessary to organise hunting parties to prevent mischief to the villagers, the chase cannot be condemned. But where, as in England, a half-tame deer is let loose, or a fox started up, and then followed by a group of horsemen with dogs, over a limited area of forest-land, and over arable ground, the "sport" loses all its rationality. The fate of the poor beast is practically decided before its torture begins. Escape it has none, in an open and thickly populated country. Our huntsmen claim that the chase produces a "healthy excitement." So do the *trente-et-quarante* tables at Monte Carlo. The excitement in the one case differs in no wise from that in the other. But the best criticism is that which our "sportsmen" themselves supply. Go to a foreigner, it is often said, and he will give you upon contemporary affairs the opinion of a future generation of your countrymen. The English huntsman describes a Spanish bull-fight as systematic brutality, and declares that it is a curse to any civilised nation. But in what way does the combat in the arena between toreador,* dogs, and bull differ from an English hunt, except that the one is inhumanly fair (approximately), the other brutally unfair? The toreador of Seville shares the risks of death with the bull which he is baiting, and the combatants are somewhat equally matched; the English huntsman follows his inoffensive prey at a distance, leaving the actual conflict to his dogs.

One may say, generally, that so long as they do not endanger human life, nor imperil man's means of subsistence, wild animals have the same right to life and liberty which man himself enjoys. Nor should they be treated in any way which would be termed cruel if applied to mankind.

But to this general law of equal right there are certain exceptions, or, perhaps more strictly, special ap-

* The word *toreador* (a bull-fighter on horseback) as a word already half naturalised is here used as including also the term *torero* (a bull-fighter on foot).

plications. One has to take account of the need for scientific observation and research, for which collections in zoölogical gardens and elsewhere are supposed to be adapted. But such collections should be intended for the benefit of humanity, not for the purpose of allowing visitors to poke umbrellas at the hapless captives. Perhaps less justifiable is the keeping of cage-birds for pleasure, although it is a lesser evil to maintain them by artificial food and heat, than to turn loose a number of sub-tropical and other exotic species to freeze and starve in northern climes. Many animals, again, could scarcely live without man. By domestication there have been artificially selected those traits which are most valuable to mankind at the expense of those characters which aid self-defense and self-sustentation. In the case of these animals there exists a mutual duty between them and mankind. Whilst on the one hand man has the right to profit by those traits for the possession of which they have been selected, whether fleetness of foot, or keenness of scent, milk, wool, flesh, or mere value as a pet, on the other, they have a claim to nourishment and kind treatment. One cannot repress a thought when one observes a horse or an ass, working from dawn perhaps to midnight, a stranger to the eight hours question, overburdened, overworked, bruised, ill-used, and underfed, of that old Norse parable, and one wonders what the owner or driver would think were some mightier than he to treat him as he treats his helpless four-footed slave. Doubtless so long as the old theological doctrine that animals differ from men *in toto* is accepted, either crudely or transfigured into that metaphysical theory which gives reason to mankind and provides animals with instinct alone, humanity to those mute "poor relations" of ours must remain almost non-existent. "Why do you not sacrifice your dogs," asked Fitzroy of a Fuegian, "instead of your women?" The answer was made with the utmost tranquillity: "The dog catches *yapfo*" (the native otter). Why does the civilised Christian of to-day ill-treat his domestic animals? Because, while like corporations they have no souls to save, unlike those institutions they have bodies to abuse. If this be true, we think that men have more need of the kicks than the beasts of the field. If the latter be but guided by blind instinct, why quarrel with them? Their mental constitution is not their fault. But if the "superior beast" acts from rational motives in abusing them, the fault is his alone, and he alone should suffer for it.

The sentiment which we call humanity did not grow up in a day. The teaching of the Mahabharata that "to injure none by thought, or word, or deed, to give to others and be kind to all: this is the constant duty of the good," is not shared by many primitive peoples. Among the Ashantis it is said that "another's distress

is no concern of yours, trouble not yourself about it." Even the Code Beaumanoir (1226-1296) declared as a right that "every man may beat his wife when she will not obey his commandments, or lies to him, providing he do it moderately and death do not ensue."* At the same time young girls had to submit to the ignominious right of branding. Baron Garofalo traces out the evolution of sympathy. It was not, says the great Neapolitan advocate and jurist, until the nineteenth century "that Victor Hugo could raise that cry, triumphant, but exaggerated, of cosmopolitanism, 'The hero is but one variety of the assassin.' . . . There has been progress, we may say, in the extension of the sentiment, which, limited in prehistoric times to the members of a single family, has now none other bounds than humanity, and even tends to go beyond that, in the form of zoöphily, that is to say, sympathy for the animals."† That the lower animals are essentially one with ourselves, kindred in flesh and bone, moved by the impulses which move us, amenable to that kindness and consideration to which we are amenable, acting reasonably as we act reasonably, cannot now be doubted. The great advances made in biology and comparative psychology have dispelled all the old theories of the days of Cosmas Indicopleustes. With this wider experience we may say emphatically with a Chinese philosopher that "the feeling of communication is essential to man," and although his statement that "the superior man is so affected towards animals that, having seen them alive, he cannot bear to see them die," is much too sentimental, one cannot refrain from admiring its lesson of kindness and humanity. And with this saying of Mencius we may couple one of a Semitic poet that a merciful man is merciful also to his beast.

Before concluding this cursory survey of the rights of animals, there is one matter to which we must briefly refer. It is the important question of vivisection. If a knowledge of human anatomy be a necessity, we have at once a justification for the practice of vivisection. And there can be little doubt that anatomy *is* a necessity. Only once in a few centuries can we inspect the process of digestion through a window in the human body, as in the soldier whose wound may be said to have created modern medicine and experimental pathology. For the rest, we have to fall back upon experiments upon animals in a condition as nearly approaching life as possible. The ancient Greeks, notwithstanding their general culture, had no medical science, because anatomy was not permitted to them, it being regarded as a sacrilege to pry into the mysteries of the human frame. One almost revolts from a

description of the recent experiments of Professor Goltz. But how could we have arrived at a knowledge of the facts without them? And they will undoubtedly prove of considerable value in the near future, as throwing some light upon local paralyses and such extraordinary paralysoïd diseases as aphasia. Nor will they be without value to psychology—a science which we are but just commencing to put to practical purposes in alienological medicine, criminal jurisprudence, and, above all, in education. Dogs deprived of both cerebral hemispheres lived for eighteen months, strong and healthy, but perfect idiots. For some time it was necessary to feed them, but though they finally learned to eat food, they never attained to seeking it. Although intellectual powers were lost by removing the hemispheres of the cerebrum, removal of the cerebellum caused simply loss of control over the muscles, so that the act of walking had to be learned over again, without any visible loss of intellectuality.

But if we put an end to vivisection, where are we to stop? Is it allowable to cut a hydra in two? May we not experiment on the terrible cholera bacillus? If not, neither are we justified in cutting up cabbages or paring potatoes. If yes, what particular species of animal shall be our boundary line between permissible and prohibited vivisection? Where is the evidence that the hydra does not experience pain when cut in pieces, notwithstanding that each piece is capable of forming a new animal? And there are naturalists who decry vivisection, but who do not hesitate to transfix an insect by putting a pin through its head! It is possible that we may carry on our experiments with more humanity than at present. Is it necessary in the interests of science to keep brainless dogs for a year and a half, assuming that these dogs suffer an appreciable amount, or, indeed, any pain during the continuance of their life? But vivisection will only last so long as physiological and medical knowledge is in its present incomplete state. We shall undoubtedly find a substitute as mankind advances in knowledge, in ingenuity, and in sympathy. We must accept it to-day, not to land it, not to exult over it, but as a necessary evil, to be tolerated rather than admired. The Tasmanian mother who killed her infants did a kindness, not only to the children, who would have died of starvation during their wanderings, but also to the tribe, which could ill support the added burden. A civilised mother who followed her example would be convicted of wilful murder, and either executed or sent to penal servitude. In this case, as in vivisection, the offense gains force as the society advances in civilisation. While it must be granted, that if the infliction of a few minutes' pain during an operation should obviate the relatively greater pain of several years or half a life-time of ill-health, the lesser evil is preferable to the greater, we

* *Code Beaumanoir*, titre 57 (quoted by Letourneau, *Évolution de la Morale*, p. 353).

† Garofalo, "*La criminologie*" (Paris, 1892), p. 31.

must take into consideration that in matters of health above all things prevention is better than cure, and that healthy breeding, right-living, careful attention to sanitation and personal hygiene, will do more to make vivisection superfluous than all the declamation in the world.

There are two ways by which the rights of animals may be enforced. The first is legislation; the second, education. Of the two, the latter is by far to be preferred. Over-legislation is a crying evil of our days. We have got so accustomed to imagine that parliaments are omnipotent, that one day we shall be awakened from our dream with a rude shock. At best, the Legislature represents only the highest intellect of the land; as a rule, it comes woefully short of that ideal. An average legislative assembly, elected by popular suffrage, represents, we may say, the intellectual, scientific, and æsthetic mediocrity of its electors. Unless those electors, therefore, be themselves educated into right-doing and right-thinking, their representatives will not be able to do much in the direction of humanity. But popular opinion reacts in another way upon legislative enactment. If popular habit or thought be far below the new law, the law gradually becomes a dead letter and is either repealed, or allowed to lie forgotten upon the statute-book. Men will never be made sober or humane, wise or kindhearted, by the dragooning of an Act of Congress. Sooner or later the "old Adam" will reappear, and the latter end of that nation will be worse than the first. Finally, the attempt to inculcate right-living by law is demoralising. It tends to crush the sense of justice and liberty; to substitute for the one legality, and for the other a sense of reliance, not upon individual effort and voluntary mutual assistance, but upon a higher power to which we are to cringe. It is a new image of gold set up by a new Nebuchadnezzar, none the less despotic because the Nebuchadnezzar is Demos itself. Nature makes no leaps, as the old schoolmen were wont to say, and progress must be slow and gradual. It is an old proverb that if each householder would keep clean his own house-front, the whole street would be clean; and if each individual strive to add a little to the factors in favor of progress, legislation will be unnecessary. It is by such education, first of self, then of those around us, and, lastly, of those who are to succeed us, that the rights of animals as of ourselves shall be secured.

STORY OF AN OLD LONDON SOCIETY.

BY MONCURE D. CONWAY.

VI.

THIRTY years ago, when I first came to London, Mr. Fox was among my first acquaintances. I came over as an antislavery Virginian, to try and influence

public opinion, which seemed to be going in favor of the Southern Confederacy. There was a sharp division of feeling; in Free Trade Hall, Manchester, I was mobbed while giving an address to a large audience, the Confederate sympathisers struggling for fifteen minutes to take possession of the platform. I lectured on the War throughout the country. In London the management of the American Union cause was largely in the hands of South Place members, among them Peter Taylor, M. P., by whom I was introduced to Mr. Fox and to the South Place Society. Mr. Fox was still a member of Parliament, but for some time had been unable to attend, and retired in that year, 1863. Though his strength was abated, the old fire sometimes kindled in his eye, and in his voice the music that had charmed so many. For though, as I once heard Froude say, the masses bent beneath Fox's eloquence as forests under a storm, it was an Æolian storm: it was not the demagogue's ram's horn overthrowing Jericho's, but an Orphic strain building the walls of civilisation. I heard him read in private very impressively the part of the king in 'Shakespeare's Henry IV, Part I; the other characters being taken by his friends. I used to visit him a good deal; he loved to talk of Emerson, Parker, Longfellow, and other Americans; also of South Place friends. (I had given discourses in the Chapel, but had no thought of remaining in England.) The beautiful and gracious old man, with his soft eye, his silvery hair parted in the middle, flowing around his serene face, remains a picture in my memory. He died June 3, 1864, and it was among my first offices as minister of the Society to attend his funeral in Brompton Cemetery, and to deliver in the Chapel the memorial discourse, afterwards printed.

I had come at a time when many English radicals of the Chartist times were sinking into their graves, and I officiated at the interment of several,—James Watson, William Lovett, Mrs. Hetherington, and others. And I may add here that it has fallen to me to deliver commemorative discourses in honor of W. J. Fox, President Lincoln, Cobden, Dickens, Maurice, Mazzini, Mill, Strauss, Livingstone, Sir Charles Lyell, Professor Clifford, "George Eliot," Dean Stanley, President Garfield, Darwin, Longfellow, Carlyle, Emerson, Louis Blanc, Harriet Martineau, Mary Carpenter, James Waterlow, Bishop Colenso, Phillips Brooks, Renan, Tennyson. All of these I had personally known (except Miss Martineau and Garfield). The only personage whose career I believed it necessary to judge with severity was the late Napoleon III., my strictures on whom, reported in the press, brought me some angry and threatening letters. This by the way.

I was just thirty-one when I began here; but a long pilgrimage it had been from Methodist itinerancy

on the Potomac to the South Place pulpit. I came from sitting at the feet of Emerson. My early law studies survived in a keen interest in controversies. I lived several miles away from the Chapel, and used to start early enough on Sunday mornings to pass an hour on Smithfield Common. There, over the ashes of martyrs, orthodoxy and atheism used to struggle; and I, seeking to convert both to South Place salvation, played the part of Mr. Facing-both-ways, and was pleasantly pelted by both. Supernaturalism I had rejected long before.

The Society was burdened with debt, the congregation had dwindled under the liturgical preacher, Mr. Barnett, and there had even been a discussion as to whether the Chapel should not be closed. They could only pay me a hundred and fifty pounds salary for eight years, so hard was the struggle to rebuild the Society. During the first year it was thought a fine thing if one hundred attended. But the Society conceded me boundless freedom of utterance, even when I had to draw heavily on the same,—as when, early in 1869, I announced that I was unwilling to offer prayers to an all-wise Being. From that time to this there has been no prayer at South Place. The same revolution was made at the chapel in St. Paul's Road, in Camden Town, where I began evening discourses in June, 1868, which were discontinued after thirteen years, because I was unequal to the double work. I ceased with regret, for that Society was large and flourishing, having had the advantage of being vehemently attacked by the clergy. The Christian Evidence Society got up a visitation in the neighborhood to crush our heresies, and one of the clergymen made such misrepresentations of our teachings that he was rebuked by the late Archbishop of Canterbury,—after which I was never troubled by the London clergy, but treated by them with much respect.

It had been a feature of South Place in Fox's time that public teachers could be heard there who could be heard nowhere else. Once a woman had spoken there, the celebrated author Fanny Wright. That, however, had been forgotten, and it was thought an innovation, though welcomed by the Society, when, in 1869, I invited Mrs. Bruce (Universalist) to preach. A number of ladies afterwards occupied the pulpit,—Mrs. Ernestine Rose, who gave us an account of her friend Robert Owen; Elizabeth Cady Stanton; Mary Livermore; Miss Helen Taylor; Mrs. Besant; Mrs. Ormiston Chant; Mrs. Frederika Macdonald. I say "pulpit," for until 1872 there was a high pulpit, with communion table in front, and high-backed pews, ancient instruments of torture. The chapel was built in a puritanical age, and we have but gradually attained any decoration. We have always preserved the traditions of pulpit hospitality. Two of the ablest

pulpit orators of America, Frothingham and Higginson, would never have been heard in London at all but for this old Society; and at the same time Unitarians in regular standing—among them Rev. Charles T. Brooks, Robert Collyer, Graham Brooks—have been as cordially received. When Keshub Chunder Sen visited London he was first heard at South Place, as the founder of his Brahmo-Somaj, Rammohun Roy, was heard thirty-seven years before. In our Chapel Sir Cumara Swamy of Ceylon gave his course of lectures on the Schools of Hindu Philosophy. Courses of lectures have also been given by other eminent men; Max Müller, Huxley, Tyndall, and the younger Darwin have occupied the platform. Charles Darwin was a warm friend of the Society, and Sir Charles and Lady Lyell used often to attend. Mill, Clifford, Cairnes, Newman, and other leading thinkers, cheered me on in my Ministry, and the Chapel became the recognised organ of free religious thought in London. Beneath the building there is a stone inscribed: "Sacred to the one God, the Father." But that stone was not our rest: deeper than that was the aspiration which wrote the inscription and went on singing "Nearer, nearer, my God," until the divine drew near in the genius of humanity. So we have, really though not literally, added another foundation-stone—"Sacred to Reason and Love in their struggle with Unreason and Inhumanity."

At length, after twenty-one years, it appeared to me best to retire. It is better to retire when people say, "Why do you?" than wait till they say, "why don't you?" I was anxious to do some work in critical revision of American history; the "Life of Thomas Paine" remained to be written; and these were private reasons for returning to my native land, in which I had always retained citizenship. I was able to leave in London a large and flourishing Society which, I believed, could not fail to find some leader of the new generation to bear it on to larger life and fruitage. But events have brought me back to London, on the eve of the Society's centenary. The story of its hundred years has some points which, I have thought, might interest my countrymen. It was founded by an American, and by an American its history is now for the first time dug out of accumulated archives. Concerning my own connexion with the Society, to which the heart of my life has been given, I have of course been able to say but little.

I am still hoping for the true leader of this ancient Society, whose works of benevolence and reform fill the week, whose free classical concerts delight the Sabbath-oppressed city on Sunday evenings,—I am still hoping for the true leader to appear. But whether he be near or afar, I feel certain that this old institution will not fail. It has hidden foundations in human

needs, in its love of truth and freedom, in its unwearied courage, its helpfulness and humanity. Another hundred years will find on its platform one who shall tell our children's children a sequel yet braver than the story now inadequately told on its Centenary.

CURRENT TOPICS.

EVEN the burglar interest is depressed and uncomfortable, owing to the low price of silver and the prevailing want of confidence in our monetary standard. It appears by the dispatches from Ohio that the professors of grand larceny in that State have thrown additional discredit upon the white metal by refusing to steal it until the free coinage of it shall be decreed by Congress at the value established by the fathers of the republic in the reign of Washington. A few nights ago, at Cincinnati, a burglar having entered the house of a citizen, appropriated some watches, bracelets, and other articles of gold, but scornfully rejected the silver spoons and forks that he found in large numbers on the premises. Before leaving, he sat down to partake of some refreshment in the shape of peaches and wine, but this ill-timed indulgence proved injurious to business, for the owner of the house, being awakened by the chink of the glasses, gave an alarm, and in a few moments the burglar, with his golden booty upon him, was in the hands of the police. In explanation of his apparent hostility to silver, he said that he was not a monometallist, nor was he in any way connected with the great conspiracy between Wall Street and Lombard Street; that he stood on the Republicau platform which "demands the use of both gold and silver as standard money, and the maintenance of the parity of values of the two metals," and also on the Democratic platform, which "holds to the use of both gold and silver as the standard money of the country, and to the coinage of both gold and silver, without discriminating against either metal or charge for mintage"; but being a Republican in Republican states and a Democrat in Democratic states, he must be consistent with the bimetallism of both parties. Therefore he could not afford to steal silver except at the old ratio of sixteen to one.

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It is evident from a glance at the silver debate in Congress that our tawdry habit of "distinguishing" one another on every possible occasion has become fixed and incorrigible in the code of mutual admiration. In the Senate every man refers with insipid courtesy to every other as "the distinguished Senator"; every member of the House is "the distinguished gentleman," and so through the state legislatures and all the grades of society down to the Limekiln Club, where Brudder Waydown Beebe and Brudder Gíveadam Jones compliment each other as "de distinguished kalsominer" and "de distinguished deputy conductor ob de Pullman car." Not long ago, in a Republican convention, I heard one colored member refer to another as "de distinguished criterion from de Fourth Ward," and although I have no better idea of what he meant than he had, I look upon the flattery as more dignified, in sound at least, than the weak and diluted sweetness administered by members of Congress to one another when the member from Indiana speaks of "the distinguished gentleman from Illinois," and the member from Illinois replies to "the distinguished gentleman from Indiana." The newspapers have caught the habit; and I read in one of them the other day that "our distinguished coroner held an inquest on the body." I can stand that, if anybody can, but when the President of my country is classified as "distinguished freight," I draw the line right there. Must I submit to this: "Buzzard's Bay, August 29.—The storm necessitated changes in the plans for the departure of President Cleveland for Washington to-day. The yacht 'Oneida' awaits

its distinguished freight to-night." There is a limit even to flattery.

* * *

Yesterday was the eighty-fourth birthday of Oliver Wendell Holmes, and the papers tell us that it was a festival day for him. In the very best of health, he sat among his books receiving callers and opening letters of congratulation that poured upon him from loving friends and admirers in different parts of the world. The buoyant spirit of his college days was upon him, and the ardor of youth was in his conversation. Clear and bright as ever, from its original fountain came the rippling poetry and humor that have refreshed and invigorated so many weary travellers in this world. It is reported that he spoke with touching pathos of the old Harvard days, and averred that the public spirit of the time was higher and stronger than it is now. This may be true, but the decay is not for long. The old spirit is well preserved in the works of men like Holmes, and there is enough of it in their books to reanimate the people. In the serene happiness of his four-score years and four he may look forward or backward with equal joy. Whenever he may go, his genius will remain with us to encourage and to teach. He has lived long without growing old, and others may learn to do so if they will. While many men of sixty-four shiver in what they fancy is the winter of old age, it is only Indian summer with Oliver Wendell Holmes, although his years are eighty-four; and should he live to see his hundredth birthday, may it be Indian summer with him still.

* * *

In the county of Wicklow in Ireland is a beautiful valley called Avoca where several streams flowing from different parts of the country meet and commune together on their journey to the sea. The scene inspired the poet Moore to write a song in which he says:

"Sweet vale of Avoca! how calm could I rest
In thy bosom of shade with the friends I love best,
Where the storms that we feel in this cold world shall cease,
And our hearts like thy waters be mingled in peace."

With that bright vision in the mind, I have contemplated the approaching Parliament of Religions where the hearts of all the long estranged theologies from all the corners of the earth were to come together in friendship, and like the waters in the valley of Avoca be "mingled in peace." An enthusiastic friend of the parliament, writing in the *Nation* says: "No such assembly has ever been seen on earth as will then be gathered in Chicago. Leading representatives of every existing faith will be present in person or contribute papers, animated by the wish to ascertain wherein they agree, rather than to magnify differences." Judging by the evidences at present visible, I fear that the search for the desired agreement will be made in the old sectarian spirit where each one says to the other, "How far do you agree with *me*?" and where never a man says to his neighbor, "Thus far do I agree with *you*." Old Deacon Streeter of Marbletown was a very orthodox member of the Presbyterian church, and speaking to me one day of Shadrach Bowles, who happened to be a Universalist, he said: "Shad is a broad-minded, liberal man; he often comes to our church on a Sunday." "And," I said, "I suppose you sometimes go to his church too." "Oh, no," replied the deacon, "I would not like to set such an example." I am afraid that every delegate will go home as rigidly orthodox as he came, convinced that all the others belong to a stiff-necked and rebellious generation.

* * *

A comical bit of self-righteousness appears in a Chicago paper of August 31. It is wrapped up in a leading article patronising and praising five Buddhist priests "who will assist at the Christian service in the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago next Sunday morning." The delighted editor says: "This is one of the benign incidents growing out of the Parliament of Religions now pro-

gressing." It is indeed a most interesting eccentricity, but if it is meant as an example of a blending of religions it is only half an incident, and it will not be complete until five Presbyterian ministers assist at the Buddhist service on the Sunday following. This "benign incident" we shall never see, because like Deacon Stree-ter, the Presbyterian ministers will never "set such an example." After giving welcome to all the sects in a most hospitable way, the editor, glowing with religious fervor, says, "Worship begun with Buddhist priests participating in a Calvinistic service must be a phenomenon that inaugurates a new era." Then in the true spirit of sectarian conciliation he proceeds to show the Buddhist priests and all other heathen visitors how superior to their own benighted creeds is the religion of Chicago. With chivalrous politeness he tells them that "the countries in which their religion reposes are those in which human progress lies wrinkled like an ancient parchment," while the Christian religion "leads the way over the globe in philosophy, in science, in arts, and in commerce, the civiliser." That comparison is not intentionally offensive; it is really bestowed as kindly patronage, but it was inevitable by reason of the subject matter. When a man compares religions, the temptation to exalt his own above the others becomes irresistible, and it may safely be predicted that this will appear in the coming Parliament. The man who regards all creeds with equal charity has no creed of his own. M. M. TRUMBULL.

BOOK REVIEWS.

THE BIBLE, ITS ORIGIN, GROWTH, AND CHARACTER. By *Jabez Thomas Sunderland*. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1893.

These last years have witnessed the appearance of many books which treat of the Bible in a rational, critical manner. And not only have such works issued from the ranks of independent and non-sectarian scholars, but have also come from the hands of advanced orthodox teachers. All these books seek to incorporate, more or less faithfully, according to the leanings of their authors, the results of modern critical research in this field. And in all a tendency to mediation is noticeable. Radical thinkers are abandoning the hostile and militant positions they once held; and conservative orthodox scholars are leaving in a body the crumbling fortress of ancient literalism. So complete, in fact, has been this revolution, that the exponents of the old school can now be regarded as only fossil relics of a prehistoric age of human opinion. But these views have not yet reached the people, nor, for that matter, their exponents, the rank and file of the clergy. The highest theological scholars of both the Protestant and Catholic Churches hold views which, judged by the expositions of the popular clergy, are rank heresy. But this fact is only another instance of the truth that the world, even in matters of simple critical opinion, is always a full century behind its thinkers, to appreciate which we have only to recollect that the majority of people to-day are still struggling and are still satisfied with the eighteenth century rationalistic interpretations of the Bible and Bible miracles, and explain by long arrays of analogous facts and overwhelming scientific arguments the resurrection of Jesus as an awakening from a swoon! Such a state of things make popular books of this kind necessary.

Mr. Sunderland is a Unitarian. He is reverent. In fact he states his thoughts with *great* dispassionateness and reverence. In the light of his calmness it will shock no one to hear that the Bible is but one of the many sacred works of mankind; that it is not a single, complete, and unified work, but simply a library of the literature of a very religiously minded nation, having a history extending through many centuries; that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but is of a composite character; that there is a legendary element in the Gospels; that, generally speaking, the Bible is not infallible, contains contradictions, absurd statements

and exaggerations, is full of historical and scientific mistakes, and even gives us morally degrading representations of God—the outcome of the imaginations of not fully civilised peoples. In proof of all these facts the author's simple argument is that Bible history must be subject to the same canons of criticism as other history. And the results of this criticism are facts like those stated above. There are not two kinds of truth, a religious and a scientific truth, but one truth. If the voice of truth is not heeded, not science but religion will be the chief sufferer. This is the immoral aspect of the question. The adherence of the Church to the doctrine of Bible infallibility is driving men into infidelity and hypocrisy. The human mind will not stand such patent stultification, as absolute belief in the letter of the Bible demands of it. There is in the Bible a truth which all should take account of. It is a storehouse of valuable religious material, a book of practical religion, spiritual consolation and quickening, as none other in the world. But by the method of the Church, men are repelled from it, and irretrievably lost to its beauties.

"No, the Bible is not all true; but neither is it all false. It cannot all be accepted, unless one is willing to shut his eyes, and not only trample upon his own reason and intelligence, but also upon the biblical scholarship of the world. But much of it can be accepted, and must be accepted, unless we are willing to violate every principle of correct literary and moral judgment, and deeply injure ourselves and mankind."

The book is, thus, a lesson both for the infatuated bibliolater and the irrational infidel. It is written for popular study and its contents are so arranged and presented as to be easily got at. Appended to it is "A list of books for biblical study and reading, with critical comments." This list is a good and useful one, but contains no foreign works except such as are translated. It is also not discriminative, authors of not very high rank being admitted with scholars of the very highest standing,—a circumstance which in view of the purpose for which the list is designed is perhaps pardonable. The critical comments show, as does in fact the whole book, that the author's position is one of a mediator between the two extremes of biblical scholarship. μκρκ.

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