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FREDERICK DOUGLASS.

BY F. M. HOLLAND.

NO MAN died more characteristically. There stood "the Douglass in his hall," ready to go and lecture to the people whom he did much to free, and talking with such interest, about the suffragists, who had that day escorted him to their platform, as an honored pioneer, that when he dropped on his knees and clasped his hands, his wife thought it was only such mimicry as had always been his delight. He had passed away without pain, before she realised her loss.

He was busy to the last in plans for elevating the colored race; and none of his speeches, printed recently, came so plainly from his heart as the address, at the Tuskegee Commencement in 1892, when he reminded his hearers that they had not been so liberally dealt with at emancipation as the Russian serfs, and added, "Even the Israelites were better off than we. When they left Egypt, God told them to spoil the Egyptians; and I believe the Jews have been in the jewelry business ever since." He went on to say, "Get knowledge, then, and make money. Learn trades as you are doing here. Aristotle and Pericles are all right; get all that, too; but get money besides, and plenty of it." . . . "You commune with the soil here. The earth has no prejudice against color." . . . "Well, go on, I sha'n't be with you long. You have heights to ascend, breadths to fill, such as I never could, and never can." The protest against lynching, published soon after in the *North American Review*, shows the fire and force of his best work. That same year, 1892, he took particular pleasure in showing his visitors a portrait of "the Afro-Australian pugilist," Peter Jackson, adding, "I consider him one of the best missionaries abroad."

His devotion to a race still deeply wronged did not hinder his playing the fiddle to his guests, or telling how fond he was even then of Victor Hugo and Dumas, Scott, Burns, Longfellow, and Whittier. His memory of slavery was not so bitter as to hinder his getting a clerkship at Washington, in 1890, for his master's daughter. His interest in woman suffrage, for which he was one of the earliest agitators, continued so intense, that it is said to have hastened his death; and Mrs. Stanton says, "He was the only man

I ever knew who understood the degradation of disfranchisement for women."

His last letter to me spoke thus of a period in his life which has been sadly misunderstood, "When I believed the non-voting theory of Mr. Garrison, I was a Garrisonian indeed and in truth. I was loyal and faithful at all points; and when I ceased to believe as he did, I frankly and modestly told him so in open convention. The first remark with which my statement was met by Mr. Garrison was this, 'There is roguery, somewhere.' There was no mistaking the meaning of that remark; and coming from any one else, it would have been resented on the spot." . . . "My reverence for Mr. Garrison surpassed that for any one then living; but my own soul was more to me than any man. I passed by the insulting remark, and went on to give the reasons for the change in my opinions. What these reasons were you already know." . . . "I do not think that the grand, old anti-slavery pioneer went to his grave, thinking there was any 'roguery' in me. If he did, I was not alone in this bad opinion of his. No man, who ever quitted the Garrisonian denomination, was permitted to leave without a doubt being cast upon his honesty. That was one of the Liberator's weapons of war; and it was a weapon which never rusted for want of using. There are spots on the sun; but it shines for all that; and Garrison with all his harshness of judgment is Garrison still, and one of the best men of mothers born."

In the presidential campaign that year, Mr. Douglass held, as he had always done, that it was not only the duty but the interest of the Republicans to make protection of the colored race their foremost issue. He was sagacious enough to admit, after Mr. Cleveland's election, that the country was not going to ruin, and that there was not likely to be "any marked and visible difference" in the condition of colored people at the South. He also predicted that there would not be much change in the tariff. His superiority to political prejudice is shown by a fact, stated thus in the *New York Evening Post*:

"In March, 1894, Cæsar Celso Moreno sent to Frederick Douglass a copy of a circular he had issued in behalf of the native Hawaiians in their resistance to the aggressions of the whites. It drew forth the following letter from Mr. Douglass:

"MY DEAR SIR: I have duly received your pamphlet on the Hawaiian question, and, though much in a hurry in preparing to leave town, I must stop to thank you for this, as I think, valuable contribution to the cause of truth and justice. It is my opinion that but for the unwarrantable intermeddling of our citizens Queen Liliuokalani would now be on the throne. The stories afloat intended to blacken the character of the Queen do not deceive me. The device is an old one, and has been used with skill and effect ever since Caleb and Joshua saw the grapes of Canaan. We are the Jews of modern times, and when we want the lands of other people, such people are guilty of every species of abomination and are not fit to live. In our conduct to-day we are but repeating our treatment towards Mexico in the case of Texas. Our citizens settled in Texas under promise of obedience to the laws of Mexico, but as soon as they were strong enough they revolted and set up a government for themselves to be ultimately added to the United States. In whatever else President Cleveland may have erred, history will credit his motion and commend the object he has aimed to accomplish. I am Republican, but I am not a 'Republican right or wrong.'"

A painful struggle, between loyalty to his party and duty to himself, is recorded in the articles which he published in the *North American Review*, in September and October, 1891, after resigning his position as Minister in Hayti. The premature termination of his service there was not due to any fault of his, or any dissatisfaction among the Haytians. They trusted and honored him from the first; and he was followed into retirement by their invitation to represent them as Commissioner at the World's Fair. When the anniversary of their declaration of independence was celebrated on January 2, 1893, by the dedication of their pavilion at Chicago, he took the lead at the ceremony. That same day he delivered a lecture in which he gave this explanation of the unwillingness of Hayti to cede what he calls her Gibraltar to this country, even at his request: "Hayti is black; and we have not yet forgiven Hayti for being black, or forgiven the Almighty for making her black." He exulted in the progress she is making, and told how much she did, to show that the colored race is not fit for slavery, by conquering her own independence from Napoleon.

Among other incidents of his long visit to Chicago was his playing the fiddle and dancing the Virginia reel at the opening of the New England Log Cabin. He was the orator on "Colored American Day," August 25; and he did much to make it a success by persuading his people to disregard the foolish advice, that they should show their indignation at many wrongs by staying away.

They showed their gratitude for fifty-four years of constant labor, for their emancipation and enlightenment, by the almost unmanageable crowds which poured through the Methodist Church, the largest colored one in Washington, on Monday, February 25. Prominent among the decorations was an imposing medallion of roses, orchids, and palms, presented by the Haytian legation as a tribute from the black Re-

public. The mayor and aldermen of Rochester, New York, where Mr. Douglass had once lived in neglect, stood next morning in the dense crowd, which had gathered to escort his body to the Central Presbyterian Church; and four ex-mayors were among the honorary pall-bearers. The address was delivered by the Unitarian pastor, the Rev. W. C. Gannett, who, like Douglass, is a free religionist; and the last rites were in Mount Hope Cemetery.

His name was taken from that of the noble fugitive in "The Lady of the Lake." We are reminded of the grand scene between another Douglas and Marmion, when we read what our orator did in London. He had made such a powerful speech that noblemen were crowding to shake hands with him. With them came an eminent clergyman from America; but Douglass stepped back, drew himself up to his full height, over six feet, and said: "No, sir; if we had met thus in Brooklyn, you would never have dared to take my hand; and you shall not do it here." This was in 1846, when his position in America had been that of Shakespeare's Douglas,

"Confident against the world in arms."

He was the foremost man of the colored race; and the only question is, how much of his greatness was due to his white blood? I think that the present Governor of Massachusetts is right in calling him a white American. He belonged, both mentally and morally, to the race which founded our nation and keeps it free. His writings are often deficient in order and conciseness; but this may be fully explained by his utter lack of education, and his absorption, for some years, in preparations for platform oratory. The courage with which he resisted his master, made himself free, and fought against mobs, was thoroughly Anglo-Saxon. If all colored men had been as intractable, it would have been as difficult to keep them long in slavery as to tame the leviathan. If there were anything of the negro in him, it was his sympathy with all the suffering and oppressed, his genial courtesy, and his open-handed generosity; but this last trait did not prevent his leaving a fortune estimated at a quarter of a million. Few white men have such independence of intellect and logical power, as led him to emancipate himself, not only from the disunionism, which he had been taught by Garrison, whom he loved and honored above all other men, and which he had himself been proclaiming on the platform, but also from the creed which he had tried to propagate while still a slave. His capacity for leading and organising is beyond all question. He may not have been an original thinker; but they are rare. It is a pity that his social position was so largely determined by the darkness of his skin, instead of the whiteness of his intellect. He is soon to have a statue in Rochester; but it would be remem-

bering him more suitably to take care to give all members of the mixed race the best places which they are qualified to fill.

THE ISRAELITISH PROPHECY.

BY PROF. CARL HEINRICH CORNILL.

WE all use the word "prophet," and have some sort of idea as to what we mean. But if we were asked what we meant, the answer would be: that is quite clear and intelligible. A prophet is a man who predicts the future. This is plainly indicated in the name: *πρό* means "before," and *φημί* "I say"; hence, *προφήτης*, prophet, means a foreteller. And this will apparently be confirmed by the subject, for all the so-called prophets of the Old Testament busied themselves with the future, and according to the popular view their special duty and importance consists in having foretold the coming of Christ. But, however widespread this view may be and however generally the interpretation be accepted, it is nevertheless incorrect, and in no wise just to the character and to the importance of the Israelitish prophecy. That this can never have been the original conception of the Israelites, may be thoroughly proved by an irrefutable etymological argument. The Semitic languages in general do not possess the power of forming compound words; consequently, the idea of foretelling cannot be expressed in them by any simple word. Even the Greek word *προφήτης*, in spite of its obvious etymology, does not possess this meaning; the men who foresee and foretell the future the Greek calls *μάρτις*; to call Kalchas, or Teiresias, *prophetes* would have been wrong in Greek.

If we wish to gain a clear understanding of the Israelitish prophecy, we must first of all determine, what the Israelites themselves understood by a prophet. We find nowhere in the Old Testament a clear definition of the term; we must therefore seek to arrive at its interpretation by another way. And that way is the etymological. In no language are words originally mere empty sounds, conventional formulæ; they are always proper names. Man seizes upon some salient feature, some characteristic property of the thing to be defined, and names and defines the thing according to it. Thus the science of language grants us an insight into periods and times far back of all historical tradition, and we can, on the basis of the science of language, reconstruct the history of civilisation and the ethics of those most remote periods, for the names of a language are the precipitates of the culture and moral views of the people inventing them.

When the generic word for father in all Indo-Germanic languages denotes the supporter and breadwinner, it is to be seen clearly from this fact that the old Aryans looked upon fatherhood not merely as a

natural relationship, but as a moral duty, that to them the father was not in the first place a begetter, but also the food-giver, the supporter, the protector and provider of his family, that the original heads of families of the Indo-Europeans were not rude savages, but men of deep ethical feeling, who already had higher moral perceptions than the average man of the present day. And when our word *daughter* (*Tochter*), which can be traced through a number of Indo-Germanic languages, and therefore belongs to the general Indo-Germanic primitive stock, means in reality the *milker*, we may again draw from this, very important conclusions respecting the civilisation of those early times: we may conclude that the heads of the Indo-Germanic tribes were engaged in raising cattle, and that all the work was carried on by the family itself, that the institution of slavery was entirely foreign to them, for which we have the further positive proof that the Indo-Germanic languages possess no word in common for this idea, that it did not yet exist when they separated from one another. And now, to take two examples from the Semitic group of languages which is immediately occupying our attention, when the generic Semitic word for king, *melék*, denotes, according to the root-meaning still preserved in the Aramaic, the "counsellor"; when the generic Semitic word for God, *el*, denotes etymologically the "goal," that is, him or that to which all human longing aspires and must aspire; when, therefore, by this word for God religion is defined by the early Semites as a problem for man and as a promise of its final solution, it follows with irrefutable clearness that the much defamed and much despised Semites, are in no wise such an inferior race, or such worthless men, as is unfortunately at the present day the fashion to depict them.

Let us after this short digression direct our attention to the attempt to explain the ancient Israelitish notions of the character of a prophet by etymology. Here, however, we must point out the very important fact, that with the original etymological sense, the real meaning of the word at the time we actually meet it, is very far from determined, for both language and single words have their history. Thus, the word *marshal* means etymologically a "groom" or "hostler," yet at the present day we understand by this word something quite different from a groom. It is the task, in fact, of the history of language and of civilisation to show how out of the primitive etymological signification the actual traditional meaning has been developed.

The Hebrew language calls the prophet *nabi*. It immediately strikes us, that this word has as little an obvious Hebrew etymology as the word *kôhen* (priest) or as the specific Israelite name of God, which we are in the habit of pronouncing Jehovah. Now, if we are unable to explain the word *nabi* satisfactorily from the

Hebrew, a most important conclusion follows: the word cannot be specifically Israelitish, and must have been transplanted to Israel before the historical period. We must therefore turn to the other Semitic languages for information, and must assume that the home of the word in question is to be sought for in that branch of the Semitic group, where the etymology is still plain and lucid. We still meet with the root *naba'a* in the Assyrian-Babylonian and in the Arabic. In Assyrian it simply means "to speak," "to talk," "to announce," "to name," the substantive derived from it meaning "announcement," "designation"; from it comes also the name of the well-known Babylonian god Nebo, Babylonian Nabu, which is to be found as the first part of a large number of Babylonian names, such as Nabopolassar and Nebuchadnezzar; whilst it also follows from the original root that this Babylonian god Nabu, is the god of wisdom, of science, of the word, and of speech, whom the Greeks identified with Hermes, and after whom even to the present day the planet Mercury is named.

Considered by the light of this Assyrian-Babylonian etymology the Hebraic *nabi* would have the meaning of speaker, and that can thoroughly satisfy us; for in former days the efficacy of a prophet was entirely personal and oral. But every orator is not a preacher, and not every one who speaks, a prophet; therefore in this Assyrian-Babylonian etymology the most important point is lacking, namely, the marking of the characteristic quality of the prophetic speech. We obtain this through the Arabic. The primitive Semitic type has been preserved most purely in the Arabic, and the Arabic language has therefore for the scientific investigation of the Semitic languages the same importance, as has Sanskrit for the Indo-Germanic, and, indeed, a much higher one, for Arabic is more closely related to the primitive Semitic, than is Sanskrit to the primitive Indo-Germanic. Now, the Arabic has also the root *naba'a*, but never in the general sense of "speaking," as in the Assyrian-Babylonian, but in the thoroughly special sense of "proclaiming," "announcing," *naba'a* or *amba'a* being he who proclaims something determined, or has to carry out some mandate. The specific significance lies therefore in the Arabic root, that this speaker discourses not of himself, nor of anything special to himself, but on some distinctive instigation, or as agent for some other person; according to this the *nabi* would be the deputed speaker, he who has to declare some special communication, who has to deliver some message, and here we have lighted upon the very essence and pith of the matter.

That a trace of this fundamental signification has been preserved in the Hebrew, can be proved from a very characteristic passage in Exodus. Moses has declined the charge to appear before Pharaoh, saying:

"I am not eloquent . . . but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." And then God says to him that his brother Aaron can speak well, he shall be his spokesman, and this is thus expressed: "Behold, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron, thy brother, shall be thy prophet: thou shalt speak all that I command thee, and Aaron, thy brother, shall speak unto Pharaoh." Thus Aaron is prophet to Moses, because he speaks for him; he is his spokesman. Who it is that gives the charge and speaks in the prophet, so called, is not far to seek: it is God. And with this meaning the technical sense of the Greek word *προφήτης* agrees in the most wonderful manner. According to the Greeks the *προφήτης* is he who interprets and renders into clear, intelligible language the incomprehensible oracles of the gods: at Dodona, the rustling of the sacred oak of Zeus; at Delphi, the inarticulate utterances and ecstatic cries of the Pythia. In the same sense also Pindar can describe himself as a prophet of the muse, because he only speaks what the muse inspires in him. Thus in the Hebrew *nabi* we have him who speaks not of himself, but according to higher command, in the name and as the messenger of God to Israel; in the Greek *προφήτης*, him who transmits and explains to those around him the oracles of the gods.

Thus is the conception of the prophet, as he appears to us in the Israelitish books, thoroughly explained. All these men have the consciousness of not acting in their own personal capacities, of not pronouncing the sentiments of their own minds, but as the instruments of a Higher Being, who acts and speaks through them; they feel themselves to be, as Jeremiah expresses it once in an especially characteristic verse, "the mouth of God."

As the Arabic language gives us the only satisfactory explanation of the word, we must suppose Arabia to be the home of prophecy, and as a fact the visionary and ecstatic elements which attach to prophesying, and which the Israelitish prophecies alone overcame and shook off, savors somewhat of the desert; the first great prophet of whom we find an account in the Old Testament, Elijah, was not a native of Palestine proper, but came from the country east of Jordan, the boundary-land, where it has been proved that a strong mixture of Arabic blood existed. Besides the other neighboring tribes had also their prophets. In the history of Elijah we meet with the Phœnician prophets of Baal, and Jeremiah also speaks of prophets in all the surrounding countries.

That the word *nabi* has in fact had a history, and that prophesying was looked upon originally as something extraneous, is distinctly testified to us in a very remarkable passage. If we glance over the history of Israel, the prophet Samuel, after Moses, appears as

the most important personage. Now Samuel, in the oldest records we have concerning him, is never called prophet, but always "seer," and some later hand has added the invaluable explanatory remark that that which then was called prophet, was known in Israel in olden times as "seer."

What in those older days was understood by prophet, we learn from the narrative, where it is announced to Saul as a sign: "And it shall come to pass that when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery and a tablet and a pipe and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy: And the spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them." And as it came to pass all the people of Gibeon asked in astonishment, "Is Saul also among the prophets?" which does not mean: "How is it that such a worldly-minded man finds himself in the company of such pious people?" but is to be interpreted as meaning: "How comes a person of such distinction to find himself in such low company?" In these prophets of the time of Saul, the first mention we ever have of them, we have the type of the original appearance which prophesying assumed on Canaanite soil; they are men after the manner of Mohammedan fakirs, or dancing and howling dervishes, who make known their religious exaltation through their eccentric mode of life, and thus it comes that the Hebrew word *hithnabbe*, which means "to live as a prophet," has also the signification "to rave, to behave in an unseemly manner."

The genuine counterpart of the ecstatic fakirs may be found in the priests of Baal at the time of Elijah, who danced round the altar of Baal shouting and cutting themselves with knives, in order to produce an impression on their god. Such prophets lived together in Israel until a very late date in guilds, the so-called schools of the prophets. They wore a coarse, hairy cloak as the garb of their order, and existed on charity, a species of begging-friars, and evidently were not regarded with great respect. To Ahab they but prophesy that which was pleasing to him to hear, and as one of them came into the camp unto Jehu with a message from Elisha to anoint him king, his friends asked him "wherefore came this mad fellow to thee?" Amos likewise objects almost with scorn to being placed on the same level with these begging prophets, "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son: but I was a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit."

Rudiments of this originally ecstatic race are still to be found even among the great prophets, as when it is recorded of Elijah that he outran the king's chariot going at full speed on the road from Karmel to Jezreel, or when Elisha caused a harper to play so as to arouse through music the prophetic inspiration. Even among

the prophets whose writings have come down we find traces of violence and eccentricity in their actions and behavior.

If we compare a Hosea or Jeremiah with those savage dervishes, the examination of prophetism will show the same result that is observable everywhere, that all that Israel borrowed from others it so regenerated and stamped with its own identity, that it becomes difficult to recognise in the beautiful Israelitish creation and transformation any trace of the original. For this reason one should not be loath to recognise the many foreign elements in the religion of Israel; in doing so we do not lower it, but quite the contrary, we grant to it a testimony of highly developed vital power and invincible capacity of assimilation. Israel resembles in spiritual things the fabulous king Midas who turned everything he touched into gold.

THE INSTITUTIONAL CHURCH.

BY CELIA PARKER WOOLLEY.

WE LIVE in a self-regardful age, one of whose advantages is that we may observe from the outside the operation and growth of those forces and tendencies of the times to which we also, in common with the rest of mankind, own ourselves subject. We are both spectator and participant in the drama of events going on about us, and bear at the same time a passive and active relation to the new ideals everywhere taking shape. Perhaps we are nowhere more sensible of this double attitude of the mind than in the mingled observation and participation of the religious changes of the age. No age has furnished more earnest or intelligent discussion of the great themes of religion than ours, or won a more encouraging response in a general awakening of all minds to the fundamental questions of belief and duty. We often unthinkingly pronounce this a materialistic age, but there never was a time when men were bestowing more deep and sincere attention on the nature of the soul-life and the just claims of their fellow-beings than now. It is because the rapid growth of opinion on all these matters shows us how much we have yet to learn, that we are self-distrustful.

The Parliament of Religions, though an event of less than two years' distance, has already afforded us a new date to reckon from. We are accustomed to sum up its results in the words "fraternity" and "unity," to indicate the remarkable growth in religious tolerance and mental hospitality which this gathering from all climes, nations, and creeds witnessed; but another result quite as important is found in the increasing practicality of our religious ideals. One result bears close logical connexion with the other. Once remove the barriers of thought and bring men together upon the basis of their common love of the

good and their love of each other, and life gains not only in spiritual uplift, but in moral earnestness. Every day sees a closer identification in the speech and action of men of the religious life with the moral life, every day lets us hear a fresh and more emphatic demand from some quarter for a church that shall best express the brotherhood of man. New ideals of church life are set forth every Sunday from the pulpit, the main appeal and argument of which is no longer "Save yourself from some impending doom of divine wrath threatening you in the future," but "Save your fellow-creature from his present doom of ignorance, suffering, and crime." The church, as a refuge of the saved, is an anomaly and hindrance to the world's growth, but the church as a place of united work and fellowship for all the needy souls of earth, is just coming into view. The educational uses of the church are being rapidly developed, but in quite other ways than are illustrated in the doctrinal teachings of the pulpit. To-day many helpful adjuncts to the church life are found outside the pulpit, though they may be inspired and kept alive through its influence; in the Sunday-school, the teacher's class, the Unity club, Chataqua Circle, Christian Endeavor Society, or Epworth League, which add so much to its functional range and usefulness. Agencies like these have been found to excel the church itself in their power to win the young people, to turn their thoughts from frivolous to earnest subjects. So greatly have the divisions of church work multiplied under these and other names that the minister is no longer the only worker there, often he is not the hardest worker.

The situation, however, is one that will inevitably compel him to harder work; for this quickening of the life-currents throughout the general body of the church inevitably creates its own demands of the pulpit, and if rightly received stimulates it as nothing else can. The average congregation is much nearer the pulpit's standard in culture than it was fifty, twenty-five, or even ten years ago. All this is but welcome news to the true preacher, challenging his best powers. This modern activity of the congregation will both deepen and rationalise the life of the church. The numerous activities, benevolent, literary, missionary, and social, connected with the religious life will broaden far beyond the present boundaries of its work and influence. Already a phrase has been coined to describe this new ideal of the church, the "Institutional Church." The phrase is not altogether happy, but it serves to point the direction in which we are moving. The church, under this title, is no longer the scene of one man's labors, set above and apart from his kind, the viceroy of the Almighty; but it is rather an aggregation of mutually dependent and helpful parts, a voluntary union, a company of trustful friends bound together

by a common aspiration and a common need; co-workers for large and universal ends of love and righteousness, not the maintenance of a particular sect or organisation. The Institutional Church, like Briareus, reaches a hundred arms in all directions, but for purposes of human helpfulness, not in a wanton and cruel display of strength. The Institutional Church is bent on saving men now and here from immediate loss and destruction that follow ignorance; and the salvation processes are changed to suit this new end. It is neither miracle nor grace that will save here, but knowledge and love. This new thought of the church will place it, as has been said, among the educational forces of the community; it will vie with the school-room in influence and interest. It aims not at the development of a single set of faculties or ideas called the spiritual, but at manly growth, the extension of moral power in the world.

At first it may seem that so bold and radical a thought of the church can have no place except with the followers of a rational creed, but I suspect we should have hard work to prove this. The Institutional Church is making its way under both orthodox and heterodox guidance. It will flourish wherever there is found a sincere love of man for man. I fancy if we were to undertake an investigating tour, we should find this church already well under way at many of the missionary joints in our large cities. The evangelistic spirit, which we, as liberals, distrust, does not work wholly after unreal or specious ends; the methods it engenders are often far more practical than those found in some of our liberal churches. The evangelistic *spirit* is something the liberal church has always suffered in its absence; it should be preserved, as faith and devotion should be preserved everywhere. The Institutional Church, rightly conceived, will gain, rather than lose, in spiritual fervency and consecration from this infusion of a more practical aim. It stands for life, not dogma, for character, not creed, for the faith based in human experience and winning universal testimony for itself in the heart of man. It is the church of work, of united happy effort, of present sanctification, present achievements and rewards, and is thus the builder of the future.

SCIENTIFIC IMMORTALITY.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

IN A recent article in *The Open Court* I endeavored to translate into intellectual equivalents the fulness of feeling by which one of the countless number of personalities became and is aware of himself, of his relation to the great principle of personality and therefore of his place in nature and his motive in being.

In my article on "The Absolute" the category was enunciated as primal, final, and conclusive: RELATION,

or that which is; ACTION, or that which does; and VOLITION, or that which desires.

A clear understanding of the meaning and certainty of this category is essential to an accurate understanding of the corollaries thereto and the logical deductions therefrom.

The region of RELATION is equivalent to that of pure mathematics. Matter, about which so many have speculated only to find themselves baffled, becomes abstractly some kind of relation. Let us leave it there. The old chemistry had much to say of ultimate atoms, the new deals with absolute relations. Avoid all opinions, and neither adopt the physical hypothesis of gross materialism, nor the transcendental negativism of those who, denying the very existence of matter, make the solid earth a dream.

Because the material is a reality of relation, therefore it is real.

In another article, "The Conservation of Spirit," I made allusion to a fly which was killed on the wall of Cæsar's palace, and said of the fly that it died, and also that it was immortal. The fly died. By that is meant that the mechanism of activity ceased its customary relations, and causes of that special form ceased to produce natural effects. The fly is immortal:

1. Its bodily constituents appear eternally in other forms.
2. The effect of its forces continues as a factor in the universe.
3. The effect of the "spirit" or meaning of its life continues to exert influence in exact proportion to its value.

In the first case the immortality is of "matter"; it is a function of RELATION. In the second the immortality is of "force"; it is a function of ACTION, or change of relation. In the third the immortality is of "spirit"; it is a function of VOLITION, which in perfection is right desire, good will, or at the other extreme, the impulse howsoever acquired to changes of relations.

God says, I love. This is equivalent to saying, my desire is perfect. The fly said, I am impelled, which is equivalent to saying, I have no control over my desire. Some men always say, I am impelled. Some are able to say, on brief and rare occasions, I desire right freely. All at times are simply and automatically impelled, are creatures of impulse. Few are able to say, I am consciously, lovingly impelling.

It is only as we freely, consciously, lovingly choose the right that we are godly, and he only whose life's motive impells towards the right is entitled to consider himself made in the image of God.

The "soul" of a fly, and that of a man, and that of God himself differ, not in the least in kind, but only in degree.

The "soul" is the meaning.

I speak. Somehow, somewhere out of the depths of my being, either originated by me, or the resultant of all antecedent influences impressed upon me, thought focussed itself, and like a fulminate responsive to the friction primer, suddenly burst its pent barriers, and in the twinkling of an eye, through all the evolutionary stages of molecular motion of the brain, nervous energy of the nerves of sensation, and muscular movements and vibrations of tongue, teeth, palate, larynx, lungs, diaphragm,—all the apparatus of sound—the sentence whose real substance I have thought was born as speech.

A moment, and all is over. The multitudinous preparations; the drilling of the awkward squads of conscript forces; the arming of energies; the marshalling in arms of facts; the commissariat of veins and arteries, the stretchers of dead and ambulances of worn and wasted tissues; all, each in turn has done its work, till on the field of the lips the battle of sense has been fought to its conclusion. I have done speaking; I have said my say.

The life of the sentence I have uttered was formed in the thought which out of the vasty deep called it into being; but it was not in the actions and reactions which gave it medium for the larger life and opportunity for perfect existence.

The meaning of what we say only begins to live when its material life is finished, when on the ear of the hearer impinges the pulsing particles of air, galleons freighted with rich cargoes of ideas; landed at the wharfs of the tympanum; carted thence through the streets of the celestial city of the intellect; stored in the graneries of reason, to be distributed to the famished faculties, to each as needful, to each his fitting share.

All happenings, great or small, have their personalities. Salamis had a soul and Marathon a meaning. The soul of Salamis was not Themistocles, nor that of Marathon Miltiades. The meaning of Waterloo was not Wellington, but the pacification of Europe. The spirit of Gettysburgh was not Meade nor Hancock, but that here on this rostra the final argument of force was uttered and the debate for freedom decided in the affirmative by the fiat of destiny.

Nothing really begins to live until its activities are ended. More and more, greater and ever greater and grander, those things which ought to survive do survive, and grow and gather life more and more abundantly; those lives which deserve life, live; those men whose actions command immortality become immortal.

These are the spirits of the just made perfect.

Man is a republic and not an empire. His personality is an elective executive, not an imperator with purchased powers, nor a king with divine rights.

All life extends and endures forever. All happenings have eternity for their habitat and infinity for their goal.

But to their relations, as in pure mathematics, there is a plus and minus infinity; the result of that which is unworthy, is like the waves that ripple away from a pebble cast into the water, in ever diminishing intensity, ever widening circles.

Such is the life of the fly that died in the palace of the Cæsars; such is all ignoble life.

The life of man from the cradle to the tomb is a long speech; of some a mere sequence of phrases, disconnected, discordant; of others only "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing."

But he who speaks in sentences, inevitably lives in exact and mathematical proportion to the worth and value of the meaning of what he has said. He lives also in the result of his actions, and in the effects which his motives have had upon the universe, proportionate to the influence and to some power of the opportunity.

As to what is called life, whether of the fly or of the man, the objection may be made that at death, when the material particles are resolved into other forms, they cease to exist.

The analogy of the spoken sentence holds good always. The form of matter conveying the rhythms of sounds and rests of motion determines the ideas conveyed. The "soul" of speech is in the thought and its larger life is in the effect of the words.

An exact recombination of matter and motion would inevitably effect a resurrection of fly or man, as the repetition of the spoken word is a resurrection of the idea.

But immortality is not that,—Lazarus-like,—which would revive the flesh, but rather that certainty of spiritual existence, by which, in the thoughts and lives we have influenced, in the many mansions of the eternal house, we may go on from glory to glory, reaping exactly as we have sown.

Some may find in this nothing but desolation, the death of personality, the destruction of consciousness, the philosophy of annihilation, the religion of despair.

But here is hope, not despair, the substance and evidence of the eternal; for "the spirit quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

When it is realised entirely that the region of thought commonly called of religion or of the spirit has an exact boundary; when it is thoroughly understood that as there is a science of mechanics or of chemistry, so also there is a science of religion; when men dismiss forever the goblins and demons and phantoms and opinions of their childish past; when without fear, favor, or affection they harken to the voice of

truth and attend and follow because it is truth that speaks, then shall also be realised fully and completely in no mystical sense, but as absolutely as an axiom, that mortal life is only an expression of immortality. "And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

NOTES.

Through the kindness of M. F. de Gissac, we have received M. Gassaud's discourse on the movement inaugurated by M. de Quatrefages. We learn from it that the main objection which this great anthropologist, the Agassiz of France, had to Darwinism was that he regarded it as a degrading materialism full of desolate affirmations and paradoxes. He found religious comfort in the idea of the unity and permanence of the race, which led him to discard what he believed to be a gratuitous hypothesis. We can understand the attitude of Quatrefages if we consider that Darwinism first appeared as an application and generalisation of Malthusian principles. But we have, with a deeper insight into the theory of evolution, learned to appreciate its spiritual and religious importance, which is now removing fast the main obstacles to its general acceptance.

Mr. Theodore Stanton writes us, *apropos* of his article "John Bright on Woman Suffrage," which appeared in this paper on January 3, that it contained an error in fact. Mr. Bright never voted against the Woman Suffrage Bill whilst it was in his brother's hands. He did not vote at all, and used to say he never would so long as it was fathered by Jacob Bright. But the latter lost his seat for a season in 1874, and the Bill passed into the hands of a Conservative. Then he voted and spoke against the measure. Several members of the Bright family have seen Mr. Stanton's article since it appeared in our columns, and this is the only error they find in it.

Macmillan & Co. are publishing a complete translation of the Páli Jataka or "Buddha Birth-Stories," which are supposed to be the oldest collection of folk-lore stories in existence. They will be translated from the Páli under the superintendence of Prof. E. B. Cowell, and will be published in seven or eight volumes. The first volume, translated by Robert Chalmers, is nearly ready, while the second, by W. H. D. Rouse, and third, by H. T. Francis and R. A. Neil, are in active preparation.

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