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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

BY F. M. HOLLAND.

MANY years ago, when it was proposed to rectify the boundary between Indiana and Michigan, it was reported that a woman, who lived close to the line in the former State, was much alarmed at the prospect that her home might be annexed to the latter. It was all she could do, she said, to stand the cold in Indiana; and she knew she should freeze to death in Michigan, where the winters were dreadful. People are not much wiser to-day, in talking about the necessary collapse of literature and morality, because we are at the end of a century, and the certainty that the next one will bring the millennium. But if this generation is worse than its predecessors, there must be causes at work, which will make the twentieth century worse still; and if that century is to be better than this one, it may reasonably be supposed that the upward tendency has already made itself felt. It must also be remembered that the division between century and century is as artificial as that between Michigan and Indiana. To know what kind of men and women are going to take the lead in giving form and character to the twentieth century, we have only to look around us. If the calculations of Chrysostom, Hailes, Kepler, Blair, and other eminent chronologists are correct, we have already entered upon the twentieth century without knowing it. There will probably be about as little difference between the first years of the new century and the last years of the old one, as between the trees on opposite sides of a town line.

The man, who predicts that the twentieth century will accomplish every change for which he wishes individually, may turn out a false prophet. We differ irreconcilably in our expectations; and most of us would find the future fail to realise all our hopes. For our race, however, there will be little disappointment. There are some desires which are so generally felt, and which have been so much better gratified in this century than ever before, that they are sure to find more complete satisfaction in the future than in the past. Physical comfort, for instance, has always been desired strongly; and people are now less hindered from seeking it than they were formerly, either by superstitious scruples or by fears of danger and expense.

Herbert Spencer has shown that pleasure is health; and competition among merchants, inventors, and manufacturers has made it easy for the masses to enjoy countless comforts which were unattainable, two hundred years ago, except by the favored few. It is needless to state the particulars in which the average man is better fed, clothed, lodged, amused, doctored, and protected against ill usage than any of his ancestors were. It would be equally unnecessary to dilate upon such facts as that much more is known about science than ever before, and that the value of knowledge is now recognised universally. We delight in building universities, public libraries, and common schools, as our forefathers did in building cathedrals and monasteries. And there is still a third particular in which the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have differed from all their predecessors. They have been democratic. The right of the people to govern themselves was nowhere established on any large scale before our own revolution. What were called republics were really aristocracies. Even our own government was not so completely democratic a hundred years ago as at present. Denial of the negro's rights put those of the white laborer in such jeopardy as can never return. The principle that all just government requires the consent of the governed was much more limited, even after the abolition of slavery, by prejudices on account of sex than is now the case. During this century, democracy has become more consistent than ever before. It has quietly taken the place of aristocracy in Great Britain; and it has made itself permanent in France by regaining the popularity which was lost there nearly a hundred years ago. Local self-government is coming into existence in India. The next century seems likely to be even more democratic than this. The future will bring greater comfort, knowledge, and freedom.

It is hard to tell which will be the next nation to become a democracy, and whether this change will take place as peaceably as in England, or as violently as in France. More than one sovereign may have to choose between meeting the inevitable revolution like Victoria, or like Louis XVI. The most certain feature of the progress of liberty will be the extension, in this country, France, and Great Britain, of the methods

already in use for enabling the majority to state its commands. I mean the Australian ballot, the Myers machine for registering every vote as it is cast, and the laws to prevent corrupt practices at elections. The legislators may also be expected to take more notice than hitherto of these two facts: The majority has no right to hold more than its fair share of power: the stability of republican institutions requires that the population of every one of our cities become so capable of self-government, as not to need to be governed by a State Legislature or by Congress. It is hard to say how this is to be done, but it certainly will be done, for our people will not suffer the republic to perish. Already we know how to establish Milton's definition of freedom, namely "the civil rights and advancements of every person according to his merit"; and it will not be long before most of our voters find out why a professional politician hates compulsory examination for office. We must not be too sanguine. It may be more than a hundred years before either the English or the Americans become so conscious of the holiness of freedom as to allow her temple to remain open on Sunday. It may be long before either France or America accept Britannia's proof that industry prospers best when least interfered with, and that whenever government tries to "protect" a nation's weakest industries, it injures her most strong and valuable ones. Individual liberty is not likely to be smothered by the growth of popular sovereignty, for neither can exist long without some aid from the other; but more than one century may pass away before the full and final reconciliation of their claims.

All this must seem tame to the admirers of such prophets as Charles H. Pearson and Henry Lazarus. The former predicts that the nations which have hitherto ruled are to be superseded by the Chinese, Hindus, and South Americans. The latter's prognostication of "The English Revolution of the Twentieth Century," is to be fulfilled on St. Valentine's day, when the Salvation Army is to establish socialism, and the king will find himself unable to retain his throne, except on condition of promising to carry out two most sorely needed reforms, namely, the disuse of jewelry, and the abolition of low-necked dress. The Chinese army has already lost its terrors; and socialism is certainly not so strong in France as in 1848, when all citizens were promised work by the State, or as it was in the United States in 1843, when it was taught by most of the popular authors, and practised by some twenty hopeful but short-lived communities. The schemes, which were too visionary to retain their hold on the transcendentalism of the nineteenth century, are likely to win even less favor in that reign of science which will characterise the twentieth. One thing at least may safely be predicted of the socialists. They

will never revolutionise North America. So long as they remain a minority,—and they are a very small one at present,—their revolt would be their own destruction. If they ever become the majority, they will be able to get all they want without a revolution.

There can be little danger of socialism, while people value comforts which are the fruit of competition. It is certain that those things which already keep life healthy and pleasant will come into more and more general use among the poor. It is probable that the inventions and discoveries of the nineteenth century will soon be surpassed. All our visions of flying machines, pleasure carriages and skiffs driven by electricity, refrigerators for keeping our houses cool in the hottest summer, and cures of all diseases may fail to do justice to the achievements of the coming century. The tyranny of fashion may be checked by such practical considerations as are already forcing rich women to follow the example of the poor, and mount the wheel. All doubt whether life is worth living may soon be out of date.

There are higher needs than those of the body; but we have already seen that science is likely to have more influence in the future than ever in the past. Intolerance, superstition, and doubt will disappear, as knowledge spreads. Who can say how many nations will be set free from darkness in the twentieth century, as Japan has been in the nineteenth? It would be presumption to try to predict precisely what science is about to announce. We may have to wait even longer for another Darwin than we have done for a second Newton. The next century may do little besides furnish corroborations and applications of its predecessor's discoveries. We can be sure that it will make scientific methods of thought not only more common than ever before, but more consistent and enduring. The men of the twentieth century may know as little as we about the problems of deity and immortality; but they will be better satisfied with what little light science can give.

And what about religion? Shall we say that as she is weaker now than she was in the last century, and much weaker than in the sixteenth, she will be weaker still in the twentieth? Lucretius, Cicero, and Horace thought so; but the next century brought Christianity. Never was irreligion growing more rapidly than just before the Reformation. These outbursts of pious feeling are perfectly natural; and it is possible that the next generation may be irresistibly attracted towards the ancient shrines, or else to new forms of transcendental and scientific faith. It is also possible that emotion and aspiration may be fed so abundantly, and conscience guided so safely, by the literature and art of the future, as to make new religions superfluous, and defeat any attempt to drag forth

the church from her quiet place of honor in the background of the busy scene of life. The influence of our great poets is likely to become mightier than ever; but how much longer must the world wait for a new star? There will be no other Homer, or Dante, or Shakespeare, though there may be other Bacons. Future generations will probably find most of their inspiration and guidance in their novels; and the standard of popular fiction may reasonably be expected to rise during the next century, as it has done steadily in this. Music, painting, sculpture, and architecture will have the benefit of more thorough training than before, as well as of more liberal patronage; and the results will be grand accordingly.

As I try to state the sum of these predictions, I am surprised to find it amount to a prophecy, which may be all the more true because I had no intention of making it. The coming century was foreshadowed by the Chicago Exposition, though not so accurately as if France and England had been more prominent among the nations, while romance had found a more refined embodiment than the Midway Plaisance.

THE IRRELIGION OF THE FUTURE.

BY ELLIS THURTELL.

L'Irreligion de l'Avenir is the bold title of the best known work of the lamented Marie Jean Guyau. It was published in 1887, the year preceding that in which its brilliant author died—at an age, thirty-four, when anything like a first-rate philosophic reputation is rarely won. It is described as an *Etude Sociologique*; while the first headline to the first contents table of the book is *Fond Sociologique de la Religion*. The table concludes with *valeur et utilité provisoire des religions; leur insuffisance finale*. These words in fact give Guyau's own summing up of the whole matter. And the introduction above which they stand presents us with an admirably lucid and condensed account of his case against the various religions of the future with which we are so freely threatened. It would seem well worthy of a careful scrutiny.

Many, says Guyau, are the definitions of religion with which we meet. Some are conceived from the physical, some from the metaphysical, some from the moral standpoint mainly, some from a blending among these; none from the social side. And yet, if we look into it, we shall find that the idea of a social bond between man and superior powers is the very feature in which the unity of all religious conceptions actually consists. Man becomes truly religious only when to human society he adds in thought another society, more powerful and more elevated—one, moreover, with which he can hold communication to the advantage of his mind, body, and estate.

“La religion,” Guyau insists, “est un sociomor-

phisme universel.” It has been historically a physical, metaphysical, and moral explanation of all things that are, under an imaginative and symbolic form, and by analogy with the human society we know. “Elle est en deux mots une explication sociologique universelle à forme mythique.”

Guyau himself holds that the most important attempts in recent times to define the proper meaning are those of Schleiermacher, Feuerbach, and Strauss. According to Schleiermacher the essence of religion consists in our sentiment of absolute *dependence* upon powers whom we have named divinities. According to Feuerbach the essence of religion is *desire*—to attain good and avoid evil. According to Strauss we must superimpose these two conceptions. The religious sentiment is no doubt in its origin that of *dependence*, but this feeling of dependence, in order to give rise to a religion in the completest sense, must provoke a psychical reaction upon our side. This reaction is the *desire* of deliverance from evil and endowment with all good.

Of these accounts that of Strauss is the one which Guyau considers as more nearly approaching a satisfactory and final solution of the problem than any hitherto proposed. This, then, is the true inwardness of religion—desire of deliverance and endowment at the hands of divinity, approached through propitiatory rites and prayers. Let us now see what, historically speaking, are found to be the distinctive and essential elements in the various religions known to us.

These are, according to Guyau, three in number. First, there is the *mythical* and non-scientific *explanation* of natural phenomena, as in miracles, incarnations and revelations. Secondly, there is a system of *dogmas* imposed upon faith as absolute verities, even though not susceptible of philosophic justification or scientific proof. Thirdly, there is a system of *rites and ceremonies*, regarded as having a propitious influence over the ordering of events.

A religion without *myth*, without *dogma*, without *ritual*, though often vaunted as a modern advance on ancient superstition, is, in Guyau's opinion, but a bastard thing, bound sooner or later to be absorbed in metaphysic. It is in fact philosophy, and no religion.

But we have not yet reached the limit of Guyau's penetrating, profound, and fearless criticism of religion's quintessential being. Not only do the three elements just named form the features which distinguish religion from metaphysic, and therefore from philosophy, of which metaphysic is a part, but more; these very elements, necessary to religion as they are, also are doomed to eventual annihilation. And therefore religion itself, depending absolutely on them,

as we must say it does, will also die. Guyau indeed, with striking iconoclastic scorn, insists, "in this sense then we reject the *religion of the future*, as we should reject the *alchemy of the future*, or the *astrology of the future*."

So that the full meaning of our author's startling title, "The Irreligion of the Future," stands now quite revealed. It conveys his carefully reasoned out, and firmly fixed assurance that the wrongly called "religion" of the *naturalist*, which is the child of the rightly called religion of the *supernaturalist*, will become the parent of a non-religious metaphysic or *irreligion* in the future. As to *morality*, though he discusses the question in the body of his work, here in the summarising introduction Guyau scarcely mentions it, so obviously separate to him is ethical theory and practice from metaphysical principle or religious creed. Did he not three years before the publication of the fine book now under our consideration write his *Esquisse d'une morale sans obligation, ni sanction*?

In emphasising his rejection of all religions of the future our author does not forget to guard himself against possible unfair and intemperate attacks from would-be religion-founders, whether in the realm of science, morals, or metaphysics. He explains that by his *irreligion* or *a-religion* he of course does not imply any superficial or paradoxical contempt for the ethical or metaphysical basis of old creeds. What he does imply is simply the rejection "of all dogma, of all traditional and supernatural authority, of all revelation, of all miracles, of all myth, of all rite erected into duty." The irreligion of the future, he deliberately asserts, will preserve not a little of the sentiment that has been associated with the religions of the past. There are at any rate two grand sources of such sentiment that no philosophy worthy of the name will ever be able to ignore. The one is what has been called cosmic emotion or cosmic awe; the other is the pursuit of an ideal lying beyond the limits of reality, and being not only more than individual, but also, in its rarest and highest manifestations, more than social,—being even in a certain sense of cosmic character.

The really original and audacious nature of Guyau's contention consists in the definiteness and decision with which he denies that these sentiments have any claim to the much fought-for title of "religious." He declares—and as it seems to the present writer with irresistible force—that it is only by an abuse of language that metaphysical and ethical speculations upon the Unknowable, the Infinite, the Unconscious can be described as peculiar and essential elements of "religion." And hereby Herbert Spencer, Max Müller, Renan, Hartmann (to mention no lesser names) stand all alike condemned of imperfect philosophical

analysis, and of confusion between the permanent lineaments of metaphysic and morals, and to perishable—nay perishing—features of religion.

The present-day application of this learnedly illustrated and completely worked-out principle of Guyau's is wide-spread and perspicuous enough. His principle assuredly makes a clean and uncompromising sweep of all the various brand-new and ambitious competitors with Christianity for the title of "Religion of the Future." It takes Comte's Religion of Humanity, and shows that the word "religion" in this sense is no better than a misleading metaphor. It takes Herbert Spencer's doctrine that religion and science can be "reconciled" through their conjoint recognition of an incomprehensible mystery, and shows that Herbert Spencer should have substituted *metaphysic* for religion in order to give his reconciliation scheme any permanent value to a later generation's more critical and accurate eye. It takes Hartmann's own particular *Religion de l'Avenir*—a curious synthesis of philosophical Buddhism with non-miraculous Christianity, upon a purely pantheistic basis—and points out that Hartmann has only succeeded in making a monstrosity.

In the same fiery crucible of criticism Guyau places the spurious "religions" of Transcendentalism, of Cosmism, of Ethicism, of Secularism, of Socialism, and, as *religions*, they inevitably melt. Let us now add to these the closely similar "Religion of Science" about which Dr. Carus says so much. And what see we, carefully regarding the result? Well, do we not plainly see it, as *religion*, when submitted to Guyau's powerfully disintegrating tests, pass simply into the formless fluidity to which all the other misnamed "natural religions" have been reduced? Unquestionably, as I think, we do.

No attempt can be made here to do justice to the singularly thorough thrashing-out of the whole question as to the rationality of religion which Guyau has given us in the remarkable volume under notice. It may very well be doubted whether there exists in English any treatise on comparative religion that can at all compare with this volume for comprehensive scope, masterful grasp, and independently constructive issue as result. That result can be gathered without doubt or difficulty by any one who reads and digests the Introduction to *L'Irreligion de l'Avenir*. While in the third and last division of the book (whose headline gives the title to the whole) it is set out at length with most able and ample discussion of its bearings on urgent and up-to-date questions of religion or philosophy.

Guyau sees quite clearly that there is one sense only in which the word religion can be rightly used, and that this sense is *psychic intercourse with God*.

In true religion, therefore, unqualified assent to two propositions is absolutely needful. One is the *existence of God*. The other is *our capacity for communion with Him*. The first is a proposition of metaphysic merely. The second includes the first, and carries over metaphysic into the region of religion. A *theological* (as contrasted with an *atheological*) metaphysic may thus exist without religion. And it is this theological metaphysic which has so frequently and confusedly usurped the more popular title of religion in the various ethical, scientific, and philosophical pseudo-religions of the day.

Guyau accordingly rejects outright, as only unsubstantial wraiths of departed or departing supernatural creeds, all the varied forms of what is so indiscriminately miscalled natural religion. He insists that the whole of what is really rational in them—apart from their ethics, their science, or their sociology—is not religious in the least, but merely metaphysical.

We now know exactly where we are. In default of supernatural religion it is natural metaphysic only that is left to us. The particular form of metaphysical naturalism which Guyau personally advocates is that which is nowadays so greatly gaining ground under the name of *Monism*. This monism of Guyau's would appear not largely to differ from that which Professor Haeckel advocates, with the proviso that the unfortunate term *mechanical* is left out, and that there is nothing which is ever to be called religion in it. M. Guyau's theory may be in fact considered as a more advanced and satisfactory stage in the development of Monism than has yet been brought to light. It certainly clears our philosophic atmosphere of many reactionary and obscurantist elements. And it does so, not by any stealing of theologians' thunder, but by vigorously wielding the all-shattering leven-bolts which steady, profound, and courageous contemplation of man and nature has revealed to view.

FABLES FROM THE NEW ÆSOP.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

Parasus's Predicament.

ONE of the smaller communities in the Peloponnesus found itself in a very serious dilemma. There was none to take the office of magistrate. One after another of the more eminent citizens was appealed to, but one after another declined. They did not give as a reason for their declination either other duties, cares of business or family, or want of needful learning; but all united in saying that they declined because the populace was fickle and unreasonable, and as they had theretofore stood well in the estimation of their neighbors, they did not care to risk adverse criticism of what judgments they might render.

Parasus was a member of this community, a good companion and much esteemed for his wit. He was of so jovial a disposition that none ever laid it to his charge that he was jealous at not being preferred to the office, when he laughed and made sport of these reasons. They continued seeking one who should be magister, and rather enjoyed Parasus's humor and sarcasms.

But after a time the people became nettled that Parasus seemed to be so amused.

"Could you," said they to him, "could you, in the position of magistrate, render judgments so adroitly and yet so justly as to excite no animosity of the worsted party?"

"Could I?" said Parasus scornfully, "could I do that which all my life I have done? What more easy? You, neighbors and friends, know me well. Where are my enemies? If any there be to say I ever affronted him, let him now speak."

The people cheered, for they knew Parasus spoke the truth. Then one proposed that he should be allowed to try his genial and accommodating nature on the judicial bench, and at this the people shouted more lustily still, and forthwith they installed him,—surprised at the turn things had taken, but not unwilling,—with the ermine of office.

To give him due credit, Parasus did not lack qualifications. He was sufficiently learned, patient and painstaking, and, as between litigants, did certainly contrive to dispense justice so evenhandedly that the worsted went away from court chagrined, to be sure, and dissatisfied with this judgment, but cherishing no ill feeling towards the judge.

But the populace, the very ones to whose loud acclaims he owed his elevation, the very neighbors with whom he had always been a hail and well-met fellow, with them it had now become another matter.

They were all on hand at each day's dikastery and felt free after each decision to give their views. When Parasus was especially suave and polite, they said he smirked to curry favor; when he spoke with due deliberation, they declared him slow, and prosy, and wasteful of time; but if he hastened a decree (were it ever so plain), they had it that he gave too little time to points of law. If he gave a decision briefly, saying nothing of authorities, they ridiculed him for want of learning, and yet if he quoted precedents from other courts, they insisted that this was only pedantry put on to gloss his lack. If he smiled, he was trifling; if he looked grave, he aped Solon; if he decided for the rich man, he was a sycophant; for the poor, he was a proletariat; in short, all his best endeavors were accepted at their face value and redeemed in the currency of worst imputations.

Parasus saw that he was in a predicament; he

discovered that the very qualities which made him acceptable socially were serious detriments politically; he must elect whether to be continually misjudged and reviled as a magistrate, or give up his office and be restored to his status as a man.

The Egotist's Cure.

A CERTAIN egotist, surfeited with the sordid world and desirous of ridding himself of all contact with his kind, left the vicinity of his abode, and went to a lonely place on the sea-coast where he could commune in peace and solitude with himself and nature and dream, unvexed and uncontaminated, lofty dreams of the eternal and illimitable.

He would have liked better had his nature been of an order to dispense with even the inn, but unfortunately he was mortal, and being so, at times craved nutrition, and nutrition, as he well knew, exacted cooks. A roof, too, and a bed were essential, so unwillingly but of necessity he put money in his purse, and having arranged for accommodations at the inn, spent his time upon a rocky cliff, far from the haunts of men, that overlooked the sea.

And yet he was not altogether happy, for at the inn was a young woman who had come there with her parents, and she, giddy as most maids of nineteen or so, having innocently made acquaintance with him, was wont to rally him upon his solitary life and ask him questions, some of which, wise as he was, he could not answer.

But it was these very unanswerable questions that set him thinking all the more. One day he was at his accustomed cliff alone, with the blue of the sea before him and of the sky above and the fiery sun dropping slowly down, he mused his fill.

"All this is mine," he thought, "for me, for the ego that is me was all this made; for me, out of the chaos of nothing the spirals whirled slow and swift, evolving a vast sphere of fire, then a little ball revolving, first fire, too, then viscous, and at the last, little by little, fitter and fitter, to this very hour, all for me. How wonderful am I,—I the centered self of infinity, the soul of eternity, master of matter, divinity of destiny."

So he mused, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot." But not quite that; for the sun dipped down into the sea, and the lengthening shadows told our philosopher of the flight of time, and feeling—base, carnal, thoughtless feeling—twitched him within, reminding of supper at the inn. Then he turned his face earthward, and as he turned there, framed against the glowing sky, a thing of beauty, stood the little minx.

There she stood directly in his path. But it was not alone the physical reality that disturbed him; no,

worse than that, for of a sudden the unbidden thought rushed at our egotist and jostled and shook him rudely.

"Wake up, dreamer," it cried, "wake up and contemplate a fresh revelation. For this being, this little minx, out of the chaotic nothingness the spirals spun the planets, and the great sun, and made the grass grow, and bit by bit manufactured her sweetness and foolishness,—another centered self, a soul of eternity, a mistress of matter, a divinity of destiny."

The result was natural. The egotist was quite young, and, apart from his egotism, not ill favored. So the cares of this world and the needs of looking after a family in time cured even that; he married the minx.

THE PROSPECTS OF RELIGION.

RELIGION is at present in a critical state; it is a state of transition. An old world-view is breaking down, and a new one is growing. New problems have arisen, a new world-conception is dawning upon mankind, the voice of scientific critique can no longer be hushed, and those who bear the burdens of life demand as their due right, not only an emancipation so far as it be possible from the toil of their drudgery, but also, and that is the most important issue of the labor problem, a recognition of the dignity of their manhood.

What, under these conditions, will become of religion?

There are men who imagine that the future of mankind will be irreligious, and their opinion is based upon arguments which upon the whole are a mere matter of definition. They identify religion with superstition, supernaturalism, ritualism, belief in an individual God-being, and what not. They overlook that religion is a reality in the world, which passes through various phases, and the end of its history is not yet here. The last word is still to be spoken. Those who proclaim that religion is not fit for survival judge it according to the narrow view of some schools of religious thought, and are blind to the fact that religion is a living power and not merely a chimera of unsubstantial visions, that it is in a state of growth, and that its potentialities belong to its nature as much as its present and past conditions.

Religion, cosmic emotion, panpathy, or by whatever name you may call it, is not comparable to griffins or sphinxes, which are nonentities and mere products of our imagination; it is like love, like fear, like hope, a spiritual reality in the hearts of men. The religious impulse is an actuality, which, when guided by erroneous notions, will, like love that is squandered upon unworthy persons, tend in a wrong direction;

but for that reason religion itself is neither an aberration, nor is it unreal.

Any one who is disappointed in an intense and deep love may never be able to love again; he may deny the existence of true love; he may denounce it as a diseased condition, or ridicule the dupes of its illusions; for all that, love remains deeply founded in the nature of the human heart; and so is religion. The prevalence of superstition in religion only proves how important it is to teach mankind the right religion and to purify the religions that now exist of their errors and misconceptions.

We might just as well speak of a soulless as of an irreligious futurity of mankind, on the simple argument that such a soul-being as the old school of psychology postulates does not exist. The wrong metaphysics of the old psychology will be abandoned, but the man of the future will have the same kind of soul as the man of the past, only let us hope better, nobler, and more enlightened. In the same way the wrong metaphysics of the old religions will be abandoned, but religion will remain. The moral, emotional, and intellectual needs that begot the mythological world-view of the lower phases of religion, will not disappear when, on a higher plane of human evolution, myth yields to scientific clearness.

The apostles of an irreligious future of mankind imagine that religion will be disposed of as soon as a scientific insight into the laws of nature proves the impossibility of miracles. Religion is to them the illusion or fraud of miracle-mongers. Those who can fathom the depths of man's heart, who can feel the thrill of its mysterious longings, and recognise the power of ideal aspirations, know better. No supernatural revelation is needed, but only good common sense, to see with a prophet's eye the future of mankind, and to predict that after a century or two, when the scientific world-conception has been firmly established in the souls of the leading nations of the world, religion will be more important a factor than ever.

The religion of the future will be conditioned by the same needs as the religion of to-day, but it will be so much grander, truer, and more elevating, as the intelligence of the generations to come will surpass the confused and erroneous notions that still prevail in the present age.

P. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE PRESENT NEED IN RELIGION.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

What is the need of the hour in religion? It is not easy to say. Our age is one of discontent and transition. These two conditions mark the conclusions of the old and the beginnings of the new in all the great eras of the world; or the great eras, in their beginnings, are always characterised by these conditions.

The world is spiritually hungry. Upon this condition Jesus pronounced a benediction, "Happy are they who hunger and thirst," earnestly long for, "righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." This hunger takes many forms—for fame, wealth, pleasure, and ease, but in the last analysis it is a genuine spiritual hunger. Many are unaware of this, having never analysed their inner experiences and feelings.

If the race for wealth is intense and appalling, it is so because men have not been fed spiritually. Here is the great opportunity for the pulpit. A majority of men come under its influence directly, all men indirectly. If this attempt to satisfy the soul with food for the body is to be modified, changed, there is no power that can so successfully do it as the pulpit. It ought to rise to the gravity of the situation, and is doing so quite slowly. The world has been most effectively helped by living individuals—men alive in the highest sense.

" 'Tis life of which our souls are scant,
'Tis life and more life that we want."

These apostles of the new evangel should be dynamic centres of light and love, breathing peace and encouragement wherever they go. They should be as strong as the fabled heroes, great enough to sit among the divinities of Olympus; simple enough not to embarrass the plainest, and tender as the child caressing its mother.

Language and action are not the greatest interpreters of the soul's message. All speech, all action is condensation. Those who are trying to feed the heart in these ways only will not fully succeed. Nature feeds by giving of itself. We feed of each other by giving of our best, most inner selves. Language and deeds help in this, but the substance conveyed is always greater than the means of conveyance. Words and deeds express truth—and truth is love's, is life's medium. It is soul in touch with soul that fulfils the conditions of the highest helpfulness.

The new evangelist ought to be a lighthouse as well as a dynamo, but not dynamite. He needs faith and trust, hope and intuition.

He should be large and profound. When the soul of "Ring, greatest of monarchs," left this world, he rode richly on the golden hooped steed, over Bifrost, the arched bridge descending to meet him, and the portals of noble Walhalla sprang wide to receive him, and the gods, rejoicing, grasped him by the hand and gave him a right royal entrance into the heaven of peace.

This spirit of largeness, strength, kindly human cheer will be dominant in the movement that is destined to join men in the upward march.

Thus will the religion of science, when incarnated in noble men, unobscured by ordinary frailties, become worldwide, and ever helpful.

" Therefore, by us was
Ring well-beloved,
His shield ever guarding
Regions of peace,
Whence the loveliest image
Of might unoffending
Before us, like incense,
Forever arose."—*Fritiof's Saga.*

J. W. CALDWELL.

THE TERM "RELIGION" NEEDLESS.

Anent the Criticism of Corvinus.

To the Editor of The Open Court:

After reading the criticism of "Corvinus" on your remarks concerning the reconciliation of science and religion, I concluded that the subject had not been put before your readers in as clear a manner as the facts in the case demand. There is a vast differ-

ence between religion and the true faith of the scriptures. It must be conceded that a man's belief is his religion expressed in his theology—his ideas of the cosmos and his relation to it. Between this religion and science there certainly is a conflict; a reconciliation is not possible. But there is no conflict between the faith, or consciousness which all good people have, "that good at last shall come to all."

From the standpoint of science, religion is merely a transient superstition—old clothes that must be cast away entirely when we cross over from the domain of superstition to that of truth. Religion assumes that mankind can be moral or immoral at will, just the same as Dr. H. W. Thomas in his reply to Colonel Ingersoll assumed that the latter could do other than he is doing. Science, on the contrary, emphatically declares that mankind must do just as they are doing, and will continue to do so until there is a natural moral evolution. Something more must be worked within before anything more can be expressed outwardly. Religion assumes that man is as a branch cut off from the rest of the cosmos and that he must meritoriously work his way back to a God against whom he has rebelled and strayed away from. Science declares that no particle of matter, organic and inorganic, can be separated from the universal mass and that merit and demerit is entirely out of the question. As forms are combined, evolved and envired so they must express themselves, whether good or bad; hence there never can be harmony between science and religion. Religion assumes that man has sinned willfully and deserves punishment; science, that he is viciously inclined by nature (where he is) and that he needs moral development by the same power that made him immoral. Religion puts the responsibility of sin and misery upon mankind; science, upon the laws of nature and nature's God. While religion is scientific in its relation to the needs of mankind while in a vicious condition wherein they need urging and scaring, yet its teachings are false in regard to the true nature of things. A true knowledge of things is fit only for those who are able to receive it—for those who are able to fulfil the moral law.

All religions are based upon a premise which concludes in merit and demerit. Science utterly repudiates that superstition. In a universe of law where all things are relative merit and demerit cannot be. This principle is in accord with the faith of the Scriptures, which is a free gift of God; a power within man that supports him under affliction and causes him to hope. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? By the law of faith." The "Constitution De Fide Cattolica" declares that there can be "no real conflict between faith and reason. . . . The empty appearance of contradiction arises chiefly from this: either that the dogmas of faith have not been understood or explained according to the church's mind, or that mere theories have been put forward as right reason." Science declares that this is just what has been done. Theological theories have been put forth by religion instead of the true principle of faith which is scientific in its nature and application to the need of mankind. Religion condemns mankind by its substitution of belief in superstition for the true faith, but science justifies mankind by that true faith.

There is a conflict, therefore, between science and religion, but not between science and the true faith, because they are a unit. It is a great mistake to drag the term religion over into the domain of science. Many are being confused thereby as well as "Corvinus." Let us have clearness. We cannot logically talk about a reconciliation between science and a faith which has not been understood or rationally taught. When it is understood it will be science.

Let us understand that the term religion stands for superstition. People can have the right faith and hope without what is called religion—aye, a clearer consciousness thereof, because religious faith is often mixed with fear and dread. A scientific man

cannot logically or consistently hold to the term religion unless in the sense of "binding together anew." When we arrive at a full knowledge of the truth, what is the use of a needless term? Monists must be monists in everything. Religious people cannot be coaxed or forced into the ranks of science; they can only grow into them by natural evolution. He that sets up his standard of truth and stands unwaveringly by it is sure of victory, though his truth may antagonise every existing sect; for truth is gradually evolving and the power of evolution is the sole cause of progress. Antithetical reasoning suits the people who are in the bonds of superstition, but scientists must have their reasoning monistically straight.

JOHN MADDOCK.

SPIRIT APPETENCE.

BY CHAS. A. LANE.

O eagle soul, thou hast but sparrow wings!
A thirst for far-off clouds is in thy throat,
And longings haunt thine ear for sounds that float
In purple silence, where the star-choir sings;
Around thy heart, with wing-like flutterings,
A dream is aching for the fields remote
Of hidden spaces, and thine eyes devote
Their vigils to the hope's far beckonings.

A little while content thee, restless soul!
This lowly life holds food for thee and flowers,
And songs, antiphonal to star-choirs, roll
Their mellow measures from this earth of ours:
A little while, and unto thee may ope
The silver Sometime shimmering in thy hope.

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