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## HOW SECULARISM WAS DIFFUSED.

BY GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

"Only by varied iteration can alien conceptions be forced on reluctant minds."  
—Herbert Spencer.

IN 1853 the Six Night Discussion took place in Cowper Street School Rooms, London, with the Rev. Brewin Grant, B. A. A report was published by Partridge and Oakley at 2s. 6d., of which 45,900 were sold, which widely diffused a knowledge of Secularistic views. Our adversary had been appointed with clerical ceremony, on a "Three years mission" against us. He had wit, readiness, and an electric velocity of speech, boasting that he could speak three times faster than any one else. But he proved to be of use to us without intending it,

"His acrid words  
Turned the sweet milk of kindness into curds,"

whereby he set many against the cause he represented. He had the cleverness to see that there ought to be a "Christian Secularism," which raised Secularism to the level of Christian curiosity. In Glasgow, in 1854, I met Mr. Grant again during several nights discussion in the City Hall. This debate also was published, as was one of three nights with the Rev. J. H. Rutherford (afterwards Dr. Rutherford) in Newcastle on Tyne, who aimed to prove that Christianity contained the better Secularism. Thus that new form of free thought came to have public recognition.

The lease of a house, 147 Fleet Street, was bought (1852), where was established a Secular Institute, connected with printing, book-selling, and liberal publishing. Further conferences were held in July, 1854, one at Stockport. At an adjourned conference Mr. Joseph Barker (whom we had converted) presided.<sup>1</sup> We had a London Secular Society which met at the Hall of Science, and held its Council meetings in Mr. Le Blond's handsome house in London Wall. This work, and much more, was done before and while Mr. Bradlaugh (who afterwards was conspicuously identified with the free-thought movement) was in the army.

It was in 1854 that I published the first pamphlet on "Secularism the Practical Philosophy of the People." It commenced with showing the necessity of

independent, self-helping, self-extricating opinions. Its opening passage was as follows:

"In a state of society in which every inch of land, every blade of grass, every spray of water, every bird and flower has an owner, what has the poor man to do with orthodox religion which begins by proclaiming him a miserable sinner, and ends by leaving him a miserable slave?" as far as unrequited toil goes.

"The poor man finds himself in an *armed* world where might is God, and poverty is fettered. Abroad the hired soldier blocks up the path of freedom, and the priest the path of progress. Every penniless man, woman, and child is virtually the property of the capitalist, no less in England than was the slave in New Orleans.<sup>1</sup> Society blockades poverty, leaving it scarce escape. The artisan is engaged in an imminent struggle against wrong and injustice; then what has he the struggler, to do with doctrines which brand him: with inherited guilt, which paralyse him by an arbitrary faith, which denies saving power to good works, which menaces him with eternal perdition?"

The two first works of importance, controverting Secularist principles, were by the Rev. Joseph Parker and Dr. J. A. Langford; Dr. Parker was ingenious, Dr. Langford eloquent. I had discussed with Dr. Parker in Banbury. In his *Six Chapters on Secularism*<sup>2</sup> which was the title of his book, he makes pleasant references to that debate. The *Christian Weekly News* of that day said: "These Six Chapters have been written by a young provincial minister of great power and promise, of whom the world has not yet heard, but of whom it will hear pleasing things some day." This prediction has come true. I had told Mr. Freeman that the "young preacher" had given me that impression in the discussion with him. Dr. Parker said in his first Chapter that, "If the New Testament teachings oppose our own consciousness, violate our moral sense, lead us out of sympathy with humanity, then we shall abandon them." This was exactly the case of Secularism which he undertook to confute. Dr. Langford held a more rational religion than Dr. Parker. His *Answer*, which reached a "second thou-

<sup>1</sup> Not altogether so. The English slave can run away—at his own peril.

<sup>2</sup> Published by my, then, neighbour, William Freeman, of 69 Fleet Street, himself an energetic, pleasant-minded Christian.

sand, had passages of courtesy and friendship, yet he contended with graceful vigor against opinions—three-fourths of which justified his own.

In an address delivered Sept. 29, 1851, I had said that, "There were three classes of persons opposed to Christianity:—

"1. The dissolute.

"2. The indifferent.

"3. The intellectually independent.

"The dissolute are against Christianity because they regard it as a foe to sensuality. The indifferent reject it through being ignorant of it, or not having time to attend to it, or not caring to attend to it, or not being able to attend to it, through constitutional insensibility to its appeals. The intellectually independent avoid it as opposed to freedom, morality and progress." It was to these classes, and not to Christians, that Secularism was addressed. Neither Dr. Parker nor Dr. Langford took notice that it was intended to furnish ethical guidance where Christianity, whatever might be its quality, or pretensions, or merit, was inoperative.<sup>1</sup>

The new form of free thought under the title of the "Principles of Secularism" was submitted to John Stuart Mill, to whose friendship and criticism I had often been indebted, and he approved the statement as one likely to be useful to those outside the pale of Christianity.

A remarkable thing occurred in 1854. A prize of £100 was offered by the Evangelical Alliance for the best book on the "Aspects, Causes, and Agencies" of what they called by the odious apostolic defamatory name of "Infidelity."<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Thomas Pearson of Eyemouth won the prize by a brilliant book, which I praised for its various relevant quotations, its instruction and fairness, but I represented that its price (10s. 6d.) prevented numerous humble readers from possessing it. The Evangelical Alliance inferred that the "relevancy" was on their side, altogether, whereas I meant relevant to the argument and to those supposed to be confuted by it. They resolved to issue twenty-thousand copies at one shilling a volume. The most eminent Evangelical ministers and congregations of the day subscribed to the project. Four persons put down their names for a thousand copies each, and a strong list of subscribers was sent out. Unfortunately I published another article intending to induce readers of the *Reasoner* to procure copies, as they would find in its candid pages a wealth of quotation of free-thought opin-

ion with which very few were acquainted. The number of eminent writers, dissentients from Christianity, and the force and felicity of their objections to it, as cited by Mr. Pearson, would astonish and instruct Christians who were quite unfamiliar with the historic literature of heretical thought. This unwise article stopped the project. The "Shilling Edition" never appeared, and the public lost the most useful and informing book written against us in my time. The Rev. Mr. Pearson died not long after; all too soon, for he was a minister who commanded respect. He had research, good faith, candor, and courtesy, qualities rare in his day.

#### Secular Instruction Distinct from Secularism.

"A mariner must have his eye on the rock and the sand as well as upon the North Star."  
—*Maxim of the Sea.*

IT is time now to point out, what many never seem to understand, that Secular instruction is entirely distinct from Secularism. In my earlier days the term "scientific" was the distressing word in connexion with education, but the trouble of later years is with the word "Secular." Theological critics run on the "rock" there.

Many persons regard Secular teaching with distrust, thinking it to be the same as Secularism. Secular instruction is known by the sign of separateness. It means knowledge given apart from theology. Secular instruction comprises a set of rules for the guidance of industry, commerce, science, and art. Secular teaching is as distinct from theology as a poem from a sermon. A man may be a mathematician, an architect, a lawyer, a musician, or a surgeon, and be a Christian all the same; as Faraday was both a chemist and a devout Sundamanian; as Buckland was a geologist as well as a Dean. But if theology be mixed up with professional knowledge, there will be muddle-headedness.<sup>1</sup> At a separate time, theology can be taught, and any learner will have a clearer and more commanding knowledge of Christianity by its being distinctive in his mind. Secular instruction neither assails Christianity nor prejudices the learner against it—any more than sculpture assails jurisprudence, or than geometry prejudices the mind against music. If the Secular instructor made it a point, as he ought to do, to inculcate elementary ideas of morality, he would confine himself to explaining how far truth and duty have sanctions in consideration purely human—leaving it to teachers of religion to supplement at another time and place, what they believe to be further and higher sanctions.

Secular instruction implies that the proper busi-

<sup>1</sup> In 1857 Dr. Joseph Parker published a maturer and more important volume, *Helps to Truth Seekers, or, Christianity and Scepticism*, containing "The Secularistic Theory—A Critique." At a distance of more than thirty-five years it seems to me an abler book, from the Christian point of view, than I thought it on its appearance.

<sup>2</sup> A term of intentional offence as here used. Infidelity means treachery to the truth, whereas the heretic has often sacrificed his life from fidelity to it.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Baines (afterwards Sir Edward) was the greatest opponent of his day, of national schools and Secular instruction, sent his son to a Secular school, because he wanted him to be clever as well as Christian. He was both as I well knew.

ness of the school-teacher is to impart a knowledge of the duties of this world; and the proper business of Chapel and Church is to explain the duties relevant to another world, which can only be done in a second-hand way by the school-teacher. The wonder is that the pride of the minister does not incite him to keep his own proper work in his own hands, and protest against the school-teacher meddling with it. By doing so he would augment his own dignity and the distinctiveness of his office.

By keeping each kind of knowledge apart, a man learns both, more easily and more effectually. Secular training is better for the scholar and safer for the state, and better for the priest if he has a faith that can stand by itself.

If the reader does not distrust it as a paradox, he will assent that the Secular is distinct from Secularism, as distinct as an act is distinct from its motive. Secular teaching comprises a set of rules of instruction in trade, business, and professional knowledge. Secularism furnishes a set of principles for the ethical conduct of life. Secular instruction is far more limited in its range than Secularism which defends secular pursuits against theology, where theology attacks them or obstructs them. But pure secular knowledge is confined to its own pursuit, and does not come in contact with theology any more than architecture comes in contact with preaching.

A man may be a shareholder in a gas company or a waterworks, a house owner, a landlord, a farmer, or workman. All these are secular pursuits, and he who follows them may consult only his own interest. But if he be a Secularist, he will consider not only his own interest, but, as far as he can, the welfare of the community or the world, as his action or example may tell for the good of universal society. He will do "his best," not as Mr. Ruskin says, "the best of an ass," but "the best of an intelligent man." In every act he will put his conscience and character with a view so to discharge the duties of this life as to merit another, if there be one. Just as a Christian seeks to serve God, a Secularist seeks to serve man. This it is to be a Secularist. The idea of this service is what Secularism puts into his mind. Professor Clifford exclaimed: "The Kingdom of God has come—when comes the Kingdom of man? A Secularist is one who hastens the coming of this kingdom: which must be agreeable to heaven if the people of this world are to occupy the mansions there."

#### DEVIL STORIES AND DEVIL CONTRACTS.

IN THE popular literature of mediæval times, the Devil plays a most important rôle. While he continues to be the incarnation of all physical and moral evil, his main office becomes that of a general mischief-

worker in the universe; he appears as the critic of the good Lord, as the representative of discontent with existent conditions, as the desire for an increase of wealth, power, and knowledge; he is the mouth-piece of all who are anxious for a change in matters political, social, and ecclesiastical. He is identified with the spirit of progress so inconvenient to those who are satisfied with the existing state of things, and thus he is credited with all aspirations for improvement. In a word, he is characterised as the patron of both reform and revolution.

#### I. DEVIL STORIES.

The literature of devil stories and legends is very extensive. We select here a number of the most representative from among them:

Several legends indicate an origin by hallucination: For example the famous temptations of St. Anthony. St. Hilarian, when hungry, saw a number of exquisite dishes. St. Pelagia, who had been an actress in Antioch, lived the life of a religious recluse in a cave on the Mount of Olives. The Devil offered to her a number of rings, bracelets, and precious stones, which disappeared as quickly as they came. Rufinus of Aquileja relates the story of a monk, a man of great abstinence, living in a desert. One evening a beautiful woman appeared at his hermitage asking for a night's shelter. She conducts herself with modesty at first, but soon begins to smile, to stroke his beard, and to pat him. The monk becomes excited and embraces her fervently, when, lo! the whole apparition vanishes, leaving him lonely in his cell. He hears the laughter of devils in the air, and, despairing of his salvation, he went back into the world and fell an easy prey to the temptations of Satan.

It was a gnostic notion to regard the whole nature of objective existence as a work of the Devil. And the Church, in spite of its opposition to the views of gnosticism, adopted this doctrine. All nature was devilish. The monk retired from the world, but he took with him into the solitude the memory-pictures of his life. Memory-pictures are part of our soul, and a man who suddenly cuts off all new impressions, so that his experience becomes a blank, will have hallucinations as naturally as a man who falls asleep will have dreams. The darkness of the present will exhibit the self-luminary of past impressions; the emptiness of his solitary mode of existence will allow the slumbering memory-images to rise into bodily presence. A very interesting letter of St. Hieronymus to the virgin Eustochia, which exemplifies the truth of this explanation, is still extant. St. Hieronymus writes:

"Alas! how often, when living in the desert, in that dreary, sunburnt loneliness, which serves as an habitation to the monks,

did I believe myself revelling in the pleasures of Rome. I sat lonely, my soul filled with affliction, clothed in wretched rags, my skin sunburnt like an Ethiopian. No day passed without tears and sighs, and when sleep overcame me, I had to lie on the naked ground. I do not mention eating and drinking, for the monks drink, even if sick, only water, and regard cooking as a luxury. And if I, who had condemned myself from fear of hell to such a life, without any other society than scorpions and wild beasts, often imagined myself surrounded by dancing girls, my face was pale from fasting, but in the cold body the soul was burning with desires, and in a man whose flesh was dead, the flames of lust were kindled. Then I threw myself helpless at the feet of Jesus, wetted them with tears, dried them again with my hair, and subdued the rebellious flesh by fasts of a whole week. I am not ashamed to confess my misery; I am rather sorry for no longer being such as I was. I remember still how often, when fasting and weeping, the night followed the day, and how I did not cease to beat my breast until at the command of God peace had returned."

The legend of Merlin, as told by Bela in the old chronicles, characterises a whole class of stories.

The defeated Satan intends to regain his power by the same means through which God has vanquished him. He decides to have a son who shall undo Christ's work of redemption. All the intrigues of hell are used to ruin a noble family until only two daughters are left. The one falls into shame, while the other remains chaste and resists all temptations. One night, however, she forgets to cross herself, and thus the Devil could approach her—even against her will. The pious girl undergoes the severest penance, and when her time came, she had a son whose hairy appearance betrayed his diabolical parentage. The child, however, was baptised and received the name Merlin. The excitement in heaven was great. What a triumph would it be to win the Devil's own son over to the cause of Christ. The Devil gave to his son all the knowledge of the past and the present; God added the knowledge of the future, and this proved the best weapon against the evil attempts of his wicked father. When Merlin grew up, he slighted his father and performed many marvellous things. He was full of wisdom, and his prophesies were reliable. It is generally assumed that after his death he did not descend into hell but went to heaven.

Similar is the story of Richard the Devil, the hero of a modern opera. The Duchess of Normandy, the old legend tells us, had no children. Having implored the help of God in vain, she addressed herself to the Devil who satisfied her wish at once. She had a son who was a mischief from babyhood. Being very courageous and strong, he became the chief of a band of robbers. He was knighted to temper his malignity, but this appeal to his feeling of honor failed to have effect. In a tournament he slew thirty knights; then he went out into the world to seek adventures. On his return he became a robber again. One day, when he had just strangled all the nuns of a cloister, he re-

membered that he had a mother and decided to visit her. But when he made his appearance, her servants dispersed in wild fear. For the first time in his life he was impressed with the idea that he had become odious to his fellow-men, and becoming conscious of his evil nature, he wanted to know why he was worse than others. With his sword drawn, he forced his mother to confess the secret of his birth. He was horror-struck, but did not despair. He went to Rome, confessed to a pious hermit, submitted willingly to the severest penance and combated the Saracens who happened to be laying siege on Rome. The emperor offered him his daughter as a reward. And now the two records of Richard's fate become contradictory. Not knowing the truth, we state both impartially. Some say that Richard married the emperor's daughter who was in love with him; others declare that he refused the match and crown, and returned to his hermit confessor, into the wilderness where he died blessed by God and mankind.

Not all the sons of the Devil, however, join the cause of the good Lord. Eggelino, the tyrant of Padua, forces his mother to confess the secret, that he and his brother Alberico were sons of Satan. Eggelino boasts that he will live as befits the son of the Evil One. He succeeds with the assistance of his brother in becoming the tyrant of Padua, commits terrible crimes and dies at last in misery and despair. The story is dramatised by Albertino Mussato in his *Eccerius*.

#### DEVIL CONTRACTS.

The Devil, fighting with God for the possession of mankind, was supposed to have a special passion for catching souls. Being the prince of the world he could easily grant even the most extravagant wishes of man, and was willing to pay a high price for his soul. Thus originated the idea of making compacts with the Devil; yet it is worthy of note that in these compacts the Devil is very careful to establish his title to the soul of a man by a faultless legal document. He has, as we shall learn, sufficient reason to distrust all promises made him by men and saints. Following the authority of the old legends, we find that even the good Lord frequently lends his assistance to cheating the Devil out of his own. He is always duped and the vilest tricks are resorted to to cheat him. While thus the Devil, having learned from experience, always insists upon having his rights insured by an unequivocal instrument (which in later centuries is to be signed with blood); he, in his turn, is fearlessly trusted to keep his promise, and this is a fact which must be mentioned to his honor, for although he is said to be a liar from the beginning, not one case is known in all devil-lore in which the Devil attempts to cheat his stipulators.

He appears as the most unfairly maligned person, and as a martyr of simple-minded honesty.

The oldest story of a Devil-contract is the story of Theophilus, first told by Eutychian, who declares he had witnessed (!) the whole affair with his own eyes.

Theophilus, an officer of the Church and a pious man, living in Adana, a town of Cilicia, was unanimously selected by the clergy and by the laymen as their bishop, but he refused the honor from sheer modesty. So another man became bishop in his stead. The new bishop unjustly deprived Theophilus of his office. The latter deeply humiliated went to a famous wizard and made with his assistance a compact with Satan, renouncing Christ and the Holy Virgin. The bishop at once restores Theophilus to his position, but Theophilus repents his crime and takes refuge in the Holy Virgin. After forty days fasting and praying he is rebuked for his crime but not comforted; so he fasts and prays thirty more days, and receives at last absolution. Three more days and the fatal document is returned to him. Now Theophilus relates the whole story in the presence of the bishop to the assembled congregation in church; and after having divided all his possessions among the poor dies peacefully and enters into the glories of paradise.

Even popes are said to have made compacts with the Devil. An English Benedictine monk, William of Malmesburg, says of Pope Sylvester II., who was born in France, his secular name being Herbert, that he entered the cloister when still a boy. Full of ambition, he flew to Spain where he studied astrology and magic among the Saracens. There he stole a magic-book from a Saracen philosopher, and returned flying through the air to France. Now he opened a school and acquired great fame, so that the King himself became one of his disciples. Then he became Bishop of Rheims, where he had a magnificent clock and an organ constructed. Having raised the treasure of Emperor Octavian which lay hidden in a subterranean vault at Rome, he became Pope. As Pope he manufactured a magic head which replied to all his questions. This head told him that he would not die until he had read Mass in Jerusalem. So the Pope decided never to visit the holy land. But once he fell sick, and asking his magic head, was informed that the church's name in which he had read Mass the other day was "The Holy Cross of Jerusalem." The Pope knew at once that he had to die. He gathered all the cardinals around his bed, confessed his crime, and, as a penance, ordered his body to be cut up alive and the pieces to be thrown out of the church as unclean.

Sigabert tells the story of the Pope's death a different way. There is no penance on the part of the Pope, and the Devil takes his soul to hell. Others

tell us that the Devil constantly accompanied the Pope in the shape of a black dog, and that this dog gave him the equivocal prophecy.

The most famous, most significant, and the profoundest story among the legends of devil-contracts is the saga of Dr. Johannes Faustus. Whether the hero of the Faust legend derives his name from the well-known Strassburg goldsmith Faust, the companion of Gensfleisch vom Gutenberg, the inventor of printing, or whether he was a historical personality is an open question. Certain it is that all the stories of the great naturalists and thinkers whom the people at the time regarded as wizards were by and by attributed to him, and the figure of Dr. Faustus became the centre of an extensive circle of traditions. The tales about Albertus Magnus, Johannes Teutonius (Deutsch), Trithemius, Abbot of Sponheim, Agrippa of Nettesheim, Theophrastus, and Paracelsus, were retold of Faust, and Faust became a poetical personification of the great revolutionary aspirations in the time immediately preceding and following the Reformation. The original form of the legend represents the Roman Catholic standpoint. Faust is allied with the Devil, he worked his miracles by black art, and has to pay for its practice with his soul. Faust begins his career in Wittenberg, the university at which Luther taught. Faust is the embodiment of natural science, of historical investigation, of the renaissance, and of modern discoveries and inventions. As such he subdues nature, restores to life the heroes of ancient Greece, gathers knowledge about distant lands, and receives Helena as the ideal of classic beauty.

As the fall of the Devil is, according to biblical authority, attributed to pride and ambition, so progress and the spirit of investigation was denounced as Satan's work and all inquiry into the mysteries of nature was regarded as magic. Think only of Roger Bacon, that studious, noble monk, and a greater scientist than his more famous namesake, Lord Bacon! When Roger Bacon made some experiments with light, and the rainbow-colors of light, at the University of Paris, the audience ran away from him terrified, and his life was endangered because he was suspected of practising the black art.

Faust is the representative of scientific manliness. He investigates, even though it may cost him heavenly bliss; he boldly studies nature, although he will be damned for it to hell; he seeks the truth at the risk of forfeiting his soul. According to the mediæval theology Satan fell simply on account of his manly ambition and high aspiration, and yet Faust dares to break and eat of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge. According to Marlow's Faustus Lucifer fell, "not only by insolence, but first of all by aspiring

pride." Mephistopheles seems to regret, but Faustus comforts him, saying :

"What is great Mephistopheles so passionate,  
For being deprived of the joys of heaven?  
Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude,  
And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess."

The oldest Faust book, dated 1587, is preserved in one single copy only which is now carefully preserved in Ulm. Scheible has published it in his work *Dr. Johannes Faust* (3 Vols., Stuttgart, 1846). The preface states that the publisher had received the manuscript from a good friend in Speyer, and that the original story had been written in Latin. The contents of this oldest version of the Faust legend are as follows:

Faust, the son of a farmer in Rod, near Weimar, studied theology at Wittenberg. Ambitious to be omniscient and omnipotent like God, he dived into the secret lore of magic, but unable to make much progress, he conjured the Devil in a thick forest near Wittenberg. Not in the least intimidated by the Devil's noisy behavior, he forced him to become his servant. Faust, being the master of demons, did not regard his salvation endangered, and when the Devil told him that he should nevertheless receive his full punishment after death, he grew extremely angry with him and bade him quit his presence, saying: "For your sake I do not want to be damned." When the Devil had left, Faust felt an emptiness not experienced before, for he had become accustomed to his services. Accordingly, he ordered the Devil to return, who now introduced himself as Mephistopheles. The name is derived from the Greek *μη τό φως φιλήσ*, "not-the-light-loving," and was afterwards altered into Mephistopheles. He now made a compact with the Devil who consented to serve him for twenty-four years, Faust allowing him afterwards to deal with him as he pleased. The contract was signed by Faust with his blood, which he drew with a penknife from his left hand. The blood, running out of the wound, formed the words: *Homo fuge* (man, fly!). This startles Faust, but he remains resolute.

Mephistopheles entertained his master with all kinds of merry illusions, with music and visions. He brought him dainty dishes and costly clothes stolen from royal households. Faust became luxurious and desired to marry. The Devil refused, because marriage is a sacrament. Faust insisted. Then the Devil appeared in his real shape which was so terrific that Faust was frightened. He gave up the idea of marriage, but Mephistopheles sent him devils who assumed the shape of beautiful women, and made him dissolute.

Faust conversed with his servant about eschatological subjects, and heard many things which greatly

displeased his vanity. The Devil said, "I am a Devil and act according to my nature. But if I were a man, I would rather humiliate myself before God than before Satan."

Faust became sick of his empty pleasures. His ambition was to be recognised in the world as a man who can explain nature, presage future events, and so excite admiration. Having received sufficient information concerning the other world, he wanted to come into direct contact with it, and Mephistopheles introduced to him a number of distinguished devils. When the visitors left, the house was so full of vermin that Faust had to withdraw. But he did not neglect his new acquaintances on that account, but paid them a visit in their own home. Riding upon a chair built of human bones, he visited hell and contemplated with leisure the flames of its furnaces and the torments of the condemned.

Having safely returned from the infernal region, he was carried in a carriage drawn by dragons up to heaven. He took a ride high in the air, first eastwards over the whole of Asia, then upwards to the stars, until they grew before his eyes on his approach into big worlds, while the earth became as small as the yolk of an egg.

His curiosity being satisfied in that direction, he concentrated his attention to the earth. Mephistopheles assumed the shape of a winged horse upon which he visited all the countries of our planet. He visited Rome and regretted not having become pope, seeing the luxuries of his life. He sat down at his table invisible and took away the daintiest morsels, and the wine from the pope's very lips. The pope, believing himself beset by a ghost, exorcised its poor soul, but Faust laughed at him. In Turkey he visited the Sultan's harem, and introduced himself as the prophet Mohamet, which gave him full liberty to act as he pleased. Beyond India he saw at a distance the blest gardens of paradise.

Faust, being invited in his capacity of magician to the Emperor Charles the Fifth, made Alexander the Great, the beautiful Helen, and other noted persons of antiquity appear before the whole court. Faust fell in love with Helen, so that he could no longer live without her. He kept her in his company and had a child by her, a marvellous boy who could reveal the future.

When the twenty-four years had almost elapsed, Faust grew melancholy, but the Devil mocked him. At midnight, on the very last day, some students who had been in his company heard a frightful noise, but did not dare to enter his room. They found him on the next morning torn to pieces in his room. Helen and her child had disappeared, and his famulus Wagner inherited his books and magic art.

This briefly is the contents of the *Volksbuch*.

A transcription of the Faust-book in rhymes was published as early as 1587 in Tübingen. Another version of the Faust legend was Widmann's Hamburg-edition of 1599. It is less complete than the first Faust book and lacks in depth of conception while it abounds rather more in coarse incidents. Widmann's version became the basis of several further editions, 1674 by Pfitzer in Nürnberg, 1728 in Frankfurt and Leipsic. Faust must have appeared on the stage, for the clergy of Berlin filed a complaint that Faust publicly abjured God on the stage. The puppet-play Faust was compiled for the amusement of peasants and children, in fairs and market places. Yet it was powerful enough to inspire Goethe who saw it still performed when a boy, to write the great drama which became the most famous work of his life.

English editions appeared very early, and Marlowe, the greatest pre-Shakespearian dramatist, used the Faust story for one of his dramas, which is still extant.

Goethe's Faust represents the Protestant standpoint. Goethe's Mephistopheles is not as grand as Milton's Satan, but he is not less ingenious in conception. Mephistopheles is "the principle that denies." He is not a hero, not a noble-souled rebel like Milton's Lucifer, but the spirit of criticism, of destruction, of darkness. As such he plays an important part in the economy of nature. Says the Lord in the Prelude to Faust :

"Man's active nature seeks too soon the level ;  
Unqualified repose he learns to crave ;  
Whence, willingly, the comrade him I gave,  
Who works, excites, and must create, as Devil."

And Mephistopheles characterises himself in these words :

"I am the spirit that denies !  
And justly so : For all things from the void  
Called forth, deserve to be destroy'd :  
T'were better, then, were naught created.  
Thus, all which you as sin have rated,—  
Destruction,—aught with evil blent,—  
That is my proper element."

In Goethe's conception, Faust allies himself with the spirit of negation and promises to pay the price of his soul on condition that he should find satisfaction ; but Faust finds no satisfaction in the gifts of the spirit that denies. However, he does find satisfaction after having abandoned the chase for empty pleasures in active and successful work for the good of mankind. Goethe's Faust uses the Devil, but Faust rises above his negativism. However, he inherits from the revolutionary movement the love of liberty. Says the dying Faust :

"And such a throng I fain would see,—  
Stand on free soil among a people free."

This Faust cannot be lost. His soul is saved. Mephistopheles now ceases to be a mere incarnation of badness, his negativism becomes the spirit of critique. The spirit of critique, although destructive, leads to the positivework of construction ; and thus Faust becomes a representative of the bold spirit of investigation and progress which characterises the age of the Reformation.

We ask in fine : How can we explain the origin of devil-stories and devil-contracts, and what is their significance ? Our answer in brief is : The devil-stories are myths in which Christian mythology is carried to the extreme. Symbols are taken seriously, and from the literal belief of the Christian dogmas the imagination weaves these pictures which to our ancestors were more than mere tales that adorn a moral.

In modern times, the figure of the Evil One begins to lose the awe he exercised during the middle ages upon the imagination ; he develops more and more into a harmonious character. Victor Hugo uses him as a relief for his political satire. No more trenchant sarcasm in poetic form can be imagined than his lines on Napoleon III. and Pope Pius IX. He says :

"One day the Lord was playing  
For human souls (they're saying)  
With Satan's Majesty.  
And each one showed his art :  
The one played Bonaparte,  
The other Mastai.

An abbot sly and keen,  
A princelet wretched mean,  
And a rascal, upon oath.  
God Father played so poorly,  
He lost the game, and surely  
The Devil won them both.

'Well, take them !' cried God Father,  
'You'll find them useless rather !'  
The Devil laughed and swore :  
'They'll serve my cause, I hope.  
The one I'll make a pope,  
The other emperor !'"

[Un jour Dieu sur la table  
Jouait avec le diable  
Du genre humain hai ;  
Chacun tenait sa carte,  
L'un jouait Bonaparte  
Et l'autre Mastai.

Un pauvre abbé bien mince,  
Un méchant petit prince,  
Polisson hasardeux !  
Quel enjeu pitoyable !  
Dieu fit tant que le diable  
Les gagna tous les deux.

Prends ! cria Dieu le père,  
Tu ne sauras qu'en faire !

JUN 26 1887

THE OPEN COURT.

Le diable dit: erreur!  
Et, ricanant sous cape,  
Il fit de l'un un pape,  
De l'autre un empereur.]

The Devil in the literature of to-day is of the same kind: a harmless fellow at whose expense the reader enjoys a hearty laugh. Lesage's novel *The Devil on Two Sticks* is a poor piece of fiction, and Hauff's *Memoirs of Satan* are rather lengthy. *Hell up to Date* is a genuine Chicago production of modern style. The author introduces himself as a newspaper reporter who interviews "Sate," and is shown round the Inferno. He finds that "Hell is now run on the broad American plan." "Captain" Charon, who began his career as a ferryman with a little tub of a "rowboat," is now running big steamers on the Styx, "the only navigable river in hell." Judge Minos sits in court, and an Irish policeman introduces the poor wretches one by one. The lawyers are condemned to be gagged, and their objections are overruled by Satan; the inventor of the barbwire fence is seated naked on a barbwire fence; tramps are washed; policemen are clubbed until they see stars; quack doctors are cured according to their own methods; poker fiends, board of trade gamblers, and fish-story tellers are treated according to their deserts; monopolists are baked like pop-corn, and clergymen are condemned to listen to their own sermons which have been faithfully recorded in phonographs.

SONNET TO DEATH.

BY MARY MORGAN (GOWAN LEA).

Why wilt thou, Death, approach with cruel mien,  
The blackness of the night upon thy wings,  
So that thy ghastly shadow tremor brings,  
Filling with awe the vast unknown, unseen?

Art thou a friend in sooth disguised as foe,  
So masked as to appear the end of all?  
An onward step perchance,—the heavenly call  
To somewhat far more glorious than we know?

Then why not seek us as an angel fair,  
With beauty radiant and the joy of life,  
Wafting us skyward to a music rare,  
Our souls forever free from earthly strife?

Ah! thus, with hearts exultant might we rise  
To meet thee three as life's greatest, sweetest prize!

BOOK NOTICES.

A useful book for the young student of natural history, and one which, if handled with intelligence, will enable him to dispense with the services of a teacher, is Dr. Alfred C. Stokes's *Aquatic Microscopy for Beginners; or, Common Objects from the Ponds and Ditches*, which is now in its third edition, published by Edward F. Bigelow. Portland, Conn. The microscope, its parts and uses are described, and successive chapters are devoted to the description and directions for the treatment of microscopic

aquatic plants, desmids, diatoms, fresh-water algae, rhizopods, infusoria, hydras, rotifers, etc. There is a good glossary and index. (Pages, 326; price, \$1.50.)

*Important Biological Works.*

ON GERMINAL SELECTION. AS A SOURCE OF DEFINITE VARIATION. By Prof. August Weismann. Pages, xii, 61. Price, 25 cents.

The present booklet is the latest development of Dr. Weismann's theory of evolution. He seeks by his doctrine of germinal selection to explain the necessary character of adaptations, while yet retaining Darwin's theory of natural selection. Variations are shown to be determinate, but without the aid of the Lamarckian principle. The Preface contains Weismann's views on scientific and biological method, and the Appendix sketches the history and the present state of the discussion on selection and variation. (Just published.)

PRIMARY FACTORS OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION. By Prof. E. D. Cope. Illustrations, 121. Pages, 550. Tables, Bibliography, and Index.

A handbook of the Neo-Lamarckian theory of evolution by one of its foremost representatives. Places special stress on the evidence drawn from the field of paleontology, especially in the United States. (Just published.)

"One of the most noteworthy of recent contributions to science."—*Chicago Evening Post.*

THE DARWINIAN THEORY. By the late George John Romanes, LL. D., F. R. S., etc. Pages, 460. Illustrations, 125. Cloth, \$2.00. New edition.

POST-DARWINIAN QUESTIONS. By G. J. Romanes. Pages, 334. Cloth, \$1.50. (Recently published.)

AN EXAMINATION OF WEISMANNISM. By G. J. Romanes. Pages, 236. Cloth, \$1.25. Paper, 35 cents.

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