

THE OPEN COURT.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO THE RELIGION OF SCIENCE.

No. 470. (VOL. X.—35.)

CHICAGO, AUGUST 27, 1896.

One Dollar per Year.
Single Copies, 5 Cents.

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A PILGRIMAGE TO BEETHOVEN.¹

BY RICHARD WAGNER.

O, INDIGENCE! thou care-bringer! protectress divine of the German musician (unless he have reached the haven of Kapellmeister at some court-theatre)! O, carking Indigence! as I ever do, so let me now in this reminiscence from my life first bring dutiful obeisance to thy praise and honor! Let me sing of thee, thou steadfast companion of my life! Always loyal, never hast thou forsaken me! With a strong palm thou hast warded from me all sudden shocks of propitious luck; and ever against the onerous glances of sunny Fortuna hast thou protected me! With an impenetrable veil hast thou always benignantly hidden from my sight the vain riches of this world! Receive thou all my gratitude for thine indefatigable constancy. But if it may be, pray do thou at length find some other foster-child than me. For indeed I should—if it were only for the sake of curiosity—like to learn from personal experience, what manner of existence I might manage to lead without thee. At the least—so I beseech thee—go thou and plague with most especial cunning our political dreamers, those madmen, who are determined in spite of everything to unite our dear Germany under a single sceptre: For then there would be but one single court-theatre, and hence a place for but one single *Kapellmeister!* What then would become of all my hopes, my dear ambitions, which even now are dim before my eyes, and, I dread, are slowly fading—even now, when I can count so many German court-theatres. But ah! I see that I grow impious. Forgive, O thou divine protectress, the blasphemous wish which just escaped me. 'Twas but momentary; for thou seest within my heart, and well thou knowest how wholly thine I am, and ever shall be, though it came to pass that there were a thousand court-theatres in Germany! Amen!

I never undertake a thing, without first offering up this daily prayer, and so I breathe it here before I begin the story of my pilgrimage to Beethoven.

But to provide for the possibility that this important autobiographical record may find publication after my demise, I consider it necessary to tell who I am. Else much therein might appear obscure. Let

my executors and the world, therefore, know these things:

My native place is a city of fair size in Central Germany. I am not quite certain what the plans of my people for my future had been. All that I recall is, that one evening I heard one of Beethoven's symphonies for the first time; that I was taken with fever in consequence, was ill for some time, and, when I had recovered, had become a musician.

I suppose it is because of this circumstance that although I have since then learned to know and appreciate much other music that is beautiful, I have, foremost, loved, and honored, and adored Beethoven. I knew no greater delight than that of yielding myself wholly up to him,—of allowing myself to sink, as it were, away into the depths of his genius, until I should finally imagine that I was a part thereof; and even as such a tiny part I would begin to esteem myself, have more elevated conceptions and opinions, and, in a word, to be what the wisecracks usually call a simpleton. This delusion was of a very gentle sort, and it did no harm to any one. The daily bread which I ate during this period of my life was very dry, my wine very thin and watery; for the giving of music-lessons does not earn much of an income where I live, my dear executors and public!

I had been living thus in my little garret for some time when suddenly, one day, it occurred to me that the man whose creations I adored above everything else, was still living. I could not understand how it was that I had not thought of this before. It had never suggested itself to me as possible that Beethoven could actually stand before one, that he could eat and breathe like an ordinary mortal. And here he was, living in Vienna; and he, too, was a poor German musician like myself!

From that instant my peace of mind was gone. All my thoughts turned into the one wish, *to see Beethoven!* Never Mussulman more devoutly yearned to make the pilgrimage to the grave of his prophet, than I to the humble chamber where Beethoven dwelt.

But how should I manage to carry out such a design? The journey to Vienna was a long one, and money was required to make it; whilst I, poor wretch, was hardly earning enough to keep body and soul to-

¹ Translated from the German by O. W. Weyer.

gether. It was painfully evident that I should have to devise some extraordinary measures, if I hoped to get the necessary travelling-money together. I had composed several sonatas for the piano, in the master's style; these I carried to a publisher. But the man curtly gave me to understand that I was a simpleton with my sonatas. He advised me, that, if I expected in time to earn a few dollars with compositions of this kind, I should first undertake to make something of a reputation with galops and potpourris. I shuddered at the thought. But my longing to see Beethoven conquered. I composed galops and potpourris. But during all this time, from very shame, I could not bring myself to even so much as look at my Beethoven; I shrank in horror from the desecration.

Unfortunately, however, I failed at first to get any compensation at all for these sacrifices of innocence. For although he published them, my publisher said he could not pay me for them until I had secured somewhat of a name. Again I shuddered, I succumbed to despair. But despair yielded some excellent galops. I really got some money for them; and at length the time came when I believed I had amassed enough to execute my plans. But in the meantime two years had passed away; and during all that time I was in mortal dread lest Beethoven might die before I had achieved a name with my galops and potpourris. Thank heavens! he survived the grandeur of my fame. Sainted Beethoven! forgive me for this fame; for I sought and won it that I might see you.

Ah, what genuine ecstasy! I had attained my goal! Who in the wide world happier than I! Now, at last, I could throw my bundle over my shoulder and start on my pilgrimage to Beethoven. I felt a holy thrill as I marched through the city-gates and directed my course to the South. Only too gladly would I have taken a seat in one of the stage-coaches. Not because I dreaded the toil of foot-travel (for what tribulations would I not eagerly have borne for this dear object!), but because then I should the sooner have gotten to Beethoven. Alas! I had as yet accomplished too little for my celebrity as a galop-composer to be able to pay the costly fare. Accordingly, I resolutely faced every hardship, deeming myself lucky since they terminated in bringing me to Beethoven. O, how I raved! and dreamed! Never lover knew greater bliss, returning after a long separation to the love of his youth.

After a time I entered the beautiful land of Bohemia, the home of the harp-players and wandering singers. In one little town I ran across a company of these nomad musicians. They formed a little orchestra, made up of a bass, two violins, two horns, a clarinet, and a flute. There were three women with them; one was a harp-player; the other two were singers and had fine voices. They played dances and

sang folk-songs; people gave them money, and they journeyed on. Later I chanced upon them again in a pretty and shady nook, just off the highway. They were bivouacking and having their dinner. I joined them, telling them that I, too, was a musician. We were soon on good terms. Since they played dances, I asked them, rather timidly, if they had ever yet played any of my galops. The splendid fellows! they had never heard of my galops! What a world of relief this knowledge afforded me!

Then I asked if they did not play some other music besides dance-music.

"To be sure we do!" they answered, "but for ourselves only, not for the people who consider themselves above us."

They got out their music. I remarked among it the grand septette of Beethoven; surprised I asked them if they played that, too.

"And why not, pray?" the oldest of them rejoined. "Joseph's hand is disabled so that he cannot play the second violin; or we should take great pleasure in playing it for you right now."

Enraptured, I seized Joseph's violin and promised to the best of my ability to supply his place; and we began the septette.

What a delightful experience! Here, upon a Bohemian highway, beneath the open heaven, to hear Beethoven's septette played by common strolling musicians, with a purity, a precision, and a depth of sentiment, as seldom by masterful *virtuosi*! Great Beethoven! we brought thee a worthy offering!

We were right in the midst of the *finale*, when—the road here taking a winding course up the hill—an elegant travelling coach noiselessly approached and drew up close by us. A remarkably tall and remarkably blond young man lay extended at full length within the wagon, harkened with considerable attentiveness to our music, and then, drawing a note-book from his pocket, jotted down something therein. Then, after suffering a gold piece to drop from the wagon, he gave orders to his people to drive on, addressing them briefly in English, from which I knew that he must be an Englishman.

The interruption spoiled our musical mood, though it occurred fortunately after we had finished the septette. With emotion I embraced my friends and wished to accompany them. But they told me their course turned off from the main road at this point and took them across fields to their native village to which they were returning on one of their periodical visits. Had it not been that Beethoven himself was waiting for me, I certainly should have gone thither with them, too. As it was, we parted, uttering our farewells with mutual feeling. I remembered, later on,

that no one had picked up the Englishman's gold-piece.

At the next inn,—where I turned in to rest my weary limbs,—I found the Englishman, seated at a good meal. He examined me attentively for a time, and at length addressed me in passable German :

“Where are your companions?”

“Gone home,” I said.

“Get out your violin and play something more,” he continued. “Here's money.”

I was offended. I said curtly that I did not play for money, had furthermore no violin, and explained to him briefly how it was that I had happened to be in the company of the musicians.

“They were good players,” observed the Englishman. “And the symphony of Beethoven was very good, too.”

I was struck with this remark. I asked him if he did anything in the way of music himself.

“Yes,” he replied. “I play the flute twice a week. Thursdays I blow the *Waldhorn*. And Sundays I compose.”

That was certainly a great deal, and I marvelled. I had never in all my life heard of strolling English musicians. I reasoned, therefore, that they must be in very easy circumstances, if they did their strolling in such handsome equipages.—I asked him if he was a musician by profession.

For some time I got no reply. Finally, drawing slowly, he exerted himself to say that he had much money.

I saw my error, for evidently the question had offended him. Mortified, I became silent, and went on eating my modest meal.

The Englishman, after another long scrutiny of my person, began again :

“Do you know Beethoven?” he asked.

I replied that I had never as yet been at Vienna, that I was just then on my way thither, and that my object in going there was to satisfy the dearest wish I had, that of seeing the adored master.

“Where are you from?” he asked.

“From L”

“That's but a short distance off. I come from England, and my object, too, is to make the acquaintance of Beethoven. We will both make his acquaintance. He is a very celebrated composer.”

“What a wonderful coincidence,” I thought to myself. What very different kinds of folk dost thou not attract, sublime master! On foot and in wagon they flock to thee. My Englishman began to interest me; but I own that I little envied him his fine equipage. My toilsome pilgrimage, so it appeared to me, was the more holy and devout of the two; and I felt that when we reached our goal, mine must surely

bring more joy to me than his to him, who made his progress thither in pomp and pride.

Just then the postilion blew his horn. The Englishmen rode away, after calling to me that he should see Beethoven before me.

I had been trudging after him but a few hours when I unexpectedly came upon him again. It was along the road. One of his wagon-wheels had broken down. He was still seated within the wagon, imperturbably tranquil, his servant up behind, unheeding that the wagon had pitched heavily on its side. I learned that they were waiting for the postilion, who had hastened to a village lying some distance away, to fetch a smith. They had been waiting a long while. And, as the servant spoke English only, I resolved to go myself to the village and fetch both postilion and smith. Just as I expected, I found the postilion in the tavern, where he sat at liquor, with little care for the Englishman. But I soon brought him and the smith back to the wagon. The injury was repaired. The Englishman promised to remember me to Beethoven and—rode away.

How very much surprised I was, on the next day, to overtake him on the highway again. His wheel was all right this time; he had calmly stopped in the middle of the road and was reading in a book. He seemed to feel some satisfaction as he saw me come plodding along on my journey.

“I have been waiting here a great many hours,” he said. “For right here it occurred to me that I had done wrong in not inviting you to ride with me to Beethoven. Riding is much better than walking. Come, get into the wagon.”

Again I was surprised. And really, for a moment, I was undecided whether to accept his offer or not. But quickly I recalled the vow which I had made the day before, as I saw the Englishman speed away in his carriage. I had vowed absolutely to make my pilgrimage afoot. I now declared it aloud. With that, it was the Englishman's turn to be surprised; he could make nothing of me. He repeated his offer, adding again that he had been waiting a good many hours for me, although his journey had already been very greatly delayed by the work of having his broken wheel more thoroughly repaired in the place where he had lain the night before. I remained firm, however, and he rode, wondering, away.

To tell the truth, I had secretly begun to feel an aversion for him. For, like a gloomy premonition, the thought forced itself on me that this Englishman would yet cause me a great deal of trouble. And besides, both his admiration of Beethoven and his intention to form the acquaintance of the maestro looked more like a rich exquisite's hobby, than the deep and keen thirst of an enthusiastic soul. Accordingly, I

chose to avoid him, that my devout yearning might not be unhallowed by any communion with him.

But, as if my destiny were determined to admonish me in advance of the fateful companionship I would yet come to with this gentleman, I met him still again in the evening of the same day, stopping in front of a hotel,—waiting for me, so it seemed. For he sat in the forward seat, looking down the road in my direction, whence he had himself come.

"Sir," he said, "I have again been waiting many hours for you. Will you ride with me to Beethoven?"

This time a secret horror began to mingle with my surprise. It was impossible otherwise to explain this strange insistence to serve me, than that the Englishman, observing my increasing aversion for him, was determined to force himself upon me, for the purpose of compassing my ruin. With unfeigned impatience, I again refused his offer. Contemptuously, he exclaimed:

"Confound it! I don't believe you think so very much of Beethoven. I shall soon see him." And away he flew at a rapid pace.

As it turned out, I did not see this insular citizen again during the still very considerable part remaining of the road to Vienna. I entered the streets of that city at last. My pilgrimage was ended. With what feelings I entered this Mecca of my creed! All the fatigues of my long and toilsome journey were forgotten. I was in my haven, within the walls which enclosed Beethoven.

My emotion was too deep for me to think of prosecuting my purpose at once. I did, it is true, immediately inquire after the residence of Beethoven, but it was merely that I might get lodgings in the neighborhood. Almost exactly opposite the house there was a hotel, not too pretentious. I took a small chamber in the fifth story, and there I prepared myself for the greatest event of my life, a call on Beethoven.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

IDENTITY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN GREECE AND INDIA.¹

BY PROF. H. OLDENBERG,

VIII.

OPPOSED to the realm of the migration of the soul with all its sufferings, there is, for Greek and Indian thinkers alike, a world of freedom, of the complete cessation of all suffering. Whilst the youthful human mind of the early ages perceived in power and victory, in wealth and long life, the chief joys of life, the supreme end of life is now salvation from the misery of becoming and passing away, rest in the calm glory of eternity.

Among the Greeks, as we have seen, the Orpheans

¹ Authorised translation from the *Deutsche Rundschau* by O. W. Weyer.

speak of "releasing one's self from the circle," and of "taking flight from the circle." Plato pictures the soul as being rescued from its wanderings and entering into "the community of the divine, the pure, the true to itself." At one time, it is the negative form which this ideal assumes: the release from the suffering of existence. At another, it is the positive form: perfect, unchanging blessedness. A certain reserve was for the most part observed toward the temptation to make the description of this condition of perfection too concrete and to paint it in high colors: these most beautiful homes of the soul are not easily described, says Plato.

Now this all very closely touches upon Buddhistic ideas. Buddha says to his followers: "As the great ocean, my disciples, is permeated with a *single* flavor, the flavor of the salt; so, too, disciples, is this doctrine, and this law, permeated with a *single* flavor, the flavor of salvation."

"There is, my disciples, a place where there is neither earth nor water, neither light nor air, neither this world nor that world, neither sun nor moon. I call that, disciples, neither coming nor going nor resting, neither death nor birth. It is without substructure, without progress, without stop. It is the end of suffering."

Sometimes the various turns taken by the Buddhistic texts in which this final aim, Nirvāna, is spoken of, run as if this aim were the termination of all being, or absolute nothing; then again they seem to point to a state of highest perfection, surpassing all comprehension and baffling all description. Taken as a whole, the coloring of these thoughts is perceptibly a more negative one than in Greece; and the solution of all too far-reaching questions is declined with greater firmness and readiness. "He, who has gained salvation," thus runs a Buddhistic quotation, "surpasses the point where his being can be compassed by the numbers of the corporeal world. He is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable, like the ocean." And at another time, Buddha says to a disciple, who will not suffer a quietus to be imposed upon his questions about the existence of him who has won salvation: "What is not revealed by me, suffer it to remain unrevealed."

As to the ideas concerning the way by which the final highest aim was to be attained—in Greece they rapidly developed in matter and profundity. Early thought still remained essentially under the influence of religious creations which carry the style of remotest antiquity. We know what is the customary practice in the cult of uncivilised peoples, for one who seeks to acquire supernatural power or to ward off evil spirits or death-bringing things of witchcraft. He fasts; he withdraws into solitude; he avoids everything that has any relation with death or similar perils, as food which

for some reason or other is considered to be connected with the kingdom of death; by various means he excites within himself ecstatic conditions. This technique of the primitive sorcerer's art, applied to new purposes, maintained itself in Greece as elsewhere with indomitable pertinacity.

It has been justly observed, that a figure like that of Epimenides—an adept master of mystical wisdom, flourishing about 600 B. C., and celebrated throughout all Greece,—bears a number of traits which characterize perfectly the type of the savage medicine-man: fasts and solitude, mystic intercourse with the spirits, long ecstasies, in which he gains his "enthusiastic wisdom." The interdiction of food and—if this ethnological expression be permissible—the observance of taboos of various kinds, among which is very prominent the aversion to all things which in any way remind one of the domain of death,—these are a special vehicle for the spiritual endeavors both of the Orpheans and of the Pythagoreans.

But a new tendency is soon introduced and gains more and more in strength. True continence and purity, so Plato teaches, lie in the purification of the soul from all sensual things, liberation from the passions and desires which "transfix the soul to the body as with a nail" and which compel the soul to endure being reborn in ever new forms of embodiment. The redeemer from these bonds is philosophy, which alone really prepares one for death. Philosophy guides us from the world of constant becoming into that of actual being, into the realm of eternal ideas. The blessed moment of a vision dawns: the curtain before the thinker's eyes sunders, and truth herself shines upon him, in the glory of which immersing itself, the soul is released from the transitory world. In the joy, the bliss of this contemplation, the philosopher, even here below, deems himself in the islands of the blessed. Death, however, forever releases the soul of him, who "has purified himself through philosophy, from corporeality": his soul enters into "that akin to his soul, the invisible, the divine, the immortal, the truly wise."

In this last thought, the aim of ideas, which we are now considering, found its culmination. And up to this very point, the Indian ideas follow the Greek ideas in undeviatingly parallel lines.

In India, too, in Buddha's age, the aims of the new spiritual yearning were striven for with the same means from the old cult of sorcery, that we find in Greece—retirement into solitude, exhaustion by severe fastings, and the development of a whole category of ecstatic conditions. For its part, Buddhism rejects fasting as well as every kind of self-torture; but it lays great stress upon the cultivation of those ecstatic meditations, in the exalted calm and quiet of which, afar from the confusing superabundance of form of the ma-

terial world, it was thought, a presentiment or foretaste might be enjoyed of the final termination of all transitoriness. One of the old Buddhist monkish poets sings:

"When the thundercloud its drum awakes,
Fast the rain sweeps o'er the bird's swift paths,
And in quiet mountain cave the monk
Fosters reverie: no joy like that!

When, along the flowery bank of streams,
Which the forest's motley garland crowns,
He fosters reverie, wrapped in blissful calm,
No joy ever can he find like that!"

But that which, before all other things, gives release from earthly suffering is the complete subjection of desire, of "that thirst which but leads from one re-birth to another re-birth,"—the attainment of the pure and highest knowledge.

"Who conquers it—that despicable thirst, which it is difficult to escape in this world—from him all suffering drops like drops of water from the lotus flower."

But this thirst which accompanies earthly existence may be subdued through knowledge,—that knowledge which discovers the misery of the fate of becoming, merely to pass away again, and reveals the cessation thereof in the escape from this world. Since the value or worthlessness of life depends upon the fateful play of great cosmic powers, the endeavor of the devout, the sage, is directed no longer to the object of securing the goods of this world through the friendship of benevolent gods, but to the aim of penetrating the infinite cosmic process, in order that, having mastered it, he may prepare for himself the future place where it is good to be. This last proposition is alike characteristic of the religion of India and of Greece.

Like the ideas of Plato, the doctrine of the Buddhists is that the seeker gains possession of the knowledge of salvation,—after a ceaseless struggle and endeavor continuing through a period of innumerable re-births,—in the sudden inspiration of one incomparable instant of time. He to whom this instant has come has "obtained salvation and beheld it face to face." The Buddhist enlightened one, like the philosopher of Plato, continues to live on earth as a completed being who, in his most fundamental nature, is now no longer an earthly citizen. "The monk who has put away from him lust and desire, and is rich in wisdom, he has even here on earth obtained salvation from death, rest, Nirvâna, the eternal home." And when the end of earthly existence has come, he disappears into those mysterious depths, concerning which Buddha forbade his disciples to inquire whether their meaning is ideal being or absolute nothing.

* * *

The naturalist, studying a cellular structure, will obtain very different views of the same object, accord-

ing to the direction in which he makes his sections. The direction in which we have contemplated Buddhism made it possible for us to notice the very closest relationship between its fundamental principles and the doctrines of the Orpheans, the Pythagoreans, and Plato. But, in conclusion, we must not omit briefly to point out that other lines of consideration would have produced other views and other comparisons of a very different nature.

If we scan the personality of the great Indian promulgator of these ideas, we find at once that Buddha is in all the phenomena of his life, in the manner of his teaching and labors, as widely different from the Greek thinkers as the Oriental character is from the Hellenic. A nimbus of miracles surrounding and glorifying his life, a lofty dignity which overtops all the universe, caps his image in a way impossible to imagine in connexion with the earthly and human figures of Pythagoras and Plato. It is no longer the regions of Greek philosophy, but rather the regions of the Gospels, into which the Buddhistic tradition now seems to conduct us. In fact, some have gone so far—though in my opinion without sufficient reason—as to draw from the striking resemblances of these two fields the conclusion that direct transfers have been made from India to the West. As it was formerly supposed that Pythagoras had drawn his doctrines from Indian sources closely related to Buddhism, so, too, the assumption has found believers—corresponding to the various views taken of Buddhism—that Buddhistic prototypes underlie extensive portions of the Gospels, and that either at Alexandria or at Antioch the intercourse of Christian writers with Buddhistic envoys led to the introduction of a large number of stories, proverbs, and parables from Indian literature into that of the New Testament.

It would be possible to carry this identification still further. If along with the person of Buddha and with his doctrine we glance at the third member of the ancient Buddhistic trinity—the ecclesiastical brotherhood or church—we shall be reminded, with sufficient vividness, by the immemorially ancient rules of the Buddhistic order of mendicant monks,—with its deep-rooted aversion to the world, the austerity of its precepts as to poverty and chastity, with its long list of instructions concerning the observance of dignity and reserve, which are manifested after a set fashion in mien and glance, in the manner of eating and drinking, in short, in every gesture,—of Christian monasticism, whether viewed as a whole or in its minutest detail.

I think that we may and must be satisfied with the similarity of historical causes at work in the two separate quarters of the world as the explanation for all these resemblances,—a similarity which in my judg-

ment amply accounts for our meeting among civilisations nearer to us in time and place with formations, isolated and scattered, yet closely resembling those which at the height of Indian history, pulsating with Indian life-blood, were united, in Buddhism, into so compact and remarkable a whole.

THROUGH OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION.

BY GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

"So many gods, so many creeds—
So many paths that wind and wind,
While just the art of being kind
Is all the sad world needs."
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE said she knew "Lord Byron must be a bad man, for he was always *intending* something." Any improvement in the method of life is "*intending something*," and society ought to be tolerant of those whose badness takes no worse form. The rules Secularism prescribes for human conduct are few, and no intelligent preacher would say they indicate a dangerous form of "badness." They are:

1. Truth in speech.
2. Honesty in transaction.
3. Industry in business.
4. Equity in according the gain among those whose diligence and vigilance help to produce it.

"Though this world be but a bubble,
Two things stand like stone—
Kindness in another's trouble,
Courage in your own."

Learning and fortune do but illuminate these virtues. They cannot supersede them. The germs of these qualities are in every human heart. It is only necessary that we cultivate them. Men are like billiard balls—they would all go into the right pockets in a few generations, if rightly propelled. Yet these principles, simple and unpretending as they are, being founded on considerations apart from modes of orthodox thought, have had a militant career. The Spanish proverb has been in request: "Beware of an ox before, of a mule behind, and of a monk on every side." The monk, tonsured and untunsured, is found in every religion.

In Glasgow I sometimes delivered lectures on the Sunday in a quaint old hall situated up a wynd in Candleriggs. On the Saturday night I gave a woman half-a-crown to wash and whiten the stairs leading to the hall, and the passage leading to the street and across the causeway, so that the entrance to the hall should be clean and sweet. Sermons were preached in the same hall when the stairs were repulsively dirty. The woman remarked to a neighbor that "Mr. Holyoake's views were wrang, but he seemed to have clean principles." He who believes in the influence of material conditions will do what he can to have them

pure, not only where he speaks, but where he frequents and where he resides. The theological reader, who by accident or curiosity looks over these pages, will find much from which he will dissent; but I hope he will be able to regard this book as one of "clean principles," as far as the limited light of the author goes.

Accepting the "golden rule" of Huxley—"Give unqualified assent to no propositions but those the truth of which is so clear and distinct that they cannot be doubted"—causes the Secularist to credit less than his neighbors, and that goes against him; being, as it were, a reproach of their avidity of belief. One reason for writing this book is to explain—to as many of the new generation as may happen to read it—the discrimination of Secularism. Newspapers and the clerical class, who ought to be well informed, continually speak of mere free-thinking as Secularism. How this has been caused has already been indicated. Two or three remarkable and conspicuous representatives of free thought, who found iconoclasm easier, less responsible, and more popular, have given to many erroneous impressions. When Mr. Bradlaugh, Mrs. Besant, and Mr. Foote came into the Secularistic movement, which preceded their day, they gave proof that they understood its principles, which they afterwards disregarded or postponed. I cite their opinions lest the reader should think that this book gives an account of a form of thought not previously known. One wrote:

"From very necessity, Secularism is affirmative and constructive; it is impossible to thoroughly negate any falsehood without making more or less clear the opposing truth."¹

Again:

"Secularism conflicts with theology in this: that the Secularist teaches the improbability of humanity by human means; while the theologian not only denies this, but rather teaches that the Secular effort is blasphemous and unavailing unless preceded and accompanied by reliance on divine aid."²

Mrs. Besant said:

"Still we have won a plot of ground—men's and women's hearts. To them Secularism has a message; to them it brings a rule of conduct; to them it gives a test of morality, and a guide through the difficulties of life. Our morality is tested only—be it noted—by utility in this life and in this world."³

Mr. Foote was not less discerning and usefully explicit, saying:

"Secularism is founded upon the distinction between the things of time and the things of eternity. . . . The good of others Secularism declares to be the law of morality; and although certain theologies secondarily teach the same doctrine, yet they differ from Secularism in founding it upon the supposed will of God, thus

admitting the possibility of its being set aside in obedience to some other equally or more imperative divine injunction."¹

For several years the *National Reformer* bore the subtitle of "Secular Advocate."

We could not expect early concurrence with the policy of preferring ethical to theological questions of theism and unprovable immortality. We accepted the maxim of Sir Philip Sydney—namely, that "Reason cannot show itself more reasonable than to leave reasoning on things above reason." We are not in the land of the real yet, common sense is not half so romantic to the average man as the transcendental, and an atheistical advocacy got the preference with the impetuous. The Secularistic proposal to consult the instruction of an adversary proved less exciting than his destruction. The patience and resource it implies to work by reason alone are not to the taste of those to whom a kick is easier than a kindness, and less troublesome than explanation. Those who have the refutatory passion intense say you must clear the ground before you can build upon it. Granted; nevertheless, the signs of the times show that a good deal of ground has been cleared. The instinct of progress renders the minority, who reflect, more interested in the builder than the undertaker. What would be thought of a general who delayed occupying a country he had conquered until he had extirpated all the inhabitants in it? So, in the kingdom of error, he who will go on breaking images, without setting statues up in their place, will give superstition a long life. The savage man does not desert his idols because you call them ugly. It is only by slow degrees, and under the influence of better-carved gods, that his taste is changed and his worship improved. The reader will see that Secularism leaves the mystery of deity to the chartered imagination of man, and does not attempt to close the door of the future, but holds that the desert of another existence belongs only to those who engage in the service of man in this life. Prof. F. W. Newman says: "The conditions of a future life being unknown, there is no imaginable means of benefiting ourselves and others in it, except by aiming after present goodness."²

Men have a right to look beyond this world, but not to overlook it. Men, if they can, may connect themselves with eternity, but they cannot disconnect themselves from humanity without sacrificing duty. The purport of Secularism is not far from the tenor of the famous sermon by the Rev. James Caird, of which the *Queen* said:

¹ "Secularism: What Is It?" *National Secular Society's Tracts*—No. 7. By Charles Bradlaugh.

² "Why Are We Secularists?" *National Secular Society's Tracts*—No. 8. By Charles Bradlaugh.

³ "Secular Morality," *National Secular Society's Tracts*—No. 3. By Annie Besant.

¹ *Secularism and Its Misrepresentation*, by G. W. Foote, who subsequently succeeded Mr. Bradlaugh as President of the National Secular Society.

² Prof. F. W. Newman, who is always clear beyond all scholars, and candid beyond all theologians, has published a *Palinode* retracting former conclusions he had published, and admitting the uncertainty of the evidence in favor of after-existence.

"He explained in the most simple manner what real religion is—not a thing to drive us from the world, not a perpetual moping over 'good' books; but being and doing good."¹

This end we reach not by a theological, but by a Secular, path.

NOTES.

Mattoon Monroe Curtis, Professor of Philosophy in Western Reserve University, publishes *An Outline of Philosophy in America*, being a brief sketch, 16 pages in extent, of the principal philosophers in America and their works. It is not complete, and the space devoted to the various movements is sometimes disproportionate to their importance, but some idea at least may be obtained from it of the extent of the work now doing in America in philosophical research.

Dr. Daniel G. Brinton, the well-known archaeologist and ethnologist of Philadelphia, has recently expressed his *View of History* from the point of view of an ethnologist in an address delivered before the New Jersey Historical Society, and now published in pamphlet form. His ideas, which, coming from so high an authority, will be read with much interest, are essentially that history "should be neither a mere record of events, nor the demonstration of a thesis, but a study, through occurrences and institutions, of the mental states of peoples at different epochs, explanatory of their success or failure, and practically applicable to the present needs of human society."

It is pleasing to note the unabated scientific activity of Mr. Lester F. Ward, of Washington, which is evidenced in all its broad scope by his numerous articles in the periodicals, several reprints of which have come from time to time into our hands. Among the latest we may notice a sound paper upon *The Nomenclature Question* in botany, one upon *The Data of Sociology*, and one upon *Sociology and Psychology*, forming parts of his contributions to social philosophy, which is appearing in the *American Journal of Sociology*, of Chicago.

In a paper read before the Texas Academy of Sciences in December, 1895, Dr. Edmund Montgomery submits to careful scrutiny the *Molecular Theories of Organic Reproduction*, basing his criticisms upon his own investigations in the subject which have extended over many years, and the fundamental principles of which have been widely recognised in the scientific world. Dr. Montgomery's position is that living substance is not "like crystals, composed of merely aggregated units or molecules, held together by the physical bond of cohesion. On the contrary, it forms a single indiscernible unit, whose constituent elements are all interdependently united by definite chemical bonds; such bonds as determine the specific nature of substances as a whole." The President of the Texas Academy of Science, Dr. George Bruce Halsted, has also given to the world recently two papers, the first entitled *The Criterion for Two-Term Prismoidal Formulas*, a subject in which his researches have achieved world-wide fame, and the second entitled *The Culture Given by Science*, where Dr. Halsted gives us in a few brief and aphoristic sentences his views on "sweetness and light."

A late number of *The Buddhist* (Vol. VIII., Nos. 3 and 4) contains a translation from the following Jataka story, which is of interest on account of its similarity to the account of St. Peter's walking on the water of the sea of Galilee:

"One day, a certain upasaka² having entertained a desire to

¹The Queen on the Rev. J. Caird's sermon, *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*.

²A disciple who has not yet acquired perfection.

visit the Buddha at Jetavana Vibara, wended his way thither. He came to the banks of a river Achirawati (a tributary of the river Ganges), and could not pass over to the other side for want of a bridge. He could not find any boatman to convey him over, and in that predicament he resolved within himself thus: 'I shall now abide myself in the joy of Buddha Lambana' (exercise of faith and contemplation on the person and virtues of the Buddha), and in that ecstasy he stepped into the river, were he found himself secure as resting his feet on a firm slab of granite. When he had walked on to about the middle of the stream, seeing high waves proceeding from either of the banks, his heart gave way slightly, and then he began gradually to sink. Seeing that the cause lay in the want of steadfast faith, he again redoubled his mental effort of the joy of Buddha Lambana, and then he could proceed on as before. Having reached the other bank, he walked steadily on where the Blessed One was."

THE LETTER OF JAMES THE JUST. In Eight Forms. Arranged for College Classes, by M. Woolsey Stryker, D.D., LL. D., President of Hamilton College. Boston, U. S. A., and London: Ginn & Company. 1895. Cloth. Pages, v + 67. Price, 60 cents.

The Letter of James the Just "crowds in small compass a great wealth of practical Christian truth. . . . Not only is this powerful homily packed with substance for public exposition and private reflexion, it is also notably suitable for critical study. It is a piece of pure and elegant Greek," etc. From these words of the editor we learn the character of the booklet before us, which contains the Letter of James arranged in eight forms,—a Greek, Vulgate, Italian, French, and German rendering, supplemented by a precise English translation and the Old-English versions of Wycliffe and Tyndale. "Translation," it is rightly said, "is itself always a comment, and by a kind of refracted light illuminates the original utterance. It gives a new voice to the old score. A combination of versions becomes no mean critical apparatus." This remark contains the justification of the book, the substance and arrangement of which bears out the editor's intention. It should be added that the material offered is excellently adapted to the ends of practical language study.

THE OPEN COURT

"THE MONON," 324 DEARBORN STREET.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, Post Office Drawer F.

E. C. HEGELER, PUBLISHER.

DR. PAUL CARUS, EDITOR.

Terms: Throughout the Postal Union, \$1.50 per year, 75 cents for six months; in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, \$1.00 per year, 50 cents for six months.

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CONTENTS OF NO. 470.

A PILGRIMAGE TO BEETHOVEN. RICHARD WAGNER	5031
IDENTITY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN GREECE	
AND INDIA. PROF. H. OLDENBERG	5034
THROUGH OPPOSITION TO RECOGNITION.	
GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE	5036
NOTES	5038