

# THE OPEN COURT.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO THE RELIGION OF SCIENCE.

No. 477. (VOL. X.—42.)

CHICAGO, OCTOBER 15, 1896.

{ One Dollar per Year.  
{ Single Copies, 5 Cents

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## ON THE DUNES OF THE BALTIC.<sup>1</sup>

An Idyl.

BY L. LINDEMANN-KÜSSNER.

THE young birches sway hither and thither in the wind, their delicate leaves still aglow with the gloss and verdure of spring. What a scene of splendor unrolls before us!

Lonely we lie here on the dune, whose undulatory contours stand out in such striking outlines against the blue sky. Gently the tiny blades and the sparse clumps of grass tremble on the sands, and the birds sing as if their little hearts would burst from joy and gladness. From afar comes the roar of the sea, and the trees vie with its wild music. Such is the mysterious surge of sound about us, both low and loud, and ere one is aware of it one dreams. I verily believe there is no spot on earth more fit for dreaming than the lofty reaches of these Baltic dunes.

There is something peculiar, too, wafted in the air from that foaming sea. The sagas of the Northland steal in upon our dreams. And must we then only dream? But two thousand years ago, and scarce that, they stand before us—those puissant men, in their garments of pelt, with their sinewy limbs and wavy beards and hair—and those tall, lithesome women, with their flowing amber tresses. They now no longer rove the forests, but their ashes lie buried in thousands and thousands of urns under Samland's hills—a silent but touching witness of the life that once here flourished.

There was a band of us here recently, digging for the urns of those forgotten dead. Far into the inland the eye could rove from this spot, and far without on the shining waste of sea. That was their delight, who lived here and were masters in the olden time. An uncontrollable yearning for freedom was their distinctive stamp. Even in their graves they sought the same freedom and altitude, whence they could survey the broad land and the far waters.

The workmen threw stone upon stone from the ditch, and again stones, three layers deep. Then

they came upon the urn. The roots of the ancient trees had tightly circled it as if to protect its scanty relics from sacrilegious eyes.

The contents of the urn were carefully examined. On top lay black clay—human dust, mingled with tiny bits of bone. Merciful Heaven! A pair of hands! And that had been a human being!

They then took out a little, compactly rolled clump of dirt, from which I carefully stripped the parts of clay—when a silver ring met my eyes. It could have belonged to none but a slender hand—for it was extremely narrow. None but a woman could have worn it. A strange mood crept over me as I viewed the little circlet, and I should have given much had I known how the woman looked whose finger the band once adorned.

The learned gentlemen kept on digging and came constantly upon new treasures. But I still held fast to the ring. The trees rustled above my head. I dreamt, and in my vision a still, low voice whispered:

“Thou!”  
“Well!”  
“Look at this!”  
“What is it, pray?”

Before me on the dune stood a woman, in the heyday of youth, and as graceful and as lithesome as a doe. The wind tossed her golden hair into her face; she stroked it back with her hand. On her finger, glittered in the bright rays of the sun—a silvery band. I fastened my eyes on it, like one petrified.

“Look!” she cried, with a ringing laugh. “Is it not beautiful?” And she flaunted the circlet in the sun. “Look! He brought it for me, for me alone, from far-off foreign lands. See how finely it is chased! Never companion of mine boasted so costly a bridal gift as this”—and then with a low exultant ripple—“they laughed at me, because I was so much smaller than they and reached scarce to their necklace-span-gles. But the tallest and handsomest man of them all came and took me as his wife.”

She kissed the ring.  
“Oh! If he were but with me again!”  
“Is he gone from you?”

“Yes. He is the bravest of them all, and there is much warring with the neighboring folk. But he

<sup>1</sup>Translated from the German by *μικροκ*.

has always come back victorious, and then he lifts me in his arms and laughs at me, how light I am, and fondles me like a child. Hark!—and she strains her ear to listen—"But no, 'twas only the wind. I thought I heard the trumpet's sound. Yes, there it is again"—and again she bent forward to listen.

A peal rolled over the dune, mournful and dismal, and a slow procession approached. On a bed of green boughs lay the frame of a gigantic man. A cry burst from my companion's lips. She ran to the body—the bearers halted. Tearing the garment that covered the stalwart chest, she laid her head upon his heart—it beat no more. With a cry like a stricken hind, she fell to the ground.

Night dawns. The moon spreads its ghostly light over the dunes. In the distance a shadowy procession of men and women files slowly up the ascent. Arrived at the top, they halt. There are lurid flames in the sky—soon afterwards darkness. They gather the ashes together, and put them with the loved ornaments in the urns. And then upon these they pile stones—heaps of stones.

With a shock, I start from my reverie. The learned gentleman at my right has just remarked: "That must have been a mighty warrior, Doctor. Look at the tremendous girth of these bracelets, and these spear-heads. And all so marvellously preserved"—

"Did this urn stand by the side of the small one, in which the ring was found?" I asked.

"Yes. They were probably kindred, and were interred at the same time."

"Probably!" And I turned the little silver circlet about and about in my hands, while the far-off echo of that lovely voice whispered in my ear, "Oh! if he were but with me here again!"

I lift my eyes. The sun is in its noonday stage and beats fiercely upon the sand. The air is quite still. The birches and pines are motionless but give forth a powerful fragrance. A strange mood comes over me and I think of the stories grandmamma was wont to tell us of the noonday sprites. Methinks she was right. Was not that too a spirit's doings, but now? True, the story of the ring's discovery was real, but the other surely was elfish work! Or was it only a dream?

A dream only?

A gust of wind breaks in from the sea and all about us is life again. The trees sway and bend, and I hear from all their rustling a distinct answer: "'Twas No dream, No dream, but actual reality! Ye foolish ones. Think not ye are different from those who dwelt here in days of yore. For destiny is ever the same, ever the same. Joy of heart and pain of heart, that is your lot, as 'twas theirs of old. So it was then, so it is now, and so it will remain!"

## SECULARIST CEREMONIES.

BY GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE.

"Death is the decisive test of the value of the education and morality of society; Secular funerals are the symbol of the social renovation."—*J. P. Proudhon.*

[CERTAIN ceremonies are common to all human society, and should be consistent with the opinions of those in whose name the ceremonies take place. The marriage service of the Church contains things no bride could hear without a blush, if she understood them; and the Burial Service includes statements the minister ought to know to be untrue, and by which the sadness of death is desecrated. The Secularist naturally seeks other forms of speech. It being a principle of Secularism to endeavor to replace what it deems bad by something better—or more consistent with its profession—the following addresses are given. Other hands may supply happier examples; but, in the meantime, these which follow may meet with the needs of those who have no one at hand to speak for them, and are not accustomed to speak for themselves.]

### ON MARRIAGE.

Marriage involves several things of which few persons think beforehand, and which it is useful to call their attention to at this time. The bridegroom, by the act of marriage, professes that he has chosen out of all the women of the world, known to him, the one to whom he will be faithful while life shall last. He declares the bride to be his preference, and, whoever he may see hereafter, or like, or love, the door of association shall be shut upon them in his heart for ever. The bride, on her part, declares and promises the same things. The belief in each other's perfection is the most beautiful illusion of love. Sometimes the illusion happily continues during life. It may happen—it does happen sometimes—that each discovers that the other is not perfect. The Quaker's advice was: "Open your eyes wide before marriage, but shut them afterwards." Those who have neglected the first part of this counsel will still profit by observing the second. Let those who will look about, and put tormenting constructions on innocent acts: beware of jealousy, which kills more happiness than ever Love created.

The result of marriage is usually offspring, when society will have imposed upon it an addition to its number. It is necessary for the credit of the parents, as well as for the welfare of the children, that they should be born healthy, reared healthy, and be well educated; so that they may be strong and intelligent when the time comes for them to encounter, for themselves, the vicissitudes of life. Those who marry are considered to foreknow and to foresee these duties,

and to pledge themselves to do the best in their power to discharge them.

In the meantime, and ever afterwards, let love reign between you. And remember the minister of Love is deference towards each other. Ceremonial manners are conducive to affection. Love is not a business, but the permanence of love is a business.

Unless there are good humor, patience, pleasantness, discretion, and forbearance, love will cease. Those who expect perfection will lose happiness. A wise tolerance is the sunshine of love, and they who maintain the sentiment will come to count their marriage the beginning of the brightness of life.

#### NAMING CHILDREN.

In naming children it is well to avoid names whose associations pledge the child, without its consent, to some line of action it may have no mind to, or capacity for, when grown up. A child called "Brutus" would be expected to stab Cæsar—and the Cæsars are always about. The name "Washington" destroyed a politician of promise who bore it. He could never live up to it. A name should be a pleasant mark to be known by, not a badge to be borne.

In formally naming a child it is the parents alone to whom useful words can be addressed.

Heredity, which means qualities derived from parentage, is a prophecy of life. Therefore let parents render themselves as perfect in health, as wise in mind, and as self-respecting in manners as they can; for their qualities in some degree will appear in their offspring. One advantage of children is that they contribute unconsciously to the education of parents. No parents of sense can fail to see that children are as imitative as monkeys, and have better memories. Not only do they imitate actions, but repeat forms of expression, and will remember them ever after. The manners of parents become more or less part of the manners and mind of the child. Sensible parents, seeing this, will put a guard upon their conduct and speech, so that their example in act and word may be a store-house of manners and taste from which their children may draw wisdom in conduct and speech. The minds of children are as photographic plates on which parents are always printing something which will be indelibly visible in future days. Therefore the society, the surroundings, the teachers of the child, so far as the parents can control them, should be well chosen, in order that the name borne by the young shall command respect when their time comes to play a part in the drama of life. To this end a child should be taught to take care what he promises, and that when he has given his promise he has to keep it, for he whose word is not to be trusted is always suspected, and his opinion is not sought by others, or is disre-

garded when uttered. A child should early learn that debt is dependence, and the habit of it is the meanness of living upon loans. There can be no independence, no reliance upon the character of any one, who will buy without the means of payment, or who lives beyond his income. Such persons intend to live on the income of some one else, and do it whether they intend it or not. He alone can be independent who trusts to himself for advancement. No one ought to be helped forward who does not possess this quality, or will not put his hand to any honest work open to him. Beware of the child who has too much pride to do what he can for his own support, but has not too much pride to live upon his parents, or upon friends. Such pride is idleness, or thoughtlessness, or both, unless illness causes the inability.

Since offspring have to be trained in health and educated in the understanding, there must not be many in the family unless the parents have property. The poor cannot afford to have many children if they intend to do their duty by them. It is immoral in the rich to have many because the example is bad, and because they are sooner or later quartered upon the people to keep them; or, if they are provided for by their parents, they are under no obligation to do anything for themselves, which is neither good for them nor good for the community, to which they contribute nothing.

Believing this child will be trained by its parents to be an honor to them, and a welcome addition to the family of humanity, it is publicly named with pleasure.

#### Over the Dead.

##### 1.—READING AT A GRAVE.

##### *Esdras and Uriel.*

[An argument in which the Prophet speaks as a Secularist.]

And the angel that was sent unto me, whose name was Uriel, said:—I am sent to show thee three ways, and to set forth three similitudes before thee: whereof, if thou canst declare me one, I will show thee also the way that thou desirest to see . . .

And I said, Tell on, my Lord.

Then said he unto me, Go thy way; weigh me the weight of the fire, or measure me the blast of the wind, or call me again the day that is past.

Then answered I and said, What man is able to do that, that thou shouldest ask such things of me?

And he said unto me, If I should ask thee how great dwellings are in the midst of the sea, or how many springs are in the beginning of the deep, or how many springs are above the firmament, or which are the outgoings of Paradise, peradventure thou wouldst say unto me, I never went down into the deep, nor as yet into Hell, neither did I ever climb up into Heaven.

Nevertheless, now have I asked thee but only of the fire, and wind, and of *the day wherethrough* thou hast passed, and of *things from which thou canst not be separated*, and yet canst thou give me no answer of them.

He said, moreover, unto me, Thine own things, and such as are *grown up with thee*, canst thou not know? How should thy vessel, then, be able to comprehend the way of the Highest? . . .

Then said I unto him, It were better that we were not at all than that we should live still in wickedness and to suffer, and not to know wherefor.

He answered me and said, I went into a forest, into a plain, and the trees took counsel, and said, Come, let us go and make war against the sea, that it may depart away before us, and that we may make us more woods.

The floods of the sea also in like manner took counsel, and said, Come, let us go up and subdue the woods of the plain: that there also we may make us another country.

The thought of the wood was in vain, for the fire came and consumed it. The thought of the floods of the sea came likewise to nought, for the sand stood up and stopped them.

If thou wert judge now betwixt these two, whom wouldest thou begin to justify? or whom wouldest thou condemn?

I answered, and said, Verily it is a foolish thought that they both have devised; for the ground is given unto the wood, and the sea also hath his place to bear his floods.

Then answered he me and said, Thou hast given a right judgment; but why judgest thou not thyself also? For like as the ground is given unto the woods, and the sea to his floods, even so they that dwell upon the earth may understand nothing but that which is upon the earth: and he that dwelleth upon the heavens may only understand the things that are above the height of the heavens.

Then answered I and said, I beseech thee, O Lord, let me have *understanding*.

*For it was not my mind to be curious of the high things, but of such as pass by us daily.*

*Harriet Martineau's Hymn.*

[The only hymn known to me in which a Supreme Cause is implied without being asserted or denied, or the reader committed to belief in it.]

Beneath this starry arch  
Nought resteth or is still,  
But all things hold their march  
As if by one great will;  
Moves one, move all;  
Hark to the footfall!  
On, on, for ever!

Yon sheaves were once but seed;  
Will ripens into deed.

As eave-drops swell the streams,  
Day-thoughts feed nightly dreams;  
And sorrow tracketh wrong,  
As echo follows song,  
On, on, for ever!

By night, like stars on high,  
The hours reveal their train;  
They whisper and go by;  
I never watch in vain:  
Moves one, move all:  
Hark to the footfall!  
On, on, for ever!

They pass the cradle-head,  
And there a promise shed;  
They pass the moist new grave,  
And bid bright verdure wave;  
They bear through every clime,  
The harvests of all time,  
On, on, for ever!

II.—AT THE GRAVE OF A CHILD.

The death of a child is alone its parents' sorrow. Too young to know, too innocent to fear, its life is a smile and its death a sleep. As the sun goes down before our eyes, so a mother's love vanishes from the gaze of infancy, and death, like evening, comes to it with quietness, gentleness, and rest. We measure the loss of a child by the grief we feel. When its love is gone, its promise over, and its prattle silent, its fate excites the parents' tears; but we forget that infancy, like the rose, is unconscious of the sweetness it sheds, and it parts without pain from the pleasure it was too young to comprehend, though engaging enough to give to others. The death of a child is like the death of a day, of which George Herbert sings:

"Sweet day, so clear, so calm, so bright  
Bridal of the earth and sky;  
The dew shall weep thy fall to-night—  
For thou must die."

It is no consolation to say, "When a child dies it is taken from the sorrows of life." Yes! it is taken from the sorrows of life, and from its joys also. When the young die they are taken away from the evil, and from good as well. What parents' love does not include the happiness of its offspring? No! we will not cheat ourselves. Death is a real loss to those who mourn, and the world is never the same again to those who have wept by the grave of a child. Argument does not, in that hour, reach the heart. It is human to weep, and sympathy is the only medicine of great grief. The sight of the empty shoe in the corner will efface the most relevant logic. Not all the preaching since Adam has made death other than death. Yet, though sorrow cannot be checked at once by reason, it may be chastened by it. Wisdom teaches that all human passions must be subordinate to the higher purposes of life. We must no more abandon ourselves to grief than to vice. The condition of life is the lia-

bility to vicissitude, and, while it is human to feel, it is duty to endure. The flowers fade, and the stars go down, and youth and loveliness vanish in the eternal change. Though we cannot but regret a vital loss, it is wisdom to love all that is good for its own sake; to enjoy its presence fully, but not to build on its continuance, doing what we can to insure its continuance, and bearing with fortitude its loss when it comes. If the death of infancy teaches us this lesson, the past may be a charmed memory, with courage and dignity in it.

### III.—MEN OR WOMEN.

The science of life teaches us that while there is pain there is life. It would seem, therefore, that death, with silent and courteous step, never comes save to the unconscious. A niece of Franklin's, known for her wit and consideration for others, arrived at her last hour at the age of ninety-eight. In her composure a friend gently touched her. "Ah," murmured the old lady, "I was dying so beautifully when you brought me back! But never mind, my dear; I shall try it again." This bright resignation, worthy of the niece of a philosopher, is making its way in popular affection.

Lord Tennyson, when death came near to him, wrote :

"Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar  
When I put out to sea.

Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark,  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark."

There is just a touch of superstition in these genial lines. He writes: "After death the dark." How did he know that? What evidence is there that the unknown land is "dark"? Why not light? The unknown has no determinate or ascertained color.

Where we know nothing, neither priest nor poet has any right to speak as though he had knowledge. Improbability does not imply impossibility. That which invests death with romantic interest is, that it may be a venture on untried existence. If a future state be true, it will befall those who do not expect it as well as those who do. Another world, if such there be, will come most befittingly and most agreeably to those who have qualified themselves for it, by having made the best use in their power of this. By best use is meant the service of man. Desert consists alone in the service of others. Kindness and cheerfulness are the two virtues which most brighten human life. Wide-eyed philanthropy is not merely money-giving goodness, but the wider kindness which aids the as-

cendancy of the right and minimises misery everywhere.

Death teaches, as nothing else does, one useful lesson. Whatever affection or friendship we may have shown to one we have lost, Death brings to our memory countless acts of tenderness which we had neglected. Conscience makes us sensible of these omissions now it is too late to repair them. But we can pay to the living what we think we owe to the dead; whereby we transmute the dead we honor into benefactors of those they leave behind. This is a useful form of consolation, of which all survivors may avail themselves.

Mrs. Ernestine Rose—a brave advocate of unfriended right—when age and infirmity brought her near to death, recalled the perils and triumphs in which she had shared, the slave she had helped to set free from the bondage of ownership, and the slave minds she had set free from the bondage of authority; she was cheered, and exclaimed: "But I have lived."

The day will come when all around this grave shall meet death; but it will be a proud hour if, looking back upon a useful and generous past, we each can say: "I have *lived*."

### IV.—ON A CAREER OF PUBLIC USEFULNESS.

In reasoning upon death no one has surpassed the argument of Socrates, who said: "Death is one of two things: either the dead may be nothing and have no feeling—well, then, if there be no feeling, but it be like sleep, when the sleeper has no dream, surely death would be a marvellous gain, for thus all futurity appears to be nothing more than one night. If, on the other hand, death be a removal hence to another place, and what is said be true, that all the dead are there, what greater blessing can there be than this?"

Sir Edwin Arnold, in his *Secret of Death*, writes:

"Nay, but as when one layeth  
His worn-out robes away,  
And, taking new ones, sayeth,  
'These will I wear to-day!'

So putteth by the spirit  
Lightly its garb of flesh,  
And passeth to inherit  
A residence afresh."

This may be true, and there is no objection to it if it is. But the pity is, nobody seems to be sure about it. At death we may mourn, but duty ceaseth not. If we desist in endeavors for the right because a combatant falls at our side, no battle will ever be won. "Life," Mazzini used to say, "is a battle and a march." Those who serve others at their own peril are always in "battle." Let us honor them as they pass. Some of them have believed:

" Though love repine and reason chafe,  
 There came a voice without reply—  
 'Tis man's perdition to be safe,  
 When for the truth he ought to die."

They are of those who, as another poet has said, "are not to be mourned, but to be imitated."<sup>1</sup> The mystery of death is no greater than the mystery of life. All that precedes our existence was unseen, unimaginable, and unknown to us. What may succeed in the future is unprovable by philosopher or priest:

" A flower above and the mould below ;  
 And this is all that the mourners know."<sup>2</sup>

The ideal of life which gives calmness and confidence in death is the same in the mind of the wise Christian as in the mind of the philosopher. Sydney Smith says: "Add to the power of discovering truth the desire of using it for the promotion of human happiness, and you have the great end and object of our existence."<sup>3</sup> Putting just intention into action, a man fulfils the supreme duty of life, which casts out all fear of the future.

A poet who thought to reconcile to their loss those whose lines have not fallen to them in pleasant places wrote:

"A little rule, a little sway,  
 A sunbeam on a winter's day,  
 Is all the proud and mighty have  
 Between the cradle and the grave."

This is not true; the proud and mighty have rest at choice, and play at will. The "sunbeam" is on them all their days. Between the cradle and the grave is the whole existence of man. The splendid inheritance of the "proud and mighty" ought to be shared by all whose labor creates and makes possible the good fortune of those who "toil not, neither do they spin"; and whoever has sought to endow the industrious with liberty and intelligence, with competence and leisure, we may commit to the earth in the sure and certain hope that they deserve well, and will fare well, in any "land of the leal" to which mankind may go.

#### MR. G. J. HOLYOAKE'S SECULARISM.

We have published in *The Open Court* a consecutive series of articles on "Secularism," by Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, in which he furnishes a *résumé* of his life-experiences as his "Confession of Faith." The present number contains a few speeches of his made on solemn occasions, such as funerals, marriages, and naming a child, which will give a clear idea of secularist ceremonies, such as Mr. Holyoake would have them.

Among the representative freethinkers of the world Mr. George J. Holyoake takes a most prominent position. He is a leader of leaders, he is the brain of the Secularist party in England, he is a hero and a martyr of their cause.

Judged as a man, Mr. Holyoake is of sterling character; he was not afraid of prison, nor of unpopularity and ostracism, nor of persecution of any kind. If he ever feared anything, it was be-

ing not true to himself and committing himself to something that was not right. He has been an agitator all his life, and as an agitator he was—whether we agree with his views or not—an ideal man. He is the originator of the Secularist movement that was started in England; he invented the name Secularism, and he has been the backbone of the Secularist propaganda ever since it began. Mr. Holyoake left his mark in the history of thought, and the influence which he exercised will for good or evil remain an indelible heirloom of the future.

Secularism is not the cause which The Open Court Publishing Co. upholds, but it is a movement which on account of its importance ought not to be overlooked. Whatever our religious views may be, we must reckon with the conditions that exist, and Secularism is powerful enough to deserve general attention.

What is Secularism?

Secularism espouses the cause of the world *versus* theology; of the secular and temporal *versus* the sacred and ecclesiastical. Secularism claims that religion ought never to be anything but a private matter; it denies the right of any kind of church to be associated with the public life of a nation, and proposes to supersede the official influence which religious institutions still exercise in both hemispheres.

Rather than abolish religion or paralyse its influence, The Open Court Publishing Co. would advocate on the one hand to let the religious spirit pervade the whole body politic, together with all public institutions, and also the private life of every single individual; and on the other hand to carry all secular interests into the church, which would make the church subservient to the real needs of mankind.

We have published Mr. Holyoake's Confession of Faith, which is an exposition of Secularism, not because we are Secularists, which we are not, but because we believe that Mr. Holyoake is entitled to a hearing. Mr. Holyoake is a man of unusually great common sense, of keen reasoning faculty, and of indubitable sincerity. What he says he means, and what he believes he lives up to, what he recognises to be right he will do, even though the whole world would stand up against him. In a word, he is a man who according to our conception of religion proves by his love of truth that, however he himself may disclaim it, he is actually a deeply religious man. His religious earnestness is rare, and our churches would be a good deal better off if all the pulpits were filled with men of his stamp.

We have published Mr. Holyoake's Confession of Faith not for Secularists only, but also and especially for the benefit of religious people, of his adversaries, of his antagonists; for they ought to know him and understand him; they ought to appreciate his motives for dissenting from church views; and ought to learn why so many earnest and honest people are leaving the church and will have nothing to do with church institutions.

Why is it that Christianity is losing its hold on mankind? Is it because the Christian doctrines have become antiquated, and does the church no longer adapt herself to the requirements of the present age? Is it that the representative Christian thinkers are lacking in intellectuality and moral strength? Or is it that the world at large has outgrown religion and refuses to be guided by the spiritual counsel of popes and pastors?

Whatever the reason may be, the fact itself cannot be doubted, and the question is only, What will become of religion in the future? Will the future of mankind be irreligious (as for instance Mr. Lecky and M. Guyau prophesy); or will religion regain its former importance and become again the leading power in life, dominating both public and private affairs?

The first condition of a reconciliation between religion and the masses of mankind would be for religious men patiently to listen to the complaints that are made by the adversaries of Christianity, and to understand the position which honest and sensible

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Linton. <sup>2</sup> Barry Cornwall. <sup>3</sup> *Moral Philosophy*.

freethinkers, such as Mr. Holyoake, take. Religious leaders are too little acquainted with the world at large; they avoid their antagonists like outcasts, and rarely, if ever, try to comprehend their arguments. In the same way, freethinkers as a rule despise clergymen as hypocrites who for the sake of a living sell their souls and preach doctrines which they cannot honestly believe. In order to arrive at a mutual understanding, it would be necessary first of all that both parties should discontinue ostracising one another and become mutually acquainted. They should lay aside for a while the weapons with which they are wont to combat one another in the public press and in tract literature; they should cease scolding and ridiculing one another and simply present their own case in terse terms.

This Mr. Holyoake has done. His Confession of Faith is as concise as it can be; and he, being the originator of Secularism and its standard-bearer, is the man who speaks with authority.

For the sake of religion, therefore, and for promoting the mutual understanding of men of a different turn of mind, we have presented his expositions to the public and recommend its careful perusal especially to the clergy, who will learn from them some of the most important reasons why Christianity has become unacceptable to a large class of truth-loving men, who solely for the sake of truth find it best to stay out of the church.

Now we ask: What is the main difference between Secularism and "the Religion of Science."

Secularism divides life into what is secular and what is religious, and would consign all matters of religion to the sphere of private interests. The Religion of Science would not divide life into a secular and a religious part, but would have both the secular and the religious united. It would carry religion into all secular affairs so as to sanctify and transfigure them; and for this purpose it would make religion practical, so as to be suited to the various needs of life; it would make religion scientifically sound, so as to be in agreement with the best and most scientific thought of the age; it would reform church doctrines and raise them from their dogmatic arbitrariness to the higher plain of objective truth.

In emphasising our differences we should, however, not fail to recognise the one main point of agreement, which is our belief in science. Mr. Holyoake would settle all questions of doubt by the usual method of scientific investigation. But there is a difference even here, which is a different conception of science. While science to Mr. Holyoake is secular, we insist on the holiness and religious significance of science. If there is any revelation of God, it is truth; and what is science but truth ascertained? Therefore we would advise all preachers and all those to whose charge souls of men are committed, to take off their shoes when science speaks to them, for science is the voice of God.

The statement is sometimes made by those who belittle science in the vain hope of exalting religion, that the science of yesterday has been upset by the science of to-day, and that the science of to-day may again be upset by the science of to-morrow. Nothing can be more untrue.

Of course, science must not be identified with the opinion of scientists. Science is the systematic statement of facts, and not the theories which are tentatively proposed to fill out the gaps of our knowledge. What has once been proved to be a fact has never been overthrown, and the actual stock of science has grown slowly but surely. The discovery of new facts or the enunciating of a new and reliable hypothesis has often shown the old facts of science in a new light, but it has never upset or disproved them. There are fashions in the opinions of scientists, but science itself is above fashion, above change, above human opinion. Science partakes of that stern immutability, it is endowed with that eternity and that omnipresent universality which have since olden times been regarded as the main attribute of Godhood.

There appears in all religions, at a certain stage of the religious

development, a party of dogmatists. They are people who, in their zeal, insist on the exclusiveness of their own religion, as if truth were a commodity which, if possessed by one, cannot be possessed by anybody else. They know little of the spirit that quickens, but believe blindly in the letter of the dogma. It is not faith in their opinion that saves, but the blindness of faith. They interpret Christ's words and declare that he who has another interpretation must be condemned.

The dogmatic phase in the development of religion is as natural as boyhood in a human life and as immaturity in the growth of fruit; it is natural and necessary, but it is a phase only which will pass as inevitably by as boyhood changes into manhood, and as the prescientific stage in the evolution of civilisation gives way to a better and deeper knowledge of nature.

The dogmatist is in the habit of identifying his dogmatism with religion; and that is the reason why his definitions of religion and morality will unfailingly come in conflict with the common sense of the people. The dogmatist makes religion exclusive. In the attempt of exalting religion he relegates it to supernatural spheres, thus excluding it from the world and creating a contrast between the sacred and the profane, between the divine and the secular, between religion and life. Thus it happens that religion becomes something beyond, something extraneous, something foreign to man's sphere of being. And yet religion has developed for the sake of sanctifying the daily walks of man, of making the secular sacred, of filling life with meaning and consecrating even the most trivial duties of existence.

Secularism is the reaction against dogmatism, but secularism still accepts the views of the dogmatist on religion; for it is upon the dogmatist's valuations and definitions that the secularist rejects religion as worthless.

\* \* \*

The religious movement, of which The Open Court Publishing Co. is an exponent, represents one further step in the evolution of religious aspirations. As alchemy develops into chemistry, and astrology into astronomy, as blind faith changes into seeing face to face, as belief changes into knowledge, so the religion of miracles, the religion of a salvation by magic, the religion of the dogmatist, ripens into the religion of pure and ascertainable truth. The old dogmas, which in their literal acceptance appear as nonsensical errors, are now recognised as allegories which symbolise deeper truths, and the old ideals are preserved not with less, but with more, significance than before.

God is not smaller but greater since we know more about Him, as to what He is and what He is not, just as the universe is not smaller but larger since Copernicus and Kepler opened our eyes and showed us what the relation of our earth in the solar system is and what it is not.

Secularism is one of the signs of the times. It represents the unbelief in a religious alchemy; but its antagonism to the religion of dogmatism does not bode destruction but advance. It represents the transition to a purer conception of religion. It has not the power to abolish the church, but only indicates the need of its reformation.

It is this reformation of religion and of religious institutions which is the sole aim of all the publications of The Open Court Publishing Co., and we see in Secularism one of those agencies that are at work preparing the way for a higher and nobler comprehension of the truth.

Mr. Holyoake's aspirations, in our opinion, go beyond the aims which he himself points out, and thus his Confession of Faith, although nominally purely secular, will finally, even by churchmen, be recognised in its religious importance. It will help to purify the confession of faith of the dogmatist.

In weighing Mr. Holyoake's best and maturest thoughts, we feel convinced that both the secularists and the believers in reli-

gion will by and by learn to understand that Secularism as much as dogmatism is a phase—both are natural and necessary phases—in the religious evolution of mankind. There is no use in scolding either the dogmatist or the secularist, or in denouncing the one on account of his credulity and superstition, and the other on account of his dissent; but there is a use in—nay, there is need of—understanding the aspirations of both.

There is a need of mutual exchange of thought on the basis of mutual esteem and good-will. Above all, there is a need of opening the church doors to the secularist.

The church, if it has any right of existence at all, is for the world, and not for believers alone. Church members can learn from the secularist many things which many believers seem to have forgotten, and, on the other hand, they can teach the unbeliever what he has overlooked in his sincere attempts at finding the truth.

P. C.

### THE DOOM OF THE UNITED STATES.

*La Revue Blanche* is a fortnightly belletristic journal, published in Paris, of broad aims and undoubted critical ability. In one of its recent numbers is an article by Mr. Jacques Saint-Cère, entitled "The Collapse of the United States." Mr. Saint-Cère recently disported himself as the Paris correspondent of certain large American dailies, and seems to have acquired by this means self-accredited competency in France as an infallible oracle in American matters. The "melancholy Jacques" is himself conscious of his lofty position, for he keenly satirises European ignorance of European history, and gravely sets aright certain European prejudices concerning American affairs. The following extracts from his prophecy are of interest, both as showing his intimacy with our politics and ethnology, and as affording a curious insight into the mental workshops of certain European critics of America, who, with all the truths they proclaim, not infrequently display a lamentable ignorance of facts. The occasion of Mr. Saint-Cère's remarks is the present crisis in American politics. He has been speaking of the free coinage of silver, whereupon he offers the following reflexions:

"The war of Secession was caused by the violent contrariety of interests of the South and the North. After the war these interests were more or less consolidated, and, after thirty years, Confederates and Federals stand on a tolerably friendly footing. But now new interests have arisen with quite a different tendency—the interests of the East and the West. And so diametrically are these opposed, so irreconcilable are they, that it is certain they will bring about in time a terrible rupture, long foreseen in thoughtful moments by all Americans who are concerned in their country's future. In the East the sole occupation is manufacturing; the necessity of exporting exists; and here the people are free-traders. In the West the sole occupation is agriculture; the necessity of creating a home-market exists; and here the people are protectionists. How can such interests be reconciled? How can men who live only to work, and work only to make money, possibly make concessions where their work and their money are at stake?"

"In the East all eyes are involuntarily turned towards Europe, which they yet condemn, towards the old civilisation which they yet imitate. Here the inhabitants still recollect that their nation was created and settled by European colonists. In the West the inhabitants are separated from the Atlantic by a vast continent, and their eyes are directed to the Orient and to Australia; they will hear nothing of our civilisation, and do not trouble themselves in the least about Europe, of which they are utterly ignorant. The man of the East, however remote his ancestry, has still European blood flowing in his veins: he is stocky, thick-set. The man of the West has Indian blood in his body, and cannot conceal it: he is tall and lean. In the East they still use

the fist as well as the revolver: in the West they wield the knife as deftly as the rifle. The man of 'Frisco detests the man of New York as heartily as the Western farmer despises the workingman of Chicago. In Europe we imagine that Americans are all that homogeneous class of beings who chew tobacco, whittle sticks of wood, and have a flag with stars at the top, an arrangement extremely ludicrous to people whose flags are all of a piece. If we speak English we add with affected superiority that they are Yankees, and if we are extremely well-informed we say 'Stars and Strips' or 'Yankee Deedle Doodle.'

"But we err in this as in many other things. At bottom here there are two nations, two races, which will violently tear themselves asunder some day, after a frightful war, not unforeseen by them at present. We shall see the Republic of the Atlantic, ultimately destined to play a part in Europe—and the Republic of the Pacific, for which we are in the way of opening the Far Orient to what we term civilisation, and which England will be less astonished than is usually supposed at finding, some day, established in Australia.

"There are many things utterly beyond the ken of the festive cocktail!" Yes, and we might add, also of the frolicsome, obfuscating absinthe.

T. J. McC.

### NOTES.

The booklet of pretty tales from which the idyl, "On the Dunes of the Baltic," in the present number, is taken, is by Mrs. L. Lindemann-Küssner, the wife of Professor Lindemann, a celebrated German mathematician, formerly of Königsberg, now of Munich, and best known to the public at large by his famous proof of the impossibility of squaring the circle. Mrs. Lindemann's little sketches are marked by simplicity and genuine sentiment, and their perusal will be much enjoyed by students and readers of German. Their title is *Für dich* and they are published by Karl Schüller, of Munich.

## 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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