

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### THE REV. J. M. GOEZE AND LESSING.

The Rev. R. G. Baumann, pastor of the Lutheran churches at Mount Palatine and Peru, Illinois, delivered a lecture on "Johann Melchior Goeze and Lessing" at La Salle recently, which was of more than ordinary interest by reason of the famous literary feud waged by these two champions of Christianity and Liberalism. Lessing having published *The Fragments of Wolfenbüttel*, a manuscript that contained a keen criticism of the Gospels and the Christian dogmas, was fiercely attacked and denounced by Christians, and he selected from among over ninety critics of his the head pastor of Hamburg, Johann Melchior Goeze, as the man against whom to direct his defence. Goeze was the most conspicuous of Lessing's adversaries, and Lessing attacked him in the most formidable manner. There is no room here to expatiate on the subject, nor is there any need of it, for the facts of this famous dispute are sufficiently known; suffice it only to say that in Lessing's time the head pastor of Hamburg, being a well-known man, perhaps the most famous clergyman of Germany and the incumbent of a rich living, enjoyed great advantages over Lessing, the poor *littérateur*, who eked out a meagre sustenance as a librarian. The liberals were scantier in Lessing's days than they are now, and Goeze was sure of finding applause in all religious circles. The tables, however, were quickly turned. Clergymen pose before the public during lifetime, but their fame fades before the light of their successors, while the author's reputation (if his works are going to stay) rather increases after his death. In a similar way the actor gains glory quicker and more easily than the poet, but the poet's fame is eternal while the actor is soon forgotten. At any rate, while Goeze seemed to have the best of it during Lessing's lifetime, the head pastor's renown quickly waned in later generations, and to-day he and his cause have become almost the laughing-stock of the world. The fact is that everybody is familiar with Lessing's side of the controversy, and no one (orthodox Christians not excepted) has read what Goeze had to say. Thus public opinion has become one-sided in favor of Lessing, and it seems a very bold undertaking to take up the doomed cause of the vanquished pietist. Pastor Baumann has dared to do so. He has gone over the documents again and places himself squarely on the side of the defender of Christianity so much ridiculed by liberals and scorned even by dogmatic Christians who are in the habit of emphasising that he was not the proper man to defend the cause of the Church. Pastor Baumann's defence of Goeze's position comes very timely, and although we cannot adopt Goeze's religious conviction, which is satisfied with traditional Christianity, we can neither accept Lessing's views, which are nothing but a bare agnos-

ticism. We find that both sides are justifiable as one-sided standpoints, but the solution of the problem about which they fight is not contained either in Goeze's or in Lessing's propositions.

It is a decided merit of Pastor Baumann's lecture to have called attention to the noble spirit of Goeze's attitude in the controversy, which becomes apparent in a letter written to Lessing, which reads as follows :

"MY DEAR SIR<sup>1</sup> :—Be not vexed if on this occasion I speak a word in another tone than the one which you have forced from me. God knows that I love you heartily. I do not overlook the beautiful talents which God has given you, nor your exquisite learning and comprehension which you have acquired by their right use in several departments of *belles-lettres*. I forgive you from the bottom of my heart that you employ all your strength to degrade me in the eyes of the Church, of the learned world, and of my own congregation, as an unscientific and stupid fool, and *that* I should be if seven like me could not hold their own against the seventh part of your *Fragments*. But this very love, this regard, urges me to take, in a quiet hour, the following thoughts into consideration : you declare, and my whole heart quakes at the declaration, that for the sake of having published the *Fragments* and what you have done in connexion with them, you would not fear in your hour of death. For the sake of God, consider what you have written. Consider the responsibility which you owe on Judgment Day to the Lord, whose honor you have criminally attacked and blasphemed through the *Fragments*, whose word you have rated much lower than miserable human writings. Bear in mind that on that day not one but hundreds will rise against you and say, 'O Lord! we have heard 'that your disciples, upon whom we looked as tools of the Holy Spirit, were 'frauds, that they had stolen a dead body, that they were rascals. Thus we could 'not help regarding thy resurrection as anything else than a mischievous fable 'through which the world was duped. We began to be ashamed of it and mock at 'it. We offended others and made them like us, and the writings of these men, as 'well as the holy religion taught by them, became ridiculous and absurd.'

"Well, my dear sir, are you indeed certain that this scene will not happen, and that, should it happen, your similes and witty suggestions will be sufficient to justify your demeanor?"

These lines, written after an acrimonious controversy, in which Lessing had shown no compassion for his adversary, exhibit a noble spirit, and we cannot help thinking that Lessing, after the receipt of this letter, regretted much what he had said. But the main thing in question is not the character of the combatants, but the cause for which they fought, and we find that the one, Goeze, believed in the absolute reliability of a tradition as genuine and indubitable truth, while the other one, Lessing, regarded the attainment of truth as impossible. Lessing said :

"If God in his right hand held all the truth, and in his left hand solely every living aspiration after the truth, yet with the condition of eternal error, and if he gave me the choice I would with humility choose the left hand and say : 'Father, give me this ; the pure truth after all is for Thee alone.'"

Lessing apparently overestimates the aspiration for truth, and undervalues the possession of truth. It is true that truth, if uttered from insincere motives, ceases to be truth. It acquires an admixture of most venomous falsity. But for that reason error, if held with the conviction of being truth, remains a dangerous condition, and will exercise an injurious influence, be the man who is blinded by such

<sup>1</sup>Literally, My Dear Mr. Counsellor, or *Hofrath*, which was Lessing's official title, given him by the Duke of Brunswick.

illusions ever so sincere and faithful. We may excuse the man who errs, we may think better of him who in honesty and with modesty defends an untruth than of his antagonist who stands up for the truth in haughtiness and for the sake of his own interests. Supposing mankind were really condemned to search for the truth without ever finding it, would not life be like the cruel fate of Tantalus? Our hunger for truth would be a punishment rather than a blessing, and science, instead of being the bread of life, would be a stone.

We cannot say that Goeze's position is right; we are not satisfied with the traditional belief of any one of the churches, and find in none of the Christian sects the realisation of the ideal religion. There is a need of reform and criticism in the indispensable means of discovering the sore spots which must be cured. But when we concede that we are not in possession of pure truth, we need not despair of truth itself. We are at least in a partial possession of truth; for truth reveals itself in degrees, and we can progress from an incomplete to more and ever more complete comprehension of truth. Truth is not a thing, not an object which we either have in its entirety or have not at all; truth is a matter of spiritual growth; it develops, and the development of truth on earth is nothing else than the progress of the human race.

Lessing's position is not only untenable, but also dreary and disconsolate, and it seems that Lessing assumed his attitude for the same reason that our modern agnostics adopt agnosticism, viz., for mere spite of gnosticism. The self-complacency of the gnostics provokes the antagonism of unbelievers, and they attack the principle of the gnosis itself, without noticing their own inconsistency. If agnosticism is right, science has lost all authority; and all opinions, whether scientific or superstitious, come down to the same level. Lessing perceived that his adversaries, who claimed to be in possession of truth, were wrong, but he himself had not as yet discovered a way out of it. In fact, he preferred the traditional dogmatism to the shallow liberalism of his time. He wrote to his brother during February of 1774:

"What is our new fangled theology but dung-suds as compared with impure water? With our old-fashioned orthodoxy we were pretty nearly through. A division had been made between its doctrines and philosophy, and each one proceeded on its own way without hindering the other. But what do they do now? They tear down this division, and under the pretext of changing us into rational Christians they make of us irrational philosophers. Do not please consider so much that which our new theologians reject as that which they propose in its place. We are pretty well agreed that our old religious system is wrong, but I would not grant you that it is a botch of bunglers and half-philosophers. I know of nothing in the world on which human acumen has shown itself and practised itself more than here. A botch of bunglers and half-philosophers is the religious system by which they now try to replace the old one, and they arrogate to themselves much more influence upon reason and philosophy than was done formerly. In the face of these facts you are dissatisfied with me that I defend the old one."

This attitude seems to suggest that the proper way of attaining to the truth is investigation, and that we should proceed in a conservative spirit, to keep the good we had and not to discard everything if we discover a flaw somewhere. There is no need of casting out the child together with the bath because the water has become dirty. The eagerness of the combat alone can have led Lessing to adopt the doctrine now so prevalent all over the world, that the search for truth is based on a vain hope, and this notion must have proved very oppressive to him.

One of his friends, Jacobi, visited Lessing in Wolfenbüttel in 1780 and ex-

pressed in a letter to Elise Reimarus, of May 15, 1781, written soon after Lessing's death, his opinion concerning his state of mind as follows :

"I should like to know how much secret grief may have contributed to his [Lessing's] death. A profound melancholy lay upon him, and I shall never forget that morning which on my return I passed in his company. He gave me some remote hints that his late wife had blamed him on her death-bed for having infected her with his sorry view. That was frightful and forbade him to think of marriage, children, and love."

The object of the Religion of Science is to lead us out of the narrowness of the old views represented by Goeze into a broader, a truer, a scientifically more correct, and a nobler religious conception without committing us to Lessing's desolate position of a disbelief in the attainableness of truth. The hope of future progress does not lie in blind faith, nor in infidelity, but in exact and bold inquiry; and there is comfort neither in a submission to unbelievable dogmas nor in the acceptance of agnosticism, but in the final discovery of truth. The fact that every new discovery leads to new problems, thus exhibiting the inexhaustibleness of the universe, does not prove that there is no truth; nor is it a system of the worthlessness of partial glimpses of the truth. We had new glimpses of truth which show us the old truths in a new light. Shall we therefore despair and say there is no truth at all?

It is the aim of *The Open Court* to stimulate research and to point out that the methods of science are also applicable to the problems of religion. Religion is not a domain that is exempt, and the light that science throws on it will only preserve the old ideals and render them in their purified forms more useful and practicable.

P. C.

## DETERMINISM AND MONISM *versus* MORALITY.

*To the Editor of The Open Court :*

The following brief notes refer to an article written by Dr. Carus in the May number of this magazine, in which he answers some of the present writer's criticisms of the ethical views advocated by *The Open Court* and *The Monist*. It were fruitless to re-state the arguments advanced; and, as I do not believe that Dr. Carus has answered them in a satisfactory manner, I see no necessity for explaining or strengthening them. There are, however, some points in his reply that are of special interest, and to which I would call particular attention.

Dr. Carus properly says that the whole matter turns on the freewill problem, and he presents and elaborates a definition of freedom that, according to him, reconciles morality and determinism. To dispute about words is, indeed, a most fruitless task; and I shall, therefore, overlook his definition as such, and consider simply the *facts* implied.

Dr. Carus's conception of a free agent is identical with Spinoza's and is to the effect that a thing (whether sentient or not) is free when it acts according to its own nature, and not constrained by another thing, that is, by a cause outside of itself. Free actions he describes as "primary movements" having "their ground in a quality of the moving thing"; while actions that are not free are "secondary movements," due to push or pull, which is an *external* influence."<sup>1</sup>

Is it necessary for me to repeat that this mode of reasoning is founded on the anti-monistic illusion that effects are due to their *immediate* causes only; that there are separate and independent things in nature, and that everything is an aggregate

<sup>1</sup> Italics mine.

of properties existing and acting by themselves? In a universe in which every phenomenon is but a phase of one eternal energy, in which every body is but a part of an infinite whole, what is meant by *internal* and *external*, by the properties of an object independent of the properties and actions of other objects? Furthermore, every action being a reaction, what matters it whether John acts constrained by the immediate action of a whip or by the "push or pull" to which the molecules of his brain were submitted when they formed part of the gaseous nebula from which our solar system originated? The question is simply one of time: in one case energy transforms itself rapidly, and, so to speak, before our eyes; in the other case the transformation is gradual and the intermediate steps many in number and complex in nature; but the final action is as much constrained in one case as in the other. It seems evident that all distinction in this respect is anti-monistic and may be traced to what, in my essay, I have called the second source of error.

Dr. Carus makes a nice distinction between necessity, in the sense of inevitableness, and necessity, in the sense of compulsion; and he says that an object is compelled when it is acted upon "by some external power." In this, it will be well to notice, he differs from Spinoza, who, if I remember well, identifies necessity with compulsion. An illustration will show whether the distinction is admissible. Suppose that John and Peter are walking down a hill, and that suddenly a boulder rolls down and strikes John in the back, forcing him to run down the hill. This is a case of compulsion. Suppose, also, that Peter, in seeing his friend forced down the hill by the blow, runs to his assistance. This Dr. Carus would call a free action, it being necessary simply in the sense that, given Peter's character, he could not act otherwise under the circumstances. Now I should like to ask if Peter was not as much struck by the *sight* of his friend's condition as the latter was by the stone; and if it is logical to say that one man was "compelled" because he came in contact with a massive body that affected him *molarly*; while the other man was not compelled, because, although he received a shock that was transmitted to his brain and therefrom propagated, yet was not at first affected molarly, but *molecularly*? The explanation may seem somewhat ridiculous; but, in strict logic, that is what Dr. Carus's distinction amounts to. For him, freedom exists where the determinat causes are invisible; compulsion, where they are visible. I must again refer the reader to my "second source of error."

He also identifies morality with the pursuit and love of truth. But this is certainly a very elastic doctrine; for trueness may be predicated of bad actions as well as of good actions. I confess that, although truthfulness may be a good quality, I do not conceive how truth in general can be made the foundation of ethics.

There is another view taken by Dr. Carus, which, I should submit, is one more illustration of metaphysical survival. He speaks of ideas and convictions as very powerful factors in human actions. Expressions like these are often used, and I should raise no objection to them were it not that Dr. Carus takes them in a literal sense, whereas, according to the materialistic principles of monism, such expressions are only metaphorical.<sup>1</sup> An idea, as such, is not the cause of anything; it appears in consciousness as the effect of a neural state; this neural state (which, theoretically at least, *could* be expressed in foot-pounds) gives rise to another neural state, to which corresponds another idea, etc. etc. But an idea is not, as Dr. Carus seems to imply, a metaphysical entity capable of determining or dictating

<sup>1</sup>Since Dr. Carus seems to have a pronounced abhorrence of the term *materialism*, I must say that here the term is employed to denote all systems holding that mind is inseparable from matter, or that matter possesses mentality.

human actions. A human action is an organic change, whether molar or molecular, and such change can be due only to the immediately preceding *physical* condition of the organism. These considerations I submit, be it understood, *from the monistic point of view*, my contention being merely for *consistency*.

Finally, Dr. Carus charges me with forgetting "that sentiments are very important factors in the make-up of man's soul;" and this he does immediately after quoting a passage in which I emphatically insist on the controlling influence of feeling, and on the fact that the power of feelings is so strong that they often prompt us to act in opposition to our correct judgments. But his contention seems to be that, because the influence of feeling is so strong, it should not be opposed. I agree with Dr. Carus in that a strongly organised feeling should not be *violently* opposed: the nervous woman will be more injured than benefited if we try to change her feelings by frightening her. But this is not the point at issue. The question is whether her feelings are defensible on rational grounds, and, above all *whether we can consistently maintain that her way of acting is to be taken as a universal guide.*

ANTONIO LLANO.

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EDITORIAL REPLY.

Being the editor of this magazine, I treat my contributors as guests and am therefore anxious to let my critics have the last word in controversies. Accordingly I should have published Mr. Llano's rejoinder without any editorial comment, had he not challenged me to answer a question, which, if avoided, might give the impression of involving an unsurmountable difficulty. It is a question which is fully answered in my reply published in the May number of *The Open Court*. That Mr. Llano proposes the question, proves that he has not appreciated my definition of freedom (which in his opinion is a mere verbal quibble) and he can therefore not be expected to see the point why morality is not a mere illusion but an all-important feature in man's make-up.

If John, struck by a boulder, rolls down hill, he is not active but passive. He does not act, but is acted upon. His fall is not a deed that evinces a quality of John's character. But Peter, when following John for the sake of assisting him, is active, not passive.

It is true that Peter is acted upon by the idea of his companion's misfortune; and the idea originates in him by a sense-impression which in its physiological aspect is as much an impact as is the push of a rolling boulder. But here is the difference: The sense-impression gives rise to an idea, and the idea results in an action which characterises Peter's nature, his mental make-up, his very soul. The chain of causation is, in John's case, in all its causative factors purely mechanical, while, in Peter's case, it passes through the sphere of his mental and emotional life so as to make the reaction that ensues characteristic of the peculiarities of his soul. John's fall characterises a quality of John's body; it proves that John's body is as much possessed of gravity and subject to the laws of mechanics as any other mass of atoms. It is a purely mechanical result of the boulder's impact upon John's body. Peter's reaction upon a sense-impact characterises the mental and moral nature of Peter. His hastening down hill is an uninterrupted chain of mechanical motions beginning with the molecular motions which are the physiological side of his thoughts that prompt his muscles to action. But in addition to the mechanical aspect of the event, we have the psychical aspect. Peter's motions are not mere movements, they are a deed.

Man does not consist of matter alone, but also of sentiments and thoughts; and sentiments and thoughts, are as real as concrete objects and mechanical pressures. Mr. Llano's faithfulness to "the materialistic principles of monism" (as he calls it) leads him to disregard the import of the psychical facts of existence.

Among the molecular motions of Peter's brain, there is one which in its peculiar form is the physiological aspect of an idea of peculiar significance; this idea rouses other ideas of a sympathetic significance, embodied in brain-structures of an analogous form; and the nature of these ideas determines the character of Peter, as it finds expression in deeds, which, if done without compulsion, are rightly called his own deeds.

Whether a man be moral or not depends upon the significance of his motive ideas.

Ethics is the science that investigates the nature of motive ideas and searches for a norm or standard by which their commendability may be judged.

I refrain from further comments, because, aside from answering a direct question, there is no need of my repeating old arguments. Mr. Llano, too, feels as though he in his turn ought to repeat his arguments. And naturally so, because I have failed to convince him that he is one-sided, and he has failed to convince me that I am inconsistent when I take ideas as something more than morally indifferent molecular brain-motions.

Thus, so far as we two are concerned, we have wasted our powder in vain. But the case is different with our readers; and this is the main advantage of controversies. Our readers can go over the whole field again and reconsider the arguments offered on both sides; they may be benefited by the ventilation of these questions.

I conclude with the prayer that our readers may choose the truth on whatever side the truth may be. For controversies are not waged that one or the other may enjoy the satisfaction of a victory or that two wranglers may show their skill, but simply and solely that the truth may come out.

P. C.

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## THE JEYPORE PORTFOLIO OF ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS.

His Highness, the Maharaja Sawai Madhu Singh of Jeypore, has published in six portfolios, containing almost four hundred plates, illustrations of the carvings found in the ancient buildings of his State. Col. S. S. Jacobs, engineer of the Jeypore State, undertook the work first at his own expense, but as the collection increased the expenditure became greater than his means allowed and he was only enabled to continue his labors by the liberality of His Highness, the Maharaja, and, considering the transiency of all things, and especially of those finer ornaments of Indian architecture, the publication of these ancient forms is practically an act of rescuing them from perdition. To some extent photography has done much to make us acquainted with the general character and grandeur of India's ancient architecture, and Ferguson, in his *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, has given us a systematic account of it. Here, however, we find representations of the fine detail work whose wealth of form is almost more wonderful than the imposing magnificence of the structures themselves; and these designs could be introduced into modern architecture to-day, and would thus revive among Western people the spirit of ancient Indian art.

In the Preface to the work, Col. Jacobs states "few men in India have the time or opportunity to make for themselves a collection of architectural studies. Nor is it likely that the opportunity will again occur of erecting any buildings so

grand as those we see around us ; noble specimens, it is true, but designed to meet the requirements of an age that is past. Still there is no reason why the details which everywhere meet the eye, so full of vigor, so graceful and true in outline, and so rich in design should not be made use of in modern buildings."

No cost has been spared to make the plates themselves worthy of the subjects which they represent. They are of large size and are drawn with the greatest skill, which does credit to the Jeypore School of Art, to its Principal the late Surgeon-Major F. W. A. de Fabeck, to Lala Ram Bakhsh, head draftsman and drawing teacher of the Art School, to Mr. A. Cousens of the Archæological Department of Western India, and all the others who assisted in completing the work. It will contribute much to strengthen the respect which every educated man cherishes for India ; and the great pecuniary sacrifice with which these portfolios have been brought out is a good evidence of the ideal spirit that is still found in India to-day.

The six volumes that have so far appeared have been given free of charge, as a present from the Maharaja, to various schools, institutes, or individuals interested in work of this kind, on the sole condition that they would pay the express charges from India. The edition is limited and therefore the copies are rare.

We need not say that the possession of a work of this kind would be of great value in every school of art and every technological institute. Every architect or wood-carver would be glad to profit by a study of these delicate designs.

We herewith publicly tender the Maharaja our sincerest thanks for the beautiful present he has made to The Open Court Publishing Company.

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#### NARCISSUS.<sup>1</sup>

Narcissus, poor deluded boy, thy fate  
 Has brought to many a lip a smile  
 And word of cold contempt ;  
 But few who scornfully thy tale relate,  
 If tried as he they now revile,  
 Would be themselves exempt.

Thou didst the love of rustic maidens scorn  
 The while the tenuous bow was strung  
 And timid stag pursued.  
 And tho' poor Echo strove from earliest morn,  
 And tho' thy latest words were sung,  
 Alas ! she was not wooed.

And thou hadst never loved on earth, I ween,  
 Hadst chased alway the trembling deer  
 And sought thy rustic play,  
 Hadst thou thine own fair image never seen  
 In forest lakelet burnished, clear,  
 On Fate's appointed day.

Thou wast consumed by love of self, 'tis said.  
 What folly not to know thy face  
 Reflected true to life !

<sup>1</sup> Narcissus, a Greek youth who refused the love of Echo and the other nymphs, fell in love with his own face, reflected in a forest pool. He pined away and died of unrequited love, and his beautiful body was changed into the Narcissus flower.

Yet many a man, to earth's ambition wed,  
Has staked his all in life's short race  
On prize less worthy strife.

The miser grim who hoards his counted gold  
All heedless of a world of woe  
That mutely asks for aid,  
Narcissus-like, in each coin doth behold  
His own reflexion. Does he know  
What fate for him is laid ?

That boy, enamored of his own fair form,  
But sacrificed it to itself,  
While he, in years more wise,  
And moulded by life's sunshine and its storm,  
Resigns his soul for greedy pelf  
And o'er his treasure dies.

And he who lends his brain to perfect wrong,  
Though for another be it wrought  
Or at ambition's call,  
Will find, reflected in the world, ere long  
The image of his bosom's thought ;  
And though he conquer all,

His soul grows stultified by deeds unjust,  
And, lost each impulse, lofty, true,  
His better self descends,  
Till, all consumed by selfish lust,  
He gloats o'er the appalling view,  
And in confusion ends.

And he who strives the world to lift and save  
By deeds of sweet self-sacrifice  
And noble Christian love,  
Will find, e'en though he seek an early grave,  
His image, pure as morning skies,  
Reflected there above.

Aye, truly what we are is what we find  
Reflected in each phase of life,  
And what we love we are.  
Yea, though the glare of sin would mortals blind,  
Would fill the soul with damning strife  
And all its beauty mar,

The sparks of life divine within us burn  
With constant, though oft clouded ray ;  
And from our griefs and woes,  
That fain would bury hope in Death's last urn,  
See, bursting from the mortal clay,  
A flower of beauty grows.