

MISCELLANEOUS.

UNIVERSITY REFORM IN FRANCE.

Ever since 1871 the more liberal-minded educators of France have been dreaming of restoring to their system of higher education the university form somewhat similar to that which flourished under the ancient régime, and which served as a model to other nations in the building up of their various university organisations. But the task was fraught with so many political and administrative difficulties that even the boldest and most energetic Ministers of Public Instruction were forced to keep adjourning the consideration of the reform. But thanks to the transitory measures drawn up by M. Liard, Director of Superior Instruction, and especially thanks to the decree of 1885 which created a General Council of the Faculties in each academic district, the future universities began, at least in the chief centres of the nation, to assume a certain university stamp. So when in 1896 the moment came to enact a law actually constituting more or less autonomous universities, little else had to be done than to legalise what already existed.

Of course one of the chief difficulties in the way of university reform in France was, and is still, the excessive centralised and bureaucratic form of the government. Comparing American and French educational institutions, M. Ernest Lavisse has said: "With us who are free but who are far from possessing all the habits and virtues of liberty, an omnipotent corporation would be too apt to look out wholly for its own interests, which would lead to decay." But while accepting the inevitable, M. Lavisse holds that the new institutions must enjoy absolute intellectual freedom. "It is because we have this freedom," he goes on to say, "that our universities exist, and when we shall be fully conscious of the fact, they will prosper. What we most need at this hour is to become thoroughly conscious of this fact. The lingering remnants of the functionary spirit must wholly disappear from our universities. Intellectual life cannot flourish under any sort of functionaryism, with its rules, its precautions, and its claims of respect." M. Jules Lemaître bows as resignedly to this state control tyranny as does M. Lavisse, for "in our present political condition it cannot be otherwise."

But M. Brunetière, generally so conservative, is radical on this point, and squarely combats the view held by his two colleagues of the Academy; and it is to

1 It is the custom of the American University Dinner Club of Paris to invite to each of their three annual banquets a prominent French professor or ex-professor and request him to respond to a toast to the French universities. It thus happens that we have the views of Ernest Lavisse, Gaston Paris, Ferdinand Brunetière, Jules Lemaitre, etc., concerning the various aspects of French university reform. The quotations scattered through this letter are taken, in most cases, from notes made during the delivery of the speeches of these educators.

be noted that he spoke thus before his American trip. "To be entirely worthy of its name 'university,'" he says, "the University of Paris should enjoy entire independent autonomy. A university deserves its name only when it is the single and sovereign master of its own budget, when it can dispose of its revenues according to the changing exigencies of knowledge, when it is free to modify its curriculum in accord with the ever-varying requirements of the social state, and when, finally, the choice of its professors is wholly in its own hands."

Another criticism which M. Brunetière has to make of the new University of Paris is the leaving outside its circle several of the great special schools of the capital. He points out that "if Pasteur or Sainte Beuve were alive to-day and a foreign student wished to listen to their lectures, it would be impossible, because Pasteur and Sainte-Beuve taught only at the Superior Normal School. The same thing would hold true of Renan and Burnouf, who lectured at the College of France whose schedule is arranged totally regardless of that of the Sorbonne, so that clashing of hours is sure to occur."

M. Gaston Paris, who is Administrator of the College of France, took exception, later, to M. Brunetière's statement, and while he had to admit that the great special schools of Paris, do not form part of the University, he thought, nevertheless, that they might fairly be considered as closely allied thereto, because "these schools have exerted considerable influence on the new spirit of the universities." He might even have gone further and stated that, at least in the case of the Superior Normal School, one or two foreigners may always obtain permission to study there; and he would also have been quite within the bounds of truth if he had declared that the Sorbonne is now so well equipped that it can turn out as capable candidates for future professorships as the Normal School. In fact, M. Michel Bréol, of the College of France, said to me recently that, for this very reason, the Normal School would not be founded to-day if it did not already exist, "for both institutions substantially now go over the same ground."

Another obstacle encountered by the University reformers was that spirit of selfishness which shows itself in nations as in individuals, but which is peculiarly out of place in the French character when international and foreign affairs are concerned; for it is in direct contradiction with the history and true nature of French republicanism, which has always been so universal, especially in the early days when its catholicity sometimes bordered on sentimentality. The question was asked, and vigorously pushed home, in many quarters, whether the increased presence of foreign students which was to be one of the results and, in fact, aims, of the new system, would not work ill to French students. Even M. Lavissee felt that this narrow view had to be conciliated; for in one of his reports to the Superior Council of Public Instruction we find him saying: "We have no right to carry hospitality to the point of being detrimental to our own countrymen. . . . We have already quite a number of foreign students, and under the express and natural reservation that the rights and interests of our own students be safeguarded, we may express the hope that this number may increase."

Another hard battle was fought over the establishment of an advanced general degree for foreign students. Most all French University students are preparing for a profession which can be entered only after obtaining a second degree. Therefore, concluded M. Lavissee quite illogically when viewed from the American standpoint, the régime of these State degrees cannot be modified so as to embrace foreign aspirants. But he also pointed out that all the time of the professors is not occupied in this labor of preparing students for these degrees, and further remarked

that many French students—most of those, for instance, at the School of Political Sciences in the Rue St. Guillaume are of this category—would like to study and take a degree without having in view the ulterior purpose of entering upon some State profession.

The great majority of the French faculties of science were strongly opposed to the proposed innovation, and if it had not been for foreign influences and the patriotic desire of a little body of enlightened Frenchmen to keep up and even increase the prestige of this country beyond its own boundaries, the creation of this *doctorat d'Université*, as the new degree is called, would never have been carried through. M. Emile Picard, Professor of Pure Mathematics at the Sorbonne, in closing his report last March to the faculty of sciences of the University of Paris, said on this point: "There is no exaggeration in declaring that the peril is imminent when we see what efforts foreign universities are making to attract to their lecture-rooms greater numbers of foreign students."

Antipathy to Germany, or perhaps it would be more correct to say, a desire to check the growth of Teutonic influence abroad at the expense of French influence, also contributed not a little to bring about this reform. Not long ago the Paris *Temps* contained a leading article, believed to be from the pen of M. Liard, pointing out that German universities conferred such a degree, that without it foreigners and "especially Americans"—one of the many examples of the important part played by our university element in this campaign—will not attend French seats of learning, and that, finally, our countrymen returning to the United States with a German parchment, give a Teutonic bent to the rising generation across the Atlantic, until German books, scientific instruments and ideas flourish there to the exclusion of those of French origin. "Make inquiries," the writer goes on to say, "among our publishers of scientific works, in our shops where surgical instruments are sold, in our pharmacies, and among the industries connected therewith, and ask how many books, instruments, and remedies are sent to America. You will be told that the amount is almost insignificant. What is the cause?" The indirect reason, we are led to infer, is the absence in the French universities of a doctor's degree for foreigners, with the consequences arising therefrom.

"The establishment of a doctorate, as in Germany, which is open to foreigners," said M. Gaston Paris at the American University Dinner last Thanksgiving Eve, "was largely due to American influence. In fact, we have to thank our American friends for having requested this and other reforms in our system of higher education." To Professor Parker of Chicago redounds the honor of having given organised form to this desideratum. There was formed in Paris a year or two ago a committee composed of leading French educators, whose purpose was to promote the presence in France of students from abroad. In co-operation with it, a purely American committee was also established, with one branch in the United States, of which Professor Simon Newcomb was chairman, and with another here in Paris. The latter is now on the point of being reorganised.

The various universities of France having been invited to send to the Superior Council of Public Instruction their views concerning the organisation of the new doctorate, this request has been acquiesced in. M. Lavissee is now busy on the report in this matter for the University of Paris, and the Council will unify the subject, while leaving as much latitude as possible to each university in the arrangement of the details. This spirit of decentralisation and individual initiative is, in fact, one of the dominant characteristics of this whole movement for university reform and is sure to bear much good fruit in the near future.

And now a word about this new degree itself. It is generally conceded that the course leading up to it will be far more difficult than is the case with the Ph. D. in Germany and will show greater ability on the part of the successful candidate. One of the reasons why the standard is sure to be high and to be kept high is that the different universities are to be left free, in a very large measure, as has just been seen, to regulate, each for itself, the nature and extent of the required studies. Thus each university will feel that it has as rivals all the other French and foreign universities and so must in no respect debase its own doctor's degree. This healthy competition on the part of the provincial universities is one of the very things desired by the Paris educators. "Our wish," said M. Bréol to me the other day, "is not only to attract foreign students to Paris, but to induce them to attend also the other French universities as well. With this end in view, we have made it one of the rules of the new doctorate that the candidates may pursue their studies successively in more than one institution, and the time passed in several will count as if spent wholly in one." Much latitude is also left to the private initiative of the student himself,—liberty in the choice of the studies offered, in the length of time to be given to a special branch, and in the composition of the jury which may be formed of professors chosen by the candidate and whose lectures he has followed. In a word, the relations between professor and student will be as free and close as possible. I may add that a dozen or more Americans are already matriculated here in Paris for the doctor's degree.

Those of your readers who have followed me to this point, even though they may be but cursorily acquainted with the subject, will be apt, perhaps, to share this opinion of M. Lavissee, who exclaimed at one of our banquets: "Those who like me have watched from day to day the transformation which has taken place in our system of higher education, and can exactly compare the former state of things with what we have now, may have firm hope in the future, for it has required but a quarter of a century to bring about such great changes." But we still have much to do; we have taken only the first step in the right direction."

THEODORE STANTON,

NOMOTHEISM.

To the Editor of the Open Court :

In presenting the conception of an unconscious and impersonal God who is characterised as "superpersonal" (*The Open Court*, Oct. 1897-Feb., 1898), Dr. Carus indulges in unlimited drafts upon the terminology of the God-idea which he antagonises. The portrayal throughout both his articles is an ingenious and artful appeal to habits of thought and ideas that are fundamentally conflictive with the God-conception which he seeks to establish.

The aim of science is single; its office is to seek and proclaim truth; its methods in presenting truth are severely simple and direct. A truth for which science is announced as sponsor needs least of all, to commend it to the souls of men, a recourse to terms that are expressive of ideas to which it stands opposed. If from this impersonal God there be stripped the rhetorical finery with which Dr. Carus has so profusely endowed it, if it be despoiled of the wealth of words which invest it with life, will, reason, thoughts, ideas, love, goodness, personality, and sex, there will remain, for those who can accept it, a God that is "natural law," or "relations," or the "cosmic order"—in short, an immaterial automaton that is nothing and pro-

duces nothing. It is, after the best has been said of it, but a one-sided and emasculated cosmology that Dr. Carus has provided to satisfy the yearnings of the religious element in human nature.

Science teaches that force and matter are "uncreated and eternal"; whence it follows that relations, too, are necessarily eternal, since nothing can exist or be, without having relations to, or with, other existences. Science has not committed itself to any theory purporting to go beyond the facts of matter and energy and accounting for their mutual interactions; it is therefore to Dr. Carus, not to science, must be accredited the discovery that "relations" correspond to, or are identical with, the Logos of St. John. Indeed, so far as science affords us any warrant to speak of "relations" or the "cosmic order," they, or it, are merely concomitant to the facts of matter and energy; they, or it, bear the same relation to material realities as does a man's shadow to the man himself.

In defining the "superpersonal God," Dr. Carus tells us that it is the "eternal laws, or necessary relations, or universal verities, or whatever else you may choose to call them, which constitute the entire cosmic order." When defining the cosmic order, we are told that it is the "purely rational, not the material." And again, "the order of the universe . . . is God Himself." It will be observed that matter and energy are studiously and rigidly excluded from any participation in the Godhood which Dr. Carus has erected for our adoration. The "order of the universe," then, must be conceived as a unity or God having existence apart (in the sense of being above, or superior) from all other existences, but controlling all.

But here there arises a difficulty. If cosmic order be predicated as existing, the inference is ineluctable that cosmic order is predicated of something which itself is *not* cosmic order, but which exhibits or discloses cosmic order as its attribute. It may not be said that cosmic order (God) is a state or condition of cosmic order (God), that would be making an attribute of a thing of the thing itself, and would be quite as meaningless and absurd as to speak of the clock of a clock. Cosmic order then, is a state, condition, or quality, that has for its foundation some reality that is other than itself. All immaterial or hyperphysical laws, verities, etc., being included in the term "superpersonal God," we are, by the imperative requirements of reason, forced to the conclusion that the cosmic order (God), or the order of the universe (God), or eternal law (God), is but an appearance or reflexion of the grand and harmonious inter-workings of Force and Matter.

The conclusion which has been reached may be ridiculed or denounced as materialistic, but if the attempt to explain or account for the order of the universe be conducted in accordance with logical principles, it is difficult to conceive that any result other than that which sees in the "superpersonal God" an attribute of matter and energy, can be attained.

The conception of God as a personality is, on various grounds, an indefensible one; so too is that of Nomotheism or the cosmic-order-God. For him who fully apprehends the inconsistencies which the idea of a personal God involves, there is no refuge other than that which may be found in Pantheism or a modest Agnosticism.

RICHARD JENKINS.

[The God-conception presented in *The Open Court* October, '97, and February, '98, and in *The Monist* (April, '98) is not meant to be an "ingenious and artful appeal to habits of thought and ideas that are fundamentally conflictive with the God-conception," but an application of the significance of the God-idea in the religious history of the world. Nor is the superpersonal God the Divinity that shapes the world as its formative factors, "an attribute of matter and energy,"

but is a reality of its own and independent of the reality of the material universe.

Mr. Richard Jenkins's view is based upon the philosophical assumption that "matter" is the thing in itself and that all other realities are attributes of matter. This is a materialistic metaphysicism which frequently parades under the name of monism; but it is a pseudo-monism based upon the assumption of a one-sided unification of the data of experience. It is a view to which among naturalists Prof. Ernst Haeckel of Jena inclines¹ and which has ably been set forth by Lester F. Ward² and Mr. Paul R. Shipman.³

Matter is an abstract which comprehends a definite quality of our experiences. We need not discuss the details of the subject, for they are very complicated because there are two distinct notions of matter, one being ponderable or gross matter, viz., matter in the sense of the physicist as the generalisation of the qualities which all the chemical elements possess in common, i. e., mass and volume; the other being matter in the vague sense of material, i. e., the stuff the world is made of, including, together with the chemical element, the cosmic or luminiferous ether. Whatever we may mean by matter, this much is sure, it is a mere quality of existence, and not existence itself; true, it is the highest generalisation of its kind, but so is energy, so is form, so is sentiency. We have no right to take one abstraction and regard it as the sole reality while all other realities are degraded into mere qualities of matter. The apparent continuity and durability of matter is no reason to regard it as more real than other apparently evanescent qualities, such as color, sensation, and the forms of things. In fact, the durability of matter is illusory; the abstract notion of matter remains the same, but not concrete, real matter of objective existence; it is constantly shifting and undergoing radical changes; and there are many material things in this world in which matter is the accident, while their form is the main and essential feature. The whirl in a river is not a mass of water possessed of the attribute of rotation; nor is the rainbow a cloud possessed of certain ether motions produced by the sun and perceived as broken light; nor is man a heap of atoms possessed of the attributes of reason, will, and purposive action, etc., etc. The last instance most obviously proves that the form is the remaining and enduring, and therefore the essential feature of man's existence, while the material which is passing through this form of life is an incidental, although indispensable, attribute.

Materialistic metaphysicism is based upon the nominalism of the Middle Ages which in France and England developed into sensualism, standing upon the one-sided statement that all experience is ultimately based upon sensation. This view leaves out of sight the most important feature of experience which is its formal or purely relational aspect; it endeavors to derive mathematics, causation, and all kindred conceptions, from sensory impressions, and from them alone. Consequently it rejects the philosophical notion of universality, claiming that because twice two apples are four apples, we cannot be sure that twice two chestnuts will also be four chestnuts. The sensationalist school denies universality and it denies the realness of the purely formal which is tacitly supposed to be a mere quality of the various objects of sense. Consequently, it does not recognise the universal applicability of the purely formal. Sensationalism necessarily leads to agnosticism, for it refuses to acknowledge the basic principle of scientific certitude. The keen Scotchman, David Hume, was the first philosopher to see this inference, and he

¹ See *The Monist*, Vol. II, No. 4.

² See *The Monist*, Vol. IV, No. 2.

³ See *The Open Court*, No. 235.

boldly pronounced himself a skeptic. Kant, on the other hand, was the first philosopher to comprehend the nature of the problem which puzzled Hume and rendered its final solution possible by pointing out the contrast between the sensory and the purely formal.

We need not enter here into an explanation of his philosophy or set forth the reasons why after all he failed to arrive at the right and in our opinion sole legitimate conclusion, that the things in themselves are not unknowable objects but the systematic sum total of their formal relations, which are quite knowable and determinable, being analogous to Plato's ideas, which exist in a spaceless and timeless transcendency as the prototypes of all material things and beings. Suffice it that Kant recognised their existence as "a supersensible world" which is the sphere of all spiritual, artistic, philosophical, and moral, aspirations.

Our conception of God as this supersensible world conceived in its unity is not an assumption, a mere hypothesis; nor is it a gratuitous interpretation of facts. It is the reality whose overwhelming dominion in life makes itself felt everywhere, underlying all religious, moral, artistic, scientific, and philosophical aspirations of man. If you prefer to avoid the name God, you may call it by whatever name you please, but you must recognise its reality and paramount importance. If with the sensationalist school of philosophy you deem it best to look upon the purely formal as something that has no existence, because its existence is not material concreteness, you will be driven to the conclusion that this non-existent something is the most important feature of the world. If, with John Stuart Mill, mathematics and the other formal sciences are mere imaginary conceptions which are not even perfectly true, because mathematical lines, squares, circles, etc., are copies of real (i. e. material) lines, squares, circles, etc., purposely deviating in certain respects from their originals, we should have to confess that something purely imaginary and untrue affords us the key to the riddles of the universe.

The authoritativeness of these superreal factors of life naturally produced the idea of God which is the most direct and impressive symbol of their significance for us in their unity. Every one is at liberty to invent a better name than the word God, which would show the religious import of the omnipresent norm of being in a more telling and more personal manner. We need not quarrel about words if we agree about realities. Since we deem the old sensationalism and the materialistic metaphysicism and also agnosticism as refuted, atheism (so far as we can see) can only raise a protest against the word, not against the reality of God.

Not the least advantage of our formulation of the God-problem consists in the fact that it affords a basis upon which theists and atheists can come to an agreement. P. C.]

ONI NO NEM BUTZU.

Captain C. Pfoundes, of Japan, writes anent the Japanese Devil picture (called "the Dunning Devil") published in *The Open Court* for February on page iii. as follows:

"The collectors of accounts, 'duns,' are called *Oni*, i. e., demons; and the money due and payments thereof *On harai*—*On*, honored; *harai*, payments; also prayers, driving away evil, demons, etc. Thus a double meaning makes a punning rendering. *Oni harai*, demon praying, and getting rid of the devil by paying him.

"The figure illustrated, however, does not suggest to the Japanese any connex-

ion with the New Year's eve settlements, but simply the begging demon in the garb of a priest.

"The picture is what is called in Japan *Oni no nem-butzu* (*Oni*, Demon of; *nem*, prayers or invocations; *Butzu*, Buddha). A demon repeating the *Namo-mita bhaya Buddhaya*; in Japanese *Na-mu A-mi-da Bu-tzu*, which is the invocation of the Jo-do and the Shin-Shiu sects that rely on the saving help of Amitâbha (or Amitayus), hoping for spiritual rebirth in Sukhavati. The book in the left-hand is the Subscription List; the circlet on the abdomen is a gong struck with the mallet held in the right-hand. The gong is rhythmically struck with the mallet at each syllable, with an emphasis on the last one: *Na-mu A-mi-da BUTZU*. (the capitalised word extra vigorously). The robes are those of a mendicant Bonze, an umbrella on the back. The curls of the Buddhist head are changed to horns of a demon. The little Devil holds the Patra,—Japanese, *Tetzu patzu*—(teppats) i. e. iron bowl, the Buddhists' mendicant's begging bowl.

"There is a proverb in the 31-syllable verse that illustrates the popular idea as regarding this.

<i>Me ni mi-ye-nu</i>	Eyes see not
<i>Hi-to no ko-ko-ro wo</i>	the people's hearts
<i>O-so-ro shi-ki</i>	How fearful
<i>Ko-ro-mo ki-se-de-mo</i>	Tho' clad in vestments
<i>O-ni ga o-ni na-ri</i>	The demon is still a demon, or the demon is sounding (the gong) ¹

"The Japanese grotesque art does not stop short of religion; and the worldliness, etc., of the Bonzes, especially their breaches of the Vinaya, lay them open to the good-humored jests of the irrepressible."

BOOK-REVIEWS AND NOTES.

LIVING PLANTS AND THEIR PROPERTIES. A Collection of Essays. By *Joseph Charles Arthur*, Sc. D., Professor of Vegetable Physiology and Pathology in Purdue University, and *Daniel Trembly MacDougal*, Ph. D., Assistant Professor of Botany in charge of Plant Physiology in the University of Minnesota. New York: Baker & Taylor. 1898. Pages, 234.

This is a fascinating little book, affording us considerable insight into the psychology of plants. Although the articles are written by two men, professors of botany at universities which are quite distant from one another,* they are yet so harmonious that were the names of their respective authors not appended nobody would suspect that they had not flowed from one and the same pen. That plants are sensitive has been surmised in verse and fable by the ancients, but a scientific investigation of the nature of this sentiency is only of late origin. Charles Darwin's experiments in this line are perhaps best known. Nevertheless Linnæus's definition of the three kingdoms of nature, viz., that "minerals grow, plants grow and live, animals grow, live, and feel," is still regarded as orthodox in many scientific circles. Julius Sachs, however, and many other botanists of distinction, have shown beyond the shadow of a doubt that the irritability of plants is, in spite of

¹ This is a pun in Japanese.