

# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

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## CONTENTS:

	PAGE
<i>Frontispiece. GIULIANO BRUNO.</i>	
<i>Giordano Bruno—His Life and Mission. ALBERTA JEAN ROWELL.</i>	705
<i>Passive Resistance or Soul Force. BLANCHE WATSON.</i>	715
<i>Moral Progress in the Light of History. VICTOR S. YARROS.</i>	720
<i>East Asiatic Works in the Newberry Library. JOHN T. BRAMHALL.</i>	734
<i>Homer and the Prethers. CECILIA STEKETEE HULST.</i>	744
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	766

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GIORDANO BRUNO

1548-1600

*Frontispiece to The Open Court.*

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## GIORDANO BRUNO—HIS LIFE AND MISSION.

BY ALBERTA JEAN ROWELL.

WHEN one contemplates the turbulent albeit noble life of that illustrious Italian, Giordano Bruno, whose uncompromising devotion to Truth—which love the philosopher Locke regarded as the "principal part of human perfection in this world, and the seedplot of all other virtues"—culminated in the stake, the memory, by the exercise of that most infallible law, which Aristotle first discovered and designated as the Law of Association, invokes the venerated names of some few other exalted ones. They are Socrates, Jesus, Savonarola and Voltaire, whose unswerving loyalty to the Ideal, compelled the gods to grant to them the palm of immortality!

On the hundredth anniversary of Voltaire's death, Victor Hugo delivered an eloquent and impassioned oration. The former, like Giordano Bruno, was the implacable enemy of a despotic, overweening priestcraft, which would coerce the ignorant, irrational, superstitious and trembling rabble into an acceptance of incomprehensible dogmas and petrifying creeds. The mission of Voltaire was the mission of Bruno. In his characteristic vivid, dramatic and terse style, Hugo dilates upon the function of Voltaire.

"To combat Pharisaism; to unmask imposture; to overthrow tyranny, usurpations, prejudices, falsehoods, superstitions; to demolish the temple in order to rebuild it, that is to say, to replace the false by the true; to attack a ferocious magistracy; to attack a sanguinary priesthood; to take a whip and drive the money-changers from the sanctuary, to reclaim the heritage of the disinherited; to protect the weak, the poor, the suffering, the overwhelmed, to struggle for the persecuted and oppressed—that was the war of Jesus Christ! And who waged that war? It was Voltaire."

Bruno was born in the year 1548, in the vicinity of the little idyllic, Italian town of Nola, when Naples was knowing anxieties and tribulations from fear of a premeditated introduction of the Spanish Inquisition within the boundaries of her fair and peaceful city. Gioan and Francesca Bruno named their baby son Felipe (Philip). Yet he was to be known to the world not as Philip, but Giordano, a supremely dignified appellation later conferred upon him by the monastery of St. Dominico. Nola had gained a lasting renown from its heroic resistance to Hannibal after the slaughter of Canae. Here, where the air was sweet and balmy and the skies were azure blue; where the bountiful vineyards yielded the vermilion grape and the plains were rich and golden with the gleaming corn; where the dying day sighed its last along the purple hills and at eventide surrendered her kingdom to the moon and stars—the little Felipe spent his early years. Endowed with the susceptibility of the poet to all living beauty, he early drank draughts of the heavenly nectar. The simple, volcanic and pleasure-loving Nolan folk, sensitive likewise to the all-prevading glory of their native place, had called it Campagna Felice (the happy fields). When in later years, Giordano Bruno, a homeless wanderer upon the face of the earth; when like his noble predecessor Dante he had come to realize how savoreth of salt the bread of others and how hard the climbing up and down another's stairs, a mighty longing would well up in his soul again in the retrospect of detached and melancholy moments for those happy, golden plains of his birthplace which he had deemed only justly comparable to the garden of the Hesperides. But it appears also that in common with other Nolans, Bruno was inclined to be superstitious. In the ancient and deserted temples, the Nolans witnessed the fitful visits of earthbound souls, while Bruno himself maintains that he beheld spirits on hills where the beeches and laurels grew.

Even as Renan has imaginatively depicted the youthful Jesus, in a reverent posture, wrapped in holy mediation upon the lofty mountaintop, which revealed to him an appalling and infinite vista, so the child Bruno would pass many a night on the mountain Cicada and under the dream-mellow rays of moonlight and the distant lamps of Heaven, abandon himself to solemn musings. The stars signified to his awesome and pious soul the infinitude of Time, Space and Experience. His favorite expression—"My thoughts are stitched to the stars"—which his English contemporary, John Lyly, originated, rendered him impervious to calumny, penury, per-

secution and pain. The latter recalls the Emersonian dictum—"Hitch your wagon to a star." Said Latini, who pointed out to Dante the way to find Eternity, "Follow thy star and it cannot help but lead thee to a glorious port." Mazzini, the great Italian patriot and religious, when imprisoned in a vile dungeon, through a small aperture was enabled to contemplate the sea and sky, two sublime symbols to him of the Infinite. The latter was a profound consolation and an eternal source of inspiration, which sustained Mazzini in moments of direst distress and poignant sorrow. He was thus enabled to transcend all sensibility to inharmony and pain.

At thirteen years of age, Giordano Bruno entered the monastery of St. Domenico. For nearly thirteen years he studied natural science and recondite philosophy, familiarizing himself with classical and ancient lore. He absorbed Neo-Platonism with avidity. He was particularly fascinated by the Neo-Platonic doctrine of illumination. Plotinus and other Alexandrian scholars had declared that Truth or the Absolute could be comprehended by intuitive insight only and not by discursive thought. Porphyry said that Plotinus in ecstatic vision, experienced mystic communion with the Absolute, which he defined as "a flight from the alone to the alone," wherein there is "an absorption in a sublime tranquility." Moreover Bruno acquainted himself with the Pythagorean symbolism of numbers and the Orphic wisdom of Greece.

In his eighteenth year Bruno began to doubt the church doctrine of the Trinity. He regarded the Father, Son and Holy Ghost as attributes of the Deity or One. In the *Inferno* of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, the frightful picture of Lucifer, the arch-fiend who is imbedded in ice, exhibits a triple aspect. The three persons of the Holy Trinity—Power, Wisdom and Love—have their hideous counterpart in the three faces of Satan. On the right, the sallow visage which munches Cassius in the mouth, typifies weakness, the antithesis of Power; on the left, the face as black as night, which chews at Brutus, signifies Ignorance, the opposite of Wisdom; the central, red visage, from the mouth of which Judas Iscariot, the arch-traitor is dangling, expresses Hate which is opposed to Love. Dante lived in the thirteenth century and was an apostle of St. Thomas Aquinas, whose writings he studied with zeal. Even St. Augustine was rather adverse to the literal interpretation of the Divine Trilogy of Persons. In fact all subscribed to the doctrine of the "language of accommodation"—that the bible "condescends to a comprehension of our faculties."

But the thinker who exercised the most potent influence upon the career and philosophy of Giordano Bruno was Copernicus. The physics and cosmogony of Aristotle, then popular with the schoolmen and incorporated into the dogmas of the church, were administered a mortal blow by the new cosmology of Copernicus. But the works of Copernicus found favor neither with the enlightened intellects of the Renaissance nor the Church; the former because they believed the dignity of man would be violated by an infinite extension of the heavens; and the latter because they believed that all ecclesiastical dogmas would perish with the refutation of one. But a perusal of the works of Copernicus demonstrated to Bruno his life's mission—that of promulgating a new theology and metaphysics which would correspond to the new cosmology. It was within convent walls that Giordano Bruno first realized his lofty destiny.

After attaining his twenty-fourth year, Bruno spent three years performing his priestly functions, reading masses and delivering sermons. His comedy, "The Chandler," depicts in a bright vivid style and pungent satire the demoralization of contemporaries, exposing the Personifications of the three vices, Stupidity, Rascality and Hypocrisy to the utmost ridicule and contempt. A satirical poem, "The Ark of Noah," also appeared in 1570.

On ascertaining that works by so-called heretical writers were found among his possessions at Naples, Bruno quickly severed all connection with his order, and as an excommunicated and fugitive monk, wandered forlorn and almost destitute about the Roman Campagna. In the year 1576 he broke his monastic vows and pledged himself to follow the "white star of Truth" whithersoever she might lead. It was then Bruno commenced his protracted wanderings throughout Europe, which lasted over fifteen years. The missionary zeal, the spiritual energy and inward fire to proclaim the truth, which consumed his spirit, would not permit him to settle for any length of time in one place. It was while in old London, England, that Bruno wrote some of his most important philosophical works. Nevertheless his attack on Aristotelianism landed him in numerous difficulties, even in tolerant England.

While in Paris, prior to his landing in England, Bruno by reason of his marvelous gifts, had aroused the interest of King Henry III who summoned him to appear before him. Bruno possessed a prodigious memory. He demonstrated to the satisfaction of the king that he had acquired the latter by natural means. He



also dedicated a pamphlet to his majesty, entitled *The Shadow of Ideas*—a dissertation on the Lullie art, for it was from Lulla he derived the fundamental principles for his system of mnemonics. In addition to presenting an improved art of remembering, *The Shadow of Ideas* contains an outline of the philosophy, then embraced by the writer. The doctrines expounded in his book are Neo-Platonic. Bruno accepts the theory of universal animism,—that the spirit of the One or God pervades every atom of the cosmos. But God is transcendent as well as immanent. Bruno bases his system of mnemonics upon the following main premise: our ideas being shadows of truths, we use the shadows (words) of these shadows (ideas) in mnemonics.

Throughout this work, Bruno is constantly reinforcing his own arguments by truths culled from mediæval and ancient philosophy, even not disdaining the classical myth, for with Dante, Swedenborg, Madame Blavatsky, Emerson and other mystical and philosophical writers he believed all present truths symbolic of higher truths. Truth in the Absolute was an unattainable star. Madam De Stael, the French authoress who has been called the child of the French Revolution, subscribed to an analogous theory. She contended that between reason and Truth an eternal and indissoluble harmony pre-exists. The style of Bruno is rough-hewn, possessing the spontaneity of an abundant imagination with something of the elemental fire of Aeschylus. From sparks and smouldering fires he bursts into mighty conflagrations. He is constantly diverging from his main theme, to which he returns again with lightning-like rapidity, after a brief skirmish in its thought vicinity. Although his bombast, dogmatism, often to the degree of harshness, his vulgar buffoonery and obscenity might antagonise the admirer of modern literature, his contemporaries utilized the identical setting, for the age deemed its entertainment considerably enhanced thereby.

The comedy entitled *The Chandler*, which he wrote ten years ago, he rewrote during his residence in Paris. Although the characters are abstract types and the play is redundant with indelicate allusions, still these artistic foibles did not detract from its eminent uniqueness, for it has been adjudged by the foremost critics as quite "sui generis"—presenting an innovation in the comedy. The vivacity of its dialogue has been compared to the French dramatist Aretino. *The Chandler*, in addition presents many similarities in style and mode of treatment to Plautus, Moliere and

Cyrano. Also its light, rollicking humour suggests Rabelais. In the play, Bruno exhibits the affectation, vanity and mental limitations of the foolish, pretentious pedant, Manfurio, who was the prototype no doubt of Holofernes in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour Lost* in all its gross indelicacy, vulgarity and aesthetic repulsiveness. Bonifacio and Bartolomeo typify the over-credulous who place a profound and unquestioned trust in the occult powers of alchemists, magicians and the "powder of Christ" of designing members of the priesthood who made merchandise of the fetishes of childish, superstitious and ignorant minds. In the dedication of the *The Chandler*, Bruno propounds his doctrine of The One: "I need not instruct you of my belief: Time gives all and takes all away; everything changes but nothing perishes; One only is immutable, eternal and ever endures, one and the same with itself. With this philosophy my spirit grows, my mind expands. Whereof, however obscure the night may be, I await daybreak, and they who dwell in day look for night . . . . Rejoice therefore, and keep whole, if you can, and return love for love." Believing as he did in the immanence of God, Bruno regarded the vices as inversions of their corresponding virtues, nay their necessary counterpart even as the gross matter of the candle furnishes the radiant flame.

Bruno's ardent, fiery temperament, with its absolute disregard for his own safety, coupled with his missionary zeal, urged him to depart from France and promulgate his doctrines on English soil. Accordingly equipped with credentials from the French king, Bruno presented himself at the home of Michel de Castelnau de Mauvissiere, French ambassador in London. At Oxford, Bruno introduced himself by issuing a pamphlet, *Thirty Seals*. There he lectured on the Copernican system, the Pythagorean Symbolism of numbers, the immortality of the soul and his own doctrine of the infinitude of the solar systems. His ideas couched in a self-assertive and tortuous language aroused tremendous opposition. On those pedants who clung obstinately to the tenets of Aristotle, also excusing the "defects of their divinity," Bruno conferred the satirical sobriquet of "parrot."

In conformity with the pompous and voluminous diction of the age, Bruno, in his superb contempt of censure and convention, and boundless self-confidence, penned the following high-sounding epistle to the Vice-Chancellor and dons of the university of Oxford, prior to his brief instatement there: "Jordanus Bruno

of Nola, lover of God, doctor in a more perfect divinity, professor of a purer and more harmless wisdom, a philosopher, known, esteemed and honorably entreated by the foremost academies of Europe, a stranger to none but churls and barbarians, the awakener of souls from slumber, the queller of presumptuous and recalcitrant ignorance, one who showeth in all his actions, the love he beareth to all men, whether Briton or Italian, female or male, whether bearing the mitre or the crown, the gown or the sword, the cowl or without one; but who chiefly yearns for the man whose converse is peaceful, human, true and profitable; he who seeks not for an anointed head or a crossed brow, for the washed hand or him that is circumcised, but for those true lineaments of man which be his soul and trained understanding; one who is abhorred of them that spread foolishness and are but petty dissemblers, but whom men proven and in earnest love, and who is applauded by the nobler sort . . . .”

The bourgeois character of the dons did not escape the observation of Bruno nor evade his caustic and bitter sarcasm. He had stated that the dons knew much more about beer than they knew about Greek, which no doubt contained a grain of truth. The Oxfordians in their turn retaliated by giving vent to a sneer at the “excitable, gesticulating foreigner, hairy as Pan.”

Bruno, despite the fact that his soul was replete with the music of lofty and immortal thoughts; in spite, too, of his profound gratitude and penetrative insight, was not without his shortcomings. His supreme self-confidence and missionary zest rendered him irritable, vain, resentful, passionate and indiscreet. But like the Crippon, that mythical animal who possessed the head and forepart of an eagle with the body of a lion, symbolic of the divine and human, Bruno, borne aloft upon his eagle pinions, could mount heavenward to the stars or with eyes bent in fixed gaze upon the earth, remain oblivious to his noble destiny! The great, even with the common herd, partake of the sum of human weaknesses to a greater or lesser degree. What Robert Louis Stevenson observed of the life of Goethe, who ranks with the immortals, may be appropriately applied to Bruno. The extreme ethical opposites revealed in the conduct of Goethe, demonstrated to Stevenson how greatness and weakness may co-exist in the one soul without diminishing admiration one whit for the expressed virtues.

In company with the French ambassador Castelnau, Bruno repeatedly appeared at the court of Elizabeth. There he was espe-

cially welcomed, for Elizabeth boasted of her knowledge of Italian and took a pride in surrounding her court with gentlemen who had visited Italy and rendered themselves conversant with Italian literature. The extreme enthusiasts returned to their native England to display some "strange, antic tricks," which was the unmistakable indication of an Italian education. Shakespeare immortalized these superfluous mannerisms through the mouth of Rosalind: "Look you lisp . . . , etc., etc., or I will scarcely think you have swam in a gondola." The queen, Bruno eulogized in extravagant terms, well-nigh exhausting the language of adulation, in that age a point of etiquette when addressing monarchs. He named her the great Amphidrite. While at the court Bruno came into close touch with Sir Philip Sidney, a devotee of Petrarchism, who dedicated sentimental and romantic verses to a lady from whom he had stolen a kiss in youth. With his characteristic tactlessness, Bruno made some supercilious observations, adjuring him to substitute a worship of imperishable wisdom for the perishable charms of body or personality.

It is said that Bruno had the Horatian contempt for the rabble. In fact he even went so far as to maintain that sublime truths should be invested in the obscurity of symbol and allegory, that it might not confuse the crass ignorance and stupidity of the vulgar mob. The hatred of the English for the foreigner is traditional. Bruno evidently was not beloved of the English populace, for in a chain of abusive epithets he describes them: "England can boast a common people which will yield to none other in disrespect, outlandishness, boorishness, savagery and bad bringing up."

Bruno's *The Ash-Wednesday Supper* gives a vivid if repelling picture of the English savants, who with "the souls of geese that bear the shape of men," regale themselves on a miscellaneity of viands, after which they discourse on the Copernican cosmology whilst defending Aristotelian physics and cosmology with its division of space into a celestial and earthly region, upon which Dante based his *Divina Commedia*. At this supper Bruno explains his theories relating to the heavens. He maintained that the scintillation of stars is due to the fact that they give forth their own light while Venus does not twinkle because it simply reflects light. Also the atmosphere of the earth rotates with her. His truly sublime theory was the doctrine of the infinitude of worlds. According to Bruno the center is the middle around which any-

thing revolves, but the doctrine of an infinitude of worlds implies an infinitude of centers. Moreover Bruno believed that the planets were inhabited, thus considerably weakening the fundamental, orthodox doctrines—that of fall and redemption through grace.

Bruno published numerous philosophical works in England and indeed his residence there was the most productive period of his life.

Germany next called to the restless zealot. There he spent a tolerably peaceful period, still disseminating his ideas as he traveled from place to place. He predicted a high destiny for the Germans: "Here," he said, "is being prepared the soil for the transplanting of wisdom from the lands of Greece and Italy. May Jupiter grant that the Germans may recognize their strength and strive to aim for the highest, and they will be no longer men, but rather resemble gods, for divine and god-like is their genius."

At last in an ill-fated moment Bruno accepted the invitation of the oscillating, weak, treacherous and irascible Mocenigo of Venice, to share his home and teach him the liberal arts and the sciences. His stay with Mocenigo was of short duration, the latter finally betraying him to the Inquisition for his refusal to stay longer with him.

He was incarcerated in the prison of Ancona for seven years, which living death was finally terminated by the dire doom inflicted upon him by the Roman Inquisition. In the year 1600, February 16, Giordano Bruno departed from this bourne of Time and Place upon a pyre which the flames greedily consumed, in the Campo dei Fiori (the field of flowers). He rendered up the ghost with those memorable words of Plotinus upon his lips: "Vast power was needed to reunite that which is divine in me with that which is divine in the universe!" Bruno was martyred in Jubilee year, when all Rome resounded with the merrymaking of good and bad and penitential psalms arose to Heaven.

But Bruno was the apostle of pain. He deemed sorrow a necessary mode of realization. This negative aspect of eternal joy is the golden spur. He had written with such a noble ardour: "O difficulties to be endured! cries the coward, the feather-head, the shuttle-cock, the faint-heart . . . . The task is not impossible though hard. The craven must stand aside. Ordinary, easy tasks are for the commonplace and the herd. Rare, heroic and divine men overcome the difficulties of the way and force an immortal palm from necessity. You may fail to reach your goal.

Run the race nevertheless. Put forth your strength in so high a business. Strive on with your last breath." Again he says, in defining his mission: "The Nolan has given freedom to the human spirit and made its knowledge free. It was suffocating in the close air of a narrow prison house, whence, but only through chinks, it gazed at the far-off stars. Its wings were clipped, so that it was unable to cleave the veiling cloud and reach the reality beyond."

It would be well to conclude with Bruno's own rapturous song, of which Boulting has rendered an excellent, free translation:

"Rising on wing secure, with burning heart,  
What fate may scare me, smiling at the tomb,  
Bursting all bonds and scorning gates of doom,  
Whence few are chosen for such lofty part?  
I soar beyond the mortal years, and start  
For regions where grim iron casts no gloom  
Nor adamant restrains. Forth from the womb,  
Free from the darkness, free and passionate, I dart.  
I dread no barrier of banished spheres;  
I cleave the sky, and other suns behold;  
Celestial worlds innumerable I see;  
One left, another company appears;  
My pinion fails not, and my heart is bold  
To journey on through all infinity."

## PASSIVE RESISTANCE OR SOUL FORCE.

BY BLANCHE WATSON.

“Without Swaraj there is now no possibility of Peace in India.”  
M. K. GANDHI.

WHAT is “Swaraj?”

According to Mahatma Gandhi, it is the right of a people to manage their own affairs, i. e., it means Self-government. It has been said that India is not fit to govern itself. To this Gandhi replies, “He who has no right to err, can never be forward. The history of the commons is a history of blunders.” “Swaraj”, says this great leader of the Indian people, “can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national, is on the whole, sound.” This means that back of and above Swaraj must be the “Swadeshi” spirit, the spirit that is symbolized more particularly by the wearing of the national dress made of Indian-made materials, but which means the cherishing of whatever is inherent in the development of the national life.

In the introduction to his little book *Hind Swaraj*\* or “Indian Self-Government” Gandhi says:

\* Published by S. Ganesan & Co., Triplicane, Madras, India.

“It teaches the gospel of love in place of that of hate. It replaces violence with self-sacrifice. It pits soul-force against brute force. The booklet is a severe condemnation of ‘modern civilization.’ It was written in 1908. My conviction is deeper today than ever. I feel that if India would discard ‘modern civilization’ she would only gain by doing so.”

This book is a difficult book to interpret with justice both to the author and the reader one sets out to reach. The Western mind needs to re-orient itself to take in the thought and particularly the spirit of this man whose own personal life may be said to have been modelled after the “Sermon on the Mount.”

Godliness, to him, is the fundamental requisite for the carrying out of a scheme of non-co-operation wholly by means of non-violent methods backed by the power of Love.

"Khilafat cannot be saved," he says, "The Punjab humanity cannot be redressed, without godliness—for godliness means change of heart,—in political language changing the angle of vision."

In his own words here is his program :

- (1) Cultivating the spirit of non-violence.
- (2) Setting up Congress organizations in every village.
- (3) Introducing the spinning wheel in every home and manufacturing all the cloth, required for our wants, through the village weaver.
- (4) Collecting as much money as possible.
- (5) Promoting Hindu-Moslem unity and
- (6) Ridding Hinduism of the curse of 'untouchability' and otherwise purifying ourselves by avoiding intoxicating drinks and drugs.

Such a program, followed in the letter and the spirit, Gandhi has said would establish Swaraj in India in nine months. It would do more than that, it would revolutionize Revolution—indeed it would sooner or later revolutionize every phase of the world's activity!

The words "otherwise purifying ourselves", as Gandhi uses them, are of great significance and are capable of wide application. In answering his critics, who had misinterpreted his views on medicine he says:

"The present science of medicine is divorced from religion. . . . A clean spirit must build a clean body. Let us hope and pray that we may witness a definite attempt on the part of physicians to bring about a re-union between the body and the soul."

Article 2 of Gandhi's program may well be taken to heart by all who would in any way change the existing order of things. "What is really needed," he says, "is not a large measure of sacrifice but ability to organize and to take simple concerted action." The reader will notice that he says organize in 'every village.' Every home, he asserts, must have the spinning wheel and 'every village should become self-supporting for its cloth.' And this means Swadeshi!

But it is Article 1 of this remarkable program that rivets one's attention. In a recent issue of his paper, "Young India", Gandhi says:

"The success of our movement depends upon our ability to control all the forces of violence on our side. . . . I want India to realize that she has a soul which cannot perish and which can rise



triumphant over every physical weakness and defy the physical might of the whole world. . . . Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering."

How people have murdered each other from the beginning of history is a matter of record, Gandhi points out. "But", he says, "if this were all that had happened in the world it would have been ended long ago. . . . The fact that there are so many men still alive in the world shows that it is based not on the force of arms but on the force of truth or love. . . . In spite of the wars of the world it still lives on."

His statement that history as written "Is a record of an *interruption* of the course of nature"—that soul force is natural and so, not noted in history—brings to mind the comment of Mr. H. G. Wells on Napoleon, to the effect that he was an "aggravated interruption" and a "pestilential nuisance." And Gandhi's characterization of passive resistance as "refusal to do a thing that violates one's conscience" recalls Thoreau's oft-repeated answer to Emerson's question as to why he was in jail on the charge of refusing to pay his taxes. In this connection it is interesting to note, that, among the books which Gandhi recommends for study and reference are two essays by this little-read and much under-estimated American writer, namely, "Life Without Principle" and "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience." The following words of the great Indian leader are strangely reminiscent of Thoreau:

"A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else. . . . If man will only realize that it is unmanly to obey laws that are unjust, no man's tyranny will enslave him. This is the key to self-rule."

Strength, to Gandhi, means the absence of fear, not the quantity of flesh and muscle in one's body, nor the keen edge of one's sword. "Passive Resistance," he declares, "is an all-sided sword; it blesses him who uses it and him against whom it is used. Without drawing a drop of blood, it produces far-reaching results. . . . It is the weapon of strength and power. . . . Those who defy death are free from all fear. That nation is great which rests its head upon death as its pillow!" The English expression "Passive Resistance," Gandhi has declared more recently does not give the exact meaning of what he has in mind. *Satyagraha*, i. e., Truth-force conveys the meaning more correctly. It is soul-force as opposed to the force of arms.

"Both soul force and force of arms," says he, "have received

their due meed of praise. . . . They respectively represent forces of God and Evil. The Indian belief is that there was in this land a time when the forces of Good were predominant. That state still remains our ideal. Europe today furnishes a forcible illustration of predominance of the forces of Evil."

The principle of non-co-operation which is in reality the machinery by which Gandhi's program is being put through in India, was an outgrowth of the twenty-year struggle in South Africa where, with 160,000 of his countrymen behind him he fought for, and gained the full measure of recognition that they had demanded of the British government. Setting aside the negative form of the word, Non-co-operation is in reality the positive part of this singular revolutionary program. Non-co-operation means complete boycott of everything English—an amplified boycott that makes it an act of wrong-doing for an Indian to buy and use anything of English manufacture, to attend English schools, enter English courts or accept honors of any kind from that government.

In a word the rejection side of the program is not all. It is, to be sure, a process of retracing and unlearning, but it is more than that, for concurrently—it provides for the building up of a virile, independent India. It is a call to the Indians *not* to co-operate with the present environment that they may build a new and better one. Side by side with the rejection of the one thing is the acceptance of the other—which is nothing less than a better life, new life and more life for the down-trodden masses of their country. It demands that India return to itself, which must result in the creation of a free self-governing state to supersede the present dependent state. It means the building of the Panchayat or Village organization system, the reviving of Indian industries, the establishment of Indian arbitration courts, the starting of new schools; the creation of the will to live as a free nation. It is a call to the Indians not to co-operate with the present environment, but to build a new one. Says Gandhi to the English:

"Why should we operate with you when we know that by so doing we are being daily enslaved in an increasing degree? . . . I recognize your bravery and know that you will yield to bravery. . . . Bravery on the battlefield is impossible for us. Bravery of the Soul still remains open to us. I am invoking that bravery."

And this does not mean that Gandhi is narrowly nationalistic. Like all weapons Non-co-operation is to be laid aside as soon as it shall have served its purpose. Co-operation with all nations of

the earth must come after India has proved her worth and taken her right place in the family of nations. A program that is predicted on Love could not conceivably call for national isolation.

And now a word about Gandhi himself. Colonel Wedgwood, an Englishman, writes of him in the *London Nation*:

"This saint or Mahatma has India at his feet. The intelligentsia differs from him in private, rarely in public: property differs from and trembles; the Government differs from, because he goes to the root of all government and thinks it best to wait. . . . He is as serious as a child and as pure. One does not think it blasphemous to compare him to Christ. . . . He is a Jain, particularly averse to taking life; and while still a child had already found the efficacy of non-resistance. Such cotton clothes as he has are hand-spun, hand-woven, and hand-made. His food (when not fasting) is too simple to create fear of goal fare. All this shows why he has a hold on India, the land of resignation, and why the fear of him grows."

The remarkable thing about his man is, that while he fights he loves. He is saying to the English, "I would not raise my hand against you even if I had the power. I expect to conquer you by my suffering." It is with the coin of suffering that Gandhi expects India to purchase its freedom. He wants the absolute independence of India, not for the benefit of the India people alone, but for the good of all human kind. The message that was Christ's two thousand years ago is Gandhi's today. On it rests the future of the world,—a word purged of violence and wrong. Gandhi is saying:

"Let the bugles sound the Truce of God to the whole world forever. Not to one people, but to every people let the glad tidings go."

## MORAL PROGRESS IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY.

BY VICTOR S. YARROS.

**M**UCH has been written lately about the imperative need of doing something in order that civilization may be saved or "salvaged." Humanity, we have been solemnly assured, is doomed, and our culture may perish, unless we accept this or that remedy for our social, economic and moral ills.

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader of serious scientific literature dealing with social problems that the learned doctors disagree, as they have always disagreed in the past, concerning the nature and elements of the remedy required by the patient, civilized mankind. The patient would be deeply perplexed indeed were he, or it, to endeavor to follow the insistent advice of the physicians. However, the latter do agree that humanity is sick unto death. They shake their grave heads pessimistically. They are most anxious and depressed.

This mood of theirs does them credit, morally and emotionally speaking. They have the noblest of intentions. But are they justified in their pessimism? Is the patient as sick as they believe he is?

It is clear that an answer to these queries cannot be evolved out of one's inner consciousness. Freud and the subconscious cannot help us, either, to a sound, satisfactory answer. To find such an answer *we must go to history, to the human record.* Has humanity been in better health than now? If so, when, and when did it contract its present dangerous malady? What has happened to it?

Let us interrogate some one who has made an earnest and special study of our patient and knows the history of the case. Mr. H. G. Wells has given us his *Outline of History* for the very purpose of enabling us to draw comparisons and contrasts, to judge of the condition of humanity today in the light of its condition at various past stages of growth and development. We are in no wise obliged to accept Mr. Wells' own interpretation of historic events

and phases. We are free to ignore his lessons and morals, and to study his facts and charts with an open mind.

Let us contemplate some of the facts. Let us, so far as possible, clear our minds of prepossessions, fixed ideas, uncritical notions, and permit the facts to speak for themselves.

In the first place, then, as Mr. Wells observes in many relevant connections, "no man today is more than four hundred generations from the primordial savage." Civilization, therefore, is still in its infancy when we compare it with the age of our planet or the beginning of animal life upon it.

And what were the ways, habits and notions of the primordial savage? There have not been wanting efforts of sentimentalists and political metaphysicians to idealize the savage or the "state of nature." But what are the facts? To quote Mr. Wells:

"The idea of property arises out of the combative instincts of the species. Long before men were men the ancestral ape was a proprietor. Primitive property is what a beast will fight for. The dog and his bone, the tigress and her lair, the roaring stag and his herd, these are proprietorship blazing. No more nonsensical expression is conceivable than the term "primitive communism." The Old Man of the family tribe of early Palaeolithic times insisted upon his proprietorship in his wives and daughters, in his tools, in his visible universe. If any other man wandered into his visible universe, he fought him, and if he could, he slew him. The tribe grew in the course of ages, as Atkinson showed convincingly in his *Primal Law*, by the gradual toleration by the Old man of the existence of the younger men, and of their proprietorship in the wives they captured from outside the tribe, and in the tools and ornaments they made and the game they slew. Human society grew by a compromise between this one's property and that. It was largely a compromise and an alliance forced upon men by the necessity of driving some other tribe out of its visible universe. If the hills and forests and streams were not *your* land or *my* land, it was because they had to be *our* land. Each of us would have preferred it to have it *my* land, but that would not work. In that case the other fellows would have destroyed us. Society, therefore, is from its beginning the mitigation of ownership. Ownership in the beast and the primitive savage was far more intense a thing than it is in the civilized world today. In the natural savage and in the untutored man today there is no limitation to the sphere of ownership. Whatever you can fight for, you can own—women-folk, spared captive, captured beast, forest glade, stone pit or what not. . . . Men found themselves born into a universe all owned and claimed—nay, they found themselves born owned and claimed."

So much for the idea of property as entertained by the savage

and the untutored man of our own day. One may dispute Mr. Wells' affirmation that the idea of property arises out of our combative instincts, for it is possible to maintain that the will to live and the instinct of self-preservation, which, as we know, may lead to mutual aid rather than to warfare, give rise to the idea of property. But of the passion for property, the intense devotion to it, the readiness to fight for it, there can be no doubt. Even the men who give very generously when appealed to in the name of humanity, and who cheerfully tax themselves for all manner of public and semi-public enterprises of a benevolent character, will fiercely resent the slightest suggestion that their property, that to which they have a legal and an acknowledged right, may be taken from them *without* their genuine consent.

Now let us glance at the picture drawn by Mr. Worthington Smith, an authority cited by Mr. Wells, of "the very highest life in the world some fifty thousand years ago." What kind of a life was it? "Bestial," says Mr. Wells, and we cannot demur to his strong adjective. To quote from Mr. Smith's *Man the Primeval Savage*:

"The primeval savage was both herbivorous and carnivorous. . . . Primeval man would not be particular about having his flesh-food over-fresh. He would constantly find it in a dead state, and if semi-putrid, he would relish it none the less—the taste for high or half-putrid game still survives. If driven by hunger and hard pressed, he would perhaps sometimes eat his weaker companions or unhealthy children who happened to be feeble or unsightly or burdensome. . . .

"The savages sat huddled close together round their fire, with fruits, bones and half-putrid flesh. . . . Man at that time was not a degraded animal, for he had never been higher; he was therefore an exalted animal."

What were the family relations of this savage? Mr. Wells, following several authorities, gives us the following picture:

"The Old Man is the fully adult male in the little group. There are women, boys and girls, but so soon as the boys are big enough to rouse the Old Man's jealousy, he will fall foul of them and either drive them off or kill them. . . . Some day, when he is forty years old perhaps, or even older, and his teeth are worn down and his energy abating, some younger male will stand up to the Old Man and kill him and reign in his stead. There is probably short shrift for the old at the squatting-place. So soon as they grow weak and bad-tempered, trouble and death come upon them."

But all this is true only of the primeval savage! Well, we take a leap across the ages and pause to glance at the ways and practices

of the Neolithic man seven, six, five and even four thousand years ago.

The Old Man had developed into a tribal god, who had to be propitiated by sacrifices, mutilations and magic murder. "Neolithic man"—to quote Wells—"under the sway of talk and a confused thought process killed on theory; he killed for monstrous and now incredible ideas, he killed those he loved through fear and under direction. They not only made human sacrifices at seed-time, but there is reason to believe that they sacrificed wives and slaves at the burial of chieftains; they killed men, women and children whenever they were under adversity and thought the gods were athirst. They practiced infanticide."

Another leap brings us to the "aristocracy of the human race," the Israelites of Judea and Palestine. What a revolting, sanguinary story is that of the Hebrew nation! Wars of aggression, melancholy failures, disasters, humiliations; then kingship, the intrigues of David against Saul, and the story of David, which, as Mr. Wells says, "with its constant assassinations and executions reads rather like the history of some savage chief than of a civilized monarch." Solomon's reign opened in as bloody a manner as his father's. He was a wasteful and oppressive ruler, concludes Mr. Wells, and in religion unstable and superstitious. After the brief glory of the Hebrew state under Solomon we have a "tale of wars, of religious conflicts, of usurpations, assassinations and of fratricidal murders to secure the throne"—a tale "frankly barbaric."

From the Jews we turn to the Romans. In 264 B. C. the first gladiatorial combat took place at Rome, but the taste for these horrible combats grew rapidly, and "until the time of Seneca, first century A. D., there is no record of any protest from moralists or statesmen against this cruel and brutal business. The gladiators at first were prisoners of war; later criminals under death sentence were used; then slaves were freely sold to the trainers of gladiators; finally, dissipated young men adopted the trade. Gladiators fought by the hundred, and those of them who objected because of fear or for any other and better reason "were driven on by whips and hot irons." The organization of murder as a sport and show speaks eloquently of the standards of Roman civilization.

Another measure of that civilization is supplied by the way in which the slave and gladiatorial uprising under Spartacus was suppressed. Six thousand of the captured followers of Spartacus

"were crucified—long miles of nailed and drooping victims—along the Appian Way."

These and similar atrocities, it may be urged, were exceptional, and the true test must be sought, in fairness, elsewhere—in the life, material and mental, of the average Roman citizen. What, then, was the lot of the common man during the age of the Antonines—an age of comparative prosperity and peace?

We quote from *The Outline*:

"There are signs of a very unmistakable sort that the great mass of human beings in the empire, a mass numbering something between a hundred and a hundred and fifty millions, was not happy, was probably very acutely miserable beneath its outward magnificence. . . . Life for the great majority who were neither rich nor official, nor the womankind and the parasites of the rich and official, must have been laborious, tedious and lacking in interest and freedom to a degree that a modern mind can scarcely conceive. . . .

"People refused to have children. . . . In modern states the great breeding ground has always been the agricultural countryside, where there is a more or less secure peasantry; but under the Roman empire the peasant and the small cultivator was either a worried debtor, or he was held in a network of restraints that made him a spiritless serf, or he had been ousted altogether by the gang production of slaves. . . .

"Education in republican Rome was the freak of the individual parent and the privilege of wealth and leisure. . . . The ordinary Roman was not only blankly ignorant of the history or mankind, but also of the conditions of foreign peoples; he had no knowledge of economic laws or of social possibilities. Even his own interests he did not clearly understand. . . .

"From the second century B. C. and onward everyone is remarking on the ignorance of the common citizen and his lack of political wisdom, everything is suffering from the lack of political solidarity due to this ignorance, but no one goes on to what we should now consider the inevitable corollary, no one proposes to destroy the ignorance.

And what of the political life and institutions of Rome, even under the republic? Says Wells truly: "If republican Rome was the first of modern self-governing communities, she was certainly the 'Neanderthal' form of them."

It could not be otherwise. There were no newspapers of any kind; no use was made of the principle of elected representation; there was no statecraft; the voting system was grotesquely ineffective; the great mass of voters in Italy were disfranchised by distance; the Roman voters were mostly men of a base type, easily



corrupted by demagogues and selfish politicians; and outside voters, whenever they attempted to enter the city and claim their rights, could be, and were, intimidated and attacked and massacred on the pretext that they were conspiring against the republic.

Rome fell and nothing could save it. Sounder and better states and communities gradually grew up. But what shall we say of *their* moral and intellectual standards? A few facts and references will suffice to answer this question. To wars and civil wars it is hardly necessary to allude even, any more than it is necessary to speak here of the corruption and cynicism of kings, diplomats and ministers, or of the oppression of the peasants and burghers by the privileged aristocracies.

In 1618 the civil or Thirty Years' War broke out in Germany. During that contest the looting of towns and villages was the rule rather than the exception. "The soldiers," writes Mr. Wells, "became more and more mere brigands living on the country, and not only plunder but outrage was the soldier's privilege. After the close of that contest "so harried was the land that the farmers ceased from cultivation, and great crowds of starving women and children became camp followers of the armies, and supplied a thievish tail to the rougher plundering." Central Europe "did not fully recover from these robberies and devastations for a century."

In 1791 the Jacobin revolution occurred in France. The terror soon followed, and the world shuddered at the excesses and horrors of that regime. But, to quote Mr. Wells:

"In Britain and America, while the terror ruled in France, far more people were slaughtered for offences—very often quite trivial offences—against property than were condemned by the revolutionary tribunal for treason against the state. A girl was hanged in Massachusetts in 1789 for forcibly taking the hat, shoes and buckles of another girl she had met in the street. Again, Howard, the philanthropist, found, about 1773, a number of perfectly innocent people detained in the English prisons who had been tried and acquitted, but were unable to pay the jailer's fees. And these prisons were filthy places beyond effective control. Torture was still in use in the Hanoverian dominions of his Britannic Majesty King George III. It has been in use in France up to the time of the National Assembly."

Human slavery was not abolished *till the middle of the nineteenth century*. As for child labor, in 1819 the English factory act, the first of a series, prohibited the employment of *children of nine*

in such establishments and limited the working day of children above that age to *twelve hours*.

Let us conclude the examination of the human record with several fragmentary and detached citations.

"It is not more than five hundred years since the great empire of the Aztecs," says Mr. Wells in his summing up, "still believed that it could live only by the shedding of blood. Every year in Mexico hundreds of human victims died in this fashion: the body was bent like a bow over the curved stone of sacrifice; the breast was sliced upon with a knife of obsidian, and the priest tore out the bleeding heart of the still living victim."

Discussing the introduction of Negro slavery into New England, Mr. Wells, while noting that the conscience of the American colonists were never quite easy on that score, calls attention to the fact that all attempts to restrain the slave trade were checked by the great proprietary interests of the mother country. As to the sort of institution these proprietors, nominally Christian and humane, thus protected and defended, Mr. Wells writes:

"In some respects the new gang slavery was worse than anything in the ancient world. Peculiarly horrible was the provocation by the trade of slave wars and man-hunts in Western Africa, and the cruelties of the long transatlantic voyage. The poor creatures were packed on the ships often with insufficient provision of food and water, without proper sanitation, without medicines. Many who could tolerate slavery upon the plantations found the slave trade too much for their digestions."

These practices show how thin was the veneer of civilization and religion as late as the early 17th century. In the latter part of the 19th they would have been impossible in America, or in Europe. But what of Africa, of the Congo? To quote Mr. Wells again:

"By 1900 all Africa was mapped, explored, estimated, and divided between the European powers, divided with much snarling and disputation into portions that left each power uneasy or discontented. Little heed was given to the welfare of the natives in this scramble. The Arab slaver was indeed curbed rather than expelled, but the greed for rubber, which was a wild product collected under compulsion by the natives in the Belgian Congo, a greed exacerbated by the pitiless avarice of King Leopold, and the clash of inexperienced European administrators with the native populations in many other annexations, led to horrible atrocities. No European power has perfectly clean hands in this matter."

We complain, and with much reason assuredly, of the administration of law and justice in the courts, civil, criminal and equit-

able, that are maintained by all civilized states. The law's delays are proverbial. The bias of judges, the passion of juries, the influence of mob intolerance on the course of justice—all these things give us deep concern, as they should. Yet compare the administration of justice in our day with the State Trials of so recent a period as the Elizabethan in Great Britain! Read Macauley on these famous, or infamous, trials, and ponder the contrast! Judges spoke and behaved like bitter and ferocious prosecutors in those days. There was no pretense of impartiality or of judicial independence. The Crown dictated verdicts and packed juries.

Or, glancing at law and justice in earlier periods, before and after the Norman invasion and conquest of England, any good textbook on jurisprudence will give the modern reader a tolerably adequate idea of the "trials" of cases under primitive Anglo-Saxon and Norman law. We learn that those trials were never investigations of the facts and honest efforts to apply principles to issues. "Trial might be by compurgation, by witness, by charters, by record, by ordeal, or by battle." To quote from Prof. Roscoe Pound's *Introduction to the Study of Law*:

"Trial by ordeal took place by cold water, by hot water, hot iron or the morsel. Each was preceded by a solemn religious ceremonial in which the party was adjured not to undergo the ordeal unless in the right, and Heaven was invoked to decide the dispute.

"In the ordeal by cold water the party was cast into the water, which was asked to cast him forth if guilty, but receive him if innocent. If he sank there was judgment in his favor. In the ordeal by hot water the party plunged his arm into a vessel of hot water and brought forth a stone. His arm was then bandaged for three days. If at the end of that time his arm had healed, there was judgment in his favor. If it had festered, there was judgment against him. In the ordeal by hot iron the party was required to carry a hot iron for nine feet, when his hand was bandaged and the result determined as in the ordeal by hot water. In the ordeal by the morsel the party was required to swallow a bit of bread or cheese weighing an ounce. If he did so without serious difficulty, there was judgment in his favor; if he choked, there was judgment against him. In trial by battle the parties, if they were infirm or incapable of battle because of age or sex, their champions—that is, kinsmen or other appropriate persons who knew the case—fought with staves in a ring before the justices from dawn till the stars appeared or one of them yielded. If one were vanquished, or if the party having the burden of the issue did not prevail in the time fixed, there was judgment against him."

Trial by jury has been called the palladium of liberty, and Prof.

Pound writes that "it was the first thoroughly rational mode of trial to develop in the modern world." The evolution of trial by jury was not achieved fully until the 19th century.

Such, briefly, is the human record—the record almost to our own period. In the light of the facts thus recalled, what conclusion emerges? Is a belief in human progress justified? Does the past of mankind support it? Is there any actual basis for current talk regarding human decadence and degradation? Are the most advanced of human communities—notably the United States—rushing gaily to destruction?

The true answers to these queries can hardly be in doubt after a sober consideration and pondering of the evidence in the record. Whatever tests we apply—political, economic, social, moral, artistic—the result is the same. There has been progress in every direction. Some of us, in our impatience and haste, may complain of the rate of this progress. It has been slow, if we measure it with an arbitrary standard. Why, we cry, did not men and women follow, or remain loyal, to such seers and guides as Gautama Buddah, or the Hebrew prophets, or Jesus of Nazareth, or St. Francis? Why have all the great religions been corrupted and smothered in irrelevant and superstitious dogmas and empty ceremonies? We might as well ask why the average Englishman or American does not write like Shakespeare or Milton. Moral genius is as rare as poetic and literary. The human race has advanced at the only rate at which it has been able to advance. It is what it is, and we cannot help accepting it. The question is not what another species might have accomplished with like opportunities, but what our species *has* accomplished. And it has accomplished much.

Take property. We still cling to property, but many of us are collectivists, communists, syndicalists, Single-Taxers, advocates of equality of opportunity, champions of co-operative production. Most of us recognize the obligation to share our possessions with the destitute. Even the most selfish among us dare not denounce public and private charity. We frown on anyone who protests that he is not his brother's keeper. We take the ground that unemployment is a community problem, and that he who seeks work and cannot find it must be supported at the expense of the body politic and social. We have, in truth, traveled far from the notions and practices of the primitive savage in respect of property—its rights and sanctions.

Or take the life of the average community. Can we call it

"bestial?" We still have slums, homeless families, unclean and insanitary dwellings, indecent overcrowding. But for these conditions the mechanical and industrial revolution, which in so relatively short a time abolished the cottage and home industries, erected large factories, and reduced tens of thousands of artisans and craftsmen to the status of wage-workers in concentrated establishments, is largely responsible. The movement for better housing, for "garden cities," for individual and co-operative home-owning is world-wide and effective, though the great war naturally interrupted it.

We have unemployed at all times, and during "hard times" this evil becomes acute. But we also have, or are planning to provide, insurance against unemployment, local and central agencies for the relief of the destitute among the unemployed, and engineering and other bodies that are earnestly grappling with the questions of seasonal work, waste in industry, co-ordination of public and private measures designed to reduce unemployment to a minimum. And we have socially recognized the obligation to feed, clothe and shelter those who are willing to work but unable to procure it.

Still with us is the disgrace and evil of child labor, but who can compare the child labor of today with that of fifty years ago? Compulsory education laws, continuation schools, vocational schools, junior colleges and many other things of like purpose and design are the order of the day. Certainly public sentiment, religious and secular, condemns child labor and the lingering opposition to its eradication is felt to be futile.

In America, at any rate, according to recent figures, children are no longer sent to prison for any ordinary offence, either before or after trial and conviction. Detention homes have been established for children, and though they are far from perfect, no one will assert that they are physically or morally as pestilential as the jails and prisons of our cities and counties.

But, some may object, all these improvements are of slight consequence because fundamentally the wage-worker is still a serf and the average man is still oppressed and exploited by the privileged classes! Genuine progress means a constant increase in the freedom and opportunity of the average toiler.

Granted, and most heartily. But what are the signs, portents and tendencies in the industrial world so far as relations between employers and employed are concerned? There are some reactionary employers, of course, especially in industries that depend almost entirely on foreign, un-Americanized labor. But the trade unions

are stronger than ever; the campaign for the "open shop," or the shop closed to organized labor, has failed in America; machinery for adjudication of labor disputes is being fashioned and installed in many industries; "shop representation" and shop councils are being established even by powerful corporations in avowed recognition of the claims of "industrial democracy" and the principles of mutuality and justice; tens of thousands of employes are investing in industrial stocks and receiving dividends in addition to wages. The significance of all these and similar symptoms is unmistakable. Even the opponents of social and trade-union radicalism, so-called, are promoting radicalism unconsciously. They are helping to supplant the wage-system by some form of co-operation.

Meantime organized labor itself, long indifferent to voluntary co-operation and disposed to depend unduly on state aid and paternalistic legislation, is beginning to turn to co-operation, productive and distributive, as a partial solution of its problems. If labor leaders are wise, or if they become wise, trade union funds and workmen's savings will seek more and more direct competition with capitalism in the great fields of production and distribution. There is no reason why thousands of small factories should not spring up in every industrial country. Co-operation is more efficient than capitalism—and more equitable. Labor for decades has had to fight for its rights. Now it is beginning to think of its opportunities this side of Utopia, opportunities under capitalism and private property. Labor hopes to control the political state sooner or later. Numbers and organization may give it such control in certain countries. Why should it wait, however, for that consummation? Without controlling parliaments and governments, labor can use its own capital and its own credit to build up co-operative industries and demonstrate their superiority both to monopolized or to excessively competitive industry. Capitalism could not prevent such development of co-operation if it would, and only very shallow persons imagine that it would deliberately seek to obstruct and prevent the development of co-operation if it could. Here and there, of course, short-sighted and greedy groups of local bankers, or of entrenched monopolists, have fought, and will again fight, co-operative enterprises, but the same thing is true of innovations essentially capitalistic. Ignorance and blind selfishness always resist improvements, even when they are not at all radical. The point is that capitalism would not rise in its might to fight and defeat co-operation.

It is idle to bewail the "degradation of labor." Labor in mod-

ern society is more independent, more militant, more intelligent, more cohesive than it ever was. Mr. John Galsworthy, a true and sincere humanitarian, who has arraigned many of the defects and vices of the present social-economic order in his novels, plays and essays, and who demands for labor more comfort and more beauty than it is now enjoying, is constrained to acknowledge, after a fresh indictment of society, that "in spite of everything this is still the best age, on the whole, that man has lived in."

In this connection a few sentences from Mr. Wells' *Outline*, contrasting the rôle of labor prior to the Industrial Revolution with its rôle since that momentous change are highly pertinent. "The power of the old world," writes Mr. Wells, "was human power: everything depended ultimately upon the driving power of human muscle, the muscle of ignorant and subjugated men. . . . A vast proportion of mankind in the early civilization was employed in purely mechanical drudgery. . . . Modern civilization is being rebuilt upon cheap mechanical power. For a hundred years power has been getting cheaper and labor dearer. . . . As the 19th century advanced human beings were wanted now only as human beings. The *drudge*, on whom all the previous civilizations had rested, the creature of mere obedience, the man whose brains were superfluous, had become unnecessary to the welfare of mankind."

Glancing for a moment at political relations of men, who can deny that the change from autocracy, monarchy, oligarchy to modern democracy, with its equal suffrage, direct primaries, frequent elections, initiative-referendum systems, recalls, popular assemblies, constitutional conventions, and the like, represents very real and great progress? We complain, and rightly, of the shifty opportunism, the cowardice and the subserviency of the majority of modern lawmakers and executives. But what is the implication in these complaints? Clearly, that representatives fear the voters and seek to please them, to feed their prejudices, to reflect their notions. The average legislator is alas, not very superior intellectually and morally to the average body of his constituents, but democracy should lead us to expect this and to accept it with resignation, or, rather, with the determination to elevate the electorate in order to elevate its public servants and delegates.

We have lately realized the weakness of territorial representation and are beginning to consider sympathetically the alternative of functional representation—of selecting men and women on the basis of their work and service rather than on that of accidental

residence. There may be much promise of improvement in this idea—as the writer thinks—or there may be little. But there is nothing to prevent modern democracies from experimenting with functional representation. Political changes are far less difficult of accomplishment than changes that directly affect property rights and vested interests. At any rate, whether we reorganize our legislative chambers or not, any considerable element in a modern community, if it is sufficiently intelligent and persistent, and if it takes the trouble to organize, can even now secure fairly adequate representation in most of these chambers.

No; history does not lend any real support to the pessimistic conclusion of those thinkers who hold that progress is an illusion or a dogma. On the contrary, history irresistibly forces on us the conclusion that the human race is essentially a progressive race, and that progress is in truth a law of its nature. The belief in absolutely continuous, uninterrupted progress was dogmatic. Lapses, interruptions, periods of stagnation there have been, and there will be. But these periods are becoming shorter and less frequent. Humanity is not Bourbon. It learns and it forgets—somehow. Acquired characters may not be inherited by the offspring of the beneficiaries of valuable acquisitions. Biology has rendered no final verdict on that important issue. But civilization, culture, improvements are handed down by generation to generation; the torch is never extinguished or lost.

The late Alfred Russell Wallace called the Nineteenth Century “the wonderful century.” Wonderful it was, and not merely on account of mechanical and scientific achievement. The century of constitutional changes, of liberal reforms, of suffrage extension, of the establishment of popular and secular education, of trade unions, of factory legislation, of the rise and development of Socialism in its various forms, of cautious but important applications of science to punishment for crime, of the development of daily, weekly and monthly journalism, of the free and circulating libraries, of cheap editions of the most humanizing and elevating forms of literature; the century of Godwin, Fourierism, Owen, Comte, Louis Blanc, Proudhon, Carlyle, Mill, Toynbee, Ruskin, Maurice, Kingsley, Morris, Marx, Mazzini, Emerson, Thoreau, Gladstone, Bright, Cobden, Henry George, and a host of other sincere and penetrating thinkers and critics of social maladjustments—that century was marvellous in a social, ethical and economic sense as well! And it planted seeds that have yet to yield rich harvests in many fields. True, the



present century seems so far to have brought only disillusionment, reaction, loss of faith and generous enthusiasm. The world war, utterly unnecessary, which the madness and littleness of a few men clothed with brief but unlimited authority inflicted upon civilized mankind, has caused many to despair of humanity and pronounce the doom and fall of our proud culture. But these views are superficial. They are based on misconceptions and arbitrary assumptions. The world will ere long take a fresh start on the road to justice and righteousness, unity and peace. The problems that face civilized societies have never been so well understood as now. None of them are insoluble, and this means that humanity can and shall solve them—not in a decade, or even a century, perhaps, but within calculable time. To quote Mr. Galsworthy again, "There is in human nature, after all, the instinct of self-preservation, a great saving common sense." This instinct and this sense have not prevented catastrophes and tragedies, to be sure, but they have extracted moral profit from the catastrophes and tragedies. Because of them good has often come out of evil, and bitter experience has not been wholly wasted. Because of them, and only because of them, the golden rule in social and economic relations is not a mere dream or illusion. Human nature may not change; it does not need to change. Environmental and institutional changes will answer. There is enough intelligence and enough sympathy, imagination and right feeling in humanity to bring about the requisite changes in the institutions that have outlived, or are outliving their usefulness, or that offend the sense of justice and the reason of the average body of human beings. The seers, the guides, the interpreters of life must address unceasing appeals to justice and to intelligence. There is no other fountain of justice, of mercy, of solidarity.

## EAST ASIATIC WORKS IN THE LIBRARY.

BY JOHN T. BRAMHALL.

**A**N East Asiatic library in Chicago! *Que bono?* The Chinese Wall is being demolished, not by the Chinese, nor by the Mongols, but by peaceful scholars of the West. The barred gates of Lhasa have been opened also. Scholars are interchanging between Harvard and Chicago on the one hand and Peking and Tokio on the other. The Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 was the academy of tonsured heads of all the world. *Om mani padme hum* was translated into Pope's Universal Prayer:

Father of all, in every age  
In every clime adored,  
By saint, by savage and by sage,  
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

*Ex orient lux.* Out of the East comes light. Into the spiritual darkness that has fallen upon the West, covered with murky war clouds, comes a gleam of divine light from the East to a suffering world. Such is the hope of many, as it was aforesaid to the shepherds who gazed from Bethlehem upon the star in the east when Herod ruled in Judea. The enthusiastic reception accorded to Rabindranath Tagore in Europe and America is not without significance, for it was not as a literary lion that he was received, but as a religious teacher. In Utrecht he was welcomed with an address in Sanscrit, which is taught in all the Dutch universities, and at Rotterdam he was invited to deliver his lecture, "The Meeting of the East and the West," from the pulpit of the principal church, an unprecedented honor. His reception at Christiania, where he was presented with the Nobel prize, outdid, both in honors and in popular acclaim, it is reported, any ovation ever given to king or commons in Skandinavia.

Nor can we mistake the meaning of the Eastward facing of Germany, in these post-war days, a spiritual *Drang nach Osten*. It

is possible that Goethe's *Westostlicher Divan*, like Fitzgerald's *Omar*, was not wholly inspired by the Sufi wine, but we have his own declaration: "All that I had preserved and cherished that was similar in sense and substance" (to the *Divan* of Hafiz) "came forth, and with all the more vivacity because I felt constrained to escape from the actual world which threatened fresh troubles into an ideal one, to live in which with satisfaction all my will, pleasure and capacity were pledged." And again: "The Mohammedan religion, mythology and manners allow to poetry a scope which suits



The *Ise Monogatari*, "Tales of Ise," Printed in 1608 during the period Keicho.

my years." (They were seventy!) "Unconditional submission to the immutable will of God, cheerful survey of the mobile affairs of earth which are ever returning spirally upon themselves, love and inclination oscillating between two worlds, all the real now clarified, now dissolving to symbols—what needs the Grandfather more?"

But we need not go back to the Germany of Goethe, or of Schopenhauer, or of Max Muller, or of Neumann, to demonstrate the interest that Germany has taken in Oriental literature and religions. The recent publication of Spengler's "Decline and Fall of Western Civilization," and Paul Cohen-Portheim's "*Asien als Erzieher*" has

turned the attention of studious minds from the distraction of politics to the restful philosophies of the East. These works were recently reviewed in *Europäische Staats- und Wirtschafts Zeitung*. "Popular interest," said the reviewer, "is not turning so strongly toward the ideals and teachings of Asia out of mere weariness of the world and of life—which superficial thinkers are so ready to ascribe to Buddhism—but in search of satisfaction for positive spiritual needs."

Our scholars are not satisfied, and they should not be, with translations and abridgments, however faithfully made. They ask for sources, and of these we have, naturally, all too few. For the East is a strange world and its people are *sui generis*. They might indeed be likened to beings of another planet, so entirely have they been isolated these many centuries from the people of the West. It is not alone a matter of distances, of deserts, or of oceans. Their manner of thought and vehicles of expression are the antipodes of ours. Literally do they stand upon their heads to us and think and write reflexively. Like the nether side of the moon they have been concealed, and have concealed themselves from the enquiring gaze of the West. Nor can it be said that the West has displayed, until quite recently, an eagerness to know them. For countless millenniums life and culture have been expanding on the two sides of the globe, in each separately and diversely. Only but yesterday the Venetian merchant carried his pack to Cathay and the Portuguese sailors were thrown by a storm on the coast of Zipangu. Then appeared the cowed brothers, Francis and Dominic, carrying the cross, and sundry men in cocked hats with demands for trade in opium, rum, clocks and cottons. And so began our acquaintance with the East. But both commerce and religion necessitated a knowledge of the languages. For diplomacy, indeed, it mattered little (note "this is not grammar," in the British Yang-tse business). Have we a key that shall unlock the treasury of the East? How may we interpret them, and us to them?

In 1907, Dr. Berthold Laufer, while conducting investigations in the Far East for the Field Museum of Natural History, of which he is the distinguished curator of anthropology, was commissioned by the Newberry Library to gather for them a representative collection of East Asiatic works on religion, philosophy, history, etc., and by the John Crerar Library to collect works on geography, law, the natural sciences, etc. The result of this commission, for the Newberry Library, was the acquisition of over a thousand

works, making a library of over twenty-one thousand volumes. And while the collection cannot be presumed, says Dr. Laufer, "complete in any section, so much has been attained by including the majority of all important works that the student will be able to carry on serious and profound research work in any of the branches of knowledge enumerated, and it may therefore be considered a truly representative collection of the Chinese, Manchu, Tibetan, and Mongol literatures." As to language, the Japanese is represented by one hundred and forty-three works, Tibetan by three hundred and ten, Mongol by seventy-two, Manchu by sixty:



The *T'ang Liu sien sheng wen tsi*, block book of the Sung period, 1167 A. D.

the rest are in Chinese, the most extensive and important literature of the East and the one from which the light of the others (Tibetan possibly excepted) radiate. In Manchu literature, says Dr. Laufer, Chicago has one of the richest collections in existence. Among the most notable works (no other copies being known), may be mentioned a commentary on the Four Classical Books (*Se shu*) by the Emperor K'ang-hi, in twenty-six quarto volumes (the Palace edition of 1677), a commentary on the Book of Mutations, *Yi king*, also by K'ang-hi (Palace edition of 1754), and a commentary on

the Ancient Book of History, *Shu king*, by the Emperor K'ien-lung (Palace edition of 1754). These are all in Manchu, in its most elegant style, which is radically different from the Chinese, being a Turanian or Ural-Altaic language allied to the Mongol and Turkish. These works, it is said, seem never to have been placed on the book-market and to have come out of the Palace in consequence of the panic following the death of the Emperor Kwang-su and the Empress Dowager in 1908. It is a curious circumstance, comments Dr. Laufer, that just at that time the Peking book-market, which offers no customers for Manchu literature, was flooded with rare Manchu books. It was evident, however, that they were not "loot," being regarded by the ignorant Chinese authorities as valueless and were publicly sold by them for quite a nominal sum. Among other treasures in this unique Manchu library is a Palace edition (1741) of the Four Classical Books, *Se shu* (not the K'ang-hi commentary mentioned above); the Manchu translation of the historical work, *Tung kien kang mu*, a great rarity, in the Palace edition of 1681, in ninety-six volumes, and a collection of Buddhist charms and prayer formulas (dharani), in Chinese, Manchu, and Tibetan, in ten volumes, a splendidly printed book with fine large wood engravings executed in the Palace during the K'ien-lung period (1736-1795). This K'ien lung, it is to be noted, besides being a valiant soldier who cleared the empire of the Mohammedans, was a devoted scholar who wrote incessantly, both poetry and prose, collected libraries and republished ancient classics of great value. His campaign furnished him with themes for his verses, and in the Summer Palace was found, when the allies entered Peking in 1860, a handsome manuscript copy of a laudatory poem he composed on the occasion of his victory over the Gurkas.

The richest harvest of Tibetan books was made in the ancient Buddhist monastery of Derge in eastern Tibet, and others were picked up in Sze-ch'uan and in the Kuku Nor region which was visited by the Abbé Huc on his way to Tibet. The only serious attempt at a Tibetan bibliography, as pointed out by Dr. Laufer, was the work of the celebrated Hungarian scholar, Csoma de Koros, consisting of an analysis of the Kanjur, or collection of the sacred books of Lamaism made by King Kri Song Tsan in the Eighth century. The Newberry copy of the *Kanjur* was printed at the monastery of Narthang (Tashilhunpo) in central Tibet in 1742. Tibetan books, we are told, are not ready-made, but printed only as ordered by the Abbot and the printing blocks are kept under lock and key

in the temple and the shop is opened but once a year. There is, accordingly, a great variety of paper and ink in the editions and the Newberry copy is, fortunately, of the best in every particular.

The Tibetan translations (of the Buddhist scriptures) are almost literal (I again quote from Dr. Laufer) and prepared with the greatest care and accuracy, and as most of the Sanskrit originals are lost, they become a primary authentic source for the study of Buddhism; even in those cases where the Sanskrit texts are preserved the Tibetan documents always provide considerable assistance in making out the correct Sanskrit reading. To one equally versed in Tibetan and Sanskrit and familiar with Buddhist style and terminology, it is even possible to successfully restore the Sanskrit original from the reading of the Tibetan text. The vast stores of this collection (the *Kanjur*) have in part been repeatedly ransacked by scholars interested in the history of Buddhism. Franz Anton Schiefner, the Russian linguist, and Leon Feer, the French orientalist, have made extensive use of it, and H. A. Jaeschke was enabled to make a version of the New Testament in Tibetan. W. W. Rockhill, American traveler and diplomat, has skilfully utilized it for a life of Buddha and a history of Khotan, but the bulk of its contents still remains unstudied.

The minds of men, providentially, differ, and there is no such thing possible as uniformity in religion, either in the Jewish, the Buddhist, Roman Catholic, or the Mohammedan church. Buddhism does not form an harmonious unity in China, in its cradle country India, nor its nursery Tibet, nor in Japan where it is exotic and where claims are actively put forth to send missionary coals to Chinese Newcastles. As for Buddhism, which casts its influence over all of eastern Asia, the key is found in the study of the sectarian formations of the Lamaism of Lhasa and Urga. So it is that Dr. Lafer urges that only by a thorough investigation of the history of these various sects can we ever hope to penetrate into the mystery of Lamaism. The history of the collections embodied in the *Kanjur*, "The Translation of the Word" (of Buddha), can only be fully understood through the history of the sects, and the latter subject will shed new light on the formation of the Canon. What is hoped for, therefore, is a critical concordance of the various editions of the *Kanjur*, the literary history of which is recorded in their lengthy prefaces, and finally a collation of the works in the Tibetan with those in the Chinese *Tripitaka*, a Tibeto-Manchu-Chinese concordance.

Besides a large collection of the writings of the Dalai Lamas, the Newberry has secured a number of beautiful Tibetan books printed at the imperial press of Peking in the reigns of the Emperors K'ang-hi (1662-1722) and K'ien-lung (1736-1795). Especially noteworthy is an ancient and splendid copy, written in silver on a black polished background, of the famous *Mani Kambun*, "The Collection of Precious Laws," a treatise chiefly on religion, but which also contains an account of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet and of the closing years of the reign of Srong Tsan Gampo (to use the simpler spelling of Prof. Davids), the first his-



Commentary to the *yi king*, (Book of Mutations). Written by the Emperor K'ang-hi, Manchu.

torical Tibetan king and the founder of Lhasa. As the copying of sacred books is considered a great religious merit, writing in vermilion insures a higher merit than work with black ink, while silver and gold writing surpass both.

The edition of the Chinese *Tripitaka* which the Newberry has the rare good fortune to possess is that which formerly reposed in the temple at Wu-chang and known under the designation of the Buddhist Canon of the Ts'ing or Manchu dynasty. Until the close of the Tenth century the Chinese Canon was preserved in manuscript only, but was finally printed (*nota bene*) in A. D. 972 by order of the Emperor T'ai-tsu. Thereafter it was printed



repeatedly from wooden blocks which were as often destroyed by fire or in the course of wars. A few copies of editions coming down from the Ming period have survived in some temples of northern China and one preserved in a monastery in Shan si is said to be complete. The K'ien-lung Palace edition now in the Newberry was drafted in 1735 by the Emperor Yung-cheng and on his death was completed by his son and successor, the indefatigable editor and publisher, K'ien-lung. The printing of the work extended over three years and was completed at the end of 1738. The printing blocks are still preserved in the temple of Po-lin-sze, near the great Lama temple in Peking. The temple record says that it required 28,411 blocks to engrave the entire work, which is composed of 55,632 leaves. It consists of 7,920 oblong flat volumes bound in 792 wrappers. Each volume is illustrated with a fine wood-engraving of delicate tracing and elegantly bound in silk brocade of various designs of peculiar rarity and artistic value.

A work of great importance, and at the same time the earliest printed book in the Newberry Library, is the *T'ang Liu sien shêng wên tsi*, dated 1167, in twelve volumes, containing the poems and essays of Liu Tsung-yüan (A. D. 773-819), one of the most celebrated poets of the T'ang dynasty. This edition, in forty-three chapters, is fully described in the Catalogue of Lü t'ing and has a commentary by Shi Yin-pien. The margins of the pages show the peculiar black ornament, or "stamp" of the Sung period (called "black mouth"). The pages have twenty-six lines of twenty-three characters and are printed, of course, from a single block, three centuries before Gutenberg.

Another work of the Sung period of which the Newberry boasts (figuratively, of course), is the *Tse chi t'ung kien* (Laufer) by Se-ma Kuang (A. D. 1009-1089), which corresponds with the *T'ung Chien* of Dr. Giles of Cambridge University in the Encyclopædia Britannica. To quote Professor Giles: "There is one (work of history) which stands out among the rest and is especially enshrined in the hearts of the Chinese people. This is the *T'ung Chien*, or Mirror of History, so called because 'to view antiquity as in a mirror is an aid in the administration of government.' It was the work of a statesman of the Eleventh century, whose name by a coincidence was Ssu-ma Kuang.\* He had been forced to retire from office, and spent nearly all the last sixteen years of his life

\* Ssu-ma Ch'ien (145-87 B. C.), grand astrologer and historian edited the *Shih Chi*, or Historical Record and other works recovered by the first Han emperor, after the burning of the books.

in historical research. The Mirror of History embraces a period from the Fifth century B. C. down to A. D. 960. It was revised by Chu Hsi, the famous commentator, who flourished A. D. 1130-1200, and whose work is now regarded as the standard history of



Title page from the Tibetan *Kanjur*. Block printed at the Buddhist monastery at Narthang, Tibet, 1742.

China." It was first published in 1172 under the title *Tung kien kang mu*, and it is a complete copy of this edition, says Dr. Laufer, that the Newberry now possesses. It is a rare and fine specimen of Sung printing and perhaps the most extensive work of that period now known. The Newberry also has a beautiful Manchu translation in a Palace edition of 1681 in ninety-six large volumes.



Characteristic Frontispiece to Buddhist Works.

Dr. Laufer, wisely no doubt, makes no allusion in his monograph on the collection, to the suspicion which has been cast by Allen and Giles upon the genuineness of the Book of History, the Confucian Canon and the Tao Te Ching and other works edited by Ssü-ma Ch'ien in the First century B. C. Perhaps some of the monumental works in this great library of original sources may shed some light on the story of the Burning of the Books, the secret repository of forbidden books in the wall of Confucius'

house, and the studious inaction of the Board of Erudite Scholars in those shadowy days now nineteen centuries past.

Limitations of space forbid even brief mention of the literary and artistic treasures of Japan and Korea contained in this collection, the extent of which has merely been hinted at in the foregoing sketch. It is a door opened into another world, whose historical, anthropological, literary and religious wealth is not easy for us to comprehend. With such facilities for research, together with those now possessed by the John Crerar Library and the Field Museum, it is quite reasonable to say that Chicago may offer better opportunities for scholars in Oriental research than can now be offered in either Lhasa, Peking or Tokio.

## HOMER AND THE PROPHETS.

OR

### HOMER AND NOW.

BY CORNELIA STEKETEE HULST, M.A., M.P.D

PERHAPS the best approach to Homer today is by means of the "Movie," at least, a young university scholar who has seen the film of *Odyssey* tells me what would argue this happy conclusion. He says that it is a "thriller" of the first order, and that when it was given in his university town, it attracted large and increasing crowds of townsfolk and students before its run of a week was over, not at all because it was "scholarly stuff," and "highbrow," but because it has a strong human appeal. Its action rushes along carrying spectators with it though new to the story and foreign to Greek traditions. Even the gods and fabulous monsters seem real, because they are seen with the physical eye—in this respect the new art of the moving picture is at an advantage as compared with the ancient art of the Bard, though Bards acted the parts as they sang them. Miraculously, in a mist, a god can appear, and then vanish miraculously.

A great improvement, this of attending a "Movie," instead of thumbing a dictionary and grammar laboriously, pondering roots and points of construction as the means of approach to the story. Every move of the thumb, every act of acquiring knowledge, every judgment passed distracts the reader's attention from characters and situations so that he cannot realize them intensely. If he is to get the full effect of the story when a "Movie" is not available, a dramatic reading will be the next best approach, with an epic pitch and tension. Those who have had the good fortune to hear Professor Clarke's dramatic reading of *The Descent into Hades* will realize much of the human appeal of the *Odyssey*. Two small boys whom I took to hear it sat congealed during the reading and agreed later that this was the greatest "show" that they had ever seen.

It would not be possible for spectators and hearers to remain unmoved by the epic hero of Homer if they realized his character

and situation. He is bayed about by a large band of desperate conspirators who threaten his life, and his wife; he is endangered at every turn by alluring sorceresses and monsters; and false and hostile gods block his way when he tries to return home after the war. But friends and righteous gods rise up to help him, and Wisdom, personified as the goddess Athene, gives him guidance and pleads his cause, in Olympus, on Earth, even down in Hades, whither he has to go to learn all that a mortal may know. It is a thrilling sight to see him go down and learn it.

As a background and foil to Homer's great hero, strange and horrible monsters appear, as man-eating Polyphemus, a terrible one-eyed giant. The enchantress Circe changes her victims to swine by means of a magic drink; two evil water spirits, Scylla and Charybdis, half women and half snakes, wreck sailors on the rocks and in the whirlpool; alluring Sirens charm men to destruction with their beauty and their songs. These, out of many, are strange and horrible enough, and Odysseus escapes from them all by moral strength, courage, resolution, and craft; but stranger and more horrible are those whom he meets in the Lower World. There the Dead are not men, but pale shadows without substance, as he learns when he tries to embrace his own mother, whom he finds among them, she having died since he left home. Pale shadows are his companions who died in the war, or since, and they weakly and pathetically complain of the wrongs they have had to endure. Others are suffering penance for the sins they committed when they were alive, as Sisyphus, who rolls a great rock forever up a hill, for when he gets it nearly to the top it rolls down and he has to do his work all over again,—a good allegory of the life that men lead, forever rolling stones up an incline, but never reaching the top. Near him, Tantalus is forever thirsty because the water that rises almost to his lips is siphoned out of his cup just before he is able to drink it—again an allegory, of us poor thirsty mortals who see the waters of our hopes recede just when we expect to drink our Desire. Tityus is tortured by an Eagle, which comes every day to tear his liver out as fast as it grows again—we say that our *heart is torn*, meaning the same.

On earth, the human characters range from very villainous villains, the Suitors, who are plotting dishonor and death for the hero, to the hero and heroine, Odysseus and his Penelope, who are almost too good to be true. In the background lie dark tragedies of the House of Atreus, a House "baneful and driven to ruin" as its name signifies derivatively,—will the House of Odysseus go down in

tragedy as dark? Can Odysseus arrive in time to save his wife from the Suitors? and will he be able to hold his own against such odds if he does?

The first scene is laid in heaven, where the righteous gods are discussing the fate of Odysseus and decide to help him to return. This foreknowledge does much to sustain us through the many harrowing scenes that follow, which might be too harrowing to simple-minded hearers. The next scene shows Odysseus' home, where his steadfast wife is weeping and praying for his return and his handsome young son, Telemachus, the image of his father, except that he is young and tall, is dreaming apart about the day of his father's return. The Suitors are lying around, leading their customary vicious life, gambling, drinking wine, talking unwisely, and doing nothing useful. Now the goddess of Wisdom appears, in the guise of a middleaged man who was Odysseus' friend. Telemachus welcomes her and cares for her comfort in every way with extreme politeness, and accepts gratefully her wise advice that he shall no longer remain inactive like a boy, but rouse himself to act like a man. From this moment he deserves the epithet that Homer gives him, *discreet*, and his name, *Telemachus*, which signifies derivatively, *The Perfect Warrior*. To the joy of his mother and the confusion of the Suitors, he announces his majority, orders the Suitors to leave, calls the gods to bear witness and to give him help against them should they refuse, calls an assembly of the people, makes his charges before them, and announces his purpose to go in search of his father. This is not starting a battle, but a campaign. Every word and act is wise, and will win the approval of Wise Odysseus on his return.

The many scenes in which Odysseus meets his trials are varied and effective, laid on enchanted Islands, at the fireside, in a Swineherd's cottage, in a palace, out at sea. The scene of his shipwreck, where the winds and the waves toss his frail raft about until it sinks—he is saved by a kind seaymph who lends him her wimple for a life-preserver—is followed by a charming idyllic scene on the shore of an inland rivulet where a young Princess, Nausicaä, is washing the family clothes in company with her maidens. They have finished trampling them in the washing-pool and have spread them out on the sand to dry, and now they have refreshed themselves from the baskets that they brought with them and are playing a game of ball, when Odysseus appears before them, a shipwrecked stranger, unclothed except for a broken bough of a tree, which he holds before

him in lieu of a figleaf apron. A sorry plight for a world-hero! Athene befriend him and Apollo inspire him, so that he can win the young Princess to take up his cause!

They do befriend him. A marvellous grace is shed about him and words of wisdom flow from his lips. The Princess listens, encouraged by Athene, and is persuaded to give him some of her brothers' beautiful clothes, along with sage advice as to how he can reach her mother, Queen Virtue, and win her heart to his cause. Under the guidance of Wisdom, the Princess Nausicaä, who had turned like a child to flee at sight of the stranger, takes the part of a perfect woman. As Telemachus is the model for all Greek boys, so Nausicaä is for the girls, able to meet a difficult situation with perfect success, maidenly, modest, gentle, affectionate (she calls the King, her father, "Papa, dear"), brave, kindly, courteous, helpful, generous, prudent, wise—we must name all of the virtues for women and show that she was possessed of them all from evidence in the text. A Princess but not above doing the family washing! Such should all maidens be! Telemachus will doubtless marry her, and their house will be, through them, the happiest ever, protected by the righteous gods to the happiest of conclusions—nothing *baneful, driven to ruin* there!

It begins to be clear why the Greeks made their Homer the foundation book for the education of their young. Their best ideals were here, implicit in characters and situations, possibly more effective, certainly more attractive, than if they had been set forth in didactic form. Not only Odysseus and Penelope, but this mere youth and maiden, "follow Wisdom like a guiding star," an inspiration for others also to summon resolution and endure to Victory. Homer holds forth a promise of honor and reward for following Wisdom as clearly as did the preacher to the youth of Israel, in Proverbs:

Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore, get wisdom.

Exalt her and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honor when thou dost embrace her.

Hear, O my Son, and receive my savings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

Enter not into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men,

For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence.

Involuntarily the question rises when we see the perfect accord in Grecian and Israelitish ideals. Did Homer's epics inspire the writer of the Proverbs? Did the writer of the Proverbs inspire Homer to write his epics? Nice questions of priority and influence

as between Homer and Sacred Books of Israel are not for us, but we shall count it sufficient to see that Homer and the writers of the Sacred Books of Israel are in accord in the praise of Wisdom, rewards for Wisdom, and punishment for evil.

The same questions rise as to the *Works and Days* of Hesiod, which is assigned by scholars to the period of Homer,  $\pm 800$  B. C., and which, like *Proverbs*, was didactic in its purpose. The main themes presented in *Proverbs* and *Works and Days* are *right social relations*, *work*, and *piety*, these in the form of exhortations, or injunctions *to be kind to the stranger and the suppliant, to be just to the fatherless, to respect another man's property, to regard another's bed . . .* and these are the very themes that Homer presented in narrative form. Odysseus was a *stranger and suppliant* at the palace of Alcinous and the cottage of the Swineherd, who treated him kindly, and afterwards at his own palace, where the Suitors treated him ill; the depraved Suitors scorned to do honest *work* to maintain themselves, but quartered themselves on Telemachus and devoured his substance, he being then practically *fatherless*, while they threatened to force his mother to choose one of them in *marriage*, though if she had consented she would have been considered guilty of violating her *husband's bed*; for it was the Law of Babylon, and doubtless throughout the East, that if a man failed to return from a war, perhaps because he was held as a slave in some foreign land, his wife must stay true to him in case he left property sufficient for her support. If she were unprovided, she was free to marry again. Unlike the Suitors, all who are good in Homer's stories are *workers*, even the Queens and Princesses are busy, spinning and weaving cloth, and washing the clothes. In the end, all who do evil in any form are punished: "Finally Zeus imposes dear requital for the wicked man's unjust deeds," say Hesiod, and this a most careful scrutiny of characters and incidents in Homer proves true.

It need not surprise us that this most artistic of storytellers has perfect retribution, or poetic justice in all of his stories, for early, unsophisticated ages, like that to which he belonged, love a moral, as unsophisticated children do. As late as the period of Solon, didactic poetry was loved in Athens, and Solon won much of his influence in the city by the didactic verses that he wrote. It seems to be the mark of a degenerate age to rate low the didactic and the moral in works of art, but to care overmuch for manner and method. As to Homer, a person bent on sermonizing, could get as many texts



for sermons from his writings as he could from *Works and Days*, or from *Proverbs*—of course, Homer does not preach them.

In general, the basic idea of Homer's poems is that men and nations, nay, even gods, are punished when they do wrong. So the hundreds of wicked Suitors who abused the hospitality and wooed the virtuous wife of Odysseus when he was away after the war suffered death as a just retribution at his hands when he came home; so Prince Paris of Troy, who led Queen Helen astray when he was a trusted guest in the home of her husband, King Menelaus, suffered final defeat and death in the course of the Trojan War, which resulted from his act; so Priam, the aged King of Troy, along with all of his family and his nation, went down to utter destruction because they unwisely protected the guilty pair in Troy instead of punishing them, their city burned to the ground, their women enslaved; so Aphrodite, though a god, met humiliation and defeat at the hands of the righteous gods because she misguided these mortals and tried to protect them with the aid of War, Ares, her own false, secret lover. Against these false gods, (1) Zeus fought, because he protects the rights of hosts, of guests and of nations; (2) Athene fought, because she protects the wise and must punish the foolish; (3) Hera fought, because she guards the hearth and home; and (4) Apollo fought because he does poetic justice and sends retribution, and had warned Priam by prophets not to protect Paris in Troy.

Let us examine closely the conduct of Priam and the Trojans to see just who were guilty, that the righteous gods visited all with doom. When Paris broke the law of the righteous gods by leading away another man's wife (his name is derived from *I sleep beside*, the term used for committing adultery), the Trojans were morally bound to punish him, to drown him, in the river if they followed the Law of Babylon, to stone him to death, if they followed the law of their near-neighbor, Israel, at least to expel him from the city, if they followed the warning sent them by Apollo before Paris committed his crime. Priam showed perfect willingness to obey the god at first, and sent Paris out of the city, but later he weakened, and admitted him when he came to Troy leading Helen, the Shining One, by the hand. The derivation of these names makes our assurance doubly sure in the interpretation. As *Paris* is derived from the term for committing adultery, so *Helen* is derived from a root cognate with that in *Helios*, the Sun, and it puns upon the infinitive meaning *to lead by the hand, to seduce*, a fact which explains the ancient vase-paintings, where Helen and

Paris are represented as *hand in hand*. Homer calls Paris also by the name *Alexander*, a contraction of the Greek, *I am defended of men*, a name which is a reproach to both Paris and those who defended him, for this defense of the guilty was an exceedingly grave offense in the eyes of the righteous gods, as it was to Jehovah in Israel, to be punished with destruction of the city.

In the Sacred Books of Israel many instances are given of cities destroyed for harboring this sin of Paris, or others like it. Among these was Israel herself when she turned from the worship of the gods of the fathers to Ashtaroth, an Eastern "false goddess," parallel with Aphrodite, as is told in Judges ii, 14, 15.

And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them for evil, as the Lord had said and the Lord had sworn unto them, and they were greatly distressed.

This punishment of Israel was earlier than the fall of Troy, and other still earlier parallel incidents are told in the bible, in which cities conquered by Israel were punished because they also had been guilty of this law. Such parallels are shown in Leviticus xviii:

(1) And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

(2) Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, I am the Lord thy God.

(3) After the doings of the Land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do; and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do; neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. . . .

(2) Ye shall not lie carnally with thy neighbor's wife, to defile thyself with her. . . .

(24) Defile not ye yourselves with any of these things, for in all of these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.

(25) And the land is defiled; therefore I do visit its iniquities upon it, and the land herself vomiteth forth her inhabitants.

A still further example of punishment inflicted upon a city for a sin very like that of Troy, is the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah:

*And lo, the smoke of the country went up like the smoke of a furnace.*

The cities destroyed for their wickedness, especially Sodom and Gomorrah became "a proverb and a by-word" in Israel, as did Troy among the Greeks, therein receiving the *Curse for Disobedience* pronounced upon breakers of the Law in Deut. XVIII:

*Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations.*

If, on the contrary, they had obeyed the law, they would have received the *Blessings for Obedience* promised:

*And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee.*

Here we are again struck by the fact that Homer and the ancient Greeks were in perfect accord with the Prophets and writers of the Sacred Books on this important question of morals, both holding the conviction that a city giving obedience to God's law will receive a blessing, as a city disobeying will receive his curse. *Athens*, named in honor of *Athene*, is an example of a city called by the name of the Lord and confident of power in any righteous cause; *Troy* is an example of a city called by the name of an evil one and weak against its enemies, being the name of the hated winter dragon and his lair, of labyrinth, who imprisons the Princess of the Sun every year until the assaults of the Spring set her free. Of this we shall have occasion to speak more fully later. Throughout the ancient world this myth of a hated labyrinth destroyed was told, and celebrated in spring festivals, so it might well be taken by a Bard to supply a moral background for his story of a city punished for its sin.

Was King Priam alone guilty of bringing destruction on Troy? Were the brothers of Paris guilty? Were the Counsellors? Were the young warriors? Were the women? It is marvellous how conclusively the poet gives answer to these questions in what he tells in the famous scene at the Scaean Gate, where Paris meets Menelaus in single combat on the plain below, while Priam, Helen and the old Counsellors watch from the walls.

(1) The aged Counsellors bore tribute to Helen's exceeding fairness, though at the same time they condemned her:

"Now when they saw Helen coming to the Tower they softly spake winged words one to the other, 'Small blame it is that Trojans and well greaved Achaeans should for such a woman long time suffer hardships; marvellously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon. Yet even so, though she be so goodly, let her go upon their ships and not stay to vex us and our children after us.'"

Blaming her, though lightly, and not guilty of wanting to protect her in their city, they are still guilty of not raising their voices actively in council for the death or expulsion of Paris and Helen from the city according to the warning of Apollo and the law. There are ways of putting pressure on a king, as the scenes representing councils show, and they might use them, so they must be held guilty of the destruction which follows.

(2) The sentiment among the people in Troy was against Paris

and Helen and they would willingly have betrayed Paris to Menelaus :

"They surely in no wise hid him from kindness, could any have seen him, for he was hated of all even as black death.

It will be noted that the people were the soundest of head among those in Troy. But they remained inactive against Paris.

(3) The rank and file of warriors in Troy were willing to see the wrong-doer punished, for before the combat began they prayed thus :

"Father Zeus, that rulest from Ida, most glorious, most great, whichsoever it be that brought this trouble upon both peoples, vouchsafe that he may die and enter the House of Hades, that so for us peace may be assured and trusty oaths."

But they made no active effort to fix the guilt or to inflict punishment upon the guilty persons, so they also were not guiltless of the destruction of their city.

(4) This is particularly true of Hector, the oldest of the king's sons, the natural leader of the young men of the city, whom they love. In the powerful speech that Hector makes to Paris before the combat, he heaps reproach and scorn upon him for bringing Helen to Troy :

"Evil Paris, most fair in semblance, thou deceiver, woman-mad, would thou hadst been unborn or died unwed. . . . It would be better far than thus to be our shame and looked at askance of all men . . . to bring back a fair woman from a far country . . . that she might be a sore mischief to thy father and city and all the realm, but to our foes a rejoicing, and to thyself a hanging of the head! . . . Thy lyre will not avail thee, nor the gifts of Aphrodite, those locks and thy fair favor, when thou grovellest in the dust. But the Trojans are very cowards, else long ere this hadst thou donned a robe of stone for all the ill thou hast wrought."

So sternly an Israelite might speak, imposing the penalty of the law, *a robe of stone*, that is, *the death by stoning*. The last sentence has bitter significance :

"*The Trojans are very cowards, else long ere this hadst thou donned the robe of stone for all the ill thou hadst wrought.*"

Accusing the Trojans of being cowards for not stoning Paris, does not Hector here include himself? Since he was the daily witness of the crime, and the leader of the people, he must feel that he should have led in the stoning. Being a true and a brave man, since he has failed in his duty he must admit the truth that he has been a physical coward, afraid to face Achilles in arms, and a moral coward, afraid to face his father in protest when he is doing a wrong that will wreck the city. Priam has been a kind father, but this

\* Lang, Leaf and Myers translation of *Iliad*.

son must feel that now the one hope of the city is in his opposing his father, and, if that should be necessary, of deposing him from his throne. In the days of the Patriarchs of the Oldest Dispensation, it had been a son's duty to obey his father unquestionably, but this speech shows that in Hector's mind his sense of duty to his father and king is now in conflict with his sense of duty to his fatherland. It is for him to save Troy, or to bear God's retribution when the city falls, when his white-haired mother, his wife, and his child, will be led away into slavery as a consequence of his father's foolish doting. If Hector should call in the name of the law and the righteous gods of their fathers, the young men would rise with him and purify the city, perhaps they have even invited him to it, for they call his little son *Astyanax*, king of the city, though the name that he had given the child was *Scamander*, after the name of the river at Troy.

Mistakenly, Hector decides to obey his father and to fight for him in the cause that he judges wrong. His decision is not ignoble, and for his nobility of spirit Apollo still loves him and does a great deal to assist him. Prolonging the war as a just punishment upon Agamemnon, he can still give Hector a chance to distinguish himself and win fame which will never die; and he lets Hector fall before that last dark day when the city falls, when his aged father will die by violence and the women he loves will be driven forth. Even Hector's pitiful death, when wisdom has betrayed him, and the violence done his dead body after Achilles has killed him, are a gift of Apollo, to make of Hector a noble "Song in the ears of men" . . . and a warning.

The moral truth that a son must set himself against his father and his brothers when they are wrong is implicit in Homer's character of Hector. Three centuries later the theme of a son in conflict with his father and his brothers was dramatized on the Athenian religious stage in the myth of Prometheus, where the hero will not help his father and brothers do wrong and is made to endure a kind of crucifixion because he will not yield. This is what Hector should have done, and if he had done it, he would have found himself a victor, even suffering crucifixion. The martyr's death would not have been so cruel to him as any death which he must suffer in Troy, self-condemned. But this light had not broken on him, and it was more than a thousand years after Troy fell before the teaching that a son must rise against his father was not only made explicit, but put in the form of the strongest command, when Jesus said:

I am come to set a man at variance with his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

That sermon might well have been written to cover the case of Trojan Hector, for his love of his father and mother, his wife and his son led him to do what he knew was wrong; it also covers the case of his sister Cassandra, who denounced Paris, inspired by Apollo to do so, and thus set herself against her father and mother; it also covers the case of Andromache the Queen's daughter-in-law, who agreed with Hector as to the guilt of Paris, whom his parents would not expel; it also covers the case of King Priam, the father who loved his son Paris so well that he defended him knowing that he was wrong. Did the Supreme Teacher have Troy in mind when He spoke these truths, and the sword that should have been drawn within the city, to save it? "I come not to bring peace but a sword"—not unity, but division would have saved that city, and divine wisdom has it, even in Homer by implication, that victory could come only by giving up the defense of what was wrong.

Priam himself was also divided against himself as to defending Paris, as we have said, having first expelled him and then admitted him with Helen. In the speech that he makes to Helen at the Scaean Gate, he is shown still divided against himself, for he clearly admits that she was wrong, but lays the blame for what she did on the gods:

"Come hither, dear child, and sit before me, that thou mayest see thy former husband and thy kinsfolk and thy friends. I hold not thee to blame; nay, I hold the gods to blame who brought on me the dolorous War."

This is sophistical, and Homer does not agree with Priam, for in the first scene of the *Odyssey* he represents Zeus himself as denying that the gods are to blame for evil, and stating that evil-doers must bear the blame themselves since the gods have given them laws and even special warnings by prophecy, he using the case of Aegisthus as an example, who also was guilty of adultery and had been punished by the just gods for it. The speech of Priam blaming the gods would be blasphemous if he realized it, at the least it is pathetic, and the retribution sent upon him is certainly sufficient—the death of many of his sons before his eyes in battle, including noble Hector, for sheltering one evil son in his crime. With tender

pity the poet tells of the gray-haired father humbled to beg the mutilated body of his son Hector from the victor—even Zeus feels pity then and sends Iris down to command Achilles, under severest penalty, to be merciful to the poor old man.

And Helen . . . how human and appealing Homer made her without for a moment blinking her crime, or condoning it! When Hector taunted Paris, it will be remembered he referred to Helen as "a fair woman from a far country," "a sore mischief to thy father and city and all the realm, to our foes a rejoicing, and to thyself a hanging of the head," and we know that he was more merciful in his treatment of her than the other members of the king's family, except Priam himself. So Helen's life in Troy had been like that of the "strange woman" of Proverbs v, "as bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword."

When Homer first shows Helen at the Scaean Gate, where she watches the battle with Priam, she has learned from bitter experiences to be very humble and very apologetic. She is no haughty beauty, but very gentle, and she has formed the habit of self-accusation. Speaking to Priam, she refers to herself as "shameless me"; she calls herself "worthless me" when she talks of herself to Telemachus, in the *Odyssey*, in the presence of Menelaus and the party of wedding guests. And nobody, excepting doting Priam seems to gainsay her. On her part, this may be artful and intended to disarm her critics and forestall them, but how sad a consciousness and a sub-consciousness her words reveal!

All of the incidents in which Helen appears, show scorpions in her mind, as that in which Hector is urging Paris to enter the combat with Menelaus:

"My brother, even mine that am a dog, mischievous and abominable, would that on the day when my mother bare me an evil storm-wind had caught me away to a mountain or a billow of the loud-sounding sea, when the billow had swept me away before all these things came to pass. . . . But now, my brother, enter in and sit here upon this seat, since thy heart hath been troubled chiefly for my sake, that am a dog, and for Alexander's, on whom Zeus bringeth evil doom, that in days to come we may be a song in the ears of men."

Hector refuses her pathetic appeal and invitation with a curt and cold rebuff:

"Do not bid me sit, Helen; thou wilt not persuade me of thy love."

If she had invited any of his brothers, the answer would have been worse than curt and cold, as we see from what Helen says brokenly at the bier of Hector, in her lament,

"Hector, of all my brethren far dearest to my heart! Truly my lord is

godlike Alexandros who brought me to Troyland—would I had died ere then. . . . Never yet heard I evil or spiteful word from thee; nay, if any other haply upbraided me in the palace halls, whether brother or sister of thine, or brother's fair-robed wife, or thy mother . . . then would thou soothe such and refrain them by the gentleness of thy spirit and by thy gentle words. . . . No more is any left in wide Troyland to be my friend and kind to me, but all men shudder at me."

Her speeches reveal gulphs of suffering and despair. She despises and hates herself and, what is worse, she despises and hates Paris, and struggles to break the bonds by which Aphrodite commands Helen to return to him, but Helen speaks wild, rebellious words to the goddess:

"Strange Queen, why art thou desirous now to beguile me? . . . Thou comest hither with guileful intent. Go thou and sit thou by his side, and depart from the ways of the gods; neither let thy feet ever bear thee back to Olympus, but still be vexed for his sake and guard him till he make thee his wife, or perchance his slave. But thither will I not go—to array the bed of him; all the women of Troy will blame me hereafter; and I have griefs untold within my soul."

Here are glimpses of untold griefs; that she had broken from the ways of her own home people, that her feet never bore her back to her childhood home, that she had doubted his keeping his promise to make her his wife, that she had felt only his slave, that she had no friend among the women of Troy, only shudderings among strangers and griefs in her own soul.

She has come to judge Paris inferior to even Menelaus, as she tells him to his face after his combat:

"Thou comest back from the battle; would thou hadst perished there, vanquished by that great warrior that was my former husband. Verily, it was once thy boast that thou wast a better man than Menelaus dear to Ares, in the might of thy arm and thy spear. Nay, I, even I . . . bid thee not to attack him recklessly lest perchance thou fall on his spear."

This for his physical cowardice; to Hector she shows that she understands the evil of his heart:

"Would that I had been wedded with a better man, who felt dishonor and the many reproaches of men. As for him, he has no sound heart now, nor will he ever have."

Her ideals are not bad, and she is not a light woman as has been generally supposed. Her husband was not lovable, and she made the tragic mistake, like Guinevere, of giving her love to a less noble man supposing that he was nobler. If she had been wedded to a man like Odysseus, or like Hector, she might not have been tempted to leave him for a man like this Paris. As it is, the Apple of Love with which Aphrodite tempted her has turned out to be that Apple



of Sodom, fair to the eye, but ashes and dust on the tongue. Poor Helen!

Helen of Troy led a darkly tragic life even when Paris and Priam lived, and it continued to be darkly tragic. After Paris was killed, following Hector, it is told that Helen was given in marriage to Deiphobus, who was a notable coward, for his name is expressive of constant fear. With him she must have been even less happy than with Paris, for Aphrodite had not moved her to love him and marriage with him would not soften the judgment against her in Troy.

Poor Helen! When Troy fell and Menelaus carried her back to Sparta instead of subjecting her to the penalty of the law, she was never to be happy there. Perhaps his motive in letting her live was, as has been suggested, a hope he harbored of attaining eternal life through her, for she was of the immortals, being a sister of Castor and Pollux—his words in the *Odyssey* make this theory probable; perhaps, as has been suggested, his hope of keeping Helen's regal dowry was contingent on his keeping her. At any rate, his motive cannot have been love. He had never shown that he loved her, and incidents told of him make it certain that he could not have won her love, or even commanded her respect. He had drawn her by a lot, then he had tried to get out of marrying her because he was afraid other Suitors might make him trouble if he did marry her, and he finally made her his wife only when his companion kings promised that they would stand by him if trouble should come of the marriage—what a contrast to Kingly Odysseus, who stood ready to protect his wife single-handed against hundreds of hostile suitors! Helen must have realized that her marriage with Menelaus was far from perfect, and far from sacred. Under such conditions, it is not very surprising that when Prince Charming came, with "fair looks and fair favor," and offering her the golden Apple of Love, she was strongly tempted to give him her hand, unwise though this conduct might be.

How wretched the life of Helen was after Menelaus brought her back to Sparta is shown in the scene at their hearth when Telemachus visits them. She is evidently trying to make the best of her husband, paying him compliments as "a man who looks for nothing, either in mind or person," and telling other pitiful lies with a show of devotion, while she abases herself by calling herself "worthless me." She pretends that when her heart had turned back to him before Troy fell she gave aid to the Greeks who came into the city as spies, so making herself a traitor to Troy for his sake. But

Menelaus shows that he does not believe her story and follows it at once with an incident which would prove that she was, instead, actively treacherous to him and the other Grecian chieftains, and tried to betray them to their enemies to the last day that they were in Troy. The incident is this: When the Greeks lay concealed in the wooden horse and within the walls of Troy, Helen came alongside the horse, followed by "godlike Deiphobus," and spoke each chieftain's name, in turn, mimicking the voice of his wife, trying to get the Greeks to answer and so betray them into the hands of their foes. In telling this incident, Menelaus addresses Helen as "wife," and the manner of his retort seems courteous, but this is only the more cutting, an example of withering irony. Was the incident that he told true? It has the earmarks of being invented, a lie to outmatch her lie, a stab into her heart, a blow in her face. She makes no denial or explanation, but takes his browbeating silently, gently bidding the maids prepare the couches for the night. Verily, in her soul she carried "griefs untold"!

Homer is very just to Helen, possibly generous in giving her such a husband, for he makes her conduct seem natural, at least, where he might have made it seem simply revolting. So Aeschylus, also, in the *Agamemnon*, makes that of Clytemnestra, by showing the very unlovely husband she had. In this, the poets both seem to be saying, "Given such husbands, the wives will be tempted, so: Moral, for husbands as well as for wives."

Poor Helen! Her soul was to suffer increasingly until the end—like that of the "strange woman" in Proverbs V, her parallel:

*Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on Hell.*

Euripides shows Helen's own father refusing to give her protection and the common people hating her so that she dares not show her face on the streets for fear they will do her violence, but ventures forth only at night and veiled. Her legend tells that finally, after her unhappy life with Menelaus, she suffered a horrible death. When Menelaus died, his sons, along with those of Nicostratus, *the victorious people*, drove her forth from his palace. She fled for refuge to the Island of Rhodes, but there was refused protection by Polyxo, the queen, whose husband had died in battle in the Trojan War. Hating Helen for the sorrows that had come upon the world by reason of her sin, the women of Polyxo disguised themselves as Furies and fell upon her while she was in the bath. Finally they dragged her forth and hanged her on a tree.

Helen's death was thus more sad and ignominious than the

death decreed by Babylon and Israel for the sin she had committed. Except for the speeches of Priam and the aged counsellors, no touch of wavering in condemnation of Helen occurs in the literature of Greece, so far as I have seen, and these suffered grievous punishment for their un-Wisdom. Homer, like the Prophets, is thus of the old dispensation, though he presents the character of Helen in such a way as to wring the heart with pity. It remained for the merciful Saviour to speak the word of pity for such as she, when the woman taken in adultery was brought to him:

*Let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone. . . . Neither do I condemn thee, go in peace.*

This is of the new dispensation, founded on love and a justice deeper than Apollo's. Had Homer's pitiful Helen helped to prepare the world to accept the new law?

Agamemnon is pictured in his home as an even less worthy husband and father than Menelaus was, no more of a man. There must have been a long record of base deeds done by this king to warrant Achilles in taunting him, when they quarrelled, with having *the face of a dog* and the *heart of a stag*. We know some of the things he had done: (1) He had angered Apollo by injuring the family of a priest, and thereby brought pestilence upon his army in retribution; (2) he had outraged and estranged the best of his warriors by doing him an injustice, depriving him of his prize; (3) he had sacrificed his own daughter to secure military success; (4) he was not regardful of the feelings of his wife, as Odysseus was, and was bringing to her home a captured Trojan Princess and the children she had borne him. Then Clytemnestra struck him down "like an ox in the stall," having disarmed him first and quieted his fears by warmly welcoming him home. The character of Agamemnon would justify Clytemnestra if anything could do so, but Homer does not justify her, and all praised her son Orestes later for putting his mother to death in retribution. The gods also approved this act, and when Orestes' own heart was driven toward madness with doubt as to whether, even in such a case, he should have raised his hand against his own mother, tradition tells that Athene and Apollo set his conscience at rest—the goddess of wisdom came down to Athens in person and founded the Court of the Areopagus to try his case, and Divine Justice, Apollo, acted as judge.

In happy contrast with these unhappy kings, who wrecked their homes by their own unworthiness, and were wrecked by their wives, stands wise Odysseus, and in contrast with their wives stands his Penelope, faithful and "heedful" Penelope. When the story opens,

it is many years since Odysseus went to war, but Penelope has not forgotten. She still weeps for him, and she prays. She has brought up her son in his father's ways and to dream his father's return. She entertains all passing strangers so that she may learn from them any rumor about him that they may have heard, "a rumor sent from Zeus." She is sought by a host of suitors, but does not consider their offers of marriage; and, where she dares not reject them definitely because that would probably bring on a struggle among them and her forcible abduction by the victor, she holds them off by her clever stratagem of the web that she is weaving—a windingsheet for Odysseus' aged father, promising that she will announce her decision when she takes it from the loom. But every night she unravels the work that she has done in the day, and never announces her decision. It is this incident which gives her her name, for Penelope is derived from *a web, to cover or wrap up*.

And Odysseus deserves her devotion. Where Agamemnon and Menelaus make plural marriages and keep concubines, Odysseus considers the feelings of his wife so much that he does not even take the good nurse, Eurycleia, as Homer tells. When plural marriages are no reproach, how good that Penelope cares so much, and that Odysseus cares that she cares! He gave her a monogamous home, and she made that home so happy that he did not want to go to the war. When they came to conscript him, they found him busy plowing salt into the earth to prove that he had gone crazy and ought to be exempted—a wily ruse! But they knew his wiles so well that they suspected him, and tested him by placing his baby on the ground where the plow would strike him. Odysseus turned aside so as not to plow the child under, so they concluded that his mind was sound and led him away to the ships. This incident does well to illustrate his love of home, but it is post-Homeric and does not do justice to Odysseus' profound belief in the righteousness of this war, which Homer shows in many incidents.

The personal love that his home-folk give to Odysseus is proved more than justified when we come to see this Zeus-praised, Athene-protected world-famous hero in the incidents of the Epics. In the first scene where he appears in the *Odyssey* he is a captive, held by a goddess who wants him to be her husband, and who would make him immortal if he would consent to remain. But he is not tempted to do so, and, when the curtain rises upon him, the greatest of heroes is seen sitting in tears on the shore of the sea, his face turned toward his little island kingdom, longing but to see the smoke rise in the distance from his own hearthstone. He is not thinking of the glory

he won in the war and scheming for more riches and power, he is thinking of how to reach home, and this is the more to his credit because more than one goddess had offered him her love.

Circe had tried to enchant him and hold him with her, but he had resisted and forced her to do his bidding; even the Sirens could not win him, though he listened to their songs, for he had wisely restrained himself against their enticements. With women, as with goddesses, he won an instant success. His godlike bearing, his gentle courtesy, his manly strength in making a plea, his sincere use of compliment, his freedom from all that would characterize the male-flirt, or "lady-killer"—these win him a way to the hearts of good women. Instantly, Nausicaä feels confidence in him, as later her mother, Queen Virtue, does, and as her father and his sage councillors do. From the moment when Odysseus comes as a suppliant among them, seats himself in the ashes of their hearth to signify his utter need, and reaches up his hands to the knees of the queen in appeal for assistance, he wins them all.

Stripped of every advantage of pomp and circumstance, he makes them feel his worth, not only of character, but also of physical power. He knew that he could win in their contests, but he held himself in the background modestly and would not enter until he was forced to do so by the taunt of a bystander, and even then he would not enter a contest against any member of the family of his kind entertainer. In all of the physical contests except running and dancing he won—it would have been unhuman if no defect whatever had been shown in this greatest of heroes, too discouraging for the coming generation of fellow-mortals. There was no flaw in his wits, in his heart, in his action; no other man could equal him in strength, or even draw his bow; no other equalled him in manly beauty, except in one important respect—the lower part of his body was out of proportion to the upper, being too short. It was this one defect that prevented him from being the first in dancing and first in single combat, as he was easily first in council, in shooting with the bow, in hurling the javelin, and in putting the shot. In that age, success in personal combat came to him who was most determined, courageous, skillful, and powerful, but also fleetest of foot *and longest of leg*, for he must be able to overtake his enemy who tried to flee, or to outstrip him if he for the time being tried to do the fleeing—Grecian warriors often chose to postpone a combat, and they counted it no disgrace to turn the back on an enemy, and run. It was Achilles, who was the fastest runner, who fought the single combats for the Greeks, a man counted less than wise and without high ideals, but

the glory of bringing the war to a close was by common consent given to Odysseus, who planned the strategy with Wisdom.

So Odysseus was first in war, as he was first in building a home in peace, and certainly first among the kings in the hearts of all wise and good men. He and his household prayed often to the righteous gods, but no prayer to Aphrodite or Ares by either him or Penelope is reported by Homer, nor did any other of the high-souled heroes of Troy pray to them, a final proof, if one were needed, that they condemned them, along with the frail mortals whom they misled. The love which is wise is the love of Odysseus' home.

This condemnation of Aphrodite that we find in Homer, we find strengthened, if possible, in the myth of Cupid and Psyche, which was developed several centuries after Homer, but in harmony with his spirit. In this beautiful myth, which was one of those presented among the most sacred mysteries at Eleusis, Cupid (Eros, Desire), is the son of Aphrodite but has so transcended his mother that he is the lover of the soul, Psyche, whereas she represents love of the body only. There is nothing about Eros of the naughty little flut-terer who shoots his arrows so as to make a Midsummer Madness of loving,—*in-and-out, out-and-in! Presto! Change about!* So Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, late and degenerate Grecians might picture him, or degenerate Roman poets, who laughed at vows broken by lovers, and at discord between husbands and wives. To the Eleusinian worshippers, as to Homer, life was serious and earnest among men who were wise; to them, as to Penelope and Odysseus, love is devotion through long years of trial.

In the myth of Cupid and Psyche it is told that Cupid gave his love to a mortal maiden, the Soul, against the wishes of his hateful and low-minded mother, and that he was constant in his devotion though Psyche proved to be far from perfect. When she did not trust him though he loved her truly, he flew away, for love cannot live with suspicion; but while she was suffering the long and hard punishment which Aphrodite inflicted upon her, he watched over her secretly, won friends for her in her need, and finally came back to her when she had proved herself worthy. Such love as theirs was judged worthy of immortality, so a council of the gods at last decided to give her the butterfly wings and translate her to heaven, where she was fed on ambrosia, the nectar of Olympus. The meaning of this myth as a whole is that love, purified of earthly imperfections, is immortal. In the time of Homer the Greeks had not expected a happy life beyond the grave, but this myth is evidence that a hope of immortality had risen *for those souls that had loved*

*and suffered steadfastly.* Thus poetic Justice was satisfied, that a soul like Penelope shall not wander in blank forgetfulness in a sad, dark underworld, and that an Odysseus can have the immortality for which he would not sell himself to a goddess.

In this myth, the butterfly wings would not signify any lightness of character in Psyche such as we are accustomed to ascribe to the butterfly, but only an analogy between the soul that rises from earth to heaven through purified love and that beautiful winged thing that has experienced transformation through stages of caterpillar and chrysalis. The caterpillar sometimes even descends into the earth, as into a grave, to make its chrysalis, and seems dead, but from it there issues forth the very beautiful winged creature, which rises above the earth where it crawled and lay buried, to live a new life in a finer and rarer element, feasting on nectar. The Greeks doubtless adopted this nature-allegory and belief in the immortality of the soul from Egypt, where the Sacred Beetle had been used as the symbol of rising from literal corruption into incorruption. As the Egyptians buried scarabs in tombs, wrapped their dead in grave-cloth (like the gossamer in cocoons), and laid the mummy to repose in a sarcophagus which imitated the chrysalis of the Sacred Beetle in markings and design (as Fabre has pointed out), so the Greeks adopted the custom of carving a butterfly on the stone that marked the restingplace of the dead. The interpretation of the butterfly wings in the myth of Psyche to signify immortality is therefore beyond question.

Like the myth of Prometheus, Fore-Thought, the god who bore torture for saving man, this myth of the Soul immortalized by true love became a stage to still higher religious teaching. It was presented, as we have said, in the Mysteries at Eleusis, an institution developed three centuries after Homer to present the highest religious themes, the ways of gods to men, the immortality of the soul, the brotherhood of man, and the fatherhood of God. Along with the solemn initiations and the sacrament of the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine at Eleusis in sign of mystic brotherhood, these religious myths presented there helped to prepare the way for the fuller religious truth and the deepened mystic signification to be given to the world five centuries later in Palestine where the mystic brotherhood consisted of those who stood ready to take up their cross, and the bread and the wine were given the meaning of self-sacrifice to the point of the body broken and the blood shed.

The fact of a connection between Grecian and Hebrew thought was forgotten by Western writers in later centuries, but patristic

Grecian writers had made much of it on the affirmative side, for theological and practical purposes. To one who looks for it, the line of growth is as clear in Grecian thought as in Israelitish between the prophets and their fulfillment in Jesus—both show what is called in Christian terminology the *working of the Holy Spirit*, in scientific, an *evolution*.

In the light of these profound moral and religious truths of Homer, we see how inadequate and often false are the ideas commonly held as to the ancient Greek religion. It seems that many of our ill-considered opinions on the subject have come to us from early Christians, like Saint Augustine, who rightly condemned the myths of degenerate Roman Vergil, but did not thereby, as Saint Augustine was careful to state, condemn the myths of the Grecian dramatists, or of Homer. Vergil's gods were Homer's false gods, for Vergil exalted Venus (Aphrodite) and Mars (Ares) and showed them triumphant, where Homer had shown them ignominious and defeated, Vergil's motive being to flatter the Romans and his patrons, who had adopted Mars (Ares) as an ancestor of Romulus and Venus (Aphrodite) as an ancestor of the Caesars.

Other ill-considered opinions have come down to us as with authority from the scholars who revived the study of Greek at the time of the Italian Renaissance, under the patronage of the powerful princes and business men of the period, and under the influence of Vergil. These scholars did not draw fine distinctions in interpretation, and the princes were no more of Athene and Apollo than Vergil had been, though they gave Apollo lip-service and amused themselves with his arts, which is a very different thing from creating a high art under his inspiration. The real gods of their daily devotion were Aphrodite and Ares, Hermes and Hephaestos, False Love and War, Trade and Manufacture. . . . again, the false gods of Homer. Such a spirit as this has never created a high art. The Borgias, the DeMedici, and the D'Estes took little real interest in morals and religion, extended their power unscrupulously (Machiavelli told the truth about them in "The Prince"), and led riotous lives in their luxurious palaces, less like Odysseus' than like the Suitors'. To use the word art for their pseudo-Grecian product, voluptuous, languishing Venuses, sportful, naughty Cupids, riotous ramping Satyrs, and the like, is little short of profanation. These were in spirit the opposite of high, austere, Apollonian Homer, whose truly great art served nothing less than the exalted Sun, Apollo, the Destroyer of evil. The patrons of the Renaissance took from degenerated mythology



only what suited their own views of life, and imputed these back to Homer. Love and war, private luxury and display, collection and investment were the purposes of their pseudo-Grecian art (?), as it has been of those rich patrons ever since whose real interest in life is the getting of money and power, and more and more money and power. All of this is offense to Apollo, whose great art in ancient Greece, from Homer to Pericles, was fundamentally religious and public, to serve the gods and lift men above their lower selves by inspiration.

The truly great art of the Renaissance in Italy was Christian, not that of the pseudo-Grecians, not for private luxury and display. Like Athenian art it was fundamentally religious, and largely public, an expression of the best ideals of that day in literature, public buildings, temples for the worship of God, statues and pictures to adorn them. The ideals of this great Christian Renaissance art are also those of Homer, and the opposite of pseudo-Grecian.

Judged by the standards of Homeric, Appollonian, and Christian art, Dante is to be ranked among the highest artists, along with Homer. Unlike Vergil, he was no flatterer of princes, and he was certainly not Aphrodisian; unlike the pseudo-Grecians, he was of the austere school of Homer and the prophets, being Vergilian only as he honored Vergil because Vergil was mistakenly believed to have prophesied the coming of the Saviour and so to have been a kind of pagan-prophet and herald of Christianity. This was a great mistake of those uncritical times, for Vergil's prophesying applied to the Caesars, who were assuming divine honors in imitation of the rulers of the East, and his expected Saviour was Augustus, whose "Roman Peace" was to be attained by means of war, and world-conquest.

Great as Dante was—he has been well called the voice of ten silent centuries—he was far less of a power and an influence among his people and those of the following centuries than Homer is seen to have been in Greece, for Homer was a national poet who not only gave his nation a voice, but became its religious leader by presenting wisdom and justice in such a way, embodied in Athene and Apollo, as to form, or determine its later religion, politics, and art. Athens would not have been more glorious than other nations if Athenians had not built their institutions on wisdom and justice more than other nations, more than our foremost modern so-called democracies in various important respects, not only in the arts, but also in the wisdom and justice of their law and their administration of land, courts and finance. The Athenian passion for wisdom and

justice we may credit to Homer, and also the practical fruits that came from this passion, including the influence that Athens has had upon the whole civilized world. When we add to this, that Homer, with the prophets prepared the way for Christianity, we begin to understand how great a moral and religious power he has been, and still is, indirectly, though his ideals have been mistakenly identified for centuries with those of Vergil.

When these points become clear, we must revalue Homer, and assign him the foremost place among poets, a place very near to the prophets, so giving to him the honor that the middle ages gave to Vergil by mistake. If there was a pagan-prophet and herald of Christianity, it was Homer.

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## MISCELLANEOUS.

### DOES SCIENCE UNDERSTAND NATURE?

(An appreciative footnote to Mr. H. R. Vanderbyll's articles on "Intellect, Religion and the Universe" in the *Open Court* for August and September, 1921.)

BY HARDIN T. MCCLELLAND.

PEOPLE as a rule live from day to day without the least venture of speculation as to what keeps their bodies alive and healthy, and their minds conscious and rational. Work and food and sleep, and the occasional pastime of conversation make up the principal items of interest in practically any home or community within our public observation. Even in the private studios and laboratories where intellect and mechanical devices are less ephemerally concerned but more directly in contact with the obstinate facts of Reality, the *same* physical and mental functions of our vital economy are largely in the ascendent. The scientist has the same senses and faculties as the man in the street, but he exacts greater accuracy and more patient effort from the use to which he puts them. While the latter conceives life to be little other than a turbulent zone of livelihood and ephemeral utility, the former regards it as a clearing-house for functional values and phases of development.

What degree of spirituality then is actually and durably present in human nature? What proportion of our intelligence is devoted to the

non-utilitarian investigation of the hows and whys of Life. Do those whom we dignify with the name of scientists really deserve this dignity through having obtained any actual understanding of Nature? And is there any possible way of adequately verifying this understanding in view of the fact that practically all our so-called knowledge is empirical, sensual, dative and hypothetical? Such questions as these have fired the imaginations of philosophers for years. The very audacity of such inquiries is what piques our self-sufficiency and we join in the general clamor for debate and possible solution.

But is a solution of any determinable degree of accuracy possible? We do not even know this. All we can do therefore is to continue theorizing, searching, experimenting, and analyzing. No current synthesis is final; no syncretism, however elaborate and inclusive, is truly universal and pantological. All such systems of generalization, even when rationalized to the degree of harmony with every known science, are yet finite surveys of life in the natural world, and of Nature in the vast *infinitude* of the Universe. What bond of philosophical validity can be said to exist between the human mind (as the subjective instrument of inquiry and understanding) and this universal infinitude (as the external object of such inquiry and understanding)? This is the pivotal question in practically every philosophical attempt from Anaxagoras to Bertrand Russell; and especially does it take on an unusual significance in the cosmological approach to Dr. Boutroux's very suggestive volume on the "Contingency of the Laws of Nature."

Some thinkers even complicate the question further by pointing out that even the elements of one person's inner life constitute part of the external world for some other person. And I would emphasize also that any hypothesis of existence is still finite through being derived from that co-ordinated series of *human* viewpoints called consciousness. For no one, at any certain moment, is conscious of *everything*. Hence it may be argued that what passes for science is but a refined sort of nescience which has been systematized and indexed, while what is usually called understanding is only a group-reflex of instinct and vital impulse. The series may be progressive, but the ratios are constant and the sum is always finite.

Even our concepts of Nature are limited to the space of this earth's superficial crust, supplemented by a few observations on starlight and atmospheric phenomena. Nature herself, showing forth so shyly within our narrow ken, is but *one* of the provinces of Reality (i. e., the material province); while Reality (including so far as we know matter, mind, spirit, law, etc.) is but *one of the categories of phase* in the Universal Infinitude. Another turn of the wheel of cosmic existence will probably reveal an altogether strange and dissimilar form of life and law and purpose—for example, that possible after-life to which physical death is the transition. Were this not so we would have no anticipations of change, no tychastic theories of human destiny. Our knowledge of Nature would not then, as now, depend so largely on physical experience and intellectual lucubrations of empirical data. In

view of a little respect for simple metaphysical possibility, any element of bigotry in the realm of science is quite unwarranted.

We are all acquainted with the English scientists during the Boer War who could not cope with fevers and natural conditions nearly so confidently well as did the ignorant (?) and superstitious natives. Then there are the many unaccountable miracles of occult workers who cannot be said to mock natural law *all the time* with their apparent magic and fraud. Now comes the Polish mathematician, Count Korzybski, repudiating our "animal theories" and propounding a dimensional system of conceiving life and spirit in the world. What he claims for the time-binding faculty of man is but a preface to what *might* be claimed its sequel and superior—the Nature-binding power of God or (practically) of any superhuman form of intelligent existence.

If the divine is but a sublimation of the best that is possible of attainment in human nature, what super-Nature (to us quite enigmatic but not necessarily unknowable) would be possible in *another phase* of the Universe where all existence is a sublimation of the divine? To answer questions of this order certainly requires that we leave our little man-made gods and creeds behind, repudiating ephemeral interests, joys and sorrows; and try to live after the manner of heavens high serenity. That is, not only be capable of taking both space and time into our intellectual embrace, but to be Nature-lovers and Nature-conquerors as well. For this I have no gruff and ruthless conquest in mind, but rather figuratively to take Nature by the hand and count the stars but stepping-stones to the wider life of man's immortal spirit.

The sum of human knowledge is bound up in the several sciences and is ornamented now and then with the individual insights of romanticism and genius. But to claim that man's mind or apparatus exhausts Nature, or even that we fully understand what little measure of the natural world our faculties are capable of compassing, is folly if not bigotry, and a position which is therefore indefensible. Such an attitude is even culpable for greater intellectual wrongs, for it indicates either of two things: sheer ignorance or proud assumption. Hence, I think that everyone with the least ambition toward manly thought should always consider that the Universe is bigger than anything human; for its laws and magnitude even antedate and overreach anything we can predicate of the Trinity. The whole inadequate scheme of our modern philosophical approach, even with its clumsy bolster of scientific materialism, founders on one simple question: If we do not yet know the simplest codes of natural law in our own particular province of Reality, how can we defensibly presume to read the Word of God, understand the highest sublimation of phases (non-human, ultra-cosmic, super-Nature, etc.), or even see the last Horizon of our great Sidereal Domain? I often wonder whether future Science will be able to qualify for this supreme inquiry.

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## INDEX TO VOLUME XXXV.

### ARTICLES AND AUTHORS.

	PAGE
Affinity of Druidism with Other Religions, The. Dudley Wright...	129
Ambrosia and Nectar. Peter J. Popoff.....	568
Amiel, Henri-Frederic. Lewis Piaget Shanks.....	641
Argumenta Ab Amore et Invidia Ducta. Henry Bradford Smith..	449
Asiatic Works in the Newberry. John T. Bramhall.....	734
Athenian Religious and Moral Training. Fletcher H. Swift...321,	385
Bogart, Guy. The New Mysticism, 180; Meditation, 573; Ocean I Love You (Poem), 371; There May I Worship (Poem), 319; Three Poems (Poem), 249.	
Bramhall, John T. A Rich Medieval Library, 507; East Asiatic Works in the Newberry .....	734
Brown, Lawrence Parmly. The Cosmic Man and Homo Signorum..	10
Bruno, Giordano—His Life and Mission. Alberta Jean Rowell...	705
Buddhism, The Theology of Mahayana. William Montgomery McGovern .....	38, 111
Burke, B. U. A Diplomatic Tinder-Box.....	287
Cheskis, Joseph I. The Problems of Eternal Punishment in Jean Jacques Rousseau .....	141
Chu Tzu's Advice on Home Management, Selections from. Hardin T. McClelland .....	155
Church, The Evolutionary Function of the. Orland O. Norris....	232
Cleven, N. Andrew N. Religious Aspects of the Mexican Con- stitution of 1917 .....	482
Competition, The Elimination of. T. B. Stork.....	294
Concept of Self and Experienced Self. Jessie L. Preble.....	60
Conger, W. B. The Early Dietician.....	216
Cosmic Man and Homo Signorum, The. Lawrence Parmly Brown..	10
Cross, The. Eric Rosenquist .....	257
D'Aurevilly, Barbey, The Satanism of. Maxmilian J. Rudwin.....	83
Dante's Devil. Maximilian J. Rudwin.....	513
Deford, Miriam Allen. A Poet's Science.....	549
Dietician, The Early. W. B. Conger.....	216
Diplomatic Tinder-Box, A. B. U. Burke.....	287
Druidism with Other Religions, The Affinity of. Dudley Wright..	129
Education—Present and Future. L. A. Shattuck.....	310
Eternal Punishment in Jean Jacques Rousseau, The Problem of. Joseph I. Cheskis .....	141
Eucharist, The. Wm. Weber .....	91
Evolution, Retarded. T. Swann Harding .....	270
Evolution, Retarded. H. R. Vanderbyll.....	628
Fitzpatrick, F. W. Evolution of Expressed Thought.....	687

	PAGE
German Constitution of July 31, 1919, The. Emil Reach.....	172
Gospel According to John, The. Sherman D. Wakefield.....	339
Greek Language, Roman Tolerance Toward The. A. Kampmeier..	243
Haeckel, Ernst, The Lear-Tragedy of. Herman George Scheffauer.	193
Harding, T. Swann. On Cherished Fallacies of Tender Minds, 202; Retarded Evolution, 270; A Study in Infantile Regression....	413
Homer and the Prophets. Cornelia Steketee Hulst.....1, 65, 744	744
Hulst, Cornelia Steketee. Homer and the Prophets.....1, 65, 744	744
Ideals and Immediate Social Programmes. Victor S. Yarros.....	590
India, Religion and Philosophy in Ancient. Hardin T. McClelland .....	463, 552
Infantile Regression, A Study in. T. Swann Harding.....	413
Intellect, Religion and the Universe. H. R. Vanderbyll.....	485, 537
Intellectualism and Moral Evolution. Victor S. Yarros.....	254
Jesus and His Disciple Peter. William Wallace Martin.....	613
Jesus the Philosopher. Roland D. Sawyer.....	658
Jesus Threw Down the Gauntlet, When. Wm. Weber.....	372, 438
Jourdain, M. Tom Paine .....	577
Kampmeier, A. Roman Tolerance Toward the Greek Language....	243
Kueffner, Louise Mallinckrodt. The Wanderlure (Poem).....	191
Laughter, Some Marginal Notes on. Samuel D. Schmalhausen....	361
Liberal Study, The Meaning of. Henry Bradford Smith.....	697
Library, A Rich Medieval. John T. Bramhall.....	507
Martin, William Wallace. Jesus and His Disciple Peter.....	613
Mazdak. Paul Luttinger .....	664
McClelland, Hardin T. Religion and Philosophy in Ancient India, 463, 552, 621; Selections from Chu Tzu's Advice on Home Management, 155; The Universe is Beautiful and Benevo- lent .....	354
McClelland, Hardin T. Does Science Understand Nature?.....	766
McGovern, William Montgomery. The Theology of Mahayana Buddhism .....	38, 111
Meditation. Guy Bogart .....	573
Mexican Constitution of 1917, Religious Aspects of the. N. Andrew N. Clevon .....	482
Minds, On Cherished Fallacies of Tender. T. Swann Harding....	202
Moral Progress in the Light of History. Victor S. Yarros.....	720
Morgan, William J. Some Pragmatic Defenses of Religious Beliefs	584
Mysticism, The New. Guy Bogart .....	180
New Altars, (Poem). Ethel Talbot Scheffauer .....	702
Newberry, East Asiatic Works in the. John T. Bramhall.....	734
Norris, Orland O. The Evolutionary Function of the Church.....	232
Ocean I Love You. (Poem). Guy Bogart.....	371
Paine, Tom. M. Jourdain .....	577
Passive Resistance or Soul Force. Blanche Watson.....	715
Peace, The Illusion of. James N. Wood.....	406
Philosophies, A Truce of. Robert V. Shoemaker.....	54
Poet's Science, A. Miriam Allen Deford.....	549



	PAGE
Popoff, Peter J. Ambrosia and Nectar.....	568
Pragmatic Defenses of Religious Beliefs, Some. William J. Morgan	584
Preble, Jessie L. Concept of Self and Experienced Self.....	60
Price, Julius J. The Rabbinic Conception of Work.....	302
Rabbinic Conception of Work, The. Julius J. Price.....	302
Reach, Emil. The German Constitution of July 31, 1919.....	172
Reid, Gilbert. Present Day Ideas on Revolution.....	529
Religion and Philosophy in Ancient India. Hardin T. McClelland	463, 552, 621
Religion Not a True Sublimation. Theodore Schroeder.....	495
Religious Aspects of the Mexican Constitution of 1917. N. Andrew N. Clevon	482
Religious Beliefs, Some Pragmatic Defenses of. William J. Morgan	584
Revolution, Present Day Ideas on. Gilbert Reid.....	529
Rockwell, Grace. The Historical Position of St. Thomas Aquinas..	475
Roman Tolerance Toward the Greek Language. A. Kampmeier....	243
Rosenquist, Eric. The Cross .....	257
Rousseau, Jean Jacques, The Problem of Eternal Punishment in. Joseph I. Cheskis	141
Rowell, Alberta Jean. Giordano Bruno—His Life and Mission....	705
Rudwin, Maximilian J. Dante's Devil, 513; The Satanism of Barbey d'Aurevilly	83
Saint Thomas Aquinas, The Historical Position of. Grace Rockwell	475
Satanism of Barbey d'Aurevilly, The. Maximilian J. Rudwin.....	83
Sawyer, Roland D. Jesus the Philosopher.....	658
Scheffauer, Herman George. The Lear-Tragedy of Ernst Haeckel..	193
Scheffauer, Ethel Talbot. New Altars (Poem).....	702
Schmalhausen, Theodore. Religion not a True Sublimation.....	495
Science, Dogma and Bias in Social Reform. Victor S. Yarros.....	455
Science Understand Nature, Does? Hardin T. McClelland.....	766
Schroeder, Theodore. Religion Not a True Sublimation, 495; Secularized Mystics	163
Secularized Mystics. Theodore Schroeder .....	163
Shanks, Lewis Piaget. Henri-Frederic Amiel.....	641
Shattuck, L. A. Education—Present and Future, 599; On the Education Bunco	310
Shoemaker, Robert V. A Truce of Philosophies.....	54
Smith, Henry Bradford. Argumenta Ab Amore et Invidia Ducta, 449; The Meaning of Liberal Study.....	697
Starrett, Vincent. "Michael Wood": A Study in Mysticism.....	148
State, Reforming the Modern. Victor S. Yarros.....	430
Stork, T. B. The Elimination of Competition.....	294
Swift, Fletcher H. Athenian Religious and Moral Training....	321, 385
Theology of Mahayana Buddhism, The. William Montgomery McGovern	38, 111
There May I Worship. Guy Bogart (Poem).....	319
Thought, Evolution of Expressed. F. W. Fitzpatrick.....	687
Three Poems. Guy Bogart .....	249
Universe is Beautiful and Benevolent, The. Hardin T. McClelland.	354
Vanderbyll, H. R. Intellect, Religion and the Universe, 485, 537; Retarded Evolution	628
Wakefield, Sherman D. The Gospel According to John.....	339
Wanderlure, The. Louise Mallinekrodt Kueffner.....	191

	PAGE
Watson, Blanche. <i>Passive Resistance or Soul Force</i> .....	715
Weber, Wm. <i>The Eucharist, 91; When Jesus Threw Down the Gauntlet</i> .....	372, 438
Wood, James N. <i>The Illusion of Peace</i> .....	406
Wood, Michael; <i>A Study in Mysticism. Vincent Starrett</i> .....	148
Wright, Dudley. <i>The Affinity of Druidism with Other Religions</i> ..	129
Yarros, Victor S. <i>Ideals and Immediate Social Programmes, 590; Intellectualism and Moral Evolution, 254; Reforming the Modern State, 430; Science, Dogma and Bias in Social Reform, 455; Moral Progress in the Light of History</i> .....	720

#### BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

Lawrence, Edward. <i>"Savage Life and Custom"</i> .....	63
Macler, Frederic. <i>L'Evangile Armenien</i> .....	704
Mendelsohn, S. <i>"The Arterial Function in Ancient Rabbinic Writings</i> .....	254
Rudwin, Maximilian J. <i>The Origin of the German Carnival Comedy</i>	255
<i>Devil Stories: An Anthology</i> .....	638
Wells, H. G. <i>Outline of History</i> .....	252
Williams, Clarence Russell. <i>The Appendices to the Gospel According to Mark</i> .....	575





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