This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

B 966,377

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

AP
4
.N86.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

NORTH BRITISH REVIEW.

MARCH AND JUNE, 1868.

VOLUME XLVIII.

AMERICAN EDITION.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY THE LEONARD SCOTT PUBLISHING COMPANY.
140 FULTON STREET, BETWEEN BROADWAY AND NASSAU STREET.

1868.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INDEX TO VOL. XLVIII.

A

Arnold, Mr. Matthew, 34.
Atomic Theory of Lucretius, 111; matter indestructible and eternal, 112; atoms, or the seeds of things, 113; perpetual motion of atoms, 114; energy due to motion of atoms, 115; varying density of bodies, explained by vacuum, 116; gravitation, 117; "declination of atoms," ib.; free-will and atoms, 118; indestructibility of motion, 119; Newton, Leibnitz, Davy, and Joule, ib.; summary of the theory, 120; Descartes, 121 Leibnitz, ib.; Bernoulli, 122; Hobbes, 123; Sir William Thomson's vortex atoms, 124; law of gravitation, 125; is the theory of gravitation final? ib.; Lesage, 126; atomic theory of gravitation, ib.; problem of the constitution of matter yet unsolved, 127; summary of atomic theories, ib.

B

Brain, the: its divisions, and the fluids with which it is supplied, 265, 266.
Bunsen, Memoirs of Baron, 228; former estimate of German intellectual capacity entertained in Britain, 229; growth of German literature, 229, 230; altered state of the British mind as to things German, 230, 231; parentage of Bunsen, 231; his life as a student, 231, 232; meets Niebuhr in Rome: appointed Prussian Resident there: his marriage, 232, 233; leaves Rome, and comes to England, 233; becomes Prussian representative in Switzerland, and afterwards Prussian Minister in England, 234; his last years, ib.; estimate of his character, 234, 235; Bunsen an English-German, 235; his piety, 236; a lyric, 237; the English side of his character, ib.; his love of England, 237, 243; his theology, 239-241; value of his theological works, 241, 242; his work on Egypt, 242; value of the 'Memoirs,' ib.; letters to Lücke, 243, 244; his remarks on the antagonism between English and German nature, 243; his opinion of religious thought in England, 244; letter to Renan, 245; letter to one of his sons, ib.; the Queen and Prince Albert, 246; relative value and position of French, German, and English civilisation, 246, 247; his political opinions, 248; remarks on his career as a diplomatist, 249, 250.
Burns, poetry of, 182.
Butler, Bishop,—his ethical theory, 78-76.

C

Combination amongst workmen; see Trade-Unions.
Churches and Creeds, 211; address of Dean Stanley on the connexion of Church and State, ib.; his idea of the Church, 213; his analogy between a State Establishment and the early Church, 213, 214; unsatisfactoriness of his argument, 214; how he deals with objections, 214, 215; the Nonconformists, 215; the Scottish Free Church, ib.; the Liberal school, 216; what ought to be the present policy of the Scotch and English Establishments in regard to non-established Churches, 217, 218; alternative of disestablishment, 218; legal results of disestablishment, 219; inconsistencies of Dean Stanley, 220; relation of churches to their creeds, 221; characteristics of Mr. Innes's work on the 'Law of Creeds,' 221, 222; necessity of the periodical revision of creeds and articles, 222, 223; claims of the High Church party, 223; the Scottish Church, 224; High Church claims refuted by the logic of events, ib.; relation of Scottish Churches to their creeds, 225; right of revision claimed and exercised, 226, 227; legal position of non-established Churches, 227, 228.
Crusades, the; see Louis, St.
Culdees of Britain; see Montalembert.

E

Education—Schools and Universities, 155; Mr. Lowe's four "principles" subversive of classical studies, 156; Sydney Smith's article, "Too much Latin and Greek," 157; substance of the "Essays on a Liberal Education," ib.; the learning of grammar, 158; Latin and Greek verse-making, ib.; "bifurcation" in schools and colleges, 159; "practical changes" recommended by Mr. Sidgwick, ib.; Mr. Mill on educational reform, 159, 160; scientific instruction, 160, 161; what place ought the teaching of English to occupy in our system? 161, 162; the idea of the "Essays" a mistake, 162, 163; faults of the Editor's essay, and of his lecture at the Royal Institution, 163, 164; translations of the classics, 165; importance of the study of the original, 165, 166; peculiar value to us of the life and languages of the ancients, 166; liberal education in connexion with our Universities, 167; Scotch Universities, 167, 168; Scotch Schools—Mr. Fearon's report untrustworthy, 168, 169; the English Universities—Cambridge, 169; Oxford, 170 seq.; moderations, 171, 173; the "suggestions" of Mr. Pattison, 172; his scheme indirectly aids the priestly party in Oxford, ib.; objectionable on its own merits, ib.; the question of age, ib.; position of the pass-men, 173; present mania for athleticism, 174; administration of endowments, ib.; scholarships, 174, 175; "lodging out," 175; impracticability of Mr. Pattison's plan of reform, 176, 177; subject of tests, 178; religious teaching of our universities, 179; the argument that the tests protect the Church of England, 179, 180; position of Dissenters, 180.
English, teaching of,—what place ought it to occupy in our educational system? 161, 162.

F

Fearon's (Mr.) Report on Scotch schools, 168, 169.
Fenianism, 131 et seq.
Financial relations of England and India, 46-58.
French criticism—M. Renan, 34; the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' 35, 46; M. Caro, 35; Renan's early life, 36; his philosophical studies at Issy, 36, 37; his transition from Christian faith to a scientific career, 37; betakes himself to literature, 38; Madame de Krudener, ib.; M. Sainte-Beuve, 38, 39; Renan's 'Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse, 41; his estimate of Channing, 41, 42; essays on the poetry of the Celtic races, 42, and

Digitized by Google

on Averroës and Averroïsm, ib.; on the Religions of Antiquity, 43; his tribute to M. de Sacy, 43, 44; Cousin, 44; Renan's position in respect to Christianity, 45.
French language, unpoetical, 183.

G

Germans and German literature; see Bunsen.
Greek Idyllic Poets, 250; Theocritus, ib.; Bion and Moschus, 250, 251; question as to the authenticity of some of the idylls, 251; idyllic poetry, 252; origin of bucolic poetry, ib.; modern pastoral poetry, ib.; Theocritus to be studied amid the scenery of the south, 253; peculiar properties of classical landscapes, 253, 254; Greek sculpture, 255; pastoral habits unchanged, ib.; the gods are gone, 256; natural beauty as regarded by the idyllic poets, 256, 257; contrasted with modern poets, 258; story of Galatea, 259; idylls illustrative of town life, ib.; classical witches, 259, 260; poems illustrative of the heroic age of Greece, 260; difference between Greek and mediæval chivalry, 260, 261; the seventh idyll of Theocritus, 261, 262; the idylls of Bion, 262, 263; the poetry of Moschus, 263, 264; Milton and Shelley, 264; Tennyson, 265.

H

Hume, and the philosophy of Locke, 77.

I

Idyllic poetry (Greek), 250-265.
Indian administration: the Financial relations of England and India, 46; want of an imperial policy, 47; our treatment of Indian affairs, 47, 48; its direct consequences, 48; what are India's imperial obligations? 49; India supports no navy, 50; does India indirectly pay tribute to England? 51; "home charges," 52; pensions, ib.; England's dealings with Indian commerce, 52-54; what the English connexion has done for India, 54, 55; its progress under English administration, 55, 56; native rule, and its supposed merits, 56; present lightness of taxation in India, 57.
Innes, A. T., on the "Law of Creeds;" see Churches.
Irish Question, the, 128; importance of understanding the evil to be remedied, 129; three sorts of discontent, ib; the Irish in America, 129, 147; vagueness of recommendations as to dealing with Irish wrongs, 130; political discontent, ib.; Fenian manifestoes, 131; Irish divisions of opinion, 132, 133; religious discontent, 133; the Irish Church, 134; mixed education, ib.; the land-tenure discontent, 135; iniquitous commercial legislation, 136; tenant compensation, 137, 138; tenant-right in Ulster, 138; distraint and leases, 139; property in land admittedly conditional, 140; three schemes proposed—Mr. Bright's, ib.; Mr. Butt's, 141; the 'Spectator's,' ib.; examination of these schemes, 141-145; subletting and subdivision, 145; insufficiency of the land area, 146; prosperity of emigrants, 148; land sales, 149; experimental legislation, 150, 151; conclusions, 151-154.

L

Lacordaire, Father, 93.
Louis, Saint (IX. of France), History of, 194; the narrative of Sire de Joinville, 195; Blanche of Castille (mother of St. Louis), 195, 196; events of his reign, 196, 197; battle of Taillebourg, 197; quarrel between Innocent IV. and Frederic II., ib.; St. Louis as a legislator, 197, 198; his asceticism, 198; takes the vow of a Crusader, 199; influence of the Crusades on Europe, ib.; reasons for that of Louis, 200; invasion of the Tartars, ib.; the Kharismians, 201; state of Syria at this time, ib.; arrival of Louis before Damietta, 202; its capture, ib.; rashness of his brother, the Comte d'Artois, 203, 204; battle of Mansourah, 204; retreat, 205; surrender of the King, 206; treaty with the Sultan of Egypt, ib.; results of the Crusade, 207; surrender of Damietta, ib.; violation of the treaty by the Egyptians, 208; Saint Louis in Palestine, ib.; death of his mother, Blanche, 209; his Second Crusade, ib.; desire for the preaching of the Gospel at Tunis, 210; his death at Carthage, 211; characteristics of his reign, ib.
Lowe, Mr., on classical study, 156.
Lucretius; see Atomic Theory.

M

Mistral's 'Mirèio,' 180; the Provençal patois, 181; Avignon worthy of a visit, ib.; patois suited for pastorals—the Scotch of Robert Burns, 181, 182; inhabitants and dialect of the French sea-board of the Mediterranean, 182; the French not a poetical language, 183; the scene of Mistral's pastoral, 184; Muriel (Mirèio), ib.; her suitors Alàri, Veran, 184, 185, and Ourrias "the brander," 185; Vincent, Muriel's lover, described, 186; Ourrias and Vincent—the fight, 187, 188; St. Medard's night on the Rhone, 188; meeting of Master Ambroi (Vincent's father) and Master Ramon (Muriel's father), 189; Muriel's flight, 190; the three Maries, 190, 191; last scene of all, 192; specimen of the translation by Mr. Grant, 193, 194.
Monasticism; see Montalembert.
Montalembert's 'Monks of the West,' 86; ancestry of M. de Montalembert, 87, 88; his early life, 88; his connexion with the 'Avenir,' 88, 90; his ideal of monasticism, 90; parallel with Froude, 91; Lacordaire—a typical monk, 93; history of monasticism, 93; slavery of the Church under the Christian Emperors, 94; providential mission of the barbarians, 94, 95; division of Montalembert's 'History,' 95; the re-conversion of Saxon England, by Augustine, 96; monasticism in Ireland, ib.; St. Columba, 97, 98; his penance, 99; probation of aspirants, 99, 100; labours of St. Columba in Scotland, 100; missionary enterprise of Irish monks, 101; the Irish paschal observance, 102; the monastery at Lindisfarne, ib.; sequel of the 'History,' 103.

N

National Manuscripts; see Writing, History of.
Niebuhr, 232.
Nonconformity in Britain, 215.

O

Oxford University, 170 seq.

P

Pattison's (Mr.) "Suggestions on Academical Organisation" considered, 172, 176, 177.
Popular Philosophy in its relation to Life, 70; thought and speech—philosophy and rhetoric, 71, 72; ethical theories of popular philosophy as based on appeal to feeling, 73; benevolence and self-love as competing principles in Butler, 73, 74; duty and happiness according to Butler, 75; his language on the Love of God, 75, 76; Hume works out philosophy of Locke, 77; rights and

Digitized by Google

obligations, ib.; morality of an act, pleasure caused by it, contemplation, 78; according to Hume, the idea of obligation vanishes, 79; Rousseau and the psychology of individualism, 80; philosophical ground of his indecency, 81; Burke and Rousseau, 82; Wordsworth, 83; deliverance from individualism in art, ib.; philosophy and religion, 84; modern English utilitarianism, 85.

Q

Queen's (The) Highland Journal, 103; reasons for choice of Balmoral, 104; love for Balmoral, 105; the country-life of England, 105, 106; appreciation of Highland family life, 106; the Royal household, 107; characteristics of the Journal, 108; its popularity, ib.; monarchy in the present day, 108, 109; the wide circulation of the book to be desired, 110.

R

Renan, Ernest; see French criticism.

S

Sleep (On), 265; the brain: its divisions, ib., and the fluids with which it is supplied, 266; the causes of sleep, 266, 267; effect of the diminution and increase of oxygen in the blood, 267, 268; effect of intoxicating gas—chloroform, 268; objects and purposes of sleep, 268, 269; experiments of Pettenkoffer, 269; of Liston, E. Smith, etc., 270; hybernation of animals, ib.; phenomena of dreams, and wakefulness, 270, 271; Aristotle's treatise on sleep, 271, 272; length of time required for sleep, 272.

Spanish Romances (Recent), 58; intellectual life in Spain, 59; the novels of Fernan Caballero, 59–61; translation of 'La Gaviota' (the Sea-Gull), 61; specimens of the tales contained in her various works, 62–68; sketch of her life, 69; description of the authoress by Lady Herbert, 70.

St. Columba, 97, 98, 100.

Stanley, Dean, on the connexion of Church and State, 211 seq.

T

Tartars, Europe invaded by, 200.

Tennyson, Alfred, 264.

Tests, University, 178, 180.

Theocritus, idylls of, 250–265.

Trade-Unions: how far legitimate, 1; general features of the case for and against them, 1, 2 seq.; —(1.) principles of political economy affecting them; can unions raise wages? 2; source and nature of wages-fund often misunderstood, 3, 4; reservoir fund, 5, 6; meaning of the words 'demand' and 'supply,' 6, 7; demand distinguished from desire to buy, 7, 8; usual theory of demand and supply imperfect, 8; wages may be affected by bargaining, 9, and can be raised by unions, 10, 11; interests of capital and labour not identical, 11, 12;—(2.) consideration of the right to combine, 13; this right not indefeasible, ib.; necessarily subject to limitations, 13, 14; wages raised by free-trade, 15; criterion of lawful and unlawful rules, 16;—(3.) trade-unions as they exist: the Sheffield outrages, 16, 17; the "knobsticks," or non-society men, 17; the artisan and labourer, 18; unjustifiable contracts and rules, 18, 19; position of men with extra skill, 20; the question of over-time, 21, 22; piece-work, 22, 23; the limitation of apprentices, 23, 24; administration of unions, 24, 25; freedom of members, 25; reports issued by unions, 26; payments and benefits, 28; differences among unions, 29;—(4.) the necessity for legislative action, 30; what rules shall be legal? 31; penalties for illegal agreements, 31, 32; arbitration, 32; shall trade societies be benefit societies? 32, 33; concluding recommendations, 33, 34.

U

Universities; see Education.

V

Verse-making, Latin and Greek, 158.

W

Wordsworth, 83.

Writing, the History of, 272; facsimiles of national manuscripts, 273; analogy between writing and architecture, ib.; development of printing and the decline of painting, 274; "Gothic" characters, 275; mediæval style of penmanship—round and pointed style, 275, 276; two co-ordinate fashions, 277; specimens of early English, ib.; foliated writing, 278; the Norwich Psalter in the Bodleian Library, 279; development of the black letter, ib.; unprofessional writing, 280; invention of printing, ib.; the "Secretary" type, 281; first half of sixteenth century, 282; the light thrown by these MSS. on the English tongue, ib.; genuine examples of early English, 283, 284; discontinuance of Gothic characteristics in penmanship, 284; the "Roman" hand, 285; Arabic numerals, 285, 286; writing and printing in Germany, 286; handwriting of Queen Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, ib.; use of black letter in printing, 287; the parallel between Gothic type and Gothic architecture, ib.; volume of the National Manuscripts of Scotland, ib.; its superiority to the English volumes, 288; the Lord Clerk Register (Sir William Gibson-Craig) and Sir Henry James, ib.; Anderson's "Thesaurus Diplomatum and Numismatum Scotiæ" brought to maturity by Thomas Ruddiman, ib.; features of Scottish caligraphy, 289; caligraphy of the Franks, ib.; the "Ludovician" hand, ib.; distinctions between it and the Anglo-Saxon, ib.; the charter of Duncan to the monks of St. Cuthbert, 290; diplomatic and palæographic evidence of its genuineness, 290, 291; St. David, founder of Holyrood, Melrose, and other religious foundations, 291; the foundation-charter of Holyrood, ib.; Malcolm Canmore, ib.; initials and capitals, 292; King Malcolm's great charter to the Abbey of Kelso, ib.; northern limits of old Anglian dialect, 293; acknowledgment by Richard of England of the independence of Scotland, 294; peculiarities of Scottish writing, ib.; relative merits of engraving and photozincography, 295; older types of writing, ib.; sculptured stones of Scotland, 296; Irish Art, ib.; symbolic carvings, 298; interpretation of these, ib.; peculiar to Pictland, 298, 299; what these objects represented, their connexion with heraldry, 299; often found near churches, 300; "Drosten's Cross," ib.; symbolism is akin to writing, 301.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

NORTH BRITISH REVIEW.

NO. XCV.

FOR MARCH, 1868.

ART. I.—TRADE-UNIONS: HOW FAR LEGITIMATE.

First, Second, Third, and Fourth Reports of the Commissioners appointed to Inquire into the Organization and Rules of Trade-Unions and other Associations. V. Y.

TRADE-UNIONS are on their trial. Large and increasing numbers of workmen have banded together to promote their common interests; they claim to represent the feelings and wishes of the artisans in each trade; they possess large resources, and have used their power with such effect that while they proclaim higher wages, lighter labour, and increased influence, as fruits of their exertions, they are denounced by numerous opponents as illegal societies, using outrage and intimidation to coerce men and masters, and as injuring commerce, without permanent benefit even to the members of these unlawful unions. The men say that they have found a plan by which they can, and do, better their condition, and they claim the right to put their plan in practice under the protection of the law. They are answered by the assertion that trade-unions are nurseries of disaffection, fatal to liberty, hostile to merit, and injurious at once to capital and labour. On all hands legislation is called for; each party awaits with impatience the report of the Royal Commission now sitting; the unions demand recognition as corporate bodies able to possess property and to recover debts at law; while their opponents press for the complete abolition of the system, or at least for such repressive and restrictive measures as shall break the power of these combinations.

The issues are of imperial importance. Mistaken legislation in one direction may involve great detriment to our commercial prosperity; and errors of an opposite kind may alienate the great body of skilled artisans to whom the suffrage has just been largely intrusted. The loyalty of these men to our constitution as hitherto worked will in a great measure depend on the justice done to their demands by the expiring Parliament; and no worse effect could follow the extension of the suffrage than an attempt by workmen to use their new power to alter legislation in a sense favourable to their immediate interests, but adverse to those of the nation. The evidence received by the Royal Commission, and the questions asked by the members of that Commission, seem to show that even among those who are familiar with trade, with workmen, and with the handling of economical questions, the gravest errors are rife—errors indorsed without hesitation by the greater portion of the press. The claims and practices of unions are judged on no fixed principles, and their legitimate action is condemned with almost the same rigour as is justly displayed in branding the foul crimes which they have fostered. The wishes of workmen are misunderstood, their habits are unknown, and they are pitied for hardships unheard of from the mouths of artisans, but mercifully vouched for by master builders.

The principles of political economy, though often quoted, are little understood; we propose—*first*, to discuss those principles as affecting trade-unions; *secondly*, to consider the right to combine; *thirdly*, to describe unions as they exist; and *finally*, to examine what legislative action is required. Before entering on these four subdivisions of our task, we will state briefly the general features

Digitized by Google

of the case for and against trade-unions, and for the latter purpose shall draw largely from an article in the *Quarterly Review*.

This article begins with the assertion that unions are not economically beneficial to their members; that they do not, and cannot, raise wages permanently. It is not denied that wages have risen since the establishment of unions, but this rise may have been due to large profits made in trade—not to the unions at all. When profits are large the demand for labour will be great, and wages must rise. When profits are small in a given trade, capital will be driven from that trade, and wages will fall. The action of trade-unions cannot, it is said, increase the wages-fund or capital out of which the workmen are to be paid, nor do they diminish the number of the recipients, though they may prevent the increase of that number by arbitrarily limiting the number of apprentices. Now, wages depend simply on the ratio between the capital employed as wages and the number of persons to be paid; and unless by augmenting the capital or by diminishing the number, in other words, by augmenting the demand or diminishing the supply, no permanent alteration in wages can be effected. The question for those who wish to raise the wages of labour is, not how to divide the existing wages fund in a manner more favourable to the working man, but how to increase competition for his labour among employers; in other words, how to increase the wages fund. Trade-unions, far from even aiming at this end, drive capital away from trade by harassing employers, diminishing profits, and increasing risks. Therefore, in the long-run they tend to diminish wages, and though for a little while they may obtain an increase from an employer working, for instance, under a penalty, the increase is only temporary, and is little, if at all, short of a theft from that employer. But while they fail to increase wages, they do increase the cost of production; they do therefore injure all consumers, themselves as well as others. By excluding competition, they may raise their own wages, but this exclusion constitutes a tyrannous monopoly which cannot be permitted for a day; and even this monopoly can never raise the wages of working as a whole. The main aim and object of trade-unions being to raise wages, the above arguments lead to the conclusion that this object is a delusion based on an obvious fallacy, so that unions are, so far even as concerns the interest of their members, an enormous blunder. But worse than this, they are injurious to the country at large, and their existence is irreconcilable with public policy. They injure the quality of all articles produced, by diminishing competition among artisans; they are hostile to excellence among workmen, discouraging piece-work and over-time, by which the skilful man may hope to better his condition; they oppose machinery, and foster dissension between employers and employed; they limit the quantity of wealth produced, by limiting the number of producers;—by all these means, without benefit to themselves, they banish trade, and increase the cost of produce to consumers. Worse still, they are not even honest, nor do they represent the true feelings and wishes of workmen; they are governed by glib democrats, who resort to force and outrage to establish their power; they are secret societies, and therefore odious; they have been established by fraud, on the pretence of being benefit societies, for which purpose they are even now bankrupt; the savings which should have been invested to provide for the benefits have been squandered in futile strikes, and even had every sixpence been profitably invested, the subscriptions are inadequate to provide for the payments promised. It is really a comfort to think that such monstrous organizations are even by the present law illegal, and we must readily grant that the only remedy practicable is total abolition. Here and there we have reinforced the *Quarterly* argument by extracts from the evidence of Mr. Mault and others; and assuredly this impeachment, supported by evidence of murder, theft, and outrage, can be met by no light denial.

Let us now hear what men in unions claim to have accomplished, what objects they avow, and how they answer the accusations against them. As to wages, the men say:—"We *have* raised wages; if political economy says that this is impossible, so much the worse for political economy; we know that unions do raise wages, and our employers know it, and this is one reason why they are hostile to unions. Our opinion is no conjecture, but based on evidence collected for years from all parts of England,—evidence which we lay before you. The cry used always to be that strikes could not raise wages; now it often is that wages have by unions and strikes been raised so high that trade is banished to other countries. Not only do we raise wages, but by the establishment of working rules, by the collection of information as to the want and excess of labour in different towns, by the selection of good and exclusion of bad workmen, by discouraging piece-work and over-time, noxious practices both, we have greatly benefited our members, and at the same time we have bene-

Digitized by Google

fited both our employers and the consumers of the wealth we produce. By the establishment of organized bodies with whom employers can treat and argue, we have diminished the number of strikes, and facilitated arbitration; our unions supervise the conduct of their members, and we have notably raised the social position of the artisan; by our benefit funds we encourage frugality, and have banished pauperism from among us. Your calculations as to our bankruptcy are based on a misconception of our rules; we do not discourage excellence; we do not oppose machinery; we are not governed by democrats; we no more injure trade by refusing to work for less than 36s. per week than a capitalist injures trade by refusing to invest his money for less than 10 per cent. The unions are popular even among non-members, and are recognised by the whole working class of the country as acting in their interests, and we so love our unions that we will emigrate or starve rather than abandon them. We admit that the great power given by unions has been abused by the ignorant in certain trades; we admit that even the best unions have from time to time made mistakes, and that the worst have incited men to murder and outrage; we will second every endeavour to prevent the recurrence of such crimes, but we contend that such great power has never yet been wielded by single men or by large bodies with less abuse of that power; we claim to have our rights recognised by law; we will cheerfully submit to those restrictions of our power which are required for the general good, but if you determine on abolition we will use our whole political power to reverse your decision."

The answer reads tamely after the accusation. Here and there it involves direct contradiction as to facts. It does not meet the case as to limiting the number of competitors, and it could only be honestly delivered by members of the best unions; but before examining any of the minor contradictions, we must endeavour to settle the first question at issue, Can or cannot unions raise wages? This really is a fundamental question. If unions cannot raise wages, it is futile to discuss whether they should be permitted to try; they certainly cause great annoyance and loss by their endeavours, and also suffer much themselves; if they cannot raise wages, neither can they obtain other indirect benefits, such as shorter hours, equivalent to increased pay. The one argument in favour of permitting combinations of workmen to bargain with their employers is that these combinations do enable men to make a more advantageous bargain with the capitalist. If this be not true, the policy of allowing an apparent but unreal privilege would be dishonest to the workman and unjust to the capitalist. It could only be palliated on the ground that we dare not interfere with the ignorance of the workmen, and must deceive them to keep them quiet. Let us, then, examine closely the arguments in favour of the proposition dinned daily into our ears, that no combination of workmen or of masters can alter the rate of wages.

These arguments take two forms, different in wording, but the same in essence, and are enounced as the doctrine of the Wages Fund, and the Law of Demand and Supply. Mr. Mill writes of the wages fund as follows:—

"Wages depend, then, on the proportion between the number of the labouring population and the capital or other funds devoted to the purchase of labour; we will say, for shortness, the capital. If wages are higher at one time or place than at another, if the subsistence and comfort of the class of hired labourers are more ample, it is and can be for no other reason than because capital bears a greater proportion to population. It is not the absolute amount of accommodation or of production that is of importance to the labouring class; it is not the amount even of the funds destined for distribution among the labourers: it is the proportion between those funds and the numbers among whom they are shared. The condition of the class can be bettered in no other way than by altering that proportion to their advantage; and every scheme for their benefit which does not proceed on this as a foundation, is, for all permanent purposes, a delusion."

Very clear, and very true. When you know the number of recipients and the sum to be paid them, divide the number of shillings by the number of men, and you obtain the mean wages. If 1000 eggs are sold daily, and 1000 pence are daily spent on eggs, the mean price of eggs that day will be a penny a piece. The price of eggs depends on the egg fund, it seems. Diminish the number of men, diminish your divisor, says Mill, and your quotient will be larger. Sell only 500 eggs, and the price will be twopence, if the egg fund remains the same, which it will not. Still, we do not deny that by restricting the number of eggs for sale, and of labourers applying for employment, the price of eggs and rate of wages will rise though the wages and egg funds will fall. But we seem now to be leaving the clear and beaten path of simple division: apparently this same wages fund is not a constant quantity. It may diminish, it may increase. This becomes interesting to our labourers, who cannot readily diminish their numbers. Cannot this same wages

Digitized by Google

fund be persuaded to increase for their benefit? How does it happen to be exactly the amount it is? What will make it rise? what will make it fall? The stock answer is, "My poor fellows, do not delude yourselves; the wages fund depends on the profits of capital; if profits are large the fund may increase, but everything tending to diminish the profits diminishes the wages fund, so if you or some of you for a little while get increased wages, diminishing our profits, the fund to be divided among you next year will be smaller; and so, however much we may regret it, you will infallibly get less than you do now; what you are now getting is the market price of your labour—the laws of political economy say so." Workmen do not always believe this, and sometimes do get an increase of wages; but the argument of the economist is elastic—they say the wages fund has increased; your new wages are now the market price of labour; you would have got it without asking. But all workmen are not quite sure that this is true, nor are we. The fallacy lies in the premiss that everything which diminishes profits diminishes the wages fund, or the saving which the capitalist applies to the purchase of labor. Of course the tendency in that direction must be admitted, but the motion of a body is not determined by one force only; to deduce its motion by calculation from the forces in action, we must take all the forces into account, all the tendencies; and we venture to say that in a large number of cases diminished profits on capital may cause an increase in the saving applied to the purposes of production. Take a concrete case first. A manufacturer having a large fixed capital in the form of a factory, has for some years cleared as gross receipts £100,000; he has paid as wages £80,000 per annum; for simplicity's sake we may assume that he pays for his raw material and tools in wages only; he has spent £20,000 per annum on his personal establishment. Under pressure from trade-unions he has thought it wise to give an increase of wages to his workmen for one year, though they have neither diminished in numbers nor have his profits increased; he would rather not face the loss entailed by a strike. Such things do happen. That year he pays his workmen £90,000, and finds he has only £10,000 clear profits. What will this man do? Will he next year pay a smaller number of workmen, employing say only £50,000 in wages at his original mill, and diverting the balance of £50,000 to increase other investments or his personal expenditure, or will he curtail his expenditure, and provide £90,000 as wages for his workmen next year too? As a matter of observation, many manufacturers will continue the production to the extent of £100,000 per annum, and will increase the amount paid as wages. Their gains do not represent the profits on the wages fund alone, but on the fixed capital as well. If they diminish the rate of production in their factory by investing a large portion of their gross annual receipts elsewhere, they greatly diminish the returns on their fixed capital, so much indeed as to outweigh any moderate advantage they can obtain by investing annual receipts more profitably. This consideration will often lead a manufacturer to continue his business with increased wages and diminished profits. No manufacturer has come before the Commission to say, "I have always, or generally, diminished my business whenever I have had to give increased wages;" and yet, whenever a man does continue his business at the original rate of production, with increased wages and constant, or nearly constant, receipts, he is increasing the wages fund or his circulating capital in the face of a diminished profit. Should he obtain an increase of price from the consumer, our argument is strengthened.

The greatest portion of the circulating capital of a country constituting its wages fund is of this nature. Year by year the savings of other classes add to this fund, but it is mainly composed of the price received by the manufacturer for his produce, a portion of which he habitually re-invests in the payment of labour without any conscious effort to save. We now assert that the proportion which he does so re-invest is not necessarily smaller because wages are larger or profits smaller. A manufacturer will generally work his mill or factory to the utmost so long as he does obtain a profit; he does not voluntarily set aside a certain sum for wages, diminishing and increasing that sum according to profits, but he employs as many men as he can, and pays them what he must. How this "must" is determined, shall be considered further on. Obviously there is a limit to action of this sort. Any conscious savings he will generally invest in other undertakings, and if his profits fall below a certain point, he will endeavour in all ways to divert the use of his fixed capital to other objects. He may be unable to control his personal expenditure; and so, if wages rise and profits fall beyond a certain point, his contribution to the wages fund will diminish, and possibly disappear, owing to his ruin. But how is this certain point to be determined? Are all manufacturers habitually carrying on their business at such profits,

Digitized by Google

that should these diminish they will diminish their annual payments in wages? We think not, and if not, the wages fund may increase in the face of diminished profits.

Let us turn to the second class of capitalists, men who, not being manufacturers, save to invest money, with the object of obtaining an assured income as the reward of their saving. A portion of each new saving will find its way into the wages fund. Will these savings be increased or diminished as the rate of interest is high or low? On the one hand, a high rate of interest is a greater temptation to investment than a low one; but then with a low rate of interest a much larger sum must be invested to return a given income, and a given ideal income, of say £1000 per annum, is generally the object of investors of this class. Is it clear that the saving for investment in countries with a high average rate of interest, is greater in proportion to the incomes than in countries where a low rate of interest obtains? We doubt it extremely; indeed, we entirely disbelieve that saving increases in proportion to the rate of interest to be obtained. We do not believe that men determine if they can get 10 per cent. that they will invest £1000, but if they can only get 5 per cent. they will spend it. The contrary proposition is more nearly true: if men can get 10 per cent. for their money, they will consider they have made a sufficient provision for their family by investing £10,000; if they can only get 5 per cent. they feel compelled to invest £20,000 before retiring from business. In fine, both with the manufacturer re-investing old savings in his own business, and the professional man investing new savings, diminished profits on capital lead to diminished expenditure, and not always or generally to diminished saving. The reason why this fact is very generally denied may probably be, a confusion between profits and the fund out of which savings are taken. If, it is said, the profits from which savings are made for re-investment diminish, how can we expect savings to increase? But the renewed savings for re-investment which constitute the great bulk of the wages fund do not come out of profits, but out of gross receipts. Our typical manufacturer does not annually obtain the £80,000 or £90,000 used for wages out of his profits of £10,000 or £20,000, but out of his gross annual receipts of £100,000. So that diminished profits do not entail a diminution in the fund from which renewed savings are made. They do diminish the fund from which new savings are drawn, and no one will deny that in face of falling profits and rising wages new investments in a particular trade will be checked.

Hitherto we have assumed that notwithstanding the increased cost of production consumers would pay no more for the produce. If they do pay more, the fund from which the renewed savings are drawn will increase also, and the wages fund will or may be increased still further. We took the other case first, as more unfavourable to our views.

But, it may be urged, the argument as to a possible increase of the wages fund notwithstanding diminished profits, cannot hold good in those employments which require but little fixed capital. Undoubtedly the more easily capital can be transferred from one business to another, the sooner will any possible increase of wages fund applicable to that business reach its limit; but this transfer of capital is by no means an easy matter, as any manufacturer or man of business will tell us.

Some persons in speaking of the wages fund seem to imagine that there would be a material as well as a moral difficulty in paying increased wages. They reason as if wages were limited by the amount of cash which manufacturers hold. It is of no use, they say, that the manufacturer may be willing to pay increased wages, if he has not already saved money enough for the purpose. A man cannot give what he has not got. A man who will open his eyes and will look at the way in which wages are paid in practice, will never be deceived by this fallacy. There is a very considerable available sum in the hands of all solvent persons and manufacturers, used to provide against irregularities in receipts and payments. This fund in money, or in assets easily convertible into money, forms a kind of distributing reservoir, and might be called the reservoir fund. If it were not for a fund of this kind the richest man might be in continual straits for a few pounds because receipts do not arrive daily, but at intermittent and at more or less uncertain times. No solvent manufacturer (except in times of panic) would have any difficulty in doubling the wages of all his workmen next week and for many weeks following (though he might ultimately be ruined by the process), any more than a solvent consumer would have any difficulty in doubling his weekly expenditure, though he might ultimately leave himself without a penny. All money received by a manufacturer is first paid into the reservoir fund; from that fund it may pass into four distinct channels: it may be spent, it may be invested in fixed capital unproductively, in fixed capital productively, or finally, in circulating capital out of which wages are paid. If the manufacture is profitable, the receipts paid into

Digitized by Google

the reservoir fund continually exceed the sum returned into the circulating channel; an increase in the wages of the workmen increases the sum to be returned, and diminishes the sums flowing into the three other channels. Even if the trade is not profitable, wages may be increased, but only by drawing back through the second or third channel sums previously invested, until the manufacturer is wholly ruined. To allow this last re-absorption, savings made by some other person are certainly required, and in hard times these savings may not be forthcoming, so that in common language our manufacturer cannot realize his assets. He will be all the sooner ruined in this case by unprofitable trade; but so long as trade is profitable, in order to pay increased wages he need only divert out of the reservoir fund what, up to that time, he has habitually spent or consumed as income. Thus there is no material obstacle to an increase of wages, so long as any profit whatever is made by trade.

Having sifted the wages fund argument, we find that it tells us nothing as to the possible price of labour, because it does not tell us how the wages fund itself is determined. It may increase by obtaining a larger share of the gross receipts from the sale of produce, though profits may be less; it may be swelled by the increased savings of the community made in the face of a diminished average rate of interest; it may rise by an increase in the gross receipts received by the maker from the consumer, and the want of specie opposes no obstacle to an increase of wages so long as produce will sell for more than its cost. We see that in some uncertain way the wages fund is affected by the security of property, the effective desire of accumulation, profits made on capital, the number of labourers, peace or war, but we have found no better way than mere observation of determining whether a given change of circumstances will or will not augment the fund. One class of economists believe they can give a definite rule by which the price of labour may be determined, or at least by which any permanent change in that price is regulated. This rule would, therefore, if true, allow us to calculate either the wages fund or the change in the wages fund due to altered circumstances. This rule they name the Law of Demand and Supply. We will again take our definition of the law from Mr. Mill, who says—

"The idea of a ratio as between demand and supply is out of place, and has no concern in the matter; the proper mathematical analogy is that of an equation.

"Demand and supply, the quantity demanded and the quantity supplied, will be made equal. If unequal at any moment, competition equalizes them, and the manner in which this is done is by an adjustment of the value. If the demand increases, the value rises; if the demand diminishes, the value falls; again, if the supply falls off, the value rises; and falls if the supply is increased. The rise or the fall continues until the demand and supply are again equal to one another; and the value which a commodity will bring in any market is no other than the value which in that market gives a demand just sufficient to carry off the existing or expected supply. . . . This then is the law of value with respect to all commodities not susceptible of being multiplied at pleasure.

"There are commodities of which, though capable of being increased or diminished to a great or even unlimited extent, the value never depends on anything but demand and supply. This is the case in particular with the commodity labour."

Well, as Mill says labour and commodities not capable of being multiplied at pleasure have their value fixed by demand and supply alone, let us first see what that law means as applied to some given commodity.

A thousand equal diamonds are offered for sale; a thousand purchasers equally desire them: what will be the price of diamonds? A thousand eggs have been imported to a henless island; a thousand islanders would like to have them for breakfast: what will be the price of eggs? No economist has hitherto stated the law of demand and supply so as to allow this calculation to be made.

Let us examine more nearly what is meant by "demand" and "supply." The word *demand* is used in two distinct senses, and the confusion arising from these two meanings lies at the bottom of much bad reasoning. *Supply* is almost always used to signify "the quantity offered for sale," and can be expressed or measured by a number. Thus the supply of eggs is the number of eggs; the supply of land the number of acres in the market. When the demand is said to be equal to the supply, men mean that all of the commodity offered for sale is bought, and that no more would have been bought had it been offered. In this sense demand also means a quantity measured by a number; as Mill says, "A ratio between demand and supply is only intelligible if by demand we mean the quantity demanded." But the word *demand*, as popularly used, signifies a desire; and when 100 eggs are sold each day at 2d. each, instead of 1d., the demand is said to have increased; and so correct would this language be in any other than in a highly technical sense, that correct reasoning will be impos-

Digitized by Google

sible so long as this ambiguous word is used to signify the quantity demanded. The quantity demanded depends on the price at which the goods can be purchased; and the demand in the sense of a desire may be measured by value as expressed in money. Thus, in a place where 1000 eggs per diem are sold at 2d. each, the desire for eggs may be said to be twice as strong as in a place where 1000 eggs will fetch daily 1d. a piece only. Again, the number supplied, popularly called the supply, must not be confounded with the readiness to sell the commodity in question. We may say that the people who sell the 1000 eggs at 1d. are twice as ready to part with or supply eggs as those who sell them at 2d. The equality between demand and supply means equality between the number demanded and the number supplied at a given price; and to signify these numbers we shall use these words, and not the words demand and supply. No equality or ratio can be said to exist between the desire to buy and the readiness to sell. When our 1000 eggs are sold at 2d., the desire to buy was clearly greater than when they were sold at 1d., but the readiness to sell was less in the former case than in the latter. A high price indicates a great demand and a small supply, in the sense of readiness to sell. If the desire be measured by the product of the number sold and their price—in other words, by the whole sum spent,—the readiness of a community to sell, being inversely proportional to the price, might be measured by what is called the reciprocal of that number, or by the quotient of the number supplied by the money spent. Measured thus there is no equality or constant ratio between desire to buy and readiness to sell. The two may increase together, as when a larger number are sold at a constant price, or either may increase while the other diminishes, or both may decrease together. There is, indeed, an equality between the wish to buy and the reluctance to sell each individual thing, but this means no more than that the purchaser and seller must agree on one price before a transaction can take place. Still, as reluctance to sell is measured by the price demanded, we might state that when prices are constant, the desire to purchase is equal to the reluctance to sell, measuring one by the money spent and the other by the money received. These two equations, first between two numbers, and secondly between two values, are both true, and can one be deduced from the other; but unfortunately, because the number demanded has an effect on the reluctance to sell, and *vice versa*, people speak as if the equation lay between the number demanded and the readiness or perhaps the reluctance to sell—which is nonsense. Any increase in the number demanded at a given price indicates an increase at the time in the whole desire for the thing wanted; but it is not true that an increased total desire for the thing wanted necessarily indicates an increase in the number demanded. At one time in a given town 1000 workmen may be wanted at 20s. per week, and at another time only 800 workmen at 30s. If the value of money has remained constant with respect to other commodities, the total desire of the community for that particular kind of labour may be said to be greater in the second case than in the first, though the number of labourers wanted is less. Again, if at one time 1000 are willing to work at 20s., and at another time none, or say only 100, will work at 20s., while 900 are willing to work for 25s., the readiness to supply labour will have diminished, though the number of labourers remains the same. To avoid confusion, we will avoid the equivocal words *demand* and *supply* altogether, and speak only of the number or quantity demanded and supplied as one pair of corresponding ideas, and the desire to purchase and reluctance to sell as a second pair of comparable magnitudes.*

* We may now try to write the equation indicated by Mr. Mill. Let the quantity demanded be called D, and the variable price x. We know that D is affected by the price, diminishing as the price increases, and may therefore write $D = f\frac{1}{x}$, where f is not a simple factor, but is a mere symbol, indicating that D increases as the price diminishes, and is affected by no other circumstance, an assumption which on any given market-day may be true. Next, let S be the number which at the price x will be supplied during the same time that the quantity D is bought. S will also vary with the price, but it will increase as the price increases. We may therefore write $S = Fx$, expressing the assumption that S is a function of the price, and is affected by no other circumstance. When D is equal to S, we have the equation $f\frac{1}{x} = Fx$, by which the price x could be calculated, and would be determined, if the quantities demanded and supplied varied according to any constant law, and merely in consequence of variation of price. There would then be only one natural and invariable value or price for each article. But this equation does not express all that Mill says. If the desire for the article increases, the value tends to rise. The quantity demanded then is not a mere function of the price. D must therefore be considered equal to some more complicated expression, such as $f(A + \frac{1}{x})$, where A is some unknown variable quantity. Again, the readiness to sell at a given price may diminish, and so diminish the quantity supplied, which is therefore not a mere function of price. To express this we write $S = F(B + x)$, where B again is an un-

Digitized by Google

We assert that the number of things bought and sold may remain perfectly constant and yet a considerable change of price take place. Not only may the number remain equal at very different prices—this no one denies; but a thousand transactions may take place this year at one price and a thousand transactions may take place next year at double the price without any variation whatever having taken place in the demand or supply, as measured by the number of goods supplied and sold. What is necessary for this result is simply that while a disinclination to supply the article at the old price arises, an inclination on the part of purchasers to buy at a higher price shall also arise. So long as the total desire for the article and reluctance or readiness to sell it, are unaltered, the price of the commodity remains fixed. Competition between both buyers and purchasers brings back the price to this fixed amount whenever any accidental deviation occurs. This is the law of demand and supply, as usually understood. The price is no more fixed by competition than a weight is fixed by a balance and scales; but the balance and scales serve to measure weights, and competition brings the price to the amount fixed by other considerations, which, in the case of a limited article, may be infinite in number, including everything capable of increasing the desire for the commodity, or the reluctance to part with it. The action of the law as usually described is true, but partial; the effect due to a disinclination on the part of purchasers to sell at the old price is admitted as a virtual diminution of supply, but this increased price will, it is said, diminish the demand, meaning the number demanded, and so the price may rise, but the number demanded, as well as the number supplied may fall; on the other hand, the demand, meaning either number demanded or desire to purchase, may rise; this they say will increase the number supplied under the stimulus of an increased price, and the price will rise with an increased number of transactions. No one has ever denied these two actions, both tending to an increase of price—but one with an increased trade, the other with a diminished trade. How is it that we are not equally familiar with the third case, where the demand, meaning the desire to purchase, increases, and the supply, meaning readiness to sell, diminishes at the same time, so that as before we have an increased price, but this time with neither an increase nor a decrease in the number of transactions? * A change of price at any time may be due to increased desire for possession, or increased reluctance to sell; the increased reluctance to sell may increase the desire for possession, or it may diminish this desire; the action in any one case can only be determined by experiment. If the holders of a thousand diamonds refuse to sell except at an average increase of 20 per cent. in price, no one can tell except by experiment whether more or less money will be spent in diamonds next year, nor even whether more or fewer diamonds will be bought.

To apply this reasoning to labour:—Wages, it is said, can only increase by an in-

---

known variable quantity; thus when D is equal to S, we have the new equation, $f(A + \frac{1}{x}) = F(B + x)$, —an equation in which, so long as A and B and f and F were all constant in value and form, x would remain constant, and would be fixed in terms of these magnitudes. If x were to rise by what we may term an accident for a day or two above the value determined by the equation, the first number would be smaller than the second, the quantity supplied would be in excess of that required, competition would therefore at once lower the price to its true value, as determined by the above equation, so that all the goods supplied might be sold. The consequence of a fall in price diminishing the second member would be to raise the first. The increased quantity wanted would bring back x to its true market value. Again, suppose that the desire to possess the goods increases by an increase of A; if B remains constant then x must rise to maintain our equation. If the readiness to sell increases by an increase of B, x must fall. Our equation thus expresses every relation between value, demand, and supply, which Mill states as expressing the law of value with respect to all commodities not susceptible of being multiplied at pleasure. But there is nothing in this law to prevent A, f, F and B from varying any day or any hour, from motives of the most opposite kind.

When the quantity demanded at a fixed price increases, A is increased. If B varies at the same time to a corresponding extent, we may have x the same as before, but a brisk trade instead of a slow one. If, on the other hand, B diminishes while A is constant, the price will rise while the number of transactions will become more limited, but if A rises while B falls, we may have a new and higher value of x, with a constant number of transactions; this is the conclusion to which we especially wish to draw attention. A diminished supply conveys to the minds of most persons the idea of absolutely fewer things for sale; but when an exact definition is sought of the number of things for sale, the idea of price is necessarily added; the things must be for sale at a given price, and an increase in the price at which a given number will be supplied produces many of the effects due to a diminution in the number supplied at a constant price.

* The omission of this case from consideration tends to obscure the fact, that a great change in price may accompany a very small change in the number of transactions, and indeed that change of price has no invariable connexion with a change in the number of transactions, unless on the assumption that the quantities A B f and F all remain constant, which will be sensibly true during any short period. These quantities in the long-run all may, and do vary, for every commodity.

Digitized by Google

crease in the demand or by a decrease in the supply; and decrease in the supply is always interpreted to mean decrease in the number of men in want of employment. Now, an equivalent effect to that produced by a decrease in the number supplied is produced whenever a given number of men who were yesterday willing to work at 30s. per week are to-day unwilling to work at that price, and require 31s. instead of 30s. If while the readiness to sell labour is decreased the desire to purchase it does not increase, we allow that to re-establish equality between the number demanded and the number supplied, the number demanded or employed must fall as wages rise; but if the diminished readiness to work be accompanied by an increased wish for labourers, wages may rise, and the number employed remain the same, though the demand and supply, as measured by the number demanded and supplied, would remain constant. Really it seems ridiculous to take so much pains to prove the self-evident proposition that if men want higher wages, and masters see that it is their interest to give those wages, the transaction may occur and all the men remain employed.

A second effect which may follow, and perhaps most generally does follow, the unwillingness of men to work except at increased wages, is this: the number employed may actually diminish, and yet the desire for labour, as measured by the total fund spent for labour, may increase; so that the reduced number, with augmented wages, may receive more than the larger number at lower wages; in this case it may be the interest of the workman to support his fellows out of work by a contribution from his gains, rather than, by a reduction in his own requirements, to allow them to find employment. We have reasoned so far on the assumption that the workmen act as one body, as is sensibly the case where unions are strong. We have therefore neglected the effect of competition among workmen. When competition can occur, it weakens the effect which an increased reluctance to sell their labour on the part of some workmen can produce in increasing the total desire for their work. The smaller the united body which refuses the low wages, the less their power; but whatever their size and importance, the tendency of their action remains the same.

It may here be argued, that the increased desire or demand on the part of the masters would have given a rise of wages independently of any action on the part of the men; but it by no means follows that without the diminished willingness on the part of the men the increased desire would ever have arisen. The master builders of London want for their present work 2000 men. They are paying them 30s. a week; there may be no reason why they should want an increased number, and still less reason why *proprio motu* they should wish to give them 36s.; but let the men decline to work for less than 36s., the masters, if making a good profit, will still want 2000 men to do their work, and may therefore agree to advance the wages. The demand, in the sense of desire for labour, may thus be said to have increased, but it has increased solely in consequence of the diminished willingness to sell. On the other hand, if trade is bad and the workmen are unwilling to work, the masters will not care to give 36s., and so the diminished readiness to sell labour may diminish instead of increasing the desire for it; and if the men are obstinate, some may get employment at 36s., for urgent matters, but the whole desire for labour and number demanded will both diminish.

An antagonist might still urge this argument: When trade is so good that masters can afford the advance of wages, they would naturally extend their business, and would want more hands; it is this potential increase in the number of hands wanted that really determines the increase of wages—not the refusal of the men to work for less than 36s. This need not always or even generally be true, but even in this case the action of the men in demanding more wages determines a rise of wages instead of extension of employment.*

Our argument is briefly this:—Wages, like the price of all other limited commodities, depend on a conflict between the desire for the commodity and the reluctance to sell it. Anything affecting either feeling as to labour will alter wages. The total desire measured by the total sum paid for wages, may increase in consequence of large profits leading men to wish for an extension of trade, but it may also increase owing to increased reluctance on the part of the labourers to sell, leading the purchasers of labour and produce, one or both, to pay more, lest they should lose wholly, or in part, their profits, or the enjoyment of their produce. Competition is the process by which the price is ascertained at which the desire for the com-

* To return to our equation: Under the influence of good trade A may rise and B fall, raising the value of x, and leaving the numerical value of each side of the equation unaltered. Or, on the other hand, A and B may both rise, while x remains constant. The action of the men determines the former change corresponding to an increase of wages, in distinction to the latter change, indicating an increased number employed.

Digitized by Google

modity and the reluctance to sell it are equal, but in no way can be said to determine the price.

We have come to a point where the identity of the wages fund argument with the demand and supply argument is obvious. The wages fund is the desire for labour, as measured by the total sum paid for it. That desire may increase or decrease in consequence of the increased reluctance of men to sell their labour. The increase of the fund invested by the capitalist may be due to increased payments he receives or expects to receive from his customers, or it may be directly due to a relinquishment of profits. It is wholly impossible to say when this will or will not be the case; it is impossible to fix any one given rate of average return on capital which may be taken as a kind of standard towards which, in all times and places, the profits tend. By the joint action of capital and labour, profits are made; that is to say, produce results from their action which exceeds the value of produce consumed by them in the process. Each claims a share in the profits; each must have some share, or each will refuse his aid. How much must each have? in what proportion shall the profits be divided? We apprehend that this is purely a question of bargain, and that the share each receives will vary, and may legitimately vary, within very wide limits. The capitalist may not force the labourer to work; the labourer may not force the capitalist to invest savings productively; each must tempt the other, and it is entirely a question of experiment how much temptation will in each case be required. It is quite possible that the temptation which was sufficient yesterday will not be sufficient today. Those who misapply the doctrine of demand and supply, or the wages fund argument, assume that the sum available to pay the workman is fixed beforehand, or, if not fixed, must be diminished by any increase of wages. To assume this is to beg the question. Every effect which is distinctly seen to follow on changes in demand and supply, as popularly understood, will follow without this wholly arbitrary assumption of fixed wages for a fixed supply of workmen; and these known effects are not inconsistent with the fact that workmen, by bargaining, may in certain cases raise their wages. When more workmen are wanted than can be found, undoubtedly wages will rise without any bargaining; the competition among masters for workmen in that case indicates the increased desire, it does not create it; and when more workmen want work than are wanted, wages will fall in spite of bargaining; the competition among workmen indicates their increased readiness to sell; but when the number wanted and the number able to work are not very different, bargaining may raise wages or prevent a fall; and in the two other cases it may increase a rise and diminish a fall—a conclusion surely not far removed from common sense. The contrary view, that somehow wages or prices are fixed by a law is something like the idea that the strength of a beam is fixed by an equation. We can imagine a party of wiseacres who should meet the proposal of an engineer to cheapen their bridges by saying, "Pray, don't be so foolish; you ought to know that the strength of a beam is determined by mathematics;" and our primitive engineer, guiltless of algebra, might say, "So much the worse for mathematics; I know I can make beams lighter and stronger and cheaper, and I've done it." At first, this would be shortly denied; but at last one of the party would find out that the mathematics were all right after all, the equations for the strength of a beam perfectly correct, only, that as some of the terms were variable, it was quite consistent with algebra that beams should be made stronger by a better distribution of material. Even so economists who know that the equation exists, determining prices, should remember that there are other variables in the equation besides prices, and that the law only determines the price in terms of these variables.

If it be granted that bargaining does affect wages, it will readily be allowed that an association with savings enables its members to bargain more advantageously than isolated workmen could do. If the alternative before the labourer is work at the wages offered or starvation, he will be much less resolute in his views as to his worth, than when the alternative lies between work at high wages and mere privation; and a large mass, acting in concert, finds support in the mutual approval of its members. Joint action also causes greater inconvenience to the capitalists, and forces them to make up their mind at one given time. This point requires no elaboration. Many persons think the unions ought not to be allowed to exercise the powers they possess, but few, if any, will deny that if wages can be altered by bargaining, unions can drive the harder bargain.

We have so far, with Mill, assumed that labour is on the same footing as to value as commodities of which the quantity cannot be increased; but the grounds of that assumption should be understood. The cost of articles which *can* be multiplied at will is rightly supposed to depend ultimately on the cost of production. Why? Because

Digitized by Google

there is no room for the exercise of any unwillingness to sell, such as may occur in the case of holders of a monopoly. If one set of holders will not sell without a profit above the average, new makers will produce, and by their competition soon reduce the cost to that which represents an ordinary profit on outlay.*

The *prima facie* reason why labour cannot be included in this category of objects is, that the quantity for sale cannot be increased or diminished quickly enough. The cost of manufacture of labour is (neglecting previous outlay on education) the cost of the weekly sustenance of the labourer, who has to go on producing himself, and however small his profits on his absolutely necessary outlay may be, he is forced to sell or die; but then he has the great advantage that by eating twice as much he cannot do twice as much work, so that at any time when he is all wanted, he gets the benefit of being a limited article, and may get more than his prime cost; but when he is not all wanted, and must sell his labour, he may be driven to cheapen his prime cost to starvation wages, or wages at which he can barely exist; whereas other articles, if the profit falls too low, are simply not produced. Mill points out, very justly, that if time be given for adjustment, the labourer comes into the category of unlimited articles; for though he will not avoid daily producing himself by eating, he may avoid reproducing himself in children, and will avoid doing so if his profit as a labourer be below a certain amount. This certain amount depends on what the labourer considers the minimum at which it is worth while to exist. The natural price of labour is fixed in this manner quite as the natural price of any unlimited commodity is fixed by the cost of its production, including in that cost the current rate of profit in trade. So far, therefore, it would appear that, after all, granting time, we might bring wages into the second category, in which bargaining avails nothing; but there are here one or two remarks to be made. If the standard of comfort be so raised that our labourer positively will not work unless he has more food and better clothes than last year, his prime cost is raised; but, considering the objection that men have to starvation and the workhouse, it is impossible that his standard should rise, unless he has some saving or fund to prevent his starving or to allow of emigration. This increase in the standard of comfort held by the labourer is analogous to the rate of profits expected by the manufacturer. If manufacturers, as a body, determine that it really is not worth while to produce goods except at an increased profit, the prime cost of their produce will be increased. Manufacturers could not act up to this determination unless they had savings—unless they combined, and unless they could prevent competition. The workman can only raise his price on precisely the same conditions, but he is fortunate so far, that competitors cannot readily be produced for any skilled employment. Ultimately, whenever population increases at such rate that competitors are practically unlimited, and where this population can flow without check into any skilled employment, wages must fall to such a point that no further competitors will enter the lists. But this increase in the number of competitors, and fall in the standard required as an inducement, both depend on man's own choice and on the standard of comfort once established. Whether, therefore, we look on wages as determined at any given time by the law of demand and supply, or as determined in the long-run by the cost of living, we find that the standard of comfort expected by the men, and the possession of savings sufficient to ward off starvation, may exercise great influence on the value of labour.

Much has been said on the identity of the interests of capital and labour. Well-meaning but fruitless attempts are made to teach workmen that capital and labour are never in antagonism. No one can deny that each needs the other; but they have a common interest only as the horse and his rider have a common interest. If the horse starves the rider must walk; if the horse jibs he must go to the knacker. So the rider feeds the horse, and the horse carries the rider. So far they have common interests; but it is none the less true that they have opposed interests, inasmuch as the horse would like to eat plenty of corn and do as little work as possible; while the rider, on the contrary, would be better pleased the less his horse ate and the farther he trotted. Workmen are all the less likely to see the common interest, if they hear the antagonism persistently denied with what

* Returning to our equation, there is no room for B; the number supplied can only depend on Fx; but if the variable B disappears, A, as an independent variable, disappears too; for A could only vary in our equation without a change in fx or Fx by the variation of B. We then find that the price of a commodity such as this is absolutely fixed once for all, so long as the ratio between f and F remains constant. Now, the number supplied at a given price will increase precisely as the number wanted increases. So long as the profit remains unaltered—in other words, $F = fz$, where z is a factor or function depending on the cost of manufacture—hence the ratio between F and f can vary only from a variation in the cost of manufacture, in which one possible variation is a change in the average rate of profit expected by the maker.

Digitized by Google

seems to them hypocrisy. They think it monstrous that one of two parties to a bargain should be told to shut his eyes, and open his hands and take the wages fixed by Political Economy, which allegorical personage looks very like an employer on pay-day. On this ground of a common interest the workmen might as well require that all profits should be paid to them, and that employers should thankfully accept the share Political Economy, in the shape of a union secretary, might think fit to award them.

Let us openly face the fact, that wages and profits on capital are matters of bargain between men and master, and then we shall be prepared to consider under what conditions that bargain may be most advantageously made in the interests of the whole community. Revising our argument, and confining its application to a stationary community, we find that annually, in addition to fixed capital employed in production, a certain circulating capital is employed in the payment of wages to productive labourers. Annually the capital and labour produce wealth of more value than the circulating capital. This new wealth may be divided in an infinite variety of ways. The same sum as before may be spent as circulating capital in the shape of wages, and the whole excess of the wealth produced be consumed by the capitalist as his reward for saving. But this constancy need not be maintained; it is equally possible that the wealth may be divided in other proportions. What does in practice determine the proportions? We answer, the will of the capitalist and of the labourer. The exercise of this free will is subject to the heaviest penalties. The capitalist may refuse to reinvest so large a proportion of his wealth, and may diminish wages. His penalty may be that fewer workmen will work—perhaps none; his profits next year may diminish instead of increasing, he may find no profits, and have to live by consuming the capital he would fain invest. Again, if the workmen demand a larger share, they do it at their peril; they may get a smaller share, they may get none. Thus a perpetual and inevitable strife arises as to the distribution of the wealth produced by the conjunction of labour and capital; each party declares their share to be the smallest they can possibly accept. "I will starve or emigrate rather than take less than 36s. per week," says the workman. "I will spend my wealth, or invest it abroad or in non-productive investments unless I get 15 per cent.," says the capitalist.* The sincerity of the two parties to the bargain cannot be tested except by the practical test of a refusal to work, or a refusal to employ workmen. It cannot be contended that the proportions of distribution once fixed will be constant, or that any natural proportion whatever does exist. No man by reasoning beforehand can discover what rate of profit will reward a man for saving, or in other words, what is the natural interest on capital. No man by reasoning *a priori* can determine what food, lodging, raiment, amusement will be sufficient for an artisan, or in other words, what are the natural wages of that artisan. Both the necessary reward to induce saving, and the standard of comfort, will vary immensely with custom, education, government, climate, and indeed with every circumstance which affects man's desire for wealth.

In the assertion of their determination, the capitalists stand at a great advantage when compared with an individual labourer who has no accumulated savings. He must work or starve, or break into open rebellion. When he has saved money, he may emigrate or change his occupation, since he will have time at his command. If many workmen at once determine not to work below a certain standard, and if they have accumulated funds, they stand more or less on an equal footing with the capitalist. They can wait, and he can wait; they suffer, and he suffers; the force of their determination is tested by the time during which each will endure the loss entailed. The capitalist sees opportunities of profits lost, he sees rivals supplanting him in trade; if his capital has been borrowed, he may see ruin impending. The workman sees his savings vanish, he endures privation at his home, he sees a rival workman at his bench, he must face unknown changes, starve, or live on charity.

This torture soon settles whether really the capitalist will be content with 14 per cent., or the workman with 30s. Nor is there any other test by which the proportion required to induce investment and to induce work can be settled. Workmen will continue to think it outrageous that the capitalist will not be content with less than 15 per cent. Masters will continue to think it monstrous that workmen who live uncommonly well on 36s. will not work for less than 40s. In truth, the master has no moral obligation to save or invest capital in consideration of any particular rate of interest, nor is it the duty of the workman

* There is no means in any one case of knowing what profit an employer really does make; the workman openly states his claim for so much a week; the employer does not state his profit, nor can be expected to do so.

Digitized by Google

to work at any given rate of wages. Capital and labour *are* antagonists, they must fight for the spoil, but they fight under this singular condition, which should put buttons on the foils—if one kills the other, the victor cannot long survive; nay, each feels every wound he gives his foe.

We have now completed the first branch of our inquiry, and, assuming that trade-unions can and do materially increase wages, will proceed to consider whether combination for this and analogous purposes ought to be permitted, and if permitted, under what restrictions, both as to the objects sought and the means employed to compass those objects; in brief, what are or what ought to be the rights of trade-unions, taking for our guide the interest of the community and the laws of positive morality.

Writers who admit that unions do and can raise wages, rarely contend that any legal restriction should be put on what they call the *right* to combine for the purpose of raising wages. Even the *Quarterly*, before venturing to recommend the abolition of unions, undertakes to prove that they do not benefit the workman by increasing his pay. Workmen generally hold the most decided belief that they have a *right* to combine with this object. So they have, while the law remains unaltered, but (we are almost afraid to write such heresy) they do not come into the world clothed with any natural right to combine, and the utility of these combinations to the nation is not so clear as they think. Granting that the law forces no man to sell his labour except on such terms as suit him (with exceptions which do not vitiate the reasoning), it does not follow that the law must and ought to grant a right of combination. How that poor word "right" is misused! It is perhaps hopeless to try to explain in a few words to those who do not know it already, that a "right" has any other meaning than something which is thought nice by the person using the word. We will, however, quote a passage from Mr. Austin's work on the Province of Jurisprudence:—

"Every right supposes a duty incumbent on a party or parties other than the party entitled. Through the imposition of that corresponding duty, the right was conferred. Through the continuance of that corresponding duty, the right continues to exist. If that corresponding duty be the creature of a law imperative, the right is a right properly so called. If that corresponding duty be the creature of a law improper, the right is styled a right by an analogical extension of the term. Consequently a right existing through a duty imposed by the law of God, or a right existing through a duty imposed by positive law, is a right properly so called. Where the duty is a creature of a positive moral rule, the nature of the corresponding right depends upon the nature of the rule. If the rule imposing the duty be a law imperative and proper, the right is a right properly so called. If the rule imposing the duty be a law set by opinion, the right is styled a *right* through an analogical extension of the term. Rights conferred by the law of God, or rights existing through duties imposed by the law of God, may be styled *Divine*. Rights conferred by positive law, or rights existing through duties imposed by positive law, may be styled emphatically *legal*. Or it may be said of rights conferred by positive law, that they are sanctioned or protected *legally*. The rights, proper or improper, which are conferred by positive morality, may be styled *moral*. Or it may be said of rights conferred by positive morality, that they are sanctioned or protected *morally*.

No one will contend that Divine law enforces the duty of permitting or aiding trade-unions. Positive law may or may not, as it pleases Parliament. The whole question then as to the right of combination depends on the question whether there is a positive moral law imposing the duty of allowing or sanctioning trade-unions. Positive morality is unfortunately less well defined than Divine and positive law. We, for our part, cannot admit that any positive morality sanctions such combinations if they are injurious to the country, but will freely grant that so far as they are beneficent to the community they have a sanction. What we wish workmen would understand is, that they have no rights other than are sanctioned by Divine law, the law of their country, and positive morality; and that whether a supposed right has or has not the sanction of positive morality is a fair matter for argument, not to be settled by doggedly repeating a set phrase that every man has a right to vote, or a right to combine, or a right to be comfortable, etc. etc., but to be proved by showing that the exercise of this right benefits the community. Especially this right to combine is no clear matter, and always has been and ought to be conferred with great caution by positive law. For instance, almost every man has a right to walk up and down in the streets of London, but it would be intolerable that any 500 men should be allowed to combine, and all walk one way, blocking up the street: when the right to combine is granted, as to Volunteers, the right of walking about in any direction they please is restricted. Any one may go into Trafalgar Square; but a right to combine, even to hold a meeting, is quite another matter. Any one may carry on a trade, but if several people combine to carry on trade, the right to combine, whether as partners, as a joint-stock or

Digitized by Google

limited liability company, is conferred with restrictions devised in the interest of the community. People may think the laws affecting the joint-stock companies bad, and may wish to change them, but no one complains that the great powers of those companies are regulated by positive law. If joint-stock companies were clearly injurious to the community, they might be and ought to be abolished to-morrow, for there is no positive moral right to combine for the purpose of trading, nor is there any positive moral right to combine for the purpose of selling labour. Those who support trade-unions must therefore argue thus: These unions raise wages; they so far benefit the community by benefiting that section of it which is most numerous and least well off. Diminished profits to capital cause an evil which does not outweigh the good of increased wages, especially as there is a limit beyond which, if wages rise, the whole payment to the working classes will diminish, so that they will learn by experience at what point consistently with the good of the community their wages must cease for the time to rise. Their opponents, granting, as some do, that the unions raise wages, contend that by doing so they injure the consumer, first, by the direct increase of cost of the goods which he buys; and secondly, by the indirect decrease of production likely to result from diminished profits to capital. Unions raise prices and restrict trade. If the prices of produce rise in all trades, the purchasing power of the wages will remain the same, and the nominal benefit to workmen will confer no real benefit, while the loss to capitalists and annuitants will be doubled. It must, we think, be admitted that if unions become very general and the wages of the whole working classes rise, the purchasing power of the wages will not increase so much as the nominal value of the wages. But as the cost of produce does not wholly depend on the wages paid in this country, nor wholly on wages paid anywhere, but partly on the profits of capital, it must equally be admitted that the purchasing power of the wages will rise with their nominal amount, though not equally, and there will result, therefore, a tangible gain to the workman, and a loss to capitalists and annuitants. Looking at the relative position of the rich and poor, we do not think that the permission to combine should be withheld because it tends to diminish the present inequality of condition. Great inequality is necessary and desirable, but it is at present great enough to admit of some reduction. The accusation that unions do restrict trade is also well founded. No rationally conducted combination will so restrict trade as to diminish the total wages fund, but a rational combination may diminish the rapidity of its extension, by diminishing the profits of capital. The inducement to save, and the fund out of which new savings are made are both diminished; and though other reasons, such as the desire for a given income, may tend to increase capital, still observation seems to show that trade will extend faster with large profits and small wages than with small profits and large wages. Is the rapid extension of trade a permanent good? Is it better that there shall be a working population of twenty-five millions with small wages, much pauperism, and great total wealth, or a population of twenty millions, less total wealth, but good wages, and little pauperism? To put the question is to answer it. If unions raise wages and the standard of comfort, the mere restriction to an increased trade will be no evil, provided the increased standard of comfort leads to a corresponding restriction of the increase of population. If it do not, then indeed the temporary gain to the fathers will be fatal to the children.

At one and the same time to diminish the increase in the production of wealth, and increase the number among whom the wealth is to be divided, is to insure a future generation of paupers. Trade-unions may for once increase the share of the workman in the profits on production, but they can only do it once, and so soon as the limit has been reached beyond which the wages fund under their action will decrease instead of increasing, they can no longer benefit the workman further than by maintaining the good they have won. When that wages fund has reached its maximum ratio to the total produce of the country, then every word said by Mill on the subject of the necessary limitation to population is applicable. Trade-unions could not maintain themselves in the face of paupers clamouring for employment, and perhaps the clear perception which those unions produce of the necessity of limited competition to the wellbeing of competitors for bread, may lead even the English workman to act on the precepts of Mill, as well as to vote for him and cheer him. Meanwhile, simple restriction of the extension of trade is not *per se* an evil, and none of the pleas against trade-unions founded upon it will hold water. When the Bank of England raises its rate of discount to 6, 7, 10 per cent. it restricts trade—unsound trade, you say; but is not trade unsound which requires for its success that the workmen shall be *quasi* paupers? The laws on joint-stock companies, the standing orders of the House

Digitized by Google

of Commons, the determination of any board of directors not to invest money in an undertaking which promises to return less than five per cent., taxes, wars, Factory Acts—all these things are restrictions on trade, some wise, some inevitable; thus, we cannot forbid actions simply because they restrict trade, and we can see no reason why combinations of capitalists should be permitted to fix the rate of interest at which they will invest their money, and combinations of workmen forbidden to fix the rate at which they will sell their labour. They no more restrict trade by demanding high wages than capitalists do by demanding high profits. The same reasoning answers the allegation that trade-unions drive away trade. Unquestionably, if the workmen are sufficiently foolish to persist in their demands for wages which the trade cannot afford, they may drive away the trade; but again, if capitalists are so foolish as not to sell unless at a profit so great as to prevent successful competition with other countries, they may lose their business, ruining themselves and their workmen. We do not, therefore, prescribe a given rate of profit as a maximum, but trust to self-interest as the strongest of motives to prevent such suicidal action. Workmen in practice may be found less sensible than employers, but there is much evidence in the Blue-Books to show that the unions do look very keenly into the possibility of foreign competition; and in an ideal union it is clear that information among the men that the trade was being lost would lead them to abate their demands.

An odd fallacy has been mooted lately, chiefly by Americans, to the effect that free-trade and high wages are incompatible—that, in effect, free-trade tends to lower wages, and that if the unions raise wages free-trade must be abandoned. The effect of free-trade at any place is to reduce the price of articles which cannot advantageously be made there, but it increases the price of articles which can be advantageously made there; and as under perfect free-trade no article would be produced anywhere but where it would be advantageously produced, it raises the price paid at each place for those articles, and raises the fund out of which wages arise. Free-trade, therefore, not only increases the purchasing power of fixed wages, but actually tends to raise wages. Thus, supposing wine can be more advantageously made in France and beer in England, under free-trade the average price of beer in the two countries will be higher than it was in England when excluded from France, and wine with free-trade will be dearer in the two countries than wine in France when excluded from England. But the average price of beer and wine in France and England will, with free-trade, be lower than without it. The Frenchman, if he sets his heart on alternate bottles of Bass and Beaune, will be able to purchase them for less than before; but the brewer of Bass and the grower of Beaune will get more money with free-trade than without it, and will be able to pay higher wages, until of course by competition his profits are brought down to the average rate. Free-trade can only depress wages of those commodities which were already made at a disadvantage in any given place. If this disadvantage be due to excessive wages, it will depress wages; but unless the manufacture can bear the average rate of wages, it ought not to be carried on in that place. The workmen, have, therefore, in such a case to decide whether they prefer to abandon their trade or to work for lower wages; but here again they are simply in the same position as the employer. Free-trade tends to diminish profits on all articles which cannot be advantageously made in a place, and so a producer of such articles must either abandon his trade or be content with small profits. Free-trade is good for both capital and labour when applied to proper objects; it is inimical to capital and labour when improperly, that is to say wastefully, employed. It is found expedient to allow the capitalist to consult his own interest rather than prescribe his course of action by law; and we think it will be found equally expedient to allow the workman to consult his interest, and to make no attempt to keep down wages by preventing the combination necessary to allow workmen to make a bargain.

When the right to combine is granted, it can only be granted in the interest of the whole community, not in the interest of the members of any particular combination. Joint-stock companies are allowed not in the interest of their shareholders, but because joint-stock companies are supposed to benefit the nation. The law granting the right ought therefore to impose limits on the action of the combination wherever that action is hurtful to the community, as in the case of a company, by imposing a limit to the profits it shall divide among its shareholders. The very first limitation to the powers of a trade-union should be aimed at preventing any violent or sudden change in the labour market. A sudden refusal to work causes much greater inconvenience than a refusal to work at a future time; it may cause great suffering to the community, as when all cabs are withdrawn, or when

Digitized by Google

engine-drivers strike suddenly; and it may extort wages for a time which the capitalist would never have given, if he had been aware, before entering on a certain course of action, of the demand his workmen would make. This can create no permanent rise of wages, and it does harm both to public and to employer, driving away capital without any advantage to the workman. No law could permit all the bakers one day to declare that they would not sell bread under double or treble the price charged the day before, or to declare that for the next month they would make no bread. No law could permit all the railway officials round London to declare that to-morrow they would not work. We need not, however, deny to bakers and railway officials the right to combine. Let them give six month's notice, and the public can provide against the threatened loss or inconvenience. Any employer receiving a six months' notice will be free to choose whether he will enter into new engagements; if so, on what terms; and though he may still be fettered by old engagements, a six months' notice will generally extricate him from any serious embarrassment.

This simple restriction, which apparently would be accepted readily by the unions, is far from being the only one required. A combination permitted with the object of raising wages inevitably uses its power to obtain collateral benefits, generally equivalent to increased pay, though differing in form; in fine, they bargain not only as to wages, but as to all the conditions of the contract between man and master.

All arguments in favour of permitting bargains for money apply to bargains for other privileges, such as a diminution of the hours of labour, the notice to be given before dismissal, the allowance to be made for travelling, etc. But as some conditions are illegal in any contract, we are at liberty to consider what conditions shall be declared illegal in this particular class of agreement between employer and workman. We assert that *the contract must contain no provision in virtue of which the workman or the master shall undertake to injure a third person who is no party to the contract, and that all other conditions may properly be made a matter of bargain.* This principle will serve to distinguish the right from the wrong action of unions, when in the next division of our subject we consider their actual practice, as explained in the evidence before the Commissioners. Observe, we do not say that workmen must not combine to injure other people. Masters might say that by combining to make them pay high wages unions injured them. Consumers might complain of high prices as an injury. Fellow-labourers thrown out of work by a strike may complain that they suffer by the action of the combination. Yet if a bargain is to be allowed at all, these injuries must follow. We say that the workmen and employers must not be allowed to agree on terms one of which is the injury of a third person. If a contract of this form is entered into, the workman is bribing his employer to injure this third person. The employer wants work done; the workman says, "I will do it on these conditions:—1*st*, You shall pay me 30s. a week; 2*d*, My working hours shall not exceed 56 in each week; 3*d*, You shall turn off John Smith." Wherever, as in this case, one condition of the agreement is that a third person shall be injured, the agreement is contrary to the laws of positive morality, it is and should be not only illegal, but subject to a penalty for both the parties to such an agreement. We need hardly have recourse to first principles to prove this, and shall assume it as self-evident; our only care will be to prove that if enforced, it is sufficient to restrict the action of trade-unions within harmless limits.

To resume: We find that although combination to raise wages and guard the other interests of workmen is no natural right, it may be permitted consistently with interests of the community, provided sudden action be prevented, which might both derange the necessary machinery of daily production and traffic, and also unnecessarily harass the capitalist engaged in production; and we further declare that the legitimate field for the action of the combination in driving its bargain is defined by the principle that no injury to a third person shall form any part of that bargain.

We turn now to the description of trade-unions as they are; and assuming that the general scope and action of unions is sufficiently known, we shall forthwith discuss those rules and practices which are either certainly pernicious, or are thought so by many writers.

The atrocious outrages detected at Sheffield, and among the Manchester brickmakers, require little comment here; not, indeed, that too much can be said to show the execration in which such crimes are held: they are only possible in societies where the criminal is conscious of the support and approbation of his associates—where the opinions of men are vile, and their conscience degraded. It is therefore most necessary that the thieves and murderers should know that beyond that depraved circle they are known and loathed as simple thieves and murderers. We do not pass by these outrages quickly,

Digitized by Google

as of small account, but because there is no question but that they are outrages, that they deserve the heaviest penalties, and that futher legislation is desirable for their better prevention, detection, and punishment. By and by we will discuss the remedies and safeguards against these crimes; but now, when about to discuss the merits of various rules and practices, it were waste time to prove that assassination, arson, theft, and the destruction of property must remain crimes, even if committed by members of a trade-union in the interests of what they call the trade.

Unions wholly free from outrage, and whose members neither practise personal violence nor even intimidation, do nevertheless interfere with non-society men— knobsticks, as they are called by engineers. The wretched knobstick need not fear that he will be murdered or even beaten, but he is persecuted nevertheless; he is jeered at and snubbed on all possible occasions; he is betrayed to foremen for peccadilloes; he receives none of those little aids by which the other men lighten one another's labour; apprentices fetch him no beer; he is generally rather an inferior workman, and his work receives its full due of criticism; he is an outcast, a pariah, and fear of personal violence is not required to render this position a wretched one. Some societies will not allow him to work in the same shop with their members, even as though he tainted the air; and upon the whole, perhaps, these societies are the most merciful. Workmen in general cannot be brought to see the wickedness of their conduct towards the poor knobstick. They reason thus: "If he is a competent workman, and will pay a very moderate subscription, we will receive him among us; if he is not with us he is against us; and while he acts as our enemy, he receives great part of the benefits we painfully gain for ourselves by sel.-denial and privation; we strike, we starve, we gain the victories, and then this fellow, who fought against us, shares the spoil. Our wages rise, and so do his, unless we can prevent it, as we certainly will if we can by any means within the law." Odd as it may seem, the knobstick takes much the same view of his own position; he feels himself a sneak, who for money betrays his fellows; he looks on the union with fear and longing, but with reverence. He is unskilful, poor, weak, and a traitor; they are skilled, rich, strong, and noble; yes, even when they morally kick him; for *they* serve a common cause, *he* stands alone an outcast; he wishes he could work better, could scrape that entrance-money together, and pay the fine standing against his name. Sometimes he does, and feels himself a free man at the very moment when he would generally be described as entering into slavery.

The above description is drawn from experience among the engineers. In trades where the union is weaker, non-society men may meet with less contempt, and greater facilities in joining are often held out; and again, there are unions which treat them much worse, refusing to work in a shop where a single non-society man is employed. With the engineers, every man would belong to the union if he could. In other trades there are doubtless men who disapprove of the conduct of the unions, and would much rather not belong to them or acquiesce in their proceedings, but who are nevertheless driven into the unions by the harassing conduct above described; but we believe this to be a small class. In considering the treatment which the knobsticks receive, and which is cruelly wrong, we must remember how natural that particular form of cruelty is to man, and how society is pervaded from top to bottom with a similar feeling. The knobstick is the *parvenu*—the man who has not entered the profession by the right gate. A saving clause generally exists in favour of great merit; and it does take *great* merit to overcome the barriers erected by the actual possessor of any patronage or privilege. Men can get into the Artillery or Engineers by competition; does any one think a snob could stop in those corps? We remember very well the case of a young man who had served his apprenticeship as pupil to a very eminent mechanical engineer, but who was told by a civil engineer, that whatever his merits or knowledge he must not look forward to the position of a resident engineer on a railway, a position worth from £250 to £400 per annum, because he had come into the profession by a wrong gate, *i. e.* through a mechanical engineer's office, not through a civil engineer's office. Be it in law physic, church, army, or navy, the man who does not come in at the right gate will be looked upon with an evil eye. We fear the feeling is too deep-rooted in our English nature to be met by any law to the contrary. Great merit of course overcomes the feeling, and wins regard in spite of all restrictions, and this more readily among cultivated than uncultivated men; but shall we not feel greater indignation at the physician who refuses to attend a case where a midwife has been employed, than at a workman who declines to work beside a knobstick?

While we frankly allow that there is no hope of obtaining full justice for the non-society man wherever unions are strong, we

Digitized by Google

can point out one great distinction between the cases of oppression among gentlemen and those among workmen. The social indignities heaped on the victim are the same in both cases; but the workmen often go further—they make a bargain with their employer that he shall join in the persecution, that as one consideration received in return for their labour they shall be able to shut the door against their weak competitor. They thus bribe the employer to deprive workmen of the wages they could otherwise gain. This action falls distinctly within the rule which we laid down, that no compact should be allowed, one condition of which was the injury of a third party. Neither master nor man should be suffered to agree to a rule excluding the knobstick; we fear he will be excluded by the system of contumely, after all has been done that can be done for him, but we can at least protect him against positive enactments.

The case of labourers employed to do the work of skilled artisans is closely analogous but not identical. Perhaps some of our readers may not be aware of the great distinction in social status between the artisan and the labourer. In works on political economy the labourer means a man who lives by the labour of his hands, but in workmen's language a labourer means a man of wholly different and much lower standing than the skilled workman. The labourer in each trade does the work requiring comparatively little skill, but much strength and hard work, and in workshops the line between labourers and artisans or mechanics is as clear and as strongly drawn as that between employers and workmen. Not that a labourer is necessarily or generally a mere beast of burden without any skill; on the contrary, an engineer's labourer or a bricklayer's labourer requires considerable training; and so it is in each branch of trade. Custom has partitioned the work between two classes, one receiving nearly twice the wages of the other, and consisting of men with some education, men who dress in a good black coat on Sundays, and who look on the other or labouring class as one with whose members they cannot associate out of the workshop, while in the workshop the labourers are treated as servants. Labourers have sometimes foremen of their own; they have unions also, in emulation of their betters; but the labourer and mechanic are as different as the mechanic and the gentleman. This being the relation between the two classes, it is a mortal sin in a labourer to presume to encroach on the field which the mechanic arrogates to himself. Of course labourers, by seeing mechanics constantly at work, are frequently able to do the simpler parts of the work as well as they. Woe to the labourer who is caught doing the work of his betters; he will not be beaten, any more than a gentleman's servant wearing his master's clothes will be thrashed, but he will not long keep his employment. The subdivision of the work into two categories has come about in the interest of all concerned. It has analogies in the distinctions between apothecaries, general practitioners, and physicians, between solicitors and barristers. It would be very inconvenient in any workshop if the labourers were generally looking to promotion as mechanics, nor will they ever desire it as a body; but precisely as there should be no legal impediment to a practitioner who wished to become a physician, or to a solicitor who wished to become a barrister, so there should be no legal, or rather illegal, disabilities preventing a labourer from changing his condition or work. Few of the unions, we imagine, would object to this; they object to a labourer who remains a labourer, but does odds and ends of their work. The objection will never be eradicated, but judged by our rule the men would not be justified in striking against the employment of one or more labourers in ways of which they did not approve.

There is yet one more form of interference with competition: those who will not work on certain conditions, who are on strike, bribe other men who are willing to work, not to do so. This is indefensible, according to the rule laid down. The union must not contract with any man, or body of men, to the injury of a third person—the master. If this simple rule could therefore be enforced against men and masters, it would prevent strikes against non-society men, and against the employment of labourers to do any special class of work. It would remove the disabilities which, under unions as they are, do weigh on labourers and similar competitors in the labor market, and it would abolish the system of buying off competing workmen during strikes. The coercion of non-society men by what are sometimes called moral means would remain; but against this society at large is powerless in all ranks; and we warn all those who fancy that the unions are oligarchies ruling tyrannically a disaffected multitude outside the pale, that the competition of outsiders against the societies will not be much more active than at present, when all coercion is at an end; for, incredible as it may seem, trade-unions are looked up to by the mass of workmen of all grades as the champions of labour, whose rules may injure individuals here and

Digitized by Google

there, but on the whole benefit the great majority.

From what precedes it is already apparent that, in bargaining as to wages, unions think it their business to settle many collateral conditions; and, in fact, no relation between employer and employed escapes their vigilance. At first sight, all men who pique themselves on being liberal, are disposed to concede to workmen the right of refusing to work unless the conditions of the employment suit them as well as the wages; but a little consideration has already shown us that we cannot allow men to stipulate for any conditions whatever. We will now point out some of those conditions which are indefensible, but which have been claimed, ay, and established, by the workmen.

Sometimes the societies choose the materials the masters shall employ, such as the size and make of bricks, or the quality of stone to be used. Sometimes they choose the place where the materials shall be prepared for use, as when they refuse to set stones worked at the quarry instead of at the building. Sometimes they refuse to allow the employment of certain machinery. Sometimes they claim the right of dismissing their own superior officers, as their foremen. Sometimes they even choose the means of transport of the materials to be used, refusing to fix bricks brought on a given canal, or by a given carter. They even claim a veto over contractors, and sometimes architects. In fine, it is hard to say in what matter affecting their employer they will not occasionally interfere, when it is their interest to do so.

These claims are selected from isolated instances in special trades; they do not represent the general conduct of unions, and it must be singularly galling to workmen to find every instance of unjust action discovered in any petty branch or trade attributed to the general policy of their societies. On the contrary, many skilled artisans will not hesitate to denounce interference in every case above cited as unjust and intolerable. The difficulty is to show this to the more ignorant workman, who replies doggedly, "I have a right to do what I please with my own labour, and will not work if you get bricks from Jones less than four inches thick, or stones ready dressed from Robinson's quarries, or if Smith cuts them, or if Green is to be foreman, or if you use barrows instead of hods." We answer, "O dogged objector! you have not a right to do what you please with your own, but only to do that which is lawful, and it shall not be lawful for you to use your labour as a payment to your employer for injuries which you wish to inflict on Brown, Jones, Robinson, Green, and the customer who wants 2¼ inch bricks. You must not spend your money standing outside your grocer's door, and paying all who come there sixpence each, on condition that they shall deal elsewhere. A bargain between two people to injure a third is a conspiracy, and you shall not sell your labour on those most objectionable conditions." The ground commonly taken against these and similar conditions, that they are contrary to free-trade and injurious to customers, though true as far as it goes, is insufficient. Our dogged bricklayer asks if he and his employer are not to be free to agree on any conditions they please, and calls that free-trade. It is true that we cannot pretend to prevent everything injurious to customers. High wages and high profits are injurious to customers; we do not interfere with these in general; but from the principle of preventing a contract between two parties, containing a condition injurious to a third party, the impropriety of all the above claims follows as a simple consequence. If our bricklayer does not see it, he must be made to see it.

The case of one trade striking in support of another, as masons in support of bricklayers, offers greater difficulty, supposing the original strike to be for a legitimate object. If the support were bought by one trade from another, the action would be illegal. The masons' union must not contract with the bricklayers' union to injure the master for a consideration obtained from the bricklayers; but if the masons received no consideration, specified or implied, we do not see that they could be prevented from supporting their colleagues. So far as their contract with their employers is concerned, they are at liberty to make an advantage to a third party one of the conditions of the contract. They may say to the employer, "You shall pay me five shillings a day, and that mason one shilling extra, or I will not work for you." The hours of labour, the conditions on which notice of dismissal shall be given, the regulations as to lost time, allowances for walking, for travelling, are all proper subjects for negotiation, and may fitly be included in any contract.

The rules of a workshop include all these matters, but they include others which are uncondemned by the principle hitherto employed to distinguish good from evil. These are the rules as to over-time, piece-work, and the standard rate of wages—all vexed questions. The standard rate of wages is differently interpreted by men and masters. The men say "it is a minimum below which no one of our members shall work, and we

Digitized by Google

will take care to have no members much below the average. If we do not carefully select our members as competent workmen, they will not find employment at all at our standard rate. We shall then have to support these incompetent members out of our own funds; we are therefore bound, under a very stringent penalty, to admit none but competent workmen." The masters, on the other hand, declare the so-called minimum to be virtually a maximum, fixed so high that they cannot afford to give the best workmen more that the standard rate, because they have to pay the inferior men more than their value. They also allege that the men interfere to prevent skilled workmen obtaining higher wages. This the men deny, we think with truth, alleging that masters are not at all in the habit of offering superior men higher wages. The masters allege that they would more often do so if they were not afraid that the rise would be made a pretext for a demand for an increased standard rate; they also express great compassion for the inferior workman, who, not being worth the standard rate, cannot get employment at all. On this last point all grievance would cease if there were no coercion against non-society men. The inferior workman would simply not join the society, and the master could then pay him what he pleased. We doubt whether the best masters would be very anxious to see him in their shops. We think the men have here the best of the argument, and that the masters are hardly candid in speaking of bargains with individual men. Such bargains never have been common. New workmen are almost always engaged at the current rate for average workmen, and either kept or dismissed without material change in those wages, unless the rate changes. Mr. Smith in his evidence, in answer to a leading question, says, "he" (the employer) "would not bargain with each individual man," but points out that if he wanted more workmen he would instruct his foreman to offer 6d. a day extra, that is to say, over the current rate of wages. Even Mr. Mault, who acted as a kind of advocate, with a brief against the unions, speaks of the "current rate of wages." The separate bargain with each man, except in extreme cases, has never obtained, and never will. No satisfactory evidence was brought showing that men of extra skill did receive higher wages without unions than with unions, and the case against unions as levelling the men broke down, though urged almost with importunity by the Commissioners. No workman came forward to say, "I should have 5s. a week more but for the unions." There is good evidence that highly skilled workmen in unions do receive more than less skilled workmen.* This point would be a small one if no coercion were used to non-society men, as these ambitious workmen would quit the union if they thought it retarded their progress; but it is certainly to be regretted that all the unions do not act upon a simple principle involved in the carpenters' and joiners' trade-rules, recently adopted at Birmingham: "The ordinary rate of wages for skilled operatives of the various branches to be 6½d. per hour. Superior and inferior workmen to be rated by the employer or foreman."

The middle-class public greatly misapprehend the question of extra skill. In such professions as the law or physic extra skill has an enormous extra value. The best advice may be worth 100 guineas, when the average advice is only worth one. The difference in skill between workmen is not at all after this manner. If the average workman be worth 35s.; the very best will not be worth more than 40s. The difference in wages usually given does not generally exceed a shilling or two per week. The great advantage given by skill is certainty of employment. The highly skilled workman is always spoken of by middle-class writers as a man anxious and likely to rise in the world. This is untrue; the men who rise do not rise in virtue of their skill as workmen, but because they possess other qualities far more valuable, and which, in fact, are rarely found in combination with extreme skill at the bench. The evidence given before the Commission has failed to show that skilled workmen think themselves aggrieved, or that the unions have prevented workmen from rising. In general, all allegations on the part of masters that unions are baneful to their members must be received with great caution. The members of unions are extremely well satisfied with them, as any one mixing with workmen will soon discover.

* The assertion that unions wish to reduce good and bad men to one level is continually repeated, but we find no corroborative evidence anywhere. Masters say that they are afraid of giving good workmen extra wages, lest this should lead the men to expect a general rise. They also say, they cannot afford to give extra pay when the general rate is high. Neither statement bears on the workman's wish for equality. Neither with nor without unions is there any machinery of competition by which the man of extra skill can enforce full extra payment, because of the understanding between masters that one shall not entice away the other's best hands. The objection to piece-work is due to no objection to skill; if there be any such objection, it can only exist in some local or small trades, and we are really curious to know how the cry arose.

Digitized by Google

In fine, if unions are to bargain, they can only bargain for the standard rate of wages; they may refuse to allow their own members to receive less, taking the risk of having to support incompetent members. It is wrong that skilled workmen should be prevented from gaining in unions as much as they would out of the union, and this is, in fact, not practised; if it were, and if the highly skilled men chose to remain in the unions without coercion, we fail to see how we can interfere to prevent their working at less wages than they are worth. The complaint that unions made men indolent seems also based on misconception. Many masters complain that men are lazy, and declare that unions make them lazy. It is undeniable that men who are tolerably certain of employment will not work so hard as men to whom loss of employment means pauperism. If, therefore, unions have made and do make men more independent and less liable to starve, they probably do make them less industrious; but though hard work is good, we doubt the propriety of keeping men poor in order that they may work the harder. As a proof of indolence, masters cite the general dislike of over-time avowed by trade unions.

The question of over-time is thoroughly misunderstood by the general public. By refusing to work more than ten hours, or even eight hours a day, a man may put his employer to some inconvenience; he may make less money than if he worked fourteen or sixteen hours per diem, and indirectly he may increase the cost of articles to the consumer; but surely if he can by working eight hours each day gain as much money as he requires, society has no right to ask him to work longer; when he bargains with his master that he shall not be made to work longer, this condition, so far from being directly injurious to any third party, is beneficial to his fellow-workmen, since more of them will be employed than if he worked sixteen hours each day. But, says the Press, he ought to be energetic, hard-working; he ought not to be satisfied with what he can earn in eight hours. Why not? Is contentment so great a crime? The country will never progress if our workmen become indolent, it is said. True enough; but what is indolence? Do you for the progress of the country desire that workmen shall work eight, ten, twelve, or sixteen hours each day? Is it not perhaps quite as well that 1000 men should work hard for ten hours a day, as 800 should work for fourteen, or even 700 for sixteen hours each? "Ah! but," says the middle-class lawyer, "where should I have been if I had not worked late every night for years; and what a shame it is to prevent the ambitious workman from pushing his way by hard work too; or suppose he has a large family, as I have, what an atrocious thing is this that a trade society shall tell him No, you must not work extra hours to gain enough to support and start your sons and daughters in life. These trade-unions are levellers, foes to merit and progress." Gentlemen who reason thus know neither the objects nor the habits of workmen. If any individual who pleased could work over-time without entailing equal work on all his fellows, there would be little or no objection to over-time; but if over-time is made at all, it must be made by a large proportion of the men employed in a shop. The engine must be at work, the gas burning, the time-keeper at the gate, the foreman present; and does any one suppose this can be done for an odd man here and there, who wishes to get on, or earn extra pay? No; the rule in a shop is, that all or none work over-time. Of course, one branch of the shop, as the pattern-makers, may not be working extra hours, though the erecters are; but the work in any branch of the shop where over-time is made must be in full swing, or over-time will not pay the masters. Over-time, gentlemen, means this:—You are engaged at a salary to work in an office from 9 to 5, which most of you think long hours. One day your employer comes into the office and says to you, "For the next six months you must all come back after dinner and work from 7 to 10 every evening; of course you will be paid for your extra hours at an increased rate." The consternation in the office would be great; here and there one of you would like it, but to the mass it would be intolerable. They could not go out to dinner or to the theatre; they would have to give up their reading at home; they could not see their friends; and if this sort of thing were to go on year after year, and become the rule, not the exception, most of you would look out for lighter work and less pay. Over-time, habitual over-time we mean, is due to the simplest possible cause. It allows employers to make more money, with a given fixed capital. Suppose that their works are large enough to turn out 50 locomotives per annum, with men working 10 hours a day; then if the men work 14 hours a day, the works may perhaps turn out 60 or 65 locomotives per annum. The profits on the capital invested will therefore be so much increased, that for the extra hours wages can be profitably paid at a higher rate—at time and a quarter, or time and a half, in technical language. Masters say, as Mr. Smith says in his evidence, their works are not elastic, and if they get extra orders they

Digitized by Google

must work extra time. As brick walls are not elastic, they stretch flesh and blood, and it being, as we have shown, clearly their interest to keep their productive powers at a maximum, they keep flesh and blood somewhat tightly stretched, so that in many works the habitual hours are from 6 in the morning to 8 at night, and in some from 6 to 10. Unions have opposed this, and most properly so. It is better for the men and better for the country that a larger number of men should be employed for the smaller number of hours. Never mind how the men employ their leisure; we will neither assume with some that they pass it in laudable courses of study, nor with others that they pass it in the pothouse; independently of all these really irrelevant arguments, we say there is no reason why workmen as a body should not decline to work more than a given number of hours, provided in those hours they can make the wages they require. It may be inconvenient to a few of their number not to have the opportunity of making more, but it would be intolerable that a large mass of workmen should, night after night and year after year, have all of them to work till 10 o'clock, in order that one per cent. of their number should rise to be a master, or that even five per cent., with extra large families, should be more at their ease. In truth, the middle-class mind is so imbued with the one longing to *get on*, that they cannot conceive a healthy state of society in which the members are actually contented with their position. Your middle-class man must make his way and end his days with greater means, and in a higher rank of society than his father, or he has failed. Nay, such is the struggle, that unless he steadily strives to advance he will recede, and, falling back, will come to real ruin and privation. Failing to perceive the happier condition of skilled workmen, who need not struggle at all, and who scoff at the idea that to become a draughtsman or a clerk is an advance, the middle class think, as Mr. Gladstone said at Oldham, that the best condition of things for the labouring classes is that in which it shall be easiest for the able or the diligent man to rise out of it. What a blunder is this! On the contrary, the best state for the working man is that in which he can be good, happy, and well off, remaining in that state. Not one in a thousand can ever hope to rise, and we must not legislate for this unit, but for the 999 who desire no better than to do their duty *in* the condition of life in which they were born, not *out* of it,—which last is the whole aim of the educated Englishman.

We have spoken of habitual over-time; as to occasional over-time in the face of a real emergency, no union ought to object to it, and we think few do, unless there be some standing quarrel. We have known a gang of a dozen shipwrights work thirty-six hours on a stretch, ay, and work hard too, and be back at their work after one night's rest. No indolence this, nor any uncommon case; but then the men must feel that there is a real occasion calling for extra exertion.

Piece-work is no better understood than over-time. In some places, and in many trades, as at Birmingham in the hardware trades, the men *will* have piece-work, and decline to be paid by the day. There some masters deprecate piece-work. In other trades and other places, the men set their face against piece-work, and there the masters uphold it. This is no accusation against either party; what answers best for masters does not always answer best for the men, and *vice versa*. Unlike over-time, piece-work has its good as well as bad points. The clever, hard-working, and ingenious workman, who contracts to do a given piece of work for a fixed price, will work harder and make more money than a man working by the day. His invention is also called into play, and various clever devices in aid of work are continually invented by men working by the piece. They make tools specially adapted to the job, and getting handy, often turn out the work, done well, and with surprising quickness. A master will then often diminish the contract price; the man grumbles a little, but submits, so long as it is his interest to do so; and in good workshops, there is a kind of honourable understanding that men at piece-work shall be allowed to make time and a third; that is to say, at the end of the week their profits will not be considered excessive if they receive one-third more than men in receipt of daily wages. So far, piece-work is distinctly beneficial. Men working by the day do not like it, for it makes them seem lazy; they therefore urge against it, that it tends to make men scamp work, i.e., do it only just well enough to pass, and that where work cannot be thoroughly inspected this scamping is carried very far. This is probably true, but it would apply to all contracts; and with all submission to the workmen, we do not think that their zeal for good work would lead them to oppose the practice very resolutely. No rules against using inferior kinds of iron or unseasoned wood appear to be issued by the societies, and the secretaries would no doubt say these matters rested between the employers and their customers, so that zeal against the bad work due to a particular plan of payment seems uncalled for. In truth, piece-work has some tendency to diminish wages in certain trades,

Digitized by Google

and also tends to make men work harder; and as the average man dislikes low wages and hard work, he opposes piece-work, to the detriment undoubtedly of the skilful hard-working man. This is much to be regretted, and might drive the skiful man out of the unions, if there was no moral coercion keeping him in. We do not see how legislation can force a body of men to take contracts rather than wages. We can only provide legal protection for those men who prefer a contract to a salary. No general rule about piece-work can be laid down. Where articles are made by thousands, not by tens, piece-work tends to raise wages. Men become very expert so that their labour is worth more; they do work at home also, and keep their tools and inventions secret; and the master well knows that paying by the day he would get less for his money, even if the earnings of the workmen were less per week. In these cases piece-work is the rule, not the exception; and yet it has some very bad effects. It prevents any modification in the design and pattern of the articles produced. The workmen either flatly refuse to make the new design, or finding by a few trials how much longer it takes them to make than the old form, they demand such an exorbitant price that the manufacturer prefers to keep in the old rut. Birmingham is, we believe, losing her pre-eminence in the hardware market partly if not mainly in consequence of this vicious system of payment restraining invention and progress, while both in America and on the Continent the quality of work and the patterns used have greatly improved. Thus in laying down the law about piece-work, general rules must be avoided, and the attention directed to the special customs of each trade.

As an instance of misconception due to ignorance of special customs, we may remind our readers of a paragraph which went the round of the papers, stating that the union of engineers had a rule under which a man making any extra profit by piece-work was forced to share that profit among all his mates, though they were simply receiving daily wages. - What a picture this raised of a hard-working man who, before he could make one shilling for himself, had to gain a pound for twenty other idle people! The explanation turns upon a special form of contract, devised for the convenience of men and masters, and applicable, for instance, to the erection or putting together of a locomotive engine, the parts of which have been prepared in the fitting-shop and boiler-shed. A gang of half a dozen men may be employed to erect the engine, and these work under a leading hand. The employer finds it his interest to let the erection of the engine as a contract to this gang, who undertake to finish the work for a fixed sum, say £50. The contract is not, however, made in form between the half-dozen men, who have no corporate capacity, but with the leading hand as their representative. As it would be very inconvenient to the men to wait for the completion of the job before receiving payment, they are each paid the usual weekly wages, and the balance due to them when the work is done is paid to the leading hand for distribution. He is sometimes, indeed generally, allowed by his mates rather a larger share than he would get if the division were made strictly according to the wages at which each man is rated in the shops. It appears that some leading hands took it into their heads that they might keep the balance to themselves, as probably at law they might have a right to do. The union very properly stopped this. All the men are working by the piece, and all should make like profit. If any one of them skulked his work, the others would either force him to quit the gang, or at the least would take care never to work associated with him again. This was explained to the Commission by Mr. Allan, but it was apparently not very clearly understood.

The limitation of apprentices is a common but not universal rule among trade-unions—the object being to keep up wages by preventing competition. This condition directly injures all apprentices who are excluded under it, and we think it therefore an improper condition in the contract between master and man. It is highly valued by the men as a very powerful means of raising wages; and while they admit that this is the general scope of the rule, they defend their conduct by several arguments which deserve consideration. First, they say that they are willing to enter into a bargain to work for their masters, but not to teach; that they do not, in fact, impose this condition injurious to a third party, but simply refuse to enter into a special subsidiary contract to teach, that being no essential part of their business. This is so far a sound argument, that we think it would be unanswerable if they would allow masters to employ apprentices in distinct rooms, taught by workmen who did not share this objection to the education of competitors; but neither masters nor men will look at this as a practical issue from the difficulty. Unless, therefore, the men allow apprentices to work along with them they do exclude young men from the trade, and make their injury a condition upon which the society man will work. Another argument is, that if no limitation were imposed wages would fall so rapidly that really the benefit

Digitized by Google

to those admitted into the trade would vanish, and that the union is acting kindly in preventing lads from embarking in a trade in such numbers as would prevent them from ever earning a comfortable livelihood. Specious this, but false—as most arguments are which attempt to prove that a rule devised for your own benefit really benefits the person against whom it is aimed. It would no doubt be pleasant for skilled workmen to possess a monopoly of their trades, and only to admit such numbers as would keep their wages at a comfortable rate. Administered with a little good sense, such a rule as this would insure the existence of a class of well-to-do artisans;—but how about those excluded? No monopoly can be allowed for the benefit of a privileged class of workmen who are to administer the patronage as seems good to them, regardless of the poverty of all applicants whom they refuse. Workmen compare their trades to ships, which when full can receive no more with comfort; but if a ship's crew, finding a crowd of famished creatures on an island, told them, "Really, good people, we should be most inconveniently crowded if you came on board; why, we should have to be put on short rations, and you know you would not like that yourselves;" the answer would be—"Have pity on us; short rations are not starvation, overcrowding is not abandonment;" and the crew would deserve hanging who left the wretches behind rather than sacrifice some comfort. A low standard of comfort, implying low wages, is an evil, and a great evil; but it is a worse evil to create an artificially high standard among the few, to the detriment of the many. Of course, rules which simply prevented the accumulation of an undue number of lads in one shop would be defensible enough, and educational restrictions might also be permitted, analogous to those which fence round most of the learned professions. These restrictions do limit competition; but the members of the several professions do not simply select *proprio motu* who shall and who shall not be free to enter these professions. Mr. Roebuck told at Sheffield a pitiful story of an orphan lad * supposed to have suffered exclusion under one of these arbitrary rules determining who may and who may not become an apprentice. It is a pity he should have used an argument so easily answered. All rules, all laws, however beneficial on the whole, work hardly in individual cases, and workmen know this as well as Mr. Roebuck ought to know it.

We have now discussed the main rules of trade-unions—some bad, some indifferent, some good. There are minor regulations about which a great fuss has been made. Here and there a rule is found that members shall not speak to employers, which simply is an endeavour to stop talebearing; there is here and there a rule against *chasing*, which means that some men have been suspected of maliciously, or for extra pay, driving their mates to work harder than was pleasant, by showing what they, the chasers, could do;—wrong, no doubt, and meaning that workmen squabble sometimes in an undignified manner, but having no reference whatever to the really skilled workman, who is honoured in and out of unions by all men. Then there are lists of black sheep here and there. Some masters copied this practice by the way, but explained that their black sheep got white in time, whereas the men's black sheep were dyed in grain; but the men explained that their black sheep would be bleached by the payment of a fine; and indeed, that these portentous lists mean that if a sinner is repentant, he must pay a fine varying say from 2s. 6d. to £2, according to the enormity of his offence, before he can once again be admitted as a lamb into the fold—many of those fines being simply safeguards against the intermission of the weekly payments whenever the said sheep preferred not to pay them. It is preposterous to make a fuss about these trivial matters. Let us settle, on some rational principle, how far the action of unions may extend on really important points, and leave the management of bricklayers' etiquette to bricklayers, and smile rather than frown when we hear that a man may be fined 6d. for tattling.

Passing from the examination of the rules, with their merits and demerits, we will say a few words as to their administration. On this point there is as great a difference between the practice of various unions and various trades as between man and man. Such societies as the Amalgamated Engineers or the Amalgamated Joiners and Carpenters fight with courtesy when they think they must fight, and enforce their rules against peccant brethren with justice and without rancour. Of course where there are opposing interests there will be disputes, and where there are disputes there will be some recrimination; but after reading Mr. Mault's attack and Mr. Applegarth's reply, we conclude that masters have little cause to blame these unions of superior workmen. The executive council and secretaries are really superior men, and prevent instead of fomenting strikes. The masons do not stand so high; bricklayers lower still; with them may be classed plasterers; and when we

* It so happens, the lad was not excluded, but the union did ask for his exclusion.

Digitized by Google

reach bricklayers' labourers and brickmakers, we reach the realm where violence and outrage are used as the sanction of trade rules. In the better societies, moderate fines or exclusion from the society are ample securities against any infraction of the laws. It is not till we reach Sheffield and the grinding trades that we find the payment of arrears enforced by maiming and murder. The wretches do not see that when they whine a complaint that they are driven to it; having no legal redress against defaulters, they pronounce the condemnation of their unions. Exclusion should be and is the bitterest punishment in the better unions, even though exclusion is followed by no necessary loss of work. The grinders dare not exclude their members. A club or an insurance office need never sue for arrears. Expulsion is a very simple remedy, entirely in their own hands; and unless expulsion be felt as a punishment, the club is of no benefit to the member. There is evidence to show that the better class of unions facilitate arbitration upon disputed points, and settle rules with the masters more easily than can be done when the workmen are disorganized. It is natural enough that masters should resent having to settle any rules at all, and having to meet the unions as their equals, with whom they are to bargain, discussing every condition of the contract, as if with a brother capitalist. They naturally regret the good old times when the workman was a servant, often a trusted and devoted servant, but still a servant, who must do as he was told. That is past, and the world will not turn back, so it is useless to discuss whether or not a reverse motion would, on the whole, be profitable. The old form of good feeling as between master and dependant is gone, but it is quite possible that good feeling in a new form should grow up. We hope and expect that it will; but so long as masters try to crush the unions, and to detach men from them, this new kind feeling is impossible. The sincere attachment of men to their unions admits of no rational doubt. Over and over again employers have tried to put an end to unions by declaring that they would employ no union men; as often unions have come out of the struggle more vigorous than ever. Men will starve, they will emigrate; they have starved, they have emigrated, rather than abandon these institutions. Men trust in them, as they trust in themselves, with a thorough British self-reliance. A Frenchman clamours for work and protection from his Government, or from his master. They look for their benefits from the head of the establishment as they look for benefits at the hands of the Government. Englishmen are too self-reliant to follow any similar course of life. The English workmen ask nothing but wages and respect from their employers; and from the Government they ask leave to be allowed to manage their own affairs. They organize themselves and govern themselves on a small scale, as Great Britain at large is governed on a large scale; and when organised, they say little about the rights of man, or communism, or principles of any kind. They want good wages, and where the shoe pinches they try to ease it. They have done so with so much success, and have had so much pleasure in managing their own affairs, that they feel a loyalty to their unions akin to that felt by the middle classes to Parliament. To deny this feeling shows ignorance, to ignore it folly. Would that the workmen felt towards our Government what they feel for the unions; they may come to feel this, and if they do England will be stronger than she is now. It is the fashion to speak of the workmen as tools in the hands of secretaries and delegates, who foment strikes to their own profit. Among the lower trades the men may be in the hands of low men, though probably even there the governor truly represents the governed. The large unions are no more in the hands of their leaders than England is in the hands of Parliamentary leaders. The unions have their Gladstones and Disraelis *in parvo* no doubt, but these are representative men; and the constitution of a union is singularly well suited to secure an accurate representation of the feelings of a majority, and a full expression to the opinions of a minority. The officers are elected by universal suffrage, and all decrees are passed in the same manner. This, we allow, affords small guarantee for a true expression of feeling. Shareholders may all vote, but directors govern; fellows of learned societies elect, but the councils choose. But why? Because of the great difficulty in organising any opposition, in finding a nucleus round which discontented members can rally. But trade-unions are divided into many branches, each with a committee and local secretary, each holding a separate meeting, generally in a separate town, before any vote is given. Thus the carpenters have 190 branches, the engineers 808 branches; and any discontented branch can express its opposition, and can make known its feelings to all other branches, while the executive council or committee can never personally explain their motives, or personally influence more than a very few branches. No better plan could be devised against the growth of dictation; and except in small local societies, we see no

Digitized by Google

signs of dictatorship. In the large societies the accounts are regularly printed, distributed, and scrutinized by every branch; and each one has a direct interest in preventing a misapplication of funds by any of the others. The incomes of six of the societies concerning which evidence was given before the Commissioners, ranged from £2700 per annum to nearly £87,000 per annum. Is not the collection and successful administration of these funds a very striking proof of the powers of self-government possessed by workmen?

Not an instance of malversation in these societies was brought before the Commissioners; no workmen appeared to complain that they were defrauded; no complaint was made of any difficulty in collecting the funds. The accounts appear to be well kept, and the expenses of management were not shown to be excessive. (The small local societies, such as those in Sheffield, differ *toto cœlo* from the account just given.) The monthly circulars published by the leading societies are very creditable documents. They record the votes given on all questions by all the branches. They contain the reports from all branches of the state of trade in the several districts; also the number of sick and the number out of employment in each place, with the amount of relief distributed from the funds of the union. The decisions of the executive council and resolutions of branches are also printed. A number of the circular or report issued by the Amalgamated Joiners and Carpenters, taken at hazard, contains, besides the above official matters, an account of the presentation of a testimonial to a gentleman who had rendered assistance in courts of arbitration; a suggestion that technical education might prove one of the benefits of trade-unions, with a resolution of the executive council in support of the suggestion; a report of a speech by Mr. Greenfell, M.P., on trade-unions, urging the stock doctrines of political economy; a portion of a paper on trade societies and co-operative production, by Mr. Ludlow; some short account of co-operation in America; reports of the proceedings at branch anniversaries, with the accompaniments of loyal toasts, evergreens, and allegorical designs, such as Justice trampling outrage under foot, and holding a balance with a scale, on which the word "Arbitration" is inscribed. Next comes a letter from the operative bricklayers of Burslem, who mean well, though the style of their secretary is cloudy. He says of trade-unions:—

"Although they may in some instances have exceeded the bounds of discretion, and perhaps acted tyrannically, yet, as a body of men, they must execrate the conduct of such officials as those of Sheffield and Manchester, believing that education (compulsory or otherwise) would have prevented such a state of things—as witness those trades where the greatest amount of it exists."

Inarticulate this, but good. The report concludes with an open column, containing letters from their members. One letter suggests a plan for a co-operative society: one advocates a reform in the method of voting; and one calls for a trade directory. We are tempted to give this last letter *in extenso*. The style of the joiner differs considerably from that of the bricklayer.

"Brother Members,—At a time when trade is generally in a very depressed state throughout the country, it may not altogether be out of place to consider whether we cannot afford some additional facilities of those of our members who are unfortunately compelled to seach for employment.

"I have heard many members state the difficulty they have experienced in finding out the workshops whenever they have ventured into a locality with which they were not well acquainted. This is not to be wondered at in London, where many of the shops are situated in some court or alley, so that a man might pass by every day for a month without once dreaming that a joiner's shop was to be found in the immediate vicinity. And I am quite sure that many of us who reside in the north of London would be nearly as much at a loss in looking for a job in Lambeth or the Borough, as we should be in Birmingham or Manchester. This state of things is not, I believe, confined to the metropolis; it prevails also in other districts.

"To supply the want which I consider at present exists, I would suggest that schedules be issued from the General Office, on which each Branch could forward a return of the names and addresses of all the building firms in the vicinity. A committee might be appointed by each Branch for the purpose of filling up the schedules, and the result of their labours might be read over to the Branch for final approval, and signed by the officers, before it is forwarded to the General Office. From these returns a Trade Directory might be compiled, and issued to the Branches; a copy might be kept with the vacant book of each Branch for the use of any member who might require it, whilst those who might desire a copy for private use could be supplied at a reasonable price. The returns could be revised and a new edition issued whenever such a course might be deemed necessary.

"If this plan were adopted, I believe much time and trouble might be saved which is now needlessly expended, as a member when signing the vacant book might copy on a slip of paper the addresses of any firms he might wish to visit. A member seeking employment in a

Digitized by Google

strange town would be especially benefited by such an arrangement.

"The policy of our society, as I understand it, is to endeavour to remove as much as possible of our surplus labour into those districts where trade is brisk, and where it may find profitable employment. With this view we publish a monthly return of the state of trade in each town where a Branch of our Society exists. Would it not also be a step in the right direction if we published a Directory which would furnish valuable information to members on travel, and to many others in want of employment?

"The adoption of this suggestion would involve very little expense, and might easily be carried into effect by the Executive Council, should it meet with the approval of the members. I therefore take the liberty of soliciting the Branches to express their opinions thereon by resolution in the usual way.—Yours fraternally,

"JOHN D. PRIOR, Islington Branch.

"5 WAKELING TERRACE, BRIDGE STREET, N.
"*January 4th*, 1868."

Remark, that in the above report there are no leading articles, and no matter but what strictly bears on the union and the interests of its members.* In a society conducted upon this plan, we cannot doubt that any course of action decided upon does truly represent the wishes of the members. Yet, when men refuse to work for certain wages, a portion of the press invariably deplores the unhappy fate of the poor men misled and duped by secretaries and delegates who are supposed to find their account in ruining the societies they serve. Lately even, the leading journals have deplored the blind obstinacy of the shipwrights at the east end of London, who will not consent to a reduction of wages. We are told that it is intolerable that men who will not work for six shillings a day should be supported by the poor-rates and by charity. Only as a matter of fact, we believe that none of the union shipwrights have received anything either from charity or the poor-rates. Other papers say the strike is supported by contributions from distant branches, whose members force the Millwall men to refuse reasonable wages. The Millwall men remark that there is no strike, and that they are living on their savings, and are not supported from the union funds. Probably this assertion would require some qualification before it expressed all the facts; but we believe the Millwall men to have been hitherto quite as as much in favour of refusing to submit to any reduction of wages as the other branches or unions. They may be wise or foolish; it may be better for them that few or no ships should be built at Millwall, or it may be a great loss. If, owing to the dearness of provisions and cost of transport, ships are built in the Thames at a disadvantage, it will be better for the whole country, in the long-run, that shipbuilding should not be practised there. That is the true free-trade principle. But whatever be thought of these questions, we cannot refuse men the right to decline twenty shillings a day, so long as they support themselves or one another, and do not hinder competition. But "think of the distress they occasion among the labourers, and other trades who would take lower wages, but who cannot work without shipwrights." Poor fellows! they do suffer sadly, but to force shipwrights to work at wages they will not voluntarily accept is equivalent to confiscation of property. Vast misery is caused when a capitalist, finding that he can invest his money more profitably elsewhere, closes a mill. We do not compel him to be content with two per cent., when he will not invest without the profit of ten. People are amazed when they hear a man declare that he cannot bring up his family if he has less than seven shillings a day, and point to labourers who support large families on three shillings a day. The shipwright may very properly plead that his standard of comfort and education is wholly different from that of the labourer, and that what he means is just what a gentleman means who says he can't marry under five hundred a year. A high standard is very far from an unmixed evil; it is almost an unmixed good.

There is much discrepancy between the various estimates of the proportion of men in each trade who have hitherto joined unions. Mr. Mault, for the building trades, puts the number as low as 10 per cent., and tries to convince us that these 10 per cent., being organized, do lead and govern 90 per cent. disorganised; though the latter are backed by the masters and Colonel Maude. Mr. Applegarth thinks about half the men in the building trade belong to the unions, and that in large towns this proportion is far exceeded. Mr. Mault includes as in the trade, the boys, the labourers, and all the little country workmen, taking his gross numbers from the census; his estimate is, therefore, obviously very incorrect, and we do not think many masters will indorse his estimate from practical experience. According to one estimate 700,000 men are now enrolled in trade-unions. The large societies are increasing very rapidly; most

* The Annual Reports of large societies contain detailed statements of expenditure, receipts, funds, etc. The Engineers' Report for 1867 has 429 pages, that of the Carpenters 159 pages.

Digitized by Google

of them increased by about one-fourth during last year. The Engineers' Society, with 33,600 members, an income of £86,885, a reserve fund of £140,000, and 308 branches, stands far ahead of all others, but it increased by only 3300 members last year. If, as some think, it already includes 90 per cent. of all the men working at the trade, no further very rapid increase is possible. No masters came forward to give evidence against this society. Nor did Mr. Allan, the secretary, complain of the masters. Such disputes as have occurred in this trade of late years seem to have been of a very trifling character. The engineers did not go to Geneva, nor take part in the great trade conference with which Mr. Potter was connected.

The Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, numbering 8261 members, with an income of £10,487, £8320* in hand, and 190 branches, is very similar in organisation and in general conduct to the Engineers' Society. Both of these unions are benefit or mutual benefit insurance societies as well as trade societies. They have an allowance for the sick, a superannuation allowance, a payment for burial expenses, and they give £100 to any member who is so disabled by an accident that he cannot follow his trade. Most of the unions have some benefits, and partake in some degree of the nature of friendly societies, but the superannuation payment is generally omitted. These benefits are sometimes most unjustly described as mere traps, to entice prudent men into unions. It is far more true that the trade-unions have taught to be provident. The benefits, great or small, are so unmixed a good, that the opponents of unions have endeavoured to show that after all they are, as benefit societies, mere swindling concerns, that the subscriptions from members are quite insufficient to provide for the benefits promised, even in the great Engineers' Society, with its £140,000 of capital. These enemies to unions have got an actuary, Mr. Tucker, to come and pronounce the curse of bankruptcy on unions from this point of view; and he has been generally acknowledged a true prophet by writers. Mr. Allan holds up facts in the face of Mr. Tucker's calculations which he does not attempt to reconcile with his deductions, and the facts seem to contradict the figures.

The following table shows the payments which, according to Mr. Tucker, would be required to provide for the engineers' benefits.

Now, as the actual subscriptions of the members amount to only 4s. 4d. per month, it seems clear that the society, spending about half its income on trade purposes and management, must be bankrupt.

Age of Entry.	Monthly Payments. To provide 10s. per Week in Sickness, up to 65.	To provide Superannuation Allowances.	To provide for a Payment of £15 at Death.	Total.
	s. d.	*s. d.*	*s. d.*	*s. d.*
25	1 1	2 2	0 4¼	3 7¼
30	1 3	2 10	0 5¼	3 6¼
35	1 3½	3 10	0 6¼	5 7¼
40	1 5	5 5	0 7¼	7 5¼
45	1 7¼	6 10	0 9¼	9 3

Mr. Allan in reply says, We have paid all calls upon us for sixteen years, and our funds in hand increase rapidly. We had ten years' experience in an older society, and may therefore count twenty-six years' experience against your calculations. We have also many sources of income that you do not count. Mr. Tucker rejoins, saying, Your members have increased so rapidly that your soundness has never been put to the test. Mr. Allan hands in statements showing for each year the payment under each head, and points out that one-third of the members leave before dying or receiving superannuation allowance, and Mr. Glen Finlaison has been called in to advise the Commissioners further.

On looking over the figures it is clear that the statistics on which Mr. Tucker reasoned do not apply to trade societies. Thus from 1858 to 1866, the amount paid by the engineers for sick benefits amounted on the average to 8¼d. per month per member, and this payment per member was sensibly constant during those nine years, being 8¼d. for 1858 and 7¾d. in 1866. During the seven preceding years the benefit was a little smaller, and the average per month per member was 6¾d., presenting the same stationary character. These amounts are about half what Mr. Tucker would make a man of thirty pay. The difference is partly accounted for by the fact that the 10s. per week is reduced to 5s. after twenty-six weeks' illness; but it must be chiefly due to the supervision under which every such member lives—a supervision of great service to the really sick, but fatal to malingering. Mr. Allan in fact here completely refutes the calculations, and the constancy of the payments year by year proves that their small

* In 1868 the fund is £14,171.

Digitized by Google

amount does not depend on any exceptional youth on the part of the members. The superannuation allowance, on the other hand, has not reached its maximum among the engineers; it has increased from ¾d. per month per member in 1852 (and 0 in 1851) to 3d. in 1865 and 1866—still very far from the 2s. 2d. which Mr. Tucker would relentlessly exact from every subscriber. This enormous discrepancy is due to three causes:—

1. The maximum has not yet been reached.

2. No man has a right to the superannuation allowance at any given age, but must continue to work so long as the society can find employment for him, so that a very large proportion of the men work till they die.

3. One-third of the members fall off before becoming entitled to the allowance.

Mr. Glen Finlaison will in course of time tell us how much all these circumstances ought theoretically to diminish Mr. Tucker's estimate.

The payment per month per member for the burial benefit shows a gradual increase, rising from 1½d. to 3d. in the sixteen years, but during the last nine years the increase has been very slow, being 2¾d. in 1858, and 3d. in 1866. Out of every 100 men in the society at a given time, 33 do not die at all, but retire; this ought therefore to diminish Mr. Tucker's estimate by one-third; but these men who never receive the funeral benefit contribute to the fund from which the others are paid, and diminish by so much their contributions. The longer they stop in the society the greater is this action; without any very complex calculation, we see that from this one cause Mr. Tucker's estimate must be diminished by considerably more than one-third, nearly by one-half—in which case the actual payments of the engineers will, even from Mr. Tucker's table, have nearly reached their maximum. If the average age of members, as would appear from this, has reached a constant maximum, the superannuation allowance is also nearly a maximum, in which case 8¼d. for sickness, with 3d. for superannuation, and 3d for funeral, in all 14d. a month, will really be sufficient to provide for benefits which would cost in the actuary's estimate 3s. 7¾d., even on a preposterously favourable assumption as to the youth of members when they join the society. The question turns chiefly on the superannuation allowance. We wait with curiosity for Mr. Glen Finlaison's report; but even this gentleman can have no statistics as to the number of mechanics who are unable to support themselves in old age by their craft, and how long infirm men live after stopping work. Meanwhile, we venture to remind Mr. Tucker that, for trade purposes, and expenses of management combined, the Engineers' Society does not spend so large a proportion of its receipts as the St. Patrick's and some other friendly societies spend on management alone. Moreover, if the funds do fall short of the calls upon them, trade-societies can call upon their members for extra payments.* Sir Daniel Gooch and others suggest that these calls will not be met. No such case has yet arisen, nor in a mutual insurance society do we think it likely to arise, but of course with long practice workmen may emulate the financial morality even of railway directors. Meanwhile, let it be well understood that not a single case of repudiation has been discovered among any of the larger societies. Even Assurance Companies have met their liabilities with less certainty than trade-unions; between 1844 and 1866, 308 Assurance Companies have ceased to exist; of these, 59 are winding up in the Court of Chancery. In 1867, the total number of companies was 204, so that the failures form a considerable percentage of the whole number.

Reviewing, as a whole, the conduct of trade-unions, we find that they differ one from another as man differs from man. Among small unions of ignorant uneducated men we find organized villany of the grossest stamp. In larger unions of better workmen we find narrow views enforced with blind selfishness, but without violence. In the largest unions, formed by the most skilled artisans, we find few objectionable rules, and few disputes between master and man; while the struggles that do occur are carried on with little bitterness and absolutely no violence. These last unions comprise benefit societies of great value. In all cases we find an intense attachment of workmen to the union, joined with dislike of those who cannot or will not join the society,—a dislike which in the better trades involves social discomfort, and in Sheffield the risk of assassination. We find the cries about piece-work and over-time to be founded on ignorance; that the indolence complained of arises not from unions, but from the natural slackening which results from increased comfort and diminished risk of want. We find the accusation of levelling unsupported by the evidence of any levelled workman, and wholly denied by the unions. We find that the government of unions does truly rep-

* The ironfounders are now being severely tested, but they have survived many tests during the last fifty-seven years.

Digitized by Google

resent the wishes of their members, that they do assure those members against want, and that they do increase the wages of the working classes. Let us not reason of an imaginary working man, ground down by the tyranny of a secretary, secretly loathing his oppressor, losing the substance of wages while grasping at the shadow, and using violence to coerce a majority whom he cannot convince, and with whom he secretly agrees. Let us not seek with middle-class complacency to patronize the oppressed being, and deliver him from his thraldom. So doing, we shall seem but wretched hypocrites to workmen blindly unable to comprehend our blindness. No; it is the wearer who knows where the shoe pinches. Masters hate unions; workmen love them. Let those who feel them to be adversaries destroy them if they can; the workman will fight hard, but in the great trades they have used and will use no foul weapons, and will feel like bitterness to open opponents.

We prophesy no dismal revolution, no war of fustian with broadcloath, no violence of any kind, if the attempt be made to abolish unions; we only expect then shortly to see candidates of the highest respectability on the hustings swallowing unwholesome pledges to support the worst rules trade-unions have yet devised. Now is our opportunity. If we show that we can govern wisely, workmen may consent to be governed. If we act with folly we must soon learn to follow our new masters. Educated Englishmen have hitherto known how to lead, and we therefore dismiss the question whether workmen shall still be permitted to combine, and consider only what remedies shall be applied to the gangrened spots found here and there, and what restrictions are really necessary in the interests of society and in protection of the rights of the minority.

Admitting that total abolition is out of the question as impolitic, undeserved, and impossible, we must insist that the great power granted to the bodies of workmen shall be administered under stringent regulations, clearly defining the rights and duties of the workmen, securing masters against extortion, independent workmen against coercion, and individual members of the unions against fraud or oppression by the majority. The better unions may complain that they have deserved no penal enactments, but laws are made for good and bad alike, the good man differing from the bad, not as living under a different law, but as never incurring its penalties. In treating of the legal action required, we have to consider simply how to prevent these crimes and misdemeanours which some unions have been shown to foster.

First, it will be necessary to give the unions a corporate existence, enabling them to sue and be sued; not but that the better unions are almost indifferent upon this point, finding expulsion an ample remedy against defaulting subscribers, as is the case with clubs; nor yet is a corporate existence necessary to allow the unions securely to possess property—the device of trustees would meet, and has met this want. Giving a legal remedy against debtors will remove that shadow of justification which has been quite falsely pleaded in extenuation of rattening (*i. e.* coercion by theft), in the case of the grinding trades; but removing the excuse will not prevent the crime. We advise legalising not on the above grounds, but in order that the whole body of workmen may be responsible for their conduct to individual members and to society; in order that any benefits promised may be secured; in order that no unjust expulsion or illegal levy of funds may be enforced by an irresponsible body, and in order that the unions may suffer as a body when they transgress the law. There is so clear an agreement between all parties on this point that arguments in support of legalising are unnecessary, and we need only discuss the conditions under which a corporate capacity may be granted.

The conditions on which unlimited joint-stock companies are allowed to exist need not be very widely departed from in the case of unions. The Government ought no more to interfere as to the sufficiency of the payments by members to meet the benefits promised, than they ought to declare publicly whether a given joint-stock company is sound or unsound; but they may properly insist that the liability of the members of the association shall be unlimited, so that no member subscribing on the faith of mutual assurance need be without a legal remedy against the body and the individuals for any sums which may become due to him. The names of all members should be made public, and every change of membership, by death, expulsion, or withdrawal should also be published, with the cause of the change, and a legal appeal against expulsion should be established. The rules of the union should be the articles of association, providing for their own modification, and for the passing of bye-laws within certain limits. The duty of the registrar should be confined to certifying whether the articles of the association contained any illegal provisions, and no society should be permitted to exist except in the form now sketched. We

Digitized by Google

would leave the widest possible scope to legal societies, and would forbid secret societies under heavy penalties. Of course the accounts of these societies should be audited, but we attribute little virtue to the system of audits. We do not see how an auditor, even if he examine a voucher for every payment, is to discover whether or no the voucher be forged; if a dozen men, when a branch wishes to misapply funds, sign receipts, say for payments during sickness, and the secretary duly enters these payments in his book, how can any auditor, however appointed, discover that these men were not sick, but that the funds have been misapplied? In cases of crime paid for out of union funds, a bungle in the accounts might assist detection, but simple misappropriation of funds will not be detected by auditing. Again, suppose it to have been detected, the auditor refuses to pass the accounts. If the union approve the misappropriation they have only to subscribe the amount, recoup the peccant branch, and the accounts must pass. This is no punishment for misappropriation. If £10 are misapplied without detection the union will possess a balance of say £90. If detected they will have to subscribe £10, but they do not lose this, they simply raise their balance to £100. This form of punishment would be as sensible as though a judge were to condemn a prisoner to pay out of his pocket a fine of 40s. to his own bankers. The simple refusal of an auditor to pass accounts will be no punishment, and will not even cause temporary inconvenience, unless the misappropriation has been very large. What can follow a refusal to pass the accounts? In a joint-stock company no dividend can be declared; but are we prepared to say that in a union no benefits shall be paid while the accounts remain uncertified? No; there is no magic either in the word audit nor in the thing, and if the auditor is to have any power to enforce correct accounts, he must have the power of inflicting penalties for non-compliance with the regulations. He will be of little use as a protection against the action of unions, but may be useful in protecting the interests of members defrauded by their officers.

What rules shall be legal, what rules shall be illegal? We propose that the union should be treated as a single body, existing for the purpose of contracting for the sale of labour, and that no contract shall be allowed which, by any of its conditions, requires the injury of a third person or body, not a party to the contract. No rules permitting or enforcing such contracts should therefore be legal, and we see no other restriction which has been shown by evidence to be necessary. This principle would render illegal, strikes against outsiders; against machinery; against any special materials, any given contractor; against the limitation of apprentices. It would leave the union the fullest scope to determine the conditions on which its members would sell their labour, so long as these conditions were within the competence of their employer and of themselves.

Our principle would allow all bargains as to hours of labour, the amount of wages, the time of their payment, the conditions of dismissal, the penalties enforced in workshops against workmen, the acceptance or refusal of piece-work, the establishment of courts of arbitration, and the time during which any given set of rules, forming part of a contract, shall be binding. No special provision is wanted against murder, theft, intimidation, or violence. All these things *are* illegal. A provision against threats might be found useful, and is suggested in the proposed Act drawn up by the conference of amalgamated trades.*

In addition to the above restrictions, we would forbid all sudden strikes; that is to say, we would require that no contract should be terminated suddenly either by masters or men, but that a notice of from three to six months should always be required. By this we do not mean that a master shall not be at liberty to discharge a workman, or a workman to leave his master, with any notice agreed to under the rules; but that when given rules are accepted by masters and men, neither party shall be at liberty to require a change without a notice of from three to six months. The above restrictions should all apply to associations of masters, or to single masters, treated as the purchasers of labour. Thus they would be prevented from stipulating that union men should not work for other masters who might happen to be obnoxious to the leading employers; and the penalty for any illegal agreement should be equally enforced against master and man, whether proposed in the interest of the former or of the latter.

What then shall be these penalties? We answer without hesitation, Fines levied on both parties to the illegal contract, if this has been completed, and levied on the party proposing the illegal contract, if this has not been completed. To fine a single workman

* This Bill aims at protecting the funds of the Societies, and freeing them from liability under the law of conspiracy; it contains a provision as to the selection of juries in cases of offences committed by Trade-Unions which the men had better abandon forthwith.

Digitized by Google

is a farce. To imprison him is a hardship, unless he has committed a crime or misdemeanour, for which, by the law as it stands, he would be personally liable. Nor do the unimprisoned 999 suffer very much from the imprisonment of their herald or representative; they feel very angry, subscribe large sums for him and for his relations, but vicarious suffering touches them little. If unions are to be restrained as a body, they must be punished as a body. The fines may be equal for masters and men, and should be heavy enough to be really felt. It will be said that the unions will never take any collective action in wrong-doing, but will use some scape-goat of a man to commit illegal actions, and that thus they will escape any joint responsibility. The evidence before the Commissioners, except in cases of outrage, does not show this. It is the union which strikes; it is the union which demands unreasonable and improper conditions. Facts will show whether the union has or has not supported a particular demand on the part of a number of its members. There may be some attempt hereafter at equivocation; but if all members of a union are withdrawn from a given shop, the motive of the strike and the attendant facts will not be easily concealed from a jury. The case of outrage and crime committed by one member of a union, in its interest, will always present greater difficulties, just as the detection of a criminal who has committed murder is always more or less difficult. But even in this case we strongly advocate a punishment for the union whenever complicity of the main body with the criminal can be established to the satisfaction of a jury. We might then obtain informers without indemnification as to the whole union; and we should be spared the degradation of discovering great crimes only on condition of allowing them to pass unpunished. Of course occasionally this would lead to the punishment of some innocent persons along with the guilty; but if innocent persons belonging to an association by their supineness allow the commission of crime or folly by their associates, they must suffer, and ought to suffer, precisely as the innocent shareholders of a mismanaged company must suffer, and ought to suffer, by the misconduct of secretaries and directors. If they fear this, they need not join these associations at all. These involuntary accomplices should have their remedy against single branches of the society, secretaries, or others who may have involved them without their consent.

Our recommendations are briefly, Turn trade-unions into legal associations, with power to contract for the sale of the labour of their members; declare what contracts are illegal, and punish the association as a mass for any illegal transaction it promotes, threatens to promote, or sanctions; require publicity, and enforce regular accounts; punish individuals for misconduct as individuals, and punish the body for misconduct as a body.

We have said nothing about arbitration —a pet plan with many well-meaning persons. Compulsory arbitration is a contradiction in terms. Voluntary arbitration is an excellent method for settling small points and avoiding quarrels upon matters of sentiment, which are by no means the least serious quarrels; and courts of arbitration or conciliation will come naturally to be established wherever unions and masters are animated by good feeling; indeed, they have been established, and have worked well. As a means of determining wages, or any of the main conditions of a contract, they are quite useless, except within very narrow limits. Mr. Kettle arbitrated as to wages by the simple plan of finding out what wages were given in the neighbourhood—a very good plan, but hardly applicable on a large scale. Arbitration cannot fix the average price of sugar, land, or labour, though it may decide whether the average price of the day has been offered for any small quantity of these commodities. Until bargains in the market and on 'Change can be replaced by arbitration, arbitration will not replace strikes as a means of determining the market value of labour.

A much more mischievous suggestion has clearly taken deep root in the minds of some of the Commissioners—namely, that trade societies should not be allowed to exist as benefit societies. In the interests of the community, no less than those of workmen, we earnestly trust that the impolicy of this proposal may be seen in time. It has been put forward, as though in the interest of the workmen; but the suggestion came from no working man. No man has complained of not receiving the benefit to which he was entitled. No man has complained that to meet such payments to others he has submitted to vexatious exactions exceeding the subscriptions he undertook to pay. The men are thoroughly satisfied with the mutual assurance system which has grown up. Englishmen of the lower classes find much difficulty in setting by sufficient sums out of their earnings to provide against sickness, accidents, or old age, while retaining command of the capital saved. The recklessness and improvidence of the Englishman is too well known; but in the form of subscriptions

Digitized by Google

to benefit societies they do and can save, being unable to withdraw their deposits. These trade and other benefit societies have induced thousands to save thus, who would never save in other ways; the best unions wholly prevent pauperism among their members. These admirable provisions are to be destroyed! and why? Because, forsooth, the accumulation of funds destined to provide these benefits is supposed to be a temptation to extravagance in striking. In other words, the capitalist is supposed to be more ready to peril his position than the spendthrift or needy man. The evidence is wholly against such reasoning. The societies with large benefit funds are the most reasonably managed. If a large fund is accumulated for trade purposes only, it forms an irresistible temptation to strike. How else can it be employed? Masters would at least have the melancholy satisfaction of being able to foretell when a strike was imminent, by simply watching the accumulation of the trade fund. But a subscriber to a benefit society, who sees the fund applied to trade purposes, knows that he must make good every farthing wasted. The fund that goes is his fund; either he will some day share it, or if it goes he must some day replace it, by extra payments. You say the men are too stupid to understand this; but you are wrong. The men do understand it, and even the dullest are taught when, after a strike, whips and levies come week after week to enable the union to meet its liabilities. They will repudiate, you say; they have not repudiated, and little good is to be got by repudiation when the assurance is mutual. To provide against the conceivable case of all the young men of a trade repudiating a debt mainly owed to old ones, the dissolution of a company or withdrawal of members may properly be subjected to some restriction, though it seems hardly worth while to provide for a contingency which is highly improbable. So strongly do we feel on the subject, that we would rather urge that no trade society should be allowed to exist without certain benefits. No better guarantee could be obtained for a prudent administration of the funds. This is no theory, but a fact. Separate trade and benefit societies involve separate expenses of management, separate governing bodies; if restricted to a given trade, the funds will infallibly be improperly used for trade purposes; if they are unrestricted to one trade, the supervision of each member by all the others, allowing benefits to be cheaply purchased, would be sacrificed. You also sacrifice the *esprit de corps* which brings in the thoughtless lad as well as the sober middle-aged man. In a word, let those who advocate the separation say distinctly in whose interest they desire it. If for the workman, believe that he knows best what he wishes, and wait for complaints before you force your aid upon him. If you desire the separation in order to weaken unions, say so. It may weaken them, but it will force them to be aggressive, and diminish their responsibility. A precious plan this to avoid quarrels! you give a man money which he can spend in no other way than in fighting, and then prevent him from accumulating other property, so that he can lose nothing in the fray! Of all the folly talked about unions, surely this is the most mischievous, supported though it be by men of real benevolence, who prate of widows and orphans as though hundreds such had been defrauded, as has truly been the case in some of the very friendly societies they so strongly advocate in opposition to trade-unions, which have hitherto everywhere met their engagements.

In conclusion, we have only to urge that before men are condemned for practices which at first sight may seem unreasonable and even unjust, care should be taken to understand the practices, and the arguments should be heard which the men have to urge in their favour. When we speak of the men, we speak of the secretaries or others among them who have the gift of speech. Many English workmen, not dull of understanding, cannot explain themselves, and what is more, they will not do so, in answer to avowedly hostile inquiries. The Press, in notices and articles written for the middle classes, and written by men ignorant of workmen, has so very generally misunderstood and misrepresented the action of unions, as to have raised a feeling of angry contempt, preventing even wise and reasonable advice from being listened to. Above all, let us beware of believing that the men are suffering from hardships, of which masters draw a harrowing picture, but of which no artisan complains. Workmen are wedded to the system of unions from no irrational motives, but because they have by their aid obtained great benefits.

The members find great pleasure in the management of their own affairs, and boast of the kindly feeling and enlarged sympathies which co-operation induces, at least within the pale.

The artisan enrolled in one of the great societies may with some truth speak as follows:—"To unions we owe increased wages, diminished labour, freedom from care; in hard times, and in sickness, from want of work and want of bread, the union protect us; neither by accident nor in old

Digitized by Google

age shall we or ours be paupers; we ask no patronage, receive no charity, fear no oppression; we live as free men, owing our welfare to our own providence, and we shall maintain our power by using it with prudence." There is indeed a sad reverse to this pleasant picture. The best things may be misused, and trade-unions have been misused; but were we to abolish all institutions misapplied, all rights abused, all customs warped from their true aim, what fragment of society could we retain? Let us neither seek to destroy trade-unions, strong as they are for good and evil, nor yet fear with a firm hand to set a legal limit to their power. With good laws and sound teaching these bodies may yet become the pride of our country, affording one more proof of the great faculty Englishmen possess of self-government. Under bad laws, ignorant dislike, and unsound advice, they may indeed turn to a curse, fostering disloyalty and outrage, fatal to trade, and to the well-being of all classes. God grant that we may be wise in time!

ART. II.—1. *L'Idée de Dieu.* Par E. CARO. Paris, 1864.
2. *La Philosophie de Goethe.* Par E. CARO.
3. *Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse.* Par ERNEST RENAN. Paris, 1862.
4. *Essais de Morale et de Critique.* Par ERNEST RENAN 1859.
5. *Averroës et l'Averroïsme.* Par ERNEST RENAN. 1861.
6. *Revue des Deux Mondes.* Second Series.

To know the best that is known, and to say it—that is the definition of criticism which an ambitious English critic has founded upon the practice of France, for the use of his countrymen. Mr. Arnold continues the tradition of Dryden in sending us to school across the channel, but Dryden did not consider the journey indispensable. He was a good critic, but a better poet, so he boasted of the native riches which only needed to be set off by foreign art: Mr. Arnold, a good poet but a better critic, points to the foreign riches which may relieve our poverty. True, he may urge that times are changed. We are in a fair way to accept his definition; yet it would have astonished Boileau as much as Addison, La Harpe as much as Jeffrey. Those estimable critics never imagined that an author was a sort of literary jackal or lion's provider to the critical appetite; they never reflected that second-hand omniscience would be the proper function, or the reasonable aspiration, of a fortnightly review. Perhaps, if they had heard that this ideal was realized at Paris, they might have thought Plato's contemptuous simile of the man with the looking-glass more applicable to the repetitions of criticism than the creations of poetry; perhaps it might have strengthened their suspicion, to find the first of French critics modestly stating the result of his inquiries among mathematicians, about the character of M. Biot's mathematical talent, or making up his mind on Buffon's scientific rank, in reliance on M. Flourens's edition of his works.

But though modern French criticism may appear to outsiders what Aristotle's metaphysics appeared to Bacon, "a depredation of other sciences rather than a true province of knowledge," yet criticism in France has a character and an inspiration of its own. Knowledge changes its character in passing through the critical alembic. To the critic, knowledge is not a systematic whole growing day by day till it becomes co-extensive with the universe; it is a collection of methods and results, rather than of facts or laws. Ethics is the science of motives and circumstances rather than of duties; history is the record of tendencies rather than of actions; art is to be studied in its temporary conditions rather than in its universal aims. A philosopher may proclaim his opinions, a critic detects his wishes in confessing his own; when controversialists are weary with debating doctrines, a critic professes to narrate their history. In a word, criticism, in the modern sense, is the result of the failure of many efforts, the exhaustion of many careers, the decadence of many institutions. People examine the mechanism of society, because ambition is impracticable; the results of physical science and even of psychology seem more indisputable, because philosophy is impossible. That is why French criticism is disinterested, subject to two rather important drawbacks—it has to vindicate its own freedom and its own security. It would be condemned, if any dogmatic authority were to conquer society; it would be silenced, if any dogmatic passion were to invade society. It is more than an accident, that far the ablest organ of French criticism in also an organ of the Orleanist party, one of whose ablest politicians has discovered that Christianity is a valuable bulwark against socialism, because it is the only system which gives a meaning to misery. The house of Orleans represents the emancipation of the literary class, and it represents the disappointment of the expectations which menace the security of the classes on whom literary men depend for a

Digitized by Google

public. Hence, side by side with *exposés* of the extravagance of Imperial finance, we have querulous articles on our own Reform question, where, though we may miss something of the sparkling vigour of Mr. Lowe's denunciations, the intelligent foreigner supplies us with other grounds of alarm: for it would never have occurred to the most timid native that the *wealth* of the Trades Unions made them as formidable to our civilisation as the monasteries. This is worthy of the ingenious observer who sets forth the effects upon the rural population of the austere ritual of the Anglican Church, where the clergyman kneels down to pray and change his surplice at the foot of the pulpit stairs. Side by side with elaborate expositions of the last results of comparative philology, we have now some gorgeous cloud-castle of M. Renan, built on the transformations that humanity may effect in the visible universe; now a slightly ponderous tribute to M. Guizot's defence of Christianity; or a protest against Hegelianism, or materialism, from one of the indefatigable writers who are always rediscovering the theism of Descartes, sometimes with, and sometimes without, his doctrine of the immortality of the soul; but, in any case, without the least suspicion that they are condemned to the hopeless labour of the daughters of Danaus. For the *Revue des Deux Mondes* is not exclusive; there is nothing which an able writer may not advocate in its pages, except the merits of Imperialism, or the *Vie de César*, or perhaps the temporal power of the Pope. There is a reason for these exceptions; the jurisdiction of a préfet, or a bishop with an influence on a préfet, is apt to press rather hardly on the educated classes, who have plenty of property and plenty of intelligence, and who only need to be left to enjoy them at their own discretion. It is to such an order that civil and religious liberty is important for its own sake; to the immense majority of the population a good despotism is the best of governments, until they are ready to assume power themselves.

There we find instalments of M. Mignet's history of Francis I. and Charles V., side by side with instalments of M. Caro's indictment against Goethe for the essentially Spinozistic character of the philosophy which underlies all his contributions to both poetry and science. Mr. Caro is himself an interesting figure; it is impossible to imagine a greater contrast in controversy than the manner in which he and Mr. Mansel attack the same opponents. The Bampton lecturer is never content with a bare refutation. M. Caro is argumentative, but not contemptuous. Mr. Mansel is impatient till every form of rationalism is an object of public loathing and contempt: M. Caro seems to be afraid to betray a Parisian Antichrist except with a kiss, though there is no real danger of his courage failing before the crucifixion is complete. An unfriendly critic might suspect that there was something of timidity in his courtesy; and the suspicion would be confirmed by the pathetic enumeration of the perils to which the slightest serious protest in favour of a spiritual philosophy exposes a literary Frenchman under the Second Empire.

Whether danger can excuse cowardice, or self-pity heighten heroism, our readers will be in a better position to judge after reading a few extracts from M. Caro's alarming description of the partisan liberalism of France, which thinks that civil liberty is never secure and modern civilisation is never guaranteed against the ghosts of the Middle Ages while Christianity is still erect in our midst as a perpetual insurrection against modern society. According to him, another La Bruyère is needed to paint this liberalism as it deserves:—

"It is an inverted fanaticism, a back-handed intolerance, for free-thinkers can be intolerant too, and their intolerance is the most odious of all, for it is aggravated by a lie. Those delightful liberals never suspect that liberalism implies a love of liberty, even the liberty of antagonists. You may affirm that you would maintain all the conditions and guarantees of lay life, all the rights of free thought, all the principles of civil society, and the independence of Church and State. That is not enough. This jealous keen-sighted party suspects not only all Catholics whatever, from such absolutists as Bossuet to such liberals as M. S. de Sacy; but also every Protestant who does not subscribe to every apotheosis the party may decree, every philosopher who makes profession of Christian spiritualism. The day that M. de Pressensé took up his pen to refute M. Renan, another Protestant was put on the list of suspects, where M. Guizot has long figured since he declared his faith in the supernatural. People talk of the sensitive despotism of orthodoxy; I know no orthodoxy more sensitive or more despotic than this which I have endeavoured to describe.*

It will be seen from these specimens, and many more might have been added, that criticism, which sometimes claims to be the modern representative of the mediæval clergy, has emancipated itself completely from the spirit and letter of the mediæval maxim, "Clericus clericum non decimat." We are not sorry for the change, for if critics were not to be subject to criticism in the first place, our vocation would be gone, in

* *L'Idée de Dieu*, par E. Caro, p. 163.

Digitized by Google

the second place, we should have no fellow-labourers; and in dealing with a writer like M. Renan, it is a peculiar advantage to be able to avail ourselves of the criticism of his countrymen. In England, we do not think of dwelling on the personal history of living English writers, and M. Renan is an author whose personal history has exercised an unusual influence on his thought. In England, again, we are in danger of forming our opinion of him too exclusively from the *Vie de Jésus*, a work which it is impossible for us to criticise, since the necessity of the subject seems to convert every reader into a conscious opponent, or an unconscious partisan of the main positions of the book. The peculiar conditions of French life, to which the work itself is adapted, enabled M. Sainte-Beuve to review it without involving himself too deeply in earnest controversy. He tells us very precisely what three of his friends thought of it; he tells us rather confusedly what *he* thought of what *they* thought, and leaves us with an impression that the book is stronger than its critics, and weaker than its subject. We learn also from him that M. Renan is the youngest of his family—twelve years younger than the sister, who relieved him from material cares, when he severed the ties which bound him to the Catholic Church, and whom he lost on the oriental pilgrimage in which she accompanied him. From the repose of a Breton fireside, he passed to a little school kept by ecclesiastics—country priests of the old stock—grave, well-instructed men, who taught polite literature solidly and sensibly; men too old to be affected by the encroachments of the neo-catholic or clerico-romantic party. M. Renan, we are assured, has always been very grateful to their memory. His studies there were so successful that he was promoted to a seminary, then under the control of the present Bishop of Orleans. There he entered upon a new world, and came in contact for the first time with the worldly Catholicism of Paris, which was born in M. Sainte-Beuve's lifetime, and has been growing under his eyes in strength and pomp from day to day; a Catholicism at once agitating and agitated, superficial and material, always feverish, always in a hurry to profit by every cry, every reputation, every fashion of the day, and all the latest machinery for combat and enjoyment, losing no opportunity for firing the brain or the liver; the Catholicism which has produced the rising generation, that one contemplates with admiration at its work in France,—which, we may add, has crossed the channel, though for the present it halts at the Tweed. After three years of this training, he was admitted to Saint Sulpice, and commenced his philosophical studies at the establishment of Issy, where he found again, for two years, the repose and solidity of his early Breton training. In a graceful and tolerant essay on Lamennais, M. Renan speaks highly of the intellectual benefits of the routine of ecclesiastical training:—

"The education of the clergy, which has serious drawbacks as a training for civil and practical life, acts admirably in awakening and developing intellectual originality. There may be more system, more depth, more discipline in the training of the University, but it is subject to the drawback of being too uniform, leaving too little place for the individual taste of pupil or professor. The Church, in literature, is, after all, less dogmatic than the University. Her taste may be less pure, her methods not so strict, but she does not idolize the literature of the seventeenth century. Perhaps with her substance is less entirely sacrificed to form; if her training is more declamatory, it is less rhetorical. This holds especially in the higher training. In the absence of all inspection, all official control, the intellectual *régime* of the large seminaries is that of the most complete liberty, as nothing, or next to nothing, is required of the pupil as a rigid obligation; he is left in full possession of himself. With this, and with absolute seclusion, and long hours of meditation and silence, and incessant preoccupation, with a goal above all personal desires, it is easy to understand that such houses must be an admirable scene for the development of a faculty of conscious thought. Such a mode of life crushes the feeble, but gives singular energy to such as are capable of independent thought." *

Nevertheless his first doubts were awakened by the study of natural science, though they were not yet too strong to be relieved by Malebranche, and the young Sulpician could still rest at one of the intermediate stations, where the great Oratorian had spent a lifetime. The doubts that had been aroused by the study of nature were deepened by the contrast which he believed he found between the facts of history and scholastic orthodoxy: he observes himself that it is hard to say how many have been introduced to heresy by the *solvuntur objecta* of theological treatises. This suggests a reflection which we believe to be important in these days of controversy. In many sciences, such truth as is accessible gains by collision with error. Neither Mr. Mansel's disciples nor Mr. Mill's would value the doctrines for which they contend, unless they had to contend for them; we get a clearer notion of Greece from Mr. Grote than from Bishop Thirlwall, just because he is more combative.

* *Essais de Morale et de Critique*, p. 148.

Digitized by Google

Probably no one without a genius for grandiloquence could long derive intense enjoyment from a liberty which he had not to conquer or defend. About art the case may be doubtful. Few have an organization sufficiently sensitive to enjoy it for its own sake, in perfect repose: a protest against a consciously realized error,—an avoidance of a consciously realized fault makes our interest more lively though less pure. But about religion, not even the example of Spain can make us hesitate. The perfection of faith and devotion is only for those who turn their backs on other things; who are content to live in a pit, and see the stars. In one sense a doctrine is profaned even more when it is defended than when it is attacked: a pious opponent takes his tone from the splendour and pathos of the ancient creed, but the reply is thrown in part at least into the form of a *reductio ad horribile*, and takes its tone from all the worst parts of the attack. M. Renan's taste did not suffer in creating his impossible and fascinating Antichrist, but even Mr. Browning becomes vulgar, when he condescends to meet such sophistries on intellectual grounds.

But we have wandered from M. Renan's history. In the second year of his residence he learnt Hebrew, and was himself appointed to deliver an elementary lecture to his fellow-students. Meanwhile he read Herder, which furnishes M. Sainte-Beuve with an opportunity for eulogising the sciences which Germany has created, and France has hitherto neglected to adopt. These studies had a very tranquillizing effect on M. Renan, who learnt that it was possible to be eloquent in honour of Christianity, without believing in it; and that if he had lived in Germany, he might have found a situation where it would have been possible to pursue his investigations freely, yet not defiantly, without breaking with venerable things or names. In France this was impossible; the sympathizing biographer, who obviously values intellectual liberty more than truth or sincerity, says, "However, our intellectual precision, our arid forms, our crushing rules, forbid such indecision, though it is often fruitful and salutary, we are compelled to choose between *yes* and *no*." *

In his transition from Christian faith to an exclusively scientific career, we are told that there was nothing of the convulsion which preceded the revolt of Lamennais. M. Renan was yet unpledged, and had fewer ties to break: moreover, Lamennais had thrown himself into a great cause, in which he believed the interests of humanity to be at stake; M. Renan desires nothing better than to leave humanity to cherish its old beliefs, slightly eviscerated, while he and those who sympathize with him philosophize at leisure under their breath. So he came out of the conflict without a scar, though with wounds, which he would have us believe still bleed inwardly; he came with the tastes of a priest, the creed of a *savant*, and a conscience of his own. He cares little or nothing for secular progress, or the omnipresent ideas of 1789, he cares little for industrial displays like those of 1855 or 1867. He can scarcely be said to care for truth, unless to think it too precious to be attained and too sacred to be communicated is a trustworthy evidence of sincere devotion. When we try to ascertain what makes life valuable to him, we find it is something like the spiritual selfishness which is wrongly attributed to devotees. For an enlightened devotee is sedulously on his guard against letting his delight in his own feelings take the place of the object which gave them birth; in the eyes of M. Renan there is something illusory in all objects of devotion, and the only reality worth having is to be found in the luxurious and elevated sensations which such illusions serve to cultivate. He has told us in his latest work, that if the human race were ten times as intelligent, it would be a hundred times as religious, and that if its intelligence were raised to a still higher power, it would plunge from one ecstasy to another through the voluptuous languors of eternity. We do not know whether Comte might have approved of this devotional ideal; we are certain that Saint Theresa would have condemned it even more severely in the name of religious sincerity, than Jeremy Bentham in the name of practical utility.

When his emancipation was completed, M. Renan sought a new career in the University. At that time M. Cousin and his philosophy were supreme; but he was too generous to throw obstacles in the way of a student whose opinions differed from his own. But the style of teaching at the University was too dogmatic and too unhistorical to suit M. Renan. In France, neither philosophers nor the public have any idea of more than two forms of philosophical teaching: one where all lecturers repeat and enforce the official doctrines; another where every lecturer is free to propagate his own. The first process is naturally rather barren, and reduces philosophy, as M. Taine suggests, to a safe tepid bath for young boys; the second is not only unsettling, but, we are assured, intolerably irritating to the sensitive ears of a French audience. As it would be too much to hope that French professors should

* *Nouveaux Lundis*, ii. 388.

Digitized by Google

confine themselves in their lecture-rooms to the history of opinion, and adjourn the discussion of absolute truth to university sermons, it is probably as well to surrender all philosophical teaching on the ground that some questions are better evaded than answered; for there is the respectable authority of Goethe's wise men for affirming that questioners are by all means to be avoided. When the University had failed him, he naturally took refuge in literature; and for a year or two, we are told, his writings bore traces, since effaced, of resentment against the yoke which he had worn. But however sedulously he might cultivate a purely literary spirit, and however successfully he might develop his literary aptitudes, his own theological pre-occupation, and the sensitive vigilance of the religious world, were too much for his peace of mind. The public could not understand M. Renan's delicate and plaintive protests, that he had not the slightest wish to disturb the belief which he incidentally disproved; so perhaps he judged wisely in abstaining from a formal defence, and taking refuge in flowery ambiguities. This course gave friendly critics an opportunity for insisting on the ethereal resignation, whose only reply to calumny was to soar to still loftier regions, and disappear in the golden cloud of poetry.

The scheme whose normal development was thus disturbed, was too extensive to have been adequately executed; for it was nothing less than an harmonious series of contributions to the religious history of mankind, in which every essay presupposed the first principles of a science which will never exist. To crystallise every character, every nation, every epoch, in the appropriate formula, to ascertain the significance of each as making up the common stock of human thought, is a task simply too difficult for the human mind. When we endeavour to form a complete conception of a single character, we do not encounter the same preliminary difficulty as when we try to conceive an ultimate point of space; the attempt is not simply unmeaning, it fails from the number of details we have to consider; from the difficulty of deciding which of them shall be regarded as a key to the rest. It is a rare triumph when a critic can succeed as M. Sainte-Beuve has succeeded in his subtle account of Madame de Krüdner, in representing one hemisphere so completely as to suggest the existence of another. He shows the devotional side of her worldliness, the worldly side of her devotion; how she went into raptures of pious astonishment at the success of her manœuvres to take Paris by storm; how after her conversion, she found the principal proof of the Divine mercy to mankind in the excitement which attended her preaching; he quotes Saint Evremond to prove how fashionable ladies take to religion as a *pis aller*; in a word, he gives a complete picture of her life from a secular point of view, and he lets you see that another point of view is possible, while he exposes the incongruities which result from the attempt of her biographer to blend the two in one tableau. It is impossible to formulate a single character; it is obviously yet more impossible to formulate the character of an age. A tendency which is obscured in an individual, may become plain in a society; but of two impossibilities, it is easier to ascertain how far Cromwell obeyed his conscience, than how far Catholicism really controlled mediæval life. Again, when we come to the transition from one age to another, what various explanations have been given of the Reformation! It has been considered a glorious triumph of Divine grace; a horrible caricature of one or two Christian doctrines, to the destruction of the rest; a mere reaction against the corruptions of the fifteenth century; a mere incident of the Renaissance; a movement towards liberty of conscience; a movement towards freedom of thought; an aristocratic movement; a democratic movement. If we ask which of these conceptions is true, it requires a knowledge of all ecclesiastical history to answer; and yet the answer is a step to a complete knowledge of ecclesiastical history. Nevertheless the problem of the Reformation is one of the easiest which M. Renan has to solve in constructing his religious system of humanity, for the data are not ludicrously inadequate. There is one postulate, however, which gives an illusory stability to such cloud-castles.

Long before Germany had invented the sciences which M. Sainte-Beuve wishes to see imported into France, or kept in quarantine beyond the Rhine, Pope had enunciated the pompous falsism, 'Whatever is, is right.' To this talisman every lock flies open. It is as easy to justify one epoch as all; the world has been in travail since the creation to bring forth the magnificence of to-day. Nothing valuable has been lost; there is no such thing as accident; the wilful folly of mankind cannot destroy what is worthy to survive. Whatever has perished may be disregarded; it perishes because it cannot endure as opium produces sleep by a soporific tendency. It is a curious proof of the insatiable curiosity which prefers any theory whatever to the confession of ignorance, that the only serious opposition which is made to this arbitrary and oppressive fatalism comes from the cynicism of such writers as Pascal, who make the fate of the universe depend on the

Digitized by Google

length of Cleopatra's nose; or the flippant humility, which is quite as anxious to disclaim responsibility as to acknowledge weakness, and shelters itself from the pedantry of general laws in the Memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, and the adventures of Gil Blas. An orthodox writer like Guizot is a more persistent offender than a heterodox writer like M. Renan; just because he has a more definite object to glorify, since a semi-Calvinist Providence is a less fluctuating ideal than the consciousness of the human race. Accordingly, his subtle analysis of the actual course of events, which frequently succeeds in explaining the 'how,' is supplemented by barren formulas which profess to explain the 'why.' Such phrases as 'it was too late,' 'the time was not yet come,' really tell us very little. They are intended to show why what many people desired remained unexecuted, but unless we are too proud to use them, authorities will never be wanting to prove how much accident and caprice can do to stifle or paralyse desires widely felt, worthily represented, and adequately supported.

In M. Renan this solemnity of assumption is connected with his sacerdotal instincts; he wishes for an elaborate ideal which may wean its worshippers from the interests of every day, and he is not sorry that his ideal should be a little arbitrary and baseless, in order that its worship may breathe a counsel of perfection for the few, than an obligation for the many. Hence, too, his laudable aversion to one whole side of French literature, which we may as well describe in the words of M. Sainte-Beuve:—

"At every period the bent of French genius has been towards gaiety, levity; good sense always ready, but petulant, imprudent, contemptuous, and turbulent; towards malicious satire; and one must add towards indecent jests. If this element were to rule alone and unchecked, what would be the fate of our language and literature? Nothing would be lost in cleverness, but would they retain their grandeur, their elevation, their force, their majesty, in a word, their tone? For what is called tone, can only result from the combination of opposite qualities and elements, which sustain and counteract each other."*

The contrast may be traced from the early epics, and the licentious Fabliaux, through Bossuet and La Fontaine, Saint Juste and Camille Desmoulins, to Lamartine and Royer Collard on one side, and Béranger on the other. There can be little uncertainty on which side M. Renan is to be reckoned. If the general tone of his writings left any doubt upon the question, he has determined his own place, by his fervent denunciations of the farce of *Patelin*, as well as by his depreciation of Molière and Béranger, who preach as the perfection of the natural law, wine, women, song. Apparently this austerity is almost too much for his friendly critic, who evidently suspects that the world would be rather dull if the supernatural were banished, and all the restraints it once imposed retained; to say nothing of the chance that the perpetual elegy of M. Renan might become as wearisome as the perpetual dithyramb of M. Quinet. Accordingly, M. Sainte-Beuve takes shelter under a dictum of M. Renan himself, that to avoid a conclusion is often a mark of subtlety, and subsides into the safe propositions that M. Renan and Béranger are both necessary to complete the French character, and that as the predilections of the former run counter to the national bias, it is fortunate that he can recommend them by a graceful style. One might fancy that the same temperament which makes M. Sainte-Beuve loth to surrender the rank luxuriance of national life, where so many flowers grow among the weeds, makes him anxious to retain the protecting shadow of a superintending Providence. So at least we are inclined to explain his evident eagerness to find a theist in M. Renan. Probably few of that writer's admirers are doomed to total disappointment, all will find in him what they seek, *quemvis hominem secum adtulit ad nos.* It is certainly difficult, as M. Sainte-Beuve points out, to discover a meaning for duty, unless the Highest Good be an objective reality which will rebuke prosperous and contented self-deceivers when they see it face to face. In the same way, progress seems to imply a definite external goal, to which mankind are gradually approaching, for otherwise it is hard to decide between the conflicting claims of several divergent tendencies, each of which gathers force as time goes on, to represent the main current of humanity. M. Renan himself is not insensible to the danger, that the analysis which he applies to spiritual facts may be applied by others to spiritual ideas; and it is difficult to think that the obstinate scruples on which he relies are not due to the education against which he rebelled; for whatever M. Renan may be inclined to suppose, there is nothing in the nature of the case to make rooted wishes and traditional reverence better reasons for faith in the ideal, than for faith in the Gospel, or to make the matter-of-fact style of argument with which the Resurrection is assailed less effective when turned against the supremacy of a benificent Creator. On this latter point M. Renan abstains from definite

* *Nouveaux Lundis*, ii. 381.

Digitized by Google

statement, but the assumption that the work of humanity is holy implies an independent guarantee of its perfection—a God in fact—more strongly than occasional invocations, which sometimes sound too sentimental to be serious.

Whatever doubt there may be as to the precise object of the worship of which M. Renan has constituted himself the priest, there can be none as to the sacrifice which it requires. The present Emperor of the French has been suspected of a desire to confine the Romans to a cultivation of ruins, which, to be sure, yield a better harvest than revolutions, but he never approached the lyrical unction of the following extract from M. Renan :—

"For my part, I tremble to think of the day when this sublime mass of ruins shall be penetrated anew by life. I cannot conceive Rome except just as it is, a museum for all grandeurs which have fallen, a *rendezvous* for all whom this world persecutes, for the sovereigns it has dethroned, the politicians it has deceived, for all whom it has sickened and disgusted; and if ever the fatal tide of modern commonplace threatened to pierce through this barrier of consecrated ruins, I could wish to have priests and monks paid to preserve it, to maintain misery and gloom within, desolation and fever around." *

Surely this is an echo of the famous prayer of Torquemada, that God would come down to help him in his holy warfare against the pravity of relapsed Jews. It is idle to explain away such fervour as a mere recoil from vulgarity, such as preserved Petrarch from the pedantic infidelity of the Italian Averroïsts; it is the normal clerical taste for suffering and contemplation, only the contemplation is to be intellectual and æsthetic, not moral or devotional, because M. Renan found he had a stronger vocation to be a *savant* than a priest. It is natural that he should despise the boasted ideas of 1789. They are not necessarily vulgar, they are capable of all the ethical and artistic elevation with which they are presented in the funeral oration of Pericles; but they are necessarily lay; there is no place in them for the exaltation of the elect of Christianity, still less for the more exclusive dignity of the worshippers of the ideal. In Athens, in New England, there has always been the assumption, in one form or another, that all the Lord's people are prophets: in Christendom the Gospel is preached to the poor, but one always seems to hear M. Renan muttering under his breath, "This people, which know not the law, is—blessed." He applauds the wisdom of the Catholic Church in withdrawing the Bible from the people. Of course the reason is ready; Americans and Englishmen read the Bible; all exercise their private judgment on theology, and antiquity is taught at Oxford as badly as in the days of Rollin. In France, no one reads the Bible, no one forms a theology of his own, and France is at least as enlightened as England, Old or New. No doubt it is better for the poor to read the Bible than nothing, but they might easily have better books to read; and then we have the old example of the bad effects of the Old Testament upon the Puritans. M. Renan obviously thinks that the monopoly of priests was a good preparation for the monopoly of men of science; obviously also he feels with the corrupter clergy of the Middle Ages, that such exclusive pretensions need some apology; that it is invidious to take away the key of knowledge. The mediæval clergy recommended the people to look at the painted windows while mass was being said in an unknown tongue. M. Renan finds that, while very few are capable of science, none are excluded from the ideal; indeed the simple may find an ample compensation in his spontaneous instincts, for what they lose on the side of reflection. Even if the consolation is illusory, and the sentimental *savant* is superior to the village curé, the inequality is the fault of nature, and must exist even under an orthodox view of the spiritual world, whereupon he appeals to the instance of Martha and Mary,—not very happily we think, for after all Martha was free to choose the good part. Nor do we quite understand why this inequality is more painful to the privileged classes than to their inferiors. Of course it is true that a more intense and varied life is exposed to regrets and disappointments, from which an oyster or even a fool is comparatively free, from which a stolid worldly drudge, we may add, is safer than a devout and simple Breton. But the test of mere satisfaction is misleading. Those who experience such regrets and disappointments do not wish to exchange them for sluggish content; and those who are satisfied with the innocent pleasures of a routine existence, have once been ambitious of the pleasures and pains of superiority, and would not refuse them if they were attainable.

But perhaps we are dwelling too long on an afterthought, which is creditable to Mr. Renan's modesty, but might be effaced without intellectual loss from his writings. The first thought is franker and truer. "A cultivated man can feed upon art and science, and upon the elevated exercise of all the highest faculties; but the illiterate has

* *Les Revolutions d'Italie*, 259.

Digitized by Google

nothing but religion. . . . Intellectual elevation will always be the property of a small minority, and if this minority is left free in its own development, it will not busy itself about the way in which the rest mould God to their own image." * Even when M. Renan gives us his natural thought, unembarrassed by well-meant attempts at reconciliation, which his opponents cannot but regard as an insult or an imbecility, we invariably find one element which baffles us entirely; we cannot divine what M. Renan means by the "ideal." He does not define it, he does not describe it, he incessantly, alludes to it. Sometimes it seems an abstraction from history; sometimes simply a contrast to everyday life; sometimes the thought of the best and most interesting characters. Any or all of these conceptions are intelligible separately, perhaps together, but not in M. Renan's context. We can understand that it is possible to think of a better world than this, or to think of this world as better than it is; but one cannot understand how such thoughts are the highest reality. Mankind cannot accustom themselves to such a way of thinking, and this is one of the ultimate tests of truth, or at least of credibility; it is not a way of thinking that it is possible to cultivate or acquire. A man of science learns to think of colour as depending on so many vibrations of light; a devotee learns to rejoice in suffering, and each can teach the lesson in his turn; but no one seems able to teach the worship of the "ideal." We confess we should like to see an explanation of the following sentence, which we feel it is cruel to translate:—"In the first centuries of our era, in the midst of a world of corruption, where every virtue had taken wing, when none of the cities of earth was a worthy sphere for the display of noble instincts, where was a refuge found for lofty souls? In the eternal city of the ideal." This is not the only instance where we fail to grasp the assumptions which seem to underlie M. Renan's writings. We do not see why he infers the non-existence of miracles from a valuable remark of M. Littré (which, perhaps, needs to be taken with some limitation), that they never occur where they can be scientifically tested: it would be as reasonable for a trout to infer the non-existence of live May flies, from the fact that they never appear under water, where they could be observed at leisure—by trout.

The masterly essay the origin of Islam increases our regret that his subtle investigations of yet more interesting questions should so often rest upon premises which preclude not only agreement, but fruitful and satisfactory discussion. The hidden forces of spontaneity are in their place, when used to explain the origin of a false religion. They are not at variance with a more concrete and forcible description of the process of illusion, "when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he waketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite." Hence the mechanical reproduction of the half conscious state, in which the soul projects its own determinations into the outer world, and receives them back as an answer from on High. Hence the indecision, the perfidies, the cruelties, which marked Mahomet's later years; hence the transformation of his church into an empire, whose foundations were sealed with the blood of his sincerest converts, extirpated by the venal adherents who had been won by the imposture and the compromise which grew with success, and made success more rapid and more sure. Hence, too, the superiority of the disciple to the master; the deceived to the deceiver. The faith of Omar proved stronger than the faith of Mahomet in more than one decisive crisis, just because Mahomet was, and Omar was not, the founder of Mahometanism. So at least M. Renan affirms, and on this point his authority is unimpeachable, because disinterested, for he expressly disclaims the modern theories which represent St. Paul as superior to his Lord, and the true founder of Christianity.

It is naturally easier to criticise M. Renan's social views, though they too are deeply coloured by his moral and literary prepossessions. We agree almost entirely with his article on the Exhibition, and confess to sharing his regret that few visitors disappoint exhibitors, by the parting reflection, "How many things I can do without!" Still we wish for a little enthusiasm in his recognition of the benefit that even the most prosaic progress will confer on the immense majority of our fellow-creatures, if it abridges their labours and lessens their privations; they cannot be elevated by mechanical labours, nor softened by sordid privations.

But his horror of mere popularity has misled him in his estimate of Channing. He admits himself that his criticism has been one-sided; that more relief has been given to Channing's want of scientific attainments and critical subtlety, than to his charity and moral earnestness. His excuse is, that he was preoccupied with the disappearance of high culture and high genius, and that Channing's Utopia would have been dreary for the want of them. Undoubtedly Channing's literary and æsthetic side was not

* *Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse*, Preface, p. 16.

Digitized by Google

his strong side; but we are inclined to think that the triumph of his principles would do more for art and literature than the triumph of M. Renan's. A general uniformity of conditions is by no means unfavourable to art. A Persian might plausibly have urged everything against the society of Greece which Europeans urge against the society of America; and yet the society of Greece produced the only perfect art the world has yet seen. A Roman of the fifth century might have made just the same objections to the monastic ideal of society which M. Renan makes to Channing's, and yet the monastic society produced an art only inferior to the art of Greece. If culture is disappearing, it is not due to optimism or liberalism, but to the love of money, and Channing was not the preacher of self-interest; if genius is disappearing, that is not due to the disappearance of ignorance or prejudice, but to an insatiable curiosity. A preacher whose teaching does not go beyond the song of the angels at the Nativity, and who feels the holiness of sunset in simplicity, does more for art and culture than if his *hortus-siccus* contained the flowers of every mythology under heaven: he is of those who ask the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward.

When we turn to consider M. Renan, not as a teacher of humanity, not as a too contemptuous spectator of industrial progress, it is easier to agree with him, less invidious to criticise him. Scarcely any praise is too high for his Essay on the Poetry of the Celtic Races, which strikes us as far superior to Mr. Arnold's delicate study on the Celtic element in our own literature; not only in breadth of habitual knowledge, but in repose of keeping. M. Renan assumes that his readers start with a serious interest in the subject, consequently he does not attempt to awaken their flagging attention with anecdotes about the Llandudno Eisteddfod or Thomas Moore, nor insist with disproportionate emphasis on the Pindarism or Titanism of Llywarch-Hen. M. Renan is content to give us a portrait,—Mr. Arnold insists on ascertaining the specific characteristics of Celtic art. He will not be content without an anatomical examination. We have no wish to depreciate science, but the parade of comparative anatomy is not artistic, when it only leads to a provisional result. It is really better to be told what the qualities of the Celtic race were, than what the qualities of other nations were not. It is instructive to read a description of the feminine, inward shrinking character of the whole race, based upon the Mabinogion, and the legends of Saint Brandan, and his own Breton souvenirs, with a passing hint that this is peculiarly applicable to the Cymric branch. Of course there is something one-sided in this description; for instance, it does not prepare us to recognise as a Cymric utterance the following noble triad:—Three things are highly disgraceful to a Cumro. To see with one eye, to hear with one ear, and to fight with one hand. Nevertheless, so far as he goes, M. Renan has real information to give, but we are not sure that Mr. Arnold's phrases about sentimentality and irritability are not empty as well as comprehensive. No doubt they explain the hardy qualities of the Gael, quite as well as the softer qualities of the Cymry, signalized by M. Renan; no doubt, also, they explain how the Celtic infusion in our nationality produced that delicate religiosity which makes the Olney Hymns so incontestably superior to the *Lyra Germanica*. Still we are afraid that a writer of Mr. Arnold's range of knowledge might discover as much sentimentality and irritability in other semi-civilized races; and the unlearned may be permitted to complain with Pascal, that formulæ which explain so much should always require so much explanation.

The elaborate essay on Averroës and Averroïsm is at once a beautiful example of French scholarship, and a telling piece of veiled but not ineffective controversy. Frenchmen are fond of representing their University as the one bulwark which still protects intellectual independence against the advancing tide of clerical education. According to M. Renan, the University of Paris discharged the same glorious function in the thirteenth century. Certainly he has produced decisive evidence that there was a strong Averroïst party in Christendom, which all the energies of the angelical Doctor were needed to defeat; he has shown strong reason for believing that the University of Paris was the focus of this insurrection, and even for suspecting the complicity of the great Franciscan order, though, if this had been the case, we should have expected Guillaume de St. Amour, the champion of the University against the Mendicants, to have chosen the Friars Preachers rather than the Friars Minors as the principal objects of his invective. In fact, the system of Averroës, for its own sake, is what attracts his historian least. M. Renan is interested in the unsuccessful struggle of Averroës against the reactionary bigotry of the African immigrants, who destroyed the intellectual life of Spanish Mahometanism; he is interested even in the resistance which his dull Paduan continuators opposed to the Inquisition; he is interested in the filiation of Arabian philosophy to Greek; but he is not

Digitized by Google

interested in its approximation to truth. Hence his work, though a model of condensed investigation and lucid and accurate statement, would be mechanical, if it were not difficult; one feels that literary history is taking a direction on which it will sink rapidly towards the level of Photius, when the labours of scholars have smoothed the road.

In this respect the essay on the Religions of Antiquity is much fresher and more suggestive, though scientifically it is less complete. It is interesting to see how a writer unacquainted with the researches of comparative mythologists has seized the connexion between language and mythology:—

"An indefinite sense, expressed by most perfect and definite form, is the essential characteristic of Greek art and Greek mythology. For mythology is a second language, born like the first, of the echo of nature in consciousness; like the first, inexplicable by analysis, though its mystery reveals itself to such as can comprehend the hidden forces of spontaneity, the secret harmony of nature and the soul, the eternal hieroglyphism on which the expression of human sentiments rests."—*Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse*, p. 19.

The earlier part of this extract is perfect, but when we hear of hidden forces of spontaneity, and perpetual hieroglyphism, we sigh for the comparatively definite guesses of Professor Max Müller, which, if they do not reveal facts, at least set something like facts before us. There may be no more evidence for saying that blue-eyed Athenè armed with the ægis of her father, is the personification of the blue sky gleaming through the storm clouds, than that Minerva is female nature conceived on its spiritual and religious side, but we can understand the early Greeks thinking of one, and we have some difficulty in thinking ourselves of the other. It may be uncertain whether Hermes represents the wind, or the dawn, or neither; it may be a good description of the final Greek conception of him to say,—

"Mercury is human nature regarded on the side of its industrial aptitudes; he is the ephebus, with all the beauty of the supple vigour which the gymnasium can give;*

but the solution only differs in degree from the old-fashioned platitude of the god of thieves; it throws no light whatever on the origin of the conception which it expands, not incorrectly, but does not attempt to explain. Again, when we are told that the contest of Apollo and Hermes represents the contest between the worship of the conquering Dorians and the conquered Pelasgians of Arcadia, we have a right to ask in a fifth revised edition for the comparison of this view with the conjecture of comparative mythology, that here we have one of the endless versions of the sun's victory over morning twilight.

M. Renan may very likely be right in thinking that the results of the new science are still too confused and uncertain to be laid before the French public, but we are scarcely convinced that they leave the doctrine of his article unaffected.

But whatever may be the defects of his criticism of M. Creuzer's system, they are compensated by his singularly graceful account of M. Creuzer's life, which gives us a beautiful impression of the lives of the German scholars of the grand school; the originality and delicacy to be found under a mask of simplicity and almost dulness; the lofty *naïveté* which is only possible to serious conviction; the character which is stamped pedantic by the pedantic levity of France. We learn to realize the infancy whose dreams were fostered under the vaults of St. Elizabeth's Church at Marburg, and moved to the harmonies of the grand old ecclesiastical music, in which M. Renan believes we can trace the lingering echoes of the lyre of a Pindar and a Sappho; to realize the ideal repose of a manhood which neither controversies nor calumnies could disturb, and the idyllic amenities of the learned ladies of Holland, who continue the traditions of Padua. Perhaps we shall fall into the pedantry of levity ourselves, if we insist on a doubt, whether some remarks on the vulgarity of the point of view in *Tartuffe* and *les Femmes Savantes* are as well placed as they are well founded.

Again, the little essay on Ary Scheffer's picture of the Temptation is very graceful; but a criticism on a serious work of religious art is scarcely the place for pleasantry on the arch-enemy, as a poor victim of calumny, an unfortunate revolutionist, driven into hazardous enterprises by a passion for activity. It is doubtful whether a compassionate representation of evil is a proof that evil has lost its power; undoubtedly unmixed evil is rare, but its dominion is only strengthened by the good which it absorbs.

A pleasanter feature of M. Renan's critical character reveals itself in his tribute to M. de Sacy. An obsolete style of criticism, a liberalism more generous than logical, a piety genuine, doubtless, and delicate, but narrow in its honesty and pedantic in its delicacy, do not seem strong titles to the respect of the most daring of contemporary critics. M. Sainte-Beuve would have been

* *Etudes d'Histoire Religieuse*, p. 20.

Digitized by Google

coldly appreciative; M. Taine would have treated him as intelligent schoolboys treat an awkward master, not without regard to their own manly dignity; while M. Renan is positively enthusiastic over the uprightness and respectability, which are the true aristocracy of modern times. He delights in the idyll of the *Rue de la Serpent*, as he calls the history of M. de Sacy's literary ancestors; who studied antiquities after Lebeau and history after Rollin; who were in earnest, and respected themselves, and had a character, in spite of their prejudices and their petty quarrels. He acquiesces in the severe judgment passed by M. de Sacy on the present and immediate future of France; since it coincides with his own fervid alarm, at the growing disinclination for the life of self-devotion, and for disinterested occupations, and affords him an opportunity for enlarging on his favourite commonplace, that the world is no happier for the machinery of happiness. It is equally interesting to mark the point of divergence. The conservative tastes which are so valuable in morals are pronounced unfavourable to the hesitation and curiosity of the critic. Here we think M. de Sacy has at least the advantage of consistency; it may not be justifiable, though we are inclined to think it is inevitable, to gratify our moral taste in the choice of first principles; but if we are to select our principles in this way, in the last resort, our moral taste must be the paramount influence in determining our belief on historical questions, as well as others. For the real supremacy must rest somewhere, not only in the society, but in the individual; and therefore, after the homage which M. Renan renders to M. de Sacy, it is useless to protest that history cannot be sacrificed under penalty of losing models more valuable than those of the seventeenth century. Perhaps, also, there is something exaggerated in the admiration for historical right, which makes him single out a defective sense of the sacredness of prescription, as the one flaw in the liberalism of M. de Sacy, which is therefore pronounced to lack the one sufficient protection against the degradation of China, where the rights of each are sacrificed to the happiness of all, and moral interests are postponed to temporal expediency. M. Renan reminds us that their *a priori* origin has made French liberties weak; he does not remind us that their historical origin has made English liberties narrow, even selfish. He belongs to a school which is always magnifying the local liberty of England; perhaps he may be cured by the sight of an English school, which is always magnifying the administrative energy of France. Perhaps it is not too much to ask the cultivated opposition on either side of the channel, to raise their ambition higher; to seek a remedy and not a change of evils; to remember that a British vestryman is as bad as a French préfet, and a French préfet as a British vestryman. But M. Renan is certainly right in refusing to despair of France, because the Revolution which created a hierarchy of public officials has failed to create a system of public bodies, and in pointing out that the variety of type which still exists in European society is a guarantee against the stifling of civilisation by one official routine.

M. de Sacy is protected by his respectability, by his orthodoxy, we had almost said by his dulness; he does not compete in any way with M. Renan, or encroach upon his public; but there is something pretentious in M. Cousin's brilliancy, while his somewhat ostentatious patronage of Christianity cannot have been pleasant to a quondam seminarist. Nor is M. Renan blind to the defective acquaintance of the famous eclectic with the mysteries of German philosophy; but he leaves Hegel's sneers where he found them. He does not tell us, that though Cousin might have caught a few German fish, he was careful to drown them in French sauce. He only points out that M. Cousin did not borrow enough to stifle his own originality. He could see the grotesque aspect which eclecticism presents as the philosophy of parliamentary government, but he gravely reminds us that Cousin was not the first offender, that Royer Collard had already proclaimed that every *régime* had a philosophy of its own, which perhaps is only a more solemn repetition of the familiar adage, "Let me make a nation's ballads, and let who will make its laws." The same charity reigns in M. Renan's appreciation of the numberless difficulties and artifices and reserves which M. Cousin imposed upon himself, when he resolved to become the founder of a school, and to undertake cure of souls. These humiliations only serve to impress M. Renan more deeply with the self-devotion of a thinker, who could sacrifice his own intellectual liberty to deliver his countrymen from the degrading bondage of material interests. He is positively anxious that Catholicism should avail itself of the services of M. Cousin, though he hints that a philosopher should leave no dogma unquestioned, and that a Christian should leave no mystery unembraced. Perhaps, as self-pity is rather uncritical, we could have spared a passage in which M. Renan claims to be a better Catholic than most educated

Digitized by Google

Frenchmen who die with the sacraments, on the ground that, without exactly holding any one article of the faith, he sympathizes intelligently with all; which reminds us of a question canvassed by one of Miss Yonge's heroines, whether whipt cream with a tang of soapsuds, or slightly moulded cheese, be the better exponent of milk.

As the problem which baffled Miss Lucilla Sandbrook is too deep for us, we pass to an extract of unexceptionable grace and delicacy:—

"M. Michelet has spoken somewhere of those tardy loves of philosophers which begin towards the middle of life, or even past the middle, and end by concentrating themselves on a single image, with all the ardour of a youthful passion. But it is a sight never seen before, a miracle of historic intuition, in unison with an unrivalled vigour of imagination, that M. Cousin should have been content to accept the recompense of his pure life and earnest youth in the memory of beauties who faded two centuries ago. M. Cousin's taste for beauty seems to have applied itself successively to rather various objects; the taste for beauty is never intolerant, its choice is an affair of simple preference, which leaves no room for discussion. Hence the air of paradox which æsthetic criticism always puts on, for it finds beauty its only object in the most opposite systems; it is always volatile so far as it takes the form of a speculation; the only thing which can fix it is an act of free election, as free and as sovereign as the grace of God." *

Such smiling reserve is far preferable to the little ebullitions of accuracy which serve to explain M. Sainte-Beuve's professions of indifference to the invasion of the domain which the author of Port-Royal hoped to retain as his own by title of discovery. The present generation are certainly more interested in learning how M. Cousin came to fall in love with Madame de Longueville, than how much self-denial Madame de Longueville displayed in taking to a cap on her conversion, or even in ascertaining that in M. Taine's opinion the society of the Grand Siècle was rather dull, and that the so-called poetry of Boileau was merely a good school-boy exercise.

M. Renan is one of the most cultivated minds of Europe, and he addresses one of the most cultivated audiences. If he and his public are less solidly instructed than the Germans in the data for theorizing on the highest subjects, they escape from the systematic pedantry which entrenches every new hypothesis behind *chevaux de frise* of such solid-looking formulæ, that its adherents are in danger of forgetting its true use as an opportunity for discarding the creed of their childhood, and mistaking an elaborate uncertainty for a permanent addition to the stock of human knowledge. M. Renan and his public are wiser; like Horace, *Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri*, they can find in every suggestion of criticism an escape at once from the interests of the Bourse and the Bois de Boulogne, and from the traditions of the Sorbonne, and the contentious theodicy of Notre Dame. Still, it is their interest too that the vulgarity of daily life and the foolishness of preaching should survive their polished and desultory attacks. Swift warned the free-thinkers of his day that the abolition of Christianity would not only give a meaning to the oft-repeated cry of "the Church in danger," but would destroy their favourite occupation, and their only chance of distinction. M. Renan does not need such a warning; he is sufficiently aware of the force of the nursery adage, "If you can't make them, you oughtn't to break them;" and this homely wisdom supplies a basis of common sense to a great deal of ethereal eloquence in honour of the touching reserve of the priests, who are too angelic to distress their congregations by explaining that their whole life has been a lie. He is honestly anxious that Christianity may continue to exist, in order that he may continue to explain it away; for he is fully persuaded of the truth of the maxim which the *Revue des Deux Mondes* inculcates so perseveringly on successive Governments, that nothing which does not exist can support. He is quite right; his method cannot stand alone. Positive science of definite facts would be possible to a solitary thinker; the co-operation of fellow-students would check his errors and extend his knowledge, but it would not change its kind. Again, the solitary soul is quite competent to discover her own devotional needs, and to concentrate herself on them, whether their objective satisfaction has been revealed to her or no. Vico and Pascal in the speculative sphere, Stephenson and Zinzendorf in the practical sphere, were natually independent of their predecessors and surroundings. But poetry requires a beautiful tradition of life to illustrate and adorn, and criticism requires a beautiful tradition of life to analyse and destroy. For an epoch of criticism is necessarily an epoch of decline, in which poetry becomes the mere expression of personal moods and feelings, and practical life, when its conditions are too well understood, resolves itself into the play of personal interests, the conflict of personal ambition. There is an excess of second-hand knowledge, which is as destructive of wis-

* *Essais de Morale et de Critique, pp.* 95, 96.

Digitized by Google

dom and intellectual life as the excess of second-hand wealth is fatal to energy and frank enjoyment. All superiority and attainment are relative, and no man has reason to congratulate himself on belonging to a generation which thinks that it is being floated up to a higher level of ideas, even if the elevation were stable;—a table-land is as flat as a plain. French criticism has gained the table-land, and it expatiates there in stately gyrations which become slower as they take a wider range. Now and then there is a show of contest about a philosophical question or an individual character (for personal questions become exciting when general questions have become insoluble); but the contest is never *à l'outrance*, for the habit of resultless conflict has worn out the desire for victory. If the *Revue des Deux Mondes* could be personified and interrogated as to its *raison d'être*, we might be sure that it would repudiate the extreme pretensions of its English admirers; perhaps its inspiring muse would reply, that since Providence brought nothing into existence that was not worthy to survive, she had been commissioned to perpetuate, to purify, and to enrich the tradition of Descartes and Racine, of Cuvier and Royer Collard; that in this office she had done what she could, but that she scarcely knew, if she did not often attenuate, what she sought to purify, and dilute what she sought to diffuse, till the new elements which she strove from time to time to blend with the current, were lost in a transparent stream of insignificant words. If the same question were addressed to M. Renan, we might not wrong him much by the supposition that he had desired the graceful and modest function of the bee, which gathers honey from the flowers which it did not plant, which it cannot harm, and which it may sometimes help to fertilize, but that experience had taught him that though he could not taste the sweetness of the lime-tree, he could not impart it to others, and that people said the garden was withered where he passed; that he was more grieved than surprised when enemies compared him to the voracious sloth, which strips the trees of a forest, then drops to the ground; and if it survives the fall, drags itself slowly and painfully along till it finds another forest to strip.

ART. III.—1. *The Annals of Indian Administration in the Year* 1865–66. From the Records issued by the various Indian Governments in 1866–67. Vol. xi. Serampore: Printed by Marshall de Cruz. 1867.

2. *The Parliamentary Debates on the Abyssinian War.* November 1867.

IT is a striking instance of the uncertain state of public opinion with regard to the duty of the dependencies of Great Britain to render her aid and service in her Imperial wars, that, in the Parliamentary debates last autumn on the Abyssinian War, the orators of the Ministry and the leaders of the Opposition seemed almost equally perplexed to determine what share of the expenses ought in justice to be borne by India. The proposal of the Government, that India should continue to be charged with the pay of the troops temporarily withdrawn from her garrison for service in Africa, was evidently founded on no principle. The regiments now in Abyssinia are as far removed from the control of the Governor-General as if they were cantoned at Aldershot; and, while the war against King Theodore lasts, it is an idle pretence to say that these troops are kept available for immediate service in India, and that therefore their pay may fitly be made a charge on the revenues of that country. The Government can only have snatched at such an excuse because it feared to raise openly the inconveniently broad question, what proportions of the whole cost of the expedition should in fairness be assigned to England and India respectively. Sir Stafford Northcote shrank from affirming that India ought to be regarded as a principal party to the war, in alliance with this country, and that she should be called upon, therefore, to contribute, towards defraying the expenditure that will be incurred, such a sum—be it more or less than the pay of the regiments sent from India—as will be a just measure of the value of the interests she has at stake. He contented himself with stringing together a number of precedents which showed, not that the course the Ministry had determined to take was the right one, but that in former wars the Imperial obligations of India have been very capriciously dealt with, in consequence of the want of a settled plan for the distribution of the naval and military charges of expeditions in which England and India are jointly concerned.* Mr. Gladstone was

* In the first China war, the East India Company paid the expenses of the troops sent from India to China, besides providing at its own cost new regiments to take the place of those troops in India. In the Persian war of 1856, India bore not only the whole of the ordinary, but half of the extraordinary expenditure. In the second China war the Imperial Government paid everything. In the third China

Digitized by Google

naturally dissatisfied with this narrow and unstatesmanlike way of stating a case which was so strong in its own merits that it could only be weakened by the unskilfulness of its advocates; but he merely suggested that the Government might, by taking higher ground, have given a conclusive answer to critics who held that India was treated shabbily in being required to pay even a moderate portion of the charges on account of the Abyssinian expedition. "If," he said, "the Government should think fit to propose an inquiry—and for my part I am very much disposed to believe it might be useful—into the distribution of the military and naval charges between England and India under the present arrangements, my opinion, my strong opinion, is that the result of that inquiry would be a not inconsiderable addition to the charge of India, and a not inconsiderable diminution of the charge of England." This declaration on the part of the leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, that he firmly believes the English people are now made to bear the burden of taxes unfairly imposed upon them for the relief of the people of India—for that is what Mr. Gladstone's "strong opinion" amounts to—was unfortunately robbed of much of its importance by the counter declaration of Earl Russell in the House of Lords a week afterwards, that, "if the mother country withdrew troops from any of the colonies" for an Imperial war, "she must take on herself the payment of them" and that there is no reason why we should bear more hardly on India than on the colonies.

The confusion of ideas here briefly indicated would not be of much moment if the only matter in dispute were whether India should or should not grant the paltry amount of £300,000 as an aid to the Imperial Government in the war with King Theodore. But the question that has been raised has much wider and more general bearings, affecting the whole constitution and policy of the empire. The attention of Parliament is so constantly occupied with the discussion of domestic affairs, that it is only now and then a chance debate which allows the home public to catch indistinct and casual glimpses of the administration of those vast territories in every part of the globe which owe allegiance to the British Crown. No doubt Englishmen would long ere this have learned to view with far other eyes what goes on in the dominions of the Queen beyond the limits of the four seas, if England had from the first consciously and deliberately aimed at conquest and empire, and had marched with measured and unfaltering step from one aggression to another, bent only on making all nations acknowledge the supremacy of her flag, and on bringing them all alike under the discipline of obedience to a regular and centralized system of government. But no statesman ever planned the creation of the British Empire; none have attempted to give it a uniform and coherent organization. The colonies consist of numerous settlements of vagrant Englishmen who have gone out into the world to seek their fortune, and who for the most part are indebted to the mother country for no other kind of education than that which the elder Mr. Weller prided himself on giving his son, when he put him out in the streets and left him to shift for himself. When they succeed in life, we rejoice with them in their fame and prosperity; and if any foreign nation tried to injure them, we should protect them to the best of our ability; but we have never done so much for the colonies, nor are the foremost of them yet so firmly established as strong, rich, and self-governed communities, that we should be justified in expecting much assistance from them in any great conflict in which England might be engaged. We hold India, no doubt, by a quite different sort of tenure; but the mode in which our Indian possessions have been acquired has not been favourable to a strict definition of the relations that ought to subsist between the paramount power and the dependency. During a century of almost incessant warfare, in which the boundaries of British India have been ever steadily enlarged, till we are now the undisputed lords of the whole Peninsula, a powerful party in England have constantly denounced the policy of conquest and annexation; and the English people in general, unwilling to appear guilty of the inconsistency of denying to other nations the freedom which they themselves claim as the most precious of national birthrights, have reluctantly and often only under protest, accepted the Imperial dominion secured to them by the combined statecraft and skill in arms of great Englishmen in India. The reputation of Lord Dalhousie, who had the glory of completing the work which Clive and Hastings began, has been as virulently assailed in our own day as that of Sir Philip Francis's victim was nearly a hundred years ago, and the tenor of the accusations in each case is precisely the same. The national conscience is, however, satisfied with these disclaimers of all previous knowledge of and complicity in the ambitious designs of the men whose "unhal-

war, India only paid the expenses of the vessels employed in the expedition, all other charges being borne by England.

Digitized by Google

lowed lust of conquest" has given us an empire at which all the world wonders. We may have had greatness thrust upon us, but it does not follow that, because we disapprove of the means by which we have become great, we should therefore reject the end. Human virtue has its limits; and the English nation's honest abhorrence of all kinds of arbitrary government has not yet generated such a self-denying spirit within us as would make us capable of the sublime effort of abandoning any piece of territory worth the keeping that had once come into our possession. Cynical foreigners, including some of the natives of India (who will not believe that we have made any great sacrifice, even if we were in earnest, in refusing last year to annex Mysore), are apt to assume that the virtuous indignation we express at the acts of the men who founded and consolidated our Indian Empire is mere hypocrisy; and there is, indeed, some force in the jeering remark that it was not until we had destroyed every formidable enemy who opposed the progress of our arms in India, had reduced all the remaining native Princes to the condition of mere feudatories of the British Crown, and had seized the whole sea-cost, all the strong places, and the most fertile provinces in the Peninsula, that our Government magnanimously proclaimed to the princes and people of India Her Majesty's solemn determination to rest and be thankful, and not to covet the territory of any of her neighbours and allies. It must be owned that these fine phrases are too commonly used by Englishmen as a blind to conceal from themselves the real nature of their rule in India. Afraid to own that their government of that country is a despotism founded on conquest and maintained by force, and that its existence is justified by the peace, order, and prosperity it has secured to a people who were previously given up as a prey to all the evils of anarchy, philosophical Liberals habitually affect to talk of the natives of India as the loyal subjects of a constitutional government, and to have their feelings outraged by proposals to take money out of the Indian Treasury, without the consent of the tax-payers of that country, for the support of Imperial enterprises. Sir Henry Rawlinson, it is true, had the candour to remind the House of Commons last November that it was a mere misuse of terms to speak of Indian tax-payers as if, like English tax-payers, they possessed the privileges of representative government; but this plainness of speech gave great offence, not only to sentimental politicians like Mr. Fawcett, but to critics who, though generally holding sentiment in profound aversion, yet consider it a dangerous thing to tell all the world on what footing our government in India really stands. So general is this feeling among our representatives in Parliament, that, in their scrupulous and tender regard for the rights of the natives of India, they even forget their duty to their own constituents, and are content to leave undetermined, from year to year, to the possible injury of British tax-payers, the question raised by Mr. Gladstone, and on which that high financial authority has gone so far as to express beforehand a "very strong opinion," whether the Imperial charges for which England now holds India liable are not fixed on far too low a scale.

The direct consequences of this irresolution and want of sincerity in our treatment of Indian affairs are most hurtful to English influence in India. The people of that country are by no means indifferent to politics, or ignorant of what goes on in England. The vernacular press, which counts its newspapers by the dozen, and their readers by thousands in every large town, is almost entirely in the hands of intelligent, ambitious men, who have been educated in the schools and colleges founded by the British Government, and whose ardent minds have been filled, by the liberal training they have thus enjoyed, with Western ideas of nationality and popular rights, to which their forefathers, in the happiest days of Hindu or Mussulman rule, were utter strangers. There is something whimsical in the gravity with which a smart young Brahmin of Calcutta, or Parsee of Bombay, fresh from the study of English constitutional history, and eager to astonish his admiring fellow-countrymen by displaying his perfect familiarity with the manners and customs of English civilisation, catches up all the cant phrases of Parliamentary life in this country, and moralizes, in leading articles that mimic with marvellous accuracy every trick of style and tone in our periodical literature, on such a maxim as that taxation without representation is tyranny. These are the men who seriously believe that England's chief mission on earth is to educate the natives of India, in order that, when they are fitted for self-government, she may gracefully retire and leave them the further control of their own destinies; and, as no one has yet been bold enough to fix the date when this retirement shall take place, the newspaper writers may be forgiven for assuming that such a blessed consummation of our glorious work in the East may be accomplished even in their own day. They constantly write, therefore, with a sort of compassionate good-will towards the British Government as a temporary in-

Digitized by Google

stitution. They acknowledge, indeed, that on the whole our rule has probably been a blessing to India; but they complain that our form of administration is too hard and prosaic for imaginative Orientals; that it does not open out careers for enterprising youth who scorn the peaceful paths of commerce and industry, and that its tame and dull uniformity might perhaps be advantageously exchanged for the attractive irregularity of political life in native States. These critics, happily for themselves, know nothing by personal experience of the actual condition of the subjects of independent native princes, nor do they care to make the reflection that there is not one of the so-called independent States in India which has within itself the elements of cohesion, or which would not fall to pieces within six months if the protection of British troops were withdrawn. Charmed with fantastic visions of national independence, they are eager to anticipate the time when India shall be governed by her own princes, with, of course, the aid and advice of the cleverest and most virtuous graduates from the universities of the Presidency towns. Meanwhile, having a press as free as that of England or America, they assiduously practise in the newspapers all the arts of independence. They affect mighty airs of indignation at the audacity of England in doing anything with regard to India that has not received the sanction of the national will, and greedily re-echo and exaggerate the complaints of magnanimous members of Parliament, that the people of India are cruelly oppressed, because the Imperial Government arbitrarily determines to defray the expense of a ball to the Sultan, or of part of the Abyssinian expedition, out of the Indian revenues. The Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* lately gave a quotation from a native paper, in which the editor, commenting on the proceedings of Parliament, declared it to be a scandalous thing that, while India had to provide a pension for Lady Elgin, because her husband was Governor-General when he died, and to pay England for every pound of powder supplied from this country to the Indian garrisons, the services of Indian regiments were taken for campaigns in foreign countries, and no compensation made to the people of India. Ludicrous as this kind of writing may be, it has a dangerous side also. Such criticisms of the conduct of our Government cannot be largely circulated among an ignorant population, who are naturally inclined to think evil of their alien rulers, without weakening English authority and prestige; and there is no way of silencing the critics, but by making ourselves and others clearly understand what is our actual position in India, and what general principles ought to regulate the financial relations of the two countries.

Can we then define, with any approach to exactness, what are the Imperial obligations of India, while that country remains an important member of the community of nations which forms the British empire? This question can perhaps best be answered by a reference to what would be the national duties of an Indian Government if India were an independent State. For, it is obvious that the natives of India cannot claim to be more generously treated by their conquerors, than they would be by rulers of their own race and choice. It is much if old precedents as to the doom of conquered countries are set aside in their favour, and if England refrains from exacting a heavy tribute from her Eastern subjects for the relief of British tax-payers. But if this policy is entirely reversed, if India, as a dependency, is absolutely better off, is more thoroughly protected at a less cost to her people, than if she were an independent State, then she has taken advantage of her English connexion in order to relieve herself of a portion of her legitimate burdens at the expense of the rest of the empire. Now, the chief heads of expenditure in every State are easily ascertained. The Government must first of all secure peace, order, and equality before the law, to all its subjects within the limits of its own territory, and it can attain these ends only by maintaining a strong army and civil service. Then, for the defence of the country against foreign enemies, and the protection of its external commerce, the principal places of the country must be fortified, and a disposable land-force kept always ready for service, and, in addition, there must be a navy powerful in proportion to the extent of the country's maritime interests. Finally, every State requires a diplomatic service to represent the Government at foreign courts, and to conduct negotiations and watch over the fortunes of citizens dwelling abroad in time of peace. With regard to the first of these three requirements—the maintenance of internal tranquillity,—it will be allowed that India pays for an Army and Civil Service that are fully equal to their duties. Mr. Gladstone indeed contended, in his speech last November, that it was hard upon England to be compelled to receive back at any time, whether she wanted them or not, soldiers whom she had trained for Indian service, if the Governor-General thought he could safely reduce the force at his command by a few regiments; but it is not generally a matter of complaint

Digitized by Google

with us that we have too many troops at home, and any temporary inconvenience England might be put to in having to accommodate more regiments than she wanted is surely compensated by the regular payments which India makes on account of the depôts of troops kept in this country, which are always available in case of need as a part of the home force. The diplomatic work of India is done for her all over the world, except in Persia, by agents whose salaries are paid by the English people; but there is no need to quarrel about trifles, and we will grant the payment of the expenses of the Persian mission is a sufficient contribution by India towards meeting the whole expenditure on account of Imperial diplomacy.

There remain the Naval charges; and at this stage of the inquiry we make the startling discovery that India maintains no navy at all, though about half a million a year is provided in the Indian Budget for a marine consisting of dismantled men-of-war, which are now only used as transports. Up to the year 1863, indeed, there did exist an admirable little service known as the Indian navy, which, though not strong enough to be equal to all the emergencies of a great maritime war, nevertheless did first-rate work, not only in surveying the coasts of all the Eastern seas, and putting down piracy from Zanzibar to Hong-Kong, but in assisting to bring to a successful issue important expeditions against powerful enemies of India in China, Persia, and Burmah. But after the suppression of the Mutiny it became necessary for the Indian Government to find the means of improving the financial position of the country, and bringing to a close the "era of deficits;" and Sir Charles Wood, in his zeal for retrenchment, took it into his head one day to abolish the Indian navy, A word from the Secretary of State was enough. Parliament considers it unfashionable to discuss Indian questions, and acquiesced without a thought in what Sir Charles Wood proposed. So the service was broken up, the ships were put out of commission, the officers compelled to retire on pensions, and India was left without even a gunboat of her own to protect more than three thousand miles of sea-coast and a commerce of 100 millions sterling.* This, however, was not all. Formerly, the officers and men of cruisers of the Royal Navy on the East Indian station used to receive extra pay, or *batta*, from the Indian Government. This custom also Sir Charles did away with, while throwing on the Royal ships much more severe work than they formerly undertook in the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf. It may be estimated that the saving to India by these changes amounts to nearly a million sterling a year. Part of this amount is now added to the burdens of the English people: part is made up by the diminished efficiency of the naval force employed for the defence of India. The squadron employed on the East Indian station has necessarily been strengthened, but it is composed of ships not built for service in tropical seas, and manned by officers and crews whose wretched pay makes them thoroughly disgusted with their work. Now, if India stood alone, the first condition of her existence as an independent State would be that she should take rank as a strong maritime power. Geographically, her position in Asia somewhat resembles that of Italy in Europe; and if the newly constituted Italian kingdom is compelled to devote two millions a year to its navy, it is not an extravagant supposition that India, with a commerce twice as valuable, would be forced to spend twice as much in order to place her navy on such a footing as would secure the respect of foreign powers, and prevent the depredations of the pirates that swarm in every Eastern sea.

We come, then, to this conclusion, that whereas it is the national duty of the people of India to support out of their own revenues land and sea forces sufficient for all purposes of peace and war, they obtain, by the incorporation of their country in the British Empire, the privilege of having a navy maintained for them at the expense of the good-natured people of England. We may well, in the words of Mr. Gladstone, already feel that we are overburdened with the weight of empire, when we carry out this absurdly Quixotic policy of conquering foreign countries with apparently no other purpose in view than that of increasing our own taxation for the benefit of the nations we subdue. Surely we ought to be just to our humbler fellow-countrymen who pay taxes at home, before choosing to be generous to the "oppressed tax-payers" of India? Lord Russell says we should treat India as liberally as we do our own colonies. But even with regard to the colonies we have recognised the principle that, as soon as they are able to stand alone, they shall provide for their protection at their own expense; and it cannot therefore be unfair to say, with regard to India, that that dependency, to which we are bound by no ties of kindred, ought to pay its

* The 'Monitors' now being built in England for the Government of Bombay are only intended to complete the defences of Bombay harbour, though, if England insisted on India doing her own work, they ought to be, and might be, made the nucleus of a new and efficient Indian navy.

Digitized by Google

own way. It cannot be illiberal to demand that the natives of India shall share with us the responsibilities as well as the advantages of being British subjects, and that they shall be prepared, while the Empire lasts, to cast in their lot for good as well as evil with our own. Sir Stafford Northcote, speaking rather as the head of the Indian Government than as an English Minister and Member of Parliament, contended last November that it would be "monstrous" to call upon India for help in England's European wars; but in point of principle her liability is equally binding in all our Imperial wars, whether the field of action be Europe or Asia, though, as a matter of convenience, no doubt her forces should generally be excused from service on this side the Isthmus of Suez, on condition of taking a principal part in our Eastern wars. In any case, however, the people of England have a right to insist on having such an army and navy kept on foot by India as the importance of that country's national interests demands; so that, now its separate existence is merged in that of the British Empire, it may be capable of doing its fair share of the Imperial work. Lord Cranborne thinks it would be dangerous to have India converted into a huge Imperial camp and arsenal, from which a Secretary of State could at any time send out formidable expeditions; but it is a mere question of Parliamentary discipline whether or not any Minister shall have absolute power to dispose of the fleets and armies of India at his pleasure. If Parliament attends to its duty, it can easily control the action of the Secretary of State for India; but it will hardly be suggested that we should deprive ourselves of the military advantages which the possession of India places at our command, and go on paying for the defence of that country at sea (as we do while the Royal Navy is employed for that purpose, and no compensation in money or kind is paid to England), because the House of Commons does not choose to enforce the Parliamentary responsibility of the Indian Minister. If the representatives of the people in Parliament neglect their duty, the people of course must be the sufferers; but when the constituencies once understand what are the consequences to the tax-payers of Great Britain of the lax way in which Indian affairs are treated by Parliament, they will not be long at a loss to devise the means of making India do her duty by the Empire, and yet keeping within due constitutional limits the liberty of the Executive Government to employ her forces in wars beyond her own boundaries.

But the advocates of Indian grievances assert that India returns indirectly, if not directly, full value to England for all the benefits she receives; indeed, they would even strike the balance the other way, and represent the advantages of the connexion between the two countries as nearly all appropriated by England. It would be wrong to class with such critics a writer in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1866, who tries to remove "the impression that India draws largely on the pecuniary resources and strength of England," for he endeavours, as far as his information goes, to put the case impartially, and to establish the satisfactory, and, in the main, no doubt, correct conclusion, that both countries are gainers by the relationship existing between them. But it is no answer to the complaint that the accounts of a partnership are not fairly adjusted among the several partners, to say that the business could not be broken up without causing the ruin of all concerned. The real question is, whether one partner absorbs a larger share of the profits than he is justly entitled to; and to this question the *Quarterly* reviewer supplies no answer, for in his argument he completely forgets to place on one side of the account, to the credit of England, the amount of the naval charges of which we relieve India. "Omitting," he says, "payments on account of railway materials, military stores, and other similar purchases, and in return for goods of equivalent value, the sum paid annually by India for the services of civilians and soldiers, and the interest of money lent, spent in England, forming a clear addition to the wealth of the country, is about £6,000,000 a year. . . . Now, what is the call which India makes upon England in return for the wealth she confers? It is merely the permission to employ, and to pay for, the civilians and soldiers necessary for the public service." The sailors, as we have pointed out, go for nothing in this estimate; but, taking the account as it stands, what does England gain by the transaction? In return for so much money, she grants India "merely" the permission to employ so many civilians and soldiers. There is much virtue in that "merely." Soldiers, at all events, as Mr. Gladstone remarked, are not made in a day; there is no unlimited supply of recruits in England; and it must be no slight drain on our resources to supply year by year the gaps in the ranks of the Indian army. Nor does India merely "employ" our soldiers, it consumes them. War and the deadly climate destroy their thousands year by year; and when the *Quarterly* reviewer affirms that "the splendid army, trained, paid, and kept in active discipline at the cost of India, is available for the service of England," he

Digitized by Google

forgets that the events of 1857 clearly proved what risks we run in attempting, when we are pressed for men in a European war, to reduce the English garrison of India.

Great stress, however, is laid upon the "Home charges," which consist of remittances to the amount of between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000 sterling a year, to cover the interest on money lent to India by English capitalists, and pensions payable to retired members of the civil and military services. As to the debt, is England greatly beholden to India because that country pays with creditable regularity the interest on money borrowed from English capitalists? One would think that the obligation rather lay the other way. Certainly, so far as regards the capital invested in Indian railways, it appears that our dependency has made a good bargain, for year by year the net traffic receipts approximate more closely the amount of the guaranteed interest; and, as soon as this level is reached, India will be able to boast that she has had a complete system of railways constructed for her without any cost whatever to herself. As to the pensions, not amounting in all to £2,000,000 a year, can any one who considers for what services these sums are paid gravely argue that they form an annual tribute drawn by England from India? Each of these pensions is the reward of a lifetime devoted to the service of India. A civil servant, say, who has gone out to that country in early youth, full of strength, energy, and enthusiasm for his work, remains in India thirty-five years, rising by slow degrees from the post of assistant magistrate to that of governor and despotic ruler of a province containing many millions of inhabitants. Throughout his long, active, and useful career, he has done incalculable good to India, setting a bright example to the natives of inflexible integrity of purpose, great industry, and eager devotion to duty, combined with a liberality of sentiment and anxiety to improve the condition of men of all races and creeds within the sphere of his influence, which strikes the Oriental mind with all the force of a new revelation. Such a man retires at the end of his term of service with a pension of £1000 a year, to spend the evening of his days in the country of his birth. Is it just, to point attention to every shilling that he receives as a token of the wealth England draws from India, while we omit to place on record, on the other side, the life-long labours of this Englishman to increase the prosperity of India? One cannot put in figures the value of the work he has given to his adopted country; but that work has become a permanent possession and left an abiding landmark in the history of a regenerated people. Because such a man has ceased to labour in India, is his pension of £1000 a year paid him for nothing? On the contrary, this was one of the stipulated rewards of his service, and all that he receives has been well earned by hard work done in India for the benefit of the people of India. It will be said that we have taken a favourable specimen of the class of retired servants of the Indian Government; but, as a rule, all in their degree have similarly done their duty, and merited the pensions which they enjoy. (The argument is, of course, *a fortiori* applicable in the case of remittances made to England by Anglo-Indians during their term of active service.) What shadow of a pretence, then, can there be for the allegation so often brought against England, that India is, as it were, a farm worked to the exclusive profit of Englishmen? Is there any Englishman (we except of course the *mauvais sujets* who are to be found in all services, and who, under any government, will neglect the work intrusted to them, but who are happily rare among Anglo-Indians) who eats the bread of idleness at the expense of the oppressed people of India? On the contrary, can there be any reasonable doubt that India makes a profitable exchange by purchasing from England the services of men competent to carry through the work of administrators for her in an energetic, self-sacrificing, enlightened spirit, which the sluggish nature of her own people unfits to sympathise with or even to understand, though they accept with placid contentment its invaluable results?

But then there are the fruits of our commerce with India. Does not the possession of that country supply us with unrivalled markets for the consumption of Manchester and Sheffield goods, and give enterprising Englishmen opportunities of making fortunes in trade, such as theyenjoy nowhere else in the world? The expressions often used by critics who are fond of denouncing English rapacity and injustice towards weak nations would lead ignorant persons to suppose that England jealously kept to herself the monopoly of the Indian trade, and by exclusive laws and prohibitory duties deprived all other nations of the possibility of successful competition with her. By a strange misuse of terms, an earnest opponent of English Imperialism lately made it a grievous count in a savage indictment of the whole policy of England in the East, that, wherever our flag is seen, it brings "a glut of piece goods" in its track. It can surely be no crime for Englishmen to wish to give the people of

Digitized by Google

Asia the chance of buying their clothing at rates far below the usual market price, yet this would be the only effect of "glutting" every seaport town with cargoes of Manchester goods. It is a pity the authors of such rhetorical expressions do not take the trouble at least to understand the meaning of the words they use, so as to avoid committing ludicrous blunders of this sort. There are other men, however, who stoutly contend that we take a mean advantage of our power in India when we confer on the people the benefits of free-trade, and that we ought to allow them to levy import duties on foreign goods for the protection of their own manufactures, if they choose to do so. The United States, it is urged, and even British colonies which possess the right of self-government, repudiate the doctrines of free-trade; is it not then an act of high-handed selfishness on our part to put them in practice in India? Even if it were an absolutely correct statement of the case that there is unqualified free-trade in India, it is a sufficient answer to our accusers that we, being responsible for the good government of the country, hold it our duty to give full application, so far as the Indian trade is concerned, to those laws of political economy, the due observance of which has developed beyond all precedent the commercial prosperity of England. Our policy may be a mistaken one, but at least we have proved our sincerity in first trying the experiment of adopting it at home; and the examples of the United States and some of our own colonies do not convince us we have acted wrongly, for we believe we have proof that a policy of protection does more harm to the people who adopt it than to the foreign commerce which it is designed to injure. The English Government has never proposed to pass sumptuary laws compelling the natives of India to wear no cotton cloth but what is made in Manchester; * it simply offers them every possible facility for buying everything they want in the cheapest market. Nor is it so bigoted to free-trade as to refuse to let import duties be raised by India for purposes of revenue; for there is even now a 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty on Manchester goods; and though it is true that the importation of these goods has destroyed the trade of the petty natives weavers, yet they have to encounter a far more formidable rivalry in the products of the numerous mills which have been erected during the last ten years in the principal towns of the cotton districts, and which, being favoured in the competition with Lanscashire by the cheapness of labour, the saving first of the freight on the raw material, and then of that on the manufactured goods, and, in addition, by the import duty, are gradually pushing the English manufacturers out of the Indian markets. From what we have said it will be apparent that the Englishman in India has no advantages beyond what his own superior energy and knowledge of business can secure for him. Not only is he not protected against the natives, but all other Europeans are equally privileged with himself to contend for the prizes of mercantile life in India; and amongst the well-known of Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, there are many German, French, and American names—though of course the immense majority are Scotch and English, for the simple reason that Great Britain has the principal carrying trade of the world in its hands, and is the largest producer of, and dealer in, those goods which are most in request among the natives of India. There can be no doubt that the trade with India thus carried on is most valuable to us. But we should be taking a very one-sided view of the real bearings of our connexion with India if we imagined that there was no commercial reciprocity between England and her dependency. We are all familiar with the glowing pictures which enthusiasts have painted for us of the fertilizing influences of wealth imported from India into this country; and, if we were to believe all we hear, we should conclude that the prosperity of the middle classes of English society was mainly dependent on the trade with India. But English merchants having dealings with the United States, France, Russia, and the English colonies, make as large fortunes in business as merchants who have dealings with India; and nevertheless no one points to the results of individual enterprise in the former cases as proofs of our national indebtedness to the foreign countries concerned. Yet a successful Anglo-Indian trader, who has fought as good a fight as his neighbours, is popularly supposed to have had unfair advantages granted him in the race for wealth; and whenever we ask that India should do her duty to the Empire, we are reproached whith the numerous villas inhabited by Anglo-Indian merchants, and the swarms of Anglo-Indian children maintained at our schools, out of the profits of our commerce with India; and asked if such sights

* A member of the Bombay Civil Service, not renowned for wisdom, did indeed once propose that the coolies, or labouring men, whose ordinary dress is a piece of cloth round the loins, should be compelled to wear breeches; but this proposal was made in the interest, not of Manchester, but of decency; and it was never seriously entertained.

Digitized by Google

do not shame us to silence. But it is forgotten that there may be much to be said on the other side, and that the native merchants of India may be keen-witted enough to take quite as much from us as they give. Are there no families in India enriched by the commerce with England? If it is Indian money that pays the rents of a large proportion of the houses in the wealthy suburbs of our great towns, and supports hundreds of genteel schools throughout the country, whose money is it that enables natives of India to employ European architects to build them magnificent mansions, that pays for the scores of carriages from Long Acre and splendid English horses imported into Bombay and Calcutta, and for the adornment of native women with lacs of rupees' worth of massive gold and jewelry? We narrow the question, indeed, by putting it thus; for, if the commerce between England and India has had a marked effect in increasing the prosperity of one class in England, it has effected an entire revolution in the habits of all classes in the principal provinces of British India. The truth is, that in no other country in the world has the rate of material progress been more sudden and remarkable than in British India during the last quarter of a century. The advance from the depths of Oriental barbarism to the level of modern civilisation has been not less astoundingly rapid than in the most favoured districts of America. Sir Bartle Frere, the late Governor of Bombay, said not long ago, at a meeting in Willis's Rooms, that while Englishmen continued to speak of the changeless East, the East was really, under Western influence, undergoing a transformation as complete as was ever effected by magician's wand; and, indeed, our sober experience of the gradual progress of European countries cannot measure the quickness with which revolutionary changes are effected in a country in which society has been broken up from its very foundation, in which all old theories and prejudices have been overturned, and an entirely new impulse and direction given to life, by the simultaneous introduction from the West of liberal ideas of trade, politics, and religion. But we should not be acting justly towards our readers, whom we wish to convince of the absurdity of the charge (more often insinuated than broadly stated), that India has, since she came under the rule of the English Gorvernment, been impoverished for the benefit of the people of England, if we did not give fuller details with regard to this branch of our subject.

To appreciate what the British Government has really done for India, we must consider what was the condition of the country when the East India Company began to acquire dominion in Hindustan. The Moghul empire, fallen from the greatness it had attained under the most famous of the descendants of Baber, was crumbling to pieces beneath the assaults of Affghans and Persians, Rajpoots and Mahrattas. Throughout the whole peninsula there was no settled government, but the mass of the people, the peaceful traders and agriculturists, were everywhere given up as a prey to native freebooters and foreign invaders. The state of India was like that of Britain, as described by Tennyson, after the Romans had left the island, and before Arthur re-established the reign of law. All "the ways were filled with rapine," and it was rarely that "a random deed of prowess done redressed a random wrong." Each chief fought for his own hand, and sought the aid of French or English adventurers to enable him to gain the ascendency over his rivals. It is impossible to ascertain what taxes were imposed on the wretched populations, for there was no limit to the exactions made by a constant succession of victors in the interminable civil strife; but we know that the devastations were so terrible as to throw the soil of whole provinces, once renowned for their fertility, out of cultivation; that the land-tax, one of the chief sources of Indian revenue, would in many places have yielded nothing, if soldiers had not been sent into the fields with the despoiled and tortured peasantry to compel them to sow the seed of which others would reap the crop; and that great towns were systematically pillaged till trade decayed, and every man who possessed money hid it in the ground and put on the mask of poverty, lest his wealth should bring him to ruin. The English, not solicitous at first of conquest, but provoked to aggression by native treachery, were afterwards urged on by that love of empire which is natural to every enterprising people, and finally found themselves forced to fight for self-preservation against the French,—their only real competitors for the dominion of India, for none of the native powers was strong enough to stand alone. It took nearly half a century of warfare, from Plassey to Assaye, to decide the question who should be the successors of the Moghuls in an inheritance which, wasted as it had been by the long rule of anarchy, was still among the noblest of earthly possessions. The servants of the East India Company could do little more, until English supremacy had been established, than provide the means of carrying on an often doubtful contest; but even before the final overthrow of the Mahrattas

Digitized by Google

and their French allies by Lord Lake and Sir Arthur Wellesley the foundations of a just and regular government had been securely laid in Bengal. Lord Cornwallis is often reproached with having acted too hastily in granting a permanent settlement of the land revenues of Bengal to the Zemindars, or middlemen, of that province, and thus sacrificing the hereditary rights of the tenantry; and there can be no doubt that this settlement (which, by the way, Sir Philip Francis claimed the honour of having first devised *) wronged the ryots, because at that time the nature of the land tenures of India was but imperfectly understood. But the two principles of Lord Cornwallis's policy—that without long leases there can be no agricultural improvement, and that fixity of tenure for the occupiers of the soil affords the best guarantee for the contentment of the most important class of the population,—are thoroughly sound and of world-wide application; and the Anglo-Indian Government, by steadily persisting, with better knowledge of the claims of the peasantry to a part ownership of the soil, in the course thus opened out, has not only immensely strengthened its own position, but given a most powerful stimulus to the productive resources of the country. The thirty years' settlement in Bombay, with right of renewal secured to the tenants, and no fine on account of improvements they may have made at their own expense, is a model of what such settlements should be. It is based on a revenue survey as thorough as that of which the results are recorded in Domesday Book, but having for its object the registration and confirmation for all time of the rights of native occupiers and owners of the soil; the assessment is so light that, in these days of high prices for agricultural produce, the cultivators think nothing of the small proportion of the yearly value of their crops that they have to pay to the State; and the transition from the present system to the preferable one of having the rent-charge fixed in perpetuity can at any time be made without difficulty. This wise and statesmanlike measure of reforming the land-revenue systems throughout India may be regarded as the charter of the agricultural population, and would alone suffice to give the English Government a good title to the confidence and esteem of its Eastern subjects. But, besides limiting the demand on the cultivator, and encouraging him to extend his operations and take in more land every year, assured that he will be permitted to gather the fruits of his labours, the Government has opened all the markets of the world to Indian trade, and continues to expend many millions every year (about £7,000,000 is the average) on internal communications. The results of this policy are unmistakably shown in an excellent book, entitled *Annals of Indian Administration in the Year* 1865–66, which has been compiled by the editor of the *Friend of India* from the latest records issued by the various Indian Governments. In this book we have brought together for the first time official statistics of the commercial progress of India for the last five-and-twenty years, along with the usual statements as to what has been done in the departments of legislation, administration of justice, education, and so on, during the year. No figures could speak more emphatically in favour of the system of administration now pursued in India than those which describe the movement of the external trade of the country since 1841. We forbear to give the whole table; it will be enough to say that the total value of the imports and exports (including treasure) rose from £24,024,263 in 1841, to £116,986,066 in 1865. It is true that in the latter year the returns were still swollen by the excessive values attached to cotton and piece goods during the American war; but before the influence of that war on prices had been felt in India the trade had risen in value (in 1861) to nearly £70,000,000; and as there is every probability that the prices of Indian cotton will never sink again quite to their old level, we may fairly assume that the total value of the external commerce of India will not henceforth range much below £100,000,000; that is to say, it has been quadrupled within the lifetime of one generation. Wherever he goes in India, the traveller finds proofs of the abounding prosperity of which these figures indicate the existence.* We do not say that there are not

* See *Memoirs of Sir P. Francis*, vol. ii. p. 348: —"On this principle, Lord Cornwallis gave to the natives of Bengal a security in their landed property. I appeal to the noble Lord (Castlereagh), I appeal to an Honourable Director (Charles Grant) whether this is not the very plan which I proposed in 1776, and which Lord Cornwallis has done me the honour to execute." But compare Kaye's *Administration of the East India Company*, page 181: —"The settlement, whether good or bad, was not one of aristocratic conception, English importation, or precipitate execution. It was emphatically the work of the Company's civil servants," and notably, Mr. Kaye points out, of Sir John Shore (Lord Teignmouth).

* The most disagreeable proof, to Englishmen with fixed salaries in India, is the rapid and steady increase in the prices of all kinds of food and labour in every part of the country that has been opened out by the railways. In the town of Bombay itself

Digitized by Google

outlying provinces in which little has yet been done to remedy the ill effects of centuries of misgovernment for which England is not responsible; it would be marvellous if there were no neglected spots in so vast a territory. But it would be as unfair to judge of the general condition of British India by the state of Orissa, as of that of the United Kingdom by the state of Connaught. Along all the great lines of highroad and railway, the most careless observer cannot fail to detect welcome evidences of plenty and ease among the population. The late Mr. Wilson declared that, except in Belgium, he had never seen anything to be compared with the exuberant fertility of the valley of the Ganges; and on the western side of India, let any one go along the line of the Bombay and Baroda Railway, traversing the province of Guzerat (which twenty years ago was shut off by the monsoon rains from communication with the rest of India, and not much more than half a century ago was swept at frequent intervals by Mahratta forays, so that the husbandman tilled the soil without hope, and the trader only purchased security by heavy ransoms), and the picture now presented to the eye is that of a busy, industrious, contented people, leading a free and happy life, and rapidly accumulating wealth of which no man can despoil them. Look at the groups of gaily-dressed, comfortable farming folk who throng all the country stations on the line; at the fine figures of the women, loaded with bangles of gold and silver, and resplendent with jewels,—signs at once of the great wealth of the agricultural class and the habit of security, which has become so strong amongst them that they no longer fear to expose their most valuable possessions to the public gaze. Nor is it only in Guzerat and Bengal that such progress may be remarked. In the Deccan, the Central Provinces, the Punjab, Scinde, and wherever British energy has had fair play, similar results have attended the organization of a just, enlightened, and vigorous system of government; and it is a proof of how little the enemies of British rule really have to complain of, that the principal accusation brought against it is based upon the supposed want of "romance" in its constitution.

This, indeed, is the main argument constantly put forward by the admirers of what is called the native system of government, that it is more congenial to the instincts of the people, though it does not do them nearly so much good as our own. The drift of some of the papers on this subject lately collected and sent home by Sir John Lawrence was well defined by a London journalist, who gravely said it appeared the English rule was not partial or oppressive, but it was a pity we had allowed the fine old native institution of administering justice after the patriarchal fashion under a tree to fall into decay. There was something so picturesque, he said, in that ancient practice, and we all know that picturesqueness is eminently attractive to the Eastern mind. A very similar argument might be used,—it was used, if we err not, during the Fenian panic the other day,—to show the superiority of Lynch law to more regular modes of procedure, and the greater picturesqueness of the system of hanging suspected criminals on the nearest lamp-post, instead of sending them to undergo a formal trial, and to be locked up on conviction in unromantic model prisons. But civilisation must have its forms, tedious as many of them may be; and picturesque justice is after all much more agreeable to ballad-singers and novelists than to the poor people who are forced to endure it. We do not deny that the multiplication of forms in our Indian courts of law may be carried to an unnecessary extent, to the encouragement of a system of extortion practised on clients by the lower native officials, which reflects scandal on the administration of justice; and it is possible that we may lessen this evil by continuing the course on which we have entered, of admitting the highest class of natives, who can deal with the suitors more directly than English judges or magistrates, to places on the bench, and employing educational means to raise the tone of all classes. It would be a short-sighted policy to despise the aid which natives can give us in adapting our government more closely to the country's needs; but what we protest against is that vague way of talking, that sham liberality now fashionable in England, which favours the delusion that the English only intend to hold India until the country is "ripe for self-government," and that all our Indian policy ought to have this sole end in view. Let any Englishman who knows anything of India ask himself this question: Does he look forward to a time when our Government can safely make the army of India a national army? If not, what is the advantage of letting the national party in India believe that they have anything further to

---

we find, from the Municipal Commissioner's Report for 1866, that these prices ranged in almost every case at from 75 to 100 per cent. or more above the average for the five years 1866–60; and in 1866 the disturbing effect of the American war on prices in Western India had ceased to be felt.

Digitized by Google

expect from us than the permission they have already received to compete with Englishmen on equal terms for civil appointments in the service of the existing Government, and for the prizes of all professions except the army? It is cruel to them to flatter them with hopes of independence, for, with all our imbecility of talk on such subjects, we Englishmen are strenuous enough, not to say ferocious, in action, when the integrity of the Empire is really threatened; it is dangerous to ourselves, for no one can long continue to play with edge-tools with impunity; and it is most unjust to our present system of Indian government, of which we have every reason to be proud.

The sentimental spirit, whose workings we have condemned, has been especially rampant of late years in the Indian Financial Department, and that is the chief reason why the Imperial relations between England and India have been allowed to fall into so great confusion. We have attempted to show, in this paper, that India has succeeded in shifting off her own shoulders, and on to those of the people of England, a burden that she herself ought to bear; but there are many persons who, while admitting that the case as to India's obligations has been made out, will hesitate to join us in the demand that that country should be made to do her duty, because they share the popular belief that our Indian fellow-subjects are already subjected to very heavy taxation. The general impression prevailing in England, that the expense of maintaining our Government constitutes even now too severe a drain on the resources of India, would have been dispelled long ago if the advocates of a sound fiscal policy had been permitted to reform and regulate the Indian accounts. But for the last eight years at least the Indian Treasury has never had fair play. Mr. Wilson tried to put the finances of our dependency in good order by means of strong and drastic measures of taxation. But an outcry was immediately raised, that such measures might do very well for England, but they could not be borne in India. A large party of malcontents, headed by Sir Charles Trevelyan, declared that it was disagreeable to the natives to pay new taxes, and that, if things were allowed to go on in the old way, the chances were they might come right in the end. It was, in fact, argued that the people of India ought to be treated like a nation of spoilt children; and Sir Charles Trevelyan wrote and acted as if he had the feminine weakness, spoken of by 'George Eliot,' of believing that two and two *would* come to make five (in India), if he only cried and bothered enough about it. In the end, Sir Charles Wood also unfortunately gave ear to these delusions, and the consequence was, that after all the herculean labours of General Balfour to cut down expenditure by reform in the military department, and after the wholesale transfer of the naval charges to the English Treasury, the perverseness of the late Whig Secretary of State in sending Sir Charles Trevelyan back to India as Financial Member of Council to repeal the income-tax Mr. Wilson had imposed landed India in fresh financial difficulties, from which Mr. Massey has vainly striven to extricate her.

The appointment of Sir Richard Temple to succeed Mr. Massey reawakens the hope that something may at last be done to improve permanently the financial position of India. There will be no more deficits in India when once that country has a financier bold enough to make the rich bear their just share of taxation. At present, it is only the poor in India who pay taxes. The whole revenue amounts to above £47,000,000, being in the proportion of 6s. 6d. per head of population, whereas, taking the population of Great Britain and Ireland as 30,000,000, and the annual revenue as £70,000,000, the proportion per head in the United Kingdom is at the rate of £2, 6s. 8d. Of course there is no comparison between the national wealth of the two countries; but it must be borne in mind that of the Indian revenue £20,000,000 consists of rent of the land, and from £7,000,000 to £8,000,000 of the produce of opium-duties which are paid by the Chinese, so that the taxes actually paid by the people of India do not amount to more than £20,000,000, or at the rate of a fraction less than 2s. 10d. a head. India is therefore probably the most lightly taxed of all countries that possess a civilized government; and as the principal tax of those not already enumerated is the salt-tax, producing £6,000,000, which of course is mainly paid by the poor, the rich traders who profit most largely by our rule contribute little or nothing towards the support of the Government but the chief part of the revenue from Stamps (£2,500,000), and a proportion of the Customs duties (£2,800,000) and the License tax (£500,000). This is the confessed reproach of our administration in India; and Mr. Massey, in bringing forward the miserably inadequate measure of the license-tax last year, declared that his object was to reach the pockets of the wealthy class, who now are able almost entirely to escape taxation. We can form some idea of the amount of wealth steadily accumulated by this class, and still untouched by the tax-gatherer, by referring to the quantity of bullion regularly absorbed by India, the total, from the year 1800 till the end of 1864, exceeding £256,-

Digitized by Google

000,000;* and, though the flow of gold and silver to the East is now temporarily interrupted, it must, as commerce revives, resume its former course. But the financier who desires to take toll of the riches of India for the service of the State must have recourse to much stronger and more comprehensive measures than Mr. Massey ventured last year to propose, and must be prepared to disregard, in the interest of the whole population, instead of being frightened at, the interested clamours of the wealthy natives in the great towns against every fresh project of taxation. Sir Richard Temple had the advantage in 1860 of being private secretary to Mr. Wilson; he has since, as Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, given proof of rare administrative capacity, by reorganizing a whole kingdom. A man of his firmness of character and great knowledge of the people and the resources of India ought to be able to make the wealthier classes of the population do their duty by their own country and the empire to which it belongs; and if Sir Richard Temple deals with the natives in this frank and bold spirit, compelling them to recognise and fulfil the just obligations of citizenship, instead of perpetually flattering their weaknesses and relieving them from burdens they are well able to bear, he will materially increase the effective strength of the empire, without giving the slightest cause for history to record, when the day of our supremacy in the East shall have gone by, that our administration of India had been so oppressive as to bring dishonour on the English name.

ART. IV.—1. *The Sea-Gull* (*La Gaviota*). *From the Spanish of Fernan Caballero.* By the Hon. AUGUSTA BETHELL. 2 vols. London, 1867.

2. *The Castle and the Cottage in Spain. From the Spanish of Fernan Caballero.* By LADY WALLACE. 2 vols. London, 1861.

3. *Obras Completas de Fernan Caballero. La Gaviota* (2 vols.); *La Familia de Alvareda; Elia; Clemencia* (2 vols.); *Lagrimas; La Estrella de Vandalia; Pobre Dolores; Una en Otra; Un Servilon y un Liberalito; Un Verano en Bornos; Cuentos y Poesias Populares Andaluces*; etc., etc. 17 vols. Madrid, 1856–66.

THERE is a story told of a great man in office who once fooled a tiresome place-hunter by receiving him with a great air of business, and asking solemnly, "Mr. So-and-so, I believe you are acquainted with the Spanish language?" Full of delight at the prospect of at least a consulship at Fernando Po, the applicant jumped at the bait, and answered eagerly that it was so. "Happy fellow," said the great man, "you can read *Don Quixote* in the original; I wish I could;" and so politely bowed him out. The story estimates not unfairly the position which Spanish held in the estimation of our grandfathers. A foreigner might perhaps learn it if he were going to travel in Spain, or otherwise to hold intercourse with Spaniards; or else, staying at home, he might wish to relish the humour of Cervantes and Quevedo more delicately than in a translation. This seemed practically all the use left to the language of a once great country,—to answer a geographical necessity, and to interest a few students of more than ordinary curiosity in outlying fields of literature. Of late years, however, Spanish has been attracting more attention. The history of times when Spain was a great moving power in Europe has been occupying men's minds with a lively interest. Simancas is yielding up its buried treasures, and Mr. Froude's pages stand, so to speak, knee-deep in Spanish notes. Ethnologists are making good use of the records in which Spanish conquerors depicted the manners and beliefs of the new and strange American races; and philologists are busy with the grammars and dictionaries of native languages which Spanish missionaries so laboriously compiled, as one step in Christianising tribes already converted to Christianity by the preliminary arguments of the troopers and harquebusmen. The study of Spanish literature for its own sake has been promoted by Mr. Ticknor's admirable Handbook, and even very special Spanish books have found patrons to introduce them to modern English readers. Thus we owe to Mr. Churton a translation of the poems of Luis de Gongora,* the ingenious euphuist who produced a school of florid "Gongoristic" writers, who seem still, to judge from any Spanish newspaper, to be increasing and multiplying in the land. With the poems themselves, the translator gives us, in an introductory essay on the life and times of this father of the "Cultorists" and "Conceptists," a curious picture of Spanish life before and after 1600, in days when the now dismal University of Salamanca used to have its four-

* Statesman's Year-Book for 1868.

* *Gongora: an Historical and Critical Essay on the Times of Philip III. and IV. of Spain.* By Edward Churton. London, 1862.

Digitized by Google

teen thousand students, distinguished alike for riotous fun and for "want of shirts, and no superabundance of shoes"—days of the great revival of the religious orders, when Brother John of Misery and Sister Isabel of the Offscourings, and the rest of their Carmelite fraternity, were doing good among the poor with real zeal and devotion, not unmixed with a somewhat morbid enthusiasm, and when eager villagers carried scissors to snip off relics, from the habit of Brother Francis, of the Child Jesus; and if he protected himself against scissors, would catch the hem of his garment, and bite off a morsel. From another zealous and thorough student, the late Mr. Benjamin Wiffen, brother of the translator of Tasso, we have had, not long since, the life and writings of a Spaniard of a very different stamp, Juan de Valdés,* whose *Hundred and Ten Considerations* was published two centuries ago by George Herbert and Nicholas Ferrar. Valdés was one of those early reformers whom the Spanish Church was strong enough to crush,—writers who held views as to the impropriety of honouring St. Bartholomew with four bulls at the ring on his feast-day, lest he should be angry, and lay the vines waste with hail, and who jested, as many another had begun to do in Europe, at the relics of saints and martyrs which proved their owners to have been headed like Cerberus and armed like Briareus. But Valdés' attacks on the abuses of his time have less interest to the world than his devotional writings,—eloquent, spiritual, mystic, teaching principles which his deeply sympathetic English biographer and editor holds to be "almost as much in advance of the present times as they were in the days of the 'sainted George Herbert.'"

All this, however, is but a revival of the thoughts and deeds of Spain centuries ago; and there is something more. Intellectual life is only crushed and stupefied in Spain, not quite dead; and there are even symptoms, if faint ones, of a revival. Historical research is not extinct in the country of Don Pascal de Gayangos. There is a Geological Society at Madrid, and the name of Don Cassiano de Prado is not unknown among European geologists. Wonderful to relate, there is even a Spanish Anthropological Society, which produced last year a very modest and creditable inaugural address, though what its success may be in the more difficult region of fact and argument we have no means as yet of knowing. And another remarkable sign of vitality in Spain is the appearance there of a series of modern romances of marked originality and merit. Such a phenomenon is quite startling to any one who has travelled in Spain years ago, and remembers his futile attempts to hunt out some readable light literature to improve his Spanish, his amusement at the gravity with which a translation of *Gil Blas* was offered him as a Spanish classic; his unqualified rejection of *La Dama de Monsoreau*, *Veinte años des Pues*, and *La Hermosa Joven de Perth*. Now, this difficulty, at any rate, is over. The romances of Fernan Caballero are in themselves a little library for foreign travellers. As for style, they prove what can be done with Spanish in modern fiction by any one who will put ideas into it; as for matter, they are artistic studies of Spanish scenery, life and character, so good that several of them have been translated into French and English. And if any are disposed to object that their authoress ("Fernan Caballero" is only a *nom de plume*) is rather a Spaniard by adoption than by blood and education, it must be urged, in reply, that she rather differs from ordinary Spaniards in being more Spanish than they, just as foreign settlers often exaggerate the peculiarities of their new country, and converts to a new faith are often fiercer and less tolerant to dissent than those "to the manner born." Of herself personally we have little to say. We shall try to judge her books, and her mind as shown in them, leaving for the last a few biographical details, which owe their value to the liking we all have for something personal,—a visit, a photograph, a letter—anything to give a solidity to our ideal portrait of the artist, or poet, or discoverer whose works have more than superficially occupied our thoughts.

Fernan Caballero began her literary career some eighteen years ago, by publishing "Sea Gull," *La Gaviota*, in the *España* newspaper, and has continued writing ever since, till now the Madrid collection of her works has reached its seventeenth volume. Years passed before her novels obtained much footing in Spain, while in England her curious fate has been this, that by the time her own writing had degenerated from good to indifferent, and from indifferent to almost worthless, our novel readers found out that many years ago she had produced some very remarkable books. In 1861 her name was brought to the notice of the English public in two ways; Lady Wallace published a translation of four of her stories, and the *Edinburgh Review* gave an excellent analysis and criticism of several of her best romances in an article, which did not, indeed, attract

* *Alfabeto Christiano*, by Juan de Valdés. London, 1861. *Life and Writings of Juan de Valdés*, by Benjamin B. Wiffen. London, 1865.

Digitized by Google

the attention it merited from general readers, but had the effect of inducing Miss Bethell to translate *Sea Gull*, now just published. We believe, moreover, that English translations of some others of the series have been made, and now await at the hands of the publishers their fate, which will probably depend a good deal on the position which *Sea Gull* makes for itself in English literature.

Lady Wallace, though so early in the field, lost the chance of making Fernan Caballero's English position, by what seems to us a most unhappy choice. Regarding nothing but their artistic power, and their beautifully minute delineation of details of Spanish life, she allowed herself to group together four tales, which are pervaded by one of their authoress's most unbearable faults, her morbid passion for scenes of misery and horror, for lives darkened by despair or quenched in blood. The plots of *Elia*, *The Alvareda Family*, *Poor Dolores*, *Silence in Life and Pardon in Death*, range from doleful to horrible, and from horrible to hideous. *Elia* is the story of a girl adopted by a great lady who leaves her a fortune. But when she finds that she is really a brigand's daughter, a stern sense of duty forbids her to let her lover marry beneath him: she takes the veil, and leaves him to go to the wars, and be killed there. *The Alvareda Family* tells of the marrige of good quiet Perico to his cousin, the fierce beautiful Rita, who, after a while, falls in love with a more congenial mate, young Ventura, when he comes home from a French prison; then Perico, mad with jealousy, murders Ventura, and takes refuge with the brigands; he robs a church, unwittingly kills his patron's son, is taken, condemned, and garrotted, and ruin and death fall on the whole family, even to the old blind dog, Melampo. When the Angel of Death makes his appearance among our authoress's *dramatis personæ*, it must be admitted that he plays his part thoroughly. *Poor Dolores* is another story in which the usual introduction of charming details of peasant's life and talk leads up to another tale of mad jealousy and homicide. The remaining story tells of a meek, pious girl, married to a ferocious brute of a major, whom Fernan Caballero is pleased to set up as a representative of the "advanced ideas" which she so bitterly detests. *Inter alia*, he is for ever telling the poor little creature that she knows "absolutely nothing." But one day she finds the paper which proves that it was her husband who had murdered her own mother to rob her of her money; she dies of the discovery, but at the last moment sends for the husband of advanced ideas—

"Father of my children," she said to him in a solemn voice, "I have known two things in this life."

"You?" said her husband in surprise.

"Yes."

"And what are these two things?" said the culpit, confounded, his haggard eyes starting from their sockets.

"To be silent in life, because I was a mother, and to pardon at the hour of death, because I am a Christian."

And the holy martyr closed her eyes to open them no more.

It is no wonder that ladies should lay down *The Castle and the Cottage in Spain* half read; it is too miserable, they say, and very justly. Sad incidents and crooked characters must come into fiction as they come into real life, but when each new story in two volumes full, only weaves a new tissue of new wretchedness, our readers sicken of them, and turn to books that will give them fair life, light and shade, joy and sorrow, without the ever-present sense that doing good and doing ill lead alike to suffering and misery, to early death or cheerless bereaved old age.

It is quite true, that a selection of this kind only gives too just an idea of Fernan Caballero's habit of thought. In others of her tales, she runs riot in many more varieties of crime and suffering. Thus, in *Una en Otra*, she is pleased to tell the story of a family predestined to misfortune from generation to generation. Pretty Anica, not long married to a brave muleteer, sits sewing behind the counter of her little shop, when there appears before her a hideous beggar, uttering an inarticulate roaring at her with his mouth wide open, so that she can see that his tongue has been cut out. Wild with terror, she runs to fetch a piece of money, but when she comes back he has disappeared. Her husband returns home and laughs at her fears; but as she lies awake at night the bedroom door opens and the wretch re-appears, blows out the rush-light, and stabs her husband. She dies of terror, giving birth to twin daughters, and poor Paz and Luz grow up to be victims of new tragedies, and, when they die, the dismal tale passes on to a next generation. Without feeling any sickly horror of horrible incidents, we cannot but judge unfavourably, from their continual recurrence in this series of novels, of the tone both of their author and their Spanish readers who find them acceptable. We know only too well that it is to a low class of novel-readers that a continual supply of crimes and horrors serves as a pleasant stimulant, and that writers enough are ready to gratify without limit

Digitized by Google

the unhealthy appetite. But really, as far as readers of a higher class are concerned, it is a fortunate thing that horrors are not to be aggravated by mere multiplication. A murderer with a bloody knife is a hideous object, but if he is followed by three more murderers with three more bloody knives, and these by ten torturers carrying pincers and thumbscrews, and a black eunuch bringing up the rear with a bowl of poison, we laugh instead of shuddering. Thus it happens, that after a course of these variously assorted tragedies, new horrors come to wear something of a comic aspect. Take the story called "The last Consolation" (*El Ultimo Consuelo*), which finishes with the death of an escaped convict, whose cries are heard through the dark night as he sinks inch by inch in a mud-bank, till, when there is light enough for Miguel Santos to explore the dangerous ground, nothing is to be seen above the surface but a man's arm protruding. The convict had ended a villanous life by a horrible death, but he left to his mother the assurance of his having died a Christian, by folding the fingers of the projecting hand in the form of a cross (it is a well-known gesture, made by bending the forefinger, crossed by the upright thumb); and this gesture is the "Last Consolation" which he leaves behind. The notion is horrid enough, but absurdly like the English nursery story of "Knives and Scissors," which relates how a martyr to the cause of conscientious conviction made likewise her last sign. Her husband had pushed her into the river because she would not admit that the packthread ought to be cut with a knife, and when she came up once and again to the surface he would have pulled her out, but, insensible to persuasion, she still cried "Scissors!" and the third time, when she could not even speak, he saw her hold up a hand in defiance, snipping two fingers together like scissor-blades. He left her to her fate.

In selecting *La Gaviota* for translation, the Hon. Augusta Bethell has made a far better choice than her predecessor—in fact, the best possible choice. Fernan Caballero never surpassed this, her first published work. It is considered a suitable compliment to call her the Walter Scott of Spain. If so, this is her *Waverley*. At any rate it is dramatic as a story, and especially admirable in the character and perfect freshness of the detail, and though its catastrophe is dismal enough, it is not unbearably repulsive. Miss Bethell has translated it in a very natural and appreciative way, but nevertheless we must find serious fault with her for cutting and clipping, that "the English reader" might be spared a distasteful passage or two. We read the book first in English, and looked back in one place to see if we had not missed something. The something is not missing in the original, however; it is the paragraph which describes how Pepe Vera, the bull-fighter, brought the Gaviota's handkerchief back to her at the grating of her window opening into the dark narrow street. Yet more unfortunate is another omission; for, as the authoress must have felt, if she has read Miss Bethell's translation, it cuts away the artistic balance of the story. When Stein, the young German doctor, first hears the Gaviota sing, it is one of those fierce old Spanish ballads of love, and treachery, and murder, that still go home to the heart of the peasant in Spain, as they used to do in England in centuries when life here was more like what it now is there:—

"She was there beside her lover,
Home too soon her lord is come—
'Open me the door, my Heaven,
Open me the door, my Sun,'
—And with an *aretin*, and with an *areton*."

And so on to the end. No pretty story to our ears, indeed, but put in for more than prettiness, to give us the hint of what the girl's fierce brutal nature was likely to grow to, to bring out to the full how the weak good young doctor must have wearied her with his definitions of the science of happiness, and his Odes on Solitude,—"In the soft shades of solitude I found peace, the peace at once to soften and make strong," and so forth;—this to the woman whom Pepe Vera, the matador, could see into at a glance, and could manage with a shake and a curse. To describe the growth of this character is the very end and moral of the tale; bad and selfish natures grow harder and worse with years, as the very proverb says which gives the name to the story, *Gaviota mientras mas vieja mas loca*,—"Gull, the longer she lives the madder she grows." But the ballad never appears in the English. The translator, lest her story should be made tedious or unattractive, has rubbed out the touch which the artist had thus cunningly put in. It is a pity, for, with all her defects, Fernan Caballero is a genuine artist, and knows well how to paint her own pictures in her own way.

We are little disposed to enter on any summary or criticism even of *Sea-Gull* and *Clemencia*, much less of the shorter stories, for novel-writing has now become so well understood in England, that criticism of anything but extraordinary works of genius is growing very uniform, and we might find

Digitized by Google

ourselves in 1868 re-writing the comments of the Edingburgh Review of 1861. But as a museum of Spanish life and manners, the series will long keep up its literary interest. It is like a gallery of Phillip's pictures—'Phillip of Spain,' as the crowds liked to call him, who pressed round his Andalusian scenes of church and market, prison and Alameda. And those will enjoy them most who have already an outline-picture of Spain and Spaniards set up in their minds, and like to add here a touch and there a detail, to give it greater clearness and reality. Hideous devout old Rosa Mistica keeps her girls' school (*Amiga* "female friend," as such dame's schools are quaintly called in Spain), and suffers there the persecutions of the pupils who are going through the normal course of Spanish education, "Christianity and stitching." We hear at midnight in the dark alley the jangling guitar of Ramon Perez the barber's son, and his voice telling his beloved that better is the brown skin of his brunette than all the white of any lily:—

"¡Vale mas lo moreno
De mi morena
Que toda la blancura
De una azucena!"

Or we see Aunt Juana (they call old people *uncle* and *aunt* in Spain) sit in her cottage nodding over her rosary, with her feet on the edge of the brazier of burning charcoal, while her daughters Paz and Luz (Peace and Light) are waiting for her sounder slumber to slip away to whisper with their lovers at the grated window. A whistle from outside rouses her to half-open her eyes and mumble on, not inappositely, "*Sicut erat in principio, et nunc et semper*," while Luz slips down upon her chair with folded arms and eyes shut. Presently the old dame is fast asleep, and Paz can open her window to whisper with Manuel Diaz, and hear him promise that when he has helped off his master with those four loads of tobacco, he will never touch smuggled goods again, but buy a cart and oxen, and gain his living honestly. And Luz can creep on tiptoe to the *reja*, to talk through the bars with Marcos Ruiz the muleteer:—

"It's a week you have never come to the grating."

"My father won't have it."

"And why? Look here; have I got a brand on my face, or the mule behind the door?"*

"No, but he says you squander, and you draw the knife."

"The knife—knives are men's fans.—Is that all?"

"Yes, he says that you're of bad blood, that your grandfather killed his brother, and that is why they call your family *Cains*."

"He must be doting, it's a lie what he says, and if we have a nickname, hasn't his worship got one too, like every neighbour's son?"

"I know that well enough; but what am I to do?"

"One thing is certain,—he wants you to marry Juan Mena. Is that so, or no?"

"And if his worship does wish it, who is to prevent him?"

"And you would marry him, false creature?"

"Are you wild, or joking? I,—I, marry that Gallego! An easy thing indeed!"

"Well, if it should happen, you and he, you should have cause to remember Marcos Ruiz."

"Threats! if father heard you, he would say you showed how right he was."

"It is because I love you, Luz, because I will not lose you, because I am jealous, and will not have you be another's, but mine."

"And so I will be, I will be because I want to be, because I am fond of you, not because you threaten me; do you understand?"

Another scene from the same story (*Una en Otra*) shows us Pastora, the flower of the Sierra, going with her friends to the festival of our Lady of Consolation at Utrera, on black sulky Mohino the donkey, who carried her unwillingly at the tail of the caravan, with his ears hanging like two empty bags. They reached the chapel at last, and all dismounted; they tied the horses up to the olive-trees, and turned the asses loose to graze. But when they had heard mass and prayed the appointed prayers, and dined sitting on the dry grass, and sung and laughed, and the sun's rays began to fall slanting into their eyes between the olive-leaves, and the men had gone to bring the beasts, it was discovered that Mohino had carried his great lateen-sails of ears away home. What was to be done? Every man had brought a mother or a sister behind him on the crupper, all but one; shy grave Diego the Silent had come by himself, on his brave horse, so they put Pastora up behind him, with one arm round his waist, and holding on by the other hand by a handkerchief made fast to the horse's tail. They were soon far on beyond the rest.

A long while neither spoke. At last Diego said,—

"Shall you go on staying here?"

"A month."

"It's a very little while."

"Father will think it's long."

"There will be others longing to have you back."

"None that I know of."

"Then you have no betrothed?"

"I? no, indeed."

* Mulatto blood.

Digitized by Google

"Have they got no eyes in Aracena?"
"And suppose I had no ears?"
"Are you nice to please?"
"Yes, and no."
"That's no answer; it's two opposite ones."
"Is it any matter to you?"
"Maybe."
"That's neither one answer nor two; for it's none at all"
"Are you in such a hurry to say a *no?*"
"You are in none to get a *yes.*"
"There's hope in uncertainty, isn't there?"
"Uncertainty is Limbo."
"Did you know me before?"
"I know you, and you know me too."
"Who told you all that?"
"A friend that never deceives."
"That friend tells me I cannot please; I am so sad."
"And I, I am so gay, I oughtn't to please any one who is not."
"Would to heaven it might be so!"
"But I shouldn't like that."
"Well, would you like to be kind to me?"
"Don't the stars like shining?"
"Would you like to be my star?"
"I shouldn't *like* to, but I am what I am."
"No; I offer myself without your consenting first."
"Consent is not got by asking; it has to be earned."
"In what way?"
"That's not to be said; people guess how.'"

And so they reached home.

"There's a window," said Diego with an agitated voice; "it's in Uncle Blas's yard, and it looks into the lane. Will you open it?"
"We shall see."
"Only a hope."
"See! and he is not satisfied!" said Pastora, springing off.

And so, a while after this, uncle Go-much the muleteer took Diego down to Aracena, to present him to Pastora's family. People hardly knew the old man's real name, for no one ever called him anything but Tio Anda-mucho. On the way, Diego's spirits had to be kept up by a copious application of proverbs suitable to the occasion: "Mean thinks itself mean;" "Brother Modesto never was made Superior," and so forth. At last they arrived. Uncle Go-much sent word of his coming to Pastora's family, and when our travellers had shaved and dressed themselves up to the occasion, they set out for the house, Uncle Go-much marching triumphantly in front of Diego, whose good looks and handsome bearing drew the attention of all they met. He was as shy as a boy of fifteen.

"Uncle Go-much," said one passer-by, "wouldn't have taken this up if his man hadn't been a credit to him."
"As for Uncle Go-much," said another, "the girls will pray more to him than San Antonio, if he brings this sort of cargo often."
"Uncle Go-much," said a young fellow, "bring petticoats instead of breeches next journey."
"Just you make 'em want to come," answered the jovial old muleteer.

So they reached the large well-built house, with its best room with the high-backed straw chairs ranged along the walls, and the great walnut table at the end, black and shining with age, and standing on it the huge eight-branched Roman lamp of brass that glittered like gold; the great old-fashioned chimney; the endless array of hams and sausages hanging in the smoke. There were assembled in state the family and friends, and Pastora herself, hiding, half ashamed, behind her mother. And there we find that the tale-teller has prepared for us a last scene after her own heart, that the people whom we have seen scheming and jesting and loving so pleasantly, are, after all, only on their way to the place of execution. When Diego sees Pastora's father, he recognises in him the long-sought murderer of his own, denounces him to justice, receives Pastora's curse, that even as he will show no pity he shall receive none in this life or the next; and so the scaffold, the sick-bed, and the mad-house divide the remnant of the story among them.

But, leaving "distributive justice" thus to do its work, we may look back to a little scene which has its significance from the ruling motive of Diego's life—the vow he made when he saw his own father murdered, that he would find the assassin and pay the debt. It was on his journey to Pastora, and the caravan of muleteers had travelled all night, and lain down to sleep through the heat of the day.

"Our travellers were not men to admire landscapes. So, when they had unloaded and fed their beasts, they breakfasted on bread and sausages, lay down on the housings, and were fast asleep. At two in the afternoon the first on foot was Diego. When he saw his companions still sleeping he got up and sat down in front of the *venta*. Not far from him was a little girl of seven or eight, sitting on a heap of cistus branches, like a queen on a throne. She was picking off the white flowers and putting them on her head, to make a crown that matched the throne, and the air was full of a delicious perfume that court exquisites would have envied for their dressing-rooms. Diego asked the child what it was. 'My mother,' said she, 'is lighting the oven, and it must be the terebinth or the cistus burning. Didn't you know the cistus smelt so? And it smells so, you know, because it sweats blood like our Redeemer. The flowers have got five white petals, and each petal a red bleeding stain, like the Lord's wounds. Do you

Digitized by Google

see them?' said she, and came up to Diego, offering him a flower. 'Look, look! there are five of them.'

"Diego took the flower, and fixed his eyes a long while on it; as if drawn by a painter, there was in each petal a bleeding wound. Strange sight! The innocent, gentle, perfumed little flower fascinated his gaze, stirred his imagination, aroused in him a sense of horror and affright. But the little girl looked at them in a complacent, loving way.

"'Happy thou,' said Diego, 'to have never seen wounds but in flowers. Hadst thou seen them in thy mother's breast, what wouldst thou have done to him who made them?'

"The child was quiet a while, and answered, 'The Lord forgave, and we ought to forgive too.'

"'Thou dost not love thy mother,' said Diego; and he rose up with a start.

"'More than you love your father,' the child cried, and ran away angry."

In devotional legends like this, which form so large a part of the furniture of a Spanish peasant's mind, Fernan Caballero's books are wonderfully rich, and the sympathy with which she can tell an old religious wonder-tale, or describe a village festival, gives these descriptions a sharpness and delicacy which it is beyond the power of a translator to reproduce. In one of her shorter stories, for instance, which turns on the cottage celebration of Christmas and Twelfth Night, there is a charming description of the "Nativity," set up for the delight of the children at Aunt Beatrice's,—a wondrous scene in cork and gilt and painted pasteboard, with the hermit kneeling before a crucifix, and its hunter shooting a partridge on the hermit's roof, and its smuggler hiding with his load of tobacco behind a rock of paper, while the Three Kings march solemnly by, its meadows of green baize, and its frozen river of glass, with the fish and crabs and turtles disporting themselves underneath. The shepherd, come straight from the fields, as all could tell by the fragrance of wild thyme hanging about his clothes, sings his Christmas carol; the children sing each a "couplet," and all join in chorus to each, while each time a pair of them dance solemnly in front of the *nacimiento*, and then approaching it with burning cheeks and brilliant eyes open their arms and kneel down before it, exclaiming, "for Thee!" There is one whole volume of the series filled with popular tales and rhymes collected in Andalusia, and in this are numbers of little religious legends, of which very few are known to our English folk-lore. We read how the serpent used to walk upright, elate with its triumph in Paradise, till when the Holy Family on the flight into Egypt found one among the crags, and it tried to bite the infant Jesus; Saint Joseph said to it in anger, "Fall, Pride, and rise no more," and since then it has grovelled. So the ever-green trees enjoy their privilege of life and beauty because the Virgin rested beneath them; and all men love the swallows, because, full of love and pity, they plucked the thorns from the crown that pressed the Saviour's brow; and the owl that saw the cruel crucifixion has gone on ever since in fear and sorrow, crying in his doleful voice, *Crus! Crus!* When the host is elevated on Ascension Day, the leaves of the trees bend down, and in reverence make crosses with one another, and the thunderbolt loses its power within the circuit where the sound of the orison can be heard.

There are many more of such quaint fancies, and even the nursery tales, though to a great degree mere versions of the old Pagan themes so well known in Northern Europe, are Christianized through and through, turned into broad fun about saints and apostles, or adapted to a Christian moral. Thus, in 'The Flower of the *Lililá*,' that pale little Lagrimas tells in her convent school, of the youngest brother whom the two elder murdered when they had taken from him the flower, but the reeds grew over his grave, and when a shepherd made a pipe of one and began to play it, it told the story of the murder. But instead of the murderers being sewed up in a sack and thrown into the river, as in the story of "The Singing Bone" in Grimm, the flute plays a new tune, and entreats that they may be forgiven. In *Sea-Gull* there is another tale which is quite admirable of its kind, the story of *Medio-Pollito*, "Half-Chick." He was born with one eye and one foot and one wing, as though the judgment of Solomon had been executed upon him, but he thought he was a finer cock than his father, and if the others made fun of him, that was mere envy. So he set off to go to Court, and his poor mother gave him good advice, to be careful to avoid churches where there is an image of Saint Peter, for the saint is not fond of cocks, and still less of their crowing; and to be sure also to keep clear of "certain men called cooks, who are our mortal enemies, and will twist our necks as quick as men." So Half-Chick sets out on his journey, and is too proud to help a little choked pullet, or to pick up the weak summer breeze lying breathless on the ground, or to help the poor little spark all but smothered in the ashes; and he goes to Saint Peter's Church and crows with all his might at the great door, but when he gets to Court a scullion wrings his neck in the twinkling of an eye. Then the water scalded him, and the fire burnt him to a cinder, and the

Digitized by Google

cook had to throw him out of window, and the wind whirled him up to the steeple-top, and Saint Peter stretched his hand out and fixed him there, and there he has been ever since, black, lean, and featherless. He is not called Medio-Pollito any more, but Weathercock.

Part of this story is a version of a theme often taken up in the folk-lore of Northern Europe. Another quaint tale, which a peasant tells in *Elia*, also belongs to a well-known group:—

"Well, sir, continued Pedro, there were once two very dear friends, who promised one another that the first who died should bring the other news of how it went with him in the next world. Both got married, and the first who died kept his word, and appeared to the other. How goes with you? asked he. First-rate, answered the apparition. When I presented myself up there, St. Peter said to me, What life have you led? Sir, said I, I am a poor man, I was married. . . . Not a word more, said his Honour; pass on, you've been through purgatory. So I am in glory. With this he vanished, leaving his friend much satisfied and consoled. Time went on, and his wife died, and a little later he married another. Well, his hour came, and he went out of his house feet-foremost, and presented himself just exactly in the same way to St. Peter. What life have you led? asked the saint. I have been married *twice*, answered the new-comer, with a bold front and a step forward to wriggle in. But Bald Peter gave him a cut with the keys—Back with you, comrade, said he, heaven wasn't made for fools!"

Among the most characteristic things in the *Cuentos y Poesias Populares* is the collection of popular verses, *coplas* as they are called, which are handed down in popular memory, and sung on all sorts of occasions. They are of the nature of our nursery rhymes, but here are five hundred or a thousand such, collected in one Spanish province; suggesting how the few of the kind, which survive in our own cottages and nurseries, may be mere remnants of a similar stock of popular poetry once current in England. These Spanish couplets are indeed rather numerous than good; their grace, when they have any, is generally more of manner than of matter, and translation seldom leaves much in them:—

"Our Lady has no cradle
For her little son,
But his father is a carpenter,
And he will make him one.

"They sell at gate of Paradise
Little shoes so neat,
For the little angels who have none
Upon their little feet."

And so on. There are some pretty little love-songs too. One lover relates how he passed by his mistress's door, and heard the stones quarrelling which it was she had stepped upon; another, with his imagination more within bounds, is content to tell us that how the up-hill turns down-hill to him when he goes to his Maria, but alas! as he comes back, down-hill turns to up-hill:—

"Cuando voy á la casa
De mi María,
Se me hace cuesta abajo
La cuesta arriba.
Y cuando salgo
Se me hace cuesta arriba
La cuesta abajo."

Above the peasant class in Spain, the character of society has changed much sincet he days of Ferdinand and Isabella. The richer classes congregate more and more in the towns, and the old houses of country gentlemen have come often to the state of that hideous stone barrack by the sea-shore, which we read of in *Clemencia*. The desolate mansion, with its rats and cobwebs, its tarnished gilding and rusty grated windows, the dulness and utter ugliness of the whole life, are graphically described, and the picture well matches what the traveller sees from day to day in outlying places in Spain. Clearly the aversion to a country life so much among Spaniards, and the unattractive character of the life itself, are two things which mutually explain each other. But there survive among the comparatively few rich nobles who still live on their estates fine types of the good old school. Such is Don Martin Ladron de Guevara, "one of those inland seigneurs so fastened to their towns and their houses as to form, so to speak, a part of them, as though they had been figures sculptured on them in bas-relief; men who never occupied themselves in their lives with anything but their horses, their bulls, the work to be done on their estates, and the local gossip of the village." Don Martin had never had any education whatever except his catechism; he had never opened a book in his life; he was the eldest son—what was he to learn anything for? He had learnt by habit and tradition to be a gentleman; and would speak as flatly to a king as to a beggar. A universal meddler, "like the tomatas that get into every dish," as Doña Brigida, his wife, tells him, his talk is supplied out of an inexhaustible stock of saws, proverbs, and rhymes, his "little gospels," as he calls them. Indeed his conversation in this respect leaves upon us, we are sorry to say, the impression that Sancho Panza and he had divided all the proverbs in Spain between them, and that Sancho had the first choice.

Digitized by Google

On Don Martin's estates, life goes on year after year in quiet monotony, "always the same, like the Pater Noster and the Ave Maria. In his great, bare, confortless mansion; in the dull courtyard opening out upon the parched, dusty plain, his life is not without personal interest, nor poor in kindly feeling, but sunk in utter boorish ignorance. He ploughs his lands and gets in his harvests, feeds his poor and rails at them, fights his endless battles of scolding with the irrepressible old beggar-woman, the Tia Latrana, who finds her way into every scene. "There is no procession but has its dragon (*no hay procesion sin tarasca*)," as he says. Fiercer than even the far-famed Tarasc of Tarascon himself are Don Martin's half-wild cattle on the plains; and that terrible creature which has been so felicitously described as "the novelist's bull," gives Patlo, the hero of the tale, the opportunity of saving Clemencia from impending death. He marries her; and the piece of medical detail at the end of the book is as quaint and characteristic as any finishing touch that was ever given to a story. The family doctor feels Clemencia's pulse, and with due solemnity announces to the parents that they shall be blessed with a son, as beautiful as his mother, as manly as his father, as good as both. It seems, then, that the Spanish doctor still actually knows the curious mediæval art of prognosticating the child's sex from the mother's pulse, just as travellers in the East still find it practised by the Persian hakim.

With Don Martin lives his brother, the Abbé, one of those types of the highest class of Spanish ecclesiastics who may be met with in the flesh as well as in books, — men of unworldly and unselfish lives, given up to works of charity and kindness, finding their happiness in the happiness of those around them. The Abbé had studied as a lawyer, had fought in the War of Independence, and had then taken orders. His brother maintained that he had done well, and confirmed his opinion with one of the aforesaid *evangelios chicos*: "If you will have a good day, shave your beard; a good month, kill a pig; a good year, get married; but if you want a good *for ever*, then turn priest." We are told that the beautiful Clemencia, his niece and pupil, found "my uncle the Abbé's" moral discourses deeply interesting, which we should scarcely have guessed from the long extracts from them with which we are favoured. The good man is somewhat tiresome, in fact; but probably this contributes to the accuracy of the portrait, which seems to us as genuine as that of the priest in *Poor Dolores*, of very different stamp, Padre Nolasco, with his head like an india-rubber face pulled out long, his big nose and feet, his black clothes, presented to him by his rich friend, Don Marcellino, and worn till they shone like waterproof. His *compadre*, Gil Piñones, kept him in chick-peas for teaching his sons to assist at mass: and with them and a morsel of beef, and the scrap of pork that the herdsman would give him for writing his letters, was made his daily *puchero*, wherefrom always he kept a cup of broth for his own supper, and another for the poor widow who lived in the garret. His way was to *thou* everybody; but one day a pert young doctor remonstrated with him for taking a liberty so subversive of the dignity of man:—

"Dignity of man!" replied Father Nolasco, "that's all done with in these days. Get along! Dignity in words and indignity in deeds. So I am to *thou* my Seraphic Father St. Francis, and say worship and Lordship to a straggle-chin like thee? Go and cure fevers,—don't give me one; I am not going to suit myto the fashion of the day; this straw's too hard to make whistles of,—dost see?"

Father Nolasco, with his rough jokes, his ignorance, and his coarseness, the unpriestly *caramba!* with which he shocks grown-up ears, the treacherous slaps which make him the terror of the little boys, his kind heart and practical good sense withal, is as excellent a portrait of the low-class priest as "my uncle the Abbé" is of the higher. But, unhappily, Fernan Caballero's views will not allow her to give us a full series of such portraits. We have compared her books to Phillip's pictures; but she will not paint for us the scowling, leering priest, or the lazy, sensual monk, whose bloated face is the too legible record of his life. The secularisation of the Spanish monasteries is to her a never-finished theme of complaint, and she would have us think that all the monks who were turned out into the world were men like Father Nolasco, or the simple-minded, learned recluse, Father Buendia, sent out at sixty from his cell, and his beloved convent library, to be dressed like a scarecrow by a rich relation, and set to teach Latin and good manners to her disagreeable boys; or, at worst, like poor Brother Gabriel in *La Gaviota*, who was found sitting weeping on the steps of the white cross, when Aunt Maria came to the dismantled convent at Villamar, where her son Manuel had been put in charge as guardian by "some gentlemen who call themselves 'The Public Credit.'" The old monk told them he had never been outside the walls since the father had taken him in an orphan child; he could do nothing but take care of the convent garden; so they let him stay, and he looked after the garden

Digitized by Google

still, though since the great watering machine was sold he had been hard put to it, and the orange and lemon-trees were sadly dry. Thus he lived, tying up his endless rows of lettuces, and telling his beads, and leaving the ruins of his monastery only on Fridays, to go to the chapel of Our Lady of Good Help, and pray the Lord for a happy death. The perplexity of the meek old lay brother and his friend Aunt Maria is pleasantly described when they find, lying sick and helpless at the convent gate, a mysterious foreigner, young Stein, the German doctor, and take him in and nurse him. His dress, his flute, his books in strange letters, give no clue to his character; he awoke at last out of a long trance, and cried "*Gott, wo bin ich?*"

"Aunt Maria sprang with one bound into the middle of the room. Brother Gabriel dropped the book and stood petrified with eyes as wide open as his spectacles.

"What language was he talking?" asked Aunt Maria.

"It must have been Hebrew, like his books," answered Brother Gabriel. "Perhaps he may be a Jew, as you said, Aunt Maria."

"God help us!" cried the old woman; "but no, if he were a Jew, shouldn't we have seen his tail when we undressed him?"

"Aunt Maria," said the lay brother, "the prior said that all that about the Jews having tails was stuff and nonsense, for they had nothing of the kind."

"Brother Gabriel," replied Aunt Maria, "since this blessed constitution came in, everything is changed to something else. These people that govern instead of the king don't choose anything to stay as it used to be, and so they don't choose the Jews to have tails, but they always have had them just like the devil. And if the Father Prior says the contrary, they must have forced him to, just as they forced him to say at mass 'constitutional king.'"

As it is with the monks, so with the nuns. Fernan Caballero can give us the prettiest pictures of groups of little children at the convent school in "Lagrimas," playing at making gardens with twigs of box for orange-trees, pinks for palm-trees, fishes of geranium-leaf swimming in a basin made of half an egg-shell, or setting one another riddles.

"Why don't you guess?" said Maalena (Magdalena), the eldest of the party, a grave matron of seven.

"Guess what?"

"A riddle."

"What is it then?"

"Well ... what's the little dish of almonds that they gather every day and scatter about every night?"

All the children fell into deep meditation for about half a minute.

"Ourselves," exclaimed the fat little Pepa, with a jump a full finger and a half from the ground.

"That's all wrong," said the small matron. "You're sillier than Pipé, Josefita."

"Then you tell, for you know it."

"Why, the stars, you dunce!"

"Why, no! the stars are not almonds."

"What are they then, Miss Wiseacre?"

"The tears of Mary that the angels carried up to heaven, and that's why they are so many, nobody can doubt them."

The children fell to looking at the sky, where clouds were scudding across, hiding and uncovering again the moon as they passed over.

"There!" cried plump Pepita, "don't you see the moon going in and out in the sky—what's the matter with her?"

"Father God will be calling her," replied her neighbour.

"But I can't hear His Worship."

"Well, and just so you can't see him at the mass, and he is there though," said the matronly Maalena; "and if we could see him with these eyes and hear him with these ears, what grace would there be in believing, as Mother Succour says?"

So, too, we may have *Elia's* ecstatic description of her convent life, "days of silence and prayer, flowing on in sweet monotony like the drops that fall from the honeycomb. . . . The peace that comes of the absence of passion, the repose of conscience, the gentle calm we enjoy when the past has no biting remorse, the future no torturing fear, the life of tranquil sleep and happy waking, the expectation of death without desire and without fear, the true felicity without alloy." But of the other side of the nun's life, torpidly serene, or hopelessly miserable, useless when it is cheerful, as useless when it is unhappy, we read nothing here.

With all her devotion to the habits of old Spain, there are reforms for which Fernan Caballero has made vigorous efforts. Her humane disposition has been shocked by the Spanish peasant's unfeeling cruelty to his beasts, and we believe she has founded a Spanish society for its prevention. But especially the national sport of Spain has aroused her indignation. Her hatred of bull-fighting, indeed, approaches in intensity her horror of Protestantism. In a characteristic way she passed judgment on the bull-ring, by depicting quite simply and naturally some of its most striking scenes. There are two such in *Sea-Gull.* The Duke of Almansa carries Stein the German doctor to Seville, to bring out his wife the Gaviota and her splendid voice in the great world. He takes the pair to the Plaza de Toros. The scene is vividly painted,—the huge ampitheatre with its twelve thousand specta-

Digitized by Google

tora, row above row, the upper classes on the shady side, the many-colored Andalusian dresses of the lower orders glittering in the glare of the sunshine. The first bull is a *boyante*, a waverer—charged by the first picador, he turns from him and attacks the second off his guard,—his horse is down with the bull's horns in his flanks, the picador underneath. Then appears Pepe Vera the matador, smiling in cherry-coloured satin covered with silver embroidery; he drags off the bull by the tail, and avoids his furious charges till he reaches the barrier. The Duke looked at Maria, and for the first time saw life in her cold, scornful face. She had seen something at last that came home. "My Lord Duke," said Stein, "is it possible that this can divert you?" "No," said the Duke, with a good-humoured smile, "it interests me." "Maria, shall we go?" said Stein to his wife. "No," said Maria, with all her soul in her eyes; "do you think I have got nerves and am likely to faint?" Stein left them and went to look at Seville. Pepe had seen the Duke and the woman sitting by his side, whose eyes never left the matador. Now he stands in front of them, cap in hand, sword and scarlet cloak in his left, offering the honor of the bull to "your Excellency and the royal lady at your side." "Here!" he cried to the *chulo*, and they sent the bull at him. Pepe Vera was a pupil of Montes, and gave the bull the shoulder-stroke after the well-known manner of that distinguished artist—standing to meet the beast in its rush, and letting him run on the point of his huge matador's rapier up to the very hilt, and so fall dead at his feet. Pepe Vera came calmly to make his bow to their Excellencies, and his eyes met Maria's. In the meanwhile Stein went on with his walk, lionizing the city walls and the Puerta de Xeres.

The other of the two scenes is Pepe Vera's last bull-fight, where Maria saw the black bull *Midnight* clear the ring. No picador could stand the charge of the terrible adversary. It was all the quick *chulos* could do to draw him off with their bright-coloured cloaks, and escape themselves behind the barrier. Some cried for the "half-moons" to hamstring the beast, but the crowd cried shame. The matador had been that morning to see the bull penned for the evening's *corrida*, and had known his danger at a glance; and now Maria, leaning forward upon the balustrade, and digging her nails into the wood, saw the bull stop halfway in its rush, turn sharp upon the matador with a sudden dash, catch him on his horns, and fling him off, to fall yards away, a lifeless mass on the ground.

In another story, which has its title from a proverb—*Con mal ó con bien a los tuyos te ten*—"Through good and ill, keep to your own friends still," there is another powerful piece of description. A young Spaniard, educated in England, goes to his first bull-fight at Puerto Santa Maria. The sight sickens him; he goes out and walks through the deserted streets into the silent church, and there, in the Lady Chapel, finds a pale girl kneeling alone, and notices that each fresh burst of applause heard across from the Plaza brings from her a cry of pain and a fresh flood of tears. Suddenly the sound of wheels is heard from the square outside. The girls runs hastily out, and Servando follows. A *calesa* is jolting over the rough pavement, led by the driver, and on the seat a picador, his arms fallen helpless at his side, his silver-embroidered clothes stained with blood. "God help us! it is his daughter," said the *calesero;* and just then there was heard from inside the ampitheatre a new round of thundering applause.

We have scarcely mentioned the descriptions in Fernan Caballero's novels of the drawing-room life in Spain. Of course she understands perfectly the habits of the *paseo* and the *tertulia*, the life of the upper circles of Seville and Madrid, in which she herself moves, and she makes the best of it in her stories; but the best is not much. Her gossiping old women, her innocent girls fresh from the convent, her martinet generals and bigoted marchionesses, have at least an air of reality about them. The drawing-room folks in the *Gaviota* are perhaps her liveliest pictures of the kind. We quite appreciate Rafael Arias, and his account of the ladies of the Havana, "whose black eyes are dramatic poems;" his story of the Santa Maria family, his ancestors, who were relations of the Virgin Mary, insomuch that one old lady among them used to pray, "Ave Maria, my lady and cousin," to which the servants responded, "Ave Maria, her Excellency's lady and cousin;" his description of his English friend who was going to buy the Alcazar at Seville, and set it up on his own estate at home, and wanted the chapter of the cathedral to sell him the gilt keys the Moorish king presented in a silver dish to St. Ferdinand when he conquered Seville, and also the agate cup which the great king used to drink out of. Foreigners, and especially English, are objects of great amusement in Spanish society; and no wonder. They have had, as a rule, no time to learn the habits of the country on their hurried excursions from one place in Ford's *Handbook* to another. They are sadly apt to be stone-blind to native prejudices, and to

Digitized by Google

treat the whole country and people as a show got up for their especial amusement, in a way that must be uncommonly provoking to the Spanish mind. The "impassible Englishman," in the diligence scene in *Una en Otra*, dressed in a complete suit of Scotch plaid, and giving no sign of human life amidst the fun that is going on about him, except to open his eyes wide and shake his head when somebody offers him a cigar, is unfortunately a most real animal on Spanish high-roads, and naturally becomes the typical Englishman of the ordinary Spaniard. On the other hand, the Spaniard in England is never ridiculous, though he may be neither amusing nor instructive. But the very duty of a student of life and character is to go deeper than the superficial impressions of the diligence and the *table-d'hôte*, and we should have thought Fernan Caballero must have known more about foreigners than to believe in her own absurd caricatures. Her Spaniards, even when overdrawn, are altogether better. Thus, among minor characters, Doña Eufrasia, the general's widow, whom nobody can bear, who is "as meddlesome as a noise, as inquisitive as daylight, and as ill-timed as a watch out of order," and who, nevertheless, holds her own in all companies by sheer insolence, makes a good pendant to Don Galo, the bland old Government-office-clerk at eighty pounds a year, whose four wigs of different lengths so ingeniously simulate a growth cut short by a monthly visit to the hairdresser. And there are plenty more, whose scolding and gossiping and love-making have a certain interest to readers long since weary of the conventional Spaniards of fiction—the grandees with their pale, haughty countenances muffled in their cloaks, and the Andalusian beauties with their fans and mantellas, little feet, and Moorish almond-eyes.

But all through these volumes, from first to last, there runs a quality which interferes with a judgment of them from a purely artistic point of view. It is as in a story told in one of them: A certain actor was a great amateur in bull-fighting, and used to sit with other *aficionados* in the seats close to the arena. One day he was shouting abuses at a picador whom he wanted to charge the bull, against all rule and prudence, till at last the man turned on him. "Mr. Actor," said he, "this is real." It is so with these volumes; in form they are fiction, but in fact they are descriptions of actual life in Spain; and, moreover, they are written with a distinct purpose, that of strengthening the Spaniards' conviction that the path of modern Spain among the nations is a good and glorious one; that popular education is a ruinous delusion; that a blind faith in the most childish superstitions of the middle ages is something far higher than reasonable investigation of nature; that the political or intellectual habits which have brought Spain to the state of a paralysed limb of Europe, are something to cherish with affectionate pride. One would have thought that her own career was the most telling refutation of her own opinions. She incidentally mentions "the incontestable, intellectual superiority of our people above all others;" and she must know, that the only modern Spanish writer of fiction who has risen even to mediocrity had the benefit of a foreign education, for that writer is herself. She unconsciously publishes her own estimate of Spanish literature by writing her first book, *The Alcareda Family*, in German; and when she let her works be published at the Queen of Spain's expense, she told the world in the same way her estimation of the literary condition of her adopted country.

How far she is to be classed as a Spaniard, and how far as a foreigner, it is not easy to say. Her father, Don Juan Nicholas Böhl de Faber, was a Hamburg merchant settled at Cadix, where he was consul for his native city. His name is known in literature as compiler of a collection of ancient Spanish poetry, the *Floresta de Rimes Antiquas Castellanas*. His daughter Cecilia is "Fernan Caballero." She was born in Switzerland in 1797, and her first husband was the Marquis of Arco-Hermoso. She has been twice married since, as is now a widow. Spain has evidently treated her well, and is proud of her, and her friends write her praises in the florid style which still finds favour on the Peninsula, and of which we are glad to take the opportunity of quoting a magnificent specimen:—

"And who, for years past, has visited Lower Andalusia, and not endeavoured to know personally the author of *Elia?* Who has not sought her in the flowery Port which bears the the name of the Mother of Mothers, the ever Virgin Mary; or in her modest and *comfortable* cottage of Sanlucar de Barrameda, adorned with flowers and birds, and situate beneath the maternal shade of a convent of nuns; or in the Moorish Alcazar of Seville, near the arch where still glitters the lion of Spain victoriously displaying the cross, with the expressive motto, *Ad utrumque?* Oh! how many times, after long conversations with Fernan Caballero, that noble and candid soul (from whom those who cultivate her delightful society never separate without breathing the bland perfume of goodness, without feeling their hearts pregnant with sweet tears, and a longing to do good to their neighbour), has nature appeared to me more beautiful in discourse among the pines, which, like outpost sentinels of the Guadal-

Digitized by Google

quivir, salute him as he plunges into the sea!"

More recently we have had a description of Fernan Caballero by an Englishwoman of views for once congenial to her own, Lady Herbert, in her *Impressions of Spain*, p. 123:—

"But one of the principal charms of our travellers' residence in Seville has not yet been mentioned; and that was their acquaintance, through the kind Bishop of Antinoe, with Fernan Caballero. She may be called the Lady Georgiana Fullerton of Spain, in the sense of refinement of taste and catholicity of feeling. But her works are less what are commonly called novels than pictures of home life in Spain, like Hans Andersen's *Improvisatore*, or Tourgeneff's *Scènes de la vie en Russie*. This charming lady, by birth a German on the father's side, and by marriage connected with all the "bluest blood" in Spain, lives in apartments given her by the Queen in the palace of the Alcazar. Great trials and sorrows have not dimmed the fire of her genius or extinguished one spark of the living charity which extends itself to all that suffer. Her tenderness towards animals, unfortunately a rare virtue in Spain, is one of her marked characteristics. She has lately been trying to establish a society in Seville for the prevention of cruelty to animals, after the model of the London one, and often told one of our party that she never left home without praying that she might not see or hear any ill-usage to God's creatures. She is no longer young, but still preserves traces of a beauty, which in former years made her the admiration of the Court. Her playfulness and wit, always tempered by a kind thoughtfulness for the feelings of others, and her agreeableness in conversation, seem only to have increased with lengthened experience of people and things. Nothing was pleasanter than to sit in the corner of her little drawing-room, or, still better, in her tiny study, and hear her pour out anecdote after anecdote of Spanish life and Spanish peculiarities, especially among the poor. But if one wished to excite her, one had but to touch on questions regarding her faith and the so-called 'progress' of her country. Then all her Andalusian blood would be roused, and she would declaim for hours in no measured terms against the spoliation of the monasteries, those centres of education and civilisation in the villages and outlying districts; against the introduction of schools without religion, and colleges without faith; and the propagation of infidel opinions through the current literature of the day."

We can quite appreciate Fernan Caballero's dislike to freedom of the press in Spain. Nothing can be more reasonable. The present Government cannot exist without political and religious persecution, and the Spanish newspapers are apt to indulge in unpleasant sarcastic remarks on such subjects.

It is clear that the energetic means which the Spanish Court is now taking to keep down obnoxious innovators and reformers are by no means uncalled for. But we have found ourselves wondering, as we looked through Fernan Caballero's books, whether this clever and amiable advocate of ignorance and bigotry has ever been troubled by any glimpse of the possibility that her own efforts have been unwittingly devoted to pushing forward the very progress she so detests. It has been well said of the Jesuits, that by their promotion of education they actually helped on that very movement of the European mind which their whole system was an organized conspiracy to repress. So, to compare small things with great, our authoress has done something to raise up the fallen literature of Spain, and thus to stimulate that intellectual life which turns towards civilization as flowers turn toward the light. Her very descriptions of the Spanish life which to her seems so admirable, are an unconscious but an effective attack upon it. Few foreigners, we should think, lay down one of her volumes without feeling how widely and deeply Spain must be changed before she can resume her place as one of the great nations of the world.

Art. V.—Popular Philosophy in its Relation to Life.

In the controversy as to the true character of the Sophists, raised by the publication of Mr. Grote's *Greece*, much stress was laid upon the distinction that the Sophists were not a sect holding a mischievous system of philosophical doctrine, but a profession. It was found, however, that the distinction did not materially affect the view formed of them by students of Plato and Aristotle, for their profession was to teach rhetoric, and a "rhetoric that used philosophy as its instrument." That rhetoric should thus use philosophy implies that the latter has become popular, and popular philosophy, however various its doctrines, has yet by the necessity of its nature a uniformity of type, than which the system of the straitest sect is not more unmistakable. It fixes in coarse lineaments the antithetical ideas, which genuine speculation leaves fluid and elastic, and on the strength of them gives a positive answer, Yes or No, to questions as to the world of thought, which, because asked in terms of sense, true philosophy must either leave unanswered or answer by both Yes and No. It abhors the analysis of knowledge. It takes certain formal conceptions

Digitized by Google

ready-made, without criticism of their origin or validity. These—which, because familiar, are apparently intelligible—it employs to cast a reflex intelligibility on the general world of knowledge. By their aid it can always distinguish and divide, and the matter in which we can make distinctions seems already intelligible and our own. Such philosophy must needs ultimately be both sceptical and destructive: sceptical, because, too much in a hurry to be consistent, it finds its dogmatic "Yes" contradicted by its equally dogmatic "No," and its uncritical distinctions, which seemed at first to convey such delightful clearness, turn out to have merely made darkness visible; destructive, because, while its existence implies a conscious claim on the part of the human spirit to comprehend that which it obeys, its dichotomous formulæ are inadequate to comprehend the real world of morals, religion, and law.

The parallel between our own age and that of the Sophists has been often drawn. The historian of Philosophy, indeed, finds the modern counterpart to the epoch of Protagoras some way further back, in the so-called *Aufklärung* of the last century. The popular philosophy, whose parent was Locke, no doubt asked the same questions that were in debate among the companions of Socrates; it set them in the same glory of rhetoric, concealing a depth which it could not penetrate, that provoked the irony of the Socratic dialogue. Its sceptical and revolutionary result, as represented by Hume, Rousseau, and Priestley, has an aspect familiar to the readers of Plato; and the question, "How are experience and moral action possible?" which Kant set himself to answer, recalls the more simple, "What is justice, and how do we come by the idea of it?" which forms the text of *The Republic*. But modes of philosophy do not really supersede each other "as Amurath to Amurath succeeds." Philosophy does but interpret, with full consciousness and in system, the powers already working in the spiritual life of mankind, and as these powers at every stage gather a strength which they never finally lose, so the philosophical expression which they have found in one age, is not lost, however it may be qualified, in the ages that follow. In Greece, as the elements of life were far more simple, so the various forms of philosophy followed each other more rapidly than in modern Christendom. Yet the sophistical mode of thought, having once found a home, was only dislodged with philosophy itself. The doctrine that man, the sensitive man, is the measure of all things, which as being *par excellence* the doctrine that fits philosophy to be an instrument of rhetoric, may be taken as characteristic of the Sophists, survived the criticism of Plato and Aristotle. It was virtually common to all the popular and practical schools so long as Greek philosophy lasted. So in the modern world, the doctrines of the *Aufklärung* are not to be supposed dead and done with, because Kant outgrew them nearly a hundred years ago. From the pulpit and the senate, from the newspaper and the journal of science, from saint and from sage, the disciple of Kant finds them smite him in the face whichever way he look. Nor can he account for this experience by the complaint that "our tardy apish nation" has not yet appropriated the highest thought of Europe. In Germany itself, the people now venture to assert a philosophy of their own, and it is not the philosophy of the German philosophers, but of the school of Locke. The truth is, that the doctrines of the *Aufklärung* are as much of the essence of the modern world as the principles of the Reformation, or the ideas of 1789. They are as old as the Renaissance, as old as the epoch when the citizens of Christendom, slowly emerging from the painful discipline by which the new civilisation was wrought out of the chaos of the old, first ventured to look with open eyes on their surroundings, and to ask why they should not move freely, and take their pleasure in a world that was very good.

To be free, to understand, to enjoy, is the claim of the modern spirit. It is a claim which is constantly becoming more articulate and conscious of itself. It is constantly being heard from new classes of society, and penetrating more deeply into the circumstances of life. At the same time, it is constantly finding new expression in practical contradictions of thought, which rhetoric, itself the child of the claim, is always at hand to manipulate, to entangle, to inweave into the feelings and interests of men. The result is the diffusion over society of a state of mind analogous to that which we sometimes experience when discussion has carried us a long way from our principles, and we find ourselves maintaining inconsistent propositions, which to us are mere words, yet confuse our views and weaken our hold of the principles from which they seem to follow. The age, we may say, has overtalked itself; yet to prescribe a regimen of silence is but to mock the disease. Definite thought is already speech. That a thought, when spoken, has lost half its power, is as false as the notion that the will, so soon as we act, ceases to be free, because under the incipient control of habit. The power in one case, like the freedom in the other, except so far

Digitized by Google

as it is expressed, is a mere indefinite possibility. As freedom is freedom to do something only so far as it gains a body and reality from habit, so it is only through speech that the thinking spirit can know what is itself and in the world. Only through the process of naming and metaphor, from the stage where it is nearest the sense to that where it is most remote, are phenomena held together, distinguished, and wrought into an intelligible universe. Only, again, as uttered, can thought know or act upon itself. Spoken thought is thus the medium through which the individual man at once receives his intellectual being from without, and develops it from within. The greater its fulness, the wider the range of its distinguishing and comprehending energy, the more completely is the world transformed from a brute matter to a rational organism, to which the spirit of man answers as closely and immediately as feeling to the nervous currents.

To the world, so far as it is thus transformed, man no longer stands in the attitude of blind terror at the unknown. But he is not therefore at peace. By names and theory, by distinction and comparison, by substantiating relations and bringing substances into relation, he has penetrated nature, and in penetrating it has sown himself broadcast over it. It is by no avoidable error, as in the effort to escape from himself he may sometimes imagine, that he has infected nature with his theology or metaphysic. Its relation to himself is the condition alike of the impulse to know it and of the possibility of its being known. It is in vain that he seeks to place himself in the attitude of pure receptivity. Without being active, without origination, he cannot judge, and he must needs give an account to himself of his activity. He must theorize upon his judgments, must seek for a science of his sciences, for the unity of principle which must be in that which he knows as it is in himself. He is as metaphysical when he talks of body or matter as when he talks of force, of force as when he talks of mind, of mind as when he talks of God. He goes beyond sense as much when he pronounces that he can only know things individual, or phenomena, as when he claims to know substances and the universal. That which he calls nature, therefore, is traversed by the currents of his intellect, and where intellect has gone sentiment has followed. The outward world, about which he speculates, has become an object of interest to him, inseparable from his interest in himself. If his speculation might run smooth and evenly, he would be at peace. Being, as it is, for ever thwarted and baffled —leading his thoughts along paths which diverge before he is aware of it, and at length seem so far apart that he cannot see the common ground whence they come and to which they converge—it gives him the privilege of a sorrow, intense in proportion to the range of his intellectual sympathy. He is no longer, like the barbarian, afraid of nature as of an unknown power, but oppressed by it as by the excess of his own activity. It is a labyrinth in which he has wandered at will till he has lost the clue, and which at the same time is so much his own that in its perplexities he seems at war with himself.

Meanwhile his relations to God, his fellowmen, and his own desires, which at first wrapped him round too closely to be contemplated, become objects of his curiosity. He separates himself from them to reappropriate them by the intellectual consciousness. They, too, become recognised elements in the world of knowledge, which thus gains at once an infinite complexity and an absolute dominion over the happiness of civilized mankind. As a theory of Being, or of merely speculative thought, philosophy scarcely touches what we call the popular mind. It has pleasures and pains of its own, but its uncertainties, being the burden of a few, do not diffuse themselves into that general sympathetic atmosphere of scepticism, through which alone it becomes oppressive to peace of mind. It is not until it approaches the moral life that it can become popular, and in consequence can be rhetoricized. This further plunge into the concrete it must inevitably make. The question, "What is the world that man knows, and how does he know it?" cannot long remain apart from the question, "What is the world that he has made for himself, and how has he been able to make it?" The interest in the moral world, and the interest in the so-called world of nature, tend more and more to fusion with each other. In the Greek age of sophistry, as it is presented to us by Plato and Aristotle, the unsettlement of practical ideas resulted from the application to "the good, the beautiful, and the just" of the Democritean theory of nature and our knowledge of it, and it was by a counter theory on the same subjects that Plato sought to achieve the reconstruction of morals and politics. In modern times it is the philosophy of nature and knowledge inherited from Bacon and Locke that appears in the numerous "Natural Histories of Ethics" with which the world has been beset during the last century and a half; and, conversely, it was a moral interest—the desire to find room for freedom and immortality—that moved Kant to attempt a more profound analysis of knowl-

Digitized by Google

edge. The moral philosophy which he set himself to reform is still the popular philosophy. It was not, nor is it, an harmonious system. It is divided by the current opposition between intuition and experience, between the "moral sense" and the "principle of utility." But an element of identity pervades it, implied in its being the popular philosophy. It is the uncritical expression of the claim to be free, to enjoy, and to understand. It is an abstract or result of the various methods, poetic, religious, metaphysical, by which man has sought to account to himself for the world of his experience, as they apply directly to human life. Inconsistent with all the inconsistencies of these methods, which it takes not as criticism would reconstruct but as rhetoric has overlaid them, it brings its contradictions home to the average man at the most vital points, and is the natural parent of the modern "unsettlement." It is proposed here to trace the history of its more importunate questions, and to inquire how far a philosophy, not yet, if ever it can become, popular, has already met them.

The ethical theories of popular philosophy, however various, have this in common, that they rest wholly on feeling. Of feeling, as such, they give no account. As in the popular theory of knowledge, no distinction is made between sensation itself and the intellectual judgment of which sensation is the occasion or accompaniment, so in the corresponding theory of morals, feeling is treated as the exhaustive account of all modes of consciousness with which it is associated. Taken thus ready-made, with "reflection" for its servant, it is the principle of construction in all the doctrines by which English and French philosophers, from Hobbes downwards, have accounted for "conscience," the rational will, and the actual fabric of moral custom and law. These systems vary as the import of feeling itself varies, and according to the range of the service which reflection is supposed to do it. With Hobbes, the feeling on which morality rests is the mere animal appetite, the sense of want, with the impulse to appropriate that which will satisfy the want. This appetite, however, has to lose its merely animal character before it will account even for the state of universal warfare in which, according to Hobbes, society begins. "*Homo homini lupus*," but the wolf eats when he is hungry, and has done with it. The wolfish appetite is not the permanent impulse to get as much as he can for himself, which Hobbes supposes as the source of the wolfish or primary state of society. Having made this covert introduction of self-consciousness into the primary appetite, and supposing a faculty of calculating means to ends as its instrument, it is not difficult to represent the strife of appetites as ending in a balance, which the calculating faculty of the many perceives to afford the maximum of possible gratification, and fixes in positive law. Nor does it require any great ingenuity to trace in the "social affections" secondary forms of the selfish appetite taught by accumulated calculation to anticipate its own satisfaction or apprehend its own loss in the pleasure and pain of others, and disciplined by long habit to do so instinctively.

The origin, then, of the judgment "I ought," Hobbes finds simply in the command of a ruler, and the ruling power in the last resort turns out to be the appetite of some one strong enough to enforce its satisfaction, in submission to which the appetites of others gain more than they lose. Appetite, transformed (it is not explained how) into deliberate self-interest, is thus the source at once of the idea of duty, and of the "moral sentiments," or the affections which dispose us to realize the idea. This was good hearing for the courtiers of Charles II., and, to judge from Butler's sermons, it appears to have continued the fashionable philosophy during the first part of the eighteenth century. A superficial analysis of composite feeling was clearly to the taste of the age. As if exulting in deliverance from the idea of an absolute Divine law, expressed either in the Church, or the Bible, or the conscience, which had haunted the thoughts and troubled the peace of the previous age, men would not only please themselves (as they had always done), but take credit and account to themselves for their pleasure. As the talk of a woman or a child is tedious from the iteration of "I like" and "I don't like," so the literature of that time nauseates with the description of agreeable sensations and reflections, and with easy theories of their production. In particular, fashionable controversy busied itself with the question of the element of self-interest in the social affections. Throughout his sermons, Butler stands in an attitude of defence against "that scorn which one sees rising upon the faces of people who are said to know the world, when mention is made of a disinterested action." He meets them, it is to be observed, by treating the actions in question, not as the realization of an idea of duty from which all merely personal interests are excluded, but as issuing from an immediate spontaneous affection, which self-love does not generate any more than it generates hunger, but for whose gratification, as a source of happiness, it may and ought to provide. Of self-love itself he gives no

Digitized by Google

consistent account. Sometimes it appears as one affection among others, co-ordinate with benevolence or resentment; sometimes as a reflective desire for one's good as a whole, regulating the other affections (benevolence among them), the harmonious satisfaction of which constitutes the good that it seeks.

Benevolence, in its turn, is treated sometimes as a natural affection, sometimes as a "principle of virtue." The relation between its two forms is nowhere intelligibly explained, for an explanation of it supposes a theory of the will, as the condition of moral in distinction from merely natural action, which nowhere appears in Butler. The failure to trace benevolence to its source in the active reason necessarily leads to a difficulty as to its relation to self-love. Generally in Butler we find a co-ordination between love of self and love of one's neighbour, as separate "principles of our nature," the proper balance between which constitutes virtue. If, dissatisfied with such dichotomy of the individual man, we ask for an ultimate unity which may account for the two opposite principles, Butler can give us no sufficient answer. Ultimately he abandons the co-ordination, and claims for benevolence by itself the prerogative of being the spring of all virtue. But in so doing he transfers to it without explanation, a supremacy previously assigned to self-love. The essential identity of the two he cannot explain, for he has no formula elastic enough to suit the reality of the rational will, which, in making itself its own object, takes others into itself. No one, indeed, insists more strongly on the unity of constitution of the individual nature. It is necessary to his stoical conception of virtue as the life according to nature. Now, since the moral nature, as a single whole, is the self, to live for the satisfaction of one's nature as a whole must be to live for self. According to this view, then, self-love must be the ultimate, the ruling moral principle, and such, in the sermons on Human Nature, Butler admits it to be. But on this admission, unless the self be regarded as at once individual and universal, according to a conception beyond the reach of his popular logic, it becomes difficult to maintain the "disinterested" character of benevolence. As a simple "propension" no doubt, like every other, it rests in its immediate object as an end, and this object may be the gratification of another. But in order to become a "principle of virtue," to hold its proper place in the moral system of man, it must be reflected on. Its satisfaction must be relative to that of the entire man or self. This being so, it becomes "selfish" or interested, in the ordinary sense, except so far as the self, to which it is relative, is consciously identified with something beyond the mere individual, with a public cause, duty, or the will of God. This identification, however, popular philosophy, clinging to material divisions, and treating the spiritual self as a thing exclusive of other things, will not trouble itself to apprehend, and Butler either had no conception of it himself, or did not attempt to explain it to the men of the world who listened to him in the Rolls Chapel. He never represents self-love as anything more than the reasonable desire for personal happiness; and personal happiness, desired as such, is none the less a selfish or interested motive because the gratification of others is one of its constituents. Thus, in the sermons on the Love of Our Neighbour, to save the credit of such love for disinterestedness, he has to take refuge in the unphilosophical representation of it noticed above, as parallel, not subordinate to self-love, and, in the good man, justly proportioned to it. He lapses, that is, into the raw empiricism of popular philosophy, which explains the moral man as a ready-made compound, not as the many-sided development of a single spiritual principle.

The same want of ultimate analysis confuses his conception of self-love in relation to "conscience." Here again we find an unexplained co-ordination of two separate principles, instead of a two-fold relation of one and the same. "Conscience," indeed, with him is scarcely, as with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, a mere sense. It is an authoritative faculty of judgment. He seems constantly on the verge of identifying it with reason or thought, as that which creates its own object and constitutes the unity of the self-conscious man. But he never actually does so. Human nature, he holds, is an organic system, in which "the faculty of reflex approbation and disapprobation" has a proper supremacy. Because of this authority, an act which does not accord with conscience is wrong in itself, apart from any consequence in the way of unhappiness. How this comes to be so, however, he does not—perhaps it should be said that to an audience believing in Locke he could not—explain. He was, in fact, the victim of the current psychology, which, as in regard to knowledge it assigned to thought no other office than that of combining the perceptions of things grown complete by sense, so in regard to action, left it merely to balance against each, and find means to attain, objects of desire given independently of it. On such a theory the "authority" of conscience, which as a faculty of judgment can

Digitized by Google

be no other than thought, is unaccountable, and therefore unreal. Conscience is not supposed to constitute the man; it is "a part of our nature, alongside of another part, called appetite or affection. Why should it claim "supremacy over the other part, when, after all, it can only be from this other part that it derives the object with reference to which it judges? What meaning can there be in saying that what is "against conscience" is wrong in itself, apart from resulting unhappiness, unless conscience as a creative idea gives an object to itself? If it does so—a conception, for better or worse, beyond the reach of Butler's psychology,—then adaptation to the attainment of this object may render an action right in itself. If, on the other hand, the object of man's action is necessarily given by desires which thought may regulate, but can in no way constitute, then conscience in itself can give no measure of rightness; and that which is merely right in itself as consistent with conscience, not as satisfying desires or causing pleasure, is that which is right with reference to nothing, *i. e.*, a nonentity. Thus Butler, when he wants to find some reality corresponding to the right in itself, has to seek it in happiness. He has to represent interest and duty as coinciding, which really means that conscience approves or disapproves with reference to an object given by self-love. This, however, in the absence of any adequate conception of the self as the reason which can "spread undivided," and make a universal good its own, is to make conscience the servant of enlightened selfishness. From such a result Butler shrinks, but he only escapes it by keeping conscience and self-love apart, as separate, though alike supreme, principles of our nature,—a separation which in effect makes conscience objectless and unreal, and reduces self-love from the position of the practical reason to that of an animal instinct of self-preservation.

While benevolence, self-love, and conscience, thus stand over against each other, according to Butler's moral psychology, in unexplained relation and unreconciled competition for supremacy, athwart them all comes "the Love of God." His sermons on this topic are the most interesting part of his writings. It would appear from the accounts of his life that he had some tendency to find in mystical piety an escape from the limitations of a philosophy inadequate to the expression of the spiritual life; and certainly in his sermons his thoughts seem to breathe more freely and his intellectual pulse to be less sluggish, when he can adopt from the received language of religion ideas for which the philosophy of the time could scarcely afford legitimate place. But the conception which thus inspires him, though it may make his view more adequate to the reality, is a further element of confusion in it. According to his general doctrine, reason and feeling remain asunder as separate parts of our compound nature. The love of our neighbour is treated throughout, even when its end is said to be something so general as the public good, as an "affection" with the constitution or creation of which reason has nothing to do. The office of reason is merely to consider how the benevolent propension may be best satisfied on the whole. It calculates the means to an end given independently of it. But over and above the virtuous affections, according to Butler, there is an affection for these affections *as they are thought upon*. The merciful man loves mercy. This must be an affection which reason not only directs but creates, and with which it remains in absolute fusion. Its object, as Butler describes it, is nothing sensible. It is evoked indeed by the contemplation of such goodness as we actually experience among men, but is only satisfied by the idea of the perfect goodness that is in God. It takes us not out of ourselves; it is as much our own as the most vulgar appetite; yet through it "our will may be lost and resolved up into God's." Such "resolution" or "resignation" of the will is the parent of all high thinking and acting. It carries with it hope and fear and love in their purest spiritual form; it involves all virtue, for it is the recognition of the divine order of the world which it is our privilege to enact.

The above is quite a fair condensation of Butler's language on this high theme. Yet here we find strangely reappearing, in the midst of a moral theory adapted to the psychology according to Locke, a conception which is none other than that of the beatific vision; of Spinoza's *Amor Intellectualis;* of the Platonic idea of good, the contemplation of which is the final goal of love, and which, once seen, transforms the actions of men to its likeness. How is such an intrusive conception to adjust itself to its surroundings? The love of perfect goodness, or God, if real, can clearly hold no second place in the nature of man. Is it to be added as one more "superior principle" alongside of the other three to which that title has already been given? or is it one in which the other three are reconciled? We may say, indeed, that the intellectual love for goodness, as such, can be only another form of "conscience," as the faculty which approves or disapproves of actions; that in this new form "conscience" is no longer liable to the dilemma that it either is void of an object

Digitized by Google

with reference to which it may approve and disapprove, or finds one in personal pleasure, for it has the required object in the idea of completeness, which, as reason, it presents to itself, and which, as desire, it seeks to realize in action. We may say further, that the "love of goodness" includes at once self-love and the love of our neighbour, which in it become identical with each other; for in its perfection, according to Butler, it means the resolution of the individual will into the Divine, which is a will for the good of all men; and when this consummation is attained, since the will is the self, consciously to love, and live for God, must be consciously to love and live for at once one's-self and humanity. We have but to take one step more to discern that this resolution of the love of self into the love of others or of goodness, is not a result suddenly or exceptionally achieved, but that man, as self-loving, or an object to himself, *i.e.*, as rational, ever tends to inform the world which his desires constitute or create with a unity like his own; that thus he becomes the author of custom and law, of families, nations, and states, which make the good of one the good of all, and the interest in which is identical with the interest in one's-self. If this be so, the weakness that seemed to attach to conscience in its abstraction, as an inert faculty of judgment, is done away. It need no longer be wailed over, in Butler's language, as that which, "if only it had strength, as it has authority, would rule the world." As the self-seeking reason which creates order as its own expression, it has actually constructed the system of the social and moral world, which, though the consciousness of it in the individual be but as a remote unheeded voice, yet works through him when he seems to be following his own lust and imagination.

In saying this for Butler, however, we are crediting him with a unity of system which is not in him. He was content to leave the moral nature a cross of unreconciled principles. To trace them to a unity, either of source or of result, was impossible to one who presupposed the psychology of Locke, unless on condition of ignoring the true character of their opposition. By reducing the idea of duty, and the love of God and man, to a disguised selfishness, he might have done it, but from this his religion saved him. His value as an ethical writer is due to the same cause which makes his speculation perplexed and self-contradictory. A shallower and narrower view of the moral life would have fitted more neatly into the received theory of knowledge of the soul, which alone he had at command. Popular philosophy was too strong for him. Its division of the soul into reason and feeling as mutually exclusive "parts," its doctrine that the reality of spiritual processes may be known by observing what goes on "within one's own breast," are incompatible with any just view of the process by which the actual moral world has been created, and which it involves; for it is of the essence of this process that, in a true sense, the whole is in every part of it, and the "heart" of the individual, though the deposit of its results, belies the source whence they come.

Man reads back into himself, so to speak, the distinctions which have issued from him, and which he finds in language. In this retranslation he changes the fluidity which belongs to them in language, where they represent ever shifting attitudes of thought and perpetually cross each other, for the fixedness of separate things. He has suffered, and said, "I feel;" has contrived means to escape his suffering, and said, "I think;" but it has been the "I" that has felt as well as thought, and has thought in its feeling. Otherwise the suffering, itself transitory, could not have been retained as a permanent object of consciousness, and, as such, named. The man, in suffering, has at once distinguished the suffering self from, and held it in relation to, himself; *i.e.*, has thought. In other words, the feeling has been that of a subject reflecting on himself, and in no other form can man know it. But the privilege of self-consciousness brings with it the privilege of self-deception. It is only as fixed by relation to a permanent subject, that passing acts and sufferings are substantial in language, but as thus substantiated they seem to have a separate reality of their own apart from this relation. Then, when man has reached the further or philosophic stage of reflection on self—when he begins to ask himself what his own nature is—he observes and classifies them as he might things in the outward world, in fancied separation from the self-conscious activity in virtue of which alone they are there to be observed. They are put on one side as "feelings," thought or reason on the other, and it is asked what is the function of each according to our inward experience. The feelings are taken as they are given in this experience, which means, since this experience is an intelligent one, that they are taken as already formed by thought, or (in technical language) as already subject to the categories. Thus, as constituents of knowledge, they are assumed either to be copies of, or to be themselves permanent cognisable things. As sources of moral action ("passions" or "emotions"), they are taken to be

Digitized by Google

either permanent objects of consciousness, or to be consciously caused by such objects, or to involve the idea of them.* Of intelligent experience itself no analysis is made, and hence it is not seen that, thus taken, the feelings are already transformed from the merely natural or animal state, that they already involve reason, and that it is only because they do so that we can have an intelligent experience of them. So much having been unawares assigned to the feelings and it being assumed that what is done by them is not done by reason, there remains no office for reason but in speculation to combine them, and in action so to adjust them in relation to each other and the natural world, as to secure their being pleasant on the whole; or, as Hume announced in a formula that sticks to one, "reason is and ought to be only the slave of the passions."

Hume had the true philosophic instinct of consistency, and the ambition to do for the unsorted principles of the current ethics what Copernicus had done for the intricacies of the Ptolemaic astronomy. In him the doctrines of the popular philosophy are made consistent with themselves, and thoroughly worked out. For that very reason, probably, his doctrine has never been itself popular, since to make such philosophy consistent with itself is to make it offensive to the "heart," to destroy its adaptation to the many sides of practical life, to render it unavailable as rhetoric. His greatest and only systematic work on philosophy, *The Treatise of Human Nature*, fell, as he tells us, "dead-born from the press," and has always been better known in Germany than in England. Yet it is absolutely the last work of the philosophy of Locke. If in any of its doctrines as to knowledge or virtue it has been considerably added to or modified by the subsequent disciples of the same school, this result, however practically desirable, has only been attained at the cost of speculative confusion and inconsistency.

Good and evil, according to Hume, always mean pleasure and pain, either as actually felt, or as anticipated. Pleasure and pain, again, are ultimately impressions on the bodily organs, or, in Hume's technical language, impressions of sensation. Of these "copies are taken by the mind," called ideas; and as thus copied, the primary impressions of sensation give rise to "impressions of reflection," to the "direct passions" of desire and aversion, hope and fear. These, again, may be copied, or converted into ideas, by memory and imagination, and so cause new impressions of reflection. Meanwhile there is gradually formed the idea of self, which means simply "that succession of related ideas and impressions of which we have an intimate memory and consciousness." This causes a further modification of the "direct passions." If the object which excites them be one closely related to or forming part of ourselves, there result "indirect passions"—of pride, if the direct passion be desire or hope; of humility, if the direct passion be aversion or fear. In like manner, "ideas" of other "thinking persons" having been copied on the mind, if the object exciting the direct passion be one closely related to some other thinking person, there results the indirect passion of love or hatred. In these indirect passions, however, the direct passions, though qualified, are not lost, but intensified.

These passions, according to Hume, either as simple or as complicated with each other, and having their range indefinitely extended by sympathy and the association of ideas, are the causes of all the actions of men. Reason neither has anything to do with their constitution, nor can it conflict with them. It gives nothing, originates nothing. As in regard to knowledge, it merely has to do with the relation of given "ideas" to each other, either in the way of agreement and disagreement or of cause and effect, so in regard to action, it merely has to calculate the means to a pleasure that is desired or hoped for, and discover the cause of a pain that is disliked or feared. The mere passion can never be either reasonable or unreasonable, and is always the ultimate cause of the action, which, however, may become unreasonable through a mistake in some mediate judgment. The will is merely a passion consciously related to an act.* Because a mere passion, it (and through it the act) is determined as necessarily by pain or pleasure as any so-called physical effect by its cause. Since neither in the one case nor the other has the cause any compulsive power in relation to the effect, this necessity in the operation of passion is quite compatible with the "spontaneity" of which we are conscious.

So much for an account of the way in which we do act. How do we come to speak of a way in which we ought to act,—of rights and obligations? The answer is quite

* One or other of these alternatives it will be found that Hume assumes, in the case alike of the emotions and the direct passions.

* The will, with Hume, is "the internal impression we feel and are conscious of, when we knowingly give rise to any new motion of the body or perception of our mind." Since, according to him, only a passion can give rise to such new motion, the result is that stated above.

Digitized by Google

consistent. Pain and pleasure are the primary causes of vice and virtue. "By a primary constitution of nature," certain characters and passions, and certain acts, as the expression of character and passion, "by the very view and contemplation produce a pain, and others, in like manner, excite a pleasure." It is solely in virtue of this pleasure or pain which character or acts excite "upon the mere survey," that they are either virtuous or vicious. The pain and pleasure "are not only inseparable from vice and virtue, but constitute their very nature and essence." The faculty through which they are felt is the moral sense. A further question, however, arises: Are the pain and pleasure under consideration primary, and therefore unaccountable, or can they be accounted for by any uniform property in the acts and passions, the mere survey of which excites them? Hume adopts the latter alternative. It is always the pleasure or pain caused mediately or immediately by the act or passion that makes us feel pleasure or pain in the survey of it; *i.e.*, that makes it virtuous or vicious. There are many acts, it is true, arising from obedience to laws, which the moral sense approves, and which yet cause no apparent pleasure to any one. These are acts "artificially virtuous." The selfishness of man, as Hobbes had said and Hume agreed, made the state of nature unbearable. Thus laws, states, and sovereignties were formed, which, though a limitation on the pleasures of each, secure a maximum of pleasure for all. An act of disobedience to law, therefore, though causing no pain in itself, is disapproved by the moral sense, because known to be in conflict with an institution the maintenance of which is known to be the condition of the greatest pleasure consistent with the limited generosity of men. If the pain resulting from the act of disobedience seem at first too indirect and remote to account for our sense of disapprobation, we must remember the influence of "sympathy with a general uneasiness"—such uneasiness as is caused by violation of law, and of the artifice of politicians in fostering that and kindred sympathies. No such explanation is needed with regard to acts "naturally virtuous." These are acts which cause immediate pleasure to the doer or to others, and, in consequence, excite pleasure on the contemplation. The contemplator of the act, it is to be observed, whose moral sense is gratified by it, is always supposed by Hume, as by his disciple Adam Smith, to be other than the doer of it; the special reference to one's own acts, which other writers had ascribed to conscience, being thus precisely reversed. As, in order that an act may cause satisfaction on the contemplation, the pleasure arising from it must be not exceptional, but general, the contemplator regards not the pleasure which it produces, or is calculated to produce to himself, which may be unlike its effect on others, but that which it produces to the doer or those connected with him, this being one which appears uniform to the spectators of the act, though it may be quite otherwise to the doer himself. In brief, its pleasantness makes an act or character virtuous; not, however, directly, but through the medium of a further pleasure arising on contemplation of the first. In other words, the pleasure which makes an act virtuous must not be one arising from it merely in this case or that, but one generally associated with it in the contemplation of a being who "looks before and after."

This system is perfectly neat and easy. It is the necessary result of the Epicurean principle, ἐν τῷ πάθει ὁ κάνων. But it raises awkward questions. The virtue of an act or character, according to it, is nothing in the act or character itself, any more than sound or colour, or other "secondary qualities," are in things themselves. Their "*esse*" consists in the "*percipi*;" and that not a "*percipi*" by the doer of the act, or the owner of the character, but by others. As Berkeley had previously shown, a mere feeling gives nothing beyond itself. It represents no quality in things, though, on reflection, we may refer it to such a quality as its cause. Thus the mere feeling of satisfaction in the beholder, which constitutes an act virtuous, represents nothing in the act itself. The quality in the act itself that causes the "moral" feeling, is the pleasure known to result from it to the doer or to others. This pleasure, not the virtuousness of the act—not, that is, the other pleasure which it causes upon the mere survey, and which supposes it to have been previously done—is the actual motive to the doer for doing it. To represent the virtuous act as done because it is so, or "for virtue's sake," is either nonsense, as supposing that to be the motive of the act which can only follow it, or else means that the act is done for the sake of the impression it makes on spectactors, *i.e.*, for reputation's sake.

We must cease then to speak of an idea of duty as a possible motive to or even restraint upon action, if we mean anything more by it than a regard to reputation, and to this only as a source of pleasure. It will not help us out of the difficulty to say, that the fulfilment of duty is itself a pleasure to the good man, and thus, like any other pleasure, an object of desire, and in consequence a motive of action. Something must

Digitized by Google

have induced the man to do his duty, before he could find pleasure in doing it. What was this? Not any idea originated by the reason, for of that the psychology of Locke does not allow, but a desired good or pleasure, which must have been either a simple sensuous impression, or the result of such impression. When the act has been done and been found to give pleasure to others on the contemplation, it may be done again for the sake of the pleasure to himself, which the doer derives from this secondary pleasure, *i.e.*, from the satisfaction of his own love of approbation, and this he calls finding pleasure in doing his duty. How then, according to Hume, are we to account for our doing acts unpleasant in themselves "from a sense of obligation"? Simply thus, such acts are obligatory as being "artificially virtuous" in the sense explained above. It is not, however, for their obligatoriness that we do them, but from a sense of interest, more or less distinct, and desire for ultimate pleasure, strengthened by a sympathy with the feeling of society about them, which makes their ommission painful.

The virtuous act, then, being never done for the sake of its virtue, which is a quality relative to the contemplator, not to the doer, but always either to obtain a pleasure or avert a pain, whether immediate or remote, the question arises, How is vice possible? The viciousness, according to Hume, of an act, like its virtue, lies not in the "*esse*" but the "*percipi*." It is vicious, because it gives pain on the contemplation, and the reason why it does so, is that in the doing, or its results, it causes pain or prevents pleasure to the doer or to others. How is such an act possible, on the supposition (necessary to Hume's philosophy) that every act results from the desire for pleasure, or aversion to pain? The only answer can be, that the particular present pleasure is an object of stronger desire than the general and more remote; and that the pleasure desired is always one's own, though through the action of sympathy it may sometimes involve that of others. If, then, the present pleasure happens to be inconsistent with the more general or remote, or one's own with that of other men, a vicious act ensues. If the doer of it asks, "Why should I not prefer the present pleasure, which I violently desire, to the remote which I scarcely desire at all, and my own pleasure to another's?" the answer must be, "You inevitably do so prefer it, and the phrase *ought* or *ought not*, does not express any relation of the act to you, but its relation to the beholders." In short, we must get rid of the notion that it is essential to a vicious act to be done in conscious violation of a law within the doer's self, which he is free to obey. A similar purgation must be applied to our notions of the selfish and unselfish. If a selfish act means one done from an idea of one's own general good, then no acts are selfish. If it means one done for the sake of some pleasure accruing from it to one's-self, then all acts are selfish. The distinction between the selfish and unselfish, in fact, only finds its way at all into Hume's system at the cost of marring its unity. Selfishness is treated as the opposite of benevolence, or the desire for the happiness of others, and the latter, he sometimes admits, must be taken as "an original principle of our nature," not to be reduced to the desire for pleasure or aversion from pain. Sympathy, however (another "principle of our nature" which does duty whenever it is wanted), may be represented as identifying the pleasure of another with one's own, and will thus account for acts which, as not done for one's own pleasure *merely*, may be called unselfish.

Such results may be unlovely, but they are the logical consequence of a psychology which, separating reason and feeling, regards feeling as the sole originator of action, and reason as its minister. Adam Smith only made them more palatable by disguising them, by introducing more "original principles of our nature," such as the sense of propriety, and giving a further loose to the already indefinite range of "sympathy." Though Hume's original statement of them, in scientific simplicity, met with little recognition, they were virtually the received doctrines of the educated classes in France and England during the last century. Adapted to the requirements of public spirit, and illogically modified in the adaptation, they have become, under the name "Utilitarianism," the permanent practical theory of men of the world. In confused conflict with other principles, more elevated perhaps, but less able to account for themselves, while the appeal is still to the "heart," they have been wrought into the rhetoricized philosophy of the press, the pulpit, and the platform, to become the source of much undemonstrative agony at the times when speculation comes home to life.

So far then the claim of the modern spirit to enjoy life *with understanding* results in the conviction "I always do what pleases me because it pleases me, and it is impossible that I should do otherwise." Unfortunately this result comes into necessary conflict with its other claim to be free. The burden of moral obligation is got rid of in the philosophy of Hume, but only to

Digitized by Google

be replaced by that of natural necessity. Man does as he pleases, but so does a horse out of harness; the pleasure in each case is, or naturally results from, a natural sensation. He acts spontaneously, as the horse when it races "from emulation;" not under compulsion, as a horse when it is driven. He has "ideas," as well as impressions, he *knows* what will please him, but it is as the ass knows his master's crib. He has a natural sympathy, which makes another's pleasure as his own, but dogs show the same in the chase. "Interrogate consciousness" which way you will, according to Hume, make the primary principles as many as you will, they still "answer mere nature." Such an answer, however, gives the lie to the very impulse that caused the question to be asked, too strongly to be acquiesced in. Unless man had consciously detached himself from nature, no *Treatise of Human Nature* could have been written. He would not be trying to account to himself for his own moral life, even by reducing it to a natural one, would not be asking what nature is to him or he to nature, if he were merely the passive receptacle of natural impressions, and not at the same time constructive and free.

There is of course some justification for regarding the knowledge of nature in the received way as simply an analysis of a given material, though the critical philosophy has shown that, inasmuch as nature can only be known under categories supplied by thought, even in this knowledge we are not properly receptive, but constructive. But in seeking to know the moral world, man is dealing with a world which he has made for himself. No one asserts this more strongly than Hume, when he is maintaining the "artificial" character of the most essential social virtues. Everything that makes human life human, the institutions by which "relations dear, and all the charities of husband, son, and brother first were known;" which creates honour and dishonour, loyalty and disloyalty, justice and injustice; which makes it possible to die for one's country or be false to it; to sacrifice one's-self to a cause or a cause to one's-self; to defraud the fatherless and widow, or befriend them—all these the animals know not. They are not primary but derived, not given by nature but constituted by man. We say, indeed, that laws are not made but grow. This, however, merely means that they are the expression of previously existing relations. These relations themselves are only possible to a being that can consciously make new conditions for itself, and is therefore not properly "natural." The "natural" is determined to motion either from without, or if (as in the case of animals) from within, yet by a principle within which it cannot distinguish from and present to itself. The development of man, on the other hand, necessarily implies that he is determined by a self at once individual and all-capacious, like nothing in nature, and which he can detach from its actual condition to present to himself as a form for which a new content, a power for which a new realization, may be won in the future. The moral world, therefore, cannot be truly known by an imaginary analysis of "natural" feelings and faculties. To know it must mean to re-construct it in thought, *i.e.*, to take the bare principle of self-consciousness, which has alike made our feelings what they are, and set us upon knowing them, and follow its gradual realization in actual morality.

It was not, however, from any explicit discovery of the radical flaw in its method that the natural philosophy of man got into difficulties, but from the action within it of the free self-consciousness which it really expressed, but ostensibly ignored. The great name which represents this action is that of Rousseau. His philosophic nurture was solely that of the school of Locke. Of other philosophy his ignorance was either absolute, or at least the secondary ignorance of antipathy. "I abhor Spinoza," he said of himself, and the abhorrence of Spinoza meant an abhorrence of the whole system of thought which absorbs sentiment in reason. But in him the philosophy of feeling became the food of a spirit which dealt with it in a way quite unknown to the healthy men of the world, who discussed the difference between their "impressions of reflection" with the same calmness as the distinct flavours of the wines of Burgundy and Bordeaux, to which they assimilated them. It was now the heritage of a brooding eremite, subject to no vows of abstinence or obedience, and whose hermitage was the world. This, however, was the legitimate, the necessary fate of a system which, itself the product of a high-wrought self-consciousness, pronounced the self "a succession of sensations;" and which, while it reasons upon the world of duties and obligations, derationalized it by making the satisfaction of an appetite or a sentiment its origin and end. Self-consciousness believing itself to be a mode of passion, becomes passionate, and, as such, wilful, exclusive, indecent, defiant of gods and men—"savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust." The simple passions, on the other hand, wrought by this self-belying self-consciousness into a system which, if not a

Digitized by Google

harmony, must be a discord, become morbid, contradictory, "in having still in quest to have." The man who, in following the mere motion of nature, has asked himself the question, "Why should I not?" has proved that he is not the child of nature by the most fatal gift of thinking humanity. Henceforth he is at once self-asserting and self-condemned, insolent and unhappy. If his pleasure is merely that of the most gifted of the animals, his misery is a peculiar and absolutely original privilege. The "Confessions" of Rousseau are thus not to be regarded merely as the expression of an idiosyncrasy. In virtue of his idiosyncrasy and genius he stood to the philosophy of feeling in the same relation in which the great men of action are said to stand to their several ages. He expressed it in its clearest essence and its fullest force, and, at the same time, to the eye of the historian of philosophy, he wound it up. It has retained, indeed, as we have already said, a permanent hold on popular thought, but, since Rousseau, philosophy proper has left it behind, and is interested in it only as an element in the past, which it has itself absorbed. The "good, sound, roundabout sense" of Locke has its legitimate child in the sentimentality of Rousseau, and this sentimentality in indecency; but the grave of them all is the recognition of the constructive energy of reason. It was because this recognition, though but in abstract glimpses,* had forced itself on the introspective gaze of Rousseau, that he was a heretic among the contemporary *philosophes*, yet contributed directly to the new birth of speculation that was gathering shape in the brain of the remote Professor at Königsberg.

On his sentimental and indecent side, Rousseau does not outwardly differ from other French *philosophes*, save that his sentiment is more real and his indecency less gross. But in him—

> "An apprehension clear, intense,
> Of his mind's work, had made alive
> The things it wrought on; I believe
> Wakening a sort of thought in sense."

Or rather the thought that is always in sense, as man knows it, had in him attained the utmost intensity of self-consciousness, yet still believing individual sentiment to be its sole source and object, it became monstrous as a drunken god. Instead of recognising in the objective world of art and of religious and moral institutions its sole adequate realisation, it sought to find it in mere personal feelings, where yet its misery proclaimed that its rest was not. Thus it grew loud in its license, and glorified itself in grossness. For true art it substituted that which modern newspaper critics call the "photography of passion,"—not, however, of simple passion, for that, properly speaking, has no features by which to be photographed, but of passion warped and subtilized by a misdirected self-consciousness. In this aberration, it became the fountain of the modern poetry of indecency, which, if denounced by the popular philosophy, can always reply to it with a stone from its own sling. If mere feeling has a value or reality—if, as that philosophy supposes, it is the ultimate spring of our inward life—why should not all its varieties be photographed in their nakedness? *De sensibus non est disputandum.* If that which is to you a stink is to me a savour of delight, why should I not utter my delight before all Israel and the sun, shaking a puny fist at all who would silence me? Custom is against me, but is itself the child of sense and sympathy: my altered sense, winning a new sympathy, may beget another custom. A different philosophy indeed might answer that art has no meaning except as the realization of an idea of perfection, to which sense only supplies the material; that to represent the passions in naked simplicity is impossible, for as such they are at once dumb themselves and indescribable, nor can the attempt to do so produce anything but the mean or the monstrous: that not in themselves, but only as absorbed in will or thought or spiritualized nature—only either as issuing in heroic act, or as making way in collision with each other and destiny for a peace that is not in them, or as breathed into the life of nature and from it taking beauty and repose—are the passions fit material for art at all; that thus not passion but the "high reason of his fancies" makes the Poet.

Such an answer, however, the philosophy that makes "reason the slave of passion" cannot give. Nor can it supply any effective defence of established manners against the wilfulness of self-conscious sentiment. Such sentiment finds itself girt about with the results of what its masters have taught it to call "artifice," whose domain seems to reach further and further back as reflection extends itself, till the "natural virtues disappear." For this artifice it cannot satisfactorily account. The free principle of construction, which is the source of the artifice of morals, is the same as that which, converting simple passion into self-will, comes into inevitable collision with its own artificial creation. Just because it is a principle

* See, in particular, the first part of the *Profession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard.*

Digitized by Google

of construction it is also one of negation, and from the war in the members which results there is no escape, till from the denial of the authority of an alien law it goes on to deny its own mere inviduality, and to find its own expression in the law which it had before resented. To this double denial, however, the philosophy of Rousseau was inadequate. Custom lay upon him with a weight not almost but altogether deep as the moral life. No sentiment could comprehend it; the reason which underlay it could be "envisaged" by no definite act of imagination. His antithetical logic did not allow him to conceive that the very individuality which he hugged was unreal, except so far as generalized by the relations to others which custom embodies. But self-consciousness, when it has reached such strength as it had in Rousseau, will tolerate no "mystery." That to which its logic is inadequate, that which it cannot rationalize, is alien and a bondage. The coil of custom, therefore, was to be shuffled off, and nature left to herself. The dearest ties of family were to be got rid of as much as the swaddling-bands which restrain the free motion of infancy. Some moral desert was to be found or created, where the pure personality might develop itself in mere abstraction.

Rousseau thus became the father of Jacobinism. The philosophy of feeling which to Hume had been the vindication of absolutism, had by a necessary process recoiled upon itself. Feeling having been pronounced the sole principle of action, had turned out inadequate to account for law and morality. "Artifice," itself unaccounted for, had been introduced to account for them, but to it feeling, being really self-consciousness under the limitations of sentiment, could not adjust itself, and proceeded to assert its admitted supremacy by tearing artifice to pieces. Before the trumpet-blast of natural right "temple and tower went to the ground." Burke pleaded the ancient rights in vain, though with a power which has made all subsequent conservative writing superfluous and tedious. Notwithstanding his violence and one-sidedness, he had so much of the true philosophic insight that he almost alone among the men of his time caught the intellectual essence of the system which provoked him. He saw that it rested on a metaphysical mistake, on an attempt to abstract the individual from his universal essence, *i. e.*, from the relations embodied in habitudes and institutions which make him what he is; and that thus to unclothe man, if it were possible, would be to animalize him. He saw this without any of the qualifying haze which makes ordinary men "moderate" except when their private interests are concerned, and let fly at the delusion with a speculative fancy which to unspeculative persons at the time, who feared Jacobinism for their estates, seemed almost inspired, but has led persons of the same sort since to pronounce him mad. He did not indeed reflect, as a deeper philosopher might have done, that there is a wisdom in the world wiser than the world itself wots of, and that the wild outburst of wilfulness, which seemed to be tearing up the clothes of humanity, was really powerless to destroy, and was but refashioning the old order into one that reason could more easily recognise as its own. The present generation can see this result, but speculatively seems little the wiser for it. The fabric of European society stands apparently square and strong on a basis of decent actual equity, but no adequate rationale of this equity is generally recognised. The Hedonism of Hume has been turned into Utilitarianism, the Jacobinism of Rousseau into a gentle Liberalism, but neither *ism* could save the "culture" of England, in the great struggle between wilfulness and social right across the Atlantic, from taking sides with the wilfulness. Whatever might be the case practically, it had not learnt speculatively that freedom means something else than doing what one likes. A philosophy based on feeling was still playing the anarch in its thoughts.

Burke was not a prophet, and died protesting against the inevitable. He saw the rottenness in which the "metaphysics" of the eighteenth century resulted, but had nothing with which to replace them. The practical reconstruction of moral ideas in England was to come not directly from a sounder philosophy, but from the deeper views of life which the contemplative poets originated, from the revival of evangelical religion, and from the conception of freedom and right, which Rousseau himself popularized, and which even in his hands had a constructive as well as an anarchical import. These three influences, however superficially unlike, have yet this in common, that they tend to rid the consciousness of its self-imposed individual limitations. The man to whom nature has become human, who has recognised either a kingdom of God or a power of eternal death within him, who has found in a Free State not a mere organization for satisfying his wants, but an object of interest identical with his interest in himself—such an one has escaped by the true "*solvitur ambulando*," from the hard lines within which sophists would confine him. He has already for himself answered the question whether it is he that is natural, or

Digitized by Google

nature that is unconsciously spiritual; has practically decided that he is not the passive result of outward impressions, but self-determined, and therefore partaker of the divine infinity; has universalized his individual self up to the measure of the universe of man's affairs. But he still needs the theory of his own greatness. If in a theoretic age like ours such a theory is not achieved, the very fulness of moral and artistic life only thickens the speculative chaos.

In England, it was specially Wordsworth who delivered literature from bondage to the philosophy that had naturalized man. This may at first sight seem a paradoxical statement of the relation between one known popularly as the "Poet of Nature" and a system which had magnified "artifice." It is not so really. It was because the natural philosophy of man, anatomising him into an aggregate of passions served by intelligence, had ignored the principle of construction, regular at once and free, within him, that as it reduced morals to artifice, so it reduced art to a device for producing agreeable sensations. It could as little account for the device as find any law of beauty in its results. For some time, however, it might disguise its incompetence. While the plastic arts alone, or even epic and dramatic poetry, were in question, it might shelter itself under the sonorous absurdity that man is "an imitative and inventive species," to whom the artificial copying of sensations has a pleasure of its own. For a criticism of the beautiful, while the fingering of sensations still retained some freshness of interest, the "I like" and "I don't like," under many variations, might still do plausible duty. Even in this region of art, however, the rise of a real artist, who has reflected on his art—of one who, like Reynolds, was conscious of an ideal, "which eye had not seen nor tongue spoken, which he was always labouring to express, but must die at last without expressing," made the theory of mere taste and imitation palpably inadequate. The re-awakening of the lyric interest in nature with that intensity of self-reflection which belonged to Wordsworth, gave it the final quietus. It was a proof not to be gainsaid that nature was something more to man than nature would herself explain. The natural man is the passive man, and it is not to the passive man that nature has herself passion, much less beauty and greatness in her passion, but to the creative.

The creative power in Wordsworth had neither a wide range nor a happy spontaneity. But it was deep and strong, and thoroughly understood its own depth and strength. With the nameless poetic inspiration,—

> "The spirit that like wind doth blow,
> As it listeth, to and fro,"

—such understanding might be scarcely consistent; but it supplied an inexhaustible fund of antagonism to the philosophy which wrapped the soul up in a "sensual fleece" against the universe, and an art which only set it free by artifice. He knew the wealth of his own spirit, giving when it received and receiving when it gave; that it had kindliness to waste on stocks or stones or the vacant air, yet fed itself in passiveness; that through eye and ear it drank the soul of things, yet in doing so came to that which was its own. Thus for him the fusion of the outward and inward was already consciously achieved, and thought released from self-imposed bondage to the metaphor of impression and the abstraction of individuality. It was not "within his own breast" that he had read what he was, but in the open scroll of the world—of the world, however, as written within and without by a self-conscious and self-determining spirit. To say this of him is, of course, saying no more than that he was a true poet, and poets quite as true might not have effected the practical revolution in thought which he did. That which specially fitted him for this work was the explicitness with which, in contemplative detachment, he recognised the nature of his own power and wrought its creations into definite ideas. A fuller or more rushing inspiration might have been less able to account for itself or appreciate its own philosophic import. As it was, he clearly saw that the philosophy resting on the mere passivity and individuality of man gave no room for his own poetic achievement, and met it with the answer of a *fait accompli*:—

> "His verse was clear, and came
> Announcing from the frozen hearth
> Of a cold age, that none might tame
> The soul of that diviner flame
> It augured to the earth."

It was not, however, properly an augury, but an interpretation. It led man up to the recognition of his own greatness, as universalized by communion with nature and intercourse with his kind. It was conversant, not with subtleties of the imagination, but with the great, the obvious, the habitual—with the common earth, the universal sky, the waters rolling evermore, the abiding social powers that lift man out of his animal self, and render him "magnanimous to correspond with heaven"—with these restored to the ancient glory that belongs to them in

Digitized by Google

their intelligible relations, but from which the prone and poring gaze of a false philosophy had during a century of conceit been diverted. Hence the clearness and strength of the new utterance; hence the response more free and full than itself which it elicited from Shelley; hence, too, the value which it still retains in a society that mistakes sophistication for thought.

An evangelical Christian will commonly sum up his objections to philosophy in the statement that the philosopher does not know what sin, or, by consequence, what the righteousness of God, is. There is a sense, no doubt, in which this is true of philosophy in every form. To believe is not the same thing as to account for one's belief, any more than to be an artist or to be moral is the same thing as to give an account of one's art or morality. Thus the practical religious experience, in vibration between its two poles of conscious sin and foretasted righteousness, is distinct from that interpretation of the experience, as not a mere unaccountable feeling of individuals, but a necessary result of the manifestation of the Divine Spirit in time, which it is the office of philosophy to give. But as the interpretation presupposes the experience, so, unless interpreted, the experience is liable to self-limitation and self-deceit. It is only a false abstraction of one from the other, reducing religion to an emotion and philosophy to a formula, that brings them into antagonism. The high function claimed for philosophy by Plato, Spinoza, or Hegel, seems ridiculous or blasphemous to an ordinary man, because he thinks of it as a mere intellectual exercise of this or that person's brain, which may be pursued in as complete independence of religion as a geometrical problem. Regard religion in the same way as the experience of this or that individual "heart," and it must seem not necessarily to result in any philosophical theory of itself. Regarded, however, in their truth—in that fulness of their tendencies and relations which can be seen only in the history of thought—while religion is found constantly interpreting itself into philosophy through a middle stage of theology; philosophy on its part is seen to be the effort towards self-recognition of that spiritual life of the world, which fulfils itself in many ways but most completely in the Christian religion, and to be thus related to religion as the flower to the leaf.

The formulæ of the self-recognition, however, may be inadequate to the life. They may confine instead of expressing it. Such was the relation of eighteenth-century philosophy—the philosophy *par excellence* in popular apprehension—to the religious life as it had been actually realized by mankind. It was not merely, as theoretical, a different attitude of the spirit from the religious life, as practical; it was incapable of a theory of that life. Its "moral sense," however construed, could account for nothing beyond distaste at an observed predominance of unsympathetic over generous passions, or regret for a mistaken calculation of the balance between possible pains and pleasures. Between such distaste or regret, and the consciousness of sin, the chasm is immeasurable. It is of the very essence of this consciousness, as exhibited in the history of religion, to be quite independent of definite acts of vice. It is the consciousness of an infinite vacancy only possible to a being capable of an infinite fulness, and either this must be accounted for, or the whole history of religion from St. Paul downwards erased. Only if we recognise in man a spirit properly infinite, because an object to itself, but which has gradually and with perpetual incompleteness to realize its infinite capacity, does this form of religious experience, of which all other forms are modifications, become explicable. We then understand the spiritual hunger which, trying to satisfy itself with "works of the law," with a special and limited righteousness, does but quicken the consciousness of vacancy, till it opens the soul to the anticipatory appropriation of that righteousness of God, which is being gradually enacted in the world. When in Western Christendom the spiritual form of religion began to emerge again from the shell of ecclesiasticism, it naturally resumed to some extent the Pauline vesture. A spiritual religion is of necessity a religion of the individual, and as such it was recognised at the Reformation. With this recognition, St. Paul's language regained for a time some of its meaning. But how does the individual interpret himself? As a succession of pains and pleasures gathered into unity, or as the dwelling-place of a Spirit that filleth and searcheth all things? On the answer given to this question depends, in an age of reflection, the possibility of reading the New Testament in any of its original significance. Among the countrymen of Luther, the latter interpretation was never wholly lost sight of; but it was otherwise in England. When, in the last part of the seventeenth century, upon the final triumph of individual right, there came the great outburst of personal enjoyment theorizing upon itself, the logic of limitation and exclusion silenced the groanings unutterable of the spirit. For a century or more it had its way. When the consciousness of

Digitized by Google

sin, with its corollaries, again took hold on men's minds, it came into inevitable collision with the current philosophy. "The dislike of men of taste to evangelical religion," which John Foster wrote a treatise to remove, rested on a deeper ground than any eccentricities in the religion, or any misapprehension of it on the part of men of taste. It had a real connexion with the outcry from men of the same sort against the new lyrical poetry. Each arose from the impossibility of adjusting the conception of man as a bundle of tastes, and therefore passive, to the real activity of his spirit.

If man as an artist, and man as himself a hell or heaven, practically contradicts the philosophy that would confine him within the dark chamber of passive sense, not less certainly, though in more familiar ways, does he do so as a citizen. It is the very familiarity of the contradiction in the latter case that makes it possible for it to be ignored. A theory like Hume's, which derives society and social obligation from passions served by artifice, owes its plausibility to the assumption of the passions as already related to a conscious self and other thinking persons. Only as thus related can they issue even in the most primitive social bonds. The assumption escapes notice, because the utmost investigation of "one's own breast" can never show them to us in any other character. The relation really presupposes the action of a principle for which sensation, as passive and merely individual, cannot account; but this action, from its very primariness, from its involution in the simplest possible intelligent experience, is ignored; and the formation of civil society, as of personal character, explained as a process of necessity, not rational, but natural. Against such a necessity, however, self-consciousness, when wrought to a certain pitch of intensity, inevitably rebels; and the issue of the rebellion is the recognition of its own work in the system which before oppressed it. Rousseau, as we have seen, represents the rebellion, and in him also the recognition first appears. It was involved in his conception of the State as the result of a *volonté générale*. This will is distinct, as he conceived it, *volonté de tous*. It is always rational and for good, however imperfectly actual government and law may express it. It is the *moi commun* from which alone the individual derives the capacity for right, freedom, and duty. As thus in the individual, but not of him; as beyond him in such a way as to be an object of his reverence and love, yet constituting his moral and rational self, it reconciles the three principles—love of self, love of our neighbour, and love of God—which Butler had left asunder. It is a valid principle of construction for that human world of which social relation and self-consciousness are the correlative differentiæ. Its recognition means that the individual man, after detachment from implicit unity with the social organism into an imaginary self-isolation, has again found himself in it with a new consciousness of its origin and authority. It is true that in Rousseau himself, this conception is only "shot from a pistol." It would not, any more than Butler's highest ideas, adjust itself to a logic which treated the "universal" as a fiction of thought. He saw that the *moi commun* was the only possible basis for free society, yet the current logic forbade him to regard any such community as other than a kind of invention. Hence his derided doctrine of the Social Pact. Instead of recognising the *moi commun* as the primary principle, whose operation, however immersed in sense, will alone account for the transformation of animal wants into abiding affections, and thus for the family or any other form of society, he treats it as the result of a contract among "individual egos," which yet manifestly presupposes it. Notwithstanding this contradiction, however, and with all its lack of logical apparatus, Rousseau's conception was a power that would work. The quickened consciousness of national life, whose era dates from the declaration of American Independence, has taken from it a form, and given it a reality. The German revival in the days of the "Tugendbund" was perhaps the clearest proof we have yet had, that the modern spirit is being schooled out of its individual egoism, but that revival has reproduced itself, though in more questionable shapes, in all the countries of Europe. Even the English Epicureanism has felt the change. To its formula of the "Greatest Happiness," as the object of the moral life, it has added, "of the greatest number." If this be construed (as, to secure consistency, it must be) to mean merely that the individual, in living for his own pleasure, is to take account of the pleasure of others as the condition of his own; it is, of course, no essential modification of the doctrine of Hume. But the modern English utilitarian is generally better than his logic. In defiance of Hume and Bentham, he distinguishes higher and lower pleasures by some other criterion than that of quantity, and takes as the object to which "expediency" is relative a "good of others," which involves his own. He is not practically the worse for failing to perceive that to live for such an object is to live not for the attainment of any sum of

Digitized by Google

agreeable sensations, but for the realization of an idea, of which the philosophy that starts from feeling can give no account.

"Not practically the worse"—but man, above all the modern man, must theorize his practice, and the failure adequately to do so, must cripple the practice itself. Hitherto, except from a school of German philosophers, which did not make itself generally intelligible, no adequate theory has been forthcoming, and hence that peculiar characteristic of our times, the scepticism of the best men. Art, religion, and political life have outgrown the nominalistic logic and the psychology of individual introspection; yet the only recognised formulæ by which the speculative man can account for them to himself, are derived from that logic and psychology. Thus the more fully he has appropriated the results of the spiritual activity of his time, the more he is baffled in his theory, and to him this means weakness, and the misery of weakness. Meanwhile, pure motive and high aspiration are going for nothing, or issuing only in those wild and fruitless outbursts into action, with which speculative misery sometimes seeks to relieve itself. The prevalence of such a state of mind might be expected at least to excite an interest in a philosophy like that of Hegel, of which it was the professed object to find formulæ adequate to the action of reason as exhibited in nature and human society in art and religion.

ART. VI.—1. *Les Moines d'Occident, depuis Saint Benoit jusqu'à Saint Bernard.* Par le COMTE DE MONTALEMBERT. 8vo. Vols. 1–5. Paris, 1860–67.

2. *The Monks of the West, from St. Benedict to St. Bernard.* By the COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT. 8vo. Vols. 1–5. Edinburgh and London, 1861–7.

3. *The Life of St. Columba, Founder of Hy. Written by Adamnan, ninth Abbot of that Monastery; to which are added copious Notes and Illustrations, illustrative of the Columbian Institution in Ireland and Scotland.* By WILLIAM REEVES, D. D. (Irish Archæological Society.) Dublin, 1857.

4. *The Culdees of the British Islands, as they appear in History, with an Appendix of Evidences.* By W. REEVES, D.D. 1864.

5. *Geschichte der Altirischen Kirche und ihrer Verbindung mit Rom, Gallien, und Alemannien (von 430-680); als Einleitung in die Geschichte des Stifts St. Gallen.* Von CARL JOHANN GREITH, Bischof von St. Gallen. 8vo. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1867.

6. *English Monasticism; its Rise and Influence.* By O'DELL TRAOERS HILL. 8vo. London, 1867.

THERE was not much exaggeration in the blunt phrase of Dr. Johnson, when, describing the tone of the theological discussions in the English Church of his day, he said that "the apostles were tried once a week for the capital crime of forgery." At the time to which he referred, the dogmatic principle seemed to have gone almost entirely into abeyance. The reaction against that exaggerated view of Church authority which had begun under Laud and was carried to its height by the non-jurors, had its issue for a time in a tone which rose but little above the level of naturalism. Religious belief was reduced to a question of mathematical evidence, and in many instances the teaching of the pulpit assumed a form which it would be difficult to distinguish from that of the moral essay. With all its undoubted excellence, great part of Paley's *Evidences of Christianity* can hardly be said to have been unfairly described when it was called "a balancing of probabilities;" and Johnson's criticism, irreverent as it might seem, is literally verified in Bishop Sherlock's celebrated and long popular *Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection*, in which, after the jury have returned a verdict of "Not guilty" in favour of the apostles, on the indictment for false testimony, the judge who has just been trying them receives a retaining fee in the case of Lazarus, which is announced as next upon the list for trial!

With the school of that period, indeed, the truth or falsehood of Christianity was simply a philosophical problem to be dealt with according to the laws of mathematical investigation, or a judicial issue which must stand or fall by the technical rules of legal evidence. No one seemed to think of passing beyond the threshold. We look in vain among these writers for any of those larger and more comprehensive views which, however widely we may differ from them, compel speculation, by their very boldness, in the pages of Henry More, of Stillingfleet, and even of Cudworth; for any discussion of the relations of Christianity to universal history, or its possible place in the general providential order of the world; for any examination of its doctrines or institutions in their bearing upon those of the earlier or of the contemporaneous religions of the ancient world; in a word, for any of those so-called moral considerations, wheth-

Digitized by Google

er of the whole scheme of the Christian Revelation, or of its several most prominent institutions, upon which modern inquiry has mainly turned. The sole question of that day was the one hard and literal issue—the truth or falsehood of the facts of the gospel history.

Least of all among the institutions of Christianity was that of monasticism likely to enter into the speculations of the eighteenth century; nor can it fail to be regarded as a remarkable indication of the spirit of our own age, that a voluminous history of an institution which enlists so few of the traditional sympathies of Englishmen, and by an author whose religious opinions are at once so pronounced, and so little in harmony with those of the great majority of the British public, as M. de Montalembert, should have been selected for translation into English; and that its prospects of circulation should be quite as much among Protestant readers as within the limits of the author's own communion. The revolution of thought by which this has become possible has been as rapid as it is complete. "Some years ago," asks M. de Montalembert, speaking even of France, "who understood what a monk really was?" For himself, he confesses that his first view of the monastic costume was on the boards of a theatre, "in one of those ignoble parodies which too often hold the place of the pomps and solemnities of religion;" and as regards the great body of the contemporaries of his earliest literary career, he is not going a shade beyond the truth when he says that by them the monks "were treated as a lost species, of whom fossil bones reappeared from time to time, exciting curiosity or repugnance, but who had no longer a place in history among the living."

It is only since the larger and more philosophical treament of early and mediæval European history, which may be said to have begun with M. Guizot in France and with Hallam in our own country, that the monk has in any degree been replaced in the rank to which he is really entitled in the vital history of the world. But the position of the monk in the pages of M. Guizot, and even of the later and more reverent historians of the philosophical school, is very different from the ideal which, in the volumes now before us, forms the subject of M. de Montalembert's earnest and affectionate, but yet far from indiscriminately eulogistic portraiture. Montalembert is so essentially subjective in his views and his opinions, and all the subjects which he discusses receive so much light from the circumstances of his own personal history, that we shall make no apology for adverting briefly to the leading facts of a career in which every lover of liberty must feel an interest. M. de Montalembert's personal history must be especially interesting to Englishmen, to whose country and institutions not one of the scholars or statesmen of continental Europe, hardly even excepting M. de Tocqueville, has rendered more ample and yet more discriminating justice. In truth, there are some contrasts, not to say contradictions, in the views and opinions of Montalembert, which are scarcely intelligible unless as interpreted by the circumstances of his history and his position.

Many of those who have been struck by the intimate knowledge which Montalembert exhibits of British institutions, social as well as political, may not be aware that he is connected with this country by ties of blood, his mother having been a member of the Scottish family of Forbes.* He was born, however, in France, in 1810, and he

[* The writer, knowing M. de Montalembert, and full of the loving admiration which his friends feel for him, has counted upon our readers being equally well acquainted with his character. We venture to supply what appears to us as a possible defect.

With many men who have taken the place in politics and literature which M. de Montalembert holds, the boast of ancestry would be superfluous or absurd. But you do not understand the Comte de Montalembert aright, unless you represent him to yourselves as the descendant of Crusading ancestors, gentlemen of Poitou, two of whom followed St. Louis to Palestine. Ten or twelve descents lower down, and André de Montalembert, Seigneur d'Essé, became well known in Scotland. As a boy he had carried arms in the Italian wars. Grown to manhood, he was selected by Francis I. as one of his three brothers-in-arms, at the tournament on occasion of his interview with Henry VIII. of England, in 1520. "We are four gentlemen of Guienne," said Francis, "ready to do battle against all comers—myself, Sarsac, D'Essé, and Chataigneraye." André was a soldier for the working day as well as on the Field of the Cloth of Gold. He had seen the terrible reality of war in Piedmont and Flanders before he was sent, in command of six thousand men, to the assistance of the Regent of Scotland, the Queen-Mother, Mary of Lorraine, against the English in 1548. His expedition was not very successful. He fell on rough times and a divided country, and was only half supported by the Guise princess. But whether charging the English under the walls of Haddington, or playing and willingly losing his gold to the Queen, who loved play, he maintained the character of a good commander, and what he valued more, of a gallant French cavalier—*chevalier de l'ordre*. He died gloriously at the siege of Therouanne. Centuries later, his bust was placed in the Gallery of Battles at Versailles, with the princes and generals who had fallen fighting the battles of their country.

Between the death of André d'Essé in 1553, and the French Revolution of '89, writes the Comte de

Digitized by Google

was in great part educated in that country, although a considerable portion of his youth was spent in Sweden, where his father resided for several years as French Minister at the Court of Stockholm. His higher studies were completed in the University of Paris, a school at that time singularly uncongenial to sentiments or opinions such as have distinguished Montalembert's later career. And it is no light testimony to the earnestness and strength of his belief, that, amid the whirl of fantastic systems in which a thoughtful student of that day found himself involved, and despite the chilling influences of the cold and colourless scepticism which assailed the instinct of faith, and the more seductive spell of the brilliant and specious theories which appealed to the higher sympathies of the intellect and the heart, the religious impressions of his early education should have grown into the full maturity of profound convictions, and should have been quickened into that active vitality, which, through all the vicissitudes of a busy and agitated career, has formed the very breath of his literary and political life. He has himself more than once avowed that it was mainly his experience of the dangerous influences to which he found himself in his own person exposed in the University of Paris, and which he believed to be traceable through all the successive stages of the educational system of the time, that inspired the earnest and almost passionate enthusiasm which characterized that well-known and long-sustained struggle, both within and without the Legislative Chamber, for freedom of education as the birthright of every citizen of France, and to which even those by whom it was resisted were unable to refuse their respectful sympathy.

From birth and family associations, M. de Montalembert's political predilections might naturally be presumed to be in favour of aristocratical institutions. But his first lessons of political life were received amid the storms which the absolutist measures of Charles x. and his last Ministry had aroused. The fall of the elder branch of the royal family was the opening of a new era; and since that time, the cherished dream of M. de Montalembert and his friends has been to combine with those time-honoured institutions which give stability to society, the fullest representation of the rights and interests of the people. He has repeatedly pointed to the contrast of the two almost contemporary revolutions,—on the one hand, the July revolution of France, and on the other, the peaceful revolution effected by the Reform Act in England,—as an illustration of the danger which attends the system of government by repression, and of the beneficial results of constitutional liberty. And thus, with all his instincts of race and order, with all those traditional associations, at once religious and aristocratical, which are embodied in that memorable rallying-cry with which he invoked the sympathy of the Chamber in one of his appeals against the educational monopoly of the University,—*Nous sommes fils des Croisés!*—his earliest connexion with political literature in France was, in conjunction with the Abbés de Lamennais and Lacordaire, in the intensely religious but yet highly democratical journal, *L'Avenir*, and with the same Lacordaire and M. de la Coux in the establishment of a free school for Roman Catholic instruction in Paris; and he inaugurated his career in the Chamber of Peers, which he entered upon the death of his father—the last instance of hereditary succession to a title in France—by an eloquent and successful speech in defence of the rights which it was thus sought to vindicate against the arbitrary and oppressive agressions of the police.

Montalembert's connexion with the *Avenir* may well be described as the crisis of his life. When the establishment of this jour-

---

Montalembert, sixteen Montalemberts fell fighting the battles of France. Seven have returned from the wars, crippled with wounds. Within little more than a century—1704–1824—twenty-one Montalemberts have won the cross of St. Louis, conferred only for brilliant or very long service. Montalemberts have died by the guillotine with their King, in the hospital in Algeria, of fatigue before Sebastopol.

Sprung of this heroic race, the Poitevin blood, crossed by a good strain of Scotch Forbesea, our Comte de Montalembert shows the best qualities of both races, and mixes some that seem incongruous. An enthusiastic patriotic Frenchman, he does not hate England. Rough English education, English political life, have even some charms for him, compared with the perfect discipline which drills a Frenchman from the "College" to his grave. It is easy for one whose faith sits lightly on him to be tolerant and liberal towards dissenters from his Church. But it is something rare and noble for an earnest Catholic, looking with fervent reverence to the saintly apostles of his faith, to be able to recognise the spirit of the followers of St. Augustine and of the Columbite missionaries appearing again after many ages, through all mistakes and perversion, appearing again in the early Puritans of England or in the Scotch Free Churchmen of our own time, who threw world's goods behind them for liberty of conscience.

Such is the man we wish our countrymen to know. We would not have them to think of the historian of Western Monachism as himself a monkish (we mean only a narrow-minded) bigot; though we may despair of setting before them M. de Montalembert as he really is,—the constitutional politician, the liberal Catholic, the noble French gentleman, the genial, buoyant, bright companion, the most delightful mixture of opposite qualities that our modern world has seen.—Ed. *N. B. R.*]

Digitized by Google

nal was resolved upon, he was just entering upon his first manhood, and was engaged in a tour of Ireland; and the friends who had the happiness of enjoying his society during that visit, still recall the generous enthusiasm, the truthful simplicity, the indignant impatience of falsehood or injustice, which characterized all his views, and gave life and earnestness to all his opinions. He hastened back to Paris at the summons of his friends. The story of the first beginnings of this memorable enterprise has been gathered piece-meal from the recollections of the several individuals with whom it originated; and it is impossible even for the coldest reader to withhold his sympathy from the melancholy tenderness which breathes through the reminiscences both of Montalembert and of his friend Lacordaire of their early meeting in the house of the Abbé de Lammennais, at that time the inspirer and the oracle of the undertaking. In the common objects of their association, and in the general conception of the plan by which it was proposed to carry them into execution, there existed the most pronounced and indeed enthusiastic harmony of feeling, and the echo of that feeling may still be detected in many an eloquent page of the volumes now before us. "The object of the *Avenir*," says Lacordaire's latest English biographer,* "was to reconquer freedom for the Church of France, without shrinking on the Church's side from the responsibilities which freedom entails. The actual condition of the Church was harassed and insecure; and the *Avenir* sought to place its liberties on the firm foundation of respect for established and constitutional law and independence of arbitrary power. Its watchwords consequently were, 'Liberty of opinion through the Press—war to arbitrators and privilege; liberty of teaching—war to monopoly of instruction; liberty of association—war to the old anti-monastic regulations, relics of the worst times; liberty and moral independence of the clergy—war to the budget of worship.'" But it is more questionable whether all or any of these young enthusiasts had fully realized the various issues to which this dazzling and attractive programme naturally led. Before long, the conductors of the journal found themselves assailed by storms from the most opposite quarters. A prosecution of the journal before the Court of Assize in 1831, in which the editors obtained a verdict of acquittal, served at once to increase its popularity and to confirm the resolution of the little band of friends; but their career was fatally arrested by the strong condemnation of some of their views, especially on the essential relations between Church and State, expressed by the reigning pontiff, Gregory XVI. Some memorials of Montalembert's visit to Rome during this memorable discussion, and of the painful conflict through which he, as well as his friends and associates, the Abbés Lacordaire and Gerbet, passed upon the occasion, are contained in the very charming collection of the letters and journals of several members of the La Ferronays family which was published by a surviving sister, Madame Augustus Craven,* and has obtained in France a circulation almost unexampled in a work of purely private and domestic interest. The details, although they are most interesting, would be entirely out of place here; and we must be content with a brief reference to the issue of this unhappy affair. The three friends concurred in suppressing the journal, in deference to the judgment of the Pope. Lamennais, however, as is well known, renewed, against the wishes of his friends, the same obnoxious opinions under another and eventually a far more extreme form; and it appears from some portions of Montalembert's correspondence in Madame Craven's collection, that the remonstrances which he addressed to Lamennais were not only unsuccessful, but were even resented by the latter in a way which led to the complete separation of their paths in life.

Not so, however, the relations of Montalembert with his other *collaborateurs* in the *Avenir*. His intimacy with the Abbés Lacordaire and Gerbet ripened into a tender and lifelong friendship. They were all soon afterwards associated in another literary undertaking, that of the *Université Catholique*, in which they found a congenial colleague in the brilliant and eloquent Abbé Dupanloup, now Bishop of Orleans. And the association thus formed became the nucleus of that still more distinguished union of friends, the Duc de Broglie, M. de Falloux, the Comte de Champagny, Auguste Cochin, M. de Vogué, and the rest, who, in connexion with Montalembert, have in the eloquent pages of the *Correspondant* given a tone to the Roman Catholic literature of France which commands the attention of scholars of every class throughout Europe.

On the fall of the Orleans dynasty, M.

* *Lacordaire*, by Dora Greenwell, p. 35. Edinburgh, 1867.

* *Récit d'une Sœur.* Souvenirs de Famille, recueillis par Madame Augustus Craven, neé La Ferronays. Ouvrage couronné par l'Académie Française. The edition now before us (1868) is the fifteenth.

Digitized by Google

Montalembert frankly accepted the new condition of public affairs; and, as representative in the Legislative Assembly of the Department of Doube, he gave a free, although far from undiscriminating, support to the early policy of the Prince President; but he dissented on grounds of justice as well as of expediency from the decree for Orleans confiscations, and he offered a firm though temperate resistance to the series of measures which culminated in the decisive stroke of the 2d of December. Since that date, he has persistently withdrawn himself from public life, and from all direct discussion of public affairs in France. But his earnest disapproval of the Imperial policy is no secret in the world of letters, and has given a tone to many of his publications even on topics of but little direct political significance. Nor is it difficult to detect the same spirit in much of what he has written in the volumes now before us, especially regarding the condition of the church under the Emperors.

Most of M. de Montalembert's independent publications are known in this country by English translations; and it would carry us quite beyond our allotted space to allude to them in detail. Even the single work which most nearly resembles the *Monks of the West* in its subject—the *Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary*—is in reality very different both in its character and in the mode of treatment. And far more help towards the illustration of the scope and tendency of the work on Western Monasticism might be derived from the history of the public career of the author, from his speeches and addresses in the course of the long struggle for liberty of instruction and of religious association, and above all, from his correspondence, and the other records of his intercourse with his dear and trusted friend Lacordaire. The *Monks of the West* is at once the embodiment and the historical apology of the great principle of liberty of religious association for which the author was contending throughout the conflict which, single-handed but unflinching, he so long maintained in the Chamber against an unsympathising but admiring union of ministerialists, liberals and doctrinaires.

The English reader of M. de Montalembert's *Monks of the West* must prepare himself for a very different ideal of monasticism, or rather for a different view of the relations of monasticism, from that which he has been accustomed to meet, even in those writers of mediæval history who have most freely recognised certain of the services for which the world is indebted to that institution. M. Thiers can only see in monastic life "Christian suicide substituted for Pagan suicide." * All M. Guizot's admiration of the monasteries, which he admits to have been great instruments of civilisation, is devoted to them considered merely as, in his own picturesque phrase, *foyers du mouvement intellectuel*. † Hallam's sturdy and eminently practical mind is only reconciled to what he deems the otherwise useless and even burdensome institution of monasticism, by the consideration of the work which it has done in the preservation of ancient literature, in reclaiming and cultivating the waste or barren soil, and in preserving or improving the science of agriculture, partly by precept, but still more by practical example. Dean Milman takes a somewhat loftier view of the functions of the monk. While he regards the monasticism of the West as "the guardian of what was valuable in the books and arts of the old world, as the chief maintainer if not restorer of agriculture in Italy, as the cultivator of the forest and morasses of the north," he also looks to it as the "missionary of what was high and holy in the new civilisation, and as the apostle of the heathens who dwelt beyond the Roman Empire." ‡ But although he thus appears to recognise in the monastic institute some higher office than the purely social and intellectual function which the other historians ascribe to it, he is careful in the very same passage to qualify the admission; and he merely accepts these services of monasticism, as "at least in some degree compensating for its usurpation of the dignity of higher and holier Christianity." Indeed, it can hardly be doubted that the latest historian of English monasticism, Mr. Travers Hill, has correctly represented the view of the subject commonly taken by Englishmen, at least outside of the Tractarian and Ritualistic schools, when he declares that "the very nature and instinct of Protestantism forbids all sympathy with the monastery as a religious institution." §

Now it is precisely under the relation which these writers explicitly disclaim and repudiate, that M. de Montalembert desires to consider the monastic institute, and to present it for the consideration of his readers. Not that he does not also contemplate as among its claims upon the admiration and gratitude of society, the great and unquestioned services which it has rendered to the cause of social, intellectual and material progress. But he regards these services

---

* *De la Propriété*, B. ii. c. 6.
† *Histoire de la Civilisation*, i. 366.
‡ *Latin Christianity*, i. 321.
§ *English Monasticism: Its Rise and Influence.* By O'Dell Travers Hill, F. R. G. S. London, 1867.

Digitized by Google

as purely extrinsic and accidental, though natural fruits of what constitutes the very spirit and essence of the monastic profession. Self-sanctification is, in his view, the first element, as it is the first end, of the monastic life. "A monk," he says, "is a Christian who puts himself apart from the world, in order more surely to work out his own eternal salvation. He is a man who withdraws from other men, not in hatred or contempt of them, but for the love of God and of his neighbour, and to serve them so much the better, in proportion as he shall have more and more purified his own soul." Assuming this as the true and fundamental notion of monasticism, M. de Montalembert does not hesitate to claim for the monk, "a justice more complete than that which he has yet obtained, even from the greater number of the Christian apologists of recent times."

"In taking up the defence of the religious orders, these writers have seemed to demand grace for those august institutions in the name of the services which they have rendered to the sciences, to letters, and to agriculture. This is to boast the incidental at the expense of the essential. We are doubtless obliged to acknowledge and admire the cultivation of so many forests and deserts, the transcription and preservation of so many literary and historical monuments, and that monastic erudition which we know nothing to replace; these are great services rendered to humanity, which ought, if humanity were just, to shelter the monks under a celestial shield. But there is, besides, something far more worthy of admiration and gratitude—the permanent strife of moral freedom against the bondage of the flesh; the constant effort of a consecrated will in the pursuit and conquest of Christian virtue; the victorious flight of the soul into those supreme regions where she finds again her true, her immortal grandeur. Institutions simply human, powers merely temporal, might perhaps confer upon society the same temporal benefits; that which human powers cannot do, that which they have never undertaken, and in which they never could succeed, is to discipline the soul, to transform it by chastity, by obedience, by sacrifice and humility; to recreate the man wasted by sin into such virtue, that the prodigies of evangelical perfection have become, during long centuries, the daily history of the Church. It is in this that we see the design of the monks, and what they have done. Among so many founders and legislators of the religious life, not one has dreamt of assigning the cultivation of the soil, the copying of manuscripts, the progress of arts and letters, the preservation of historical monuments, as a special aim to his disciples. These offices have been only accessory—the consequence, often indirect and involuntary, of an institution which had in view nothing but the education of the human soul, its conformity to the law of Christ, and the expiation of its native guilt by a life of sacrifice and mortification. This was for all of them the end and the beginning, the supreme object of existence, the unique ambition, the sole merit, and the sovereign victory."

It is a curious example of the tendency of extremes to meet through some unacknowledged affinity, that this very view, according to which the monastic spirit is but an issue of the world-old strife between spirit and matter, is taken by one of our own thinkers, who might least of all be expected to sympathize with the school of Montalembert. Mr. Froude, in a very remarkable essay on the "Philosophy of Catholicism," after pursuing with much acuteness the diverging lines into which all the ancient schools of philosophy, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian—Platonists, Hellenists, Therapeutæ, Essenes, Gnostics—were led in their several speculations on the mystery, as old as philosophy itself, of the intermixture of good and evil in the moral and material world; and after tracing the crisis of the struggle in the great conflict of the fourth century—that of Manicheism with catholic Christianity, professes, as frankly as could Montalembert himself, to find its issue in that "stumbling-block of modern thought" which he calls the "carnal doctrine of the sacraments, which Protestants are compelled to acknowledge to have been taught as fully in the early Church as it is now taught by the Roman Catholics;" * and he traces with as little hesitation to the same origin "the spirit which set St. Simeon on his pillar, and sent St. Anthony to the tombs,—the night-watches, the weary fasts, the penitential scourgings, the life-long austerities, which have been alternately the glory and the reproach of the mediæval saints."†

These are views for which few of our readers will be prepared. It is no part of our present plan to discuss them, whether in the sense of Mr. Froude or in that of Montalembert; but it would not be possible to understand the purpose, and hardly even the incidents, of M. de Montalembert's narrative, without a full exposition of the ideal whose history he has undertaken. He emphatically disclaims the character of a mere apologist. He refuses to deal with the monastic profession as a thing to be tolerated, a weakness to be indulged—one of those

"Sickly forms that err from Nature's honest rule."

On the contrary, the distinctive character-

* Froude's *Short Studies on Great Subjects* (2d ed.) p. 129.

† *Ibid.* 131.

Digitized by Google

istic of the great monastic life and energy which he desires to exhibit to his readers is *strength*; not the mere physical strength which man possesses in common with animals, nor the material strength whose triumphs in modern days have so largely demoralized the world, nor that stoical self-reliance—the idol of humanitarianism—which has its root in a cynical pride, and which, even in its best forms, repels by its chilling insensibility; but the strength which "signifies the discipline of self, the power of ruling, of restraining, of subduing rebellious nature—that strength which is a cardinal virtue, and which overcomes the world by courage and sacrifice."

He rejects with especial scorn what was once a favourite topic even with the Roman Catholic apologists of monasticism:

"One of the most singular of the errors which many apologists of the monastic life have fallen into, has been to regard it as a refuge for sorrowful souls, fatigued and discontented with their lot in the world, unable to hold the place from which society has banished them, consumed by disappointment, or broken by melancholy. 'If there are refuges for the health of the body,' says M. de Chateaubriand, 'ah! permit religion to have such also for the health of the soul,' which is still more subject to sickness, and the infirmities of which are so much more sad, so much more tedious and difficult to cure!' The idea is poetical and touching, but it is not true. Monasteries were never intended to collect the invalids of the world. It was not the sick souls, but, on the contrary, the most vigorous and healthful which the human race has ever produced, who presented themselves in crowds to fill them. The religious life, far from being the refuge of the feeble, was, on the contrary, the arena of the strong.

"Sometimes, it is true, by one of those marvellous contrasts which abound in the works inspired by religion, that career full of supernatural combats and triumphs, that life in which virtue and Christian strength attain their apotheosis, was precisely that in which some souls naturally infirm, and hearts wounded in the combats of worldly life, found for themselves a refuge. And as modern civilisation, by the side of its incontestable benefits, has too often the drawback of augmenting the number and the intensity of the maladies of the soul, it cannot be without interest, from a point of view purely social, to preserve for such a shelter, and to procure for them due treatment. It is very possible that even on this account, the ruin of the religious orders has been a public calamity, and has not even been without some influence upon that frightful increase in the number of suicides which is certified each year by the criminal statistics.

"But, to tell the truth, it is only in romance that we find disappointments, grief, and melancholy conducting to the cloister. I have found no serious or important trace of it in history, not even in the traditions of the degenerated communities of modern times, and much less in the heroic ages of their chronicles. Without doubt some have been thrown into the cloister by great unhappiness, by irretrievable misfortune, by the loss of some one passionately loved; and I could cite some curious and touching examples of such. But they are exceedingly rare. To present us with a general theory of the religious life as an asylum for feebleness and sadness, as a place of refuge for that melancholy which was distinctly proscribed and expelled from the life of the cloister as a vice, under the name of *acedia*, is to go in the face both of facts and reason."

We feel that we shall be the less expected to enter upon any discussion of M. Montalembert's ideal of monasticism, inasmuch as even in his own pages it is little more than an ideal. The monasticism whose history he has written, although the incident described above is never lost sight of, is presented to us far less in its inner spirit than in those outer works of charity and faith which are its manifestation. And we doubt whether there be many, even of those who by religious sympathies and prejudices of birth and education are most widely separated from Montalembert, that will not be moved, if not to sympathy, at least to respectful appreciation, by his eloquent and touching portraiture of the dear friend and associate of his early career, who was in his eyes a living impersonation of all the highest interior perfection of the cloister, while his relations with the outer world were ennobled by a long series of disinterested sacrifices, and endeared to our common humanity by the most brilliant intellectual triumphs, and the most precious fruits of Christian tenderness and love:—

"And besides—why should not I acknowledge it?—even in the midst of this contemporary world, the downfalls and miseries of which have been to me so bitter, the Divine goodness brought me acquainted in my youth with the type of a monk of ancient times, in a man whose name and glory belong to our time and country. Although he was not yet professed at the time when our souls and lives drew close to each other, and although he has since entered an order apart from the monastic family of which I have become the historian, he revealed to me, better than all books, and more clearly than all my studies of the past, the great and noble qualities which go to the making of a true monk—self-abnegation, fortitude, devotion, disinterestedness, solid and fervent piety, and that true independence which does not exclude filial obedience. His eloquence has astonished a country and a time accustomed to the victories of eloquence; his noble genius has conquered the admiration of the most rebellious critics. But he will be honoured by God and

Digitized by Google

by a Christian posterity, not so much as a writer and an orator, but as a monk, austere and sincere.

"His name is not needed here—all who read will have divined it. All will pardon me for this impulse of a heart younger than its age, and for this homage to the community of contests, ideas, and belief, which has united us for thirty years, and which has lasted through differences of sentiment as well as diversity of career. Our union, born amid the charming dreams and confidence of youth, has survived the reverses, the betrayals, the inconstancy, and the cowardices which have overshadowed our mature age, and has helped me to overleap the abyss which separates the present from the past.

"Such an example, in spite of all the differences of times and institutions, helps us also to comprehend the influence of the noble character and powerful associations with which the monastic order has so long enriched the Church and the world. For the reality of that influence is incontestable. We are obliged to acknowledge, under pain of denying the best ascertained facts of history, those succours which the most difficult virtues and the most generous instincts of man, even in temporal affairs, have drawn from the bosom of the cloister, when the whole of Europe was covered with these asylums, open to the best intellects and highest hearts.

"None can deny the ascendency which a solitude thus peopled exercised upon the age. None can deny that the world yielded the empire of virtue to those who intended to flee from the world, and that a simple monk might become, in the depths of his cell, like St. Jerome or St. Bernard, the centre of his epoch and the lever of its movements."

It is hardly necessary for us, more than for the author himself, to say that this "type of a monk of ancient times" was the learned and eloquent Dominican, Père Lacordaire.

It is time however to enter upon what is peculiarly the theme of these volumes,—the actual history of the monastic institute. The author, as we have said, deals far less with the actual constitution of monasticism and the developments and modifications which it has undergone, than with the work which it has accomplished and the place which it has filled in that vast and mysterious providential order of causes and results through which

> "The great world spins for ever, down the ringing grooves of change."

Perhaps it may appear overstrained to say, that in M. Montalembert's scheme of Christian history, the era of Western monasticism holds, of course in a minor and very imperfect sense, the place of a second Day of Pentecost. He regards the monastic institute, and especially for the West, as a new apostolate, to which the gospel was, as it were, a second time intrusted. Eastern monasticism was a thing entirely apart. It was partly the natural growth of an age of persecution and concealment; partly the inevitable development of the Christian spirit in its youthful energy and fervour. But Eastern monasticism was, for the most part, contemplative and quietist. Its activity, when it did burst into action, was chiefly intellectual; and even as such, it was directed towards the speculative rather than the practical. The most abstruse and subtle of the theological controversies of the fifth and sixth centuries had their origin in the Lauræ of Egypt and Syria; while in practical subjects, even those which relate purely to the ascetic life, the monastic literature of the East is comparatively a blank. As a missionary energy, Eastern monasticism has no place whatever in early history.

In the West, on the contrary, monasticism, a later growth, only appears at a time when action was all but a necessity. Those who are familiar with the historical writings of the high Roman Catholic school in France—of the Duc Albert de Broglie, of M. de Champagny, of Ozanam, and even of the desultory writers on the History of the Roman Empire in the *Université Catholique* and the *Correspondant*—know how gloomy is the picture of the political, the social, and even the religious condition of the Roman world under the Christian emperors. The progress of that fatal taint which, under the successors of Augustus, had poisoned every spring of action, personal as well as political, was hardly arrested by the Christianization of Rome. "Constantine and his successors," says M. Montalembert, "were baptized, but not the emperor or the imperial power." Under them Christianity was robbed of half its purifying virtue, by being stripped of the liberty under which alone its blessed influences can flourish. The theory of absolutism in every department, which makes the very essence of imperialism, was developed as freely in the affairs of religion by the Christian emperors, as though, like their Pagan predecessors, they had enjoyed, by their very office, the name and right of Pontifex Maximus. They had scarcely been enrolled as children of the Church when they aspired to be her governors. Failing in this design, they are found, with hardly an exception, in the rank of oppressors and persecutors. Hardly one of the number—from Constantine laying down the law of controversy for Osius and Eusebius, to Irene settling questions of orthodoxy for a papal legate—who does not figure, not merely as a doctor, but as a legislator, in theology. Not one among the long line of heresiarchs from the fourth to the ninth century, who has not an emperor for his protector, and even for his aggressive

Digitized by Google

champion. The very name of divinity which the Pagan emperors had claimed was but partially discarded by their Christian successors; and many of the most corrupt of the social institutions of Paganism were protected under its shadow.

It is in the paralysis of all spiritual action produced by this fatal influence, that these historians of the Roman Empire in the fifth century discover the solution of the apparently mysterious failure of the new Christianity under its earliest emperors. Never does the intellect of the Church appear to have been more active. The century which followed the conversion of Constantine is the most brilliant, as well as the most prolific, in the history of Christian literature. In no other age do we behold such a cloud of saints, of pontiffs, of doctors, of orators, and of writers. And yet, with all their subtlety of intellect, with all the fervour of their eloquence, with all the fire of their zeal, and all the weight of their learning, they failed to purify the festering pool of social profligacy, or to lift up the abject heart of degraded humanity into the consciousness of Christian truth and freedom.

There is a startling earnestness in the picture drawn by M. Montalembert, from Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine, and, above all, Salvian, of the moral condition of Imperial Rome under the Christian emperors, which will almost recall to the reader that which we borrowed on a recent occasion from the pages of Döllinger on the Rome of their Pagan predecessors. We are not disposed, however, to interpret too literally this frightful picture. It was drawn (by Salvian especially) with a preconceived purpose, and in support of a particular view. Nor, making reasonable allowance for one-sided or exaggerated representation, can we persuade ourselves that there is enough to warrant M. Montalembert's sweeping and unqualified conclusion, that

"the old world was at the point of death. The empire gave way slowly, in shame and contempt, stricken by a melancholy weakness which did not even inspire pity. Everything dropped into incurable decay. Such was the fate of the Roman empire two centuries after it had become Christian. In spiritual affairs it was on the road to that schism which, under the Byzantine Cæsars, separated from unity and truth more than half the world converted by the apostles. In temporal affairs it issued in the miserable *régime* of the Lower Empire, the hardest censure we can pronounce upon which is, to name its name."—Vol. i. p. 275.

We have thought it right to dwell somewhat upon what to many persons may appear but an episode of the subject, because in truth it forms a vital part of M. Montalembert's theory of the origin of monasticism in the West, and of its place in the chain of providential influences which have worked together for the fulfilment of the moral and religious destinies of the world. What the Church had failed to effect amid the corruption and degeneracy of the effete civilisation of the Empire, she was to bring about, he conceives, after the ordeal of anarchy and violence inseparable from invasion and conquest, through the peaceful victory of religion and civilisation wrought by the bloodless and saving ministry of monasticism. The rude energy of the northern barbarian, his untamed independence, his untutored love of truth, his inborn sense of man's honour and woman's purity, were to carry new life into the stagnant pulses of the palsied frame of the old society; and the monk, himself a new instrument of the supernatural energy of the Church, was to chasten these noble but unregulated impulses, and to divert them to God's honour, and to the lifting up and purifying of man's natural destiny.

We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of transcribing the really splendid picture which he draws of this strange moral revolution:—

"They came;—first the Barbarians. Behold them struggling with the Romans, enervated by slavery, and with the emperors, powerless in the midst of their omnipotence.

"First obscure, victims and prisoners disdained by the first Cæsars; then auxiliaries, by turns sought and feared; then irresistible adversaries; at last victors and masters of the humiliated empire; they come, not as a torrent which passes on, but as a flood which advances, draws back, returns, and finally remains master of the invaded soil. They advance, they withdraw, they return, they remain and triumph. Those among them who were desirous of arresting their course and allying themselves with the terrified Romans, are in their turn set aside, passed over, and surmounted by the tide which follows. Behold them! They come down the valley of the Danube, which puts them on the road to Byzantium and Asia Minor; they ascend its tributary streams, and thus reach the summits of the Alps, from whence they burst upon Italy. They pass the Rhine, cross the Vosges, the Cevennes, the Pyrenees, and inundate Gaul and Spain. The East imagined that it would be spared: vain delusion! The storm bursts from the heights of Caucasus, and overflows these regions in their turn. The wolves of the North (thus St. Jerome entitles them), after having devoured everything, come to drink in the waters of the Euphrates. Egypt, Phœnicia, Palestine—all the countries which they do not visit in their first incursion—are already taken captive by fear. It is not one nation alone, like the Ro-

Digitized by Google

man people, but twenty different and independent races. 'For many years,' says St. Jerome again, 'Roman blood has flowed daily under the blows of the Goth, of the Sarmatian, of the Quadi, of the Alan, of the Hun, of the Vandal, of the Marcoman.' It is not the army of a single conqueror, like Alexander and Cæsar; there are twenty kings unknown but intrepid, having soldiers and not subjects, accountable for their authority to their priests and warriors, and obliged by force of perseverance and audacity to earn a pardon for their power. They all obey an irresistible instinct, and unconsciously carry with them the destinies and institutions of the Christendom to come.

"Visible instruments of divine justice, they come by intuition to avenge the nations oppressed and the martyrs slain. They shall destroy, but it will be to give a substitute for that which they have destroyed; and, besides, they will kill nothing that deserves to live, or that retains the conditions of life. They shall shed blood in torrents, but they shall renew by their own blood the exhausted sap of Europe. They bring with them fire and sword, but also strength and life. Through a thousand crimes and a thousand evils, they shall reveal, though still under a confused form, two things which Roman society has ceased to know—the dignity of man, and the respect for woman. They have instincts rather than principles to guide them; but when these instincts shall have been fertilized and purified by Christianity, out of them shall spring catholic chivalry and royalty. One sentiment above all shall be derived from them, which was unknown in the Roman empire, which perhaps even the most illustrious pagans were strangers to, and which is always incompatible with despotism—the sentiment of honour: 'That secret and profound spring of modern society, which is nothing else than the independence and inviolability of the human conscience, superior to all powers, all tyrannies, and all external force.'

"They carry with them, in addition, freedom—not certainly such freedom as we have since conceived and possessed, but the germs and conditions of all freedom; that is to say, the spirit of resistance to excessive power, a manful impatience of the yoke, and a profound consciousness of personal right, and the individual value of every soul before other men as before God.

"Freedom and honour! Rome and the world had been bankrupt in these qualities since the times of Augustus. We owe these gifts to our ancestors the Barbarians."

Such is M. Montalembert's theory, as well of the function in regenerating Christian society in the West assigned by Providence to the monastic institute, as of the order of events in European history through which that function was to be exercised. In many of its details this theory is new; and it will attract by its boldness no less than it will charm by the picturesque eloquence with which it is enforced. Much of what the author alleges as to the social and religious disorganization of the Western Provinces in the last stage of the Roman empire, is not only founded on statements of contemporary chroniclers, but is confirmed by the researches of the best modern writers in the early history of the mediæval kingdoms of the west—by Augustin Thierry, Henri Martin, and Guizot, as well as by the more congenial authority of Ozanam. Nevertheless we feel ourselves unable to accept this view, unless in a certain broad and general application. Admitting to its extremest limit the decay of the social and religious institutions of the empire, we cannot regard the barbarian invasion as other than an evil in the spiritual, no less than in the social and intellectual order; and the very utmost that in our judgment can be said with truth in favour of the theory, regards its second member, namely, the place which monasticism, as understood by Montalembert, and as contradistinguished from the normal influences of Christianity, is to hold in the history of the religious revival by which the society was re-constituted in the West. We think that few readers of early mediæval history will be disposed to doubt that the earnest and self-denying forms of monasticism, and the generous and manly spirit of sacrifice upon which, in most of its typical representatives, they were undoubtedly founded, must have appealed with special force to the simple and hardy habits of thought and action, which, with all its coarse and unregulated impulsiveness, give a life and reality to this rude and half-organized stage of society that were wanting in the stagnant and artificial life which it had violently displaced.

Two volumes of the *Monks of the West* have been for several years before the public, and many of our readers, we doubt not, are familiar with their contents. They relate to the first introduction of monasticism into the West, to its diffusion, under its earliest and imperfectly regulated forms, in Italy and in the southern provinces of Gaul; to its systematic organization under St. Benedict; its intellectual and literary development under Cassiodorus; its entrance into the relations of every-day life under Gregory the Great; and its missionary enterprises among the new nationalities which had successfully settled down among the Roman population in the several halting-places of the barbarian invasion, during its progressive migration towards the West. In all this, however, monasticism is seen surrounded by the old influences, and in its action upon society hardly appears as a distinct and independent power. The Christianization of Italy, Gaul, and Spain, is regarded

Digitized by Google

as the work of bishops, and of a Church acting strictly according to the normal forms of the episcopal organization.

But in the three volumes which form the second instalment of M. Montalembert's task, the monk appears as the central figure in the great drama; and the scene of his historic mission is that which to us must be of all others the most interesting, the Churches of Britain and Ireland, and those missionary expeditions upon the continent of Europe, which had their origin as well as their centre in the great monastic establishments of the British Islands. "No country in the world," says Montalembert, "has received the Christian faith more directly than England from the Church of Rome, or more exclusively by the ministration of monks. If France has been made by bishops, as has been said by a great enemy of Jesus Christ, it is still more true that Christian England has been made by monks. Of all the countries of Europe it is this that has been the most deeply furrowed by the monastic plough. The monks, and the monks alone, have introduced, sowed, and cultivated Christian civilisation in this famous island."*

It will be understood, from the language here employed, that the author regards the mission of Augustine and his fellow-monks as a new planting of Christianity in a land utterly and absolutely Pagan, in which Christianity indeed had once flourished, but from which it had completely disappeared. "No traces of Christianity," he declares, "remained in the districts under Saxon sway, when Rome sent thither her missionaries. Here and there a ruined church might be found, but not one living Christian among the natives; conquerors and conquered alike were left in the darkness of Paganism." It is to be observed, however, that he speaks only of "the districts under Saxon sway;" and Mr. Travers Hill has been strangely misled when he takes him to task, in a special appendix, for this assertion. Mr. Hill, indeed, argues against Montalembert the palpable inconsistency of the allegation, that no living Christian was to be found among the natives, with his own subsequent narrative of the conflict between Augustine and a body of British bishops and clergy.† But he strangely overlooks M. Montalembert's express limitation of his statement to "the districts under Saxon sway," and in another place‡ to that portion of the "British population which had survived the fury of the Saxon conquest, and which had not been able or willing to seek for refuge in the mountains and peninsulas of Wales and Cornwall." It is clearly of these only that he speaks as "lost in the darkness of Paganism." We cannot hesitate to accept so much of the statement as almost literally true. The planting of Christianity in this part of the kingdom was unquestionably a new planting of the faith in a Pagan land; and so far as regards Saxon England, there can be no doubt that M. Montalembert is fully entitled to claim for the monks, his clients, the glory of "having made it Christian."

The story of the re-conversion of Saxon England by Augustine and his companions is one of the best known in Church history; nor is there much of novelty in M. Montalembert's version of it. The narrative in the present portion of his work is carried down to the end of the eighth century; and although most of the incidents are derived from sources with which students of English history are familiar, they are presented with a simple earnestness, and with, as it were, an instinctive sense of their bearing upon those higher and holier interests which form the especial theme of *The Monks of the West*, which give somewhat of novelty even to what has already been most frequently told under another form. We may allude, in illustration, to the account of the conflict of Augustine with the British bishops, and to the well-known history of Wilfrid of York.

But by far the most interesting part of the history of monasticism in our islands, is that which regards the monks of Ireland and their colonies in Britain and upon the continent of Europe. On the early history of Christianity in Ireland the author touches but lightly; and the reader may perhaps be disappointed to find some of the most important of the questions which were raised by the publication of Dr. Todd's *Life of St. Patrick* passed by without notice. It must be said, nevertheless, that, for the most part, these questions, however interesting in general controversy, have no direct bearing upon monastic history; and if the reader should desire to see these more largely discussed, he will find ample materials in the learned work of Dr. Greith, bishop of St. Gall,* which is in great part founded on original materials, and which has overlooked none even of the most recent contributions

* Vol. iii. p. 8.
† *English Monasticism*, p. 531.
‡ *Monks of the West*, vol. iii. p. 324.

* *Geschichte der Altirischen Kirche und ihrer Verbindung mit Rom, Gallien, und Alemannien* (von 430–630). Von Carl Johann Greith, Bischof von St. Gallen. 8vo. 1867.

Digitized by Google

to the history of the ancient Church of Ireland, whether by Catholic or Protestant archæologists.

M. Montalembert's history of Irish monasticism falls naturally into two divisions—that of the missionary monks who, under Columbanus, traversed France, Germany, and Switzerland, and reached to the very furthermost extremity of the Italian peninsula; and that of the still more celebrated colony which was planted by Columba at Iona, and from Iona was carried to the new theatre of activity at Lindisfarne, to which England is immediately indebted for almost all those great monastic foundations which in their turn became centres of civilisation and culture, each in its own locality. The history of the foreign career of St. Columbanus will be remembered as the most interesting episode in the first portion of the work given to the public in 1860.* In the history of monasticism in Britain, St. Columba is the great centre of interest.

The life of this remarkable man has been the chief subject towards which the research of Irish and Scotch archæologists has turned since the revival of the ecclesiastical branch of that study. His name is felt by the antiquarians of both countries to be in some sort common property. The short but pregnant memoir in *Chambers's Cyclopædia*, from the pen of the lamented Joseph Robertson, bears the evidence of a genuine labour of love quite as strongly as the elaborate volume of Dr. Reeves; and it may be doubted whether in the really substantial bearings of the subject, the old Franciscan editor of the *Trias Thaumaturga* exhibits a more reverent, or at least a more loving spirit, than the modern Anglican commentator of Adamnan's *Life of St. Columba*. Dr. Reeves's work may truly be described as one of the most remarkable combinations of minute and careful erudition and patient—we had almost said plodding—industry, with boldness, originality, and power of dealing alike with the largest and the narrowest bearings of the subject which our age, with all its progress in antiquarian and archæological science, has produced.

As it would be impossible to attempt within our limits any extensive analysis of M. Montalembert's volumes, we shall probably best consult for the interest of the subject by confining ourselves to this single episode,—the history of Columba, and of the apostolate in Britain inaugurated by him, and continued by successive generations of the great monastic family which he founded at Iona. This history may be regarded as in a great degree an independent narrative, and, indeed, as such, has been re-cast into a separate publication. It is avowedly founded on the materials drawn from the ancient lives; but it is illustrated by all the various learning of the greatest modern Celtic scholars, and especially from Dr. Reeves's ample stores.

Columba was of royal descent both in paternal and maternal line, his father having been one of the eight sons of the celebrated Niall of the Nine Hostages, supreme monarch of Ireland, and his mother a daughter of the royal house of Leinster. He was born in 521, at Gartan, in Donegal, still a place of pious pilgrimage, and especially of parting pilgrimage for the Irish emigrants to America, who repair thither to offer a farewell prayer in memory of the "great missionary who gave up his native land for the love of God and human souls." The devotion to native country which still lives in this interesting national custom is curiously embodied in an ancient Irish poem, attributed to Columba, and certainly of a very early date, though probably later than the sixth century;—a portion of which, slightly modified in the translation, M. Montalembert has reproduced from Dr. Reeves's volume, in which the original is given entire, with a literal translation. We are tempted to transcribe a few of the opening verses from Dr. Reeves's version. It is supposed to be spoken in the person of Columba, upon his first missionary voyage from his beloved Derry—

"How rapid is the speed of my coracle
With its stern turned upon Derry!
I grieve at my errand over the noble sea,
Travelling to Alba of the ravens.

"My foot in my sweet little coracle,
My sad heart still bleeding;
Weak is the man that cannot lead,
Totally blind are all the ignorant.

"There is a grey eye
That looks back upon Erin;
It shall not see during life
The men of Erin, nor their wives.

"My vision over the brine I stretch
From the ample oaken planks;
Large is the tear of my soft grey eye
When I look back upon Erin.

"Upon Erin my attention is fixed;
Upon Loch Levin, upon Liné;
Upon the lands the Ultonians own;
Upon smooth Munster, upon Meath!*

The concluding stanzas are thus rendered by M. Montalembert's translator—

* Vol. ii. Book vii. pp. 385-549.

* Reeves's *Adamnan's Life of Columba*, pp. 285-6.

Digitized by Google

"Were all the tribute of Scotia mine,
From its midland to its borders,
I would give all for one little cell
In my beautiful Derry.
For its peace and for its purity,
For the white angels that go
In crowds from one end to the other—
I love my beautiful Derry.
For its quietness and its purity,
For heaven's angels that come and go
Under every leaf of the oaks;—
I love my beautiful Derry.

"My Derry, my fair oak grove!
My dear little cell and dwelling!
Oh God in the heavens above!
Let him who profanes it be cursed.
Beloved are Durrow and Derry,
Beloved is Raphoe the pure,
Beloved the fertile Drumhome,
Beloved are Swords and Kells!
But sweeter and fairer to me
The salt sea where the sea-gulls cry,
When I come to Derry from far,
It is sweeter and dearer to me—
Sweeter to me."

The origin and etymology of the name *Columba* (in Irish *colum*, "a dove"), which is common to this saint with no fewer than twenty others in the Irish calendar, as well as that of his distinctive affix—*cille* "of the churches,"—are well known; and the name was an early earnest of the purity and holiness of the youth's career, which is further shadowed forth in one of the characteristic legends regarding him preserved by his ancient biographer:—

"The Irish legends, which are always distinguished, even amidst the the wildest vagaries of fancy, by a high and pure morality, linger lovingly upon the childhood and youth of the predestined saint. They tell us how, confided in the first place to the care of the priest who had baptized him, and who gave him the first rudiments of literary education, he was accustomed from his earliest years to the heavenly visions which were to occupy so large a place in his life. His guardian angel often appeared to him; and the child asked if all the angels in heaven were as young and shining as he. A little later Columba was invited by the same angel to choose among all the virtues those which he would like best to possess. 'I choose,' said the youth, 'chastity and wisdom;' and immediately three young girls of wonderful beauty, but foreign air, appeared to him, and threw themselves on his neck to embrace him. The pious youth frowned, and repulsed them with indignation. 'What!' they said; 'then thou dost not know us?' 'No, not the least in the world.' 'We are three sisters whom our father gives to thee to be thy brides.' 'Who, then, is your father?' 'Our father is God, he is Jesus Christ, the Lord and Saviour of the world.' 'Ah, you have indeed an illustrious father. But what are your names?' 'Our names are Virginity, Wisdom, and Prophecy; and we come to leave thee no more, to love thee with an incorruptible love.'"

From the care of the priest referred to in this legend, he passed, in accordance with the usage of the time, to the monastery of Moville, of which St. Finnian was abbot; one of the many monastic schools which were already scattered over the island; but the concluding portion of his career, at least, was passed under the still better known Abbot Finnian, in the celebrated school of the monastery of Clonard. He was here ordained deacon; and from the very commencement of his monastic life assumed so prominent a place, possibly in virtue of his rank as well as of his personal merits, that before he had reached the age of twenty-five he had already established several of the monasteries with which his name is associated as founder—thirty-four in number, including the celebrated establishments of Durrow and Derry. About fifteen years were spent in these home labours, when his energies were turned into another direction by an incident the details of which, though but imperfectly explained, are highly characteristic of the age and country. Partly from a dispute as to the property in the copy of a psalter which Columba had made, in which the king, Diarmid, decided against the claim of Columba; partly from a violation of the right of sanctuary of Columba's monastery by the same monarch, an armed confederation of the northern tribes was formed, through Columba's instigation, against the king, which resulted in the bloody, and, to King Diarmid, disastrous battle of Cooldrewny. A synod, held seemingly under royal influence, passed sentence of excommunication against Columba in his absence; and although, on his having been heard in his own vindication, the sentence was withdrawn at the instance of the Abbot Brendan of Birr, yet the absolution was accompanied by the condition, no less characteristic of the period, that, in penance, he should win a number of Pagan souls to Christ by his preaching, equal to that of the Christians who had fallen in the battle of Cooldrewny. The picture which his biographers have drawn of the mental conflict which followed is curious in the extreme. We can only find room for the closing scene:—

"He was more humble with Abban, another famous monk of the time, founder of many religious houses, one of which was called the *Cell of Tears*, because the special grace of weeping for sin was obtained there. This gentle and courageous soldier of Christ was specially distinguished by his zeal against the fighting men and disturbers of the public peace. He had

Digitized by Google

been seen to throw himself between two chiefs at the moment when their lances were crossed at each other's breasts; and on another occasion had gone alone and unarmed to meet one of the most formidable rievers of the island, who was still a Pagan and a member of the sovereign family, had made his arms drop from his hands, and had changed first into a Christian and then into a monk the royal robber, whose great-grandson has recorded this incident. When Columba went to Abban, he said, 'I come to beseech the to pray for the souls of all those who have perished in the late war, which I raised for the honour of the Church. I know they will obtain grace by thy intercession, and I conjure thee to ask what is the will of God in respect to them from the angel who talks with thee every day." The aged solitary, without reproaching Columba, resisted his entreaties for some time, by reason of his great modesty, but ended by consenting; and after having prayed, gave him the assurance that these souls enjoyed eternal repose.

"Columba thus reassured as to the fate of the victims of his rage, had still to be enlightened in respect to his own duty. He found the light which he sought from a holy monk called Molaise, famed for his studies of Holy Scripture, who had already been his confessor, and whose ruined monastery is still visible in one of the isles of the Atlantic. This severe hermit confirmed the decision of the synod; but to the obligation of converting to the Christian faith an equal number of Pagans as there were of Christians killed in the civil war, he added a new condition, which bore cruelly upon a soul so passionately attached to country and kindred. The confessor condemned his penitent to perpetual exile from Ireland. Columba bowed to this sentence with sad resignation—'What you have commanded,' he said, 'shall be done.'"

Such, according to the simple narrative of the actors themselves, was the origin of a step so momentous in its results. Columba had just attained his forty-second year when, in 563, accompanied by twelve disciples, he set sail in one of those great hide-covered osier barks which for the Celtic populations of that age supplied the only means of navigation. There is something very touching in one of the recorded incidents of the voyage. His first landing was upon the islet of Oronsay; but, on ascending a hill immediately after landing, he found that his beloved Ireland was still visible in the distance; and, unable to summon courage to encounter the life-long struggle which he contemplated for himself in an exile where,

"Full in the sight of paradise,"

he should be perpetually reminded of the home from which he was parted for ever, he at once re-embarked, and again landed upon the more distant island, since known as Hy or I-columb-kill, and more popularly Iona. Finding here that no trace of Ireland was discoverable upon the horizon, he fixed upon this unknown rock as the place which should form the centre of his penitentially imposed apostolate.

To his new home he carried with him the true spirit of the monk:—

"In the midst of the new community Columba inhabited, instead of a cell, a sort of hut built of planks, and placed upon the most elevated spot within the monastic enclosure. Up to the age of seventy-six he slept there upon the hard floor, with no pillow but a stone. This hut was at once his study and his oratory. It was there that he gave himself up to those prolonged prayers which excited the admiration and almost the alarm of his disciples. It was there that he returned after sharing the out-door labour of his monks, like the least among them, to consecrate the rest of his time to the study of Holy Scripture and the transcription of the sacred text. The work of transcription remained until his last day the occupation of his old age as it had been the passion of his youth; it had such an attraction for him, and seemed to him so essential to a knowledge of the truth, that, as we have already said, three hundred copies of the Holy Gospels, copied by his own hand, have been attributed to him. It was in the same hut that he received with unwearied patience the numerous and sometimes importunate visitors who soon flowed to him, and of whom sometimes he complained gently—as of that indiscreet stranger, who, desirous of embracing him, awkwardly overturned his ink upon the border of his robe. These importunate guests did not come out of simple curiosity; they were most commonly penitent or fervid Christians, who, informed by the fishermen and inhabitants of the neighbouring isles of the establishment of the Irish monk, who was already famous in his own country, and attracted by the growing renown of his virtues, came from Ireland, from the north and south of Britain, and even from the midst of the still heathen Saxons, to save their souls and gain heaven under the direction of a man of God."

Still more characteristic, we cannot help thinking, is the following anecdote of the probation of spirit through which many of those earnest souls were compelled to pass before they were accepted as workers in the great cause to which they were to vow themselves:—

"It was one day announced to him that a stranger had just landed from Ireland, and Columba went to meet him in the house reserved for guests, to talk to him in private, and question him as to his dwelling-place, his family, and the cause of his journey. The stranger told him that he had undertaken this painful voyage in order, under the monastic habit and in exile, to expiate his sins. Columba, desirous of trying the reality of his penitence, drew a most repulsive picture of the hardship and difficult obligations of the new life. 'I am ready,' said the stranger, 'to submit to the most cruel and

Digitized by Google

Scotia

ere all the tribute of
rom its midland to it-
would give [illegible]
In my [illegible]

B
Be
Bel
Belo
But s
The sa
When
It is swe

The origin and
lumba (in Irish
common to this
twenty others in
as that of his disti
churches,"—are we
was an early earnest
ness of the youth's c
hadowed forth in one
egends regarding him
ient biographer :—

"The Irish legends, whi
nguished, even amidst the
es of fancy, by a high an
ger lovingly upon the chil
the predestined saint. Th
nfided in the first place to the c
no had baptized him, and who
st rudiments of literary educati
stomed from his earliest years
y visions which were to occup
ce in his life. His guardian ang
red to him ; and the child asked
els in heaven were as young and s
A little later Columba was invite
e angel to choose among all the virtu
ch he would like best to possess. 'I c
the youth, 'chastity and wisdom ;' a
ately three young girls of wonderful be
foreign air, appeared to him, and th
selves on his neck to embrace him.
youth frowned, and repulsed them w
nation. 'What!' they said ; 'then th
not know us?' 'No, not the least in th
l.' 'We are three sisters whom our father
to thee to be thy brides.' 'Who, then,
r father?' 'Our father is God, he is Jesus
, the Lord and Saviour of the world.
you have indeed an illustrious father.
hat are your names?' 'Our names are
ity, Wisdom, and Prophecy ; and we

Digitized by Google

Nor le[illegible] were the monasteries of the land centres of missionary enterprise:—

"Still more striking than the intellectual development of which the Irish monasteries were at this period the centre, is the prodi- ious activity displayed by the Irish monks in tending and multiplying themselves over all e countries of Europe—here to create new hools and sanctuaries among nations already ngelized—there to carry the light of the pel, at peril of their lives, to the countries were still Pagan. We should run the risk of talling our future task if we did not resist emptations of the subject, which would s to go faster than time, and to follow armies of brave and untiring Celts, adventurous and often heroic, into the where we shall perhaps one day find ain. Let us content ourselves with a t, which has a certain eloquence even yness of its figures. Here is the num- ably very incomplete, given by an iter, of the monasteries founded out by Irish monks, led far from their the love of souls, and, no doubt, a y that love of travel which has one of their special distinctions:— in Scotland, n England, France, Armorica, Lorraine, satia, Bavaria, hetia, Helvetia, and Alemania; many in Thuringia and upon of the Lower Rhine; and, ly."

reer of Columba extends ars of a devoted life; and icture of the dying old is monks that he might eeling before the altar so long, is one which, be in harmony with ciations, cannot be re- t thinker with other ctful sympathy. f Columba with the bitants of the main- terminate with his bert's narrative of eltic colony of Iona ndent monasteries, ting, as it is also tire history. The t. Augustine and n of Saxon Eng- lectures to the Church,

tion in the wo has been repe talembert add But, partly t subject, partly into which the the subject co together, in a any historian ed, the chain several stages among the Sax monks, thems of the peculia missionaries, b gradual remov the end the e complete reco into the deta the work of c bishops refuse plain, from n intellectual co dertook, forty- ing of August Saxon Oswald tized in youth new Iona at Northumbria been to the Pi of the Anglo- Kent alone wa by the Roman brian kindgom that of Essex— Celtic monks Anglia, the s equal to that o And in the cig if the main ina frid, was not is to be reme merely a monk first training Celtic monaste as by some pr of his later li chronicler tell of his long hai ting from the head, would h tonsure accord

The story o ration in deta already sufficie alembert's stat pute, and espe is so interesti this well-know to trans

Digitized by Google

humiliating conditions that thou canst command me.' And after having made confession, he swore, still upon his knees, to accomplish all the requirements of penitence. 'It is well,' said the abbot; 'now rise from thy knees, seat thyself, and listen: you must first do penance for seven years in the neighbouring island of Tiree, after which I will see you again.' 'But,' said the penitent, still agitated by remorse, 'how can I expiate a perjury of which I have not yet spoken? Before I left my own country I killed a poor man. I was about to suffer the punishment of death for that crime, and I was already in irons, when one of my relations, who is very rich, delivered me by paying the composition demanded. I swore that I would serve him all the rest of my life; but after some days of service I abandoned him, and here I am, notwithstanding my oath.' Upon this the saint added that he would only be admitted to the paschal communion after seven years of penitence. When these were completed, Columba, after having given him the communion with his own hand, sent him back to Ireland to his patron, carrying a sword with an ivory handle for his ransom. The patron, however, moved by the entreaties of his wife, gave the penitent his pardon without ransom. 'Why should we accept the price sent to us by the holy Columba? We are not worthy of it. The request of such an intercessor should be granted freely. His blessing will do more for us than any ransom." And immediately he detached the girdle from his waist, which was the ordinary formula in Ireland for the manumission of captives or slaves. Columba had besides commanded his penitent to remain with his old father and mother until he had rendered to them the last services. This accomplished, his brothers let him go, saying, 'Far be it from us to detain a man who has laboured for seven years for the salvation of his soul with the holy Columba.' He then returned to Iona, bringing with him the sword which was to have been his ransom. 'Henceforward thou shalt be called Libran, for thou art free, and emancipated from all ties,' said Columba, and he immediately admitted him to take the monastic vows. But when he was commanded to return to Tiree, to end his life at a distance from Columba, poor Libran, who up to this moment had been so docile, fell on his knees and wept bitterly. Columba, touched by his despair, comforted him as best he could, without, however, altering his sentence. 'Thou shalt live far from me, but thou shalt die in one of my monasteries, and thou shalt rise again with my monks, and have part with them in heaven,' said the abbot. Such was the history of Libran, called of the Rushes, because he had passed many years in gathering rushes —the years probably of his penitence."

Having obtained a grant of the island of Iona, as well from the king of the Picts as from his own kinsman, the Scottish king, Columba began his labours for the propagation of Christianity among the Pictish tribes who dwelt beyond the Grampian range. To this great work, and to the conversion of the inhabitants of the Orkney Islands of the northern Hebrides, he devoted the remaining years of his life, still, however, maintaining a close communion with the parent monasteries of Ireland, to which he paid occasional visits, probably with the view of procuring supplies of those zealous workers, who have left their traces throughout Europe wherever the spirit of missionary or scholastic enterprise was found in activity. An Irish monastery in those days seems truly to have been a "*foyer du mouvement intellectuel*:"—

"It has been said, and cannot be sufficiently repeated, that Ireland was then regarded by all Christian Europe as the principal centre of knowledge and piety. In the shelter of its numberless monasteries a crowd of missionaries, doctors, and preachers were educated for the service of the Church and the propagation of the faith in all Christian countries. A vast and continual development of literary and religious efforts is there apparent, superior to anything that could be seen in any other country of Europe. Certain arts—those of architecture, carving, metallurgy, as applied to the decoration of churches—were successfully cultivated, without speaking of music, which continued to flourish both among the learned and among the people. The classic languages—not only Latin, but Greek—were cultivated, spoken, and written with a sort of passionate pedantry, which shows at least how powerful was the sway of intellectual influences over these ardent souls. Their mania for Greek was even carried so far that they wrote the Latin of the church books in Hellenic characters. And in Ireland more than anywhere else, each monastery was a school, and each school a workshop of transcription, from which day by day issued new copies of the Holy Scriptures and the Fathers of the primitive Church—copies which were dispersed through all Europe, and which are still to be found in Continental libraries. They may easily be recognised by the original and elegant character of their Irish writing, as also by the use of the alphabet common to all the Celtic races, and afterwards employed by the Anglo-Saxons, but to which in our day the Irish alone have remained faithful. Columba, as has been seen, had given an example of this unwearied labour to the monastic scribes; his example was continually followed in the Irish cloister, where the monks did not entirely limit themselves to the transcription of Holy Scripture, but reproduced also Greek and Latin authors, somes in Celtic character, with gloss and commentary in Irish, like that Horace which modern learning has discovered in the library of Berne. These marvellous manuscripts, illuminated with incomparable ability and patience by the monastic family of Columba, excited, five hundred years later, the declamatory enthusiasm of a great enemy of Ireland, the Anglo-Norman historian, Gerald de Barry; and they still attract the attention of archæologists and philologists of the highest fame."

Digitized by Google

Nor less were the monasteries of the land centres of missionary enterprise:—

"Still more striking than the intellectual development of which the Irish monasteries were at this period the centre, is the prodigious activity displayed by the Irish monks in extending and multiplying themselves over all the countries of Europe—here to create new schools and sanctuaries among nations already evangelized—there to carry the light of the Gospel, at peril of their lives, to the countries that were still Pagan. We should run the risk of forestalling our future task if we did not resist the temptations of the subject, which would lead us to go faster than time, and to follow those armies of brave and untiring Celts, always adventurous and often heroic, into the regions where we shall perhaps one day find them again. Let us content ourselves with a simple list, which has a certain eloquence even in the dryness of its figures. Here is the number, probably very incomplete, given by an ancient writer, of the monasteries founded out of Ireland by Irish monks, led far from their country by the love of souls, and, no doubt, a little also by that love of travel which has always been one of their special distinctions:—

Thirteen in Scotland,
Twelve in England,
Seven in France,
Twelve in Armorica,
Seven in Lorraine,
Ten in Alsatia,
Sixteen in Bavaria,
Fifteen in Rhetia, Helvetia, and Alemania; without counting many in Thuringia and upon the left bank of the Lower Rhine; and, finally, six in Italy."

This foreign career of Columba extends over thirty-four years of a devoted life; and the characteristic picture of the dying old man, carried by his monks that he might breathe his last, kneeling before the altar which he had served so long, is one which, however little it may be in harmony with modern ideas and associations, cannot be regarded by any earnest thinker with other than sincere and respectful sympathy.

But the relations of Columba with the conversion of the inhabitants of the mainland of Britain do not terminate with his life; and M. Montalembert's narrative of the part played by the Celtic colony of Iona and its kindred and dependent monasteries, is among the most interesting, as it is also the most careful, in his entire history. The story of the mission of St. Augustine and his monks in the conversion of Saxon England, and of his unsuccessful overtures to the remnant of the ancient native British Church, as well for the relinquishment of their distinctive observances as to the feast of Easter, the form of tonsure, and the supplementary ceremonial of baptism, as for their co-operation in the work of converting the Saxons, has been repeatedly told; nor does M. Montalembert add anything to its substance. But, partly through the exigencies of his subject, partly through the line of inquiry into which the investigations arising out of the subject conducted him, he has brought together, in a more intelligible form than any historian with whom we are acquainted, the chain of events by which, in the several stages of the progress of the gospel among the Saxons, the services of the Celtic monks, themselves for a time antagonists of the peculiar observances of the Roman missionaries, became the instruments of the gradual removal of every difficulty, and in the end the effective cause of a final and complete reconciliation. Without entering into the details, we may briefly say, that the work of co-operation which the British bishops refuse to Augustine, far more, it is plain, from national antipathy than from intellectual conviction, the Celtic monks undertook, forty-eight years after the landing of Augustine, at the invitation of the Saxon Oswald, who had himself been baptized in youth during his exile; and the new Iona at Lindisfarne became to Saxon Northumbria what the parent monastery had been to the Picts. Of the eight kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxon confederation, that of Kent alone was exclusively won or retained by the Roman monks. The two Northumbrian kindgoms—the kingdom of Mercia and that of Essex—owe the gift of faith to the Celtic monks alone. In Wessex and East Anglia, the share of the Celts is at least equal to that of the Continental missionaries. And in the eighth division, that of Sussex, if the main instrument of the change, Wilfrid, was not a Celt but an Anglo-Saxon, it is to be remembered that he too was not merely a monk, but a monk who owed his first training in missionary labour to the Celtic monastery of Lindisfarne; although, as by some prophetic forecast of the conflict of his later life, he shrank, as the ancient chronicler tell us, from "yielding the half of his long hair to the scissors, which, cutting from the upper part and front of his head, would have impressed on him the tonsure according to the 'Irish fashion.'"*

The story of Wilfrid is too long for narration in detail, and the outline of it is already sufficiently familiar. But M. Montalembert's statement of the questions in dispute, and especially of the Paschal question, is so interesting as a popular exposition of this well-known controversy, that we are induced to transcribe that portion of it which

* Vol. iv. p. 136.

Digitized by Google

regards the final conflict of Wilfrid with the Celtic party, before what M. Montalembert justly calls the "parliament" of Whitby. Between this discussion and the former controversy of Augustine with the British bishops, there was, as the author well points out, this vital difference, that the doctrinal or ceremonial bearing of the dispute weighed but little with the Britons, in comparison with the national feeling which was involved in their attitude of hostility to the Roman attempt for the conversion of the Saxons; whereas with the Celtic disputants, the main, and, indeed, almost the sole ground of resistance to what they called innovation, was their reverential fealty to the traditions and teaching of their fathers:

"Since the earliest days of Christianity a division had existed as to the proper date for the celebration of Easter. Some churches of Asia Minor followed the custom of the Jews by placing it on the fourteenth day of the first lunar month of the year. But all the churches of the West, of Palestine, and of Egypt, fixed upon the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the month nearest to the vernal equinox, so as not to keep the feast along with the Jews; and the general Council of Nice erected this custom into a law of the Church. Those who had accepted this law, but persisted in celebrating the fourteenth day, were held as heretics and schismatics, under the name of *quartodecimans*. The imputation of complicity in this heresy made against the Celtic Church by the chiefs of the Roman clergy in a bull addressed in 640, during the vacancy of the Holy See, to the bishops and abbots of the north of Ireland, was most unjust. The only mistake made by the Celts was that of neglecting to keep themselves informed of the difficulties which arose as to the manner of determining the commencement of the first lunar month, which ought to be the Paschal month. As has been already said in respect to the dispute between St. Augustin and the Britons of Cambria, they had remained faithful to the custom which had prevailed at Rome itself when Patrick and the other missionaries to the British Isles brought thence the light of the Gospel. At that period, in Rome and in all the West, the ancient Jewish cycle of eighty-four years was universally followed to fix this date. The Christians of Alexandria, however, better astronomers than those of Rome, and especially charged by the Council of Nice to inform the Pope of the date of Easter of each year, discovered in this ancient cycle some errors of calculation,* and after two centuries of disputes they succeeded in making the Roman Church adopt a new Paschal cycle, that which is now universally received, and which limits the celebration of Easter to the interval between the 22d of March and the 24th of April. The Celtic churches had no knowledge of this change, which dated from the year 525—that is to say, from a time when the invasions of the Saxons probably intercepted their habitual communications with Rome: they retained their old Jewish cycle of eighty-four years, and adhered obstinately to it. They celebrated Easter always on Sunday, but this Sunday was not always the one which had been appointed by the Romish Church after the new calculations. Thus it happened that King Oswy was eight days in advance of his wife, and complained of having to rejoice alone in the resurrection of Christ, while the queen was still commemorating the commencement of the passion in the services for Palm Sunday."

Many curious incidents in this remarkable history must be hurried over, and none with more reluctance than the strange picture of the aged Bishop Colman abdicating his See; gathering together his Irish monks at Lindisfarne, and, stranger still, thirty Anglo-Saxons of the same monastery, who, with himself, refused to give up the Celtic Easter or to shave their heads according to the fashion of Rome; carrying away with him to their own Iona the bones of his predecessor St. Aïdan, the founder of Lindisfarne, and first Celtic apostle of Northumbria, "as if the ungrateful land had become unworthy to possess these relics of a betrayed saint, and witnesses of a despised apostleship;" migrating once again from Iona to the remotest island of the western coast of Ireland, where he formed a new Iona, half Celtic half Saxon, on the island of Innisbofin; and finally, on a disagreement ensuing between the Celt and Saxon monks, establishing the latter at Mayo, where they continued to flourish for at least a century, although after some time they relinquished the Celtic usages and conformed to the Roman discipline, which meanwhile had found universal acceptance.

For these and many other most interesting and curious details regarding discipline, social usages, and legendary lore, the reader must be referred to M. Montalembert's text. With the miraculous narratives in which the ancient monastic chronicles abound, M. Montalembert deals in the reverent spirit of a Roman Catholic, to whose mind the enduring presence of supernatural agency in the world not only presents no difficulty, but rather commends itself as entering into the normal action of Divine Providence towards the Church. The reader of the *Life of St. Elizabeth* will recollect how frequently these legendary recitals formed the very groundwork of the narrative. In the *Monks of the West*, from its more strictly

* The exact nature of this change, and of the principles on which it is founded, are explained with remarkable clearness, and with a full elucidation of their bearing on chronology, by the Chevalier de Rossi, in his *Inscriptiones Romanæ*, Prolegomena, p. lxxviii., *et seq.*

Digitized by Google

historical character, there is considerably less of legend. But it is plain that the author never shrinks from relating an incident, otherwise satisfactorily attested, on the mere ground of its supernatural character. We have abstained, however, from entering upon such questions, partly because we considered them unsuited to our pages, as involving discussions in a great degree polemical; but chiefly because, while we are reluctant to enter upon a polemical discussion under any circumstances, we should consider it peculiarly out of place in dealing with the views of an author who, while he, earnest even to chivalry in the maintenance of his own conscientious convictions, has made it the rule of his life to respect, with equally chivalrous courtesy, the opinions of others.

We gather, with very sincere regret, from more than one indication, that the progress of the *Monks of the West* has been interrupted, and occasionally suspended, by the ill-health of its distinguished author; and we cannot conclude without expressing our earnest hope that the interruption may have proved but temporary. We shall look forward with much anxiety to the next instalment of his labour of love. There is no phase of monasticism with which M. Montalembert may be expected to deal more successfully than that in which it is next to appear—its relation to the literature and the philosophy of mediæval Europe.

ART. VII.—*Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands from* 1848–1861, etc. London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1868.

IN many points of view this book may be regarded as a continuation of, or at least as a natural supplement to, the *Early Years of the Prince Consort.* That remarkable volume ended with the marriage of the Queen. This not less remarkable volume describes the life of the Queen and the late Prince Consort in its familiar and most attractive aspects, in which are constantly present those touches of nature which will make not only her own subjects akin, but all of any nation or of any rank who can feel sympathy with genuine goodness and truth. It is a homely book, made up of human nature's daily food. The public life, as it were, of the Queen and the Prince will fall to be told elsewhere; but the private life which followed upon that happy union, enriched as it was and made beautiful by accordance of taste and sincere affection, is in some sort revealed to us in the pages of this journal. We have seen, if we may use such an illustration, the love-story ending happily with marriage; and we now get the continuation of the same story into the realities of life. And never surely, in any region of fiction, was an early promise of happiness more fully redeemed.

The volume before us is by this time well known to the public. It embraces the first visits of the Queen and the Prince to Scotland in 1842, 1844, and 1847; their life in the Highlands from 1848 to 1861; and tours in Ireland and yachting excursions in 1849, 1846, and 1861. The last of these three divisions stands somewhat apart; the first leads up directly to what is indeed the central idea of the book—the life of the Queen and the Prince Consort in their seclusion at Balmoral. From the first the beauties of Scotland would appear to have produced a strong impression both on the Queen and the Prince. Certainly their introduction to Scotland was effective. Their earliest visit was by Edinburgh to Taymouth, when they saw the beauties of west Perthshire under the auspices of the princely Breadalbane. Their next was by Dundee to Blair-Athole, where they remained from the 12th to the end of September; and the third was an exploring tour through the varied beauties of the West coast from the Clyde to Fort-William. Even the first short visit produced an impression not to be effaced:—"As the fair shores of Scotland receded more and more from our view, we felt quite sad that this very pleasant and interesting tour was over; but we shall never forget it." This liking for Scotland was deepened during the residence at Blair-Athole in 1844. In the record of the natural and beautiful life of those three happy September weeks—in some respects the most charming part of the volume—we see the love of Scotland and Highland life always growing. The comparative simplicity of the mode of life was thoroughly enjoyed; and in frequent touches a delicate and artistic appreciation of Highland scenery is apparent, expressed sometimes with a singular felicity in epithets, especially as descriptive of the colouring of the landscape. "Those Scotch streams, full of stones, and clear as glass, are most beautiful; the peeps between the trees, the depth of the shadows, the mossy stones, mixed with slate, etc., which cover the banks, are lovely; at every turn you have a picture." And again: "As the sun went down the scenery became more and more beautiful, the sky crimson, golden-red, and blue, and the hills looking purple and lilac, most exquisite, till at length it set, and the hues grew softer in the sky and the

Digitized by Google

outlines of the hills sharper." And then the frank outbreak, under the influence of this keen and true observation of natural beauty—"What can equal the beauties of nature! What enjoyment there is in them! Albert enjoys it so much; he is in ecstasies here. He has inherited this love for nature from his dear father." But the scenery was not the sole attraction. A charm not less powerful was in the quietness of the life, the freedom from restraint and ceremony: "Independently of the beautiful scenery, there was a quiet, a retirement, a wildness, a liberty, and a solitude that had such a charm for us." This charm was an abiding one. Throughout the whole journal, solitude is mentioned, with curious emphasis, as a special attraction of any scene.

After all this a Highland residence must have been determined on; but the question strikes one, Why was Balmoral chosen? The first three visits had been all more or less confined to the west of Scotland; and how then came the east to be selected as the place of a permanent home? The extracts we have given show that this did not arise from any deficient appreciation of the beauty of the western side of Scotland. The peculiar characteristics of the west sea-board were not less fully understood than the inland: "I am quite sorry that this delightful voyage and tour among the western lochs and isles is at an end—they are so beautiful, so full of poetry and romance, traditions, and historical associations." The very points in which west and central Scotland is superior to the east are noticed—the greenness, and the richer beauty of the landscape; the gorgeous colouring which makes the autumn woods of Perthshire a blaze of glory;—indeed, an express contrast is once drawn between the "splendid pass of Killiecrankie, with the birch all golden," and Deeside, then "bereft of leaves." Why then was Deeside preferred? We can see in these pages strong, we think conclusive, indications that the determining cause of this was—climate. The same cause, we fancy, must have operated against Ireland. The journals of the visits to Ireland record that the royal party were "enchanted with the extreme beauty of the scenery;" and they are filled with cordial recognition of the frankness, the courtesy, the loyalty of the Irish people. But the dampness of the atmosphere, and the too great frequency of "the useful trouble of the rain," marred the pleasure even of the first knowledge of the Highlands at Taymouth; and so, too, the landing at Cork was on a "grey and excessively 'muggy' day—the character of the Irish climate." On the other hand, the first feeling on arriving at Balmoral was, how delightfully dry the soil, and how refreshing the clear pure mountain air. And throughout the whole record of the residence there, the same source of health and pleasure—the dry, bracing air—is mentioned again and again. Doubtless the choice was wise. It may well be that the soft and gentle climate of Ireland and the west of Scotland is favourable to longevity in the case of those whose good fortune it is to enjoy it always. But when country-life must be regarded not only as a source of enjoyment, but as a means of invigoration; when the time which can be given to that life is limited; and when its great aim and object is to refresh after the weariness of life in towns, and re-animate for future exertion—then, if we are wise, we seek something different from the languid and relaxing west, and welcome the keen, stimulating air of the north; nay, do not shrink (at least for a brief time of autumn) even from the breezes of the north-east, which Mr. Kingsley has celebrated in eccentric song. There can be no doubt that for those who come from town-life, exhausted, and seeking restoration, the best tonic is to be found in the north-east counties of Scotland. Nor are they without a beauty of their own, more stern, it may be, than that of the west, but such as would strike some minds as of a loftier order. The hills may want variety of form as compared with the fantastic shapes of the "Duke of Argyle's bowling-green;" the foliage may be less rich, the vegetation altogether less profuse and gorgeous than at Killiecrankie or round Loch Tay; the whole scenery may be in some measure monotonous; but there is a grandeur in the dreariness; a feeling of freedom in the expanse of landscape; a certain breadth of cloud-effect; and above all, an ever-changing loveliness of light in the clear, dry atmosphere. Thus, for example, Her Majesty describes an early morning in October:—"Not a cloud was on the bright blue sky, and it was perfectly calm. There had been a sharp frost, which lay on parts of the grass, and the mountains were beautifully lit up, with those very blue shades upon them, like the bloom on a plum. . . . . The morning was beyond everything splendid, and the country in such beauty, *though the poor trees were nearly leafless.*"

From whatever motives chosen, Balmoral speedily justified the choice, so far as the affections of its owners were concerned. At the first sight of it, "all seemed to breathe freedom and peace, and to make one forget the world and its turmoils." When, a few years later, a cairn was erected to commemorate the royal family taking possession, her

Digitized by Google

Majesty expresses her growing affection for the place in a few simple words: "It was a gay, pretty, and touching sight, and I felt almost inclined to cry. The view was so beautiful over the dear hills; the day so fine; the whole so *gemüthlich*. May God bless this place, and allow us yet to see it and enjoy it many a long year." This affection was naturally increased as time went on, when the new house was built, and the whole place laid out under the special care of the Prince Consort. Prince Albert would seem to have possessed unusual skill and taste in these matters; both Balmoral and Osborne, we are assured, were his own "creation, own work, own building, own laying-out."

The characteristics of the people seem to have contributed not a little to the comfort of the royal family. A certain reserve, almost dignity, marks the best type of Scotch peasantry, which secured to royalty the seclusion so much desired. "All the Highlanders," says her Majesty, "are so amusing to talk to, and the men so gentleman-like." We hope this is not too flattering an estimate. It may be national predilection, but we have always thought that the north Highlander was truly characterized by this epithet in its simplest and best sense. To them may be applied the lines in which Belarius describes the royal brothers:—

"'Tis wonder
That an invisible instinct should frame them
To loyalty unlearn'd; honour untaught;
Civility not seen in others: valour
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
As if it had been sow'd!"

Among such people the Sovereign could reside, not oppressed with too demonstrative loyalty, undisturbed by intrusive curiosity.

And so we come to the burden of the volume—the life at Balmoral; and a more delightful picture, a more perfect idyll, has been seldom drawn—rare in its beauty under any circumstances; standing quite apart and peculiar, when we consider by whom that life was led and by whom that life has been recorded. Simplicity in manner and mode of life is the surest mark of perfect good-breeding; and here unaffected simplicity is the leading characteristic. And, far beyond the question of good breeding, such a life as the Highland life of the Queen affords, in the present state of English society, an example of peculiar value. For we greatly doubt whether such a life, so unostentatious, so devoid of excitement, so entirely given up to the pleasures of the country, is now-a-days very common among our wealthier classes. The country-life of England for long was, and still to some extent is, a speciality of the nation. We are proud, and apt to boast of it, partly because of its good effects on those who can enjoy it, more because of its supposed good effects on the country population. In the present state of society, it is more desirable on both counts than it ever was before. We are becoming more and more concentrated into towns—especially into one great metropolis. The town-life, therefore, is becoming more universal; and, as a necessary accompaniment or consequence, is becoming more feverish and more severe in its strain. It is not probably worse than in former days; but it extends its influences more widely over the community; and these influences are not the best: "For a crowd is not society, and talk is but a tinkling cymbal where no love is." And so the refreshment of true country-life is required by a larger class, and is more necessary to that class than perhaps it ever was before.

"O blessed Nature, 'O Rus! O Rus!'
Who cannot sigh for the country thus,
Absorb'd in a worldly torpor—
Who does not yearn for its meadow-sweet breath,
Untainted by care, and crime, and death,
And to stand sometimes upon grass or heath—
That soul, spite of gold, is a pauper."

On the other hand, the country needs the presence of this class, not less than this class needs the country. But so long only as they resort to it in order to lead a country life in a true and real sense, can they either confer or receive good. No service can be rendered, no great benefit can be gained, by carrying to the country all the characteristics of the town. One often hears the game-laws upheld, on the ground that sport attracts a certain class into rural residence. But whether this be an evil or a good depends very much, as Sydney Smith long ago pointed out, on the special circumstances of each case. "Neither are a great proportion of those whom the love of shooting brings into the country of the smallest value or importance to the country. A colonel of the Guards, the second son just entered at Oxford, three diners-out from Piccadilly—Major Rock, Lord John, Lord Charles, the colonel of the regiment quartered at the neighbouring town, two Irish Peers, and a German Baron; —if all this honourable company proceed with fustian jackets, dog-whistles, and chemical inventions, to a solemn destruction of pheasants, how is the country benefited by their presence? or how would earth, air, or sea, be injured by their annihilation?" On the other hand, as this

Digitized by Google

pleasant and most wise and just philosopher admits, people *may* love the country for other reasons than the slaughter of birds:—"Partridges and pheasants, though they form nine-tenths of human motives, still leave a small residue which may be classed under some other head. Some come into the country for health, some for quiet, for agriculture, for economy, from attachment to family estates, from love of retirement, from the necessity of keeping up provincial interests, and from a vast variety of causes." We suspect that since the time when Sydney Smith wrote, even his "nine-tenths" have grown into a more formidable proportion among human motives. We seem now-a-days bent on carrying the fever and excitement of town life into the country—that is, into the very sphere where such fever and excitement should find an antidote. The country life of England is changing, and changing for the worse. Shooting is degenerating into a mere gluttony of destruction; and the same deterioration is spreading over the whole style of country life. Doubtless there are many places not open to this condemnation; but, taking the average, it cannot be denied that the extending influence of town life is acting perniciously on the country.

Therefore when we do find country life sought for its own peculiar blessings, for health, for retirement, for beauty, our admiration is not unjustly called forth. Thus sought and so valued, it affords the enjoyment of friendship as distinct from the pleasures of society, and awakens capacities of the soul to which no other aspect of modern life can appeal:—

"The child who gazes on the colours of the sunset, on the light which ripples with the water, or on the deep blue of the sky, is often ready to bound with speechless and unanalysed delight. Nor need adults any higher beauty to call forth the same feelings, though the scenery of some favoured spots may be appreciated by them with still keener zest. Thus, in short, to call forth the heart into admiration, and prepare it for love, is the appropriate function of all natural beauty."*

Highland life gives all this in a peculiar degree. And yet how few of those who are each year drawn northward by fashion, or by a commonplace love of much slaughter of birds, rise to any conception of what such life at its best may be. And here we find the real value of this book. Highland family life in its brightest aspects, with its varied and simple pleasures, was never more vividly sketched: and the fact that all this was so thoroughly appreciated and so truly valued by the first family in the land cannot fail to have a wide influence for good.

We have said that this life was thoroughly entered into. The very headings of the short chapters show this:—"A 'Drive' in the Balloch Buie," "A Beat in the Abergeldie Woods," "Salmon Leistering," "Loch Muich," "Ascent of Ben Muich Dhui."—all these suggest scenes rich in natural beauty, and bright with freshness of enjoyment. To the great masters only has been given the charm which can declare to others the hidden glories of the world round about us; but happily very many have received the gift which reveals those glories to the possessor. To such as enjoy this boon, life among scenes of natural beauty is radiant with a light of its own. Such a light gave its richest colouring to life at Balmoral. There are no set descriptions of scenery in the volume; but almost every page shows a real feeling for nature—ever-present and deeply rooted—almost Wordsworthian. And it is not the "stock" things in Scotch scenery, those enjoying the noisiest popularity, which are here most appreciated. On the contrary, it is the "real severe Highland scenery," as that of Loch Muich, or the gloomy grandeur of Glen Ogle, where we "came to a small lake called, I think, Laragilly, amidst the wildest and finest scenery we yet had seen." And this love of nature is not merely a thing of expeditions, when people are, as it were, of set purpose to admire; it is of their every-day life, not awakened only when they go a-field, but always present—ever alive to the varying beauty of severe mountain scenery; never deaf to the "melodies of winds and woods and waters," never dull to the loveliness of a Highland sky, or to the lights that flicker on the side of a Highland hill. Besides this instinctive love of nature, the observation of the artist is constantly apparent. Thus, at Loch Muich, "I wish an artist could have been there to sketch the scene; it was so picturesque—the boat, the net, and the people in their kilts in the water, and on the shore." And even more noticeably at Loch Inch—"The light was lovely; *and some cattle were crossing a narrow strip of grass across the end of the loch nearest to us*, which really made a charming picture." Nor should the sketches, which are only too few, pass without a word of notice. They are slight; but some of them strikingly good. The dead stag at page 142, "scratched on a bit of paper that Macdonald had in his pocket, which I put on a stone," has great force; a few lines give the outlines of the hills in the Kyles of Bute with really surprising truth; and perhaps best of all, in its

* *The Soul*, p. 17.

Digitized by Google

vigour and freedom of touch, is the Prince's shooting encampment at Feithort. This last sketch suggests the part which sport took in the life at Balmoral. In the *Early Years of the Prince Consort*, we were told that the Prince, while fond of sport, was not engrossed by the mere love of destruction. We have here abundant corroboration of that remark. The Prince seems always to have enjoyed sport like a humane and reasonable gentleman, not thinking that its sole pleasure consists in what the Antiquary describes as "cracking off a birding-piece at a poor covey of partridges or moorfowl;" but fully appreciating the air, the scenery, the sociality—in fact all the "surroundings," which make sport in the Highlands the best of recreations. Nothing, to our minds, could be more suggestive of true enjoyment than the accounts we have here of expeditions, in which the ladies of the party accompany the guns, and which are directed both to purposes of sport and to exploring some neighbouring beauty of loch or hill.

What may be called the moral aspect of this Royal life in the Highlands is not less attractive than that of which we have been speaking. We get an insight into the relations of the Queen towards those round about her—both towards her tenantry and the servants of her household. This will undoubtedly be popular; but not, we hope and believe, because it will recommend itself to that ridiculous love of talking about their superiors so common among Englishmen. What is here told is told so simply and naturally, not as characteristic of or remarkable in Royalty; but as the reasonable and natural mode of life for good people with an honest wish to do their duty, and a frank desire thoroughly to enjoy the country, that we cannot but think it must appeal to something better within us than this most absurd propensity. Of how truly the duties of landlord in the special sense have been discharged, in improving the estate and ameliorating the condition of the tenantry, we have here no account; indeed such a matter was hardly within the scope of the journal. But, apart from any economic view of the landlord and tenant relation, surely Royalty was never more truly gracious than in those visits to the poor—the unaffected record of which we would gladly quote, but that it has been quoted so often. More remarkable still is the feeling shown by Her Majesty of the true relation between masters and servants. The entire want, in most cases, of any real tie between the members of the same household, is one of our social sores which did not escape Mr. Thackeray:—

"I do not sneer at the purpose for which, at the chiming eight o'clock bell, the household is called together. . . . I do not sneer at that,—at the act at which all these people are assembled,—it is at the rest of the day I marvel; at the rest of the day, and what it brings. At the very instant when the voice has ceased speaking, and the gilded book is shut, the world begins again, and for the next twenty-three hours and fifty-seven minutes, all that household is given up to it. The servile squad rises up and marches away to its basement, whence, should it happen to be a gala-day, those tall gentlemen, at present attired in Oxford mixture, will issue forth with flour plastered on their heads, yellow coats, pink breeches, sky-blue waistcoats, silver lace, buckles in their shoes, black silk bags on their backs, and I don't know what insane emblems of servility, and absurd bedizenments of folly. Their manner of speaking to what we call their masters and mistresses will be like a monstrous masquerade. You know no more of that race which inhabits the basement floor than of the men and brethren of Timbuctoo, to whom some among us send missionaries. If you meet some of your servants in the streets (I respectfully suppose for a moment that the reader is a person of high fashion, and a great establishment) you would not know their faces. You might sleep under the same roof for half a century and know nothing about them. If they were ill you would not visit them, though you would send them an apothecary and, of course, order that they lacked for nothing. You are not unkind; you are not worse than your neighbours. . . . But so it is; with those fellow-Christians who have just been saying Amen to your prayers, you have scarcely the community of charity. They come you don't know whence; they think and talk you don't know what; they die, and you don't care—or *vice versa*. They answer the bell for prayers, as they answer the bell for coals; for exactly three minutes in the day you all kneel together on one carpet,—and the desires and petitions of the servants and masters over, the rite called family worship is ended." *

Very different from this is the household of the Queen. It need not fear the test even of Mr. Thackeray's sarcasm. Kindly feeling towards every member of it; consideration for their personal comfort under all circumstances, even in the excitement of an expedition; careful knowledge of where they come from, of their relations, of all their "belongings," appear in every page. No reader will refuse to accept cordially Mr. Helps' remark, that "perhaps there is no person in these realms who takes a more deep and abiding interest in the welfare of the household committed to his charge, than our gracious Queen does in hers, or who feels more keenly what are the reciprocal

* *Newcomes*, vol. i. p. 140.

Digitized by Google

duties of masters and servants." Akin to this is that appreciation of any attention shown to herself, which is perhaps the most remarkable trait of character illustrated in this volume. Her Majesty never seems to take anything for granted. The slightest services, and courtesies, such as would be willingly rendered to any lady, and which to a Sovereign so loved and respected are things of the merest course, are never so regarded by her; but on the contrary, always call forth some special expression of recognition and thanks. Mr. Helps has noticed this characteristic also, in language not at all too strong. After reading this volume, we recognise in the present occupant of the throne, more surely than we ever could before, the wise Sovereign, the considerate ruler of her household, the fond wife, the good mother, the accomplished lady, the cordial sympathizer with all ranks and conditions of her people.

The literary execution of the book is in keeping with the idea of it. There is no pretence, no attempt at book-making, no ambition of style: all is easy, natural, and graceful. There are, as we said before, few set descriptions; but often in a sentence a landscape is forcibly brought before the reader: and the scene of the welcome of the royal party at Taymouth, in particular, is represented with great vividness. As the Journal advances, we think (though this may be fancy) we can trace more freedom in the style; considerable humour, too, from time to time, in the adoption of Scotch phrases, and in recounting the various adventures of the "great expeditions." Nothing could be better than the accounts of these excursions—the idea of which, we are told, originated with the Prince. They are given with a freshness, an evident sense of enjoyment, a frank appreciation of the fun of the situation, which make the reader realize and enter into the spirit of it all very thoroughly. Above all, there are no stock reflections in the book; as Mr. Helps puts it, "the writer describes what she thinks and feels, rather than what she might be expected to think and feel."

Scott, as was to be supposed, is the interpreter most frequently referred to. But Clough, we are glad to say, is not neglected, —a writer who has entered more profoundly, we think, than any other, into the spirit of Highland scenery. We have hitherto refrained from quoting at any length, because the whole book almost has been reproduced in the newspapers; but we cannot resist the following short passage, with *its* quotation:—

"After this we walked on for a beat quite round *Carrop;* and the view was glorious! A little shower of snow had fallen, but was succeeded by brilliant sunshine. The hills covered with snow, the golden birch-trees on the lower brown hills, and the bright afternoon sky, were indescribably beautiful. The following lines* admirably portray what I then saw:—

'The gorgeous bright October,
Then when brakens are changed, and heather blooms are faded,
And amid russet of heather and fern, green trees are bonnie;
Alders are green and oaks; the rowan scarlet and yellow;
One great glory of broad gold pieces appears the aspen,
And the jewels of gold that were hung in the hair of the birch-tree,
Pendulous, here and there, her coronet, necklace, and ear-rings,
Cover her now, o'er and o'er; she is weary, and scatters them from her.'

"Oh! how I gazed and gazed on God's glorious works with a sad heart, from its being for the last time, and tried to carry the scene away, well implanted and fixed in my mind, for this effect with the snow we shall not often see again."

Looking at this Journal critically, the undoubted popularity which it has won may at first sight excite surprise. It contains nothing in itself very original or very peculiar. The scenes described are well known; the life depicted is not the life of a Court, but of an English family. But in this very fact will be found one cause of the book's success. Familiarity of subject has an attractiveness not less than novelty. Every one must have felt the tendency to read and re-read on familiar themes in preference to adventuring on fresh woods and pastures new; and so, too, seeing how others are affected by circumstances and places we are ourselves acquainted with is, in some frames of mind, a pleasure not less keen than to learn of strange scenes and societies. To this must be added also our interest in those who led this life, and in her who has recorded it. Nor can the severest censor with justice condemn such an interest: for loyalty at the present day is not servility, still less a vulgar looking up to the great. Few things are more remarkable in history than the change which has gradually come in the position of princes. In the beginnings of modern society, after the familiarity of feudalism had waned, Louis XI., scorner as he was of outward show, would not take a cup of water from Quentin Durward until he knew that the young adventurer was noble. The Queen of Great Britain, in modern times, wrapped in a plaid, is carried over a burn by two Highland gillies, and

* *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich.* By Arthur Hugh Clough.

Digitized by Google

suffers no loss of royal dignity thereby. What a contrast between the two states of society! Nay, there is a hardly less striking contrast between the etiquette of a Court like that of Louis XIV., or the stiff ceremonial of our own early Georges, and the Court life (so far as we see it all) of these pages. The change indeed has extended beyond Courts:—

"I fancy that peculiar product of the past, the fine gentleman, has almost vanished off the face of the earth, and is disappearing like the beaver or the Red Indian. We can't have fine gentlemen any more, because we can't have the society in which they lived. The people will not obey; the parasites will not be as obsequious as formerly; children do not go down on their knees to beg their parents' blessing; chaplains do not say grace and retire before the pudding; servants do not say 'Your Honour' and 'Your Worship' at every moment; tradesmen do not stand hat in hand as the gentleman passes; authors do not wait for hours in gentlemen's anterooms with a fulsome dedication, for which they hope to get five guineas from his Lordship. In the days when there were fine gentlemen, Mr. Secretary Pitt's undersecretaries did not dare to sit down before him; but Mr. Pitt, in his turn, went down on his gouty knees to George II.; and when George III. spoke a few kind words to him, Lord Chatham burst into tears of reverential joy and gratitude; so awful was the idea of the monarch, and so great the distinctions of rank. Fancy Lord John Russell or Lord Palmerston on their knees whilst the Sovereign was reading a despatch, or beginning to cry because Prince Albert said something civil." *

The change has not been for the worse; it is in the direction of greater honesty and greater simplicity, and therefore of better breeding as well as of better morality. Nor has loyalty become weaker. It has but changed with the change in all other things. As an unreasoning sentiment it has passed away; as a rational conviction, based on respectful esteem and affectionate regard, it may now be as strong a feeling as it ever was.

We have heard it maintained as a great historical fact, that bad men, in the common judgment of the world, have always been the best kings. Thus Louis XI. was one of the wisest rulers France ever had; our own Richard III. gave promise to be the greatest even among the great Plantagenets. There is a certain truth in the seeming paradox. For there is no greater mistake than to suppose that the highest principles of personal morality can regulate wholly the transactions of States. But, true or untrue, the doctrine can only have application in those cases where the Sovereign actively controls the public policy. In our Constitution the duties directly devolving on the monarch are not of such a character. And, for this very reason, other functions assume a peculiar prominence. Foremost among these comes the function of giving the tone of society. To preserve, therefore, a pure standard of morality is a high regal duty, the discharge of which is not only a thing becoming in itself, but which surely tends to strengthen and uphold the monarchy. How much the monarchy of England, in this particular, owes to the Queen and the late Prince Albert, we can only guess, but our children may one day learn. For the most sanguine politician can hardly, we think, look far forward without some anxiety. Not long ago our great English orator, ended one of his loftiest speeches with words of good hope:—"I think I see, as it were above the hill-tops of time, the glimmering of the dawn of a better and a nobler day for the country and the people that I love so well." * We welcome the cheerful prophecy. Yet, ere the splendour of that day shall shine, we fear that many a storm will have swept over us. The present aspect of England does not speak of peace; her immediate future is not unclouded No man living, we think, has a more anxious prospect before him than the heir-apparent. Should his task prove easier than it promises to be, he will owe this to the fact that the crown will descend to him strengthened and hallowed by the affectionate regard of the whole nation. It can rest on no surer foundation. An aristocracy never yet has proved, in time of need, a support to monarchy—save when the Prince has stooped to be the head of a faction of the oligarchy. This the first two Georges were; unavoidably perhaps, without doubt unwillingly. History will one day do justice to the efforts of George III. to raise himself from such subserviency, and to become the king of his people. With all his faults, and they were neither few nor small, he *did* become the king of his people; and not even his son could break that sceptre. His granddaughter, avoiding his many errors, again holds it; and long may it be hers. "The heart of Britain still beats kindly for George III.,—not because he was wise or just, but because he was pure in life, honest in intent, and because, according to his lights, he worshipped Heaven. I think we acknowledge in the inheritrix of his sceptre a wiser rule and a life as honourable and pure; and I am sure the future painter of our manners will pay a willing allegiance to that

* *The Four Georges*, p. 114.

* Mr. Bright's Speech at Glasgow, October 1866.

Digitized by Google

good life, and be loyal to the memory of that unsullied virtue." She has so worn the crown that it rests easy and secure on her brow; and therein has deserved the gratitude, not only of her descendants, but of all who believe monarchy to be good for England.

We have said that this volume is the natural supplement of the *Early Years of the Prince Consort*. We see how the happiness, the promise of which was there, came to be realized; how truly Prince Albert was the centre of the household. From the former volume we would in some measure understand how much he must have relieved her Majesty from the weight of her public duties, how severe must be the strain of those duties upon her now. Reading this volume, we can partially, and but partially, come to know what a desolation has been the loss of him who, in the simple words of the dedication, "made the life of the writer bright and happy." In a passage of the Journal, the feeling of which no reader can fail to note, the writer alludes to the death of the Duchess of Kent. A trivial incident recalls the recent loss, and the awakened grief finds expression in a single sentence: "It made me very sad, and filled my eyes with tears. In the midst of cheerfulness I feel so sad! But being out a great deal, and seeing new and fine scenery, does me good." Here is the true anodyne—not in gaiety or excitement, but in quiet, in mountain air, in the soothing influences of nature. May these in due time have their effect in healing the deeper sorrow which has to be borne now, and which, in so great a measure, must be borne *alone*. To a Sovereign the consolation of companionship is of necessity denied; but since the publication of the Life of the Prince Consort, and of this Journal, our Queen may feel more than ever assured that the best sympathies of a whole nation attend her sorrow. Few, we think, can have read unmoved the note at page 22, which arrests us in the midst of all the joy and splendour of the visit to Taymouth:—

"I revisited Taymouth last autumn, on the 3d of October, from Dunkeld (incognita), with Louise, the Dowager Duchess of Athole, and Miss Mac Gregor. As we could not have driven through the grounds without asking permission, and we did not wish to be known, we decided upon not attempting to do so, and contented ourselves with getting out at a gate close to a small fort, into which we were led by a woman from the gardener's house, near to which we had stopped, and who had no idea who we were.

"We got out, and looked from this height down upon the house below, the mist having cleared away sufficiently to show us everything; and then, unknown, quite in private, I gazed—not without deep emotion—on the scene of our reception twenty-four years ago, by dear Lord Breadalbane, in a princely style, not to be equalled in grandeur and poetic effect.

"Albert and I were then only twenty-three, young and happy. How many are gone that were with us then!

"I was very thankful to have seen it again. —1866."

We have heard rumours of a purpose to publish this book at a price which will bring it within the reach of the great body of the people. We sincerely trust that these rumours are well-founded. For it is not the language of exaggeration or flattery, but of simple truth, to say that its wide circulation is on all accounts to be desired. Nothing can be more unreal, nothing therefore more false in morals, than attempts unduly to disparage the dignity of money and the value of position. It is idle to deny that these things can add to the purest pleasures; if in nothing else, at least in this, that they keep away causes of disquiet. But they do more. Recognised position should increase independence, should brace the tone of the mind. And, as Lord Macaulay has observed, even the beauties of nature are more fully appreciated when they can be explored with comfort, though without state, and with those appliances of wealth which make the enjoyment of them easy and secure. There is, however, but little danger that any attempts in this direction will be too successful. It will be long before men come to undervalue either money or position. They seldom look but at one side of the shield. And yet the other side shows a truth also; a truth, if less obvious, more important, and more conducive to our well-being. For, after making all due allowances, the fact remains certainly true, that the sources of the keenest and most enduring happiness are within the reach of most men. Laying aside extreme poverty or sudden calamity, with which the existence of happiness, despite all the wisdom of sages, is utterly incompatible, our best enjoyments are not dependent on wealth or grandeur. There are many sweet murmurs around us if we would only pause to hear. Independence, or the pursuit of it, domestic life, love of study, of art, of healthy physical enjoyment, appreciation of the external world; and, in a word, all mental pleasures of every kind, are, if we so will it, within our power. It is, as we have said, but a half-truth to maintain that these are sufficient for happiness; but even as a half-truth, we do not fully recognise it. A persuasion of how much they can do for us will, more than aught else, give contentment—

Digitized by Google

the healthiest, happiest, and rarest condition of the mind. It seems to us that the journal of the first lady in the land impresses this persuasion with peculiar power. In every page it is apparent that the keenest enjoyment comes from the simplest sources; and that, not from any force of contrast, but because such is the necessary result when our natures are truly attuned to life. And we see too, the sad aspect of the same teaching—not only how little rank and wealth can confer of pleasure, but how slight is their power to bring consolation. For all classes of society these lessons are good; but none so much as those who, shut out, in a greater or less degree, from external pleasures, are prone to over-value them. Were it for this reason alone, the wider the circulation of this book the better for the community. But it will teach more than this. The value of goodness and truth and pure affection, will be more strikingly brought home to all, especially to certain classes, when enforced by such an example. And we hope the book will be made accessible to all, not only for the sake of the people, but for the sake of the Royal Family. For so will the virtues of our Sovereign be more widely known; so will the Throne be strengthened in the affection of the whole nation; so will the momory of "Albert the Good" be kept green in the heart of that great community whose best interests we now know to have been his constant care.

Art. VIII.—The Atomic Theory of Lucretius.

"I know not whether this inquiry I speak of concerning the first condition of seeds or atoms be not the most useful of all"—Bacon.

The popular conception of any philosophical doctrine is necessarily imperfect, and very generally unjust. Lucretius is often alluded to as an atheistical writer, who held the silly opinion that the universe was the result of a fortuitous concourse of atoms; readers are asked to consider how long letters must be shaken in a bag before a complete annotated edition of Shakespeare could result from the process; and after being reminded how much more complex the universe is than the works of Shakespeare, they are expected to hold Lucretius, with his teachers and his followers, in derision. A nickname which sticks has generally some truth in it, and so has the above view, but it would be unjust to form our judgment of a man from his nickname alone, and we may profitably consider what the real tenets of Lucretius were, especially now that men of science are beginning, after a long pause in the inquiry, once more eagerly to attempt some explanation of the ultimate constitution of matter.

This problem, a favourite one with many great men, has come to be looked upon by most persons as insoluble; nay, the attempt to solve it is sometimes treated as impious; but knowing that all the phenomena of light are explained by particular motions of a medium constituted according to simple laws, and so perfectly explained that the exact motions corresponding to all the colours of the spectrum, with their modifications due to reflection, refraction, and polarization, can be defined in form, speed, and magnitude,—knowing this, we may reasonably expect that the other complex attributes of inorganic matter may be deduced from some simple theory, involving only as an assumption the existence of some original material possessing properties far less complex than those of the gross matter apparent to our senses. It is only in this sense that we can hope ever to understand the ultimate constitution of matter; but as the undulatory theory of light has both suggested the discovery of new facts, and has connected all known facts concerning light into one intelligible series of logical deductions, so any true theory of the constitution of matter would suggest new inquiries, and would group the apparently disjointed fragments of knowledge, now called the various branches of science, into one intelligible whole. To frame some such theory as this was the first aim of Greek philosophers, and to establish the true theory will be the greatest triumph of modern science. Of all the subtle guesses made by the Greeks at this enigma, one only, we think, has been fruitful, and that the one expounded by Lucretius, but learnt by him from Epicurus, who in his turn seems to have derived his most valuable conception from Democritus and Leucippus. As, however, we possess fragments only of these earlier writers, it is convenient to speak of the theory as that of Lucretius, though he seems to have been simply the eloquent and clear expounder of a doctrine wholly invented by others.

Before explaining how far the views of Lucretius are still held by naturalists, and how far they contain the germs of many modern theories, we must endeavour to give a clear account of what his views really were, in which attempt we shall be much

Digitized by Google

aided by the admirable edition and translation of his works by Mr. Munro.*

The principles of the atomic theory are all contained in the first two books; attention being generally called in the original to each new proposition by a "*nunc age*," or some such expression. Lucretius begins by stating that "nothing is ever begotten of nothing." To this principle, which is assumed as true in all physical treatises of the present day, he unnecessarily adds, that this is not done even by divine power, about which he could know nothing. Lucretius felt little reverence for the Pagan divinities, and states this principle so roundly as at first to shock our feelings; but if we limit the application of the principle to matter once created, and such as we can observe, his principle is true, and invariably acted upon. Not even by divine power is matter now created out of nothing—nor does any effect happen without what we call a natural cause. Lucretius seizes the opportunity of stating that men think things are done by divine power because they do not understand how they happen, whereas he will show how all things are done without the hand of the gods—a bold proposition truly, but one which, translated into modern language, means simply that natural phenomena are subject to definite laws, and are not unintelligible miracles. Lucretius fails to perceive that definite physical laws are consistent with the work of God; and the difficulty of reconciling the two ideas, unreal as it seems to us, has been felt by able men even now-a-days, when the conception of divine power is very different from any present to the mind of Lucretius. To most of us the very conception of a law suggests a lawgiver, while he, to prove the existence of laws, thought it necessary to deny the action of beings who could set those laws at nought. The demonstration which he gives of his first principle is loose, and goes rather to establish the fact that natural phenomena occur according to definite rules than to prove that no matter is created out of nothing, except in so far as this creation would, he thinks, disturb the order of nature. This first principle, as to the creation of matter, cannot indeed be otherwise than loosely stated by Lucretius, for no definition is given of what should measure the quantity of matter,† and until we have defined how this quantity is to be measured, we cannot experimentally determine whether matter is being created or not. But Lucretius meant his proposition to include the statement that nothing happens without a cause, and without a material cause, and his proof of this is precisely that which we should still adduce, being the perfect regularity with which in nature similar effects follow similar causes.

The next proposition is, that "nothing is ever annihilated, but simply dissolved into its first bodies," or, as we should say, components. This statement is complementary to the first. Together, the two propositions affirm that constancy in the total quantity of matter which is a commonplace truth now, but which to Lucretius must have been unsupported by any rigorous proof. His own arguments in support of the law go no further than to show that we have no proof of the destruction of any portion of matter. He shows that rain when it falls is not lost, but produces leaves and trees, that "by them in turn our race and the race of wild beasts is fed;" but he makes no effort to measure accurately the quantity of matter apparently disappearing, but reappearing in the new form, and without that measurement his proposition could not be rigorously proved; moreover, in the mind of Lucretius, the indestructibility referred to all kinds of causes, so that, to make our proposition co-extensive with his, we must interpret it to mean that matter is indestructible, and that no cause fails to produce an equivalent effect, though Lucretius probably did not conceive these two parts of his proposition separate one from the other.

Occasion is taken at this point to state that the components into which bodies are resolved, or out of which they are built, may be invisible. The third distinct proposition states that "all things are not on all sides jammed together and kept in by body: there is also void in things." Lucretius thought that, in order to explain the properties of matter, it was absolutely necessary to admit the existence of vacuum, or empty space containing nothing whatever. If there were not void, he says, things could not move at all! And it does seem, at first sight, that in a universe absolutely full, like a barrel full of herrings, so shaped as to leave not a cranny between them, no motion whatever would be possible; but reflection shows us that what is called re-entering motion is possible, even under those circumstances, provided we do not suppose our fish to stick to one another; there may be an eddy in which the fish swim round and round one after the other, without leaving any vacant space between them or on either side, and yet without enlarging, diminishing, or disturbing the

* *T. Lucreti Cari De Rerum Natura, Libri sex.* With Notes and a Translation, by H. A. J. Munro, M. A. Second Edit. 1866. 2 vols. Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, & Co.

† Afterwards, I. 360, the quantity of body is assumed as proportional to weight.

Digitized by Google

barrel as they move.* Lucretius either failed to perceive this, or declined to admit the possibility that all the movements of gross matter could be of this class; but he has another argument in favour of a vacuum: "Why do we see one thing surpass another in weight, though not larger in size?" How can things be of various densities unless we admit empty pores in bodies? His proof is insufficient; but here again modern research has confirmed his conclusion, so far as it affects gross matter only, and Lucretius conceived no other. His explanation of varying density is that which is universally received and taught, and even the modern disbelievers in a vacuum do not deny that some space may be unoccupied by gross matter, but simply affirm, on grounds to be hereafter stated, that all space is full of something, though not of ponderable matter. In support of his proposition, Lucretius points to the pores found in all bodies, and uses the following ingenious though fallacious argument to prove a vacuum:—"If two broad bodies after contact quickly spring asunder, the air must surely fill all the void which is formed between the bodies. Well, however rapidly it stream together with swift circling currents, yet the whole space will not be able to be filled up in one moment; for it must occupy first one spot, and then another, until the whole is taken up;" therefore in the middle a void must have existed for a sensible time.

We are next informed by our author that matter exists, or, in the language of Lucretius, "all nature then, as it exists by itself, has been founded on two things: there are bodies, and there is void in which these bodies are placed, and through which they move about." In his first and second propositions, Lucretius uses the word thing, *res*, which, as we have already explained, comprehended all kinds of things, such as matter, force, motion, thought, life, etc. He now states the existence of matter, and few will be disposed to contradict him; indeed, he appeals to the general feeling of mankind in proof of his assumption. Unless you grant this, he says, "there will be nothing to which we can appeal to prove anything by reasoning."

Lucretius now affirms that nothing exists but matter and void, or, as put in Mr. Munro's translation, "there is nothing which you can affirm to be at once separate from all body and quite distinct from void, which would, so to speak, count as the discovery of a third nature." Here at last we reach debateable ground. Lucretius hardly adduces a single argument in support of this proposition, contenting himself with showing, first, that no tangible thing but matter exists,—a mere begging the question; and, secondly, that properties and accidents are not entities distinct from matter,—which is true, but little to the point. As examples of properties, he gives weight, heat, fluidity; as examples of accidents, poverty, riches, liberty, etc. Time, he says, exists not by itself, but simply from the things which happen; actions do not exist by themselves, but may be fairly called accidents of matter, and of the space in which they severally go on. Even if all this be granted, we shall not necessarily concede that matter and void have alone a separate existence; but we must not complain that Lucretius does not support his proposition more strongly at this point, for indeed his six books form one long argument in support of his proposition. Lucretius undertakes to show that every fact in the world can be explained by the properties of matter, and that matter itself may be conceived as possessed of but a very few simple properties, from the construction of which the complex facts we see may follow. Of course he fails to do this, but if the proposition be restricted to what are called physical phenomena, it becomes, if not certainly true, nevertheless an hypothesis well worthy of consideration, and not yet proved false. Lucretius admits no subtle ethers, no variety of elements with fiery, watery, light, heavy principles; he does not suppose light to be one thing, fire another,—electricity a fluid, magnetism a vital principle,—but treats all phenomena as mere properties or accidents of simple matter, and produced in simple ways; but to understand what he meant by matter, or "bodies," we must pass on.

The next proposition of Lucretius describes the composition of matter as we perceive it. Bodies are either atoms, or compounded of atoms and void, or, more at length, they "are partly first beginnings of things, partly those which are formed of a union of first beginnings." The words which Mr. Munro here translates as "first beginnings of things" describe the Lucretian atoms; Lucretius does not use the word *atoms*, but calls these "primordia," or "semina rerum." These atoms are necessarily solid, or they could not mark off void space from full. They cannot be broken, because they have no void within them to admit a cutting body, or wet or cold or fire, therefore they must be everlasting and indestructible. Lucretius, too, is so persuaded of the great wear and tear that is going on,

* A homogeneous plenum may also be conceived as compressible.

Digitized by Google

that he remarks, if atoms had not been indestructible, everything would have been destroyed by this time. The constancy of all phenomena is a very good argument in favour of the indivisible atom, for unless the component parts of a machine are unchanged, how can the results produced be constant? unless there be really something indestructible and indivisible in sodium, how can it happen that every little fragment shall retain every physical property of sodium, so that, for instance, when glowing with heat, it shall continually, as it were, ring out the same notes of light, imparting such vibrations to our eye as paint the well-known double yellow line? If we could divide the little bodies which, vibrating at those special speeds, prove sodium to be glowing in the flame, they would no more vibrate at those speeds than a cut violin-string would give out the true note to which it had been tuned. By such division sodium would be destroyed; whatever might be the result, the body named sodium would exist no longer; but as yet no man has been able thus to divide the sodium atom, and no one expects that bodies will ever be decomposed into elements simpler than such as would ring out a single note, a single line in the spectrum. In other words, all men of science believe, consciously or not, in atoms indivisible and imperishable. Lucretius certainly knew nothing of spectrum analysis, nor of the law owing to which chemical compounds have forced an atomic theory into daily language; but the arguments drawn from these sources are simply special applications of his general theorem; if matter really obeys definite unchangeable laws, the ultimate materials employed to make matter must themselves be definite and unchangeable. Newton's exposition of this argument, quoted by Mr. Munro to illustrate our author, is admirably clear:—

"While the particles continue entire they may compose bodies of one and the same nature and texture in all ages; but should they wear away or break in pieces, the nature of things depending on them would be changed. Water and earth composed of old worn-out particles would not be of the same nature and texture now with water and earth composed of entire particles in the beginning. And, therefore, that nature may be lasting, the changes of corporeal things are to be placed only in various separations and new associations and motions of these permanent particles, compound bodies being apt to break, not in the midst of solid particles, but where those particles are laid together and only touch in a few points."

We confess that these arguments seem to us unanswerable, as proving the existence of some inalterable basis of matter. Lucretius described his atoms as small, but not infinitely small, nay, having parts, yet "strong in everlasting singleness," impenetrably hard, indivisible, unalterable, eternal.

Having reached his atom, before proceeding with the consequences of his assumption, Lucretius pauses to demolish rival theorists, but though he does this very well, we prefer to follow out his own propositions in their natural order, remarking, however, that the next proposition occurs incidentally, as it were, while refuting his antagonists, and is to the effect that the differences between all bodies may be accounted for by the different arrangement of the atoms, and the different way in which they move, or, more literally, "the motions which they mutually impart and receive." Lucretius conceived matter as formed by atoms in continual motion, rebounding as it were from one another. His conception is most remarkable, as being very far removed from the impression produced by inert matter on our own senses, and yet almost indisputably true. Arguments drawn from the laws of the elasticity of gases and from the diffusion of fluids go far to prove the proposition. The former laws may be deduced from the assumption of atoms rebounding in a void; and it is hard to conceive why different fluids or liquids should mix with extraordinary rapidity whenever placed in contact one with its neighbour, unless molecules were continually fluttering as it were, at the limits of each fluid, restrained only from continuing their course by the opposition of other atoms. If these arguments seem insufficient, we may refer to the conception of heat as a mode of motion. If heat be a mode of motion of gross matter, then, as all bodies are more or less hot, the molecules of all bodies will be moving with more or less speed,—precisely what Lucretius taught. Lucretius was led to his conception by considerations very analogous to those which lead us to consider heat and other forms of energy as modes of motion. Probably the reason why he does not state this seventh proposition as a dogma by itself, is, that the proof could not as yet be given; but in discussing rival doctrines he is led to anticipate his own views.

He proceeds to assert that there is no limit to space, nor yet to the total quantity of matter; but these are rather metaphysical than physical questions, although he seems to think that, unless infinite space were full of matter, the universe could not hold together, for he will not hear of gravitation, by which "all things press to the centre of the sum." He is almost comically unfortunate in denouncing the idea, that heavy

Digitized by Google

bodies which are beneath the earth shall press upwards, or that living things walk head downwards, and that when these see the sun we behold the stars of night; but although it is very interesting to observe that these doctrines were then held, we will examine only the propositions strictly necessary for his theory of matter, passing over also his assertion that atoms were not arranged by design, until we examine how he himself conceived that they were arranged. This explanation is given in the Second Book, containing what we should term the Kinetic branch of his theory, or, to use his own language, he next explains "by what *motion* the begetting bodies of matter do beget different things, and, after they are begotten, again break them up, and by what they are compelled so to do." The book opens with the proposition that matter does not "cohere inseparably massed together;" it does not stick together as a mere inert mass. Lucretius infers this from the continual change which we perceive, and by which all things wax and wane, although the sum remains constant.

A modern physical treatise would attribute these changes to chemical affinity, heat, gravitation, etc., or possibly, in more general terms, to the various forms of what we term Energy. Lucretius can only suppose this energy to be represented by atoms in motion; and if this be not universally true, it is probably true for many cases. This perpetual motion of the atoms is next reasserted as a distinct proposition. "No atom," he says, "can ever stop, giving up its motion to its neighbour." At first sight, nothing can be more contrary to our ideas of the laws of motion. We repeatedly see a ball strike another, and set it in motion, remaining itself apparently quiescent after the blow; but nevertheless it is quite impossible that the relative motion of two perfectly hard elastic bodies, such as Lucretius imagined, can ever be altered by knocking one against the other. Motion is essentially relative; we only know that a body moves by observing that it changes its position relatively to another. When, therefore, treating of two isolated bodies only, we need only speak of their relative velocity. The motion of the centre of gravity of any system of bodies remains quite unaffected by their collision one with another, and, in considering our two isolated atoms, we may as well, for simplicity's sake, assume the motion of their joint centre of gravity to be *nil*, though this is not necessary to our argument. Moreover, it is found that a certain quantity, sometimes called *vis viva*, sometimes the kinetic energy of the system, is also constant after and before any collision. This quantity is proportional for each body to the mass of the body, and to the square of its velocity. It must be remembered that we are now speaking of two simple bodies which have only the properties of hardness and elasticity, not being compressible, hot, or susceptible of vibration, so that the transformation of energy due to motion into other forms of energy such as heat is excluded by hypothesis.

Now, in the case of two such bodies striking one another, since their mass will not change, it is impossible that this quantity should remain constant unless each body kept its own velocity. The one cannot hand over a part of its velocity to the other, for in that case the centre of gravity of the system would acquire motion. The velocity of the two cannot increase or decrease simultaneously, or the *vis viva* of the system would alter, so the bodies have no choice but to bound back or to glance aside with their original velocity. In the latter case a spinning motion might represent the *vis viva*, but this would not be rest. If it be asked how it is that we do see the relative motion of bodies after striking one another, we answer that heat and other forms of energy have been found equivalent to *vis viva*, which may therefore pass into these forms, and so allow a change in the relative velocities of bodies. Had Lucretius known this he would have answered, that heat can only be equivalent to *vis viva* inasmuch as it substitutes the motion of small parts for the motion of the whole;—this being the very answer given by Leibnitz to the above objection, urged as fatal to the doctrine of *vis viva* which he had enounced.

It may be seen that our two bodies need not continue to move in straight lines after striking; they may glance off, so as to spin round. The *vis viva*, or energy, will be perfectly represented by the velocity of the rotating masses, and the centre of gravity may remain undisturbed. When two actual bodies strike and come to rest, it is probable that their atoms do acquire some periodic motion, such as spinning, which motion produces the appearance of heat, but is on so small a scale as to be otherwise invisible to our senses. When we consider the collision of a multitude of bodies, innumerable changes may take place in their relative velocities without violating the two principles, that the motion of the centre of gravity, and the energy of the system shall both remain unchanged. Among these combinations some will admit of one or more parts of the system coming wholly to rest, contrary to Lucretius's views, but the following consideration shows that it is difficult to see how this would be

Digitized by Google

brought about if we adhered strictly to his assumption, that the motion of a hard mass is the sole form of energy. He almost unconsciously and certainly without any express statement, assumes elasticity as a property of his atoms, which he describes as rebounding one from another; but, reverting to our two hard bodies, if they do strike and rebound they must gradually slacken speed, stop for an inconceivably short time, and then gradually resume their pace in an opposite direction, so that, if they rebound, they must stop and pass through all speeds intermediate between zero and their original velocity; so that if we admit no form of energy but a hard mass in motion, we must conclude that no two bodies ever could strike one another, and yet, as neither we nor Lucretius have assumed anything to keep them apart, we find ourselves in a droll dilemma, which seems to prove the impossibility of the existence of a universe containing simple hard atoms in motion. We moderns jump out of the difficulty at once by saying that the hard bodies are elastic, and elasticity is a form of energy, so that the energy or *vis viva* which at one time was represented by the body in motion, is at another time represented by the potential energy of elasticity. Lucretius would have shaken his head at this explanation, and would have much preferred the theory just started by Sir William Thomson, and long since vaguely suggested by Hobbes, that the elasticity of atoms may be due to the motion of their parts,—a proposition exemplified by one smoke-ring bounding away from another in virtue of the relative motions of their parts, these not being necessarily themselves elastic. The energy of the molecule at that point where it strikes its neighbour and changes velocity is on this theory transferred to another part of the molecule which moves faster as the first part moves more slowly. If the molecules of gross matter are made up of atoms in rapid motion, as Lucretius believed, or of a portion of whirling fluid, as Sir William Thompson suggests, and if elasticity itself be only a secondary property, not possessed by the *primordia rerum* at all, then the proposition that a molecule never can come to rest is undoubtedly true;—such rest would be equivalent to the destruction of matter. Lucretius could not have proved this, nor even understood the proof. He did not know the laws of motion even of two elastic bodies, but it is singular to find modern science returning to the never-ending motion of the old Greek atom.

The next proposition of our author explains the varying density of bodies. He says that the greater or less density of bodies depends on the smaller or greater distance to which the atoms in each continue to rebound after striking one another. They never stop striking and rebounding; they are in perpetual motion, tossed about by blows. Mr. Munro's translation fails, it seems to us, to convey this view, reading as though the atoms struck, rebounded and remained quiet afterwards, hooked as it were together; but Lucretius in many passages describes the never-ending restlessness of his atoms, tossed like motes in a sunbeam, which he describes to illustrate the motion of the atoms in void. This explanation of the varying density of matter is still commonly received, and will be found in all popular text-books; the density of the ultimate particles of gravitating matter is very generally assumed to be the same, the greater or less density of gross matter being supposed due to empty pores, of greater or smaller magnitude, separating the molecules. At first sight it is very difficult to see how any other explanation of varying density can be given, since we find that by compression we actually can increase the density of bodies without altering their weight or mass in any way. Now, unless there were a void space separating the molecules, where can these go to when squeezed? Most men* will find a difficulty in conceiving that space absolutely full of matter, soft or hard, can be made to hold more; but the same space does hold sometimes more and sometimes less gross matter, so that in the latter case it cannot be quite full, or, in other words, the body it contains is composed in part of empty pores. The proof is incomplete, and, if molecules be formed by the motion of a fluid, greater density may possibly be due to a modification in the motion of molecules, and not only to the greater frequency of the eddying molecules in a given space.

Lucretius next points out that his atoms must move very rapidly. In vacuum atoms travel faster than light. His proof of this is extremely vague. He says the light and the heat of the sun (which he calls "vapours") are forced to travel slowly, cleaving the waves of air, and several minute bodies of the heat (vapour) are entangled together and impede one another, but atoms of solid singleness can go ahead wholly unimpeded in a vacuum—not a very satisfactory proof. The idea running in the mind of the writer seems to have been that any matter moving in a medium would be impeded by friction, and therefore necessarily move more slowly than a free atom moving in a void; he may

* Sir William Thomson and Professor Tait find no difficulty in this conception.

Digitized by Google

also have felt that, if all the power of the universe depended on the motion of exceedingly small particles, it was necessary to suppose them endowed with great velocity; but we do not find this argument used, although it has led the modern believers in atoms to the conviction that if their motion does represent energy, their velocity must be enormous. Lucretius would be glad to know that Herapath, Joule, Krönig, Clausius, and Clerk Maxwell have been able to calculate it; $\frac{1}{40000}$ inch is the distance named by Maxwell.

The nature of the original motion of atoms is next defined. Atoms which have not struck one another move in straight parallel lines, sheer downwards; gravitation is the evidence of this. An infinite number of atoms eternally pour from infinite space above to infinite space below with enormous velocity. This velocity is conceived as the explanation of the power or energy of the universe. Gravitation thus understood was a property of all matter. The apparent exceptions are correctly explained by Lucretius. The idea of his eternal infinite rain of atoms is enough to turn one giddy; it can be best discussed after we have stated the next most singular proposition. The atoms, at quite uncertain times and uncertain places, swerve a very little from the straight line, then they strike, and from their clashing, matter and all natural phenomena are produced. As Mr. Munro translates it, "When bodies are borne downward sheer through void at quite uncertain times and uncertain points of space, they swerve a little from their equal poise, you just and only just can call it a change of inclination. If they were not used to swerve, they would all fall down like drops of rain through the deep void, and no clashing would have been begotten nor blow produced among the first beginnings; thus nature never would have produced aught."

Most people will think nature would not have produced much had she started in this way, and they are probably right; this is the head and front of our philosopher's offending, and, indeed, there is not much to be said in his defence. Let us, nevertheless, in spite of the ridicule which from Cicero's time downwards has been heaped on this unhappy doctrine of the "Declination of Atoms," try to enter into the mind of Lucretius, and to understand what he sought for and thought he had found. As already said, he sought for power in the velocity of the atoms, power which, deflected hither and thither by obstacles of all kinds, should be the origin of every motion, every force observed on earth. Gravitation in its apparent action seemed to show a universal tendency in one direction; this, then, he claimed as an inherent property of his atoms,—a claim no broader than the claim made by Newton, that every atom of matter should attract all other atoms at whatever distance they might be—and at first sight much more conceivable; at first sight only, for, indeed, atoms pouring onward, as imagined by our author, could be no source of power. Motion in mechanics has no meaning except as denoting a change of relative position; all atoms moving, as Lucretius fancied, at one speed, and in parallel lines, would relatively to one another have been in perfect rest. A bag of marbles in a railway train could not be employed as a source of energy in the train; they lie at rest; and it is only when brought into collision with something moving at a different pace from the train that they can develop any power, which may then be considerable. But more than this: How are we to conceive direction in space except relatively to something?—what is up and what is down in space? If it be answered, the place atoms come from is up above us, we answer, How, when all atoms are all one relatively to one another in a perfectly similar position, are we poor atoms to know that they are coming from anywhere? So far as we can see, an absolute motion in space is devoid of all meaning. We must conceive a shape or position for space before we can conceive of motion relatively to space, and as we are at perfect liberty to conceive any shape or position, or none at all, it follows that absolute motion in space is anything you please, that is to say, a mere fancy. Lucretius unconsciously assumed the world as his basis by which to measure direction and velocity. The direction in which things fall on the earth was sheer down in void; but really his assumption was meaningless, or, at least, explained in no way the power or force which he wished to explain. Not so, by the way, the older conception of Democritus, who thought atoms moved in all directions freely and indifferently;—a universe so constituted originally might at least contain all the energy we require. One atom would then exert its force on another, but the Lucretian atoms would have remained in profound stillness, except for that occasional swerve at quite uncertain times and places, the cause of which he leaves wholly unaccounted for. This swerving seems but a silly fancy, and yet consider this:—It is a principle of mechanics that a force acting at right angles to the direction in which a body is moving does no work, although it may continually and continuously alter the direction in which the body moves. No

Digitized by Google