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THE AMERICANS:

A CONVERSATION AND A SPEECH, WITH AN ADDITION.

By HERBERT SPENCER.

I.—A CONVERSATION: *October 20, 1882.*

[The state of Mr. Spencer's health unfortunately not permitting him to give in the form of articles the results of his observations on American society, it is thought useful to reproduce, under his own revision and with some additional remarks, what he has said on the subject; especially as the accounts of it which have appeared in this country are imperfect: reports of the conversation having been abridged, and the speech being known only by telegraphic summary.]

The earlier paragraphs of the conversation, which refer to Mr. Spencer's persistent exclusion of reporters and his objections to the interviewing system, are

omitted, as not here concerning the reader. There was no eventual yielding, as has been supposed. It was not to a newspaper-reporter that the opinions which follow were expressed, but to an intimate American friend: the primary purpose being to correct the many misstatements to which the excluded interviewers had given currency; and the occasion being taken for giving utterance to impressions of American affairs.—ED.]

Has what you have seen answered your expectations?

It has far exceeded them. Such books about America as I had looked into had given me no adequate idea of the immense developments of material civilization which I have everywhere found. The extent, wealth, and magnificence of your cities, and especially the splendour of New York, have altogether astonished me. Though I have not visited the wonder of the West, Chicago, yet some of your minor modern places, such as Cleveland, have sufficiently amazed me by the results of one generation's activity. Occasionally, when I have been in places of some ten thousand inhabitants where the telephone is in general use, I have felt somewhat ashamed of our own unenterprising towns, many of which, of fifty thousand inhabitants and more, make no use of it.

I suppose you recognize in these results the great benefits of free institutions?

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Ah! Now comes one of the inconveniences of interviewing. I have been in the country less than two months, have seen but a relatively small part of it, and but comparatively few people, and yet you wish from me a definite opinion on a difficult question.

Perhaps you will answer, subject to the qualification that you are but giving your first impressions?

Well, with that understanding, I may reply that though the free institutions have been partly the cause, I think they have not been the chief cause. In the first place, the American people have come into possession of an unparalleled fortune—the mineral wealth and the vast tracts of virgin soil producing abundantly with small cost of culture. Manifestly, that alone goes a long way towards producing this enormous prosperity. Then they have profited by inheriting all the arts, appliances, and methods, developed by older societies, while leaving behind the obstructions existing in them. They have been able to pick and choose from the products of all past experience, appropriating the good and rejecting the bad. Then, besides these favours of fortune, there are factors proper to themselves. I perceive in American faces generally a great amount of determination—a kind of "do or die" expression; and this trait of character, joined with a power of work exceeding that of any other people, of course produces an unparalleled rapidity of progress. Once more, there is the inventiveness which, stimulated by the need for economizing labour, has been so wisely fostered. Among us in England, there are many foolish people who, while thinking that a man who toils with his hands has an equitable claim to the product, and if he has special skill may rightly have the advantage of it, also hold that if a man toils with his brain, perhaps for years, and, uniting genius with perseverance, evolves some valuable invention, the public may rightly claim the benefit. The Americans have been more far-seeing. The enormous museum of patents which I saw at Washington is significant of the attention paid to inventors' claims; and the nation profits immensely from having in this direction (though not in all others) recognized property in mental products. Beyond question, in respect of mechanical appliances the Americans are ahead of all nations. If along with your material progress there went equal progress of a higher kind, there would remain nothing to be wished.

That is an ambiguous qualification. What do you mean by it?

You will understand me when I tell you what I was thinking the other day. After pondering over what I have seen of your vast manufacturing and trading establishments, the rush of traffic in your street-cars and elevated railways, your gigantic hotels and Fifth Avenue palaces, I was suddenly reminded of the Italian Republics of the Middle Ages; and recalled the fact that while there was growing up in them great commercial activity, a development of the arts which made them the envy of Europe, and a building of princely mansions which continue to be the admiration of travellers, their people were gradually losing their freedom.

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Do you mean this as a suggestion that we are doing the like?

It seems to me that you are. You retain the forms of freedom; but, so far as I can gather, there has been a considerable loss of the substance. It is true that those who rule you do not do it by means of retainers armed with swords; but they do it through regiments of men armed with voting papers, who obey the word of command as loyally as did the dependants of the old feudal nobles, and who thus enable their leaders to override the general will, and make the community submit to their exactions as effectually as their prototypes of old. It is doubtless true that each of your citizens votes for the candidate he chooses for this or that office, from President downwards; but his hand is guided by an agency behind which leaves him scarcely any choice. "Use your political power as we tell you, or else throw it away," is the alternative offered to the citizen. The political machinery as it is now worked, has little resemblance to that contemplated at the outset of your political life. Manifestly, those who framed your Constitution never dreamed that twenty thousand citizens would go to the poll led by a "boss." America exemplifies at the other end of the social scale, a change analogous to that which has taken place under sundry despotisms. You know that in Japan, before the recent Revolution, the divine ruler, the Mikado, nominally supreme, was practically a puppet in the hands of his chief minister, the Shogun. Here

it seems to me that "the sovereign people" is fast becoming a puppet which moves and speaks as wire-pullers determine.

Then you think that Republican institutions are a failure?

By no means: I imply no such conclusion. Thirty years ago, when often discussing politics with an English friend, and defending Republican institutions, as I always have done and do still, and when he urged against me the ill-working of such institutions over here, I habitually replied that the Americans got their form of government by a happy accident, not by normal progress, and that they would have to go back before they could go forward. What has since happened seems to me to have justified that view; and what I see now, confirms me in it. America is showing, on a larger scale than ever before, that "paper Constitutions" will not work as they are intended to work. The truth, first recognized by Mackintosh, that Constitutions are not made but grow, which is part of the larger truth that societies, throughout their whole organizations, are not made but grow, at once, when accepted, disposes of the notion that you can work as you hope any artificially-devised system of government. It becomes an inference that if your political structure has been manufactured and not grown, it will forthwith begin to grow into something different from that intended—something in harmony with the natures of the citizens, and the conditions under which the society exists. And it evidently has been so with you. Within the forms of your Constitution there has grown up this organization of professional politicians altogether un contemplated at the outset, which has become in large measure the ruling power.

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But will not education and the diffusion of political knowledge fit men for free institutions?

No. It is essentially a question of character, and only in a secondary degree a question of knowledge. But for the universal delusion about education as a panacea for political evils, this would have been made sufficiently clear by the evidence daily disclosed in your papers. Are not the men who officer and control your Federal, your State, and your Municipal organizations—who manipulate your caucuses and conventions, and run your partisan campaigns—all educated men? And has their education prevented them from engaging in, or permitting, or condoning, the briberies, lobbyings, and other corrupt methods which vitiate the actions of your administrations? Perhaps party newspapers exaggerate these things; but what am I to make of the testimony of your civil service reformers—men of all parties? If I understand the matter aright, they are attacking, as vicious and dangerous, a system which has grown up under the natural spontaneous working of your free institutions—are exposing vices which education has proved powerless to prevent?

Of course, ambitious and unscrupulous men will secure the offices, and education will aid them in their selfish purposes. But would not those purposes be thwarted, and better Government secured, by raising the standard of knowledge among the people at large?

Very little. The current theory is that if the young are taught what is right, and the reasons why it is right, they will do what is right when they grow up. But considering what religious teachers have been doing these two thousand years, it seems to me that all history is against the conclusion, as much as is the conduct of these well-educated citizens I have referred to; and I do not see why you expect better results among the masses. Personal interests will sway the men in the ranks, as they sway the men above them; and the education which fails to make the last consult public good rather than private good, will fail to make the first do it. The benefits of political purity are so general and remote, and the profit to each individual is so inconspicuous, that the common citizen, educate him as you like, will habitually occupy himself with his personal affairs, and hold it not worth his while to fight against each abuse as soon as it appears. Not lack of information, but lack of certain moral sentiment, is the root of the evil.

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You mean that people have not a sufficient sense of public duty?

Well, that is one way of putting it; but there is a more specific way. Probably it will surprise you if I say the American has not, I think, a sufficiently quick sense of his own claims, and, at the same time, as a necessary consequence, not a sufficiently quick sense of the claims of others—for the two traits are organically related. I observe that they tolerate various small interferences and dictations which Englishmen are prone to resist. I am told that the English are remarked on for their tendency to grumble in such cases; and I have no doubt it is true.

Do you think it worth while for people to make themselves disagreeable by resenting every trifling aggression? We Americans think it involves too much loss of time and temper, and doesn't pay.

Exactly; that is what I mean by character. It is this easy-going readiness to permit small trespasses, because it would be troublesome or profitless or unpopular to oppose them, which leads to the habit of acquiescence in wrong, and the decay of free institutions. Free institutions can be maintained only by citizens, each of whom is instant to oppose every illegitimate act, every assumption of supremacy, every official excess of power, however trivial it may seem. As Hamlet says, there is such a thing as "greatly to find quarrel in a straw," when the straw implies a principle. If, as you say of the American, he pauses to consider whether he can afford the time and trouble—whether it will pay, corruption is sure to creep in. All these lapses from higher to lower forms begin in trifling ways, and it is only by incessant watchfulness that they can be prevented. As one of your early statesmen said—"The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." But it is far less against foreign aggressions upon national liberty that this vigilance is required, than against the insidious growth of domestic interferences with personal liberty. In some private

administrations which I have been concerned with, I have often insisted that instead of assuming, as people usually do, that things are going right until it is proved that they are going wrong, the proper course is to assume that they are going wrong until it is proved that they are going right. You will find continually that private corporations, such as joint-stock banking companies, come to grief from not acting on this principle; and what holds of these small and simple private administrations holds still more of the great and complex public administrations. People are taught, and I suppose believe, that the "heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" and yet, strangely enough, believing this, they place implicit trust in those they appoint to this or that function. I do not think so ill of human nature; but, on the other hand, I do not think so well of human nature as to believe it will go straight without being watched.

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You hinted that while Americans do not assert their own individualities sufficiently in small matters, they, reciprocally, do not sufficiently respect the individualities of others.

Did I? Here, then, comes another of the inconveniences of interviewing. I should have kept this opinion to myself if you had asked me no questions; and now I must either say what I do not think, which I cannot, or I must refuse to answer, which, perhaps, will be taken to mean more than I intend, or I must specify, at the risk of giving offence. As the least evil, I suppose I must do the last. The trait I refer to comes out in various ways, small and great. It is shown by the disrespectful manner in which individuals are dealt with in your journals—the placarding of public men in sensational headings, the dragging of private people and their affairs into print. There seems to be a notion that the public have a right to intrude on private life as far as they like; and this I take to be a kind of moral trespassing. Then, in a larger way, the trait is seen in this damaging of private property by your elevated railways without making compensation; and it is again seen in the doings of railway autocrats, not only when overriding the rights of shareholders, but in dominating over courts of justice and State governments. The fact is that free institutions can be properly worked only by men, each of whom is jealous of his own rights, and also sympathetically jealous of the rights of others—who will neither himself aggress on his neighbours in small things or great, nor tolerate aggression on them by others. The Republican form of government is the highest form of government; but because of this it requires the highest type of human nature—a type nowhere at present existing. We have not grown up to it; nor have you.

But we thought, Mr. Spencer, you were in favour of free government in the sense of relaxed restraints, and letting men and things very much alone, or what is called *laissez faire*?

That is a persistent misunderstanding of my opponents. Everywhere, along with the reprobation of Government intrusion into various spheres where private activities should be left to themselves, I have contended that in its special sphere, the maintenance of equitable relations among citizens, governmental action should be extended and elaborated.

To return to your various criticisms, must I then understand that you think unfavourably of our future?

No one can form anything more than vague and general conclusions respecting your future. The factors are too numerous, too vast, too far beyond measure in their quantities and intensities. The world has never before seen social phenomena at all comparable with those presented in the United States. A society spreading over enormous tracts, while still preserving its political continuity, is a new thing. This progressive incorporation of vast bodies of immigrants of various bloods, has never occurred on such a scale before. Large empires, composed of different peoples, have, in previous cases, been formed by conquest and annexation. Then your immense *plexus* of railways and telegraphs tends to consolidate this vast aggregate of States in a way that no such aggregate has ever before been consolidated. And there are many minor co-operating causes, unlike those hitherto known. No one can say how it is all going to work out. That there will come hereafter troubles of various kinds, and very grave ones, seems highly probable; but all nations have had, and will have, their troubles. Already you have triumphed over one great trouble, and may reasonably hope to triumph over others. It may, I think, be concluded that, both because of its size and the heterogeneity of its components, the American nation will be a long time in evolving its ultimate form, but that its ultimate form will be high. One great result is, I think, tolerably clear. From biological truths it is to be inferred that the eventual mixture of the allied varieties of the Aryan race forming the population, will produce a finer type of man than has hitherto existed; and a type of man more plastic, more adaptable, more capable of undergoing the modifications needful for complete social life. I think that whatever difficulties they may have to surmount, and whatever tribulations they may have to pass through, the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known.

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II.—A SPEECH:

Delivered on the occasion of a Complimentary Dinner in New York, on November 9, 1882.

Mr. President and Gentlemen:—Along with your kindness there comes to me a great unkindness from Fate; for, now that, above all times in my life, I need full command of what powers of speech I possess, disturbed health so threatens to interfere with them that I fear I shall very

inadequately express myself. Any failure in my response you must please ascribe, in part at least, to a greatly disordered nervous system. Regarding you as representing Americans at large, I feel that the occasion is one on which arrears of thanks are due. I ought to begin with the time, some two-and-twenty years ago, when my highly valued friend Professor Youmans, making efforts to diffuse my books here, interested on their behalf the Messrs. Appleton, who have ever treated me so honourably and so handsomely; and I ought to detail from that time onward the various marks and acts of sympathy by which I have been encouraged in a struggle which was for many years disheartening. But, intimating thus briefly my general indebtedness to my numerous friends, most of them unknown, on this side of the Atlantic, I must name more especially the many attentions and proffered hospitalities met with during my late tour, as well as, lastly and chiefly, this marked expression of the sympathies and good wishes which many of you have travelled so far to give, at great cost of that time which is so precious to the American. I believe I may truly say, that the better health which you have so cordially wished me, will be in a measure furthered by the wish; since all pleasurable emotion is conducive to health, and, as you will fully believe, the remembrance of this event will ever continue to be a source of pleasurable emotion, exceeded by few, if any, of my remembrances.

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And now that I have thanked you, sincerely though too briefly, I am going to find fault with you. Already, in some remarks drawn from me respecting American affairs and American character, I have passed criticisms, which have been accepted far more good-humouredly than I could have reasonably expected; and it seems strange that I should now propose again to transgress. However, the fault I have to comment upon is one which most will scarcely regard as a fault. It seems to me that in one respect Americans have diverged too widely from savages, I do not mean to say that they are in general unduly civilized. Throughout large parts of the population, even in long-settled regions, there is no excess of those virtues needed for the maintenance of social harmony. Especially out in the West, men's dealings do not yet betray too much of the "sweetness and light" which we are told distinguish the cultured man from the barbarian. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which my assertion is true. You know that the primitive man lacks power of application. Spurred by hunger, by danger, by revenge, he can exert himself energetically for a time; but his energy is spasmodic. Monotonous daily toil is impossible to him. It is otherwise with the more developed man. The stern discipline of social life has gradually increased the aptitude for persistent industry; until, among us, and still more among you, work has become with many a passion. This contrast of nature has another aspect. The savage thinks only of present satisfactions, and leaves future satisfactions uncared for. Contrariwise, the American, eagerly pursuing a future good, almost ignores what good the passing day offers him; and when the future good is gained, he neglects that while striving for some still remoter good.

What I have seen and heard during my stay among you has forced on me the belief that this slow change from habitual inertness to persistent activity has reached an extreme from which there must begin a counterchange—a reaction. Everywhere I have been struck with the number of faces which told in strong lines of the burdens that had to be borne. I have been struck, too, with the large proportion of gray-haired men; and inquiries have brought out the fact, that with you the hair commonly begins to turn some ten years earlier than with us. Moreover, in every circle I have met men who had themselves suffered from nervous collapse due to stress of business, or named friends who had either killed themselves by overwork, or had been permanently incapacitated, or had wasted long periods in endeavours to recover health. I do but echo the opinion of all the observant persons I have spoken to, that immense injury is being done by this high-pressure life—the physique is being undermined. That subtle thinker and poet whom you have lately had to mourn, Emerson, says, in his essay on the Gentleman, that the first requisite is that he shall be a good animal. The requisite is a general one—it extends to the man, to the father, to the citizen. We hear a great deal about "the vile body;" and many are encouraged by the phrase to transgress the laws of health. But Nature quietly suppresses those who treat thus disrespectfully one of her highest products, and leaves the world to be peopled by the descendants of those who are not so foolish.

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Beyond these immediate mischiefs there are remoter mischiefs. Exclusive devotion to work has the result that amusements cease to please; and, when relaxation becomes imperative, life becomes dreary from lack of its sole interest—the interest in business. The remark current in England that, when the American travels, his aim is to do the greatest amount of sight-seeing in the shortest time, I find current here also: it is recognized that the satisfaction of getting on devours nearly all other satisfactions. When recently at Niagara, which gave us a whole week's pleasure, I learned from the landlord of the hotel that most Americans come one day and go away the next. Old Froissart, who said of the English of his day that "they take their pleasures sadly after their fashion," would doubtless, if he lived now, say of the Americans that they take their pleasures hurriedly after their fashion. In large measure with us, and still more with you, there is not that abandonment to the moment which is requisite for full enjoyment; and this abandonment is prevented by the ever-present sense of multitudinous responsibilities. So that, beyond the serious physical mischief caused by overwork, there is the further mischief that it destroys what value there would otherwise be in the leisure part of life.

Nor do the evils end here. There is the injury to posterity. Damaged constitutions reappear in children, and entail on them far more of ill than great fortunes yield them of good. When life has been duly rationalized by science, it will be seen that among a man's duties, care of the body is imperative; not only out of regard for personal welfare, but also out of regard for descendants. His constitution will be considered as an entailed estate, which he ought to pass on uninjured, if not improved, to those who follow; and it will be held that millions bequeathed by him will not

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compensate for feeble health and decreased ability to enjoy life. Once more, there is the injury to fellow-citizens, taking the shape of undue disregard of competitors. I hear that a great trader among you deliberately endeavoured to crush out every one whose business competed with his own; and manifestly the man who, making himself a slave to accumulation, absorbs an inordinate share of the trade or profession he is engaged in, makes life harder for all others engaged in it, and excludes from it many who might otherwise gain competencies. Thus, besides the egoistic motive, there are two altruistic motives which should deter from this excess in work.

The truth is, there needs a revised ideal of life. Look back through the past, or look abroad through the present, and we find that the ideal of life is variable, and depends on social conditions. Every one knows that to be a successful warrior was the highest aim among all ancient peoples of note, as it is still among many barbarous peoples. When we remember that in the Norseman's heaven the time was to be passed in daily battles, with magical healing of wounds, we see how deeply rooted may become the conception that fighting is man's proper business, and that industry is fit only for slaves and people of low degree. That is to say, when the chronic struggles of races necessitate perpetual wars, there is evolved an ideal of life adapted to the requirements. We have changed all that in modern civilized societies; especially in England, and still more in America. With the decline of militant activity, and the growth of industrial activity, the occupations once disgraceful have become honourable. The duty to work has taken the place of the duty to fight; and in the one case, as in the other, the ideal of life has become so well established that scarcely any dream of questioning it. Practically, business has been substituted for war as the purpose of existence.

Is this modern ideal to survive throughout the future? I think not. While all other things undergo continuous change, it is impossible that ideals should remain fixed. The ancient ideal was appropriate to the ages of conquest by man over man, and spread of the strongest races. The modern ideal is appropriate to ages in which conquest of the earth and subjection of the powers of Nature to human use, is the predominant need. But hereafter, when both these ends have in the main been achieved, the ideal formed will probably differ considerably from the present one. May we not foresee the nature of the difference? I think we may. Some twenty years ago, a good friend of mine, and a good friend of yours too, though you never saw him, John Stuart Mill, delivered at St. Andrews an inaugural address on the occasion of his appointment to the Lord Rectorship. It contained much to be admired, as did all he wrote. There ran through it, however, the tacit assumption that life is for learning and working. I felt at the time that I should have liked to take up the opposite thesis. I should have liked to contend that life is not for learning, nor is life for working, but learning and working are for life. The primary use of knowledge is for such guidance of conduct under all circumstances as shall make living complete. All other uses of knowledge are secondary. It scarcely needs saying that the primary use of work is that of supplying the materials and aids to living completely; and that any other uses of work are secondary. But in men's conceptions the secondary has in great measure usurped the place of the primary. The apostle of culture as it is commonly conceived, Mr. Matthew Arnold, makes little or no reference to the fact that the first use of knowledge is the right ordering of all actions; and Mr. Carlyle, who is a good exponent of current ideas about work, insists on its virtues for quite other reasons than that it achieves sustentation. We may trace everywhere in human affairs a tendency to transform the means into the end. All see that the miser does this when, making the accumulation of money his sole satisfaction, he forgets that money is of value only to purchase satisfactions. But it is less commonly seen that the like is true of the work by which the money is accumulated—that industry too, bodily or mental, is but a means; and that it is as irrational to pursue it to the exclusion of that complete living it subserves, as it is for the miser to accumulate money and make no use of it. Hereafter, when this age of active material progress has yielded mankind its benefits, there will, I think, come a better adjustment of labour and enjoyment. Among reasons for thinking this, there is the reason that the process of evolution throughout the organic world at large, brings an increasing surplus of energies that are not absorbed in fulfilling material needs, and points to a still larger surplus for the humanity of the future. And there are other reasons, which I must pass over. In brief, I may say that we have had somewhat too much of "the gospel of work." It is time to preach the gospel of relaxation.

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This is a very unconventional after-dinner speech. Especially it will be thought strange that in returning thanks I should deliver something very much like a homily. But I have thought I could not better convey my thanks than by the expression of a sympathy which issues in a fear. If, as I gather, this intemperance in work affects more especially the Anglo-American part of the population—if there results an undermining of the physique, not only in adults, but also in the young, who, as I learn from your daily journals, are also being injured by overwork—if the ultimate consequence should be a dwindling away of those among you who are the inheritors of free institutions and best adapted to them; then there will come a further difficulty in the working out of that great future which lies before the American nation. To my anxiety on this account you must please ascribe the unusual character of my remarks.

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And now I must bid you farewell. When I sail by the *Germanic* on Saturday, I shall bear with me pleasant remembrances of my intercourse with many Americans, joined with regrets that my state of health has prevented me from seeing a larger number.

[A few words may fitly be added respecting the causes of this over-activity in American life—causes which may be identified as having in recent times partially operated among ourselves, and

as having wrought kindred, though less marked, effects. It is the more worth while to trace the genesis of this undue absorption of the energies in work, since it well serves to illustrate the general truth which should be ever present to all legislators and politicians, that the indirect and unforeseen results of any cause affecting a society are frequently, if not habitually, greater and more important than the direct and foreseen results.

This high pressure under which Americans exist, and which is most intense in places like Chicago, where the prosperity and rate of growth are greatest, is seen by many intelligent Americans themselves to be an indirect result of their free institutions and the absence of those class-distinctions and restraints existing in older communities. A society in which the man who dies a millionaire is so often one who commenced life in poverty, and in which (to paraphrase a French saying concerning the soldier) every news-boy carries a president's seal in his bag, is, by consequence, a society in which all are subject to a stress of competition for wealth and honour, greater than can exist in a society whose members are nearly all prevented from rising out of the ranks in which they were born, and have but remote possibilities of acquiring fortunes. In those European societies which have in great measure preserved their old types of structure (as in our own society up to the time when the great development of industrialism began to open ever-multiplying careers for the producing and distributing classes) there is so little chance of overcoming the obstacles to any great rise in position or possessions, that nearly all have to be content with their places: entertaining little or no thought of bettering themselves. A manifest concomitant is that, fulfilling, with such efficiency as a moderate competition requires, the daily tasks of their respective situations, the majority become habituated to making the best of such pleasures as their lot affords, during whatever leisure they get. But it is otherwise where an immense growth of trade multiplies greatly the chances of success to the enterprising; and still more is it otherwise where class-restrictions are partially removed or wholly absent. Not only are more energy and thought put into the time daily occupied in work, but the leisure comes to be trenched upon, either literally by abridgment, or else by anxieties concerning business. Clearly, the larger the number who, under such conditions, acquire property, or achieve higher positions, or both, the sharper is the spur to the rest. A raised standard of activity establishes itself and goes on rising. Public applause given to the successful, becoming in communities thus circumstanced the most familiar kind of public applause, increases continually the stimulus to action. The struggle grows more and more strenuous, and there comes an increasing dread of failure—a dread of being "left," as the Americans say: a significant word, since it is suggestive of a race in which the harder any one runs, the harder others have to run to keep up with him—a word suggestive of that breathless haste with which each passes from a success gained to the pursuit of a further success. And on contrasting the English of to-day with the English of a century ago, we may see how, in a considerable measure, the like causes have entailed here kindred results.

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Even those who are not directly spurred on by this intensified struggle for wealth and honour, are indirectly spurred on by it. For one of its effects is to raise the standard of living, and eventually to increase the average rate of expenditure for all. Partly for personal enjoyment, but much more for the display which brings admiration, those who acquire fortunes distinguish themselves by luxurious habits. The more numerous they become, the keener becomes the competition for that kind of public attention given to those who make themselves conspicuous by great expenditure. The competition spreads downwards step by step; until, to be "respectable," those having relatively small means feel obliged to spend more on houses, furniture, dress, and food; and are obliged to work the harder to get the requisite larger income. This process of causation is manifest enough among ourselves; and it is still more manifest in America, where the extravagance in style of living is greater than here.

Thus, though it seems beyond doubt that the removal of all political and social barriers, and the giving to each man an unimpeded career, must be purely beneficial; yet there is (at first) a considerable set-off from the benefits. Among those who in older communities have by laborious lives gained distinction, some may be heard privately to confess that "the game is not worth the candle;" and when they hear of others who wish to tread in their steps, shake their heads and say—"If they only knew!" Without accepting in full so pessimistic an estimate of success, we must still say that very generally the cost of the candle deducts largely from the gain of the game. That which in these exceptional cases holds among ourselves, holds more generally in America. An intensified life, which may be summed up as—great labour, great profit, great expenditure—has for its concomitant a wear and tear which considerably diminishes in one direction the good gained in another. Added together, the daily strain through many hours and the anxieties occupying many other hours—the occupation of consciousness by feelings that are either indifferent or painful, leaving relatively little time for occupation of it by pleasurable feelings—tend to lower its level more than its level is raised by the gratifications of achievement and the accompanying benefits. So that it may, and in many cases does, result that diminished happiness goes along with increased prosperity. Unquestionably, as long as order is fairly maintained, that absence of political and social restraints which gives free scope to the struggles for profit and honour, conduces greatly to material advance of the society—develops the industrial arts, extends and improves the business organizations, augments the wealth; but that it raises the value of individual life, as measured by the average state of its feeling, by no means follows. That it will do so eventually, is certain; but that it does so now seems, to say the least, very doubtful.

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The truth is that a society and its members act and react in such wise that while, on the one hand, the nature of the society is determined by the natures of its members; on the other hand, the activities of its members (and presently their natures) are redetermined by the needs of the

society, as these alter: change in either entails change in the other. It is an obvious implication that, to a great extent, the life of a society so sways the wills of its members as to turn them to its ends. That which is manifest during the militant stage, when the social aggregate coerces its units into co-operation for defence, and sacrifices many of their lives for its corporate preservation, holds under another form during the industrial stage, as we at present know it. Though the co-operation of citizens is now voluntary instead of compulsory; yet the social forces impel them to achieve social ends while apparently achieving only their own ends. The man who, carrying out an invention, thinks only of private welfare to be thereby secured, is in far larger measure working for public welfare: instance the contrast between the fortune made by Watt and the wealth which the steam-engine has given to mankind. He who utilizes a new material, improves a method of production, or introduces a better way of carrying on business, and does this for the purpose of distancing competitors, gains for himself little compared with that which he gains for the community by facilitating the lives of all. Either unknowingly or in spite of themselves, Nature leads men by purely personal motives to fulfil her ends: Nature being one of our expressions for the Ultimate Cause of things, and the end, remote when not proximate, being the highest form of human life.

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Hence no argument, however cogent, can be expected to produce much effect: only here and there one may be influenced. As in an actively militant stage of society it is impossible to make many believe that there is any glory preferable to that of killing enemies; so, where rapid material growth is going on, and affords unlimited scope for the energies of all, little can be done by insisting that life has higher uses than work and accumulation. While among the most powerful of feelings continue to be the desire for public applause and dread of public censure—while the anxiety to achieve distinction, now by conquering enemies, now by beating competitors, continues predominant—while the fear of public reprobation affects men more than the fear of divine vengeance (as witness the long survival of duelling in Christian societies); this excess of work which ambition prompts, seems likely to continue with but small qualification. The eagerness for the honour accorded to success, first in war and then in commerce, has been indispensable as a means to peopling the Earth with the higher types of man, and the subjugation of its surface and its forces to human use. Ambition may fitly come to bear a smaller ratio to other motives, when the working out of these needs is approaching completeness; and when also, by consequence, the scope for satisfying ambition is diminishing. Those who draw the obvious corollaries from the doctrine of Evolution—those who believe that the process of modification upon modification which has brought life to its present height must raise it still higher, will anticipate that "the last infirmity of noble minds" will in the distant future slowly decrease. As the sphere for achievement becomes smaller, the desire for applause will lose that predominance which it now has. A better ideal of life may simultaneously come to prevail. When there is fully recognized the truth that moral beauty is higher than intellectual power—when the wish to be admired is in large measure replaced by the wish to be loved; that strife for distinction which the present phase of civilization shows us will be greatly moderated. Along with other benefits may then come a rational proportioning of work and relaxation; and the relative claims of to-day and to-morrow may be properly balanced.—H. S.]

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UNIVERSITY ELECTIONS.

The late election for the University of Cambridge had an ending which may well set many of us a-thinking. That Mr. Raikes should have been chosen by an overwhelming majority rather than Mr. Stuart means a good deal more than a mere party victory and party defeat. Combined with several elections of late years at Oxford, it is enough to make us all turn over in our minds the question of University representation in general. The facts taken altogether look as if those constituencies to which we might naturally look for the return of members of more than average personal eminence were committed, in the choice of their representatives, not only to one particular political party, but to absolute indifference to every claim beyond membership of that particular party. It would be unreasonable to expect a conscientious Conservative to vote for a Liberal candidate; but one might expect any party, in choosing candidates for such constituencies as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, to put forward its best men. And we cannot, after all, think so ill of the great Conservative party as to believe that the present representatives of Oxford and Cambridge are its best men. We ought indeed not to forget that, whatever Mr. Beresford-Hope has since shown himself, he was brought forward, partly at least, as a man of scholarship and intellectual tastes, and that he received many Liberal votes in the belief that he was less widely removed from Liberal ideas than another Conservative candidate. This would seem to have been the last trace of an old tradition, the last faint glimmering of the belief that the representative of an University should have something about him specially appropriate to the representation of an University. In Oxford that tradition had, on the Conservative side, given way earlier. Another tradition gave way with it, one which I at least did not regret, the tradition that an University seat should be a seat for life. It sounded degrading when a proposer of Mr. Gladstone stooped to appeal to the doctrine, "ut semel electus semper eligatur." But be that rule wise or foolish, it was on the Conservative side that it was broken down. It gave way to the rule that Mr. Gladstone was always to be opposed, and that it did not matter who could be got to oppose him. Again I cannot believe that the Conservative ranks did not contain better men than the grotesque succession of nobodies by whom Mr. Gladstone was opposed. But in the course of those elections the rule was established at Oxford, and it now seems to be adopted at Cambridge,

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that anybody will do to be an University member, provided only he is an unflinching supporter of the party which, as recent elections show, still keeps a large majority in both Universities.

Mr. Gladstone was very nearly the ideal University member. I say "very nearly," because to my mind the absolutely ideal state of things would be if the Universities could catch such men as Mr. Gladstone young, and could bring them into Parliament as their own, before they had been laid hold of by any other constituency. The late jubilee of Mr. Gladstone's political life ought to have been the jubilee of his election, not for Newark but for Oxford. The Universities should choose men who have already shown themselves to be scholars and who bid fair one day to be statesmen. I am not sure about the policy of bringing forward actual University officials. There is sure to be a cry against them, and it is not clear that they are the best choice in themselves. It may be as well however to remember that the example was set, though in rather an amusing shape, by the Conservatives themselves. Dr. Marsham, late Warden of Merton, who was brought forward thirty years ago in opposition to Mr. Gladstone, did not belong to exactly the same class of academical officials as Professor Stuart and Professor H. J. S. Smith; still, as an academical official of some kind, he had something in common with them, as distinguished from either Mr. Gladstone or Mr. Raikes. At the last elections both for Oxford and Cambridge, the Liberal candidate was an actual Professor. Mr. Stuart indeed is much more than a mere professor; he has shown his capacity for practical work of various kinds. But I could not but look on the Oxford choice of 1878 as unlucky. Mr. H. J. S. Smith was brought forward purely on the ground of "distinction," distinction, it would seem, so great that moral right and wrong went for nothing by its side. Just at that moment right and wrong were emphatically weighing in the balance; it was the very crisis of the fate of South-Eastern Europe. But we were told that Mr. Smith's candidature had "no reference to the Eastern Question;" he was, we were told, supported by men who took opposite views on that matter. That is to say, when the most distinct question of right and wrong that ever was put before any people was at that moment placed before our eyes, we were asked to put away all thought of moral right and moral duty in the presence of the long string of letters after Mr. Smith's name. Better, I should have said, to choose, even for the University, a man who could not read or write, if he had been ready to strive heart and soul for justice and freedom alongside of Mr. Gladstone and the Duke of Argyll. Yet no such hard choice was laid upon us. There was a man standing by, another bearer of the same great Teutonic name, not young indeed in years, but who might have gone fresh to Parliament as the University's own choice, one whom it would have been worth some effort to keep within the bounds of England and of Europe, one who to a list of "distinctions" at least as long as that of the candidate actually chosen, added the noblest distinction of all, that of having been, through a life of varied experiences, the consistent and unflinching champion of moral righteousness. I do not know that Mr. Goldwin Smith would have had a greater chance—perhaps he might have had even less chance—of election than Mr. H. J. S. Smith. But there would have been greater comfort in manly defeat in open strife under such a leader than there could be in a defeat which it had been vainly hoped to escape by a compromise on the great moral question of the moment. The Oxford Liberals lost, and, I must say, they deserved to lose. It is a great gain for an University candidate to be "distinguished;" but one would think that it would commonly be possible to find a "distinguished" candidate who is at once "distinguished" and something better as well.

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Still at Oxford in 1878 Mr. H. J. S. Smith was the accepted candidate of the Liberal party, and in that character he underwent a crushing defeat. It may be, or it may not be, that a candidate of more decided principles would have gained more votes than the actual candidate gained; he certainly would not have gained enough to turn the scale. Mr. Smith was defeated by a candidate who was utterly undistinguished; and who, instead of simply halting, like Mr. Smith, between right and wrong, was definitely committed to the cause of wrong. Mr. Talbot became member for the University on the same principle on which Mr. Gladstone's successive opponents were brought forward, the principle that anybody will do, if only he be a Tory. Any stick is good enough to beat the Liberal dog. When Toryism showed itself in its darkest colours, when it meant the rule of Lord Beaconsfield, and when the rule of Lord Beaconsfield meant, before all things, the strengthening of the power of evil in South-Eastern Europe, a constituency, in which the clerical vote is said to be decisive, preferred, by an overwhelming majority, the candidate who most distinctly represented the bondage of Christian nations under the yoke of the misbeliever. It is quite possible that crowds voted at the Oxford election, as at other elections, in support of Lord Beaconsfield's ministry, in utter indifference or in utter ignorance as to what support of Lord Beaconsfield's ministry meant. The Conservative party was conventionally supposed to be the Church party; and so men calling themselves Christians, calling themselves clergymen, rushed, with the cry of "Church" in their mouths, to do all that in them lay for the sworn allies of Antichrist.

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A constituency which could return a supporter of Lord Beaconsfield in 1878 is hopelessly Tory—hopelessly that is, till a new generation shall have supplanted the existing one. It is Conservative, not in the sense of acting on any intelligible Conservative principle, but in the sense of supporting anything that calls itself Conservative, be its principles what they may. No measure could be less really Conservative, none could more be opposed to the feelings and traditions of a large part of the clergy, than the Public Worship Act. A large part of the clergy grumbled at it; some voted for the Liberals in 1880 on the strength of it; but it did not arouse a discontent so strong or so general as seriously to deprive the so-called Conservative party of clerical support. It was perhaps unreasonable to expect much change in the older class of electors, clerical or lay; but the results of the two elections, of Oxford in 1878 and of Cambridge in 1882, are disappointing in another way. The Universities, and therewith the University constituencies, have largely increased within the last few years. The number of electors at Oxford is far greater than it

was in the days of Mr. Gladstone's elections; at Cambridge the increase must be greater still since any earlier election at which a poll was taken. And it was certainly hoped that the increase would have been altogether favourable to the Liberal side. Among the new electors there was a large lay element, a certain Nonconformist element; even among the clergy a party was known to be growing who had found the way to reconcile strict Churchmanship with Liberal politics, and whose Christianity was not of the kind which is satisfied to walk hand-in-hand with the Turk. In these different ways it was only reasonable to expect that the result of an University election was now likely to be, if not the actual return of a Liberal member, yet at least a poll which should show that the Conservative majority was largely diminished. Instead of this, both at Oxford in 1878 and at Cambridge in 1882 the Conservative candidate comes in by a majority which is simply overwhelming. It must however be remembered that it would be misleading to compare the poll at either of these elections with the polls at any of Mr. Gladstone's contests. The issue was different in the two cases. The elections of 1878 and 1880 were far more distinctly trials between political parties than the several elections in which Mr. Gladstone succeeded or the final one in which he failed. First of all, there is a vast difference between Mr. Gladstone and any other candidate. This difference indeed cuts both ways. The foremost man in the land is at once the best loved and the best hated man in the land. Neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Stuart nor any other candidate that could be thought of could call forth either the depth of enthusiasm in his supporters or the depth of antagonism in his opponents which is called forth by every public appearance of Mr. Gladstone. No other man has, in the same measure as he has, won the glory of being the bugbear of cultivated "society" and the object of the reverence and affection of thinking men. But, apart from this, the issues were different. Mr. Smith and Mr. Stuart stood directly as Liberal candidates. Mr. Gladstone, at least in his earlier elections, was still in party nomenclature counted among Conservatives, and he received but little support from professed political Liberals. The constituency was then confined to men who had signed the articles of the Established Church, and the election largely turned on controversies within the Established Church. I venture to think that the High Church party of that day was really a Liberal party, one that had far more in common with the political Liberals than with the political Conservatives. But it is certain that neither the High Churchmen nor the political Liberals would have acknowledged the kindred, and the great mass of Mr. Gladstone's supporters in 1847, in 1852, and even later, would assuredly not have voted for any avowedly Liberal candidate. In his later elections Mr. Gladstone received a distinct Liberal support; still he was also supported by men who would not support a Liberal candidate now. As he came nearer and nearer to the Liberal camp, his majorities forsook him till he was at last rejected for Mr. Hardy. The two elections of the last four years have turned more directly, we may say that they have turned wholly, on ordinary political issues. Controversies within the Established Church have had little bearing on them. So far as ecclesiastical questions have come in, the strife has been between "Church"—that kind of Church which is pue-fellow to the Mosque—and something which is supposed not to be "Church." These late elections have therefore been far better tests than the old ones of the strictly political feelings of the constituencies. Looked at in that light, they certainly do not prove that the University constituencies are more Conservative now than they were then. They do prove that the Liberal growth, the Liberal reaction, or whatever we are to call it, in the University constituencies since that time has been far less strong than Liberals had hoped that it had been. They do prove that the Conservatism of those constituencies is still of a kind which, both for quantity and quality, has a very ugly look in Liberal eyes.

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Thus far we have been looking at Oxford and Cambridge only. But we must not forget that Oxford and Cambridge are not the only Universities in the kingdom. The general results of University elections were set forth a few weeks back in an article in the *Spectator*. They are certainly not comfortable as a whole. We of Oxford and Cambridge may perhaps draw a very poor satisfaction from the thought that we are at least not so bad as Dublin. But then we must feel in the like proportion ashamed when we see how we stand by the side of London. A better comparison than either is with the Universities of Scotland. From a Liberal point of view, they are much better than Oxford and Cambridge, but still they are not nearly so good as they ought to be. The Liberalism of the Universities of Scotland lags a long way behind the Liberalism of the Scottish people in general. One pair of Universities returns a Liberal, the other a Conservative, in neither case by majorities at all like the Conservative majorities at Oxford and Cambridge. Speaking roughly, in the Scottish Universities the two parties are nearly equally balanced, a very different state of things from what we see in the other constituencies of Scotland. If then in England and Ireland the University constituencies are overwhelmingly Conservative, while in Liberal Scotland they are more Conservative than Liberal, it follows that there is something amiss either about Liberal principles or about University constituencies. And those who believe that Liberal principles are the principles of right reason and that so-called Conservative principles represent something other than right reason, will of course take that horn of the dilemma which throws the blame on the University constituencies. For some reason or other, those constituencies which might be supposed to be more enlightened, more thoughtful and better informed, than any others are those in which the principles which we deem to be those of right reason find least favour. Even in the most Liberal part of the kingdom, the University constituencies are the least Liberal part of the electoral body. The facts are clear; we must grapple with them as we can. There is something in education, in culture, in refinement, or whatever the qualities are which are supposed to distinguish University electors from the electors of an ordinary county or borough, which makes University electors less inclined to what we hold to be the principles of right reason than the electors of an ordinary county or borough. Education, culture, or whatever it is, clearly has, in political matters, a weak side to it. There is the fact; we must look it in the face.

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After all perhaps the fact is not very wonderful. There is no need to infer either that Liberal principles are wrong or that University education is a bad thing. The *Spectator* goes philosophically into the matter. The Universities give—that is, we may suppose, to those who take, only a common degree—only a moderate education, an average education, a little knowledge and a little culture springing from it. And the effect of this little knowledge and little culture is to make those who have it satisfied with the state of things in which they find themselves, and to separate themselves from those who have not even that little knowledge and little culture. "Education," says the *Spectator*, "to the very moderate extent to which a University degree attests it, is a Conservative force, because to that extent at all events it does much more to stimulate the sense of privilege and caste than it does to enlarge the sympathies and to strengthen the sense of justice." That is, it would seem, a pass degree tends to make a man a Tory. It does not at all follow that even the passman's course is mischievous to him on the whole, even if it does him no good politically. For, if it has the effect which the *Spectator* says, the form which that effect takes is, in most cases, rather to keep a man a Tory than to make him one. And it may none the less do him good in some other ways. But the *Spectator* leaves it at least open to be inferred that a higher degree, or rather the knowledge and consequent culture implied in the higher degree, does, or ought to do, something different even in the political way. And such an inference would probably be borne out by facts. If Lord Carnarvon looks on all passmen as "men of literary eminence and intellectual power," he must be very nearly right in his figures when he says that three-fourths of such men are opposed to Mr. Gladstone. But those who have really profited by their University work may doubt whether passmen as such are entitled to that description. Indeed in the most ideal state of an University, though it might be reasonable to expect its members to be men of intellectual power, it would be unreasonable to expect all of them to be men of literary eminence. If by literary eminence be meant the writing of books, some men of very high intellectual power are men of no literary eminence whatever. Without therefore requiring the University members to be elected wholly by men of literary eminence, we may fairly ask that they may be elected by men of more intellectual power than the mass of the present electors. We should ask for this, even if we thought that Lord Carnarvon was right, if we thought that, the higher the standard of the electors, the safer would be the Tory seats. But it is perhaps only human nature to ask for it the more, if we happen to think that the raising of the standard would have the exactly opposite result.

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The evil then, to sum up the result of the *Spectator's* argument, is that the University elections are determined by the votes of the passmen, and that the mass of the passmen are Tories. Now what is the remedy for this evil? One very obvious remedy is always, on such occasions as that which has just happened, whispered perhaps rather than very loudly proclaimed. This is the doctrine that the representation of Universities in Parliament is altogether a mistake, and that it would be well if the Universities were disfranchised by the next Reform Bill. And, if the question could be discussed as a purely abstract one, there is no doubt much to be said, from more grounds than one, against University representation. There is only one ground on which separate University representation can be justified on the common principles on which an English House of Commons is put together. This is the ground that each University is a distinct community from the city or borough in which it is locally placed, something in the same way in which it is held that a city or borough is a distinct community from the county in which it locally stands. The University of Oxford has interests, feelings, a general corporate being, distinct from the city of Oxford, just as the city of Oxford has interests, feelings, a general corporate being, distinct from the county of Oxford. So, if one were maliciously given, one might go on to argue that the choice of a representative made by the borough of Woodstock seems to show that the inhabitants of that borough have something in them which makes them distinct from University, county, city, or any other known division of mankind. Regarding then these differences, the wisdom of our forefathers has ruled, not that the county of Oxford, the city, the University, and the boroughs of Woodstock and Banbury, should join to elect nine members after the principle of *scrutin de liste*, but that the nine members should be distributed among them according to their local divisions, after the principle of *scrutin d'arrondissement*. On any ground but this local one, a ground which applies to some Universities and not to others, and which seems to have less weight than formerly in those Universities to which it does apply, the University franchise is certainly an anomaly. It must submit to be set down as a fancy franchise. But it is a fancy franchise which has a great weight of precedent in its favour. Besides the original institution of the British Solomon, there is the fact that University representation has been extended at each moment of constitutional change for a century past. It was extended by the Union with Ireland, by the great Reform Bill, and by the legislation of fifteen years back. Each of these changes has added to the number of University members. And each has added to them in a way which more and more forsakes the local ground, and gives to the University franchise more and more the character of a fancy franchise. Dublin has less of local character than Oxford and Cambridge; London has no local character at all. Such a grouping as that of Glasgow and Aberdeen takes away all local character from Scottish University representation. In short, whatever James the First intended, later legislators, down to our own day, have adopted and confirmed the principle of the fancy franchise as applied to the Universities. There stands the anomaly, with the stamp of repeated reenactment upon it. Some very strong ground must therefore be found on which to attack it. Liberals may think that there is a very strong ground in the fact that University representation tends to strengthen the Conservative interest, and not only to strengthen it, but to give it a kind of credit, as stamped with the approval of the most highly educated class of electors. But this is a ground which could not be decently brought forward. It would not do to propose the disfranchisement of a particular class of electors merely because they commonly use their franchise in favour of a particular political party. From a party point of view, the representation

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of the cities of London and Westminster is as great a political evil as the representation of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. But we could not therefore propose the disfranchisement of those cities. The abstract question of University representation may be discussed some time. It may be discussed in our own time on the proposal of a Conservative government or a Conservative opposition. It may be discussed on the proposal of a Liberal government on the day when all University members are Liberals. But the disfranchisement of the Universities could not, for very shame, be proposed by a Liberal government when the answer would at once be made, and made with truth, that the Universities were to be disfranchised simply because most of them return Conservative members.

We may therefore pass by the alternative of disfranchisement as lying beyond the range of practical politics. I use that famous phrase advisedly, because it always means that the question spoken of has already shown that it will be a practical question some day or other. The other choice which is commonly given us is to confine the franchise to residents. After every University election for many years past, and not least after the one which has just taken place, we have always heard the outcry that the real University is swamped by the nominal University, that the body which elects in the name of the University is in no way qualified to speak in the name of the University, and that in point of fact it does not speak the sentiments of those to whom the name of University more properly belongs. Reckonings are made to show that, if the election had depended, not on the large bodies of men who are now entitled to vote, but on much smaller bodies of residents, above all of official residents, professors, tutors, and the like, the result of the election would have been different. If then, it is argued, the Universities are to keep the right of parliamentary representation, the right of voting should be taken away from the mass of those who at present exercise it, and confined to those who really represent the University, to those who are actually engaged on the spot, in the government, the studies, or the teaching of the place.

Now every word of this outcry is true. No one can doubt that the electoral bodies of the Universities, as at present constituted, are quite unfit to represent the Universities, to speak in their name or to express their wishes or feelings. The franchise, at Oxford and Cambridge, is in the hands of the two largest bodies known to the University constitution, the Convocation of Oxford, the Senate of Cambridge. If we look at the University as a commonwealth of the ancient, the mediæval, or the modern Swiss pattern, the election is in the hands of the *Ekklêsia*, the *Comitia* of Tribes, the *Portmannagemót*, the *Landesgemeinde*, the *Conseil Général*. The franchise is open to all academic citizens who have reached full academic growth, to all who have put on the *toga virilis* as the badge of having taken a complete degree in any faculty. That is to say, it belongs to all doctors and masters who have kept their names on the books. Now, whatever such a body as this may seem in theory, we know what it is in practice. It is not really an academic body. Those who really know anything or care anything about University matters are a small minority. The mass of the University electors are men who are at once non-resident and who have taken nothing more than that common degree which the *Spectator*, quite rightly, holds to be of such small account. They often, we may believe, keep their name on the books simply in order to vote at the University elections.

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But what is the remedy? I cannot think that it is to be found in confining the election to residents, at Oxford perhaps to members of Congregation.^[1] By such a restriction we should undoubtedly get a constituency with a much higher average of literary eminence and intellectual power. We should get a constituency which would far more truly represent the University as a local body. But surely we cannot look on the Universities as purely local bodies. It has always been one of the great characteristics—I venture to think one of the great beauties—of the English Universities that the connexion of the graduate with his University does not come to an end when he ceases to reside, but that the master or doctor keeps all the rights of a master or doctor wherever he may happen to dwell. The resident body has many merits and does much good work; but it has its weaknesses. It is in the nature of things a very changing body; it must change far more from year to year than any other electoral body. And, though the restriction to residents would undoubtedly raise the general character of the constituency, it would get rid of one of its best elements. Surely those who have distinguished themselves in the University, who have worked well for the University, who are continuing in some other shape the studies or the teaching which they have begun in the University, who are in fact carrying the University into other places, are not to be looked on as cut off from the University merely because they have ceased locally to reside in it. Not a few of the best heads and the best professors—I suspect we might say the best of both classes—are those who have not always lived in the University, but who have been called back to it after a period of absence. To the knowledge of local affairs, which belong to the mere resident, they bring a wider knowledge, a wider experience, which makes them better judges even of local affairs. And can men whom the University thus welcomes after absence be deemed unworthy even to give a vote during the time of absence? One reads a great deal about the real University being swamped by voters running in from London clubs, barristers' chambers, country houses, country parsonages. And no doubt a great many most incompetent voters do come from all those quarters. But some of the most competent come also. The restriction to residents would have disfranchised for ever or for a season most of our greatest scholars, the authors of the greatest works, for the last forty years. Yet surely sad men are the University in the highest sense; they are the men best entitled to speak in its name, whether they are at a given moment locally resident or not. It would surely not be a gain, it would not increase the literary eminence or intellectual power of the constituency, to shut out those men, and to confine everything to a body made up so largely of one element which is too

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permanent and another which is too fluctuating, of old heads and of young tutors. Then too there is a very reasonable presumption in the human mind, and specially in the English mind, against taking away the rights of any class of men without some very good reason. And in this case there are at least as strong arguments against the restriction as there are for it. I speak only of the simple proposal to confine the election to residents, in Oxford language to transfer it from Convocation to Congregation. There are indeed other plans, to let Convocation elect one member and Congregation the other—something like the election of the consuls at an early stage of the Roman commonwealth—or to leave the present members as they are, and to give the Universities yet more members to be chosen by Congregation. Now I will not say that these schemes lie without the range of practical politics, because they show no sign of being ever likely to come within it. They may safely be referred to Mr. Thomas Hare.

While therefore I see as strongly as any man the evils of election by Convocation, as Convocation is at present constituted,^[2] I cannot think that restriction to Congregation or to residents in any shape is the right remedy for the evil. I venture to think that there is a more excellent way. The remedy that I propose has this advantage, that, though it would practically lessen the numbers of the constituency, and would, gradually at least, get rid of its most incompetent elements, it would not be, in any constitutional sense, a restrictive measure. It would not deprive any recognized class of men of any right. And it would have the further advantage that it would be a change which could be made by the University itself, a change which would not be a mere political change affecting parliamentary elections only, but a real academical reform affecting other matters as well, a reform which would be simply getting rid of a modern abuse and falling back on an older and better state of things. It is one of three changes which I have looked for all my life, but towards which, amidst countless academical revolutions, I have never seen the least step taken. I confess that all three have this to be said against them, that they would affect college interests and would give the resident body a good deal of trouble. But this is no argument against the measures themselves; it only shows that it would be hard work to get them passed. Of these three the first and least important is the establishment of an University matriculation examination. (Things change so fast at Oxford that this may have been brought in within the last term or two; but, if so, I have not heard of it.) Secondly, a rational reconstruction of the Schools, so as to have real schools of history and philology—perhaps better still a school of history and philology combined—without regard to worn out and unscientific distinctions of "ancient" and "modern." Thirdly, the change which alone of the three concerns us now, the establishment of some kind of standard for the degree of Master of Arts. Through all the changes of more than thirty years, I have always said, when I have had a chance of saying anything, Give us neither a resident oligarchy nor a non-resident mob. Keep Convocation with its ancient powers, but let Convocation be what it was meant to be. Let the great assembly of masters and doctors go untouched; but let none be made masters or doctors who do not show some fitness to bear those titles. Every degree was meant to be a reality; it was meant, as the word *degree* implies, to mark some kind of proficiency; a degree which does not mark some kind of proficiency is an absurdity in itself. A degree conferred without any regard to the qualifications of the person receiving it is in fact a fraud; it is giving a testimonial without regard to the truth of the facts which the testimonial states. Now this is glaringly the case with the degree of Master of Arts as at present given. In each faculty there are two stages: the lower degree of bachelor, the higher degree of master or doctor. The lower degree is meant to mark a certain measure of proficiency in the studies of the faculty; the higher degree is meant to mark a higher measure of proficiency, that measure which qualifies a man to become, if he thinks good, a teacher in that faculty. The bachelor's degree is meant to mark that a man has made satisfactory progress in introductory studies; the master's degree is meant, as its name implies, to mark that a man is really a master in some subject. The bachelor's degree in short should be respectable; the master's degree should be honourable. Nowadays we certainly cannot say that the master's degree is honourable; it might be almost too much to say that the bachelor's degree is respectable. I am far from saying that an University education, even for a mere passman, is worthless; I am far from thinking so. But the mere pass degree is very far from implying literary eminence or intellectual power. Eminence indeed is hardly to be looked for at the age when the bachelor's degree is taken; it is only one or two men in a generation who can send out "The Holy Roman Empire" as a prize essay. But the degree does not imply even the promise or likelihood of eminence or power. The best witness to the degradation of the simple degree is the elaborate and ever-growing system of class-lists, designed to mark what the degree itself ought in some measure to mark. The need of having class-lists is the clearest confession of the very small value of the simple degree by itself. And, whatever may be the value of the bachelor's degree, the value of the master's degree is exactly the same. The master's degree proves no greater knowledge or skill than the bachelor's degree; it proves only that its bearer has lived some more years and has paid some more pounds. It is given, as a matter of course, to every one who has taken the degree of bachelor—never mind after how many plucks—and has reached the standing which is required of a master. The bestowing of two degrees is a mere make-believe; the higher degree proves nothing, beyond mere lapse of time, which is not equally proved by the lower.

Now this surely ought not to be. That the first degree should be next door to worthless, and that the second degree should be worth no more than the first, is surely to make University degrees a mockery, a delusion, and a snare. Men who do not know how little a degree means are apt to be deceived, even in practical matters, by its outward show. Men who see that a degree proves very little, but who do not look much further, are apt most untruly to undervalue the whole system and studies of the University. In common consistency, in common fairness, the degrees should mean what their names imply. The bachelor's degree should prove something, and the master's degree

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should prove something more. As I just said, the bachelor's degree should be respectable and the master's degree should be honourable. I should even like to see the bachelor's degree so respectable that we might get rid of the modern device of class-lists; but that is not our question at present. The immediate business is to make the master's degree a real thing, an honest thing, to make it the sign of a higher standard than the bachelor's degree, whether the bachelor's standard be fixed high or low. Let there be some kind of standard, some kind of test. Its particular shape, whether an examination, or a disputation, or the writing of a thesis, or anything else, need not now be discussed. I ask only that there should be a test of proficiency of some kind, and that there should be the widest possible range of subjects in which proficiency may be tested. Let a man have the degree, if he shows himself capable of scholarly or scientific treatment of some branch of some subject, but not otherwise. The bachelor's degree should show a general knowledge of several subjects, which may serve as a ground-work for the minuter knowledge of one. The master's degree should show that that minuter knowledge of some one subject has been gained. The complete degree should show, if not the actual presence, at least the very certain promise, of literary eminence or intellectual power. We should thus get, neither the resident oligarchy nor the non-resident mob; we should have a body of real masters and doctors worthy of the name. Men who had once dealt minutely with some subject of their own choice would not be likely to throw their books aside for the rest of their days, as the man who has merely got his bachelor's degree by a compulsory smattering often does. We should get a Convocation or Senate fit, not only to elect members of Parliament, but to do the other duties which the constitution of the University lays on its Convocation or Senate. And I cannot help thinking that, if such a change as this had been adopted at the time of the first University Commission, it would have been less needful to cut down the powers of Convocation in the way which, Convocation being left what it is, certainly was needful.

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Such a change as I propose would doubtless lessen the numbers of the constituency. Possibly it would not lessen them quite so much as might seem at first sight. A high standard, but a standard attainable with effort, would surely make many qualify themselves who at present do not. Still it would lessen the numbers very considerably, and it would be meant to do so. Yet it would not be a restrictive measure in the same sense in which confining the franchise to Congregation would be a restrictive measure. It would not take away the votes of any class. The franchise would still be the same, exercised by the same body; only that body would be purified and brought back to the character which it was originally meant to bear. The purifying would be gradual. The doctrine of vested interests, that doctrine so dear to the British mind, would of course secure every elector in the possession of his vote as long as he lives and keeps his name on the books. But the ranks of the unqualified would no longer be yearly reinforced. In course of time we should have a competent body. And the great advantage of this kind of remedy is that it is so distinctly an academical remedy. It would not come as a mere clause in a parliamentary reform bill. It would affect the parliamentary constituency; but it would affect it only as one thing among others. It would be a general improvement in the character of the Great Council of the University, which would make it better qualified to discharge all its duties, that of choosing members of Parliament among them. In the purely political look-out, we may believe that one result of the change would be to make the election of Liberal members for the Universities much more likely. But neither this nor any other purely political result would be the sole and direct object of the change. Even if it did not accomplish this object, it would do good in other ways. If the Universities, under such a system, still chose Conservative members, we should have no right to complain. We should feel that we had been fairly and honourably beaten by adversaries who had a right to speak. It would be an unpleasant result if the real Universities should be proved to be inveterately Tory. But it would be a result less provoking than the present state of things, in which Tory members are chosen for the Universities by men who have no call to speak in the name of the Universities at all.

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EDWARD A. FREEMAN.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] That is, to all members of Convocation who are either resident or hold University office. This, besides the Chancellor and a few other great personages, lets in a few professors and examiners who are non-resident.
- [2] I use Oxford language, as that which I myself best understand; but I believe that, all that I say applies equally to Cambridge also. For "Convocation" one must of course, in Cambridge language, read "Senate."

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HAMLET: A NEW READING.

There is a sense in which the stage alone can give the full significance to a dramatic poem, just as a lyric finds its full interpretation in music; but we prefer that a song of Goethe or Shelley should wait for its music, and in the meantime suggest its own aërial accompaniment, rather than be vulgarized in the setting. And even when set for the voice by a master, although there is a gain in as far as the charm is brought home to the senses, yet there is a loss in proportion to the beauty of the song; for if it is delicate the finer spiritual grace departs, and if it is ardent the

passion is liable to scream, and, above all, there is a vague but appreciable loss of identity; so that on the whole we please ourselves best with the literary form. There is the same balance of gain and loss in the relation of the drama to the stage. The gain is in proportion to the excellence of the acting, and the loss in proportion to the beauty of the play. It is well then that, as the lyric poem no longer demands the lyre, the poetical drama has become, though more recently, independent of the stage. Each has its own perspective of life, its own idea of Nature, its own brilliancy, its own dulness, and finally its own public; and notwithstanding the objections of some critics, it will soon be admitted that a work may be strictly and intrinsically dramatic, and yet only fit for the study—that is, for ideal representation. For there is a theatre in every imagination, where we produce the old masterpiece in its simplicity and dignity, and where the new work appears and is followed in plot and action, and conflict of feeling, and play of character, and rhythm of part with part, if not with as keen an excitement, at least with as fair a judgment, as if we were criticizing the actors, not the piece. And were all theatres closed, the drama—whether as the free and spontaneous outflow of observation, fancy, and humour, or as the intense reflection of the movement of life in its animation of joy and pain—would remain one of the most natural and captivating forms in which the creative impulse of the poet can work. When we look at its variety and flexibility of structure—from the lyrical tragedy of Æschylus to a "Proverbe" of De Musset; at its diversity of spirit—from the exuberance of a comedy of Aristophanes and the caprice of an Elizabethan mask to the serenity of "Comus" and Tasso, and the terror of "Agamemnon" and "Macbeth;" at its range of expression—from the full-toned Greek and English Iambic to the plain but sparkling prose of Molière, and from that again to the intricate harmonies of Calderon, Goethe, and Shelley; with its use of all voices, from vociferous mob to melodious daughters of Ocean, and its command of all colour, from the gloom of Medea to the splendour of Marlowe's Helen,—it is a small matter to remember the connection of work or author with the stage—how long they held it, how soon they were dispossessed, how and at what intervals and with what uncertain footing they returned. We do not accept them because they were popular in their day, and we do not reject them because they are not suitable to ours. They have lost no vivacity or strength or grace by their exclusion from the stage and their exile to literature—to that permanent theatre for which the poet, freely using any and every form of dramatic expression, should now work.

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"There is the playhouse now, there you must sit....
For 'tis your thoughts that now must deck our king."

The relevancy of these remarks, as an introduction to a study of one of Shakespeare's plays, will presently appear.

I.

Shakespeare, although a master of theatrical effect, is often found working rather away from it than toward it, and at a meaning and beauty beyond the limits of stage expression. This is because he is more dramatist than playwright, and will always produce and complete his work in its ideal integrity, even if, in so doing, he outruns the sympathy of his audience. This disposition may be traced not only in the plays it has banished from the stage, including such a masterpiece as "Antony and Cleopatra," but in those that are universally popular, such as "The Merchant of Venice," where the fifth Act, although it closes and harmonizes the drama as a work of art with perfect grace, is but a tame conclusion to the theatrical piece; and in the scenes that furnish us with the delicate and finished study of Antonio, we find the audience intent on the situation and the poet on the character; for we no more expect to see the true Antonio on the stage than to see the true moonlight shimmering on the trees in Belmont Park. But sometimes the play will transcend the limits of stage expression by being too purely and perfectly dramatic, as in "Lear."

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For not only is it, as Lamb points out,^[3] impossible for the actor to give the convulsions of the father's grief, and yet preserve the dignity of the king, but the sustained intensity of passion fatigues both voice and ear when they should be most impressive and impressed. Had Shakespeare written with a view to stage effect, he would not in the first two acts have stretched the voice through all the tones and intervals of passion, and then demand more thrilling intonations and louder outcries to meet and match the tumult of the storm. This greatest of all tragedies is written beyond the compass of the human voice, and can only be fully represented on that ideal stage, where, instead of hoarse lament and husky indignation, we hear each of us the tones that most impress and affect us, and can command the true degrees of feeling in their illimitable scale.

But in "Hamlet" the inadequacy of the stage is of another kind. It leads to a general displacement of motive, and change of focus, the hero's character being obscured in the attempt to make it effective. And for this to some extent the stage itself, as a place of popular entertainment, and not the actor, is at fault. Some such ambiguity as this seems, indeed, only natural, when we recall the circumstances attending the composition of the play.

By common consent of the best authorities, "Hamlet" represents the work of many years. I make no conjectures, but content myself with Mr. Dowden's statement of the case:—"Over 'Hamlet,' as over 'Romeo and Juliet,' it is supposed that Shakespeare laboured long and carefully. Like 'Romeo and Juliet,' the play exists in two forms, and there is reason to believe that in the earlier form, in each instance, we possess an imperfect report of Shakespeare's first treatment of his theme,"^[4] We know also that Shakespeare had before him, at least as early as 1589, an old play in which "a ghost cried dismally like an oyster wife, 'Hamlet! Revenge!'" and Shakespeare worked upon this

until from what was probably a rather sorry melodrama he produced the most intellectual play that keeps the stage. And the very sensational character of the piece enabled him to steal into it the results of long and deep meditation without hazard to its popularity. He seems to have withdrawn Hamlet from time to time for a special study, and then to have restored and readjusted the hero to the play, touching and modulating, here and there, character and incident in harmony with the new expression. In this way a new direction and significance would be given to the plot, but in a latent and unobtrusive way, so as not to weaken the popular interest. This leads to the ambiguity of which I have spoken. The new thought is often not earnestly but ironically related to the old material, and the spiritual hero seems almost to stand apart from the rude framework of the still highly sensational theatrical piece. This has given rise to a rather favourite saying with the Germans, that Hamlet is a modern. Hamlet seems to step forth from an antiquated time,—with its priestly bigotry, its duels for a province, its heavy-headed revels, its barbarous code of revenge, and its ghostly visitations to enforce it,—to meet and converse with a riper age. But this is because Hamlet belongs wholly and intimately to the poet, while the other characters, though informed with new and original expression, are left in close relation, to the old plot.

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Such being the ambiguity resulting from this continued spiritualization of the play, the actor would instinctively endeavour to remove it, and to bring the hero in closer relation with the main action of the stage piece. Hamlet must not be too disengaged; he must not be too ironical. A few omissions, a fit of misplaced fury, a too emphatic accent, a too effective attitude, with what is called a bold grasp of character, and Shakespeare's latest and finest work on the hero is obliterated.

Now, the great actors who have personated Hamlet have done much, and the thrilling treatment of the ghost-story has done more, to stamp upon the minds of learned and unlearned alike the impression that *the great event of Hamlet's life is the command to kill his uncle*. As he does not do this, and as he is given to much meditation and much discussion, it is assumed that he thinks and talks in order to avoid acting. And then the word "irresolution" leaps forth, and all is explained. This curious assumption, that all the pains taken by Shakespeare on the work and its hero has no other object but to illustrate this theme—a command to kill and a delayed obedience—pervades the criticism even of those who consider the intellectual element the great attraction of the play. And yet, when you ask what is the dramatic situation out of which this speculative matter arises, the German and English critics alike reply in chorus, "Irresolution." Each one has his particular shade of it, and finds something not quite satisfactory in the interpretations of others. Goethe's finished portrait of Hamlet as the amiable and accomplished young prince, too weak to support the burden of a great action, did not recommend itself either to Schlegel or Coleridge, who take the mental rather than the moral disposition to task. Schlegel, with some asperity, speaks of "a calculating consideration that cripples the power of action;" and Coleridge, with more subtlety, applies Hamlet's antithesis of thought and resolution to the elucidation of his own character, concluding that Hamlet "procrastinates from thought." Gervinus, while following Schlegel as to "the bent of Hamlet's mind to reflect upon the nature and consequences of his deed, and by this means to paralyze his active powers," adds to this defect a deplorable conscientiousness, which unfits Hamlet for the great duty of revenge. And Mr. Dowden, while most ably collating these various kinds and degrees of irresolution, concludes that Hamlet is "disqualified for action by his excess of the reflective faculty." Mr. Swinburne alone resolutely protests against this doctrine. He speaks of "the indomitable and ineradicable fallacy of criticism which would find the key-note of Hamlet's character in the quality of irresolution."^[5] And he considers that Shakespeare purposely introduces the episode of the expedition to England to exhibit "the instant and almost unscrupulous resolution of Hamlet's character in time of practical need." I gladly welcome this instructive remark, which, although Mr. Swinburne calls it "the voice of one crying in the wilderness," is more likely to gain me a patient hearing than any arguments I can use. But before I propose my own reading, I will, as I have given the genesis or natural history of this theory of irresolution, compare it with the general features of Hamlet's mental condition throughout the play.

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If Hamlet "procrastinates from thought," if "the burden of the action is too heavy for him to bear," if "by a calculating consideration he exhausts all possible issues of the action," it should at least be continually present to his mind. We should look for the delineation of a soul harassed and haunted by one idea; torn by the conflict between conscience and filial obedience; or balancing advantage and peril in an agony of suspense and vacillation; forecasting consequence and result to himself and others; and so absorbed in this terrible secret as to exclude all other interests. We have two studies of such a state of irresolution, in Macbeth and Brutus. Of Macbeth it may truly be said that he has an action upon his mind the burden of which is too heavy for him to bear. It is constantly before him; he is shaken with it, possessed by it, to such a degree that

"function

Is smother'd in surmise; and nothing is
But what is not."

Now "he will proceed no further in this business," and now "he is settled and bound up to it," and in one long perturbed soliloquy stands before us the very picture of that irresolution which "procrastinates from thought." Brutus thus describes his own suspense:—

"Between the action of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream:

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The genius, and the mortal instruments,
Are then in council: and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection."

But what is the general course and scope of Hamlet's utterance, whether to himself or others? We find musings and broodings on the possibility of escape from so vile a world alternating with cool and keen analysis, polished criticism, and petulant wit; we find a pervading ironical bitterness, rising at times to fierce invective, and even to the frenzy of passion when his mother is the theme, relapsing again to trance-like meditations on the depravity of the world, the littleness of man and the nullity of appearance; and when his mind does revert to this "great action," this "dread command," which is supposed to haunt it, and to keep it in a whirl of doubt and irresolution, it is because it is forcibly recalled to it, because some incident startles him to recollection, proves to him that he has forgotten it, and he turns upon himself with surprise and indignation: Why is it this thing remains to do? Am I a coward! Do I lack gall? Is it "bestial oblivion?" or is it

"some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event?"

On this text, so often quoted in support of the orthodox "irresolution" theory, I will content myself at present with the remark, that surely no one before or after Hamlet ever accounted for his non-performance of a duty by the double explanation that he had either entirely forgotten it or had been thinking too much about it.

Looking then at the general features of Hamlet's talk, it is plain that to make this command to revenge the clue to his mental condition, is to make him utter a great deal of desultory talk without dramatic point or pertinence; for if, except when surprised by the actors' tears or by the gallant bearing of the troops of Fortinbras, he wholly forgets it, what does he remember? What is the secret motive of this prolonged criticism of the world which "charms all within its magic circle?"

The true centre will be found, I think, by substituting the word "preoccupation" for the word "irresolution." And the "preoccupation" is found by antedating the crisis of Hamlet's career from the revelation of the ghost to the marriage of his mother, and the persistent mental and moral condition thus induced. Start from this, as a fixed point, and a dramatic situation is gained in which every stroke of satire, every curiosity of logic, every strain of melancholy; is appropriate and pertinent to the action.

In order to measure the full effect of this strange event, we must bring before us the Hamlet of the earlier time, before his father's death, and for this we have abundant material in the play.

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II.

Hamlet was an enthusiast. His love for his father was not an ordinary filial affection, it was a hero-worship. He was to him the type of sovereignty—

"The front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;"

a link between earth and heaven—

"A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man."

To Hamlet, this "assurance of a man" was the great reality which made other things real, which gave meaning to life, and substance to the world. That his love for his mother was equally intense, is clearly discernible in the inverted characters of his rage and grief. In her he revered wifeness and womanhood. He sees the rose on

"the fair forehead of an innocent love."

And of his mother we are told—

"The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks."

But this enthusiasm was connected with a habit of thought that was rather critical than sentimental. Hamlet had a shrewd judgment, a lively and caustic wit, an exacting standard, and a turn for satire. He was fond of question and debate, an enemy to all illusion, impatient of dullness, [typo for dullness?] and not indisposed to alarm and bewilder it; and he had brought with him from Wittenberg a philosophy half stoical and half transcendental, with whose eccentricities he would torment the wisdom of the Court. He looked upon the machinery of power as part of the comedy of life, and would be more amused than impressed by the equipage of office, its chains and titles, the frowns of authority, and the smiles of imaginary greatness. He therefore of all men needed a personal centre in which faith and affection could unite to give seriousness and dignity to life; and this he had found from his childhood in the sovereign virtues of the King and Queen. So that his criticism in these earlier days was but the fastidiousness of love, that disparages all other excellence in comparison with its own ideal; his philosophy was a disallowance of all other

reality; and his negations only defined and brightened his faith. Doubt, question and speculation, mystery and anomaly, the illusions of sense, the instability of natures, all that was irrational in life, with its certainties of logic and hazards of chance, all that was unproven in religion, dubious in received opinion, obscure in the destiny of man, were but glimpses of a larger unity, vistas of truth unexplored.

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Hamlet's thinking is always marked by that quality of penetration into and through the thoughts of others, that is called free-thinking. The discovery, as he moved in the spiritual world of established ideas and settled doctrines, apparently immovable, that they were of the same stuff as his own thoughts—were pliant and yielding, and could be readily unwoven by the logic that wove them, would tempt him to move and displace, and build and construct, until he might have a collection of opinions large enough to be termed a philosophy. But it would be gathered rather in the joy of intellectual activity, realizing its own energy, and ravelling up to its own form the woof of other minds, than with any practical bearing on life. All this was a work in another sphere —

"of no allowance to his bosom's truth."

The light of a sovereign manhood and womanhood was reflected on the world around him, and afar on the world of thought—their greatness reconciled all the contradictions of life. And in pure submission to their control all the various activities of his versatile nature, its irony and its earnestness, its shrewdness and its fancy, its piety and its free-thinking, harmonized like sweet bells not yet jangled or untuned. He lived at peace with all, in fellowship with all; he could rally Polonius without malice, and mimic Osric without contempt.

It is plain that Hamlet looked forward to a life of activity under his father's guidance. He was no dreamer—we hear of "the great love the general gender bear him," and the people are not fond of dreamers. In truth, the Germans have had too much their own way with Hamlet, and have read into him something of their own laboriousness and phlegm. But Hamlet was more of a poet than a professor. He had the temperament of a man of genius—impatient, animated, eager, swift to feel, to like or dislike, praise or resent—with a character of rapidity in all his actions, and even in his meditation, of which he is conscious when he says, "as swift as meditation." He did not live apart as a student, but in public as a prince—

"the observed of all observers;"

he was of a free, open, unsuspecting temper—

"remiss,

Most generous and free from all contriving."

He was fond of all martial exercises and expert in the use of the sword. He was a soldier first, a scholar afterwards; a soldier in his alacrity to fight

"Until his eyelids would no longer wag;"

a soldier even to

"The glass of fashion, and the mould of form;"

and, above all, a soldier in his sensibility on the point of honour, one who would think it well

"Greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour is at stake."

And Fortinbras, type of the man of action, recognized in him a kindred spirit—

"Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally;"

while Hamlet eyed Fortinbras with the envious longing of one who had missed his career. What must have been the felicity of life to such a man, whose vivacity no stress of calamity, no accumulation of sorrow could tame, whose enthusiasm embraced Nature, art, and literature, and whose delight was always fresh and new, "in this excellent canopy the air, in this brave o'erhanging firmament," and in the spectacle of man "so excellent in faculty, in form and moving so express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god?"

Without a warning the blow fell. His father was suddenly struck down; and while he was indulging a grief, poignant and profound indeed, but natural, wholesome, manly, his uncle usurped the crown. This second blow would be acutely felt, but it would rather rouse than prostrate his energies. There is no passion in Hamlet when there has been no love. And he had always held his uncle in slight esteem—foreboded something from his smiling insincerity. He never mentions him without an expression of contempt, hardly acknowledges him as king; he is a thing—of nothing—a farcical monarch—"a peacock"—and, in this particular act, no dread usurper, but a "cut-purse of the realm." Whether he designed to wait or was prepared to strike, his future was still intact, his energy unimpaired. His mother remained to him, now doubly dear and doubly great, and with her the tradition of the past. She was, as he gathered from her silence, like himself, retired from the world, absorbed in grief; but he was assured of her constancy and truth. Even the kind of distance between them in age and sex, in mind and character, was no barrier to this sympathetic relation. She was there with the expectation that

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makes heroism possible; she was there to watch, if not to further his enterprise, and to give it lustre with her praise. We are often quite unconscious of the commanding influence exerted on our life by those who are least in contact with it. To be cognizant of one steadfast and stainless soul is to have encouragement in difficulty and support in pain. The mere knowledge of its existence is a light within the mind, and a secret incentive to the best action. Though silent and apart, it is the witness of what is great, and our life is always seeking to rise within its sphere; while, by a secret transference—for souls are not retentive of their own goodness—our standards of living and thinking are maintained at their highest level, like water fed by a distant spring. All this and infinitely more than this was the Queen his mother to Hamlet. It is impossible, therefore, to measure the effect upon him of her marriage with his uncle. The shock of it is ever fresh throughout the play. In the third Act the whole frame of nature is still aghast at it:—

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"Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act."

And this was not only after the revelation of the Ghost, but after the confirmation of its truth by the test Hamlet had himself applied. Even then the first paroxysm has hardly subsided. You see the whole being measured by it, the mind stretched to give it utterance, the world called as a witness to its enormity:—

III.

But it is at an earlier stage of this impression, when the thought of this profanation of the sacredness of life and the sanctity of love chills the life-blood of his heart, and then rushes burning through it like the shame of a personal insult, that he first stands before us in the palace of the King. In appearance nothing is changed. He sees the same crowd, the same obsequious attitudes, the same decorous forms; the trumpets with their usual flourish announce the arrival of the King and Queen; the Ministers of State precede them, and the Court ladies; the pretentious gravity of Polonius' brow; the dreamy innocence of Ophelia. The sovereigns seat themselves, the Queen looks smilingly around her as of old. All is easy, bright, and festive. All goes on as if this horrible revolution were the most natural thing in the world. Oh, that he could avoid the sight of it! Oh, that he could be quit of it all!

"Oh! that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew;
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!"

Although the nervous horror of his address to the Ghost is greater, there is no speech in which Hamlet betrays so deep an agitation as in this. He struggles for utterance, repeats himself, mingles oaths and axioms, confuses and then annihilates time in the breathless tumult of his soul. "Why, she, *even she*. O Heaven!" What can he say? what is vile enough? "A *beast*

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"that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourned longer—married with my uncle."

In this opening speech we see at once the immediate relation of the feeling of life-weariness so prevalent throughout the play to this supreme emotion; we see also his comprehensive criticism of the world branching from the same root—

"How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seems to me all the uses of this world!
Fie, on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden;"

and

"Frailty, thy name is woman."

These themes are developed Act by Act, we can follow them to the graveyard scene, and to the moment before death.

And it is not unnatural that Hamlet's grief should assume a comprehensive form. The Queen had drawn the world in her train. Nobles and people, councillors and courtiers, the honoured statesman, the artless maiden, had joined her, had connived, were her accomplices. They had, parted among them, all the vices appropriate to *her* Court, *her* people. The world was betrayed to Hamlet in all its meanness and littleness: and he looked at it to see if he could discover the secret of his mother's treason, as Lear would anatomize the heart of Regan to account for her ingratitude. In attacking it he is attacking her guilt, in its inferior forms and obscure disguises. It is the nest of her depravity, and the small vices are but hers in the shell, and the whole is a vast confederacy of evil. Here are no "superfluous activities," no desultory talk; Hamlet's preoccupation is one throughout. He alternates between the desire to escape from so vile a world, and the pleasure of exposing its vice and fraud. The one gives us soliloquies, the other dialogues. Now he looks out at an obscure eternity from a time that was more obscure, and now the tension of the mind relieves the tension of the heart. On the one side we have all passages of life-weariness, whether as the issue of long meditation, or as the outcome of familiar talk; and on the other we have the brilliant and discursive criticism of man and Nature continued throughout

the play. All this is so closely connected with the treason of his mother, that we see the very attachment of the feeling to the thought.

This explains the particular bitterness with which he attacks the Ministers and parasites of the Court. As soon as he sees them he crosses the current of their talk, commits them to an argument, confuses them with the evolutions of a logic too rapid for their senses to follow, and makes their bewilderment a sport. How small their world appears in the mirror of his ironical mind! The state-craft, the love-making, the "absurd pomp," the "heavy-headed revels," the women that "jig and amble and lisp," the nobles that are "spacious in the possession of dirt," the sovereign that is a "king of shreds and patches;" as for their opinions, "do but blow; them to their trials, and the bubbles are out;" as for their ideas of prosperity, it is to act as "sponges and soak up the king's countenance, his rewards and authorities;" as for their standard of worth, "let a beast be a lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's table." It is a disgrace to live in such a world, and contemptible to share its pleasures and prizes.

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But his quarrel with it does not end here. The flaw runs through the whole constitution of things; there is no possible equation between the anomalies and dislocations on which he turns the dry light of that sceptical philosophy which has usurped the place of faith. Thought is good and action is good, but they will not work together. Our reason is our glory, but our indiscretions serve us best—we must either be cowards or fools. We have a perception of infinite goodness, just sufficient to make us conclude that we are "arrant knaves, all of us," and just enough belief in immortality "to perplex our wills." There is nothing but disagreement and disproportion—a constant missing of the mark, a stretching of the hand for that which is not. How is it possible to take seriously such a life if you pause to think?

It is not only irrational but visionary. The evanescence and fluency of Nature would matter little, but man himself, with his ingenuities of wit and triumphs of ambition, is whirled from form to form in "a fine revolution if we had the trick to see it." This is a favourite idea, it lends itself so easily to the contempt of the world—

"Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away,"

is only a variation of "a man may fish with the worm that has eat of a king, and eat of the fish that has fed on the worm."

In this collision with the world, alone and unsupported, Hamlet's natural buoyancy returns. It is the moment of isolation, but it is the moment also of intellectual freedom. It is desertion, but it is also independence. Every incongruity feeds his fanciful and inventive humour. He follows vanity and affectation with irony and mimicry, removes a mask with the point of his dexterous wit, and exposes the pretence of virtue or conceit of knowledge with sarcastic glee, while there is a savour of retribution in his chastisement of vice. The vivacity of this running comment, critical and satirical, on the ways and works of men adds much to the charm of the play, but it is a charm that properly belongs to the best comedy. And Shakespeare has marked this disengagement of his hero from the sanguinary plot by reserving the exaltation of verse to the expression of personal feeling, while the lithe and nimble movement of his prose follows with its undulating rhythm every turn of Hamlet's wayward mind, in subtlety of argument or caprice of fancy.

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Such is the "preoccupation" of Hamlet, emotional and intellectual. I have purposely made it seem a separate study, as thus alone could this fatal "thought-sickness," in which Heaven and Earth seemed to partake, be treated with the requisite clearness and fulness.

We can see at once that no other claim to the command of his spirit is likely to succeed. His mind is already haunted. No Ghost can be more spiritual than his own thoughts, or more spectral than the world around him. No revelation of a particular crime can rival the revelation lately made to him of sin in the most holy place—the seat of virtue itself and heavenly purity. He may acknowledge the ties of filial obedience and the duty of revenge, but there is no place, nor obligation to hold, no world to which it may be attached, no faith or interest strong enough within him to give it vitality, no fruit of good result to be looked for without. The place is occupied:

"For where the greater malady is fixed
The lesser scarce is felt."

When Hamlet says, "There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so," he confesses himself an idealist—that is, one to whom ideas are not images or opinions, but the avenues of life. They garner up happiness and they store the harvest of pain; they make the "majestical roof fretted with golden fire" and the "pestilential cloud." The basis on which Hamlet's happiness had rested had been suddenly removed, and with the sanctity of the past the promise of the future had disappeared; the sky and the earth. He could say to his mother:

"Du hast sie zerstört
Die schöne Welt;"

but the new world is built of the same materials—that is, absorbing ideas. The shadow descends till it measures the former brightness; the revulsion is as great as the enthusiasm.

IV.

Why, then, does he accept the mission of the Ghost? To answer this fully we must accompany him

to the platform.

In this scene Hamlet exhibits in perfection all the elements of courage—coolness, determination, daring. He is singularly free from excitement; and this is not because he is absorbed in his own thoughts, for he easily falls into conversation, and treats the first subject that comes to hand with his usual felicity and fulness, rising from the private instance to a public law, and applying it to large and larger groups of facts till his father's spirit stands before him. Thrilled and startled he pauses not, "harrowed with fear and wonder like Horatio on the previous night, but at once addresses it, as he said he would, though hell itself should gape." No more dignified rebuke ever shamed terror from the soul than Hamlet administers to his panic-stricken friends, and when they would forcibly withhold him from following the Ghost, the steady determination with which he draws his sword is marked by the play upon words:

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"By Heav'n, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me."

In the presence of his father the old life is rekindled within his filial awe and affection, unquestioned obedience, daring resolve. He will "sweep to his revenge,"

"And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter."

And this commandment had forbidden him to taint his mind against his mother.

But what is his first exclamation when he is released from physical horror, and his thoughts regain the living world? It is

"O! most pernicious woman!"

This singular phrase is one of Shakespeare's final touches, as does not appear in the quarto of 1603; and it marks, therefore, his deliberate intention, and is of the highest significance. He who will hereafter be so often amazed at his own forgetfulness has already forgotten.

When his friends reappear, Hamlet is in a half-ironical humorous and assuming an astonishing superiority over ghost and mortal alike informs them—

"It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you."

But when this honest ghost plays sepulchral tricks, Hamlet shows small respect to it, and at last, in a tone of almost command, cries—

"Rest! rest! perturbed spirit!"

Does Hamlet slight the command of the Ghost? By no means. He never repudiates it or even calls it in question. There is no hesitation, cavil, or debate in the acceptance of it as a duty. But the purpose cools. It cools even on the platform. What passes within him is hardly a process of thought, otherwise some intimation of it would be given in his numerous self-communings. But there is a process prior to thought in which the relations of things are felt before they are defined, and a conclusion is reached, and a disposition decided, without the mediation of the reason. There is a vague attraction this way or that, a blind forecast and correlation of issues, and the whole being is so influenced that, while there is no register of result in the memory, there is a direction of the will and a determination of conduct. From the shadow of the future that passes thus before his spirit he shrinks averse. To scramble for a throne—to lord it over such a crew—to be linked to them as by chains—to return to that polluted Court—to be the centre of intrigues and hatreds—and for what? To leave the darker deeper evil untouched. Some process such as this may account for the change from "sweeping to his revenge" to

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"The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right!"

In the meantime, in the well-lit chambers of consciousness, no note is taken of this shadowy logic. This may appear paradoxical: but the last of the changes from love to indifference, from faith to doubt, is the avowal of change. When the ties of habit and tradition are inwardly outgrown, we bend and intend with our whole being in a new direction without the purpose or even the desire to move. So Hamlet silently evades the obligation he so readily undertakes, and sinks back into that more powerful interest that almost at once regains possession of his mind. Still, before he quits the scene of this ghastly disclosure, he resolves to counterfeit madness—and this for two reasons: he will seem (to himself) to be conspiring, and he will gain a license to speak his mind without offence. This is the only use to which he puts this mask of madness, as Coleridge has remarked. But why should he instinctively seek to gain more latitude of speech? Because since the marriage of his mother he had suffered from an enforced silence with regard to the proceedings of the Court, as he distinctly tells us in the first soliloquy—

"But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue!"

From his first utterances after he had left the platform, we at once infer that the mission of the Ghost had failed. There is nothing that Hamlet would sooner part with "than his life." There is, therefore, no prospect before his mind, no awakening energy, no latent enterprise. With what relief, on the contrary, does he turn from the real to the ideal world! How cordially does he welcome the players, and how gracefully, so that we seem for the first time to make acquaintance with his natural tone and manner. Here at least is man's world, whose reality can never be

undermined. He plies them with questions, indulges in literary criticism, and asks for a recitation. Suddenly he sees tears in the actors' eyes. He hurries them away, and when he is alone breaks out—

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"Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!"

He is jealous of the players' tears. Here again is no debate, but simply surprise at his own apathy. He tries to lash himself to fury but fails, and falls back on the practical test he is about to apply to the guilt of the king which he must appear to doubt, or this pseudo-activity would be too obviously superfluous.

In the interval between the instruction to the players and the play, Hamlet's mind, unless absorbed by some strong preoccupation, would naturally turn to the issue of the plot; and he would reveal, if he admitted us to the secret workings of his mind, if not resolution, at least irresolution, something to mark the vacillation of which we hear so much. But we find that the whole matter has dropped from his mind, and that he has drifted back to the theme of—

"Oh! that this too too solid flesh would melt!"

It is now recast more in the tone of deliberate thought than of excited feeling: he asks not which is best for him, but which is "nobler in the mind,"—an impersonal, a profoundly human question, which so fascinates our attention that we forget its irrelevance to the matter in hand or what we assume to be the matter in hand. It is as if he had never seen the Ghost. In his profound preoccupation he speaks of the "bourne from which no traveller returns," and of "evils that we know not of," although the Ghost had told him "of sulphurous and tormenting flames." Hamlet muses, "To sleep! perchance to dream,—ay, there's the rub," but the Ghost had said—

"I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,
And, for the day, confined to fast in fires."

It is plain that the "traveller" that had returned was not present at all to his mental vision nor his tale remembered. In his former meditation he had accepted the doctrine of the church; here he interrogates the human spirit in its still place of judgment; and he gives its verdict with a sigh of reluctance—

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all."

Considering that this and the succeeding lines occur at the end of a soliloquy on suicide,—that there is not only the absence of any reference to the ghostly action, but positive proof that the subject was not present to his thoughts, it is nothing less than astonishing that this passage should be quoted as Hamlet's witness to his own "irresolution." He would willingly take his own life; conscience forbids it; therefore conscience makes us cowards: and then with a still further generalization he announces the opposition of thought and resolution, causing the failure of

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"enterprises of great pith and moment."

Now the only enterprise on which lie was engaged—the testing of the king's conscience—was in a fair way of success, and did, in fact, ultimately succeed.

The scene with Ophelia that immediately follows is the development of another theme in the first soliloquy, "Frailty! thy name is woman." Ophelia is inseparably connected with the queen in Hamlet's mind. She is a Court maiden, sheltered, guarded, cautioned, and, as we see in the warnings of Polonius and Laertes, cautioned in a tone that is suggestive of evil. What scenes she must have witnessed—the confusion on the death of the king, the exclusion of Hamlet from the throne, the marriage of the queen to the usurper! Yet she takes it all quite sweetly and subserviently. She is as docile to events as she is to parental advice. To such a one every circumstance is a fate, and she bows to it, as she bows to her father: "Yes, my lord, I will obey my lord." She denies Hamlet's access to her though he is in sorrow; though he has lost all, she will "come in for an after loss." One would rather leave her blameless in the sweetness of her maiden prime and the pathos of her end, but to place her, as some do, high on the list of Shakespeare's peerless women fastens upon Hamlet unmerited reproach. There is a love that includes friendship, as religion includes morality, and such was Portia's for Bassanio. There is a love whose first instinctive movement is to share the burden of the loved one, and such was Miranda's love for Ferdinand. And there is a love that reserves the light of its light and the perfume of its sweetness for the shadowed heart and the sunless mind. How would Cordelia have addressed this king and queen—how would she have aroused the energy of Hamlet and rehabilitated his trust, with that voice, soft and low indeed, but firmer than the voice of Cato's daughter claiming to know her husband's cause of grief! As Hamlet talks to Ophelia, you perceive that the marriage of his mother is more present to him than the murder of his father. He discourses on the frailty of woman and the corruption of the world; "Go to, it hath made me mad. We will have no more marriages."

The play is acted. The king is "frighted with false fire," and Hamlet is left with the feeling of a dramatic success and the proof of his uncle's guilt. He sings snatches of song. Horatio falls in with his mood. "You might have rhymed," he says. The only effect of the confirmation of the ghost's story, as at its first hearing, is a fresh blaze of indignation against his mother. When Polonius has delivered his message that the queen would speak with him, Hamlet presently says, "Leave me, friend;" and then his mind clouds like the mind of Macbeth before he enters the

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chamber of Duncan—

"'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot blood,
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on."

As he passes to the Queen's closet in this tense and dangerous mood, he sees the king on his knees. His brow relaxes in a moment; he stops, looks curiously at him, and says, familiarly—

"Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying."

He did not mean to do it, because he was on his way to his mother's closet, but some reason must be found. The word "praying" suggests it. "This would be scanned;" and he scans it, and decides to leave him for another day. As he enters the closet to speak the words "like daggers," his quick decisive gesture and shrill peremptory tones alarm the queen. She rises to call for help; he seizes her roughly: "Come, come, and sit you down." Nothing can mark Hamlet's awful resentment more than his persistence through two interruptions that would have unnerved the bravest, and checked the most relentless spirit. As he looks at his mother there is that in his countenance bids her cry aloud for assistance. There is a movement behind the arras. Hamlet lunges at once. Is it the king? No; it is but Polonius. Had it been the king, it would not have diverted him from his purpose. He is no more afraid of killing than he is afraid of death, and is as hard to arrest in his reproof of his mother as in his talk with his father:

"Leave wringing of your hands; peace, sit you down."

His mother confesses her guilt. Hamlet is not appeased. He vilifies her husband with increasing vehemence; the Ghost rises as if to protect the queen. "Do not forget," he cries, although the king's name was at that moment on Hamlet's lips in terms of bitterest contempt. But it was understood between the two spirits that it was the queen's husband and not his father's murderer that he was thus denouncing. After the disappearance of the ghost, he turns again to his mother; and on leaving her almost reluctantly, without further punishment, asks pardon of his own genius—"Forgive me this my virtue," more authoritative to Hamlet than a legion of spirits.

This scene is the spiritual climax of the play, and from it the whole tragedy directly proceeds. The death of Polonius leads on the one side to the madness of Ophelia, on the other to the revenge of Laertes and the final catastrophe. Hamlet's apathy at the death of Polonius is of the same character as his oblivion of the ghost's command, and has the same origin. For there is no apathy like that of an over-mastering passion, whether it be love or jealousy, or a new faith, or a terrible doubt. It draws away the life from other duties and interests, and leaves them pale and semi-vital. Men thus possessed acknowledge the duties they evade, let slip occasion, are "lapsed in time and passion," and are surprised at their own oblivion.

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This happens again to Hamlet as he is leaving Denmark. His own inaction is flashed back upon him by the sight of the gallant array of Fortinbras, and his first words—

"How all occasions do inform against me,"

disclose that the duty of revenge has its obligations and sanctions, not in the inward but the outward world; not in the genius of the man—secret, individual, detached—but in the outward mind of inherited opinion and ancestral creed, that we share with others in unreflecting fellowship. The world has charge of it, and reflects it back upon him new in the actor's tears, and now—

"In this army of such mass and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince."

This speech must be read, like a Spartan despatch, on the [Greek: skutalê] or counterpart of Hamlet's personality. He begins, as after the player's recitation, with a confession, and ends with an excuse. He is startled into an avowal, which he qualifies by a subtle after-thought—"What is a man," he cries, who acts as I have acted, who allows

"That capability and god-like reason,
To fust in him unused?"

"A beast, no more." But as he looks at Fortinbras and his soldiers, another thought strikes him. These men act because they do not pause to think. I must have been thinking, *not too little, but too much*; and with that he turns short round upon his first confession, escapes from the charge of "bestial oblivion," and takes refuge in an imaginary "thinking too precisely on the event;" which indeed, as he remembers, had more than once prevented him taking his own life. But he condemns himself without cause; he cannot now return to that earlier stage of unreasoning activity in appointed paths, and the joy and grace of unconscious obedience.

When Hamlet returns from England, he takes Horatio apart to recount his adventures and unfold the plot of the king; but before he utters a word of this his settled mood is revealed to us in the graveyard scene. Hamlet, ever prone to belittle the world, is not loth to watch the making of a grave. There is the limit and boundary of what can be done or suffered; there the triumph is ended, and there the enmity is stayed. He advances step by step to look closely at the ruins of mortality; to slight the great names of kings and follow heroes to the dust. As he sees the skull

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tossed out of the grave, the king is already dead to him. "How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder. This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?" He is not satisfied till he takes the skull in his hand, and is sarcastic on beauty and festive wit, and the base uses to which we may come; when, from the other side, the procession of Ophelia advances. The grace and allurements of Ophelia had awakened in the imaginative Hamlet a feeling stronger and warmer indeed, but of the same relation to his capacity of loving as that of Romeo for Rosaline, and as easily lost in the glow or shadow of a deeper passion. That it was without depth and sacredness is plain from his delighting to ridicule and torment her father, and from his careless and equivocal jesting with her at the play. But though not a deep experience, it was of a quality different from that of other life. And the death of Ophelia had gathered into one the records of the hours of love; the first and the last; the meetings and the partings; the gifts, and flowers, and snatches of song. On these tender memories the hollow clamour of Laertes breaks with a discord so intolerable that Hamlet, who had with his usual reserve received the news of her death with the cold exclamation, "What! the fair Ophelia!" suddenly breaks into a fury and leaps into her grave.

In this study of Hamlet in relation to the ghost-story, we have seen that the effect, both of the first recital and of its subsequent confirmation, was to whet his mind against his mother; and that the passages in which this is expressed are among the *final touches* of the master; that the deed of revenge is only flashed upon him from without; and that, in the intervals between such awakenings of memory, he relapses to the thought-sickness of the first soliloquy; that on the only occasion when the bitterness of his sorrow leads him to meditate self-destruction, there is no question of the ghost, the murder, or the king; that the only ungovernable bit of fury is in the presence of his mother; and that from this scene the drama is developed, and the final catastrophe ensues.

V.

Supposing this "preoccupation" proved, what is the particular value and significance of the fact? Before we can answer this we must set the character of Hamlet in this new light clearly before us.

Shakespeare gives to him the rare nobility of feeling with the keenness of personal pleasure and pain, the presence or absence of moral beauty. He is one to whom public falsehood is private affliction, to whom goodness in its purity, truth in its severity, honour in its brightness, are the only goods worth a man's possessing, and the rest but a dream and the shadow of a dream. Hamlet bears his private griefs with proud composure. We have no lamentation on the death of his father, on the defection of Ophelia, on his exclusion from the throne. Among the images of horror and distress that crowd upon his mind in his mother's closet there is one on which he is silent then, and throughout the play, and that is her heartless desertion of his cause, as natural successor to the crown. To make it entirely clear that we have here no type of morbid weakness and excess, but the portrait of a representative man, we have only to look at the careful way in which all the other characters are touched and modelled so as to allow and enhance Hamlet's superiority. This is true even of Horatio. We have already remarked that in their scenes with the ghost the manhood of Hamlet is of a higher strain and dignity. And not only in resolution, but in that other manly virtue of self-reliance, his superiority is incontestable. Horatio follows Hamlet at a distance as Lucilius follows Brutus, content if from time to time he may stand at his side. Whatever is Hamlet's mood he reflects it, for to him Hamlet is always great. Horatio never questions, presumes not to give advice, echoes the scorn or laughter of his friend, is equally contemptuous of the king, and, as he never urges to action, is, if his friend is supposed to procrastinate, accomplice in his delay. Hamlet detaches himself from the world and follows his own bent; he will admit no guidance, and be subject to no dictation. He is not the man to be haggard like Macbeth, or humoured into remorseful deeds like Brutus. The strong dramatic feature of his character, the secret of his attraction on the stage, is his pure and independent personality. Who has a word of solace from him, but when does he claim it? Who leaves any mark or dint of intellectual impact on that firm and self-determined mind? And if he is superior to Horatio, how much more to Laertes? Had Shakespeare wished to exalt the quality of resolution at Hamlet's expense, he would not have chosen so ignoble a representative of it as this man. A true son of Polonius, a prater of moral maxims, while he is all for Paris and its pleasures; violent, but weak; who, when he is told of the tragic and untimely death of his sister, can find nothing better to say than—

"Too much of water, hast thou, dear Ophelia?"

who, like Aufidius, has the outward habit and encounter of honour, but is a facile tool of treacherous murder in the hands of the king. Compare the conduct of the two when they are brought into collision, and the final impression they leave. The readiness with which Hamlet undertakes to fence for his uncle's wager is one of the most surprising strokes in the play. What! with the foil in his hand, no plot, no project, not even a word, not a look between him and Horatio that the occasion might be improved! What absolute freedom from the malice which in another mind is preparing his death. The treachery of Laertes is the more odious in this, that the success of his plot depends on the generous confidence of his victim. Polonius is handled in the same way with special reference to Hamlet. His thinking is marked by slowness and insincerity, and when

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he comes in contact with the rapid current of Hamlet's mind he is benumbed; he can only mutter, "If this is madness, there is method in it." What little portable wisdom was given to him in the first Act is soon withdrawn—he stammers in his deceit, and the old indirectness having no material of thought to work upon becomes a circumlocution of truisms. As the play proceeds he is made, as if with a second intention, more and more the antithesis, as he is the antipathy, of the prince. It is the careful portrait of what Hamlet would hate—a remnant of senile craft in the method with folly in the matter—a shy look in the dull and glazing eye, that insults the honesty of Hamlet as much as the shrivelled meaning with its pompous phrase insults his intelligence. So with the other characters; they are all made to justify his demeanour towards them. The queen is heard to confess her guilt, Ophelia is seen to act as a decoy; his college friends attempt his death.

In as far then as Hamlet is right in his verdicts, blameless in his aims, lofty in his ideal, and just in his resentment, he is a representative man; and we have not the study of a special affliction, but the fundamental drama of the soul and the world. This, whatever we may call it, was the work at which Shakespeare laboured so long, and for which he withdrew Hamlet from time to time for special study, every fresh touch telling in this direction.

VI.

How far is such an interpretation consonant with the genius and method of Shakespeare? Certainly I should hardly have found courage to add another to the many studies of Hamlet had it not been for the hope of bringing out a characteristic of our great national poet that is rather unobtrusive than obscure. I mean a singular unworldliness of thought and feeling; a cherished idealism; an inborn magnanimity. Not the unworldliness of the study and the cloister, or the other-worldliness of such poets as Dante and Milton, but the unworldliness of a man of the world, the idealism that is closely allied with humour. And it is in this union and not elsewhere that the "breadth" of Shakespeare, of which we hear so much, is found. This unworldliness is elusive, ubiquitous, full of disguise. Now it is militant, and now observant; now it is fastidious in its scorn, and now it is piercing in its dissection; now it is satire, and now it is melancholy. He gives the most knightly chivalry of friendship to a merchant, and the most exquisite fidelity of service to a fool, and makes the ingrained worldliness of Cleopatra die before her love. He not only scatters through his pages rebukes of the arrogance of power and the more pitiable pride of wealth, but makes his kings deride their own ceremonies and mock their own state. Who has not observed the easy and effortless way in which his heroes and heroines move from one station to the other, from authority to service like Kent, from obscurity to splendour like Perdita, or to the greenwood from the palace like Rosalind. The change affects their happiness no more than the change of their position in the sky affects the brightness of the stars. It is all so truthful and clear that we grow more simple as we read. Lear utters but one cry of joy, and that is when he is entering a prison with Cordelia:

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"Come, let's away to prison!

We two alone will sing like birds in a cage;"

while the Queen of France has just said:

"For thee, oppressed king, am I cast down,

Myself could else outfrown false fortune's frown."

In these two lines the magnanimity of Shakespeare is pure, unveiled, as he gives us the last words of his favourite heroine: we must read them backwards and forwards to catch the portrait they enclose. We see the unconscious elevation of Cordelia's mind, not so much superior as invulnerable to mortal ills; we see this dignity and lovely pride cast down by pity and love, and then in answer to Lear's troubled and anxious look we hear in measured and steadfast tones the reassurance of perfect peace.

Remark too Shakespeare's habit of looking upon the world as a masque or pageant, not to be treated with too much respectful anxiety as if it were as real as ourselves. He who can give so perfectly the texture of common life, the solidities of common sense, likes to wave his wand over the domain of sturdy prose and incontrovertible custom, and to show how plastic it is, and how easily pierced, and how readily transformed. He has a malicious pleasure in confusing the boundaries of nature and fancy, and mocking the purblind understanding. In the "Midsummer Night's Dream" we have an ambiguous and bewildering light, with the horizon always shifting, and the boundaries of fact and fable confused with an inseparable mingling of forms; both outwardly, as when Theseus enters the forest on the skirts of the fairy crew; and inwardly in the memories of the lovers. And we are expressly told after the enchantment of the "Tempest" that this summary dealing with the solid world was not merely by way of entertainment but was a presentation of truth. And Macbeth, after grasping all that life could offer of tangible reward or palpable power, pronounces it

"such stuff as dreams are made of."

No doubt something will be said on the other side, of Shakespeare's broad and indulgent humanity, and of his toleration even of vice itself when it is convivial and amusing. It should be remembered, however, that his comedies while more realistic are not so real as his tragedies. They are, as he himself insists, entertainments; to which jovial sensuality, witty falsehood, and even hypocrisy when it is not morose are admitted, as diverting in their very aberration from the mean rule of life. So that a touch of rascality is a genuine element in comedy, as a touch of

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danger in sport, and the provocation of the moral sense is part of the fun. But they are all under guard. The moment they pass a certain boundary and break into reality, the moment that intemperance leads to disorder, and vice to suffering, as in real life, then suddenly Harry turns upon Falstaff, or Olivia on Sir Toby, and vice is called by its right name.

And as life awakens and reality enters, either the grace or the sentiment or the passion of unworldliness is more and more distinctly present. And in the tragedies even the pleasant vices are seen as part of a world-wide corruption that wrongs, debases, and betrays. Shakespeare has painted every phase of antagonism to the world, from the pensive aloofness of Antonio to the impassioned misanthropy of Timon. Every excited feeling emits light into the dark places of the earth, and every suffering is a revelation of more than its own injury. It is as if the soul, fully aroused, became aware by its own light of the oppression and injustice abroad upon the earth.

But there is a more vague and general disaffection to the world than is the outcome of any particular experience. It may be called a spiritual discontent which few have felt as a passion, but many have known as a mood: when that average goodness of human nature which we have found so companionable, and to which we have so pleasantly adapted ourselves, becomes "very tolerable and not to be endured;" when the world seems to be made of our vices, and our virtues seem to be looking on, or if they enter into the fray are too tame and conventional for the selfish fire and unscrupulous industry of their rivals; and when to our excited sensibility there is a taint in the moral atmosphere, and we long to escape if only to breathe more freely. This is more than a mood with Shakespeare, and is present in those slight but distinctive touches that mark the unconscious intrusion of character in an artist's work; and is frankly confessed in one of his Sonnets:—

"Tired with all these; for restful death I cry;
As to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing drest in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn.....
Tired with all these, from, these would I be gone."

We find, then, scattered through the dramas of Shakespeare a disaffection to the world as deep-grained as it is comprehensive; and we find the various elements of it—the contempt of fortune, the ideal virtue, the disinterested passion, the mysticism, the fellowship with the oppressed, the distaste of the world's enjoyment and the weariness of its burden—concentrated in Hamlet for full and exhaustive study; thus presenting what I have called the interior or fundamental drama of the soul and the world. [Pg 55]

But the tragedy of "Hamlet" includes more than this. It is not merely the doom of suffering on a soul above a certain strain, still less is it the accidental death of a sluggard in revenge; it is the implication of a noble mind in the intrigues and malignities of a world it has renounced. In vain Hamlet contracts his ambition till it is bounded by a nutshell; he is ordered to strike for a throne. No abnegation clears him from entanglement. The world permits not his escape, but drags him back with those crooked hands of which Dante speaks, which pierce while they hold. This is the tragedy in all its fulness, the involution of the inward and outward drama to the immense advantage of both. For while the spiritual agony of Hamlet gives an incomparable dignity to the ghost-story, yet by the very interruptions and checkings and crossings of it through the accidents and oppositions of the plot, its physiognomy is more distinctly and delicately revealed. Instead of the majestic but monotonous declamation of Timon, we have every variety of that ironical humour (indicating some yet unconquered province of the soul) that guards and embalms the purer strength of feeling, keeps it airy and spiritual, and frees it from moan and heaviness. Here we have no insistence on suffering, no literary heart-breaks, no dilettante pessimism; but those indefinable harmonies of freedom and law, of the ascendancy of the soul and the sovereignty of fate, of Nature and the spaces of the mind, that in the works of the great masters represent, if they do not explain, the mystery of life.

The religion of Hamlet is that faith in God which survives after the extinction of the faith in man. Losing the light of human worth and dignity through which, alone the soul can reach to the idea of what is truly divine, and with it the link between earth and heaven, Hamlet's religion is reduced to its elements again; to the vague and fragmentary hints of Nature, and instincts of the spirit; to intimations of limitless power, of mysterious destiny, of a "something after death," of a "divinity that shapes our ends;" and with these, gleams of a transcendent religion of humanity, for devotion to which he was suffering; and on the other side, binding him to the stage-plot, relics of childish superstition, half-beliefs, inherited opinions, "*our* circumstance and course of thought," which he adopted when he pleased,—as, for instance, when he feared lest he should dismiss the murderer to heaven, or half-believed that his blameless father was tormented in sulphurous flames for having endured a horrible death. But however obscure and indefinite the religion of Hamlet may be, and partly because it is so, and hence of universal experience, it adds reach and depth to his struggle with the world. His soul flies out of bounds and away in airy liberty on these excursions to the vast unknown, and escapes at last victorious with the light through the darkness of conscious immortality, and the lamp in his hand of "the readiness is all." There is always a certain vacuity in the positive or realistic treatment of passion, in which it is confined to the area of mortality, and after a sultry strife delivered over to the mercy of its enemies. But the world cannot so beset and beleaguer the soul as to block up the access and passage of invisible allies, or intercept the communications of infinite strength and infinite charity, or follow to its distant haunts and inaccessible refuges the migrations of thought— [Pg 56]

FOOTNOTES:

- [3] "To see Lear acted, to see an old man tottering about the stage with a walking-stick, turned out of doors by his daughters in a rainy night, has nothing in it but what is painful and disgusting."—*Lamb's Essays*.
- [4] "Shakspere: His Mind and Art," p. 96.
- [5] "A Study of Shakespeare," p. 166.

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PANISLAMISM AND THE CALIPHATE. [6]

I use the word "Panislamism," simply because it is one of the political catchwords of the day. The prefix *Pan* is supposed to have some great and terrible significance. It is not long since Europe exerted all her power to save Islam from the jaws of Panslavism, but now that a *Pan* has been added to Islam, it has become in its turn the bugbear of Europe. It is even supposed that England was fighting with this new monster, when she put down the revolution in Egypt. England could never have so far forgotten her liberality as to take up arms against Islam, but Panislam must be crushed by a new crusade. Such is the wondrous power of a prefix. So far as I can understand the mysterious force of this word, it is designed to express the idea that the scattered fragments of the Mohammedan world have all rallied around the Caliph to join in a new attack upon Christendom, or that they are about to do so. There is just enough of truth in this idea to give it currency, and to make it desirable that the whole truth should be known. Most of the mistakes of Europe in dealing with the Ottoman empire, during the present century, have come from a misapprehension of the forces of Islam, and the position, and influence of the Sultan of Turkey. There is danger now of such a misapprehension as may lead to the most unfortunate complications.

The first essential point, which must always be kept in mind by those who would understand the movements of the Mohammedan world, is the exact relation of the Ottoman Sultans to the Caliphate. The word Caliph means the vicar or the successor of the Prophet. The origin and history of the Caliphate is well known, but it may be well to give a brief *résumé* of it here. During the life of the Prophet it was his custom to name a Caliph to act for him when he was absent from Medina. During his last illness he named his father-in-law, Abou-Bekir, and after his death this appointment was confirmed by election. Omar, Osman, and Ali were successively chosen to this office, and these four are recognized by all orthodox Mohammedans as perfect Caliphs. The Persians and other Shiites recognize only Ali. It is said that the Prophet predicted that the true Caliphate would continue only thirty years. His words are quoted: "The Caliphate after me will be for thirty years. After this there will be only powers established by force, usurpation, and tyranny." The death of Ali and the usurpation of Mouawiye came just thirty years after the death of the Prophet, and this was the end of the true and perfect Caliphate. The sixty-eight imperfect Caliphs who followed were all of the family of the Prophet, although of different branches, but they fulfilled the demand of the sacred law, that the Caliph must be of the family of Koreish, who was a direct descendant from Abraham. Mouawiye and the Ommiades, fourteen in all, were of the same branch as Osman, the third Caliph. The Abassides of Kufa, Bagdad, and Cairo, fifty-four in all, descended from Abas, the great-uncle of the Prophet. There were many others who at different times usurped the name of Caliph, but these seventy-two are all who are recognized as universal Caliphs. Mohammed XII., the last of these died in obscurity in Egypt in 1538. The power of the Caliphs gradually decayed, until for hundreds of years it was little more than nominal, and exclusively religious.

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The claim of the Ottoman Sultans to the Caliphate dates back to the time of Sultan Selim I. This Sultan conquered Egypt and over-threw the dynasty of the Mamelukes. He found at Cairo the Caliph Mohammed XII., and brought him as a prisoner to Constantinople. He was kept at the fortress of the Seven Towers for several years, and then sent back to Egypt with a small pension. While Selim was in Cairo, the Shereeff of Mecca presented to him the keys of the holy cities, and accepted him as their protector. In 1517 Mohammed XII. also made over to him all his right and title to the Caliphate. This involuntary cession, and the voluntary homage of the Shereeff of Mecca are the only titles possessed by the Ottoman Sultans to the Caliphate, which, according to the word of the Prophet himself, must always remain in his own family. If the Ommiades and the Abassides were imperfect Caliphs, it is plain that the Ottoman Sultans must be doubly imperfect. It was easy, however, for an all-powerful Sultan to obtain an opinion from the Ulema that his claim was well-founded; and it has been very generally recognized by orthodox Mohammedans, in spite of its essential weakness. When the time comes, however, that the Ottoman Sultans are no longer powerful, it will be still more easy to obtain an opinion that the Shereeff of Mecca, who is of the family of the Prophet, is the true Caliph.

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The Ottoman Sultans have also assumed the other and more generally used title of *Imam-ul-Mussilmin*, which may be roughly translated Grand Pontiff of all the Moslems, although, strictly

speaking, the functions of an Imam are not priestly. This title is based upon an article of the Mohammedan faith which says—"The Mussulmans ought to be governed by an Imam, who has the right and authority to secure obedience to the law, to defend the frontiers, to raise armies, to collect tithes, to put down rebels, to celebrate public prayers on Fridays, and at Beiram," &c. This article of faith is based upon the words of the Prophet—"He who dies without recognizing the authority of the Imam of his time, is judged to have died in ignorance and infidelity."

The law goes on to say—"All Moslems ought to be governed by one Imam. His authority is absolute, and embraces everything. All are bound to submit to him. No country can render submission to any other."

Under this law the Ottoman Sultans claim absolute and unquestioning obedience from all Moslems throughout the world; but their right to this title rests upon the same foundation as that upon which is based the title of Caliph. The Prophet himself said, and the accepted law repeats, that the Imam-ul-Mussilmin must be of the family of Koreish. The Ottoman Sultans belong not only to a different family, but to a different race.

With this evident weakness in their title to the Caliphate, and the accompanying rank of universal Imam, it is a question of interest on what grounds the doctors of Mohammedan law have justified their claims, and how far these have been recognized.

In addition to the rights said to have been conferred by the Caliph Mohammed XII. and by the Shereef of Mecca upon Sultan Selim I., and by him transmitted to his posterity, the Mohammedan doctors make use of a very different argument. They say—

"The rights of the house of Othman are based upon its power and success, for one of the most ancient canonical books declares that the authority of a prince who has usurped the Caliphate by force and violence, ought not the less to be considered legitimate, because, since the end of the perfect Caliphate, the sovereign power is held to reside in the person of him who is the strongest, who is the actual ruler, and whose right to command rests upon the power of his armies."

This statement presents the real basis of the claims of the Sultans to the Caliphate. It is the right of the strongest. Any man who disputes it, does so at his peril; and, since 1517, the Ottoman Sultans have been able to command the submission of the Mohammedan world. Their title has not been seriously disputed.

But the title has this weak point in it. It is good only so long as the Sultan is strong enough to maintain it. It has not destroyed the rights of the family of Koreish. It only holds them in abeyance, until some one of that family is strong enough to put an end to the Turkish usurpation. The power of the Sultan does not depend upon the title, but the title depends upon his power. This is a point the political importance of which should never be overlooked.

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We come now to our second question. How far is the claim of the Ottoman Sultans to the Caliphate now recognized in the Mohammedan world? Except with the Shiites, who have never acknowledged it, there is no open rebellion against it. But the decay of the Ottoman Empire during the last hundred years has been obvious to all the world. Not only has it been gradually dismembered, not only have many of its Mohammedan subjects been brought under the dominion of Christian Powers, and many of its Christian subjects set free, not only have its African possessions become practically independent, except Tripoli, but the house of Othman exists today, only because Christian Europe interfered to defend it against its own Mohammedan subjects. The house of Mohammed Ali would otherwise have taken its place. Again and again have the Sultans shown their inability to defend the frontiers of Islam. Since the advent of the present Sultan, the process of dismemberment has gone on more rapidly than ever.

The influence of these facts upon the Mohammedan world has been very marked. I cannot speak from personal knowledge of the people of India and Central Asia, but from the best information that I can obtain, I conclude that while they have lost none of their interest in Islam, while they are still interested in the fate of their Turkish brethren, they would not lift a finger to maintain the right of the Sultan to the Caliphate against any claimant of the family of the Prophet. The feeling of the Arabic-speaking Mohammedans is well known. Islam is an Arab religion; the Prophet was an Arab; the Caliph should be an Arab. The Ottoman Sultans are barbarian usurpers, who have taken and hold the Caliphate by force. The Arabs have been ready for open revolt for years, and have only waited for a leader of the house of the Prophet. Their natural leader would be the Shereef of Mecca; and it is understood that the Shereef who has just been deposed by the Sultan, as well as his predecessor who was mysteriously assassinated, was on the point of declaring himself Caliph. The new Shereef is a young man of the same family.

So far as the Turkish, Circassian, and Slavic Mohammedans are concerned, their interests are bound up with those of the Sultan. They do not distinguish between the Caliphate and the Sultanat. Their ruler is the Imam-ul-Mussilmin, their law is the Sheraat, their country is the Dar-Islam; and when they are fighting for their Sultan they are fighting for their faith. They know nothing of any other possible Caliph. But if a new Caliph should appear at Mecca, and declare the Sultan a usurper and a Kaffir, it is very doubtful whether they would stand by the Sultan. They would not know what to do.

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Another element enters just now into the question of the Caliphate, of which so much has been written of late that it is only necessary to mention it here. The Mohammedan world is looking for the coming of the Mehdy. The time appointed by many traditions for his appearance has already

come, the year of the Hedjira 1300. Other traditions, however, fix no definite time—they only say "towards the end of the world," and many impostors have already appeared at different times and places claiming to be the Mehdy. According to Shiite tradition, it is the twelfth Imam of the race of Ali who is to appear. At the age of twelve he was lost in a cave, where he still lives, awaiting his time. According to the Sunnis, the *Mehdy* is to come from Heaven with 360 celestial spirits, to purify Islam and convert the world. He will be a perfect Caliph, and will rule over all nations.

It is impossible for any Christian to speak with absolute certainty of the real feeling of Mohammedans; but it is evident that this expected Mehdy is talked of by Mohammedans everywhere, and that there is more or less faith in his speedy appearance. No one who anticipates his coming, can have any interest in the claims of the Sultan to be the Caliph. Should any one appear to fulfil the demands of the tradition, and meet with success in rousing any part of the Mohammedan world, the excitement would become intense, especially in Africa and Arabia. The claims of the Sultan would be repudiated at once. Still I think it probable that too much has been made of this Mehdy in Europe. I do not think that the Pachas of Constantinople have any more faith in his coming than Mr. Herbert Spencer has in the second coming of Christ. They only fear that some impostor may take advantage of the tradition to create division in the empire. This is the real danger.

It has been evident for many years that the Sultans have felt that their influence in the Mohammedan world was declining. They have seen that beyond their own dominions the Caliph has no real authority; that whatever influence they have depends upon the strength of their own empire. Abd-ul-Medjid and Abd-ul-Aziz seem to have had a pretty clear conception of their weakness, and of the necessity of restoring the vitality of the Ottoman empire, by the introduction of radical reforms. There is no reason to suppose that the Hatt-i-houmayoun and the other innumerable Hatts issued by these Sultans, were all intended simply to blind the eyes of Europe. None knew better than they that the empire must be reformed or lost. But they were Caliphs as well as Sultans, and what they would do as Sultans they could not do as Caliphs. The very nature of their claims to the Caliphate made them more timid. They could not execute the reforms which they promised, without encountering the opposition of the whole body of the Ulema, the most powerful and the best organized force in the empire. If they could have saved their empire by resigning the Caliphate, they might possibly have been willing to do it; but they were made to believe that in surrendering the Caliphate they would lose the support of the only part of the nation upon which they could fully depend. So they hesitated, promising much and doing little, raising hopes on one side which could never be forgotten, and raising fears on the other which they could not allay; seeing clearly the need of reform, but seeing no way in which to accomplish it. They could decide upon nothing, and drifted on until Abd-ul-Aziz was deposed and assassinated by his own ministers, and the empire was on the verge of ruin.

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The next Sultan was overwhelmed by the burdens which fell upon him, and in a few months was deposed as a lunatic. Sultan Hamid came to the throne under these trying circumstances, and it seemed for a time that he might be the last of the Sultans. He was but little known, as he had been forced to live in retirement, and it was supposed that he would follow meekly in the steps of his predecessors; but it very soon became evident to those about him that he had a mind and a will of his own—more than this, that he had a policy which he was determined to carry out. A Sultan with a fixed policy was a new thing, and to this day Europe is somewhat sceptical about it; but it very soon became apparent to close observers at Constantinople. Sultan Hamid was determined to be first of all the Caliph, the Imam-ul-Mussilmin, and to sacrifice all other interests to this. His education had been exclusively religious, and in his retirement he had lived a serious life, associating much with the Ulema, who, no doubt, pointed out to him the vacillating policy of his predecessors, and the danger that there was that the Caliphate and the empire would be lost together. He determined to strengthen his empire by restoring the influence of the Caliphate, and rallying the Mohammedan world once more around the throne of Othman. Judged from a European standpoint, this policy is at once reactionary and suicidal. It ignores the fact that the Ottoman empire is dependent for its existence upon the good-will of Europe; that it has measured its strength with a single Christian Power, and been utterly crushed in a year. It ignores the principle that a government can never be strong abroad which is weak at home. It ignores the history of the last hundred years. It may be doubted whether it is a policy which can be justified from the standpoint of Islam. Turkey is the last surviving Mohammedan Power of any importance. Its influence depends upon its strength, and its strength upon the prosperity of its people, and this upon a wise and enlightened administration of the government. It would seem that the best thing the Sultan could have done for Islam, would have been not to excite the fears of Europe by the phantom of a Panislamic league, but to have devoted all his energies to the reformation of his government.

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But Sultan Hamid chose the path of Faith rather than of Reason, and, however we may think the choice unwise, we are bound to treat it with respect. It is easy to say that it was a mere question of policy, and very bad policy; it certainly was, but I think we have good reason to believe that the Sultan was actuated by religious rather than political motives, that he is a sincere and honest Moslem, and feels that it is better to trust in God than in the Giaour. I have a sincere respect and no little admiration for Sultan Hamid. Had he been less a Caliph and more a Sultan, with his courage, industry, and pertinacity, he might have done for Turkey what he has failed to do for Islam. He might have revived and consolidated the empire. It is possible that he may do it yet, and should he attempt it he will have the sympathy of the world.

But thus far, having transferred the seat of government from the Porte to the Palace, having

secured a declaration from the Ulema that his will is the highest law, and that as Caliph he needs no advice, he has sought, first of all, to make his influence felt in every part of the Mohammedan world, to revive the spirit of Islam, and to unite it in opposition to all European and Christian influences. Utterly unable to resist Europe by force of arms, he has sought to outwit her by diplomacy and finesse. I know of nothing more remarkable in the history of Turkey than the skill with which he made a tool of Sir Henry Layard. Sir Henry could not be bought; but he could be flattered and blinded by such attentions as no Ottoman Sultan ever bestowed upon any Ambassador before; and to accomplish this object, the Sultan did not hesitate to ignore all Mohammedan ideas of propriety. His demonstrations of friendship for Germany is another illustration of his diplomatic skill. But while ready to yield any point of etiquette to accomplish his ends, he has resisted to the last every attempt to induce him to do anything to repress or punish any development of Moslem fanaticism. All Europe combined could not force him to punish the murderer of Colonel Coumaroff, the secretary of the Russian Embassy, who was shot down in the street like a dog by a servant of the Palace; nor, so far as I know, has he ever suffered a Moslem to be punished for murdering a Christian.

His agents have done their best to rouse the Mohammedans of India and Central Asia. He has armed the tribes of Northern Africa against France, and encouraged them to resist to the end. He has given new life to Mohammedan fanaticism in Turkey. The change from the days of Abd-ul-Aziz is very marked. The counsellors of the Sultan are no longer the Ministers, but the astrologers, eunuchs, and holy men of the Palace. No Mussulman could now change his faith in Constantinople without losing his life. Firmans can no longer be obtained for Christian churches, and it is extremely difficult to obtain permission to print a Christian book, even in a Christian language. The greatest care is taken to seize books of every description in the Custom House. It is not long since the Life of Mr. Gladstone was seized as a forbidden book. It is a curious fact in this connection that the fanaticism of the Government is far in advance of the fanaticism of the people. There is no fear of the people, except as they are encouraged and pushed forward by those in authority. If left to themselves, Turks and Christians would have no difficulty in living together amicably.

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The relation of the Sultan to the rebellion in Egypt is not perfectly clear, and probably never will be. In one sense he was no doubt the cause of it. It was a direct result of the agitation which his policy had roused. But it was not intended by Arabi to strengthen the power of a Turkish Caliph. It was originally anti-Turkish, and looked to the revival of the Arab Caliphate, as well as to the personal advantage of Arabi himself. The Sultan could not oppose it without exciting the enmity of those whom he most wished to conciliate, so he sought to control it and turn it to his own advantage. He gave Arabi all possible aid and support. There is no reason to suppose that Arabi and his friends were deceived by this; but it was for their interest to avoid a conflict with the Sultan as long as possible, and to get what aid from him they could. But for the intervention of England, Arabi would no doubt have won the game against the Turk. He might even have caused the downfall of the Sultan; for it is a well-known fact that so great was the enthusiasm of the Moslems in Syria and Arabia for Arabi, that they were with difficulty restrained by the Turkish authorities from breaking out into open rebellion. This spirit had been fostered by the Sultan; but it naturally turned, not to the Turkish Caliph, but to the successful Arab adventurer. Even in Asia Minor and Constantinople the enthusiasm for Arabi was universal, and had he been allowed to triumph unmolested, it seems probable the Sultan would have been forced either to unite with him in a crusade against Christendom, or to send an army to put him down. Either of these courses would have been fatal; for no Moslem army would have fought against Arabi under such circumstances, and as against Europe the Sultan could have accomplished nothing.

It is no doubt perfectly legitimate for a Caliph, especially for one whose title depends upon the strength of his sword, to stir up the enthusiasm of his people and attract their attention to himself as their leader. He cannot be blamed for improving every occasion to defend their rights and interfere in their behalf. If he is strong enough to do so, it is no doubt in full accord with the example and teaching of the Prophet that he should lead them against the infidels. It is not strange that a man of faith should be so dazzled by the possibility of such a crusade as to forget his own weakness. As he sits in his palace to-night,^[7] and hears the roar of the guns announcing the great festival of Courban Beiram, and thinks that more than two hundred millions of the faithful are uniting with him in the sacrifice, and confessing their faith in the Prophet of whom he claims to be the successor and representative, it will be strange if he does not dream of what might be if he could but rally them round his throne; strange if he does not catch something of the inspiration of the Prophet himself, who, with God on his side, dared alone to face all Mecca, and with a few half-naked Arabs to brave the world. There is nothing in the Palace unfavourable to such a dream as this, and there will be nothing in the pomp and ceremony of the homage to be paid to him to-morrow morning to recall him from it. What a contrast it will be to come back from such a dream of universal dominion, and the triumph of the true faith, to the discussion of the sixty-first Article of the Treaty of Berlin and the rights of the Armenians! It is perfectly legitimate for a Caliph to have such dreams, and perfectly natural for him to prefer to try to realize them, rather than to give his attention to the reform of his empire; but without blaming the Caliph we may well doubt whether it is altogether wise for the Sultan of Turkey to indulge in such dreams.

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I believe that it would be better not only for Turkey but for Islam also, if the Sultan would give up his doubtful title to the Caliphate, and pass it over to the descendant of the Prophet who is Shereef of Mecca. As for Turkey, this is the only hope of the empire; and the experience of the Pope of Rome has made it clear that the loss of temporal power tends rather to strengthen than to weaken a great religious organization. There is no inclination in any part of the world to

persecute Mohammedans, or interfere in any way with their faith. Only a very small minority of them are under the government of the Sultan, and those who are not enjoy as much religious liberty as those who are. This is not from fear of the Sultan, but it is in accord with the spirit of the age, and the manifest interest of other Governments. As a Caliph cannot by any possibility restore the strength of the Ottoman empire, so a Sultan of Turkey cannot be the spiritual leader of millions who are not in any way under his control. I see no reason to suppose that the transfer of the Caliph to Mecca would in any way weaken the faith of Moslems or diminish their zeal. Mohammedans in India and in Russia show no more inclination to abandon their faith than those who reside at Constantinople under the shadow of the Caliph; on the contrary, there is more unbelief in Constantinople than there. What is more, there is every reason to believe that such a transfer would gratify the great majority of Mohammedans, probably a majority of those living in the Turkish Empire, certainly all the Arabic-speaking population. In one way or another this change is sure to come, however it may be resisted by the Sultan; the very effort that he has made to arouse the spirit of Islam has made it more apparent than before that he is really powerless to defend any Mohammedan country against aggression. He could do nothing for Tunis against France. He could do nothing for Arabi against England. The very encouragement that he gave in these cases was an injury to them. The Arabs are all ready to assert their rights to the Caliphate and defend them against the Sultan. If he does not surrender the title voluntarily, sooner or later they will take it by force, and that part of the empire along with it.

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The Sultan complains of the interference of Europe in the affairs of his empire; but, in fact, he owes not only his throne, but his continued possession of the Caliphate, to their protection. Let it be known in Mecca to-day that Europe would favour such a change and encourage an insurrection in Syria and Arabia, and the new Shereef of Mecca would celebrate the Courban Beiram as Caliph amidst such enthusiasm as has not been known there for a hundred years.

In spite of all this, however, in spite of the imperfection of his title, and the coolness or discontent of Mohammedans throughout the world, in spite of the growing weakness of the empire and his failure to defend those whom he has encouraged to resist Europe, it is not probable that Sultan Hamid will voluntarily surrender the Caliphate. Abd-ul-Aziz might have done it to save his empire, but Sultan Hamid is too religious a man; he values his title of Imam-ul-Mussilmin too highly to give it up without a struggle. It is safe to conclude that he will cling to it until it is taken by force by a stronger man.

I have already mentioned incidentally the relation of Europe to the Caliphate. England and France are most directly interested in this question, and hitherto their policy has been to sustain the claims of the Sultans. They seem to be quite as anxious to maintain the Caliphate of Constantinople as the Sultans themselves, and its continuance has been due in great measure to their protection. As the interest of France in this question is only secondary, I will confine myself to the policy of England. It is not strange that England, with her Indian Empire and 40,000,000 Mohammedan subjects, should be deeply interested in the question of the Caliphate. It must be a question of vital importance to her whether it is better for the peace of India to have the Caliphate in the hands of a temporal sovereign at Constantinople or of a Shereef of Mecca in Arabia. So long as she was in close alliance with the Sultan, and her influence at Constantinople was supreme, there could not be any doubt on this subject, for a Caliph at Mecca would be practically beyond her reach; but since the Crimean war English influence has seldom been paramount at Constantinople. Still, English statesmen have probably reasoned that, even if he were decidedly unfriendly, it was better to have a Caliph who had something to lose, and who, on occasion, could be reached by a British fleet and bombarded in his palace, than one in the deserts of Arabia, who could not be reached by pressure of any kind, either diplomatic or military, who might proclaim a holy war without fear of being called to account for it. There is always a great practical advantage in dealing with a responsible person. Then, again, the late Sultans have manifested no inclination to rouse the fanaticism of Mohammedans against Christendom. They have been only anxious that Christendom should forget them, and leave them to manage their own affairs in their own way. Under these circumstances no English interest has demanded the consideration of the question of the Caliphate. It is a religious question which no Christian Government could wish to take up unless forced to do so. Whatever the Turks may believe, it is certain that no European Power has any inclination to enter upon a crusade against the Mohammedan religion. Even the Pope of Rome, who in former days decreed crusades against the Moslem, is now on terms of the most friendly intimacy with the Caliph. England not only carefully protects the rights of Mohammedans in India, but she has used all her influence for years to strengthen the Ottoman Empire and discourage all agitation against the Caliphate of the Sultan.

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Such has been the policy of the past. But circumstances have changed, and long-cherished hopes have been disappointed. The effort to reform and strengthen the Turkish empire has failed chiefly because the Sultans have been unwilling or unable to abandon the strictly religious constitution of the Government, and to distinguish between their duties as Caliphs, and their duties as civil rulers over a mixed population of various sects. This failure has led to most unhappy complications in Europe, to the dismemberment of European Turkey, and to a great development of the influence of Russia, the Power most unfriendly to the existence of the Turkish Empire. It is now clear to all the world that Turkey cannot be reformed by a Caliph. In addition to this, the present Sultan, departing from the prudent course of his predecessors, has undertaken to rouse the hostility of Islam against Christendom, and to encourage fanatical outbreaks, not only in Africa, but in Asia as well. As Caliph he is no longer the friendly ally of the Christian Powers, but, as far as he dares, is acting against them. Under these changed circumstances the question must arise whether it is any longer for the interest of England to defend the Caliphate of

Constantinople. It is not a question of deposing one Caliph and setting up another. This is not the work of a Christian Power. It is for Mohammedans to settle this question among themselves. If they prefer to continue to recognize the Sultan as Caliph, they should be free to do so. But the policy of England has not hitherto been one of neutrality. It has been the active support of the Sultan. The question now is whether this support should not be withdrawn, and the Arabs made to understand that if they prefer an Arab Caliph at Mecca, England will not interfere to prevent it.

This is a very serious question, and the plan is open to the objection already suggested of the inaccessibility of Mecca. It is also to be considered that the Arabs are more fanatical and more easily excited than the Turks. But, on the other hand, it may be doubted whether the influence of the Shereef of Mecca would be greatly increased by his assuming the title of Caliph. It would not be recognized by the Turks, and Constantinople would be even more opposed to Mecca than it is now. The nature of the new Caliph's influence would be the same that it is now as Shereef of Mecca—a purely moral influence.

Another thing to be considered is the fact that this is only a question of time. Sooner or later this change is sure to come. As the power of the Sultan continues to decline, he will be less and less able to resist the progress of this Arab movement. It is not easy to see exactly what England will gain by postponing this change. Certainly not the friendship of the Arabs. I cannot speak with authority of the feeling in India; but it is understood that Indian Mohammedans sympathize with the Arabs rather than the Turks. I cannot presume to give a decided opinion on this question; but the new responsibilities assumed by the British Government in Egypt, make it one of immediate practical importance. Are the real interests of England with the Turk or the Arab?

FOOTNOTES:

[6] We have received this article from a valued correspondent, whose name, for obvious reasons, is not given.—ED.

[7] The eve of Courban Beiram.

THE BOLLANDISTS:

THE LITERARY HISTORY OF A MAGNUM OPUS.

The majority of educated people have, from time to time, in the course of their historical reading, come across some mention of the "Acta Sanctorum," or "Lives of the Saints;" while but few know anything as to the contents, or authorship, or history of that work. Yet it is a very great, nay a stupendous monument of what human industry, steadily directed for ages towards one point, can effect. Industry, directed for ages, I have said—an expression, which to some must seem almost like a misprint, but which is quite justified by facts, since the first volume issued by the company of the Bollandists, is dated Antwerp, 1643; and the last, Paris, A.D. 1875. Two hundred and forty years have thus elapsed, and yet the work is not concluded. Indeed, as it has taken well-nigh two centuries and a half to narrate the lives of the Saints commemorated in the first ten months of the year, it may easily happen that the bones of the present generation will all be mingled with the dust, before those Saints be reached who are celebrated on the 31st of December. Some indeed—prejudiced by the very name "Acta Sanctorum"—may be inclined to turn away, with a contempt bred of ignorance, from the whole subject. But if it were only as a mental and intellectual tonic the contemplation of these sixty stately folios, embracing about a thousand pages each, would be a most healthy exercise for the men of this age. This is the halcyon period of primers, introductions, handbooks, manuals. "Knowledge made Easy" is the cry on every side. We take our mental pabulum just as we take Liebig's essence of beef, in a very concentrated form, or as homœopaths imbibe their medicine, in the shape of globules. I do not desire, however, to say one word against such publications. The great scholars of the seventeenth century, the Bollandists, Casaubon, Fabricius, Valesius Baluze, D'Achery, Mabillon, Combefis, Vossius, Canisius, shut up their learning in immense folios, which failed to reach the masses as our primers and handbooks do, penetrating the darkness and diffusing knowledge in regions inaccessible to their more ponderous brethren. But at the same time their majestic tomes stand as everlasting protests on behalf of real and learned inquiry, of accurate, painstaking, and often most critical research into the sources whence history, if worth anything, must be drawn.

I propose in this paper to give an account of the origin, progress, contents, and value of the work of the Bollandists, regarded as the vastest repertory of original material for the history of mediæval times. This immense series is popularly known either as the "Acta Sanctorum" or the Bollandists. The former is the proper designation. The latter, however, will suit best as the peg on which we shall hang our narrative. John Bolland, or Joannes Bollandus as it is in Latin, was the name of the founder of a Company which, more fortunate than most literary clubs, has lasted well-nigh three centuries. To him must be ascribed the honour of initiating the work, drawing the lines and laying the foundations of a building which has not yet been completed. That work was one often contemplated but never undertaken on the same exhaustive principles. Clement, the reputed disciple of the Apostles Peter and Paul, is reported—in the "Liber Pontificalis" or "Lives

of the Popes;" dating from the early years of the sixth century—to have made provision for preserving the "Acts of the Martyrs." Apocryphal as this account seems, yet the honest reader of Eusebius must confess that the idea was no novel one in the second century, as is manifest from the well-known letter narrating the sufferings of the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne. Space would now fail us to trace the development of hagiography in the Church. Let it suffice to say that century after century, as it slowly rolled by, contributed its quota both in east and west. In the east even an emperor, Basil, gave his name to a Greek martyrology; while in both west and east the writings of Metaphrastes, Mombritius, Surius, Lipomanus, and Baronius, embalmed abundant legends in many a portly volume. Still the mind of a certain Heribert Rosweid, a professor at Douai, a Jesuit and an enthusiastic antiquarian, was not satisfied. Rosweid was a typical instance of those Jesuits, learned and devout, who at a great crisis in the battle restored the fallen fortunes of the Church of Rome. As the original idea of the "Acta Sanctorum" is due to him, we may be pardoned in giving a brief sketch of his career, though he was not in strictness a member of the Bollandist Company.

Rosweid was born at Utrecht, in 1569, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1589, the year when all Europe, and the world at large, was ringing with the defeat of the Armada and the triumph of Protestantism. He studied and taught first at Douai and then at Antwerp, where, also after the manner of the Jesuits, he entered upon active pastoral work, in which he caught a contagious fever, of which he died A.D. 1629. His literary life was very active, and very fruitful in such literature as delighted that age. Thus he produced editions of various martyrologies, the modern Roman, the ancient Roman, and that of Ado; he discussed the question of keeping faith with heretics; took an active share in the everlasting controversy concerning the "Imitatio Christi," wherein he espoused the side of A-Kempis and the Augustinians, as against Gerson and the Benedictines; published the lives of the Eastern Ascetics, who were the founders of modern monasticism; debated with Isaac Casaubon concerning Baronius; and published, in 1607, the "Lives of the Belgic Saints," where we find the first sketch or general plan of the "Acta Sanctorum." The idea of this great work suggested itself to Rosweid while living at Douai, where he used to employ his leisure time in the libraries of the neighbouring Benedictine monasteries, in search of manuscripts bearing on the lives of the Saints. It was an age of criticism, and he doubtless felt dissatisfied with all existing compilations, content as they were to repeat, parrot-like and without any examination, the legends of earlier ages. It was an age of research, too—more fruitful in some respects than those which have followed—and he felt that an immense mass of original material had never yet been utilized. It was at this period of his life he produced the work above mentioned, which we have briefly named the "Lives of the Belgic Saints," but the full title of which is, "Fasti Sanctorum quorum Vitæ in Belgicis Bibliothecis Manuscriptæ." He intended it as a specimen of a greater and more comprehensive work, embracing the lives of all the Saints known to the Church throughout the world. He proposed that it should embrace sixteen volumes, divided in the following manner:—The first volume dealing with the life of Christ and the great feasts; the second with the life of the Blessed Virgin and her feasts; the third to the sixteenth with the lives of the Saints according to the days of the month, together with no less than thirteen distinct indexes, biographical, historical, controversial, geographical, and moral; so that the reader might not have any ground for the complaint so often brought against modern German scholars, that they afford no apparatus to help the busy student when consulting their works. Rosweid's idea as to the manner in which those volumes should be compiled was no less original. He proposed first of all to bring together all the lives of Saints that had been ever published by previous hagiographers; which he would then compare with ancient manuscripts, as he was convinced that considerable interpolation had been made in the narratives. In addition, he desired to seek in all directions for new materials; and to illustrate all the lives hitherto published or unpublished, by explaining obscurities, reconciling difficulties, and shedding upon their darker details the light of a more modern criticism. Rosweid's fame was European in the first quarter of the seventeenth century; and his proposal attracted the widest attention. To the best judges it seemed utterly impracticable. Cardinal Bellarmine heard of it, and proved his keenness and skill in literary criticism by asking what age the man was who proposed such an undertaking. When informed that he was about forty, "Ask him," said the learned Cardinal, "whether he has discovered that he will live two hundred years; for within no smaller space can such a work be worthily performed by one man,"—an unconscious prophecy, which has found in fact a most ample fulfilment; for death snatched away Rosweid before he could do more towards his great undertaking than accumulate much precious material; while more than two hundred years have elapsed, and yet the work is not completed.

After the death of Rosweid, the Society of Jesus, which now regarded the undertaking as a corporate one, entrusted its continuation to Bollandus. He was thirty-three years of age, and had distinguished himself in every branch of the Society's activity as a teacher, a divine, a scholar, and an orator. In this last capacity, indeed, it was his duty to address Latin sermons to the aristocracy of Antwerp, a fact which betokens a much more learned audience than now falls to any preacher's lot. He was a wise director of conscience too, a sphere of duty in which the Jesuits have always delighted. A story is told illustrating his skill in this direction. One of the highest magistrates of the city, being suddenly seized with a fatal illness, despatched a messenger for Bollandus, who at once responded to the call, only however to find the sick man in deepest trouble, on account of the sternness with which he had exercised his judicial functions. He acknowledged that he had often been the means of inflicting capital punishment when the other judges would have passed a milder sentence in the belief that he was rescuing the condemned from greater crimes, which they would inevitably commit, and securing the salvation of their souls through the repentance to which their ghostly adviser would lead them prior to their

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execution. Bollandus at once perceived that he had to deal with the over-scrupulous conscience of one who had striven, according to his light, to do his duty. He therefore produced his breviary, and proceeded to read and expound the hundred and first psalm, "I will sing of mercy and judgment;" making such a very pertinent application of it to the magistrate's case, as led him to cry out with tears, "What comfort thou hast brought me, Father! now I die happy." A consideration of these numerous and apparently inconsistent engagements may not be without some practical use in this age. Looking at the varied occupations of Bollandus and his fellows, and at the massive works which they at the same time produced, who can help smiling at the outcry which the advocates for the endowment of research, as they style themselves, raised some time ago against the simple proposal of the Oxford University Commission, that well-endowed professors should deliver some lectures on their own special subjects? Such a practice, they maintained, would utterly distract the mind from all original investigation of the sources. Such certainly was not the case with the Bollandists, who yet could make time carefully—far more carefully than most modern historians—to investigate the sources of European history. But then the Bollandists were real students, and had neither lawn tennis nor politics to divert them from their chosen career.

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Bollandus again is a healthy study for us moderns in the triumph exhibited by him of mind over matter, of the ardent student over physical difficulties. His rooms were no pleasant College chambers, lofty, commodious, and well-ventilated; on the contrary the apartments where the volumes commemorating the saints of January saw the light were two small dark chambers next the roof, exposed alike to the heat of summer and the cold of winter, in the Jesuit House at Antwerp. In them were heaped up, for such is the expression of his biographer, the documents accumulated by his Society during forty years. How vast their number must have been is manifest from this one fact that Bollandus possessed upwards of four hundred distinct Lives of Saints, and more than two hundred histories of cities, bishoprics, and monasteries in the Italian language alone, whence our readers may judge of the size of the entire collection which dealt with the saints and martyrs of China, Japan, and Peru, as well as those of Greece and Home.

Bollandus was summoned to his life's work in 1629. He at once entered upon a vigorous pursuit of fresh manuscripts in every quarter of the globe, wherein he was mightily assisted by the organization of the Jesuit Society, and by the liberal assistance bestowed upon his undertaking by successive abbots of the great Benedictine Monastery of Liessies, near Cambrai, specially by Antonius Winghius, the friend and patron, first of Rosweid, and then of Bollandus. Indeed, it was the existence and rich endowments of those great monasteries which explains the publication of such immense works as those of Bollandus, Mabillon, and Tillemont, quite surpassing any now issued even by the wealthiest publishers among ourselves, and only approached, and that at a distance, by Pertz's "Monumenta" in Germany.

New material was now poured upon him from every quarter, from English Benedictines even and Irish Franciscans; though indeed, as regards the latter, Bollandus seems to have cherished a wholesome suspicion as to the genuineness of many, if not most, of the Irish legends. But Bollandus, though he worked hard, and knew no other enjoyment save his work, was only human. He soon found the labour was too great for any one man to perform, while, in addition, he was racked and torn with disease in many shapes; gout, stone, rupture, all settled like harpies upon his emaciated frame, so that in 1635 he was compelled to take Henschenius as his assistant. This was in every respect a fortunate choice, as Henschenius proved himself a man of much wider views as to the scope of the work than Bollandus himself. Bollandus had proposed simply to incorporate the notices of the Saints found in ancient martyrologies and manuscripts, adding brief notes upon any difficulties of history, geography, or theology, which might arise. To Henschenius was allotted the month of February. He at once set to work, and produced under the date of Feb. 6, exhaustive memoirs of SS. Amandus and Vedastus, Gallic bishops of the sixth and eleventh centuries whose lives present a striking picture of those troubled times, amid which the foundations of French history were laid. Henschenius scorned the narrow limits within which his master would fain limit himself. He boldly launched out into a discussion of all the aspects of his subject, discussing not merely the men themselves, but also the history of their times, and doing that in a manner now impossible, as the then well stored, but now widely scattered muniment rooms of the abbeys of Flanders and Northern France lay at his disposal. Bollandus was so struck with the success of this innovation that he at once abandoned his own restricted ideas, and adopted the more exhaustive method of his assistant, which of course involved the extension of the work far beyond the sixteen volumes originally contemplated. The first two volumes appeared in 1643, and the next three, including the "Saints of February," in 1658. About this time the reigning Pontiff, Alexander VII., who had been the life-long friend and patron of Bollandus, pressed upon him, an oft-repeated invitation to visit Rome, and utilize for his work the vast stores accumulated there and in the other libraries of Italy. Bollandus had hitherto excused himself. In fact, he possessed already more material than he could conveniently use. But now that larger apartments had been assigned to him, and proper arrangements and classifications adopted in his library—due especially to the skill of Henschenius—he felt that such a journey would be most advantageous to his work. As, however, he could not go in person, owing to his infirmities, which were daily increasing, he deputed thereto Henschenius and Daniel Papebrock, a young assistant lately added to the Company, and destined to spend fifty-five years in its service. The history of that literary journey is well worth reading. The reader, curious on such points, will find it in the "Life of Bollandus," prefixed to the first volume of the "March Saints," chap. xiii.—xx. Still more interesting, were it printed, would be the diary of his journey kept by Papebrock, now preserved in the Burgundy Library at Brussels, and numbered 17,672. Twenty-nine months were spent in this journey, from the middle of 1659 to the end of 1661. Bollandus accompanied his disciples as

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far as Cologne, where they were received with almost royal honours. After parting with their master, his followers proceeded up the Rhine and through Southern Germany, making a very thorough examination of the libraries, to all of which free access was given; the very Protestant town of Nuremberg being most forward to honour the literary travellers, while the President of the Lutheran Consistory assisted them even with his purse. Entering Italy by way of Trent, they arrived at Venice towards the end of October, where they found the first rich store of Greek manuscripts, and whence also they despatched by sea to Bollandus the first fruits of their toil. From Venice they made a thorough examination of the libraries of North-east Italy, at Vicenza, Verona, Padua, Bologna; whence they turned aside to visit Ravenna, walking thither one winter's day, November 18—a journey of thirty miles—and Henschenius, be it observed, was now sixty years of age.^[8] They spent the greater part of the year 1661 at Rome, at Naples—where the blood and relics of St. Januarius were specially exhibited to them, an honour only conferred on kings and their ambassadors—and amid the rich libraries of the numerous abbeys of Southern Italy. But even when absent from Rome their work there went on apace. They enjoyed the friendship of some wealthy merchants from their own land, who liberally supplied them with money, enabling them to employ five or six scribes to copy the manuscripts they selected; while the patronage of two eminent scholars, even yet celebrated in the world of letters, Lucas Holstenius and Ferdinand Ughelli, backed by the still more powerful aid of the Pope, placed every library at their command. The Pope, indeed, went so far as to remove, in their case, every anathema forbidding the removal of books or manuscripts from the libraries. Lucas Holstenius, in his boyhood a Lutheran, in his later age an agent in the conversion of Queen Christina of Sweden, and one of the greatest among the giants of the black-letter learning of the age, rated the Bollandists and their work so highly that, at his decease, which took place while they were in Rome, he used their ministry alone in receiving the last sacraments of the Roman Church. Encouraged and supported thus, the Bollandists economized and utilized every moment. They were in the habit of rising before day to say their sacred offices; and then prosecuted, with their secretaries, their loved work till ten or eleven o'clock at night. When leaving Rome they were enabled therefore to send to Bollandus, by sea, a second consignment of three chests of manuscripts, in addition to a large store which they carried home themselves.

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On their return journey they visited Florence and Milan, spending more than half a year in these libraries, and then proceeded through France to Paris, where they met scholars like Du Cange, Combefis, and Labbe. They finally arrived at home December 21, 1661, to find Bollandus in a very precarious state of health, which terminated in his death in 1665. The life of Bolland is a type of the lives led by all his disciples and successors. Devout, retired, studious, they gave themselves up, generation after generation, to their appointed task, the elders continually assuming to themselves one or two younger assistants, so as to preserve their traditions unimpaired. And what a work was theirs! How it dwarfed all modern publications! Bollandus worked at eight of those folios, Henschenius at twenty-four, Papebrock at nineteen, Janningus his successor at thirteen; and so the work went on, aided by a subsidy from the Imperial House of Austria, till the suppression of the Jesuits, which was followed soon after by the dissolution of the Bollandists in 1788. Their library became then an object of desire to many foreigners, who would undoubtedly have purchased it, had it not been for the opposition of the local government, and of several Belgian abbeys. It was finally bought by Godfrey Hermans, a Præmonstratensian abbat, under whose auspices the publication of the work continued for seven years longer, till, on the outburst of the wars of the French Revolution, the library was dispersed, part burnt, part hidden, part hurried into Westphalia. At length, after various chances, a great part of the manuscripts was obtained for the ancient library of the House of Burgundy, now forming part of the Royal Library at Brussels, while others of them were reclaimed for the library of the New Bollandists at Louvain, where the work is now carried on. After the dissolution of the old Company, two attempts at least, one in 1801 and the other in 1810—this last under the all-powerful patronage of Napoleon—were made, though without success, to revive the work. Better fortune attended a proposal made in 1838 by four members of the Jesuit Society—viz., J. B. Boone, J. Vandermocre, P. Coppens, and J. van Hecke. Since that time the publication of the volumes has steadily proceeded; we may even hope that the progress of the work in the future will be still more rapid, as the Company has lately added to its ranks P. C. de Smedt, one of the most learned and laborious ecclesiastical historians in the Roman Communion.^[9]

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After this sketch of the history of the Bollandists, which the literary student can easily supplement from the various memoirs of deceased members scattered through the volumes of the "Acta Sanctorum," we proceed to a consideration of the results of labours so long, so varied, and so strenuous. We shall now describe the plan of the work, the helps all too little known towards the effective use thereof, and then offer some specimens illustrating its critical value. When an ordinary reader takes up a volume of the "Acta Sanctorum," he is very apt to find himself utterly at sea. The very pagination is puzzling, two distinct kinds being used in all of the volumes, and even three in some. Then again lists, indexes, dissertations, acts of Saints, seem mingled indiscriminately. This apparent confusion, however, is all on the surface, as the reader will at once see, if he take the trouble to read the second chapter of the general preface prefixed to the first volume of the "January Saints," where the plan of the work is elaborately set forth. Let us briefly analyze a volume. The daily order of the Roman martyrology was taken as the basis of Bolland's scheme. Our author first of all arranged the saints of each day in chronological order, discussing them accordingly. A list of the names belonging to it is prefixed to the portion of the volume devoted to each separate day, so that one can see at a glance the lives belonging to that day and the order in which they are taken. A list then follows of those rejected or postponed to other days. Next come prefaces, prolegomena, and "previous dissertations," examining the lives,

actions, and miracles of the Saints, authorship and history of the manuscripts, and other literary and historical questions. Then appear the lives of the Saints in the original language, if Latin; if not, then a Latin version is given; while of the Greek *menologion*, which the Bollandists discovered during their Roman journey, we have both the Greek original and a Latin translation. Appended to the lives are annotations, explaining any difficulties therein; while no less than five or six indexes adorn each volume: the first an alphabetical list of Saints discussed; the second chronological; the third historical; the fourth topographical; the fifth an onomasticon, or glossary; the sixth moral or dialectic, suggesting topics for preachers.

Prefixed to each volume will be found a dedication to some of the numerous patrons of the Bollandists, followed by an account of the life and labours of any of their Company who had died since their last publication. Thus, opening the first volume for March, we find, in order, a dedication to the reigning Pope, Clement IX; the life of Bollandus; an alphabetical index of all the Saints celebrated during the first eight days of March; a chronological list of Saints discussed under the head of March 1; the lives of Saints, including the Greek ones discovered by Henschenius during his Italian tour, ranged under their various natal days, followed by five indexes as already described. But, the reader may well ask, is there no general index, no handy means of steering one's way through this vast mass of erudition, without consulting each one of those fifty or sixty volumes? Without such an apparatus, indeed, this giant undertaking would be largely in vain; but here again the forethought of Bollandus from the very outset of his enterprise made provision for a general index, which was at last published at Paris, in 1875. We possess also in Potthast's "Bibliotheca Historica Medii Aevi," a most valuable guide through the mazes of the "Acta Sanctorum," while for a very complete analysis of every volume, joined with a lucid explanation of any changes in arrangement, we may consult De Backer's "Bibliothèque des Ecrivains de la Compagnie de Jésus," t. v., under the name "Bollandus."

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But some may say, what is the use of consulting these volumes? Are they not simply gigantic monuments of misplaced and misapplied human industry, gathering up every wretched nursery tale and village superstition, and transmitting them to future ages? Such certainly has been the verdict of some who knew only the backs of the books, or who at farthest had opened by chance upon some passage where—true to their rule which compelled them to print their manuscripts as they found them—the Bollandists have recorded the legendary stories of the Middle Ages. Yet even for an age which searches diligently, as after hid treasure, for the old folk-lore, the nursery rhymes, the popular songs and legends of Scandinavia, Germany, and Greece, the legends of mediæval Christendom might surely prove interesting. But I regard the "Acta Sanctorum" as specially valuable for mediæval history, secular as well as ecclesiastical, simply because the authors—having had unrivalled opportunities of obtaining or copying documents—printed their authorities as they found them; and thus preserves for us a mine of historical material which otherwise would have perished in the French Revolution and its subsequent wars. Yet it is very strange how little this mine has been worked. We must suppose indeed that it was simply due to the want of the helps enumerated above—all of which have come into existence within the last twenty-five years—that neither of our own great historians who have dealt with the Middle Ages, Gibbon or Hallam, have, as far as we have been able to discover, ever consulted them.

Yet the very titles of even a few out of the very many critical dissertations appended to the "Lives of the Saints," will show how very varied and how very valuable were the purely historical labours of the Bollandists. Thus opening the first volume of the "Thesaurus Antiquitatis," a collection of the critical treatises scattered through the volumes published prior to 1750, the following titles strike the eye:—"Dissertations on the Byzantine historian Theophanes," on the "Ancient Catalogues of the Roman Pontiffs," on the "Diplomatic Art"—a discussion which elicited the famous treatise of Mabillon, "De Re Diplomatica," laying down the true principles for distinguishing false documents from true—on certain mediæval "Itineraries in Palestine," on the "Patriarchates of Alexandria and Jerusalem," on the "Bishops of Milan to the year 1261," on the "Mediæval Kings of Majorca" and no less than three treatises on the "Chronology of the early Merovingian and other French Kings." Let us take for instance these last mentioned essays on the early French kings. In them we find the Bollandists discovering a king of France, Dagobert II., whose romantic history, banishment to Ireland, restoration to his kingdom by the instrumentality of Archbishop Wilfrid, of York, and tragic death, had till their investigations lain hidden from every historian. As soon, indeed, as they had brought this obscure episode to light, and had elaborately traced the genealogy of the Merovingians, their claim to the discovery was disputed by Hadr. Valesius, the historiographer to the French Court, who was of course jealous that any one else should know more about the origins of the French monarchy than he did. His pretension, however, was easily refuted by Henschenius, who showed that he had himself discovered this derelict king twelve years before Valesius turned his thoughts to the subject, having published in 1654 a dissertation upon him distinct from those embodied in the "Acta Sanctorum." Hallam, in his "History of the Middle Ages," introduces this king, and notices that his history had escaped all historians till discovered by some learned men in the seventeenth century, for it is in this vague way he alludes to the Bollandists—and then refers for his authority to Sismondi, who in turn knows nothing of the Bollandists' share in the discovery, but attributes it to Mabillon when treating of the "Acts of the Benedictine Saints." Let us again take up Hallam, and we shall in vain search for notices of the kings of Majorca, a branch of the Royal family of Arragon, who reigned over the Balearic Islands in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Let any one, however, desirous of a picture of the domestic life of sovereigns during the Middle Ages, take up Papebrock's treatise on the "Palatine Laws" of James II., King of Majorca, A.D. 1324, where he will see depicted—all the more minutely because from the size of his principality the king had no other outlet for his energy—the ritual of a mediæval Court, illustrated, too, with

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pictures drawn from the original manuscript. In this document are laid down with painful minuteness, the duties of every official from the chancellor and the major-domo to the lowest scullions and grooms, including butlers, cooks, blacksmiths, musicians, scribes, physicians, surgeons, chaplains, choir-men, and chamberlains. Remote, too, as these kings of Majorca and their elaborate ceremonial may seem to be from the England of to-day, a careful study of these "Palace Laws" would seem to indicate either that our own Court Ritual was derived from it, or else that both are deduced from one common stock. The point of contact, however, between our own Court etiquette and that of Majorca is not so very hard to find. The kings of Arragon, acting on the usual principle, might is right, devoured the inheritance of their kinsmen, which lay so tantalizingly close to their own shores, during the lifetime of the worthy legislator, James II. But as Greece led captive her conqueror, Rome, so too Arragon, though superior in brute force, bowed to the genius of Majorca, at least on points of courtly details, and adopted *en bloc* the laws of James II., which were published as his own by Peter IV., King of Arragon, A.D. 1344. Thence they passed over to the United Kingdom of Castile and Arragon, and so may have easily found their way to England; for surely, if a naturally ceremonious people like the Spaniards needed instruction on such matters from the Majorcans, how much more must colder northerners like ourselves. This incident illustrates the special opportunities possessed by the Bollandists for consulting ancient documents, which otherwise would most probably have been lost for ever. Their manuscript of those Majorcan laws seems to have been originally the property of the legislator himself. When King James was dispossessed of his kingdom, he fled to Philip VI. of France, seeking redress, and bearing with him a splendid copy of his laws as a present, which his son and successor John in turn presented to Philip, Duke of Burgundy. After lying there a century it found its way to Flanders, in the train of a Duchess of Burgundy, and thus finally came into the possession of the Antwerp Jesuits.

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Again, the study of the Bollandists throws light upon the past history and present state of Palestine. Thus the indefatigable Papebrock, equally at home in the most various kinds of learning, discusses the history of the Bishops and Patriarchs of Jerusalem, in a tract preliminary to the third volume for May. But, not content with a subject so wide, he branches off to treat of divers other questions relating to Oriental history, such as the Essenes and the origin of Monasticism, the Saracenic persecution of the Eastern Christians, and the introduction of the Arabic notation into Europe. On this last head the Bollandists anticipate some modern speculations.^[10] He maintains, on the authority of a Greek manuscript in the Vatican, written by an Eastern monk, Maximus Planudes, about 1270, that, while the Arabs derived their notation from the Brahmins of India, about A.D. 200, they only introduced it into Eastern Europe so late as the thirteenth century. Upon the geography of Palestine again they give us information. All modern works of travel or survey dealing with the Holy Land, make frequent reference to the records left us by men like Eusebius and Jerome, and the itineraries of the "Bordeaux Pilgrim," of Bishop Arculf, A.D., 700, Benjamin of Tudela, A.D. 1163, and others. In the second volume for May, we have presented to us two itineraries, one of which seems to have escaped general notice. One is the record of Antoninus Martyr, a traveller in the seventh century. This is well known and often quoted. The other is the diary of a Greek priest, Joannes Phocas, describing "the castles and cities from Antioch to Jerusalem, together with the holy places of Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine," as they were seen by him in the year 1185. This manuscript, first published in the "Acta Sanctorum," was discovered in the island of Chios, by Leo Allatius, afterwards librarian of the Vatican. It is very rich in interesting details concerning the state of Palestine and Christian tradition in the twelfth century. The Bollandists again were the first to bring prominently forward in the last volume of June the "Ancient Roman Calendar of Polemeus Silvius." This seems to have been a combined calendar and diary, kept by some citizen of Rome in the middle of the fifth century. It records from day to day the state of the weather, the direction of the wind, the birthdays of eminent characters in history, poets like Virgil, orators like Cicero, emperors like Vespasian and Julian; and is at the same time most important as showing the large intermixture of heathen ideas and fashions which still continued paramount in Rome a century and a half after the triumph of Christianity.

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The new Bollandists, indeed, do not produce such exhaustive monographs as their predecessors did; but we cannot join in the verdict of the writer in the new issue of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," who tells us that the continuation is much inferior to the original work. Some of their articles manifest a critical acquaintance with the latest modern research, as, for instance, their dissertation on the Homerite Martyrs and the Jewish Homerite kingdom of Southern Arabia, wherein they display their knowledge of the work done by the great Orientalists of England and Germany, while in their history of St. Rose, of Lima, A.D. 1617, they celebrate the only American who was ever canonized by the Roman Catholic Church, and, at the same time, give us a fearful picture of the austerities to which fanaticism can lead its victims. Perhaps to some readers one of the most interesting points about this great work, when viewed in the light of modern history, will be the complete change of front which it exhibits on one of the test questions about Papal Infallibility. One of the great difficulties in the path of this doctrine is the case of Liberius, Pope in the middle of the fourth century. He is accused—and to ordinary minds the accusation seems just—of having signed an Arian formula, of having communicated with the Arians, and of having anathematized St. Athanasius. He stood firm for a while, but was exiled by the Emperor. During his absence Felix II. was chosen Pope. Liberius, after a time was permitted to return; whereupon the spectacle, so often afterwards repeated, was witnessed of two Popes competing for the Papal throne. Felix, however he may have fared in life, has fairly surpassed his opponent in death, since Felix appears in the Roman Martyrology as a Saint and a Martyr under the date of July 29; while Liberius is not admitted therein even as a Confessor. This would surely seem to give us every

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guarantee for the sanctity of Felix, and the fallibility of Liberius, as the Roman Martyrology of today is guaranteed by a decree of Pope Gregory XIII., issued "under the ring of the Fisherman." In this decree "all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and religious orders," are bidden to use this Martyrology without addition, change, or subtraction; while any one so altering it is warned that he will incur the wrath of Almighty God and of the Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. The earlier Bollandists, with this awful anathema hanging over them, most loyally accepted the Roman Martyrology, and therefore most vigorously maintained, in the seventh volume for July, the heresy of Liberius, as well as the orthodoxy and saintship of Felix. But, as years rolled on, this admission was seen to be of most dangerous consequence; and so we find, in the sixth volume, for September, that Felix has become, as he still remains in current Roman historians, like Alzog, a heretic, a schismatic, and an anti-Pope, while Liberius is restored to his position as the only valid and orthodox Bishop of Rome. But then the disagreeable question arises, if this be so, what becomes of the Papal decree of Gregory XIII. issued *sub annulo piscatoris*, and the anathemas appended thereto? With the merits of this controversy, however, we are, as historical students, in a very slight degree concerned; and we simply produce these facts as specimens of the riches contained in the externally unattractive volumes of the "Acta Sanctorum." Space would fail us, did we attempt to set forth at any length the contents of these volumes. Suffice it to say that even upon our English annals, which have been so thoroughly explored of late years, the records of the Bollandists would probably throw some light, discussing as they do, at great length, the lives of such English Saints as Edward the Confessor and Wilfrid of York; and yet they are not too favourably disposed towards our insular Saints, since they plainly express their opinion that our pious simplicity has filled their Acts with incredible legends and miracles, more suited to excite laughter than to promote edification.

But, doubtless, our reader is weary of our hagiographers. We must, therefore, notice briefly the controversies in which their labours involved them. Bollandus, when he died, departed amid universal regret: Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, all joined with Jesuits in regret for his death, and in prayers for his eternal peace. A few years afterwards the Society experienced the very fleeting character of such universal popularity. During the issue of the first twelve volumes, they had steered clear of all dangerous controversies by a rigid observance of the precepts laid down by Bollandus. In discussing, however, the life of Albert, at first Bishop of Vercelli, and afterwards Papal Legate and Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, Papebrock challenged the alleged antiquity of the Carmelite Order, which affected to trace itself back to Elijah the Tishbite. This piece of scepticism, brought down a storm upon his devoted head, which raged for years and involved Popes, yea even Princes and Courts, in the quarrel. Du Cange threw the shield of his vast learning over the honest criticism of the Jesuits. The Spanish Inquisition stepped forward in defence of the Carmelites; and toward the end of the seventeenth century condemned the first fourteen volumes of the "Acta Sanctorum" as dangerous to the faith. The Carmelites were very active in writing pamphlets in their own defence, wherein after the manner of the time they deal more in hard words and bad names than in sound argument. Thus the title of one of their pamphlets describes Papebrock as "the new Ishmael whose hand is against every man and every man's hand is against him." It is evident, however, that they felt the literary battle going against them, inasmuch as in 1696 they petitioned the King of Spain to impose perpetual silence upon their adversaries. As his most Catholic Majesty did not see fit to interfere, they presented a similar memorial to Pope Innocent XIII., who in 1699 imposed the *clôture* upon all parties, and thus effectually terminated a battle which had raged for twenty years. Papebrock again involved himself at a later period in a controversy touching a very tender and very important point in the Roman system. In discussing the lives of some Chinese martyrs, he advocated the translation of the Liturgy into the vulgar tongue of the converts; which elicited a reply from Gueranger in his "Institutions Théologiques;" while again between the years 1729 and 1736 a pitched battle took place between the Bollandists and the Dominicans touching the genealogy of their founder, St. Dominic. All these controversies, with many other minor ones in which they were engaged, will be found summed up in an apologetic folio which the Bollandists published. In looking through it the reader will specially be struck by this instructive fact, that the bitterness and violence of the controversy were always in the inverse ratio of the importance of the points at issue. This much also must any fair mind allow: the Society of Jesus, since the days of Pascal and the "Provincial Letters," has been regarded as a synonym for dishonesty and fraud. From any such charge the student of the "Acta Sanctorum" must regard the Bollandists as free. In them we behold oftentimes a credulity which would not have found place among men who knew by experience more of the world of life and action, but, on the other hand, we find in them thorough loyalty to historical truth. They deal in no suppression of evidence; they give every side of the question. They write like men who feel, as Bollandus their founder did, that under no circumstances is it right to tell a lie. They never hesitate to avow their own convictions and predilections. They draw their own conclusions, and put their own gloss upon facts and documents; but yet they give the documents as they found them, and they enable the impartial student—working not in trammels as they did—to make a sounder and truer use of them. They display not the spirit of the mere confessor whose tone has been lowered by the stifling atmosphere of the casuistry with which he has been perpetually dealing; but, the braced soul, the hardy courage of the historical critic, who having climbed the lofty peaks of bygone centuries, has watched and noted the inevitable discovery and defeat of lies, the grandeur and beauty of truth. They were Jesuits indeed, and, like all the members of that Society, were bound, so far as possible, to sink all human affections and consecrate every thought to the work of their order. If such a sacrifice be lawful for any man, if it be permitted any thus to suppress the deepest and holiest affections which God has created, surely such a sacrifice could not have been made in the pursuance of a worthier or nobler object than the rescue from destruction, and the

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FOOTNOTES:

- [8] Henschenius was a man of great physical powers. He always delighted in walking exercise, and executed many of his literary journeys in Italy on foot, even amid the summer heats. Ten years later, when close on seventy, he walked on an emergency ten leagues in one day through the mountains and forests of the Ardennes district, and was quite fresh next day for another journey. He was a man of very full complexion. According to the medical system of the time, he indulged in blood-letting once or twice a year.
- [9] Since this paper was written the Bollandists have issued a prospectus of an annual publication called "Analecta Bollandiana." From this document we learn that disease and death have now reduced the company very low. De Smedt has had to retire almost as soon as elected.
- [10] Cf., for instance, Colebrooke's "Life and Essays," i. 309. iii. 360, 399, 474; Wœpké, "Memoir on the Propagation of Indian Cyphers in Jour. Asiatique," 1863.

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ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND MADAGASCAR.

The present difficulties between France and Madagascar, and the recent arrival of a Malagasy Embassy in this country, have made the name of the great African island a familiar one to all readers of our daily journals during the last few weeks. For some time past we have heard much of certain "French claims" upon Madagascar, and alleged "French rights" there; and since the envoys of the Malagasy sovereign are now in England seeking the friendly offices of our Government on behalf of their country, it will be well for Englishmen to endeavour to understand the merits of the dispute, and to know why they are called to take part in the controversy.

Except to a section of the English public which has for many years taken a deep interest in the religious history of the island and given liberally both men and money to enlighten it, and to a few others who are concerned in its growing trade, Madagascar is still very vaguely known to the majority of English people; and, as was lately remarked by a daily journal, its name has until recently been almost as much a mere geographical expression as that of Mesopotamia. The island has, however, certain very interesting features in its scientific aspects, and especially in some religious and social problems which have been worked out by its people during the past fifty years; and these may be briefly described before proceeding to discuss the principal subject of this article.

Looking sideways at a map of the Southern Indian Ocean, Madagascar appears to rise like a huge sea monster out of the waters. The island has a remarkably compact and regular outline; for many hundred miles its eastern shore is almost a straight line, but on its north-western side it is indented by a number of deep land-locked gulfs, which include some of the finest harbours in the world. About a third of its interior to the north and east is occupied by an elevated mountainous region, raised from 3,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea, and consisting of Primary rocks—granite, gneiss, and basalt—probably very ancient land, and forming during the Secondary geological epoch an island much smaller than the Madagascar of to-day. While our Oolitic and Chalk rocks were being slowly laid down under northern seas, the extensive coast plains of the island, especially on its western and southern sides, were again and again under water, and are still raised but a few hundred feet above the sea-level. From south-east to north and north-west there extends a band of extinct volcanoes, connected probably with the old craters of the Comoro Group, where, in Great Comoro, the subterranean forces are still active. All round the island runs a girdle of dense forest, varying from ten to forty miles in width, and containing fine timber and valuable gums and other vegetable wealth—a paradise for botanists, where rare orchids, the graceful traveller's-tree, the delicate lattice-leaf plant, the gorgeous flamboyant, and many other elsewhere unknown forms of life abound, and where doubtless much still awaits fuller research.

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While the flora of Madagascar is remarkably abundant, its fauna is strangely limited, and contains none of the various and plentiful forms of mammalian life which make Southern and Central Africa the paradise of sportsmen. The ancient land of the island has preserved antique forms of life: many species of lemur make the forest resound with their cries; and these, with the curious and highly-specialized Aye-aye, and peculiar species of Viverridæ and Insectivora, are probably "survivals", of an old-world existence, when Madagascar was one of an archipelago of large islands, whose remains are only small islands like the Seychelles and Mascarene Groups, or coral banks and atolls like the Chagos, Amirante, and others, which are slowly disappearing beneath the ocean. Until two or three hundred years ago, the coast-plains of Madagascar were trodden by the great struthious bird, the Æpyornis, apparently the most gigantic member of the avi-fauna of the world, and whose enormous eggs probably gave rise to the stories of the Rukh of the "Arabian Nights." It will be evident, therefore, that Madagascar is full of interest as regards its scientific aspects.

When we look at the human inhabitants of the island there is also a considerable field for research, and some puzzling problems are presented. While Madagascar may be correctly termed "the great *African* island" as regards its geographical position, considered ethnologically, it is rather a Malayo-Polynesian island. Though so near Africa, it has but slight connection with the continent; the customs, traditions, language, and mental and physical characteristics of its people all tend to show that their ancestors came across the Indian Ocean from the south-east of Asia. There are traces of some aboriginal peoples in parts of the interior, but the dark and the brown Polynesians are probably both represented in the different Malagasy tribes; and although scattered somewhat thinly over an island a thousand miles long and four times as large as England and Wales, there is substantially but one language spoken throughout the whole of Madagascar. Of these people, the Hova, who occupy the central portion of the interior high-land, are the lightest in colour and the most civilized, and are probably the latest and purest Malay immigrants. Along the western coast are a number of tribes commonly grouped under the term *Sàkalàva*, but each having its own dialect, chief, and customs. They are nomadic in habits, keeping large herds of cattle, and are less given to agriculture than the central and eastern peoples. In the interior are found, besides the Hova, the *Sihànaka*, the *Bétsiléó*, and the *Bàra*; in the eastern forests are the *Tanàla*, and on the eastern coast are the *Bétsimisàraka*, *Tamòro*, *Taisàka*, and other allied peoples.

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From a remote period the various Malagasy tribes seem to have retained their own independence of each other, no one tribe having any great superiority; but about two hundred years ago a warlike south-western tribe called *Sàkalàva* conquered all the others on the west coast, and formed two powerful kingdoms, which exacted tribute also from some of the interior peoples. Towards the commencement of the present century, however, the Hova became predominant; having conquered the interior and eastern tribes, they were also enabled by friendship with England to subdue the *Sàkalàva*, and by the year 1824 King *Radàma I.* had established his authority over the whole of Madagascar except a portion of the south-west coast.

A little earlier than the date last named—viz., in 1820—a Protestant mission was commenced in the interior of the island at the capital city, *Antanànarivo*. This was with the full approval of the king, who was a kind of Malagasy Peter the Great, and ardently desired that his people should be enlightened. A small body of earnest men sent out by the London Missionary Society did a great work during the fifteen years they were allowed to labour in the central provinces. They reduced the beautiful and musical Malagasy language to a written form; they gave the people the beginnings of a native literature, and a complete version of the Holy Scriptures, and founded several Christian churches. Many of the useful arts were also taught by the missionary artisans; and to all appearance Christianity and civilization seemed likely soon to prevail throughout the country.

But the accession of Queen *Ranavàlona I.* in 1828, and, still more, her proclamation of 1835 denouncing Christian teaching, dispelled these pleasing anticipations. A severe persecution of Christianity ensued, which, however, utterly failed to prevent its progress, and only served to show in a remarkable manner the faith and courage of the native Christians, of whom at least two hundred were put to death. The political state of the country was also very deplorable during the queen's reign; almost all foreigners were excluded, and for some years even foreign commerce was forbidden.

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On the queen's death, in 1861, the island was reopened to trade and to Christian teaching, both of which have greatly progressed since that time, especially during the reign of the present sovereign, who made a public profession of Christianity at her accession in 1868. By the advice and with the co-operation of her able Prime Minister numerous wise and enlightened measures have been passed for the better government of the country; idolatry has entirely passed away from the central provinces; education and civilization have been making rapid advances; and all who hope for human progress have rejoiced to see how the Malagasy have been gradually rising to the position of a civilized and Christian people.

The present year has, however, brought a dark cloud over the bright prospects which have been opening up for Madagascar. Foreign aggression on the independence of the country is threatened on the part of France, and a variety of so-called "claims" have been put forward to justify interference with the Malagasy, and alleged "rights" are urged to large portions of their territory.

It is not perfectly clear why the present time has been chosen for this recent ebullition of French feeling, since, if any French rights ever existed to any portion of Madagascar, they might have been as justly (or unjustly) urged for the last forty years as now. Some three or four minor matters have no doubt been made the ostensible pretext,^[11] but the real reason is doubtless the same as that which has led to French attempts to obtain territory in Tongking, in the Congo Valley, in the Gulf of Aden, and in Eastern Polynesia, viz., a desire to retrieve abroad their loss of influence in Europe; and especially to heal the French *amour propre*, sorely wounded by their having allowed England to settle alone the Egyptian difficulty.

It is much to be wished that some definite and authoritative statement could be obtained from French statesmen or writers as to the exact claims now put forward and their justification, with some slight concession to the request of outsiders for reason and argument. As it is, almost every French newspaper seems to have a theory of its own, and we read a good deal about "our ancient rights," and "our acknowledged claims," together with similar vague and rather grandiose language. As far as can be ascertained, four different theories seem to be held:—(1) Some French

writers speak of their "ancient rights," as if the various utter failures of their nation to retain any military post in Madagascar in the 17th and 18th centuries were to be urged as giving rights of possession.

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(2) Others talk about "the treaties of 1841" with two rebellious Sàkalàva tribes as an ample justification of their present action.

(3) Others, again, refer to the repudiated and abandoned "Lambert treaty" of 1862 as, somehow or other, still giving the French a hold upon Madagascar. And (4) during the last few days we have been gravely informed that "France will insist upon carrying out the treaty of 1868," which gives no right in Madagascar to France beyond that given to every nation with whom a treaty has been made, and which says not one word about any French protectorate.^[12]

It will be necessary to examine these four points a little in detail.

1. Of what value are "ancient French rights" in Madagascar? These do not rest upon *discovery* of the country, or prior occupation of it, since almost every writer, French, English, or German, agrees that the Portuguese, in 1506, were the first Europeans to land on the island. They retained some kind of connection with Madagascar for many years; and so did the Dutch, for a shorter period, in the early part of the seventeenth century; and the English also had a small colony on the south-west side of the island before any French attempts were made at colonization. Three European nations therefore preceded the French in Madagascar.

During the seventeenth century, from 1643 to 1672, repeated efforts were made by the French to maintain a hold on three or four points of the east coast of the island. But these were not colonies, and were so utterly mismanaged that eventually the French were driven out by the exasperated inhabitants; and after less than thirty years' intermittent occupation of these positions, the country was abandoned by them altogether for more than seventy years.^[13] In the latter part of the eighteenth century fresh attempts were made (after 1745), but with little better result; one post after another was relinquished; so that towards the beginning of the present century the only use made of Madagascar by the French was for the slave-trade, and the maintenance of two or three trading stations for supplying oxen to the Mascarene Islands.^[14] In 1810 the capture of Mauritius and Bourbon by the British gave a decisive blow to French predominance in the Southern Indian Ocean; their two or three posts on the east coast were occupied by English troops, and were by us given over to Radàma I., who had succeeded in making himself supreme over the greater portion of the island. The French eventually seized the little island of Ste. Marie's, off the eastern coast, but retained not a foot of soil upon the mainland; and so ended, it might have been supposed, their "ancient rights" in Madagascar.^[15]

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It is, however, quite unnecessary to dwell further on this point, as the recognition by the French, in their treaty with Radàma II., of that prince as *King of Madagascar* was a sufficient renunciation of their ancient pretensions. This is indeed admitted by French writers. M. Galos, writing in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Oct. 1863, p. 700), says, speaking of the treaty of Sept. 2, 1861:—

"By that act, in which Radàma II. appears as King of Madagascar, we have recognized without restriction his sovereignty over all the island. In consequence of that recognition two consuls have been accredited to him, the one at Tanànarivo, the other at Tamatave, who only exercise their functions by virtue of an *exequatur* from the real sovereign."

Again he remarks:—?

"We see that France would not gain much by resuming her position anterior to 1861; also, we may add, without regret, that it is no longer possible. We have recognized in the King of Madagascar the necessary quality to enable him to treat with us on all the interests of the island. It does not follow, because he or his successors fail to observe the engagements that they have contracted, that therefore the quality aforesaid is lost, *or that we should have the right to refuse it to them for the future.*"^[16]

And the treaty of 1868 again, in which the present sovereign is recognized as "Reine de Madagascar," fully confirms the view of the French writer just cited.^[17]

2. Let us now look for a moment at the Lambert treaty, or rather charter, of 1862. On his accession to the throne in 1861, the young king, Radàma II., soon fell into follies and vices which were not a little encouraged by some Frenchmen who had ingratiated themselves with him. A Monsieur Lambert, a planter from Réunion, managed to obtain the king's consent to a charter conceding to a company to be formed by Lambert very extensive rights over the whole of Madagascar. The king's signature was obtained while he was in a state of intoxication, at a banquet given at the house of the French Consul, and against the remonstrances of all the leading people of the kingdom. But the concession was one of the principal causes of the revolution of the following year, in which the king lost both crown and life; and it was promptly repudiated by the new Sovereign and her Government, as a virtual abandonment of the country to France. Threats of bombardment, &c., were freely used, but at length it was arranged that, on the payment of an indemnity of a million francs by the native Government to the company, its rights should be abandoned. It is said that this pacific result was largely due to the good sense

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and kindly feeling of the Emperor Napoleon, who, on being informed of the progress in civilization and Christianity made by the Malagasy, refused to allow this to be imperilled by aggressive war. There would seem, then, to be no ground for present French action on the strength of the repudiated Lambert treaty.

3. As already observed, several French public prints have been loudly proclaiming that France is resolved "to uphold the treaty of 1868 in its entirety."^[18] It may with the same emphasis be announced that the Malagasy Government is equally resolved to uphold it, so far at least as they are concerned, especially its first article, which declares that "in all time to come the subjects of each power shall be friends, and shall preserve amity, and shall never fight." But it should be also carefully noted that this 1868 treaty recognizes unreservedly the Queen as Sovereign of *Madagascar*; makes no admission of, or allusion to, any of these alleged French rights, much less any protectorate; and is simply a treaty of friendship and commerce between two nations, standing, as far as power to make treaties is concerned, on an equal footing. If French statesmen, therefore, are sincere in saying that they only require the maintenance of the treaty of 1868 in its integrity, the difficulties between the two nations will soon be at an end.

But it is doubtful whether the foregoing is really a French "claim," as far more stress has been laid, and will still doubtless be laid, upon certain alleged treaties of 1841. What the value of these is we must now consider.

4. The facts connected with the 1841 treaties are briefly these:—In the year 1839 two of the numerous Sàkalàva tribes of the north-west of the island, who had since the conquest in 1824 been in subjection to the central government, broke into rebellion. It happened that a French war vessel was then cruising in those waters, and as the French had for some time previously lost all the positions they had ever occupied on the east coast, it appeared a fine opportunity for recovering prestige in the west. By presents and promises of protection they induced, it is alleged, the chieftainess of the Ibòina people, and the chief of the Tankàrana, further north, to cede to them their territories on the mainland, as well as the island of Nòsibé, off the north-west coast. These treaties are given by De Clercq, "Recueil de Traités," vol. iv. pp. 594, 597; but whether these half-barbarous Sàkalàva, ignorant of reading and writing, knew what they were doing, is very doubtful. Nòsibé was, however, taken possession of by the French in 1841, and has ever since then remained in their hands; but, curiously enough, until the present year, no claim has ever been put forward to any portion of the mainland, or any attempt made to take possession of it. But these treaties have been lately advanced as justifying very large demands on the part of the French, including (a) a protectorate over the portions ceded; (b) a protectorate over all the northern part of the island, from Mojangà across to Aritongil Bay; (c) a protectorate over all the western side of the island; finally (d), "general rights" (whatever these may mean) over all Madagascar! Most English papers have rightly considered these treaties as affording no justification for such large pretensions, although one or two^[19] have argued that the London press has unfairly depreciated the strength of French claims. Is this really so?

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The Malagasy Government and its envoys to Europe have strenuously denied the right of a rebellious tribe to alienate any portion of the country to a foreign power; a right which would never be recognized by any civilized nation, and which they will resist to the last. The following are amongst some of the reasons they urge as vitiating and nullifying any French claim upon the mainland founded upon the 1841 treaties:—

i. The territory claimed had been fairly conquered in war in 1824 by the Hova, and their sovereign rights had for many years never been disputed.

ii. The present queen and her predecessors had been acknowledged by the French in their treaties of 1868 and 1862 as sovereigns of Madagascar, without any reserve whatever. (See also *Revue des deux Mondes*, already cited.)

iii. Military posts have been established there, and customs duties collected by Hova officials ever since the country was conquered by them, and these have been paid without any demur or reservation by French as well as by all other foreign vessels. Some years ago complaints were made by certain French traders of overcharges; these were investigated, and money was refunded.

iv. All the Sàkalàva chiefs in that part of the island have at various times rendered fealty to the sovereign at Antanànarivo.

v. These same Sàkalàva, both princes and people, have paid a yearly poll-tax to the Central Government.

vi. The French flag has never been hoisted on the mainland of Madagascar, nor, for forty years, has any claim to this territory been made by France, nothing whatever being said about any rights or protectorate on their part in the treaties concluded during that period.

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vii. The Hova governors have occasionally (after the fashion set now and then by governors of more civilized peoples) oppressed the conquered races. But the Sàkalàva have always looked to the Queen at Antanànarivo for redress (and have obtained it), and never has any reference been made to France, nor has any jurisdiction been claimed by France or by the colonial French authorities in the matter.

viii. British war-vessels have for many years past had the right (conceded by our treaty of 1865) to cruise in these north-western bays, creeks, and rivers, for the prevention of the slave trade.

The British Consul has landed on this territory, and in conducting inquiries has dealt directly with the Hova authorities without the slightest reference to France, or any claim from the latter that he should do so.

ix. The French representatives in Madagascar have repeatedly blamed the Central Government for not asserting its authority more fully over the north-west coast; and several years ago, in the reign of Ranavàlona I., a French subject, with the help of a few natives, landed on this coast with the intention of working some of the mineral productions, and built a fortified post. Refusing to desist, he was attacked by the Queen's troops, and eventually killed. No complaint was ever made by the French authorities on account of this occurrence, as it was admitted to be the just punishment for an unlawful act. Yet it was done on what the French now claim as their territory.

x. And, lastly, France has quite recently (in May of this year) extorted a heavy money fine from the Malagasy Government for a so-called "outrage" committed by the Sàkalàva upon some Arabs from Mayotta, sailing under French colours. These latter were illegally attempting to land arms and ammunition, and were killed in the fight which ensued. The demand was grossly unjust, but the fact of its having been made would seem to all impartial persons to vitiate utterly all French claims to this territory, as an unmistakable acknowledgment of the Hova supremacy there.

Such are, as far as can be ascertained, the most important reasons recently put forth for French claims upon Madagascar, and the Malagasy replies thereto; and it would really be a service to the native Government and its envoys if some French writer of authority and knowledge would endeavour to refute the arguments just advanced.

Another point of considerable importance is the demand of the French that leases of ninety-nine years shall be allowed. This has been resisted by the Malagasy Government as most undesirable in the present condition of the country. It is, however, prepared to grant leases of thirty-five years, renewable on complying with certain forms. It argues, with considerable reason on its side, that unless all powers of obtaining land by foreigners are strictly regulated, the more ignorant coast people will still do as they are known to have done, and will make over, while intoxicated, large tracts of land to foreign adventurers for the most trifling consideration, such as a bottle of rum, or a similar payment.

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The question now arises, what have Englishmen to do in this matter, and what justifies our taking part in the dispute?

Let us first frankly make two or three admissions. We have no right to hinder, nor do we seek to prevent, the legitimate development of the colonial power of France. So far as France can replace savagery by true civilization, we shall rejoice in her advances in any part of the world. And further, we have no right to, nor do we pretend to the exercise of, the duty of police of the world. But at the same time, while we ought not and cannot undertake such extensive responsibilities, we have, in this part of the Indian Ocean, constituted ourselves for many years a kind of international police for the suppression of the slave-trade, in the interests of humanity and freedom; and this fact has been expressly or tacitly recognized by other European Powers. The sacrifices we have made to abolish slavery in our own colonies, and our commercial supremacy and naval power, have justified and enabled us to take this position. And, as we shall presently show, the supremacy of the French in Madagascar would certainly involve a virtual revival of the slave-trade.

It may also be objected by some that, as regards aggression upon foreign nations, we do not ourselves come into court with clean hands. We must with shame admit the accusation. But, on the other hand, we do not carry on religious persecution in the countries we govern; and, further, we have restored the Transvaal, we have retired from Afghanistan, and, notwithstanding the advocates of an "Imperialist" policy in Egypt, we are not going to retain the Nile Delta as a British province. And, as was well remarked in the *Daily News* lately, "such an argument proves a great deal too much. It would be fatal to the progress of public opinion as a moral agent altogether, and might fix the mistaken policy of a particular epoch as the standard of national ethics for all time."

What claim, then, has England to intervene in this dispute, and to offer mediation between France and Madagascar?

(a) England has greatly aided Madagascar to attain its present position as a nation. Largely owing to the help she gave to the enlightened Hova king, Radàma I., from 1817 to 1828, he was enabled to establish his supremacy over most of the other tribes of the island, and, in place of a number of petty turbulent chieftaincies, to form one strong central government, desirous of progress, and able to put down intestine wars, as well as the export slave-trade of the country. For several years a British agent, Mr. Hastie, lived at the Court of Radàma, exercising a powerful influence for good over the king, and doing very much for the advancement of the people. In later times, through English influence, and by the provisions of our treaty with Madagascar, the import slave-trade has been stopped, and a large section of the slave population—those of African birth, brought into the island by the Arab slaving dhows—has been set free (in June, 1877).

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(b) England has done very much during the last sixty years to develop civilization and enlightenment in Madagascar. The missionary workmen, sent out by the London Missionary

Society from 1820 to 1835, introduced many of the useful arts—viz., improved methods of carpentry, iron-working, and weaving, the processes of tanning, and several manufactures of chemicals, soap, lime-burning, &c.; and they also constructed canals and reservoirs for rice-culture.

From 1862 to 1882 the same Society's builders have introduced the use of brick and stone construction, have taught the processes of brick and tile manufacture and the preparation of slates, and have erected numerous stone and brick churches, schools, and houses; and these arts have been so readily learned by the people that the capital and other towns have been almost entirely rebuilt within the last fifteen years with dwellings of European fashion. England has also been the principal agent in the intellectual advance of the Malagasy; for, as already mentioned, English missionaries were the first to reduce the native language to a grammatical system, and to give the people their own tongue in a written form. They also prepared a considerable number of books, and founded an extensive school system.^[20] If we look at what England has done for Madagascar, a far more plausible case might be made out—were we so disposed—for "English claims" on the island, than any that France can produce.

(c) England has considerable political interests in preserving Madagascar free from French control. These should not be overlooked, as the influence of the French in those seas is already sufficiently strong. Not only are they established in the small islands of Ste. Marie and Nòsibé, off Madagascar itself, but they have taken possession of two of the Comoro group, Mayotta and Mohilla. Réunion is French; and although Mauritius and the Seychelles are under English government, they are largely French in speech and sympathy. And it must be remembered that the first instalment of territory which is now coveted includes five or six large gulfs, besides numerous inlets and river mouths, and especially the Bay of Diego Suarez, one of the finest natural harbours, and admirably adapted for a great naval station. The possession of these, and eventually of the whole of the island, would seriously affect the balance of power in the south-west Indian Ocean, making French influence preponderant in these seas, and in certain very possible political contingencies would be a formidable menace to our South African colonies.

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(d) We have also commercial interests in Madagascar which cannot be disregarded, because, although the island does not yet contribute largely to the commerce of the world, it is a country of great natural resources, and its united export and import trade, chiefly in English and American hands, is already worth about a million annually. Our own share of this is fourfold that of the French, and British subjects in Madagascar outnumber those of France in the proportion of five to one; and our valuable colony of Mauritius derives a great part of its food-supply from the great island.

But apart from the foregoing considerations, it is from no narrow jealousy that we maintain that French preponderance in Madagascar would work disastrously for freedom and humanity in that part of the world. We are not wholly free from blame ourselves with regard to the treatment of the coolie population of Mauritius; but it must be remembered that, although that island is English in government, its inhabitants are chiefly French in origin, and they retain a great deal of that utter want of recognition of the rights of coloured people which seems inherent in the French abroad. So that successive governors have been constantly thwarted by magistrates and police in their efforts to obtain justice for the coolie immigrants. A Commission of Inquiry in 1872, however, forced a number of reforms, and since then there has been little ground for complaint. But in the neighbouring island of Réunion the treatment of the Hindu coolies has been so bad that at length the Indian Government has refused to allow emigration thither any longer. For some years past French trading vessels have been carrying off from the north-west Madagascar coast hundreds of people for the Réunion plantations. Very lately a convention was made with the Portuguese authorities at Mozambique to supply coloured labourers for Réunion, and, doubtless, also with a view to sugar estates yet to be made in Madagascar—a traffic which is the slave-trade in all but the name. The French flag is sullied by being allowed to be used by slaving dhows—an iniquity owing to which our brave Captain Brownrigg met his death not long ago. Is it any exaggeration to say that an increase of French influence in these seas is one of sad omen for freedom?

And, further, a French protectorate over a part of the island would certainly work disastrously for the progress of Madagascar itself. It has been already shown that during the present century the country has been passing out of the condition of a collection of petty independent States into that of one strong Kingdom, whose authority is gradually becoming more and more firmly established over the whole island. And all hope of progress is bound up in the strengthening and consolidation of the central Hova Government, with capable governors representing its authority over the other provinces. But for many years past the French have depreciated and ridiculed the Hova power; and except M. Guillain, who, in his "Documents sur la Partie Occidentale de Madagascar," has written with due appreciation of the civilizing policy of Radàma I., there is hardly any French writer but has spoken evil of the central government, simply because every step taken towards the unification of the country makes their own projects less feasible. French policy is, therefore, to stir up the outlying tribes, where the Hova authority is still weak, to discontent and rebellion, and so cause internecine war, in which France will come in and offer "protection" to all rebels. Truly a noble "mission" for a great and enlightened European nation!

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After acknowledging again and again the sovereign at Antanànarivo as "Queen of Madagascar," the French papers have lately begun to style Her Majesty "Queen of the Hovas," as if there were not a dozen other tribes over whom even the French have never disputed her authority; while they write as if the Sàkalàva formed an independent State, with whom they had a perfect right to

conclude treaties. More than this: after making treaties with at least two sovereigns of Madagascar, accrediting consuls to them and receiving consuls appointed by them, a portion of the French press has just discovered that the Malagasy are "a barbarous people," with whom it would be derogatory to France to meet on equal terms.^[21] Let us see what this barbarous Malagasy Government has been doing during the last few years:—

i. It has put an end to idolatry in the central and other provinces, and with it a number of cruel and foolish superstitions, together with the use of the *Tangéna* poison-ordeal,^[22] infanticide, polygamy, and the unrestricted power of divorce.

ii. It has codified, revised, and printed its laws, abolishing capital punishment (formerly carried out in many cruel forms), except for the crimes of treason and murder.

iii. It has set free a large portion of the slave population, indeed all African slaves brought from beyond the seas, and has passed laws by which no Malagasy can any longer be reduced to slavery for debt or for political offences.

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iv. It has largely limited the old oppressive feudal system of the country, and has formed a kind of responsible Ministry, with departments of foreign affairs, war, justice, revenue, trade, schools, &c.

v. It has passed laws for compulsory education throughout the central provinces, by which the children in that part of the island are now being educated.

vi. It has begun to remodel its army, putting it on a basis of short service, to which all classes are liable, so as to consolidate its power over the outlying districts, and bring all the island under the action of the just and humane laws already described.

vii. It has made the planting of the poppy illegal, subjecting the offender to a very heavy fine.

viii. It has passed several laws forbidding the manufacture and importation of ardent spirits into Imérina, and is anxious for powers in the treaties now to be revised to levy a much heavier duty at the ports.

We need not ask if these are the acts of a barbarous nation, or whether it would be for the interests of humanity and civilization and progress if the disorderly elements which still remain in the country should be encouraged by foreign interference to break away from the control they have so long acknowledged. It is very doubtful whether any European nation has made similar progress in such a short period as has this Hova Government of Madagascar.

It may also be remarked that although it has also been the object of the French to pose as the friends of the Sàkalàva, whom they represent as down-trodden, it is a simple matter of fact that for many years past these people have been in peaceable subjection to the Hova authority. The system of government allows the local chiefs to retain a good deal of their former influence so long as the suzerainty of the Queen at Antanànarivo is acknowledged. And a recent traveller through this north-west district, the Rev. W. C. Pickersgill, testifies that on inquiring of every tribe as to whom they paid allegiance, the invariable reply was, "To Ranavàlo-manjàka, Queen of Madagascar." It is indeed extremely probable that, in counting upon the support of these north-westerly tribes against the central government, the French are reckoning without their host, and will find enemies where they expect allies.^[23] In fact, the incident which was one of the chief pretexts for the revival of these long-dormant claims—the hoisting of the Queen's flag at two places—really shows how well disposed the people are to the Hova Government, and how they look to the Queen for justice.

It will perhaps be asked, Have we any diplomatic standing-ground for friendly intervention on behalf of the Malagasy? I think there are at least two considerations which—altogether apart from our commercial and political interests in the freedom of the country, and what we have done for it in various ways—give us a right to speak in this question. One is, that there has for many years past been an understanding between the Governments of France and England that neither would take action with regard to Madagascar without previous consultation with each other.^[24] We are then surely entitled to speak if the independence of the island is threatened. Another reason is, that we are to a great extent pledged to give the Hova Government some support by the words spoken by our Special Envoy to the Queen Ranavàlona last year. Vice-Admiral Gore-Jones then repeated the assurance of the understanding above-mentioned, and encouraged the Hova Government to consolidate their authority on the west coast, and, in fact, his language stimulated them to take that action there which the French have made a pretext for their present interference.^[25]

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In taking such a line of action England seeks no selfish ends. We do not covet a foot of Madagascar territory; we ask no exclusive privileges; but I do maintain that what we have done for Madagascar, and the part we have taken in her development and advancement, gives us a claim and imposes on us an obligation to stand forward on her behalf against those who would break her unity and consequently her progress. The French will have no easy task to conquer the country if they persist in their demands; the Malagasy will not yield except to overwhelming force, and it will prove a war bringing heavy cost and little honour to France.

May I not appeal to all right-minded and generous Frenchmen that their influence should also be in the direction of preserving the freedom of this nation?—one of the few dark peoples who have

shown an unusual receptivity for civilization and Christianity, who have already advanced themselves so much, and who will still, if left undisturbed, become one united and enlightened nation.

It will be to the lasting disgrace of France if she stirs up aggressive war, and so throws back indefinitely all the remarkable progress made by the Malagasy during the past few years; and it will be hardly less to our own discredit if we, an insular nation, jealous of the inviolability of our own island, show no practical sympathy with another insular people, and do not use every means that can be employed to preserve to Madagascar its independence and its liberties.

JAMES SIBREE, Jun.

FOOTNOTES:

- [11] The single act which led to the revival of these long-forgotten claims upon the north-west coast, was the hoisting of the Queen's flag by two native Sàkalàva chieftains in their villages. These were hauled down, and carried away in a French gun-boat, and the flag-staves cut up.
- [12] This last claim must be preferred either in perfect ignorance of what the 1868 treaty really is, or as an attempt to throw dust in the eyes of the newspaper-reading public.
- [13] It is true that during these seventy years various edicts claiming the country we issued by Louis XIV.; but as the French during all that time did not attempt to occupy a single foot of territory in Madagascar, these grandiloquent proclamations can hardly be considered as of much value. As has been remarked, French pretensions were greatest when their actual authority was least.
- [14] See "Précis sur les Etablissements Français formés à Madagascar." Paris, 1836, p.4.
- [15] For fuller details as to the character of French settlements in Madagascar, their gross mismanagement and bad treatment of the people, see Statement of the Madagascar Committee; and *Souvenirs de Madagascar*, par M. le Dr. H. Lacaze: Paris, 1881, p. xviii.
- [16] The italics are my own.
- [17] See also letter of Bishop Ryan, late of Mauritius, *Daily News*, Dec. 16.
- [18] See *Daily News*, Nov. 30 and Dec. 1; *La Liberté*, Nov. 29, and *Le Parlement* of same date. Both these French journals speak of an "Act by which the Tanànarivo Government cancelled the Treaty of 1868" (*Le Parlement*), and of its being "annulled by Queen Ranavàlona of her own authority" (*La Liberté*). It is only necessary to say that no such "Act" ever had any existence, save in the fertile brains of French journalists, and it is now brought forward apparently with a view to excite animosity towards the Malagasy in the minds of their readers.
- [19] *E.g.*, *The Manchester Guardian*, Dec. 1st., 5th., and 6th.
- [20] Almost all Malagasy words for military tactics and rank are of English origin, so are many of the words used for building operations, and the influence of England is also shown by the fact that almost all the words connected with education and literature are from us, such as school, class, lesson, pen, copybook, pencil, slate, book, gazette, press, print, proof, capital, period, &c., grammar, geography, addition, &c.
- [21] See *Le Parlement*, Dec. 15, and other French papers.
- [22] Among the many unfair statements of the Parisian press is an article in *Le Rappel*, of Oct. 29, copied by many other papers, in which this Tangéna ordeal is described as if it was now a practice of the Malagasy, the intention being, of course, to lead its readers to look upon them as still barbarous; the fact being that its use has been obsolete ever since 1865 (Art. XVIII. of English Treaty), and its practice is a capital offence, as a form of treason. The Malagasy Envoys are represented as saying that their Supreme Court often condemned criminals to death by its use!
- [23] See Tract No. II. of the Madagascar Committee.
- [24] See Lord Granville's speech in reply to the address of the Madagascar Committee, Nov. 28.
- [25] The Admiral, so it is reported on good authority, congratulated the Queen and her Government on having solved the question of Madagascar by showing that the Hova could govern it. He also said that France and England were in perfect accord on this point, and on the wisdom of recognizing Queen Ranavàlona as sovereign of the whole island. See *Daily News*, Dec. 14. This will no doubt be confirmed by the publication of the official report which has been asked for by Mr. G. Palmer, M.P.

THE RELIGIOUS FUTURE OF THE WORLD.

PART THE FIRST.

I.

I suppose there are few students of man and of society to whom the present religious condition and apparent religious prospect of the world can seem very satisfactory. If there is any lesson clear from history it is this; that, in every age religion has been the main stay both of private life and of the public order,—“the substance of humanity,” as Quinet well expresses it, “whence issue, as by so many necessary consequences, political institutions, the arts, poetry, philosophy, and, up to a certain point, even the sequence of events.”^[26] The existing civilization of Europe and America—I use the word civilization in its highest and widest sense, and mean by it especially the laws, traditions, beliefs, and habits of thought and action, whereby individual family and social life is governed—is mainly the work of Christianity. The races which inhabit the vast Asiatic Continent are what they are chiefly from the influence of Buddhism and Mohammedanism, of the Brahminical, Confucian, and Taosean systems. In the fetichism of the rude tribes of Africa, still in the state of the childhood of humanity, we have what has been called the *parler enfantin* of religion:—it is that rude and unformed speech, as of spiritual babes and sucklings, which principally makes them to differ from the anthropoid apes of their tropical forests: “un peuple est compté pour quelque chose le jour où il s'élève à la pensée de Dieu.”^[27] But the spirit of the age is unquestionably hostile to all these creeds from the highest to the lowest. In Europe there is a movement—of its breadth and strength I shall say more presently—the irreconcilable hostility of which to “all religion and all religiosity,” to use the words of the late M. Louis Blanc, is written on its front. Thought is the most contagious thing in the world, and in these days pain unchanged, but with no firm ground of faith, no “hope both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil,” no worthy object of desire whereby man may erect himself above himself, whence he may derive an indefectible rule of conduct, a constraining incentive to self-sacrifice, an adequate motive for patient endurance,—such is the vision of the coming time, as it presents itself to many of the most thoughtful and competent observers.

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II.

In these circumstances it is natural that so thoughtful and competent an observer as the author of “Ecce Homo” should take up his parable. And assuredly few who have read that beautiful book, so full of lofty musing, and so rich in pregnant suggestion, however superficial and inconsequent, will have opened the volume which he has recently given to the world without high expectation. It will be remembered that in his preface to his former work, he tells us that he was dissatisfied with the current conceptions of Christ, and unable to rest content without a definite opinion regarding Him, and so was led to trace His biography from point to point, with a view of accepting those conclusions about Him which the facts themselves, weighed critically, appeared to warrant. And now, after the lapse of well-nigh two decades, the author of “Ecce Homo” comes forward to consider the religious outlook of the world. Surely a task for which he is in many respects peculiarly well-fitted. Wide knowledge of the modern mind, broad sympathies, keen and delicate perceptions, freedom from party and personal ends, and a power of graceful and winning statement must, upon all hands, be conceded to him. What such a man thinks on such a subject, is certain to be interesting; and, whether we agree with it or not, is as certain to be suggestive. I propose, therefore, first of all to consider what may be learnt about the topic with which I am concerned, from this new book on “Natural Religion,” and I shall then proceed to deal with it in my own way.

The author of “Natural Religion” starts with the broad assumption that “supernaturalism” is discredited by modern “science.” I may perhaps, in passing, venture to express my regret that in an inquiry demanding, from its nature and importance, the utmost precision of which human speech is capable, the author has in so few cases clearly and rigidly limited the sense of the terms which he employs. “Supernaturalism,” for example, is a word which may bear many different meanings; which, as a matter of fact, does bear, I think, for me a very different meaning from that which it bears for the author of “Natural Religion.” So, again, “science” in this book, is tacitly assumed to denote physical science only: and what an assumption, as though there were no other sciences than the physical! This in passing. I shall have to touch again upon these points hereafter. For the present let us regard the scope and aim of this discourse of Natural Religion, as the author states it. He finds that the supernatural portion of Christianity, as of all religions, is widely considered to be discredited by physical science. “Two opposite theories of the Universe” (p. 26) are before men. The one propounded by Christianity “is summed up,” as he deems, “in the three propositions, that a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe, that that Will is perfectly benevolent, that that Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the Universe” (p. 13). The other he states as follows:—“Science opposes to God Nature. When it denies God it denies the existence of any power beyond or superior to Nature; and it may deny at the same time anything like a *cause* of Nature. It believes in certain laws of co-existence and sequence in phenomena, and in denying God it means to deny that anything further can be known” (p. 17). “For what is God—so the argument runs—but a hypothesis, which religious men have mistaken for a demonstrated reality? And is it not precisely against such premature hypotheses that science most strenuously protests? That a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe—this might stand very well as a hypothesis to work with, until facts should either confirm it, or force it to give way to another, either different or at least modified. That this Personal Will is benevolent, and is shown to be so by the facts of the Universe, which evince a providential care for man and other animals—this is just one of those plausibilities which passed muster before scientific method was understood, but modern science rejects it as unproved. Modern science holds that there may be design in the Universe, but that to penetrate the design is, and probably always will be, beyond the power of the human understanding. That this Personal Will has on particular

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occasions revealed itself by breaking through the customary order of the Universe, and performing what are called miracles—this, it is said, is one of those legends of which histories were full, until a stricter view of evidence was introduced, and the modern critical spirit sifted thoroughly the annals of the world" (p. 11). These, in our author's words, are the two opposite theories of the Universe before the world: two "mortally hostile" (p. 13) theories; the one "the greatest of all affirmations;" "the other the most fatal of all negations," (p. 26) and the latter, as he discerns, is everywhere making startling progress. "The extension of the *methods* of physical science to the whole domain of human knowledge," he notes as the most important "change of system in the intellectual world" (p. 7). "No one," he continues, "needs to be told what havoc this physical method is making with received systems, and it produces a sceptical disposition of mind towards primary principles which have been of steam locomotion and electric telegraphs, of cheap literature and ubiquitous journalism, ideas travel with the speed of light, and the influences which are warring against the theologies of Europe are certainly acting as powerful solvents upon the religious systems of the rest of the world. But apart from the loud and fierce negation of the creed of Christendom which is so striking a feature of the present day, there is among those who nominally adhere to it a vast amount of unaggressive doubt. Between the party which avowedly aims at the destruction of "all religion and all religiosity," at the delivery of man from what it calls the "nightmare" or "the intellectual whoredom" of spiritualism, and those who cling with undimmed faith to the religion of their fathers, there is an exceeding great multitude who are properly described as sceptics. It is even more an age of doubt than of denial. As Chateaubriand noted, when the century was yet young, "we are no longer living in times when it avails to say 'Believe and do not examine:' people will examine whether we like it or not." And since these words were written, people have been busily examining in every department of human thought, and especially in the domain of religion. In particular Christianity has been made the subject of the most searching scrutiny. How indeed could we expect that it should escape? The greatest fact in the annals of the modern world, it naturally invites the researches of the historian. The basis of the system of ethics still current amongst us, it peremptorily claims the attention of the sociologist. The fount of the metaphysical conceptions accepted in Europe, until in the last century, before the "uncreating word" of Lockian sensism,

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"Philosophy that leaned on Heaven before
Sinks to her second cause, and is no more,"

it challenges the investigation of the psychologist. The practical result of these inquiries must be allowed to be, to a large extent, negative. In many quarters, where thirty or forty years ago we should certainly have found acquiescence, honest if dull, in the received religious systems of Europe, we now discern incredulity, more or less far-reaching, about "revealed religion" altogether, and, at the best, "faint possible Theism," in the place of old-fashioned orthodoxy. And earnest men, content to bear as best they may their own burden of doubt and disappointment, do not dissemble to themselves that the immediate outlook is dark and discouraging. Like the French monarch they discern the omens of the deluge to come after them; a vast shipwreck of all faith, and all virtue, of conscience, of God; brute force, embodied in an omnipotent State, the one ark likely to escape submersion in the pitiless waters. A world from which the high sanctions of religion, hitherto the binding principle of society, are relegated to the domain of old wives' fables; a march through life with its brief dream of pleasure and long reality of thought to lie deeper than *all* systems. Those current abstractions, which make up all the morality and all the philosophy of most people, have been brought under suspicion. Mind and matter, duties and rights, morality and expediency, honour and interest, virtue and vice—all these words, which seemed once to express elementary and certain realities, now strike us as just the words which, thrown into the scientific crucible, might dissolve at once. It is thus not merely philosophy which is discredited, but just that homely and popular wisdom by which common life is guided. This too, it appears, instead of being the sterling product of plain experience, is the overflow of an immature philosophy, the redundancy of the uncontrolled speculations of thinkers who were unacquainted with scientific method" (p. 8). And then, moreover, there is that great political movement which has so largely and directly affected the course of events and the organization of society on the Continent of Europe, and which in less measure, and with more covert operation, has notably modified our own ways of thinking and acting in this country. Now the Revolution in its ultimate or Jacobin phase, is the very manifestation, in the public order, of the tendency which in the intellectual calls itself "scientific." It bitterly and contemptuously rejects the belief in the supernatural hitherto accepted in Europe. It wages implacable war upon the ancient theology of the world. "It delights in declaring itself atheistic"^[28] (p. 37). It has "a quarrel with theology as a doctrine. 'Theology,' it says, even if not exactly opposed to social improvement, is a superstition, and as such allied to ignorance and conservatism. Granting that its precepts are good, it enforces them by legends and fictitious stories which can only influence the uneducated, and therefore in order to preserve its influence it must needs oppose education. Nor are these stories a mere excrescence of theology, but theology itself. For theology is neither more nor less than a doctrine of the supernatural. It proclaims a power behind nature which occasionally interferes with natural laws. It proclaims another world quite different from this in which we live, a world into which what is called the soul is believed to pass at death. It believes, in short, in a number of things which students of Nature know nothing about, and which science puts aside either with respect or with contempt.

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These supernatural doctrines are not merely a part of theology, still less separable from theology, but theology consists exclusively of them. Take away the supernatural Person, miracles, and the spiritual world, you take away theology at the same time, and nothing is left but simple Nature

and simple Science" (p. 39). Such, as the author of "Ecce Homo" considers, is "the question between religion and science" now before the world. And his object^[29] in his new work is not to inquire whether the "negative conclusions so often drawn from modern scientific discoveries are warranted," still less to refute them, but to estimate "the precise amount of destruction caused by them," admitting, for the sake of argument, that they are true. His own judgment upon their truth he expressly reserves, with the cautious remarks, that "it is not the greatest scientific authorities who are so confident in negation, but rather the inferior men who echo their opinions:"^[30] that "it is not on the morrow of great discoveries that we can best judge of their negative effect upon ancient beliefs:" and that he is "disposed to agree with those who think that in the end the new views of the Universe will not gratify an extreme party quite so much as is now supposed."^[31]

The argument, then, put forward in "Natural Religion," and put forward, as I understand the author, tentatively, and for what it is worth, and by no means as expressing his own assured convictions, is this:—that to banish the supernatural from the human mind is "not to destroy theology or religion or even Christianity, but in some respects to revive and purify all three:"^[32] that supernaturalism is not of the essence but of the accidents of religion; that "the *unmiraculous* part of the Christian tradition has a value which was long hidden from view by the blaze of supernaturalism," and "that so much will this unmiraculous part gain by being brought, for the first time into full light ... that faith may be disposed to think even that she is well rid of miracle, and that she would be indifferent to it, even if she could still believe it" (p. 254). That religion in some form or another is essential to the world, the author apparently no more doubts than I do: indeed he expressly warns us that "at this moment we are threatened with a general dissolution of states from the decay of religion" (p. 211). "If religion fails us," these are his concluding words, "it is only when human life itself is proved to be worthless. It may be doubtful whether life is worth living, but if religion be what it has been described in this book, the principle by which alone life is redeemed from secularity and animalism, ... can it be doubtful that if we are to live at all we must live, and civilization can only live, by religion?" And now let us proceed to see what is the hope set before us in this book: and consider whether the Natural Religion, which it unfolds, is such a religion as the world can live by, as civilization can live by.

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III.

The author of "Natural Religion," it will be remembered, assumes for the purposes of his argument, that the supernatural portion of Christianity is discredited, is put aside by physical science; that, as M. Renan has somewhere tersely expressed it, "there is no such thing as the supernatural, but from the beginning of being everything in the world of phenomena was preceded by regular laws." Let us consider what this involves. It involves the elimination from our creed, not only of the miraculous incidents in the history of the Founder of Christianity, including, of course, His Resurrection—the fundamental fact, upon which, from St. Paul's time to our own, His religion has been supposed to rest—but all the beliefs, aspirations, hopes, attaching to that religion as a system of grace. It destroys theology, because it destroys that idea of God from which theology starts, and which it professes to unfold. This being so, it might appear that religion is necessarily extinguished too. Certainly, in the ordinary sense which the word bears among us, it is. "Religio," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, "est virtus reddens debitum honorem Deo."^[33] And so Cardinal Newman, somewhat more fully, "By religion I mean the knowledge of God, of His will, and of our duties towards Him;" and he goes on to say that "there are three main channels which Nature furnishes us for our acquiring this knowledge—viz., our own minds, the voice of mankind, and the course of the world, that is, of human life and human affairs."^[34] But that, of course, is very far from being what the author of "Ecce Homo" means by religion, and by natural religion, in his new book. Its key-note is struck in the words of Wordsworth cited on its title-page:—"We live by admiration."^[35] Religion he understands to be an "ardent condition of the feelings," "habitual and regulated admiration" (p. 129), "worship of whatever in the known Universe appears worthy of worship" (p. 161). "To have an individuality," he teaches, "is to have an ideal, and to have an ideal is to have an object of worship: it is to have a religion" (p. 136). "Irreligion," on the other hand, is defined as "life without worship," and is said to consist in "the absence of habitual admiration, and in a state of the feelings, not ardent but cold and torpid" (p. 129). It would appear then that religion, in its new sense, is enthusiasm of well-nigh any kind, but particularly the enthusiasm of morality, which is "the religion of right," the enthusiasm of art, which is "the religion of beauty," and the enthusiasm of physical science, which is "the religion of law and of truth" (p. 125).^[36] "Art and science," we read, "are not secular, and it is a fundamental error to call them so; they have the nature of religion" (p. 127). "The popular Christianity of the day, in short, is for the artist too melancholy and sedate, and for the man of science too sentimental and superficial; in short, it is too melancholy for the one, and not melancholy enough for the other. They become, therefore, dissenters from the existing religion; sympathizing too little with the popular worship, they worship by themselves and dispense with outward forms. But they protest at the same time that, in strictness, they separate from the religious bodies around them, only because they know of a purer or a happier religion" (p. 126). It is useful to turn, from time to time, from the abstract to the concrete, in order to steady and purge our mental vision. Let us therefore, in passing, gaze upon Théophile Gautier, the high priest of the pride of human form, whose unspeakably impure romance has been pronounced by Mr. Swinburne to be "the holy writ of beauty;" and, on the other, upon Schopenhauer, the most thorough-going and consistent of physicists, who reduces all philosophy to a cosmology, and consider whether, the author of "Ecce Homo" himself being judge, the religion of the one can be maintained to be purer

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or that of the other to be happier, than the most degraded form of popular Christianity. I proceed to his declaration, which naturally follows from what has been said, that the essence of religion is not in theological dogma nor in ethical practice. The really religious man, as we are henceforth to conceive of him, is, apparently, the man of sentiment. "The substance of religion is culture," which is "a threefold devotion to Goodness, Beauty, and Truth," and "the fruit of it the higher life" (p. 145). And the higher life is "the influence which draws men's thoughts away from their personal existence, making them intensely aware of other existences, to which it binds them by strong ties, sometimes of admiration, sometimes of awe, sometimes of duty, sometimes of love" (p. 236). And as in the individual religion is identified with culture, so, "in its public aspect" "it is identical with civilization" (p. 201), which "expresses the same threefold religion, shown on a larger scale, in the character, institutions, and ways of life of nations" (p. 202). "The great civilized community" is "the modern city of God" (p. 204).

But what God? Clearly not that God spoken of by St. Paul—or the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever he was—"the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant;" for that God, the Creator, Witness, and Judge of men—is assuredly *Deus absconditus*, a hidden God, belonging to "the supernatural;" and the hypothesis upon which the author of "Ecce Homo" proceeds in his new work is that men have "ceased to believe in anything beyond Nature" (p. 76). The best thing for them to do, therefore, he suggests, if they must have a God, is to deify Nature. But "Nature, considered as the residuum that is left after the elimination of everything supernatural, comprehends man with all his thoughts and aspirations, not less than the forms of the material world" (p. 78). God, therefore, in the new Natural Religion, is to be conceived of as Physical "Nature, including Humanity" (p. 69), or "the unity which all things compose in virtue of the universal presence of the same laws" (p. 87), which would seem to be no more than a Pantheistic expression, its exact value being all that exists, the totality of forces, of beings, and of forms. The author of "Natural Religion" does not seem to be sanguine that this new Deity will win the hearts of men. He anticipates, indeed, the objection "that when you substitute Nature for God you take a thing heartless and pitiless instead of love and goodness." To this he replies, "If we abandoned our belief in the supernatural, it would not be only inanimate Nature that would be left to us; we should not give ourselves over, as is often rhetorically described, to the mercy of merciless powers—winds and waves, earthquakes, volcanoes, and fire. The God we should believe in would not be a passionless, utterly inhuman power." "Nature, in the sense in which we are now using the word, includes humanity, and therefore, so far from being pitiless, includes all the pity that belongs to the whole human race, and all the pity that they have accumulated, and, as it were, capitalised in institutions political, social and ecclesiastical, through countless generations" (pp. 68-9).

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He, then, who would not "shock modern views of the Universe" (p. 157) must thus think of the Deity. And so Atheism acquires a new meaning. "It is," we read, "a disbelief in the *existence* of God—that is, a disbelief in *any* regularity in the Universe to which a man must conform himself under penalties" (p. 27); a definition which surely is a little hard upon the *libres-penseurs*, as taking the bread out of their mouths. I remember hearing, not long ago, in Paris, of a young Radical diplomatist who, with the good taste which characterizes the school now dominant in French politics, took occasion to mention to a well-known ecclesiastical statesman that he was an Atheist. "O de l'athéisme à votre âge," said the Nuncio, with a benign smile: "pourquoi, quand l'impiété suffit et ne vous engage à rien?" But with the new signification imposed upon the word, a profession of Atheism would pledge one in quite another sense: it would be equivalent to a profession of insanity; for where, except among the wearers of strait-waistcoats or the occupants of padded rooms, shall we find a man who does not believe in some regularity in the universe to which he must conform himself under penalties? But let us follow the author of "Natural Religion" a step further in his inquiry. "In what relation does this religion stand to our Christianity, to our churches, and religious denominations?" (p. 139). Certainly, we may safely agree with him that "it has a difficulty in identifying itself with any of the organized systems," and as safely that the "conception of a spiritual city," of an "organ of civilization," of an "interpreter of human society," is "precisely what is now needed" (p. 223). "The tide of thought, scepticism, and discovery, which has set in ... must be warded off the institutions which it attacks as recklessly as if its own existence did not depend upon them. It introduces everywhere a sceptical condition of mind, which it recommends as the only way to real knowledge; and yet if such scepticism became practical, if large communities came to regard every question in politics and law as absolutely open, their institutions would dissolve, and science, among other things, would be buried in the ruin. Modern thought brings into vogue a speculative Nihilism ... but unintentionally it creates at the same time a practical Nihilism.... There is a mine under modern society which, if we consider it, has been the necessary result of the abeyance in recent times of the idea of the Church" (p. 208). In fact, as our author discerns, the existence of civilization is at stake. "It can live only by religion" (p. 262). "On religion depends the whole fabric of civilization, all the future of mankind" (p. 218). The remedy which he suggests is that the Natural Religion which we have been considering, the new "universal religion," should "be concentrated in a doctrine," should "embody itself in a Church" (p. 207). "This Church," we are told, "exists already, a vast communion of all who are inspired by the culture and civilization of the age. But it is unconscious, and perhaps, if it could attain to consciousness, it might organize itself more deliberately and effectively" (p. 212). The precise mode of such organization is not indicated, but its main function it appears would be to diffuse an "adequate doctrine of civilization," and especially to teach "science," in "itself a main part of religion, as the grand revelation of God in these later times," and also the theory "of the gradual development of human society, which alone can explain to us the past state of affairs,

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"If we really believe that a case can be made out for civilization, this case must be presented by popular teachers, and their most indispensable qualification will be independence. They perhaps will be able to show, that happiness or even universal comfort is not, and never has been, within quite so easy reach, that it cannot be taken by storm, and that as for the institutions left us from the past they are no more diabolical than they are divine, being the fruit of necessary development far more than of free-will or calculation. Such teachers would be the free clergy of modern civilization. It would be their business to investigate and to teach the true relation of man to the universe and to society, the true Ideal he should worship, the true vocation of particular nations, the course which the history of mankind has taken hitherto, in order that upon a full view of what is possible and desirable men may live and organize themselves for the future. In short, the modern Church is to do what Hebrew prophecy did in its fashion for the Jews, and what bishops and Popes did according to their lights for the Roman world when it laboured in the tempest, and for barbaric tribes first submitting themselves to be taught. Another grand object of the modern Church would be to teach and organize the outlying world, which for the first time in history now lies prostrate at the feet of Christian civilization. Here are the ends to be gained. These once recognized, the means are to be determined by their fitness alone" (p. 221).

IV.

So much must suffice to indicate the essential features of the religion which would be left us after the elimination of the supernatural. And now we are to consider whether this religion will suffice for the wants of the world; whether it is a religion "which shall appeal to the sense of duty as forcibly, preach righteousness and truth, justice and mercy, as solemnly and as exclusively as Christianity itself does" (p. 157). Surely to state the question is enough. In fact the author of "Natural Religion" quite recognizes that "to many, if not most, of those who feel the need of religion, all that has been offered in this book will perhaps at first seem offered in derision" (p. 260), and frankly owns that "whether it deserves to be called a faith at all, whether it justifies men in living, and in calling others into life, may be doubted" (p. 66). He tells us that "the thought of a God revealed in Nature," which he has suggested, does not seem to him "by any means satisfactory, or worthy to replace the Christian view, or even as a commencement from which we must rise by logical necessity to the Christian view" (p. 25) and it must be hard not to agree with him. It is difficult to suppose that any one who considers the facts of life, who contemplates not the *individua vaga* of theories, but the men and women of this working-day world can think otherwise. Surely no one who really surveys mankind as they are, as they have been in the past, and, so far as we are able to judge, will be in the future, can suppose that this Natural Religion, even if embodied in a Natural Church, and equipped with "a free clergy," will meet their wants, or win their affections, or satisfy those "strange yearnings" of which we read in Plato, and which, in one form or another, stir every human soul; which we may trace in the chatterings of the poor Neapolitan crone to her Crucifix, or in the hallelujahs of "Happy Sal" at a Salvationist "Holiness Meeting," as surely as in the profoundest speculations of the Angelic Doctor, or in the loftiest periods of Bossuet. Can any one, in this age of all others, when, as the revelations of the physical world bring home to us so overwhelmingly what Pascal calls "the abyss of the boundless immensity of which I know nothing, and you know nothing," man sinks to an insignificance which, the apt word of the author of "Natural Religion" "petrifies" him, can—can any one believe that the compound of Pantheistic Positivism and Christian sentiment—if we may so account of it—set forth in these brilliant pages, will avail to redeem men from animalism and secularity? But, indeed, we need not here rest in the domain of mere speculation. The experiment has been tried. Not quite a century ago, when Chaumette's "Goddess of Reason," and Robespierre's "Supreme Being," had disappeared from the altars of France, La Reveillère-Lepeaux essayed to introduce a Natural Religion under the name of Theophilanthropy^[37] to satisfy the spiritual needs of the country over which he ruled as a member of the Directory, Chernin Dupontés, Dupont de Nemours and Bernardin de St. Pierre constituting with himself the four Evangelists of the new cult. The first mentioned of these must, indeed, be regarded as its inventor, and his "Manuel des Théophilanthrophes" supplies the fullest exposition of it. But it was La Reveillère-Lepeaux whose influence gave form and actuality to the speculations of Chemin, and whose credit obtained for the new sect the use of some dozen of the principal churches of Paris, and of the choir and organ of Notre Dame. The formal *début* of the new religion may, perhaps, be dated from the 1st of May, 1797, when La Reveillère read to the Institute a memoir in which he justified its introduction upon grounds very similar to those urged in our own day against "the theological view of the universe." Moreover, he insisted that Catholicism was opposed to sound morality, that its worship was antisocial, and that its clergy—whom he contemptuously denominated *la prêtraille*, and whom he did his best to exterminate—were the enemies of the human race. In its leading features the new Church resembled very closely the system which we have just been considering, offered to the world by the author of "Ecce Homo." It identified the Deity with Nature.^[38] religion, considered subjectively, with sentiment, and objectively, with civilization; and it regarded Atheists and the adherents of all forms of faith—with the sole exception of Catholics—as eligible for its communion. Its dogmas, if one may so speak, were a hotchpotch of fine phrases about beauty, truth, right, and the like, culled from writers of all creeds and of no

creed. Its chief public function consisted in the singing of a hymn to "the Father of the Universe," to a tune composed by one Gossee, a musician much in vogue at that time, and in lections chosen from Confucius, Vyasa, Zoroaster, Theognis, Cleanthes, Aristotle, Plato, La Bruyère, Fénelon, Voltaire, Rousseau, Young, and Franklin, the Sacred Scriptures of Christianity being carefully excluded on account, as may be supposed, of their alleged opposition to "sound morality." The priests of the "Natural Religion" were vested in sky-blue tunics, extending from the neck to the feet, and fastened at the waist by a red girdle, over which was a white robe open before. Such was the costume in which La Reveillère-Lepeaux exhibited himself to his astonished countrymen, and having the misfortune to be—as we are told—"petit, bossu, et puant," the exhibition obtained no great success. It must be owned, however, that the Natural Church did its best to fill the void caused by the disappearance of the Christian religion. It even went so far as to provide substitutes for the Sacraments of Catholicism. At the rite which took the place of baptism, the father himself officiated, and, in lieu of the questions prescribed in the Roman Ritual, asked the godfather, "Do you promise before God and men to teach N. or M. from the dawn of his reason to adore God, to cherish (*chérir*) his fellows, and to make himself useful to his country?" And the godfather, holding the child towards heaven, replied, "I promise." Then followed the inevitable "discourse," and a hymn of which the concluding lines were:

"Puisse un jour cet enfant honorer sa patrie,
Et s'applaudir d'avoir vécu."

So much must suffice as to the Natural Church during the time that it existed among men as a fact, or, in the words of the author of "Ecce Homo," as "an attempt to treat the subject of religion in a practical manner." But, backed as it was by the influence of a despotic government, and *felix opportunitate* as it must be deemed to have been in the period of its establishment, very few were added to it. Whereupon, as the author of "Ecce Homo" relates, not without a touch of gentle irony, La Reveillère confided to Talleyrand^[39] his disappointment at his ill-success. "'His propaganda made no way,' he said, 'What was he to do?' he asked. The ex-bishop politely condoled with him, feared indeed it was a difficult task to found a new religion—more difficult than could be imagined, so difficult that he hardly knew what to advise! 'Still'—he went on, after a moment's reflection—'there is one plan which you might at least try: I should recommend you to be crucified, and to rise again the third day'" (p. 181). Is the author of "Ecce Homo" laughing in his sleeve at us? Surely his keen perception must have suggested to him, as he wrote this passage, "mutato nomine, deme." It may be confidently predicted that, unless he is prepared to carry out Talleyrand's suggestion, the Natural Religion which he exhibits "to meet the wants of a sceptical age" will prove even a more melancholy failure than it proved when originally introduced a century ago by La Reveillère-Lepeaux.

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V.

Are we then thrown back on Pessimism—"the besetting difficulty of Natural Religion" (p. 104), as the author of "Ecce Homo" confesses? Is that after all the key to the enigma of life? And is the prospect before the world that "universal darkness" which is to supervene, when, in the noble verse of the great moral poet of the last century—the noblest he ever wrote—

"Religion, blushing, veils her sacred fires,
And unawares morality expires;
Nor public flame, nor private, dares to shine,
Nor human spark is left, nor glimpse divine."

I venture to think otherwise. And as with regard to the subject of which I am writing, it may be said that "egotism is true modesty," I shall venture to say why I think so, even at the risk of wearying by a twice-told tale, for I shall have to go over well-worn ground, and I must of necessity tread more or less in the footprints of others. The reasons which satisfy me have satisfied, and do satisfy, intellects far more subtle, acute, and penetrating than mine. All I can do is to state them in the way in which they present themselves to my own mind. I shall be genuine, if not original, although indeed I might here shelter myself under a dictum—profoundly true it is—of Mr. Ruskin: "That virtue of originality that men so strive after is not newness, as they vainly think (there is nothing new) it is only genuineness."

Cardinal Newman, in writing to me a few weeks ago, suggests the pregnant inquiry, "Which is the greater assumption? that we can do without religion, or that we can find a substitute for Christianity?" I have hitherto been surveying the substitute for Christianity which the author of "Ecce Homo" has exhibited to the world in his new book. I shall now briefly consider the question whether the need for such a substitute does in truth exist. The book, as I have already more than once noted, assumes that it does. It takes "the scientific view frankly at its worst"^[40] as throwing discredit upon the belief "that a Personal Will is the cause of the Universe, that that Will is perfectly benevolent, that that Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the Universe," which three propositions are considered by its author to sum up the theological view of the universe. "If," he writes, "these propositions exhaust [that view] and science throws discredit upon all of them, evidently theology and science are irreconcilable, and the contest between them must end in the destruction of one or the other" (p. 13). I remark in passing, first, that no theologian—certainly no Catholic theologian—would accept these three propositions as exhausting the theological view of the universe; and secondly, that if we were obliged to admit that physical science throws discredit upon that view, it would by no means necessarily follow that physical science and theology are irreconcilable, for ampler knowledge might remove the

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discredit.

"What do we see? Each man a space,
Of some few yards before his face.
Can that the whole wide plan explain?
Ah no! Consider it again."

But is it true, as a matter of fact, that physical science throws discredit upon these three propositions? Let us examine this question a little. I must of necessity be brief in the limits to which I am here confined, and I must use the plainest language, for I am writing not for the school but for the general reader. Brevity and plainness of speech do not, however, necessarily imply superficiality, which, in truth, is not unfrequently veiled by a prolix parade of pompous technicalities.

First, then, as to causation. The shepherd in the play, when asked by Touchstone, "Hast any philosophy in thee?" replies, "No more but that I know that the property of rain is to wet, and fire to burn; that good pasture makes fat sheep: and that a great cause of the night is lack of the sun," and upon the strength of this knowledge is pronounced by the clown to be "a natural philosopher." Well, is not in truth the "science" of the mere physicist, however accomplished, *in pari materia* with that of honest Corin? He observes certain sequences of facts, certain antecedents and consequents, but of the *nexus* between them he knows no more than the most ignorant and foolish of peasants. He talks, indeed, of the laws of Nature, but the expression, convenient as it is in some respects, and true as it is in a sense—and that the highest—is extremely likely to mislead, as he uses it ordinarily. What he calls a law of Nature is only an induction from observed phenomena, a formula which serves compendiously to express them. As Dr. Mozley has well observed in his Bampton Lectures, "we only know of law in Nature, in the sense of recurrences in Nature, classes of facts, *like* facts in Nature:"^[41]

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"In vain the sage with retrospective eye
Would from the apparent what conclude the why;"

physical "science has itself proclaimed the truth that we see no causes in nature"^[42]—that is to say, in the phenomena of the external world, taken by themselves. We read in Bacci's "Life of St. Philip Neri" that the Saint drew men to the service of God by such a subtle irresistible influence as caused those who watched him to cry out in amazement, "Father Philip draws souls, as the magnet draws iron." The most accomplished master of natural science is as little competent to explain the physical attraction as he is to explain the spiritual. He cannot get behind the *fact*, and if you press him for the reason of it—if you ask him why the magnet draws iron—the only reason he has to give you is, "Because it does." It is just as true now as it was when Bishop Butler wrote in the last century that "the only distinct meaning of the word [natural] is, stated, fixed, or settled," and it is hard to see how he can be refuted when, travelling beyond the boundaries of physics, he goes on to add, "What is natural as much requires and presupposes an intelligent agent to render it so—*i.e.*, to effect it continually, or at stated times—as what is supernatural or miraculous does to effect it for once."^[43] Then, again, the indications of design in the universe may well speak to us of a Designer, as they spoke three thousand years ago to the Hebrew poet who wrote the Psalm "*Cœli enarrant*," as they spoke but yesterday to the severely disciplined intellect of John Stuart Mill, who, brushing aside the prepossessions and prejudices of a lifetime, has recorded his deliberate judgment that "there is a large balance in favour of the probability of creation by intelligence."^[44] Sir William Thomson, no mean authority upon a question of physical science, goes further, and speaks not of "a large balance of probability," but of "overpowering proofs." "Overpowering proofs," he told the British Association, "of intelligence and benevolent design, lie all around us; and if ever perplexities, whether metaphysical or scientific, turn us away from them for a time, they come back upon us with irresistible force, showing to us through Nature the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living beings depend upon one ever-acting Creator and Ruler."^[45] And, once more, it is indubitable that matter is inert until acted upon by force, and that we have no knowledge of any other primary^[46] cause of force than will. Whence, as Mr. Wallace argues in his well-known work, "it does not seem improbable that all force may be will-force, and that the whole universe is not merely dependent upon, but actually is, the will of higher intelligences or of one Supreme Intelligence."^[47]

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If then things are so—as who can disprove?—we may reasonably demur to the assertion that physical science throws discredit upon the position that a Personal Will is the cause of the universe. Let us now glance at the last of the propositions supposed to be condemned by the researches of the physicists—namely, that this Personal Will has sometimes interfered by miracles with the order of the universe. Now, here, as I intimated in an earlier portion of this article, I find myself at variance with the author of "Natural Religion" upon a question, and a very important question, of terminology. I do not regard the supernatural as an interference with, or violation of, the order of the universe. I adopt, unreservedly, the doctrine that "nothing is that errs from law." The phenomena which we call supernatural and those which we call natural, I view as alike the expression of the Divine Will: a Will which acts not capriciously, nor, as the phrase is, arbitrarily, but by law, "attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter suaviterque disponens omnia." And so the theologians identify the Divine Will with the Divine Reason. Thus St. Augustine, "Lex æterna est ratio divina vel voluntas Dei,"^[48] and St. Thomas Aquinas, "Lex æterna summa ratio in Deo existens."^[49] It is by virtue of this law that the sick are healed, whether by the prayer of faith or the prescription of a physician, by the touch of a relic or by a

shock from a galvanic battery; that the Saint draws souls and that the magnet draws iron. The most ordinary so-called "operations of Nature" may be truly described in the words of St. Gregory as God's daily miracles,^[50] and those events, commonly denominated miraculous, of which we read in the Sacred Scriptures, in the Lives of the Saints, and elsewhere, may as truly be called natural, using the word in what, as I just now observed, Bishop Butler notes as its only distinct meaning—namely, stated, fixed, or settled;^[51] for they are the normal manifestations of the order of Grace—an order external to us, invisible, inaccessible to our senses and reasonings, but truly existing and governed by laws, which, like the laws of the physical and the intellectual order, are ordained by the Supreme Lawgiver. Once purge the mind of anthropomorphic conceptions as to the Divine Government, and the notion of any essential opposition between the natural and the supernatural disappears. Sanctity, which means likeness to God, a partaking of the Divine nature, is as truly a force as light or heat, and enters as truly into the great order of the universe. There is a passage in M. Renan's "Vie de Jésus" worth citing in this connection. "La nature lui obéit," he writes; "mais elle obéit aussi à quiconque croit et prie; la foi peut tout. Il faut se rappeler que nulle idée des lois de la nature ne venait, dans son esprit ni dans celui de ses auditeurs, marquer la limite de l'impossible.... Ces mots de 'surhumain' et de 'surnaturel,' empruntés à notre théologie mesquine, n'avaient pas de sens dans la haute conscience religieuse de Jésus. Pour lui, la nature et le développement de l'humanité n'étaient pas des règnes limités hors de Dieu, de chétives réalités assujetties aux lois d'un empirisme désespérant. Il n'y avait pas pour lui de surnaturel, car il n'y avait pas pour lui de nature. Ivre de l'amour infini, il oubliait la lourde chaîne qui tient l'esprit captif; il franchissait d'un bond l'abîme, infranchissable pour la plupart, que la médiocrité des facultés humaines trace entre l'homme et Dieu."^[52] These words seem to me to express a great truth. The religious mind conceives of the natural, not as opposed to the supernatural, but as an outlying province of it; of the economy of the physical world as the complement of the economy of Grace. And to those who thus think, the great objection urged by so many philosophers, from Spinoza downwards—not to go further back—that miracles, as the violation of an unchangeable order, make God contradict himself, and so are unworthy of being attributed to the All-Wise, is without meaning. The most stupendous incident in the "Acta Sanctorum" is, as I deem, not less the manifestation of law than is the fall of a sparrow.^[53] The budding of a rose and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ are equally the effect of the One Motive Force, which is the cause of all phenomena, of the Volition of the Maker, Nourisher, Guardian, Governor, Worker, Perfecter of all. Once admit what is involved in the very idea of God as it exists in Catholic theology—as it is set forth, for example, in the treatise of St. Thomas Aquinas "De Deo"—and the notion of miracles as abnormal, as infractions of order, as violations of law, will be seen to be utterly erroneous.

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And now one word as to the bearing of physical science upon the doctrine of the Divine goodness^[54]—the second of the theological positions which, as we have seen, the author of "Natural Religion" assumes to be discredited by physical science. No doubt he had in his mind what has been so strongly stated by the late Mr. Mill: "Not even on the most distorted and contracted theory of good, which ever was framed by religious or philosophical fanaticism, can the government of Nature be made to resemble the work of a being at once good and omnipotent."^[55] Now there can be no question that physical nature gives the lie to that shallow optimism, which prates of the best of all conceivable worlds, and hardly consents to recognize evil, save as "a lower form of good;" unquestionably recent researches of physicists have brought out with quite startling clearness what St. Paul calls the subjection of the creature to vanity. Ruin, waste, decay are written upon every feature of the natural order. All that is joyful in it is based on suffering; all that lives, on death; every thrill of pleasure which we receive from the outward world is the outcome of inconceivable agonies during incalculable periods of time. But how does this discredit the teaching of theology as to God's goodness? Theology recognizes, and recognizes far more fully than the mere physicist, the abounding misery that is in the world, the terribleness of that "unutterable curse which hangs upon mankind," for it sees not only what he sees, but what is infinitely sadder and more appalling, the vision of moral evil presented by the heart and conscience of man, by every page in the history of the individual and of the race. It was not reserved for professors of physical science in the nineteenth century to bring to light the fact that "the world is out of joint," and thereby to discredit the theological view of the universe. Theology knows only too well that life is "a dread machinery of sin and sorrow." It is the very existence of the vast aboriginal calamity, whatever it may have been, in which the human race, the whole creation, is involved, that forms the ground for the need of the revelation which Christianity professes to bring. If there were no evil, there would be no need of a deliverance from evil. Of course, why evil has been suffered to arise, why it is suffered to exist, by the Perfect Being, of whom it is truly said that He is God, because he is the highest Good, we know not, and no search will make us know. All we know is that it is not from Him, of whom, and for whom, and by whom, are all things; "because it has no substance of its own, but is only the defect, excess, perversion, or corruption of that which has substance." The existence of evil is a mystery—one of the countless mysteries surrounding human life—which, after the best use of reason, must be put aside as beyond reason. But it is also a fact, and a fact which is so far from discrediting the theological view of the universe, that it is a primary and necessary element of that view.

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VI.

Thus much as to physical science and the propositions in which the author of "Natural Religion" supposes the theological view of the universe to be summed up. But, as he notes, the case urged

in the present day against Christianity does not rest merely upon physical science, properly so called; but upon the extension of its methods to the whole domain of knowledge (p. 7), the practical effect being the reduction of religion to superstition, of anthropology to physiology, of metaphysics to physics, of ethics to the result of temperament or the promptings of self-interest, of man's personality to the summation of a series of dynamic conditions of particles of matter. I shall proceed to state the case, as I often hear it stated, and I shall put it in the strongest way I can, and to indicate the answer which, at all events, has satisfied one mind, after long and patient consideration, and in spite of strong contrary prepossessions. And this evidently has the most direct bearing on my theme. If Christianity be irrational, its claims to the world's future may at once be dismissed. But if, as I very strongly hold, the achievements of the modern mind, whether in the physical sciences, in psychology, in history, in exegetical criticism, have not in the least discredited Christianity, as rightly understood, here is a fact which is a most important factor in determining our judgment as to the religious prospect of mankind. What I have to say on this grave question I must reserve for the Second Part of this article. I end the First Part with one observation. It seems to me that the issue before the world is between Christianity and a more or less sublimated form of Materialism—not necessarily Atheistic, nay, sometimes approximating to "faint possible Theism"—which is most aptly termed Naturalism; a system which rejects as antiquated the ideas of final causes, of Providence, of the soul and its immortality; which allows of no other realities than those of the physical order, and makes of Nature man's highest ideal: and this issue is not in the least affected by decking out Naturalism in some borrowed garments of Spiritualism, and calling it "Natural Christianity."

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FOOTNOTES:

[26] "La Génie des Religions," l. i. c. i.

[27] *Ibid.*, c. iv.

[28] The author of "Natural Religion" thinks it mistaken in so declaring itself. "Its invectives against God and against Religion do not prove that it is atheistic, but only that it thinks itself so. And why does it think itself so? Because God and Religion are identified in its view with the Catholic Church; and the Catholic Church is a thing so very redoubtable that we need scarcely inquire why it is passionately hated and feared" (p. 37). But this is an error. God and Religion are not identified, in the view of the Revolution, with the Catholic Church. It will be evident to anyone who will read its accredited organs that it is as implacably hostile to religious Protestantism as to Catholicism. Perhaps I may be allowed to refer, on this subject, to some remarks of my own in an article entitled "Free Thought—French and English," published in this REVIEW, in February last, p. 241.

[29] See his Preface to the Second Edition.

[30] Warburton, a shrewd observer enough, expressed the same view a hundred years ago, with characteristic truculence:—"Mathematicians—I do not mean the inventors and geniuses amongst them, whom I honour, but the Demonstrators of others' inventions, who are ten times duller and prouder than a damned poet—have a strange aversion to everything that smacks of religion."—*Letters to Hurd*, xix.

[31] Preface to Second Edition, p. vii.

[32] *Ibid.*, p. v.

[33] *Summa*, 1^{ma} 2^{de} qu. 60, art. 3.

[34] "Grammar of Assent," p. 389. 5th ed.

[35] What Wordsworth says is—

"We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love,
And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,
In dignity of being we ascend."

This is widely different from the nude proposition that "we live by admiration."

[36] See also p. 127.

[37] A good deal of information about Theophilanthropy and the Theophilanthropists, in an undigested and, indeed, chaotic state, will be found in Grégoire's "Histoire des Sectes Religieuses," vol. i.

[38] The Theophilanthropists were most anxious that the object of their worship should not be supposed to be the Christian God. Thus in one of their hymns their Deity is invoked as follows:—

"Non, tu n'es pas le *Dieu* dont le prêtre est l'apôtre,
Tu n'as point par la Bible enseigné les humains."

[39] The author of "Natural Religion" says, Talleyrand; I do not know on what authority. Grégoire writes:—"Au Directoire même on le raillait sur son zèle théophilanthropique. Un de ses collègues, dit-on, lui proposait de se faire pendre et de ressusciter le troisième jour, comme l'infaillible moyen de faire triompher sa secte, et Carnot lui décoche dans son *Mémoire* des épigrammes sanglantes à ce sujet."—*Histoire des Sectes Religieuses*,

vol. I. p. 406. Talleyrand was never a member of the Directory.

- [40] Preface to second edition.
- [41] "Eight Lectures on Miracles," p. 50.
- [42] *Ibid.* See Dr. Mozley's note on this passage.
- [43] "Analogy." Part I. c. i. I give, of course, Bishop Butler's words as I find them, but, as will be seen a little later, I do not quite take his view of the supernatural.
- [44] "Three Essays on Religion," p. 174.
- [45] "Address to the British Association," 1871.
- [46] I say "*primary* cause;" of course I do not deny *its own proper causality* to the non-spiritual or matter.
- [47] "Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection," p. 368. I am, of course, aware of Mr. Mill's remarks upon this view in his "Three Essays on Religion" (pp. 146-150). The subject is too great to be discussed in a footnote. But I may observe that he rests, at bottom, upon the assumption—surely an enormous assumption—that causation is order. Cardinal Newman's argument upon this matter in the "Grammar of Assent" (pp. 66-72, 5th ed.) seems to me to be unanswerable; certainly, it is unanswered. I have no wish to dogmatize—the dogmatism, indeed, appears to be on the other side—but if we go by experience, as it is now the fashion to do, our initial elementary experience would certainly lead us to consider will the great or only cause. To guard against a possible misconception let me here say that I must not be supposed to adopt Mr. Wallace's view in its entirety or precisely as stated by him. Of course, the analogy between the human will and the Divine Will is imperfect, and Mr. Mill appears to me to be well founded in denying that *our* volition originates. My contention is that Matter is inert until Force has been brought to bear upon it: that all Force must be due to a Primary Force of which it is the manifestation or the effect: that the Primary Force cannot exert itself unless it be self-determined: that to be self-determined is to be living: that to be primarily and utterly self-determined is to be an infinitely self-conscious volition: *ergo*, the primary cause of Force is the Will of God. This is the logical development of the famous argument of St. Thomas Aquinas. He contends that whatever things are moved must be moved by that which is not moved: *a movente non moto*. But Suarez and later writers complete the argument by analyzing the term *movents non motum*, which they consider equivalent to *Ens a se, in se, et per se, or Actus Purissimus*.
- [48] "Contra Faustum," 22.
- [49] Summa, 1, 2, qu. 83, art. 1. But on this and the preceding quotation, see the note on page 118.
- [50] "Quotidiana Dei miracula ex assiduitate vilescunt."—*Hom. xxvi. in Evan.*
- [51] "Stated, fixed, or settled" is a predicate common to natural and supernatural, not the *differentia* of either. And here let me remark that the expression, "Laws of Nature," is a modern technical expression which the Catholic philosopher would require, probably, to have defined before employing it. "Natura," in St. Thomas Aquinas, is declared to be "Principium operationis cujusque rei," the Essence of a thing in relation to its activity, or the Essence as manifested *agendo*. Hence "Natura rerum," or "Universitas rerum" (which is the Latin for Nature in the phrase "Laws of Nature") means the Essences of all things created (finite) as manifested and related to each other by their proper inherent activities, which of course are stable or fixed. But since it is not a logical contradiction that these activities should be suspended, arrested, or annihilated (granting an Infinite Creator), it will not be contrary to *Reason* should a miraculous intervention so deal with them, though their suspension or annihilation may be described, loosely and inaccurately, as against the Laws of Nature. By *Reason* is here meant the declarations of necessary Thought as to possibility and impossibility, or the canons of contradiction, the only proper significance of the word in discussions about miracles. Hence, to say that miracles have their laws, is not to deny that they are by the Free Will of God. For creation is by the Fiat of Divine Power and Freedom, and yet proceeds upon law—that is to say, upon a settled plan and inherent sequence of cause and effect. But it is common with Mr. Mill and his school to think of law as *necessary inviolable* sequence; whereas it is but a fixed mode of action whether *necessarily or freely* determined; and it is a part of law that some activities should be liable to suspension or arrestment by others, and especially by the First Cause.
- [52] "Vie de Jésus," p. 247.
- [53] When Mr. Mill says ("Three Essays on Religion," p. 224), "The argument that a miracle may be the fulfilment of a law in the same sense in which the ordinary events of Nature are fulfilments of laws, seems to indicate an imperfect conception of what is meant by a law and what constitutes a miracle," all he really means is that this argument involves a conception of law and of miracle different from his own, which is undoubtedly true. Upon this subject I remark as follows: There is a necessary will (*spontaneum non liberum*) and a free will (*liberum non spontaneum*); and these are in God on the scale of infinite perfection, as they are in man finitely. With Mr. Mill, as I have observed in a previous note, Law is taken to signify "invariable, necessary sequence;" and its test is, that given the same circumstances, the same thing will occur. But it is essential to Free Will (whether in God or man) that given the same circumstances, the same thing need not, may not, and perhaps will not, occur. However, an act may be free *in causa* which *hic et nunc* must happen; the Free Will having done that by choice which brings as a necessary consequence something else. For there are many things which would involve contradiction and so be impossible, did not certain consequences follow them. This

premised, it is clear that the antithesis of Mr. Mill's "Law" is Free Will. Law and antecedent necessity to Mr. Mill are one and the same. But Law in Catholic terminology means the Will of God decreeing freely or not freely, according to the subject-matter; and is not opposed to Free-Will. It guides, it need not coerce or necessitate, though it may. Neither in one sense, is Law synonymous with Reason, for that is according to Reason, simply, which does not involve a contradiction, whether it be done freely or of necessity; and many things are possible, or non-contradictives, that Law does not prescribe. Nor again does Free-Will mean lawless in the sense of irrational; or causeless, in the sense of having no motive: "contra legem," "præter legem" is not "contra rationem," "prater rationem." The Divine Will, then, may be free, yet act according to Law, namely, its own freely-determined Law. And it may act "not according to Law," and yet act according to Reason. In this sense, then, theologians identify the Divine Will with the Divine Reason—I mean, they insist that God's Will is always according to Reason—in this sense, but, as I think, not in any other. For the Divine Will is antecedently free as regards all things which are not God; but the Divine Intellect is not free in the same way. St. Augustine always tends to view things in the concrete, not distinguishing their "rationes formales," or distinguishing them vaguely. And Ratio with him does not mean Reason merely, but living Reason or the Reasoning Being, the Soul. When St. Thomas Aquinas speaks of Lex Æterna he means the Necessary Law of Morality, concerning which God is not free, because in decreeing it, He is but decreeing that there is no Righteousness except by imitation of Him.

The root of all these difficulties and of all the confusion in speech which they have brought forth is this: the mystery of Free-Will in God, the Unchangeable and Eternal, The great truth taught in the words of the Vatican Council, "Deus, *liberrimo consilio* condidit universa," must ever be borne in mind. Undoubtedly, there are no afterthoughts in God. But neither is there a past in which He decreed once for all what was to be and what was not to be. He is the Eternal Now. But still all events are the fulfilment of His Will, and contribute to the working out of the scheme which He has traced for creation. Feeble is human speech to deal with such high matters, serving, at the best, but dimly to adumbrate ineffable truths. As Goethe somewhere says, "Words are good, but not the best: the best cannot be expressed in words. My point, however, is that there is, on the one hand, a connection of events with events all through creation and an intelligible sequence, while, on the other, the Free-Will of man is a determining force as regards his own spiritual actions, as is the Free-Will of God in respect of the whole creation, and that miracles are neither afterthoughts, nor irregularities, nor contradictions, but at once free and according to law. Miracles are not abnormal, unless Free-Will is a reduction of Kosmos to Chaos, and the negation of Reason altogether."

[54] I say "the doctrine of the Divine goodness," because that is, as I think, what the author of "Natural Religion" means. As to the "simple, absolute benevolence"—"benevolence," indeed, is a milk-and-water expression; "God is love"—which "some men seem to think the only character of the Author of Nature," it is enough to refer to Bishop Butler's striking chapter on "The Moral Government of God," (Analogy, Part I. c. iii). I will here merely observe that although, doubtless, God's attribute is Love of the creation, He is not only Love, but Sanctity, Justice, Creative Power, Force, Providence; and whereas, considered as a Unit He is infinite, He is not infinite—I speak under correction—viewed in those aspects, abstractions, or attributes which, separately taken, are necessary for our subjective view of Him. I allow that God's power and His "benevolence" may in some cases work out different ends, as if separate entities, but still maintain—what the author of "Natural Religion" ignores—that God in His very essence is not only "Benevolence," but Sanctity, &c. also; *all as One in His Oneness*.

[55] "Three Essays on Religion," p. 38.

SYRIAN COLONIZATION.

During the past few years many proposals have been made, and schemes formed, for re-peopling the wastes of Syria and Palestine with the surplus population of Europe. These schemes, sometimes philanthropic, sometimes commercial, are always advocated on the assumption that the current of European emigration and capital might be turned to Syria and Palestine in accordance with sound economic and financial considerations. In this paper I propose—

First. To take a survey of the agricultural resources of the country.

Second. To draw attention to the difficulties which immigrants would experience in obtaining secure titles to landed property.

Third. To give a summary of the different kinds of land tenure, and the burdens on agriculture.

Fourth. To point out some of the dangers and inconveniences to which immigrants would be exposed.

I. In the first place we may say broadly that the natural resources of Syria and Palestine are agricultural. On the eastern slopes of Mount Hermon there are a few bitumen pits from which a small quantity of ore of excellent quality is yearly exported to England. Small deposits of coal and iron exist in several localities, and there are chemical deposits about the shores of the Dead Sea.

Gypsum and coloured marble are found in Syria, and along the coast opposite the Lebanon range sponges are fished annually to the value of £20,000. Hot sulphur springs exist at Palmyra and the Sea of Galilee, and there are ruined baths on the way between Damascus and Palmyra and in the Yarmûk Valley; but none of these natural products are of sufficient importance to attract European labour or capital.

Forests can scarcely be said to exist in Syria or Palestine. A few groves of cedars of Lebanon, which escaped the axes of Hiram, are fast disappearing. On the limestone ridges and in some of the valleys there are clumps of pine, and throughout a great part of the country there is a considerable quantity of scrub oak which the peasants reduce to charcoal, and carry into the cities. In Galilee one comes on places where the trees give a pleasing character to the landscape. On Mount Carmel there are jungles and thickets of oak, and on the slopes towards Nazareth there are considerable groves, but the nearest approach to a forest is where the oaks of Bashan, which recall the beauties of an English park, assert their ancient supremacy.

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Rows of poplars mark the courses of rivers and streams throughout the land, and supply beams for flat-roofed houses; but when churches or other important buildings have to be roofed, or timber is required for domestic purposes, it has to be imported from America, and carried into the interior on the backs of animals. There remain trees enough in some places to lend beauty to the landscape, and to show what the country may once have been, as well as to suggest what it may again become; but there are no forests to attract labour or capital.

The few manufactories of wool and cotton and soap and leather are chiefly limited to local want. Besides these there are the silk-spinning factories in the Lebanon, managed by Frenchmen and natives, and a manufactory of cotton thread on one of the rivers of Damascus.

The popular accounts of the agricultural resources of Syria and Palestine are very different. As instances of extremes:—Mark Twain tells us he saw the goats eating stones in Syria, and he assures us that he could not have been mistaken, for they had nothing else to eat; while Mr. Laurence Oliphant saw even in the Dead Sea "a vast source of wealth" for his English Company. We read in his "Land of Gilead" these words: "There can be little doubt, in fact, that the Dead Sea is a mine of unexplored wealth which only needs the application of capital and enterprise to make it a most lucrative property."^[56]

The tourists who traverse the country in spring, immediately after the latter rains, when there is some vegetation in the barest places, and when their horses are up to the fetlocks in flowers, never forget the beauty of the landscape. Others, who have been picturing to themselves a land flowing with milk and honey, hills waving with golden grain, and green meadows dappled with browsing flocks, and who pass through the land in autumn, find themselves bitterly disappointed. As they trudge along the white glaring pathways, and through the roadless and flinty wilderness, breasting the hot beating waves of a Syrian noonday, with only an ashy chocolate-coloured landscape around them, scorched as if by the breath of a furnace, they get an impression of dreary and blasted desolation which time can never efface. They looked for the garden of the Lord, and they find only the "burning marl." It was my fate, during a long residence in Syria, to hear autumn tourists criticize books written by spring tourists, and spring tourists criticize books written by autumn tourists, and generally in a manner by no means complimentary to the authors' veracity;—the fact being that the writers had given their impression of what they saw, with perhaps a little of American wit, which consists in exaggerating "the leading feature."

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I think, however, that to most English travellers, who have no hobbies to ride, the barren appearance of Syria and Palestine is a disenchantment. Accustomed to their own moist climate and green fields, they are not prepared for the dry and parched, and abandoned appearance of the greater part of the country. With us an abundance of water spoils the crops; in Syria and Palestine the case is reversed, for unless water can be poured over the land the crops are stunted and uncertain. For six or seven months in the year scarcely any rain falls, and scarcely a cloud darkens the sky. In October the early rain commences, with much thunder and lightning; and in April the latter rain becomes light and uncertain, and generally ceases altogether. Then the sky becomes intensely blue, and the sun comes out in all his glory, or rather in all her glory, for with the Arabs the sun is feminine. Suddenly grass and vegetation wither up and become dry for the oven. The level country, except where there are rivers, becomes parched. The stones stick up out of the red soil like the white bones of a skeleton. Limestone, flint, and basalt, and thorny shrubs, cover the face of the wilderness country. Here and there you may see a dwarf oak, or an olive tree, or a wild fig tree, and among the mountains you may notice little patches scratched and cultivated by the *fellahin*; but, unless on the great plains of Bashan and Esdraelon and Hamath, and on the uplands of Gilead, or where there is water for irrigation, you may ride for hours along the zigzag paths, over mountain and high-land, and before and behind extend the limestone and flinty rocks, white and blinding, and broken into fragments or burnt into powder. It thus happens that few tourists who pass along the beaten tracks of Syria and Palestine have any just conception of the vast agricultural resources of the land.

The most striking features in the Syrian landscape are two parallel mountain ranges, which appear on the map like two centipedes, running north and south. These are the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges. Lebanon proper lies along the shore of the Mediterranean. The narrow strip of land between the mountain and the sea was the home of the Phœnicians, who steered their white-winged ships to every land, and dipped their oars in every sea, before the Britons were heard of. The gardens of Sidon, luxuriant with bananas, oranges, figs, lemons, pomegranates, peaches, apricots, &c., extend across the plain for two miles to the mountain, and

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show what Phœnicia may once have been. The palm trees that adorn the fertile gardens of Beyrout are doubtless survivors of the groves from which the strip of land once took its name.^[57]

By the exertions of Lord Dufferin in 1860, a Christian governor was placed over the Lebanon in a semi-independent position. Since then the terraced mountain has been marvellously developed, and every foothold has been planted with vines and figs and mulberries. The industrious peasantry, comparatively safe from Turkish rapacity, have cultivated the ledges among its crags and peaks, and enjoy the fruits of their industry, sitting under their vines and fig trees. The bloodthirsty and turbulent Druzes, restrained by law, and unable to hold their own in a field of fair competition, are being rapidly civilized off the mountain, and betake themselves to remote regions in Bashan where no law is acknowledged but that of the strong arm.

Between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon stretches for seventy miles Cœlo-Syria or Buka'a, a well-watered and fertile plain, containing about 500 square miles and 137 agricultural villages, and marked by such ruins as those of Chalcis and Baalbek.

The Anti-Lebanon consists of a series of mountain ranges, some of which run parallel with Lebanon, and flatten into the plain at "the gathering in of Hamath," while some bend off in a more easterly direction, and shoot out boldly into the desert. The westward end of this mountainous range rises into Mount Hermon. The eastward end sinks into Palmyra. North of the Anti-Lebanon, the narrow plain of Cœlo-Syria expands into the great rolling country of high-land, river, lake, and plain, where for more than a thousand years the Hittite kings rolled back the tide of Egyptian and Assyrian invasion, and where, in later years, the Selucidæ kings pastured their elephants and steeds of war.

Among the ranges and spurs of the Anti-Lebanon are many green spots of great picturesque beauty. Wherever there are fountains the habitations of men are clustered together at the water, seemingly jostling and struggling like thirsty flocks to get to its margin. The cottages cling to the edges of fountains and rivers in the most perilous positions. Sometimes they are stuck to the rocks like swallows' nests, and sometimes they are placed on beetling cliffs like the home of the eagle above the chasm. No solitary houses are met throughout the country. The people build together for safety, and near the water for life, and by the village fountains and wells cluster the fairest scenes of Eastern poetry, as well Arab and Persian as Hebrew, and around them have taken place some of the fiercest of Oriental battles.

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At the villages a little water is drawn off from the rivers, and carefully apportioned among the different families and factions. By means of this water, carefully conducted to the various gardens, apples and plums, grapes and pomegranates, melons and cucumbers, corn and onions, olives and egg plants are cultivated; and such is the bounty of Nature, that with the least effort existence is possible wherever there is water. A little rancid oil and a few vegetables are sufficient to sustain life, and these can be had by a few hours labour in the cool of the day. The rest of the time may be spent squatting cross-legged by the water, or smoking and dozing in the shade. This is existence, but not life; yet why should the *fellah* labour for anything beyond what is absolutely necessary, when the slightest sign of wealth would create anxious solicitude on the part of the Turk?

A ride of seventy-two miles across Phœnicia, Lebanon, Cœlo-Syria, and Anti-Lebanon, brings us, by French diligence, to Damascus. Abana and Pharpar break through a sublime gorge, about 100 yards wide, down the middle of which the French road winds its serpentine course, the rivers on either side being fringed with silver poplar and scented walnut. As we look eastward from the brow of the hill, the great plain of Damascus, encircled by a framework of desert, lies before us. The river, escaped from the rocky gorge, spreads out like a fan, and, after a run of three miles, enters Damascus, where it flows through 15,000 houses, sparkles in 60,000 marble fountains, and hurries on to scatter wealth and fertility far and wide over the plain. Those who have gazed on this scene are never likely to forget its supreme loveliness. Its beauty is doubtless much enhanced by contrast. The eye has been wandering over a chocolate-coloured and heated landscape throughout a weary day; suddenly, on turning a corner, it rests on Eden.

The city is spread out before you, embowered in orchards, in the midst of a plain of 300 square miles. Around the pearl-coloured, city—first in the world in point of time, first in Syria and Western Asia in point of importance—surge, like an emerald sea, forests of apricots and olives and apples and citrons, and "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food," with all their variety of colour and tint, according to their season, sometimes all aglow with blossoms, sometimes golden and ruddy with fruit, and sometimes russet with the mellowing tints of autumn. Beyond the city the water conveys its wealth by seven rivers to shady gardens and thirsty fields; and, as far as cultivation extends, two or three splendid crops during the same year reward the industry of the husbandman. But even in the plain of Damascus the land is cultivated for only a few miles beyond the gates of the city. The water that would fertilize the whole plain flows uselessly into pestiferous marshes, and the wide plain within sight of the Damascus garrison is abandoned to the Bedawîn of the Desert and the wild boars of the jungle.^[58]

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In Palestine there is the great plain of Esdraelon, now, to a large extent, in the hands of a Greek firm at Beyrout, and partially cultivated, but capable of producing wheat and maize and cotton and barley, throughout its whole extent. On the southern side of Carmel spreads out the extensive plain of Sharon, a vast expanse of pasture-land, ablaze with flowers in early spring, and rank with thistles in the time of harvest; and further south extends the still more fertile regions of Philistia.

Looking south, from the southern slopes of Mount Hermon, the green plain of the Huleh, with Lake Merom glassed in its centre, forms a beautiful picture. Mr. Oliphant here first saw an enchanting location for his colony. "I felt," he says, "a longing to imitate the example of the men of Dan; for there can be no question that if, instead of advancing upon it with six hundred men, and taking it by force, after the manner of the Danites, one approached it in the modern style of a joint-stock company (limited), and recompensed the present owners, keeping them as labourers, a most profitable speculation might be made out of the 'Ard el Huleh.'" The lake "might, with the marshy plain above it, be easily drained; and a magnificent tract of country, nearly twenty miles long by from five to six miles in width, abundantly watered by the upper affluents of the Jordan, might then be brought into cultivation. It is only now occupied by some wandering Bedawin and the peasants of a few scattered villages on its margin."^[59]

East of the Jordan are the corn-growing table-land of Bashan and the beautiful and fertile highlands of Gilead. In the former I have ridden for hours, with an unbroken sea of waving wheat as far as I could see around me, and as regards the "land of Gilead," I can confirm Mr. Oliphant's most enthusiastic descriptions of its beauty, fertility, and desolation.

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Nor are the agricultural resources of Syria and Palestine limited to the great irrigated plains and broad trans-Jordanic table-lands. Throughout the country there are numerous villages shut in among bare hills, with apparently no resource; but on closer inspection it turns out that there are a few cultivated terraces, where tobacco and grape-vines and vegetables are cultivated, and on a still closer inspection it is evident that the bare mountains all around were once terraced, and doubtless clothed with the vine.

I was once crossing a series of undulating ranges abutting on Mount Hermon with an English tourist who was making merry at the utterly barren appearance of "the promised land." It turned out, however, that his attempted wit served to sharpen our observation, and we found that all the hill-sides had once been terraced by human hands. A few miles further on we came to Rasheiyā, where the vineyards still flourish on such terraces, and we had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the bare terraces, from which lapse of time had worn away the soil, were once trellised with the vine, the highest emblem of prosperity and joy. Similar terraces were noticed by Drake and Palmer in the Desert of Judea, far from any modern cultivation.

It is rash to infer that because a place is desolate now, it must always have been so, or must always remain so. The Arab historian tells us that Salah-ed-Din, before the battle of Hattin, set fire to the forests, and thus encircled the Crusaders with a sea of flame. Now there is scarcely a shrub in the neighbourhood.

In wandering through that sacred land, over which the Crescent now waves, one is amazed at the number of ruins that stud the landscape, and show what must once have been the natural fertility of the country. Whence has come the change? Is the blight natural and permanent? or has it been caused by accidental and artificial circumstances which may be only temporary? Doubtless, each ruin has its tale of horror, but all trace their destruction to Islamism, and especially to the blighting and desolating presence of the Turk.

That short, thick, beetle-browed, bandy-legged, obese man, that so many fresh tourists find so charming, is a Turkish official. He and his ancestors have ruled the land since 1517. A Wilberforce in sentiment, he is the representation of "that shadow of shadows for good—Ottoman rule." The Turks, whether in their Pagan or Mohammedan phase, have only appeared on the world's scene to destroy. No social or civilizing art owes anything to the Turks but progressive debasement and decay.

That heap of stones, in which you trace the foundations of temples and palaces, where now the owl hoots and the jackal lurks, was once a prosperous Christian village. Granted that the Christianity was pure neither in creed nor ritual; yet it had, even in its debased form, a thew and sinew that brought prosperity to its possessors. The history of that ruin is the history of a thousand such throughout the empire. Its prosperity led to its destruction. The insolent Turk, restrained by no public opinion, and curbed by no law, would wring from the villagers the fruits of their labour. Oppression makes even wise men mad, and the Christians, goaded to madness, turned on their oppressors. Then followed submission, on promise of forgiveness. The Christians surrendered their arms, and the flashing scymitar of Islam fell upon the defenceless; and the place became a ruin amid horrors too foul to narrate. No greater proof of the exhaustless fertility of the soil of Syria and Palestine could be furnished than this: that the spoiler, unrestrained, has been in it for 365 years, and that he has not yet succeeded in reducing it all to a howling wilderness.

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II. Those who embark capital in land, with a view to securing a home for themselves and their children, should look closely to the character of their title-deeds. The foremost Englishman in the Levant assured me that he never invested money in houses or land because there was no such thing as security of title in the Turkish Empire. My own opinion, based on an experience of ten years, is that it is impossible to know whether or not you have a title in Syria. Unfortunately this judgment does not rest on mere opinions as to what might happen, but it is fortified by the authoritative Commercial Reports of Her Majesty's Consuls throughout Syria and Palestine, and by a series of facts of daily occurrence.

Vice-Consul Jago, of Beyrout, in a report dated July 11, 1876, thus writes:—

"Efforts made by wealthy native Christians and Europeans to employ capital in

agriculture have been invariably met by great obstacles, the apparent impossibility of getting *incontestable title-deeds* being one of the many, although such documents may have emanated from the highest authority in the land. Actions of ejectment have invariably followed such efforts, to which the fact of the Government itself being often the seller opposed no bar."

The same Vice-Consul, writing from Damascus, under date March 13, 1880, referring to the difficulty of investing capital in agricultural enterprise, says:—

"Unfortunately, the present judicial system is of a nature to permit, if not to foster, the thousand and one intrigues and vexations which seem to be almost inseparably connected with the possession of land in Syria, and additional facilities for such are to be found, if wanting, in the state in which the land registry offices are kept. Erasures, irregular entries, at the request of the interested, change of one name for another as the legitimate owner, resulting often in persons finding their names down in the Government books as owners of property, the existence of which was unknown to them, and *vice versâ*, cause the validity of title-deeds, issued as they are by various courts in the country, to be a fertile source of litigation, and fraudulent action.... The fact, however, that title-deeds can be set aside by verbal testimony perhaps sufficiently accounts for the little value they practically possess."

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I could cite many instances in illustration of Mr. Jago's statements. An effort made by the Rev. E. B. Frankel, of Damascus, to secure the title-deeds of a worthless piece of barren rock without resorting to the degrading practices of the country, is interesting, not only as an illustration in point, but also as showing that an honest man would suffer loss rather than gain his point by questionable means. I was privy to the transactions as they occurred, but as Mr. Frankel has kindly furnished me with a brief history, I shall give it in his own words:—

"During my residence in Damascus, I tried one or two villages in the neighbourhood as a summer retreat, and at length fixed upon a village called Maraba, as being at a convenient distance from the city to ride there in the morning and return at night. Finding, however, that the native houses were scarcely habitable, I determined to have a small house built, close to, yet not overlooking, the village. To carry out my plan I had first of all to apply to the Vali for permission to do so. His Highness, with an outburst of Oriental liberality, declared his readiness to give me not only a piece of ground but a garden as well. This I declined with thanks, knowing the value of such an offer, but showed him on paper the spot I had chosen, consisting of a barren rock, and asked him to send a competent person to the place to examine the site and value it, and at the same time see from the plan that none of my windows would overlook my neighbours. In the course of a few days, I received a notice that a commission of six officials would meet me on the spot and settle the matter at once. I provided a luncheon *à fresco*, to which the sheikh of the village was invited to negotiate on the part of the villagers.

"After a long preamble, setting forth the value of land in general, and of this spot in particular, he offered at length to sell the site for 5,000 piastres (a piastre is equal to 2*d.*).

"'Fifty piastres,' wrote down the scribe. 'By the life of your father, it is too little—say 3,000.' 'Seventy-five,' said the scribe. 'Say 1,000—by Allah, it is worth 5,000; but Allah is great.' 100 piastres was the sum agreed to at last, and I had the permission to begin building at once.

"When the house was half finished, an order came to stop, on the ground that it was built over the tomb of a Moslem saint, and that the departed spirit might not relish the vicinity of Christians, and avenge himself by doing us some bodily harm for which the Vali would be responsible.

"After a great deal of trouble and investigation, his Highness was convinced that the existence of such a tomb was a myth. The next charge brought against me was, that whilst I pretended to build a house, I was in reality building a convent in the midst of a Mohammedan population. I had a hard struggle to convince him that Protestants had no such institutions.

"Now all these charges had been trumped up by the officials in the hope of receiving the usual bribe, which I was determined not to give—having made up my mind to carry the business through honestly and legally. One more effort was made to annoy me, or rather to force me to give the customary 'backsheesh,'—viz., that the house was built over a road leading from the village to the stream to the great inconvenience of the villagers. The Consul had at length to interfere; the Government engineer was sent to investigate the matter and report upon it, which was to the effect that there was no vestige of road or foot-path in the vicinity of the house.

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"After this, I was left in peaceful possession so far, that no one could turn me out of the house, but not having the title-deeds, I could scarcely expect to find a

purchaser in case I wished to sell it. My next effort was to secure the necessary papers. Month after month I applied in vain for them. The Governor pretended to be shocked to hear that his orders had not been carried out, he sent for the scribe, and threatened him with his fiercest displeasure if such an act of negligence should ever again be reported against him. The scribe pleaded a sprained wrist as an excuse for the delay, but by the life of the Prophet, he would write the document at once. I took a hasty leave of the Vali, and rushed off after the scribe, determined not to lose sight of him again; he had, however, disappeared, as if the earth had swallowed him up. These scenes were repeated over and over again, till at the end of twelve months, having to leave Damascus, I had to sell the house at a great loss, not having the title-deeds. The purchaser, the American Vice-Consul, trusting to his official position, hoped to be able to succeed where I had failed.

"I have no doubt but that by following the usual Oriental custom of backsheesh, and dividing £10 or £20 among the officials, every obstacle would have been removed to my obtaining the title-deeds of a property for which I paid the sum of 16s. 8d."

There are a few most interesting groups of German colonists in Palestine, who belong to a religious order called "The Temple;" and who assume to be a Spiritual Temple in the Holy Land. As far as I had opportunity of judging, the colonists were men who, as colonists, would succeed in any land, except perhaps Syria. There were among them masons and carpenters and blacksmiths and shoemakers and doctors. They were all accustomed to work with their hands, and they were prepared to do, not only whatever hard work was to be done in their own colony, but also to do any jobs for their neighbours, wherever their superior skill might be employed. They were strong, patient, sober, devout, and they entered on their work with lofty but calm enthusiasm. One branch settled at Jaffa, on the ruins of an American colony which had been led there by a Mr. Adams, and which ended in sad disaster. Another has settled "under the shadow of Mount Carmel," about a mile out of Haifa, and a third near Jerusalem. Besides settling in these places, some of the girls were prepared to go out as servants, with results, in some cases, that cannot be detailed. The first batch of these colonists settled near Nazareth in 1867, and all died of malarious fever.^[60] But the German colonists were not daunted by preliminary disaster, and they have been since battling with the difficulties of the situation with a patient energy bordering on heroism.

Mr. Oliphant visited the colonies at Jerusalem and Haifa, and after describing the streets and gardens and homesteads created by German industry, he adds, "The colonists have scarcely any trouble in their dealings with the Government."

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Captain Conder, who spent much time among the colonists, gives a more realistic picture. He says—

"The Turkish government is quite incapable of appreciating their real motives in colonization, and cannot see any reason beyond a political one for the settlement of Europeans in the country. The colonists have therefore *never obtained title-deeds to the land they have bought*, and there can be little doubt that should the Turks deem it expedient they would entirely deny the right of the Germans to hold their property. Not only do they extend no favour to the colony, though its presence has been most beneficial to the neighbourhood, but the inferior officials, indignant at the attempts of the Germans to obtain justice, without any regard to 'the customs of the country' (that is, to bribery), have thrown every obstacle they can devise in the way of the community, both individually and collectively."^[61]

The two most successful agricultural enterprises in Palestine are those of Bergheim and Sursuk, and as these are often referred to with a view to induce Englishmen to embark capital in similar enterprises, a few words about each may not be superfluous. Captain Conder, writing with full and accurate information, says:—

"Probably the most successful undertaking of an agricultural kind in Palestine is the farm at Abu Shûsheh, belonging to the Bergheims, the principal banking firm in Jerusalem. The lands of Abu Shûsheh belong to this family, and include 5,000 acres; a fine spring exists on the east, but in other respects the property is not exceptional. The native inhabitants are employed to till the land, under the supervision of Mr. Bergheim's son; a farmhouse has been built, a pump erected, and various modern improvements have been introduced. The same hindrance is, however, experienced by the Bergheims which has paralyzed all other efforts for the improvement of the land. The difficulties raised by the venal and corrupt under-officials of the Government have been vexatious and incessant, being due to the determination to extort money by some means or other, or else to ruin the enterprise from which they could gain nothing. The Turkish Government recognizes the right of foreigners to hold land, subject to the ordinary laws and taxes; but there is a long step between this abstract principle and the practical encouragement of such undertakings, and nothing is easier than to raise groundless difficulties, *on the subject of title*, or of assessment, in a land where the judges are as corrupt as the rest of the governing body."^[62]

More important still is the estate of seventy square miles in the plain of Esdraelon, now in the

hands of Mr. Sursuk, a wealthy banker at Beyrout. Mr. Oliphant gives an account of the enterprise. "The investment," he adds, "has turned out eminently successful; indeed, so much so, that I found it difficult to credit the accounts of the enormous profits which Mr. Sursuk derives from his estate."^[63]

From Mr. Oliphant's description, I turn to the excellent Commercial Report, written by Vice-Consul Jago, in plain prose, and I find he thus speaks of the undertaking:— [Pg 133]

"Some few years ago, the wealthiest native Christian in the country, tempted by the low price of land near Acre offered for sale by the Government, purchased a large tract, containing thirty villages, for £18,000. The revenue accruing to the Government was, prior to the purchase, between £T.1,500 and £T.2,000 per annum, owing to the poverty of the peasants, and consequently little production.

"Large sums were spent in importing labour from other districts for cultivation, and in providing the peasants with proper means. Under judicious management the speculation paid well, as much as thirty per cent. on capital, besides increasing the taxes paid to the Government to £5,000. The peasantry likewise benefited, being assured of protection and prompt return for their labours. This state of prosperity produced local intrigue and jealousies. Actions of ejectment were brought to which *the government title-deeds proved no bar*. Journeys to Constantinople, and endless special commissions were the result, and it was only after a liberal expenditure of money, time, and labour, that the judicial courts of the country gave a decision, which, it is hoped, has set the matter finally at rest.... In short, a capitalist wishing to employ money in agriculture must be prepared to light his way, as it were, inch by inch, and that, too, with the weapons of the country."^[64]

Apparently Mr. Oliphant would have no objection to use the weapons of the country. At least he seems ready to base the successful launching of his Company on such considerations. Looking out over the province of Ajlun, which is a fertile region about forty miles long by twenty-five in width, he exclaims: "I feel no moral doubt that £50,000, partly expended judiciously in bribes at Constantinople, and partly applied to the purchase of land, not belonging to the State, from its present proprietors, would purchase the entire province, and could be made to return a fabulous interest on the investment."^[65]

I need only suggest that where investors embark their capital in philanthropic undertakings for "fabulous interest," it might be well if they reflected on the character of their proposed security and the means used to secure it.

III. Tenure of land in Syria and Palestine is regulated by Mohammedan law as administered in the Ottoman Empire. That law contemplates land under a five-fold classification.

First. Crown lands set apart at the time of the conquest as the personal share of the Sultan and the Mussulman nation. These crown lands were farmed to the highest bidders, and the rent paid for them was known as *Miri*. Several changes at different times were introduced with respect to the *Miri*, and in 1864 these were superseded by the *Tapoo* code, the effect of which was to give titles of possession to those who, for ten years previously, had cultivated the crown lands, on condition of their paying five per cent. of the value of the land against the issue of their title-deeds. Under the *Tapoo* system the crown lands become subject to two fixed taxes—the *Verghoo*, about four per mil. on the estimated value of the land; and the *Ushr* or tithe, which should be a tenth part of the produce of the soil. [Pg 134]

Second. *Wakoof* lands dedicated to the maintenance of holy places at Mecca, or to charitable institutions and sacred sanctuaries.

Third. *Mulk*, or freehold property. This is subdivided into four categories, which I need not enumerate. Such lands are owned and cultivated by private individuals, without payment to the Government. The owners of such lands are free to dispose of them as they please, and at their deaths they pass to their descendants in accordance with the rules of inheritance prescribed by Mohammedan law.

Fourth. Waste lands.

Fifth. Lands abandoned through non-cultivation.

The above classification has the advantage of being theoretically simple, and easily understood by the people; and the different items of taxation, as laid down by law, cannot be said to be onerous. The following are the chief heads:—

Verghi.—A rate of four per mil., as stated above.

Ushr.—A tenth of the produce of the soil. This is sometimes raised to 12½ per cent., and in the manner in which it is collected it sometimes amounts to 20 or 30 per cent.

Income Tax.—Which amounts to 3 per cent. on the estimated income of those engaged in trade.

Military Exoneration Tax.—Payable by Jews, Christians, and other non-Moslems, at the rate of £T.50 for every 182 males of all ages. There is a new law limiting this payment to males between the ages of 15 and 60, but it has not yet come into operation.

Military Exemption Tax.—Payable by Moslems who are drawn by conscription, but wish to escape service, at the rate of £T.50 each.

Tax on the Registration of Real Property.

Sheep and Goat Tax of sixpence per head (3 piastres).

Besides these there are stamp duties:—auction fees of 2½ per cent., fees on contracts of 2½ per cent., on sale of all animals 2½ per cent., on recovery of debts 3 per cent., on transfer of real estate 1 per cent.; import duties of 8 per cent., export duties of 1 per cent., and a charge of 8 per cent. on all native produce and manufactures when carried by sea from one part of the Turkish Empire to another. There are also the duties on tobacco, liquors, salt, &c. In addition to these Vice-Consul Jago, in his Commercial Report, dated Beyrout, July 11, 1876, gives a summary of seventeen agricultural burdens, which are worthy of the consideration of all who feel disposed to embark in agriculture in Syria under its present rulers.

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IV. European emigrants, on landing in Syria, would find themselves in an unhealthy climate. The whole of the first batch of German settlers, and a very large number of the American emigrants who preceded them, fell victims to the fevers of the country. Captain Conder, referring to the difficulties of the German colonists, says:—

"There are other reasons which militate against the idea of the final success of the Colony. The Syrian climate is not adapted to Europeans, and year by year it must infallibly tell on the Germans, exposed as they are to sun and miasma. It is true that Haifa is, perhaps, the healthiest place in Palestine, yet even here they suffer from fever and dysentery, and if they should attempt to spread inland, they will find their difficulties from climate increase tenfold."^[66]

The privations and discomforts of Syrian peasant life would be intolerable to European emigrants. The men would work by day under a blistering sun, and sleep at night the centre of attraction for sand-flies and mosquitoes, and all the other nameless tormentors that leap and bite. Mr. Oliphant speaks feelingly of a night spent at Kefr Assad:—

"No sooner had the sounds of day died away, and the family and our servants gone to roost, than a pack of jackals set up that plaintive and mournful wail by which they seem to announce to the world that they are in a starving condition. They came so close to the village that all the dogs in it set up a furious barking. This woke the baby, of whose vocal powers we had been till then unaware. Fleas and mosquitoes innumerable seemed to take advantage of the disturbed state of things generally to make a combined onslaught. Vainly did I thrust my hands into my socks, tie handkerchiefs round my face and neck, and so arrange the rest of my night attire as to leave no opening by which they could crawl in. Our necks and wrists especially seemed circled with rings of fire. Anything like the number and voracity of the fleas of that 'happy village' I have never, during a long and varied intimacy with the insect, experienced."^[67]

These experiences were made near the troglodyte village es-Sal; and as Mr. Oliphant peeped into the subterranean dwellings and dark caves, with a view to his colonization company, he exclaimed,

"Indeed, there is probably no country in the world where an immigrant population would find such excellent shelter all ready prepared for them, or where they could step into the identical abodes which had been vacated by their occupants at least 1,500 years ago, and use the same doors and windows."^[68]

It is just possible, however, that emigrants might not care to have their necks and wrists circled with rings of fire, and their bodies covered with swarms of loathsome insects, for the romantic delights of living in underground dens that had not been occupied for 1,500 years.

Mr. Oliphant's scheme only contemplates Jewish emigrants, to whom such conditions would not be altogether novel.

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"I should not," he says, "expect men to come from England or France, but from European and Asiatic Turkey itself, as well as from Russia, Galicia, Roumania, Servia, and the Slav countries."

He has, however, his eye on the whole Jewish race throughout the world when he says:—

"As the area of land which I should propose, in the first instance, for colonization would not exceed a million, or, at most, a million and a half acres, it would be hard if, out of nearly 7,000,000 of people attached to it by the tradition of former possession, enough could not be found to subscribe a capital of £1,000,000, or even more, for its purchase and settlement, and if, out of that number, a selection of emigrants could not be made, possessing sufficient capital of their own to make them desirable colonists."^[69]

This article is not a review of Mr. Oliphant's interesting book, and therefore I shall not follow him into the details of his colonization scheme, where he narrows it, first, to Oriental Jews exclusively, and second to the elevation of such Jews into petty landlords.

"It has been objected," he says, "that the Jews are not agriculturists, and that any attempts to develop the agricultural resources of the country through their instrumentality must result in failure. In the first instance, it is rather as landed proprietors than as labourers on the soil, that I should invite them to emigrate into Palestine, where they could lease their own land at high prices to native farmers if they preferred, instead of lending money on crops at 20 or 25 per cent. to the peasants, as they do at present."^[70]

This is the point to which Mr. Oliphant's fine enthusiasm dwindles down—the floating of a joint-stock company, limited, with one million sterling capital, for the purpose of transforming into "landed proprietors" a number of Oriental Jews, who would neither have the heart to work themselves nor the skill to direct the labour of others. Those who have read modern history, or political economy, will not require an elaborate exposure of a scheme which aims at setting up in Gilead, under the guise of philanthropy, the rack-renting and ornamental landlording which have received such severe rebukes in Europe. We refer to the general outline of Mr. Oliphant's fascinating scheme, inasmuch as he has reduced to practical shape what others vaguely theorize about.

He gives us a map of the proposed colony, connected by railways and tram-cars with the outer world. It embraces "the plains of Moab and the land of Gilead," from the Jabok to the Annon. I know the country well. It is even more beautiful and fertile than Mr. Oliphant describes it to be. It is impossible to pass through it without the constant thought of what it might be in the hands of an Anglo-Saxon race. Mr. Oliphant was struck with the beauty of the girls of Ajlun, one of whom tried in vain to remove the vermin from his blankets. Dr. Thomson and I lay on a grassy slope, a whole afternoon, at the village of es-Souf, watching the children pelting each other with flowers, and we both agreed that we had never seen an assemblage of merrier or lovelier children. "I cannot make them out," said Dr. Thomson, with unwonted enthusiasm; "they seem to be English children."

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Supposing the land for the proposed colony were secured, on Mr. Oliphant's plan, partly by judicious bribing at Constantinople, and partly by buying out the interest of the present proprietors, and that the undertaking proved to be the "sound and practical scheme containing all the elements of success" which its promoters predict—the very success of the colony would expose the colonists to a great and terrible danger. Travellers must have noticed that the *fellahîn* cultivate their fields with long guns slung over their shoulders, and an armoury of pistols and daggers in their belts. Why is this? Because, as the proverb, tested by experience, has it—"A Turkish judge may be bribed by three eggs, two of them rotten; and a *fellah* may be murdered for his jacket without a button upon it."

Mr. Oliphant came upon Circassians re-occupying deserted villages in the midst of the Bedawîn, and he takes the fact as "valuable evidence that the problem of colonization by a foreign element, so far as the Arabs are concerned, is by no means insoluble."^[71] He seems to forget that the traveller with empty pockets may whistle in the face of the highwayman. The Circassians are settling in abandoned villages by the wish of the authorities. They have the deep sympathy of all Moslems on account of their sufferings. Besides, they have nothing to lose which would compensate the Bedawîn for the alienation of the Turkish Government.

The case would be far different with a rich and prosperous colony of foreigners supported by foreign capital.

In his hurried tour beyond Jordan, Mr. Oliphant came upon the Fudl Arabs with 2,000 fighting men, and in their midst a colony of 300 Circassians. In another place he came on a colony of 3,000 Circassians in the midst of the Naïm Arabs, who muster 4,000 fighting men. "The Anezeh Arabs, who control," he says, "an area of about 40,000 square miles, and who can bring over 100,000 horsemen and camel-drivers into the field," would be on the borders of the colony, and the Druzes, who are born warriors, and who inhabit Jebel-ed-Druze, he places at 50,000. Besides these there are the Beni Sukhr, and other local tribes, whose fanaticism and cupidity would be moved by the presence of a prosperous colony of foreigners.

On April 12, 1875, Dr. Thomson and I started from Der'a in a southwesterly direction over wavy hills covered with splendid wheat, the sides of the way ablaze with anemones. As we approached Remthey, we saw what in the miragy atmosphere seemed a row of trees fifteen or twenty miles long. I had been over the path before, and I was struck with this new feature in the landscape. Soon it seemed to us that the line, as far as we could see, was in motion, and as we approached closer to it, we found that it was composed of camels. We spurred our horses, and soon we found ourselves by the side of the great living stream of the Wuld 'Aly Arabs moving from the Arabian Desert to the pastures of Jaulan. The procession marched six or seven abreast, and in families of from 20 to 150. The camels had curious baskets fixed on their humps, and in these were stowed women and children, and kids and dogs, while cooking utensils were hung all round the baskets, and by the sides of their dams trotted little baby camels. The stream flowed past silent and orderly, with here and there a spearman riding by the side of his family. At short intervals flocks of sheep and goats marched parallel with the living stream.

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A party of Arab horsemen were reclining on a little hill with their spears stuck in the ground watching their people pass. We rode up to them, and their chief received us with great courtesy, and urged us to await the arrival of the cavalry with the Sheikh, to whom I had once done a favour which they remembered. We remained about an hour, and still the stream flowed past.

The Arabs told us they had begun to move at an early hour, and would continue on the march for days, and as far as we could see, looking north and south, the procession was without break or pause. They told us they could bring into the field 100,000 fighting men, and their people, they said, was "like the sand of the sea." Never before or since have I seen such a swarm of human beings—"a multitude that no man could number." Any trans-Jordanic colony would have to calculate on the proximity of this horde, whose power has never been broken, not even by Joshua nor Ibrahim Pasha, and whose rule in their own land is supreme in virtue of their resistless might. Even the Turkish Government bribe the Arabs in this region to let the Mohammedan pilgrims pass to Mecca! How much black-mail would the prosperous colony of infidels have to pay for permission to exist in the land of the faithful? And supposing arrangements could be made to secure the tolerance of the Bedawîn, there would still remain the Druzes and Circassians, and local sub-tribes and aggrieved *fellahîn*, who would form combinations to which an agricultural colony could offer no effective resistance.

Mr. Oliphant speaks of driving the Arabs "back across the *Hadj* road, where a small cordon of soldiers, posted in the forts which now exist upon it, would be sufficient to keep them in check." Turkish soldiers would not be the slightest protection to a prosperous colony of infidels, nor would a small cordon of any soldiers suffice, should the colony ever become a tempting prize.

In the spring of 1874, a small party of us were returning from Palmyra, and a few miles beyond Karyetein we passed close by a desperate battle in progress between the Giath and Amour Arabs, and a powerful caravan proceeding from Baghdad to Damascus. The camels of the caravan were formed into a circular rampart, the head of one camel being made fast to the next; and from behind this living rampart the hardy villagers, who were bringing provisions for their families from beyond the Euphrates, defended themselves throughout a long summer day—the sound of the battle being distinctly heard by the Turkish garrison at Karyetein. The Bedawîn galloped round the circle, making a feint here and an attack there until the villagers were worn out and their ammunition exhausted. Near sunset a wounded camel staggered and fell, and broke the line. The circle opened out and became a crescent. Quick as lightning the Bedawîn rushed in at the breach, the camels fled in panic in all directions, and the wiry Arabs with their flashing spears decided the victory in a few minutes. I had full details of the fight afterwards from the victors and the vanquished. The Bedawîns took possession of 120 loads of butter, and a large amount of tobacco, dates, Persian carpets, horses, mules, and camels, valued at £4,000. All the caravan people, dead and alive, were stripped naked in the desert. What did the Bedawîn do with 120 loads of butter? They had it brought into Damascus and sold publicly. What did the Bedawîn do with the splendid carpets from the looms of Persia and Cashmere? They distributed them among their powerful friends in Damascus, in return for efficient protection, and some of the best found their way into the gorgeous saloons of those whose duty it was to administer justice. One of my friends found three of his camels in the hands of the robbers' friends, and though he got several orders from the Government for the restoration of his property, he could never get them carried out. The above incident, of which I have complete details, may be interesting to those who have any idea of entrusting their lives and property to the Bedawîn hordes and the protecting Turk.

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And what is true of the land of Gilead is true of all lands bordering the Desert. In the north-east of Syria there is as fine a peasantry as is to be found anywhere. They are handsome and courteous, though picturesque in rags. They are thrifty and frugal, but penniless and starving. They are comparatively truthful and honest, but without credit or resources. They have broad acres which only require to be scratched and they bring forth sixty-fold; but they cultivate little patches surrounded with mud walls and within range of their matchlocks. During the greater part of the year these poor people dare not walk over their own fields for fear of being stripped of their tattered rags. And yet these are the most heavily taxed peasantry in the world. They pay *black-mail* to the Bedawîn, who plunder them notwithstanding; and they pay taxes to the Turks, who give them no protection. The Bedawîn enforce their claims by cutting off the ears of any straggling villagers from defaulting villages, who fall within their power, and by carrying off for ransom a number of village children into the Desert. The Turks enforce their claims by imprisoning the Sheikhs of the villages till they have paid the uttermost farthing. With protection and fair government, the peasantry of Northern Syria would be among the happiest in the world. But in their land, what the Turkish caterpillar leaves the Bedawî locust devours.

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From the foregoing remarks it is evident that the agricultural resources of Syria and Palestine are very great, and capable, under good government, of being largely developed: that the difficulties encountered by those who invest capital in land in Syria and Palestine are such as to deter immigrants from embarking in agricultural enterprises under Turkish rule in that land: and that immigrants in Syria and Palestine would be exposed to great personal dangers, which would increase in proportion to the success of their labours.

WM. WRIGHT.

FOOTNOTES:

[56] "The Land of Gilead," p. 295.

- [57] Phœnicia, the Greek [Greek: phoinikê], has been by some derived from [Greek: phoinix], a palm tree.
- [58] Vice-Consul Jago, writing from Damascus, March, 1880, says:—"With regard to the property near the Damascus Lakes, it is on the edge of the Desert where no authority exists, and therefore exposed to Bedawîn raids." He summarizes the agricultural products of the neighbourhood of Damascus as:—"Wheat, barley, maize (white and yellow), beans, peas, lentils, kerané, gelbané, bakié, belbé, fessa, boraké (the last seven being green crops for cattle food), aniseed, sésamé, tobacco, shuma, olive, and liquorice root. The fruits are grapes, hazel, walnut, almond, pistachio, currant, mulberry, fig, apricot, peach, apple, pear, quince, plum, lemon, citron, melon, berries of various kinds, and a few oranges. The vegetables are cabbage, potatoes, artichokes, tomatoes, beans, wild truffles, cauliflower, egg-plant, celery, cress, mallow, beetroot, cucumber, radish, spinach, lettuce, onions, leeks, &c."—*Report*, dated Damascus, March 14, 1881. To these might be added numerous other products, such as bitumen, soda, salt, hemp, cotton, madder-root, wool, &c.
- [59] "The Land of Gilead," p. 19.
- [60] "Tent Work in Palestine," p. 355.
- [61] "Tent Work in Palestine," p. 361.
- [62] *Ibid.* p. 372.
- [63] "The Land of Gilead," p. 330.
- [64] Beyrout, July 11, 1876.
- [65] "The Land of Gilead," p. 131.
- [66] "Tent Work in Palestine," p. 361.
- [67] "The Land of Gilead," p. 146.
- [68] *Ibid.* p. 103.
- [69] "Land of Gilead," p. 21.
- [70] *Ibid.* p. 23.
- [71] "The Land of Gilead," p. 255.

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THE CONSERVATIVE DILEMMA.

All is not as well as it should be with the Conservative party. Just when a succession of misfortunes has lowered its credit with the world, it is harassed with mutiny in the camp. Both sides have taken the public into their confidence. "Two Conservatives" lately figured on a distinguished rostrum and retailed their grievances. A month later "Two other Conservatives" stood up on the same spot and answered the impeachment. These dual appearances are rather puzzling. In the case of the first couple it may be that they fixed upon the figure "2" as a neat divisor, and while sending one-half of their force to the front kept the other half in reserve to defend the rear. This explanation will not hold good for the second couple. The party loyalists can hardly have been reduced to such insignificant proportions. Why, then, should they have hit upon the odd device of delivering their apologetics in pairs? Is suspicion so rampant in their ranks that no one man can be trusted? Is the drawing up of a reply to the insurgents so ticklish a business that two heads are needed for its satisfactory performance? Or are we to see in this circumstance merely another sign of the fatal dualism which pervades the party, and has already rent Elijah's mantle in twain?

Instead of attempting to solve these mysteries let us turn to the indictment. There, at any rate, are certain things set down in black and white, and some progress may be made in useful knowledge without any desire to be wise above what is written. The manifesto drawn up by the "Two Conservatives" is not altogether edifying reading. At a first glance it reminds us of a round-robin got up in the servants' hall for the purpose of springing a mine upon the steward and housekeeper, or of the whisperings sometimes heard in the lower ranks of a mercantile establishment where a conviction prevails that nothing but discreet promotion will save the firm. Some of the complaints set forth fall far beneath this level. They deal with tiffs and slights and rebuffs. Services have not been compensated according to the estimate of those who rendered them. Good things have been given to the wrong men, while modest merit has been left out in the cold. Lord Beaconsfield had, it seems, a Figaro in his employ who fed him with judicious doses of flattery and ministered to his blameless vices. The Figaro system has, we are given to understand, been kept up, and the great men of the party take care to live in an atmosphere of adulation. The Dukes meet with hard treatment. It is difficult to see how these unhappy beings are to give satisfaction. They are faithless to their principles if they stand aloof; they do wrong if they come down to scatter their smiles and their patronage among the crowd. Their absence looks like treason while their presence demoralizes. In both cases they are mischievous. What are they to do?

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On the whole it is held to be best for the welfare of the party that the aristocratic chiefs should forthwith perform the "happy despatch." They saved it by their secession from its councils in

1868; they ruined it in 1874 when they rushed back to claim their share of the spoils. There is some truth in the representation. It is not easy to forget the pathetic spectacle which Mr. Disraeli presented at the former period. By his suppleness and audacity he had forced his party through the crises of a revolution which they had denounced beforehand, and the consequences of which they contemplated with dismay. Over against their fears there was nothing to be put but their leader's assurances that everything would come right. They had taken "a leap in the dark," they had staked the fortunes of the party on the dice-box, and events were to decide the issue. When the blow came Mr. Disraeli's reputation for sagacity fell to zero. At last the hollowness of his pretensions was detected, and there was no mincing of epithets for the man who had befooled and destroyed a great party. The Dukes left him to himself, and, according to our present informant, their flight was the harbinger of reviving fortunes. The heart of provincial conservatism warmed to its deserted chief. The patriotic sentiments of the people began to stir. Constitutional associations sprang up in the large towns. The reaction grew apace when the party was left face to face with one great man. When in 1874 the most sanguine prophecies were fulfilled, the Dukes could not have been more surprised if Moses and the Prophets had dropt from the clouds to chide their unbelief. They made what amends they could for their former incivilities. They gathered with prodigious hum about the great man, overwhelmed him with disinterested plaudits, and settled down comfortably to the feast which his genius had spread. From that moment, so we are assured, decay set in. Aristocratic patronage soon paralyzed the rude energies which had won the victory. The Carlton again began to pay the bills and pull the strings. Then in due time came the black night of defeat, when moon and stars disappeared, and Toryism was plunged into a deeper gulf than ever. The lesson is plain. Roll up your aristocratic trumpery, and give the party a leader. What it wants is a man strong enough to pull it out of the slough and set it on its legs again.

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The burden of the manifesto of the Two Conservatives is the want of a leader, and an exhaustive process of exclusion shows among whom he is *not* to be found. The acting chiefs of the party are made to pass in file before us, as the sons of Jesse passed before the prophet Samuel when he wished to ascertain which of them was the predestined King of Israel. Not this man, nor this, nor this, but is there not yet another? Yes, there was one among the sheepfolds who little wotted of the greatness in store for him. The David of whom the Conservative Samuels are in search can pretend perhaps to no such unconsciousness of his mission. A genius for opposition pushes him to the front and flashes in speech and print. He is content probably to put up with the leadership of the Lower House, assured that, with the Conservative commonalty at his back, his talents will soon win for him a complete ascendancy. Meanwhile it is proved to demonstration that none of the acting chiefs are fit for the post. Sir Richard Cross and Mr. W. H. Smith, "great as are many of their qualities, do not entirely possess those that are necessary to secure the plenary confidence of a party." Sir Michael Hicks-Beach comes nearest the mark, "but, either from patience or indolence, he has not seen fit since 1880 to put forward his best energies." In Lord George Hamilton and Mr. Stanhope "there lurks great promise," but they lack years and experience. "Mr. Lowther is daring, but not always fortunate in his daring." They may all stand aside. It is clear that none of the six will do. There is Mr. Gibson, but "he is a lawyer and an Irishman of the Irish." As for Sir Stafford Northcote, he is a respectable man, with a host of respectable qualities, but "he is too amiable for his ambition, which is great, and in trying to play a double part, that of caution and daring, he is at times taxed beyond his strength." Besides, the House of Commons did not choose him. He was "chosen for them." There is as yet no active disaffection towards him, "but of latent dissatisfaction abundance, and of active loyalty none." Was there ever such a beggarly account of empty boxes? Did anybody ever see such an array of political numskulls? Not among these at any rate is the party to find its leader. We must look for him among those whose names have been left out of the enumeration. His blushes are certainly unseen, though his fragrance may not be wasted on the desert air.

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The double manifesto of the mutineers is remarkable for the obliviousness it displays of everything higher than personal and party interests. It reads like the minute-book of a Caucus. With a few verbal alterations it might pass for a description of the quarrels between the "Stalwarts" and the "Half-breeds." When Mr. Gibson befools Lord Salisbury over the Arrears Bill the comment is, "What a cry for the country!" The Egyptian question suggests a hope that Egypt may deliver the Conservatives from their Irish connections and enable them to agree upon a leader. The preference shown for county over borough members is jotted down as a serious grievance. The use made of social influence comes in for a share of lamentation. Here we seem to get within the smell of soup, the bustle of evening receptions, and the smiles of dowagers. The cares which weigh upon this couple of patriot souls cannot be described as august. It is hardly among such petty anxieties that the upholders of the Empire and the pilots of the State are bred. The men who bemoan such wrongs can scarcely aspire to be the sages and ornaments of a legislature that gives laws to a fifth part of the human race. It is assuredly not in an outburst of wounded egotism that we should expect to find any trace of that noble pride which delights in subordination for public ends, and is willing to forget and to be forgotten in common services rendered to the nation. If we were not assured that we have been conversing for half an hour with two fair specimens of the chivalry of the land, we should almost suspect that we had been listening to the confidences of a couple of retired but aspiring soap-boilers.

The criticisms of the "Two Conservatives" are not wholly destructive. As one fabric collapses, we begin to see the graceful outlines of another, for which a top-stone is already prepared. The question of the leadership is complicated by the requirements of the two Houses, but there is not much doubt as to the direction in which the quivering needle will finally point. Notwithstanding the gibes which have been flung at the aristocrats of the party, an aristocratic chief is necessary

to lead an aristocratic assembly, and the only possible selection is already made. Lord Cairns stands dangerously near the centre of power, but the same may be said of him as of Mr. Gibson, "He is a lawyer and an Irishman of the Irish." The noble lord, moreover, is objectionable on the spiritual side of his character. To a High Churchman he smacks a little of the conventicle, and is given to "exercises" at unauthorized times and places. His university escutcheon is dim and stained compared with that of Oxford's Chancellor. On the whole Lord Cairns can never be a serious rival for the first place among the peers of England.

Lord Salisbury is equipped with many of the qualifications that are necessary or held to be desirable in a party leader. He is a member of the higher aristocracy. He can boast of ancestors who played a distinguished part in the politics of Europe three centuries ago. This circumstance appeals to the imagination and confers a legitimate advantage. He served an apprenticeship in the House of Commons. On succeeding to the peerage he did not lose a moment in making his influence felt in the Upper House. In one of his earliest speeches he startled the peers by telling them that if they did not choose to assert their constitutional rights they would consult their dignity by ceasing to be a House at all. He has had much experience in State affairs. What he did at the India Office and as Foreign Secretary is too well known to the world. Lord Salisbury's oratorical gifts are undeniable. He is one of a select half-dozen taken from either House who stand first in the power of moving a popular assembly. Lord Beaconsfield said that he "wanted finish." The remark was more spiteful than true. Lord Salisbury could not rival his chief in the neatness and polish of an epigram, but just as little could Lord Beaconsfield rival him in the unstudied graces of oratory. His speeches have a freedom and a rhythmical flow which captivate the hearer. Though he gives full play to his imagination and recklessly faces the risks to which an impetuous speaker is exposed, he is seldom stilted, and rarely breaks the neck of a sentence. Here, perhaps, the favourable side of the catalogue should end. His speeches have the great blemish of insolence. They are wanting in geniality, and apparently wanting in reflectiveness. They contain too little thought and more than enough of gall. Perhaps their cleverness is too obtrusive. His hearers are pleased, but they suspect a trick, and levy a discount on his argument. The faults of his speeches are his faults as a politician. He is headstrong and impulsive. He borrows his ideas from his passions, and fancies he is sagacious when he is but following the bent of his uppermost desire. He has but little sympathy with modern life and but a narrow comprehension of its facts. He is under the spell of long-descended traditions, and would prefer, if he could have it so, the England of the Tudors to the England of Victoria. Of the people and of the spirit which animates them he knows nothing. How should he? Save the rustics of Hatfield, he has never seen them, except from a platform. His occasional references to such a subject as English Nonconformity shows the depth of his benightedness; and his ignorance, the voluntary and superb ignorance of the aristocrat and the High Churchman, is the source of many of his blunders. Knowing nothing of the ground in front, he forces a leap and comes down in the ditch, and his friends with him.

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Lord Salisbury is indispensable, and as nothing will cure him of his faults the only plan is to keep him out of the path of temptation. The way to do this, we are told, is to fill the front bench in the House of Commons with the right sort of men. Thus his qualifications for the leadership depend upon the choice which may be made of a leader for the Lower House. Everything points to that as the one crucial business. The "Two Conservatives" seem to have a special grudge against Mr. Gibson, perhaps because, unlike Sir Stafford Northcote, he is not too amiable for his ambition, and has lately been making a formidable bid for power. Hence we are told how absurd it is to think for a moment of Mr. Gibson. He is a member for the University of Dublin and might just as well be a member of the House of Keys or of the States of Jersey. Lord Salisbury would never have made such a humiliating display over the Arrears Bill if he had not been misled by Mr. Gibson. Hence it is necessary to keep the hon. and learned gentleman in the background if the party is not to be doomed to endless blunders, and driven, sheer beyond the range of English sympathies.

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The attack on Sir Stafford Northcote is conducted with greater caution, but with the same fell design. We are told that Lord Salisbury's selection for the leadership on Lord Beaconsfield's death was opposed by a near relative of Sir Stafford's, and lost by one vote. Then comes the suggestion that Mr. Disraeli would not have left the House of Commons for the Upper House if he had not believed that Mr. Gladstone had finally retired from the leadership of the Opposition. In other words, had he foreseen the course of events he would not have entrusted the leadership of the House to Sir Stafford Northcote. There is a vicious hit in the picture of Sir Stafford sitting between Mr. W. H. Smith and Mr. Lowther, yielding by turns to the caution of the one and the daring of the other, and showing himself unequal to the double part. Impartial observers will, perhaps, admit that Sir Stafford Northcote's chief fault is a want of backbone. He has not enough of confidence in himself. He would be a better politician if he were not so good a man. He needs to be armed either with the power of kicking out, or with imperturbable composure. This latter is the more useful and more dignified endowment, but it springs from a sense of self-sufficiency which fails him. If he had but the gift of epigram he might escape from his tormentors. The plague of it is that he never succeeds except when he reasons like a man of sense, and weapons forged on this anvil are too blunt to pierce the thick hide of impudence.

No evil has befallen Sir Stafford Northcote but such as is common to men. It seems but the other day when Lord Robert Cecil was playing the same freaks that Lord Randolph Churchill is playing now. Our friend Fluellen would perhaps say, "the situations, look you, is both alike." Either of the noble names would pass for the other if they were written with initials and dashes in eighteenth century style. In those days the late Lord Derby was the Conservative chief, and Mr. Disraeli led

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the Opposition in the Commons as his lieutenant. This arrangement nettled the young blood of the Conservative *noblesse*. Lord Robert Cecil's outlook in the world was not then what it afterwards became. He was a younger son with a career to make for himself. Ambition can supply spurs, so can prudence, so can necessity, and so can all three combined. The younger son of a great house enters upon political life at an enormous advantage over humbler rivals. If there is any brilliancy about him his fortune is made. Lord Robert Cecil's influence was sufficient to produce a succession of small insurrectionary earthquakes on the Opposition benches. Old members from the shires nudged each other in their bucolic way and asked what was the matter, learning with puzzled amusement that there were some who did not think it quite right for the gentlemen of England to be led by a Semitic adventurer. But the Semitic adventurer had the gifts of his race. He was primed to the throat with contempt and scorn, too cold and measured withal for the slightest show of insolence. As each hurly-burly ended and the dust settled, he was found sitting where he always meant to sit, just as if nothing had happened, with the same impassive look and the same indomitable calm. He had one great advantage external to himself. He knew that he could place unbounded confidence in the loyalty of his chief in the Upper House, and so long as Lord Derby stood by him the insurgent school-boys on the back-benches could do him no harm. Perhaps Sir Stafford Northcote cannot count upon the same support, but then his own resources are greater, if he did but know it.

The truth is that Sir Stafford Northcote represents the only type of Conservatism that can survive in the present state of political thought in England. It is not a brilliant type, but that is the fault of history. Enough that it may be a useful one. Toryism has undergone a process of inverse development which resembles decay, but which is merely an accommodation to the existing conditions of life and health. The figments which used to furnish it with sustenance are dead. The divine right of kings, which nourished as a sentiment long after it was disowned by the laws, has at last gone spark out. The divine rights of the Church have followed suit. The legal abuses which were clung to as a symbol of the unchangeableness of English institutions are being swept away. The monopoly of political power which gave the right of governing the realm as a perquisite to a few patrician families has been broken down. The compromise which transferred the old privileges of the aristocracy to the middle classes has had to be abandoned. The "advancing tide of democracy" at which men looked through a telescope twenty years ago, wondering at what comparatively remote period it would reach our shores, has already reached us, and the waters are still rising. The superstitions formerly attaching to the possession of land, to hereditary descent, to ancestral titles, to the feudal pretensions of the squirearchy, are all dissipating into thin air. If it is not yet proved whether science is a democratic power, at any rate it asserts the predominance of natural laws, and at their fiat artificial distinctions must tend to disappear.

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In such a state of things what part is left for Conservatism to play? Mr. Disraeli asked and answered the same question when he began his witches' dance. What have you to conserve? Nothing! The answer is not true. There is much that may be conserved for a long time to come, and when it can no longer be conserved in its present shape something will have to be said as to the altered form it shall assume. One thing is certain. Conservatism cannot emancipate itself from the conditions of the age. It may indeed turn hermit and shut itself up in parsonages and manor-houses, but if it is still to be a political power it can only plan and achieve what is possible. It accepts, and cannot but accept, the law of progress as the rule of legislation, and the only arbiter to whom it can appeal is the national will. But you may advance slowly or rapidly, you may resort to modifications and compromises instead of sweeping things bodily away. In establishing a preference on these questions there is abundant room for popular advocacy. The people are not swayed by pure reason. They are actuated to a great extent by their prejudices and their passions. They must be taken as they are, and recent experience shows that it is difficult to say beforehand what and how much may not be made out of them. Unorganized groups of men are so helpless, oratory has so much power, the small vices of the mind have so strong a tendency to pass into politics, that a wide field will long be open to propagandists of every kind. It sometimes seems as if the obstacles to be overcome might be too great for the reformers, and that the "children of light" must adjourn their efforts till the millennium is a little nearer. It is the spread of education and the silent working of intellectual influences springing from the higher knowledge of the age that puts the better chances on their side. But Conservatism has its chances too, only it must not frighten the people with antiquated nonsense. It must fall in with current ideas. It must set up on the whole similar aims to those of its opponents, merely asking a preference for other methods. Above all, it must be modest and sober and give up bounce and slap-dash. The people are becoming more serious. They reason more on politics and with better lights; a sense of power teaches them self-respect, and they resent clap-trap. Perhaps I ought to ask pardon for saying so, but they can see through a merely clever man, like Lord Salisbury. A Liberal would find Sir Stafford Northcote a more formidable antagonist. He might be more eloquent, but eloquence is not everything. A gentle persuasiveness, even with a spice of puzzledom in it, will go further in the end. The Conservative mutineers know not what they are doing when they try to demolish this type of Conservatism. Or perhaps they do know, but are bent upon objects which, from a personal point of view, are attended with compensations. But the future of Conservatism does not rest with them unless they change their ideas and manners. The staying power and the fitness of things are on the side of those whom, with the ribald audacity of youth, they deride as slow-coaches.

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The "Two Conservatives" are not prepared to accept this humble *rôle*. They meditate something heroic. They say that "if the Conservative party is to continue to exist as a power in the State it must become a popular party;" "that the days are past when an exclusive class, however great its ability, wealth, and energy, can command a majority in the electorate." "The liberties and

interests of the people at large," they say, "are the only things which it is possible now to conserve: the rights of property, the Established Church, the House of Lords, and the Crown itself, must be defended on the ground that they are institutions necessary or useful to the preservation of civil and religious freedom, and can be maintained only so far as the people take this view of their subsistence." These are the principles of democracy. It is here laid down that the people are the only legitimate court of appeal on political questions, and that the decision rests, and ought to rest, with the numerical majority. Before this court the most venerable institutions of the realm may be brought to have their merits sifted, and an adverse verdict is to be followed by a writ of execution. The only test by which they are to be judged is their utility. If they fail to stand it they are to be voted nuisances. The standard of utility is not to be the interests or the supposed rights of any person or class, but the interests of the whole people. The people themselves are to decide what is meant by their liberties, how far they extend, and what other interests shall be superadded in making out the standard towards which our institutions shall approximate.

If these are the principles of Neo-conservatism, our case is made out with a superfluity of proof. Of course there is a pretence of acting on these principles already. When a measure is before Parliament it is assumed that the sole issue in dispute is its utility. The Conservative debater recognizes the decisiveness of this test just as freely as his opponents. But these principles have not been openly avowed by the Conservatives. The "hypocrisy" with which Mr. Disraeli taunted them still flourishes in the form of amiable prepossessions. A vast mass of mystic and traditional lumber still enters into the foundations of Conservatism, and if all this "wood, hay, and stubble" were to be burnt up it would fare ill with the frail fabric overhead. The practical policy of Conservatism would not alter, and could not be altered much, but its pretensions would have to be pitched in a lower key, and the excessive modesty of the part which alone remains to it in the politics of the future would be put beyond dispute.

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It would be interesting to see this theory of Conservatism, quietly admitted though it be into the working details of legislation, hawked for acceptance among the Opposition benches, and note the result. What is this new creed of yours? we can fancy the hon. and gallant member for Loamshire ejaculating. That there must be no class influence in politics? That any half-dozen hinds on my estate are as good as so many dukes? That the will of the people is the supreme political tribunal? That if a majority at the polls bid us abolish the Church and toss the Crown into the gutter we are forthwith to be their most obedient servants? And you tell me that I can profess this horrible creed without ceasing to be a Tory! Before I could with a spark of honesty so much as parley with it I should have to crave a seat among the red-hot gentlemen yonder below the gangway. And the hon. and gallant member would only say the truth. Privilege is the mint mark of Toryism, exclusiveness is its life and soul. The doctrine of equal rights must be in everlasting repugnance to it. Toryism is the political expression of feudalized society, with lords and squires at the top, subservient dependants half-way down, and a mass of brutalized serfs at the bottom. It has been comparatively humanized by modern influences, but nothing can change the bent of its genius. With privilege vested interests of all sorts enter into ready fellowship. All those good citizens who have reason to suspect that if a public inquest sat upon them the verdict would not be favourable hasten to edge themselves in as closely as possible towards the privileged circle. The village rector, who does his duty with all the conscientiousness of a beneficed Christian, but who prizes his glebe and tithe, rushes to Cambridge to swell the majority for Mr. Raikes. Gentlemen of the long robe who make politics a vocation gravitate for some reason or other towards Liberalism; but the lower branch of the profession displays an opposite tendency. The county lawyer, who makes two-thirds of his income out of the mysteries of conveyancing, has reason to dislike such things as the registration of titles, and the transfer of estates by a few sentences extracted from a public record. The licensed victuallers, tens of thousands strong and with more than a hundred millions of invested capital, dread the change which would give them a quiet Sunday in return for a seventh of their profits. The strength of Toryism lies in this phalanx of vested interests and social privileges. The golden chain reaches from squire to Boniface, and still lower in the social scale, wherever some snug little peculium is found to nestle. The principles of Neo-Conservatism would rend the structure from top to bottom. The doctrine that the solution of all our political problems and the fate of all our institutions are simply an affair of numerical majorities at the ballot-box, and that the interests of the people are the sole end of legislation, is enough of itself to smash the party to atoms.

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All sensible politicians admit that if the time should come when a large majority of the people are adverse to monarchical institutions it will be vain to think of maintaining them by force. It may be added that sensible politicians seldom discuss such questions. They have too much present work on hand to trouble themselves about the remote and the unknown. "What thy hand findeth to do" is their motto, and out of the faithful achievements of to-day will the better future spring. Nevertheless bare possibilities sometimes present themselves as conundrums to be unravelled, and to the conundrum in question there is no second answer. But it is one thing to quietly accept a proposition and then let it drop out of sight; it is another to run it up to the top of the flag-staff as the symbol of a great party. This is what the "Neo-conservatives" propose to do with their recent discovery. An opinion of the Crown's utility is to determine whether it shall be preserved or destroyed. When the majority of the people cry "Away with it," away it is to go. As soon as the popular fiat is announced, the Sovereign will depart from Windsor, the Life Guards will present arms to the President of the Republic, and in the twinkling of an eye, as the result of a contested election, the Monarchy of England is to be decorously carried to the tomb. This is the doctrine which Tory lords and squires are asked to proclaim with sound of trumpet as the corner-stone of their political creed. "Only so far as the people take this view of its subsistence"—this is to be the

Tory patent for the "subsistence" of the Crown. Rather different this from the old cry:—

"Ere the King's Crown go down there are crowns to be broke."

It is true that the peers no longer wear coats of mail, or lead their vassals to the field of battle. Of most of them it is hardly disrespectful to suppose that on critical occasions they would prefer the rear of the army to the van. But the creed is not quite extinct that there are things worth fighting for, and that among them are the Monarchy of England and the rights of the Crown. For practical purposes, perhaps, the creed is obsolete, but it lives in the imagination, and the sentiments which spring from it are part of the cement of Toryism. The solemn abjuration which is now proposed in the name of Neo-conservatism resembles a charge of dynamite.

But in abandoning Tory principles the leaders of the new movement hope perhaps to drive a roaring trade by defending Tory institutions. They will say that they have been obliged to shift their ground, but that they hope to work with better results from their new position. The business of the party is to prevail upon Household Suffrage to accept the survivals of feudalism, and a verdict in the new court of appeal that shall ratify the old creed. It is a creditable enterprise. Will it succeed? It seems but too likely that the efforts contemplated will only serve to weaken the institutions they are meant to defend, and that whatever is practicable or desirable in the objects aimed at will be secured most easily and most effectually by the Liberal party.

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Among the political institutions of an old country there are some which certainly would not be set up if the past were obliterated, and the nation were beginning afresh. They were suitable to the times in which they originated, but they are out of harmony with the tendencies of the present day. Perhaps they do some good; at any rate they do not do much harm, and the people tolerate them for the sake of old associations. From this point of view a great deal may be said in their behalf. They make visible the continuity of our national existence, they connect us with a distant and romantic past, they lend to the State something of dignity and poetic charm. Institutions of this sort may be held in veneration by those who can trace them to their origin, and see them in perspective from the beginning. But there is one test they will not stand. They will not pass unscathed through the crucible of modern criticism. They are disfigured by anomalies, they shelter many abuses, they involve an expenditure of public money out of proportion to the services rendered in return, they consecrate a privileged descent, in the transmission of property they violate the rules of natural equity, while the principles on which they rest need only to be developed and applied with logical consistency to overthrow the fabric of political freedom. The best service that can be rendered to such institutions is to say as little as possible about them. A wise friend will not utter a word in their defence unless they are assailed, and the ground selected for defence will then be carefully limited to the dimensions of the attack. The next best service will be to remove from them as occasion offers all unsightly excrescences, to put an end to any anomaly which is beginning to excite remark, and to amend any faults of mechanism which are likely to produce a jar. Such a policy of discriminating reserve may lengthen out their existence indefinitely. But to force them to the front, to exalt them as the ripest product of political wisdom, to hold them forth as necessary to the maintenance of the civil and religious liberties of the people,—this can only be the work of designing adversaries or of blundering friends. As a basis of party action it would be like sand. It would be levelled by the mocking tides of popular criticism.

The programme of the "Two Conservatives" begins with a grand item, the conservation of the liberties of the people. But why "conserve?" Why not extend and advance them? Why should the present stage in the historical growth of our liberties be selected as the point at which conservation becomes a duty? Would not the party which undertakes the task to-day be better pleased if there were fewer of them to conserve? The Tories have always been adepts at conservation, but the things they have been most willing to conserve were not our liberties but the restrictions put upon our liberties. Since the liberties now proposed to be conserved are assumed to be threatened by the Liberals, they must be liberties of a special sort, such as liberty to spread infection, liberty to dispense with vaccination, liberty to send uninspected ships to sea, to keep children away from school, or to send them out at any age to work in the fields, the factory, or the streets. "Personal rights" have good radical sponsors in the hon. members for Stockport and Leicester. Perhaps Parliament as a whole is the best sponsor. The Neo-conservative programme should tell us what is meant by the liberties of the people. The absence of definition may perhaps cover an imposture.

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The next object of Neo-conservative devotion is the maintenance of the rights of property. Those rights are of no private interpretation, and belong to sociology rather than to politics. Every man is interested in them who has anything to lose, or who has a chance of acquiring anything. Hence they cannot be claimed as an appanage of Toryism. They are placed under the common championship of all parties. But the exclusive claim set up must have some meaning. The rights of property intended may perhaps be the rights of property as understood by the landlords, in which sense they may include a right to the property of other people; or as understood by the association of which Lord Elcho is president, in which sense they stand in opposition to the rights of the public. We know what is meant by the rights of landed proprietors, of railway corporations, of publicans, of property owners, of shipowners, of pawnbrokers and of corporate bodies, such as the guilds of the city of London. They represent the pretensions of these classes to have their interests preferred to those of the community. It is a case of prescription against equity, of the license assumed by special callings against the checks and guarantees which Parliament has found it necessary to impose for the general welfare. This is a field in which Neo-conservatism can reap no harvest. It will be vain to tell the working man who is the owner of the house in

which he lives, that his rights are in the same boat with the right of London companies to squander or misapply the wealth which has descended to them from the Middle Ages. It will be useless to enter an appeal before the tribunal of public opinion in defence of such rights as these on the pretence that they are the rights of property. The unsophisticated reason of the constituencies will resent the assumption as an attempted fraud.

The political institutions which are to be set forth as necessary to the maintenance of the civil and religious liberties of the people are the Established Church, the House of Lords, and the Crown. Of the Crown we have already spoken. It is the least vulnerable of the three, and for this reason it is the least fitted to furnish a party cry. The strength of the Crown resides in its enormous historical *prestige*, and in the constitutional device, old as the monarchy in principle, but modern in its machinery, by which it is removed from the sphere of responsibility and therefore from party assault. The Crown need not be defended for it is not assailed. If it were assailed there are sufficient grounds for an adequate, perhaps a triumphant, defence. But in mere truth it would be difficult to defend it on the special ground that it is necessary to the maintenance of our civil and religious liberties. Everybody knows that these liberties were won in despite of the Crown, and in opposition to its alleged prerogatives. We had to send a dynasty adrift before we could regard our liberties as moderately secure. No greater disservice can be done to any institution than to advance exaggerated or ill-founded pretensions on its behalf, and this is what Neo-conservatism proposes to do for the Crown. It will be well to keep this institution off the hustings. To utilize it for party purposes seems like an insidious form of treason. The Established Church is fairer game, but absolutely worthless as a means of raising the wind for a forlorn party. An institution which needs all the support it can get has none to share with companions in distress. The Church may have a larger hold upon a portion of the middle classes than it had thirty years ago, but the working classes are separated from it by a wider gulf. Many who attend its services and call themselves Churchmen are utterly indifferent to its political fate. It is preposterous to represent the Established Church as necessary to the maintenance of civil and religious freedom. In the course of her history she has been the unrelenting foe of both, and we have no more of either than she could help our having. The want of disciplinary powers prevents her from interfering with the belief, or, except in grave cases, with the moral conduct of her members, but the paralysis of the authority necessary for internal discipline is not the same thing as religious freedom. The bondage of the Church is not the liberty of the State. Disestablishment has not yet come within the range of practical politics, but if a popular statesman felt it his duty to bring the question fairly before the electorate, it is at least doubtful whether the verdict would not be hostile to the Church. No doubt need be entertained as to the result of such an appeal in the case of the House of Lords. The constitution of the House as an assembly of hereditary legislators is admitted to be indefensible. Its theoretic prerogatives are tolerated only on the understanding that they shall never be exerted. It exists by virtue of habit and indifference, aided by a conviction of its powerlessness. As a decorative institution there is no great eagerness to pull it down, but whenever the House forgets that its functions are ornamental, and commits itself to a serious issue with the Commons, its last hour will be at hand. The step most likely to precipitate its doom would be for the Tory party to glorify it as the palladium of our liberties, and try to get up popular enthusiasm on its behalf. The House of Lords would not long survive that treacherous homage. It would be beaten in one campaign.

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No: from whatever point of view we consider the question, it is plain that the attempt to reconstruct the Tory party on a Democratic basis cannot succeed. The open avowal of such an aim would deprive Toryism of all backbone and reduce it to the condition of a moribund jelly-fish. It is not given to any creature to change its nature and yet continue to discharge its old functions. It is true that Toryism in order to get on at all with the present age is obliged occasionally to act on Liberal principles. The device gives no offence so long as it is adopted quietly, and if suspicions are awakened a few heart-stirring speeches in the old orthodox vein suffice to allay them. A formal repudiation of old ideas is quite another thing. Just as Utopian is the project of defending Tory institutions on Democratic principles. There are two arsenals from which political combatants may choose their weapons, the historical and the scientific. It is from the former that the champion equips himself who offers battle on behalf of institutions that have descended to us from hoar antiquity. Weapons taken from the latter are unfit for such a service. Every blow would recoil upon the institution which it was the champion's aim to defend. To abandon the Established Church, the House of Lords, and the Crown to the uncovenanted mercies of modern political criticism is a rash experiment. The hope which sees in such an experiment a fresh lease of life and new chances of ascendancy for Toryism is absurd.

Yet there is, and always will be, room for a Conservative party in English politics, only it must move along the historic lines, and not needlessly renounce its old watchwords. We need two brooms to keep our constitutional mansion in a tidy state, one in use, the other undergoing repairs, or put in pickle, and ready to be brought in when wanted. Government by party requires the existence of two parties, and demand is apt to generate supply. It is not necessary that the two parties should be separated by an impassable gulf. It is only necessary that materials for two separate connections should be provided, and in this emergency Nature does much to help us. There are opposite moods of mind in politics as in literature and art; there are antithetical differences of intellect and temperament to be found among men of all countries and all times; there is the standing opposition between what is and what ought to be, between the actual and the ideal, between the desire of the poor human wayfarer to sit down and rest, and the curiosity which ever lures him on. Possession and the desire to possess, divine contentment and still diviner discontent, self-centring reflectiveness and impulses whose proper object is the welfare of mankind,—here are agencies which play their part in politics as well as in social life. These

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multifarious forces tend to range themselves on opposite sides, the sympathetic in each class readily finding out their kinsmen in the rest. With such materials to work upon, a Conservatism which chooses to follow the ordinary course of things can never be defunct. Extinction can only come from an endeavour after some monstrous birth against which both Nature and history have pronounced their ban.

HENRY DUNCKLEY.

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