# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

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

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER

VOL. XXXI (No. 12) DECEMBER, 1917 NO. 739

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## The Open Court Publishing Company

CHICAGO

Per copy, 10 cents (sixpence). Yearly, $1.00 (in the U.P.U., 5s. 6d.).

Entered as Second-Class Matter March 26, 1897, at the Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under Act of March 3, 1879

MOSLEM COLLEGE AT BIDAR.
After Law, *Promotion of Learning in India.* (See page 767.)

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## ON THE DAY OF THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.[1]

BY ANTONMARIA LUPI.

[TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.—Scholars are well aware that the birth of Jesus has been assigned to every month of the year; and reference is sometimes found (e. g., *Encyclopædia Biblica,* 3346) to an article in which the whole matter is canvassed, though in a work not easily obtained, and never translated into English.[2] It has so much curious interest for the student that I offer a translation, endeavoring by both phrase and typography to reproduce something of the quaint formality of the original.

The author was celebrated in his time as a man of vast and varied learning. Born at Florence in 1695, he entered the order of Jesuits, and from 1733 till his death in 1737 he taught rhetoric in the Jesuit Collegio de' Nobili at Palermo. Here was also one of those academies so famous in the Italy of the Renaissance and later, the Academia dei Pastori Ereini (this fanciful name apparently signifies "Shepherds of the Eraei Mountains," lying back of Palermo), of much repute in the literary life of the time. He was appointed to pronounce an academic discourse before this society on the festival of the Nativity in 1734, and again in 1735. On the former occasion he read a learned dissertation on the year of the Saviour's birth; and on the latter, the one given here. He planned a third on the same general topic, but his unexpected death prevented.]

THE year is now exactly fulfilled, most learned Coryphæus, most gentle Fellow-shepherds, the year, I say, is now exactly fulfilled, since I, chosen by You to discourse in this Assembly so renowned, and so learned, on the Mystery of that divine Manifestation, called to our minds by the Church in the present solemn Festival, undertook to examine in the most certain light of Chronology which was exactly the year, which the fortunate day, on which the Eternal Word, assuming our feeble frame, first vouchsafed to show

[1] Translated by Earl Morse Wilbur.

[2] Dissertazioni, Lettere, ed altre Operette del chiarissimo Padre Antonmaria Lupi Fiorentino. Faenza, 1785. I, p. 219.

himself amongst us. And as for that part of the question, which regarded the year of the sublime Nativity, I demonstrated (if I can not say the truth, yet I believe at least the probability) that the great benefit was conferred upon the World under the Consulate of Decimus Laelius Balbus, and of Caius Antistius Vetus, in the nine and thirtieth year of the Reign of Augustus, five years and seven days prior to that, which by us is reckoned as the common Era. But that part of the question, which must needs be made clear, determining the month, and the day of the divine Birth, was left undecided, awaiting the researches of more able Speakers, I being prevented by scantness of time from possibly undertaking at that time the difficult investigation. Now therefore, as your reverend commands require of me, that I return afresh to discourse of the great Mystery; methinks I can not forbear to complete that work, of which I had already planned the outline; and to set forth in clear light which one amongst all the days of the year that was, on which it pleased God, made man, to shed luster by his wondrous Birth at Bethlehem. We come however in our search into the midst of a very forest of opinions, various indeed, and conflicting; and though forsaken by the light of Astronomy, and of History, on which Chronology so much relies, we perceive at least what must seriously be maintained in harmony with Ecclesiastical Tradition.

I scarcely know, most learned Academicians, whether there be found in any of the periods renowned in Sacred Story less agreement among Writers, than in this, as to fixing, not the year only, but the month, and the day of the Virgin Birth from Mary. There is not a month in the year, unless perhaps July be excepted, that hath not found supporters, who proclaimed it as the Natal month; nor is there a day, so to say, in the months, that hath not been ambitious to be adorned with dignity so fair. January was amongst the first to have eminent supporters of its claim. John of Nicaea, an ancient Greek Writer, cited by Père François Combefis,[3] an eminent Scholar of the Order of Saint Dominic, in the supplement which he published to the *Library of the Greek Fathers*, witnesseth, that it had been the opinion of Saint James the Apostle, that the Saviour was born on the sixth of January, whereon the Church celebrates the Mystery of the Epiphany. It may be said of a surety, that this conviction was very ancient; seeing that the Christians of Egypt celebrated the Festival of the Nativity on this day, as Cassian,[4] a celebrated writer, recorded; and the Church at

[3] *Novum auctuaris*, Vol. II, p. 297. [4] *Collationes*, X.

Jerusalem likewise so noted in its Calendars; the which is attested by an Egyptian Monk Cosmas, surnamed Indopleustes, by reason of the voyage that he made to India; as we have it in the Text of this Writer, brought to light, no long time since, by Père Dr. Bernard de Montfaucon, a celebrated Antiquarian of the Order of Saint Benedict; and many of the ancient Christians were of this persuasion, as to which authentic and undoubted witness is borne to us by Saint Epiphanius.[5] The most ancient Heretics, followers of the fanatical Basilides, also themselves proclaimed January as the Natal month of Christ, as did the Churches in Egypt, in whose bosom they themselves were born; but afterwards disagreeing with the Catholics even in this, they kept as the anniversary of this Festival the tenth day of the aforesaid month. To this witnesseth Clement of Alexandria, a most ancient and authoritative Writer, in the first book of his *Stromata*.

There was none among the Ancients that had imagined, that the divine Word had wished to select for his Nativity the month of February. But there hath been found among the modern Critics beyond the Alps one that hath not hesitated to assert, that the Saviour was born about the middle of that frozen month. In favor of this view Johann Albrecht Fabricius in his *Bibliographia*, Chapter x, citeth Johann Christoph Wagenseil,[6] but as I have not succeeded in finding the Works of this Writer, even so have I not so much as been able to learn what reasons determined him to this conclusion.

March hath on its side a Critic far more renowned and of greater repute than was Wagenseil, Samuel Bochart having declared himself for March in his *Hierozoicon*,[7] a Man the most highly accomplished in the Oriental Tongues whom the Protestant party hath had. But this Author showed himself as weak in supporting this view as he had formerly been happy in many of his ingenious conjectures; wherefore on this point he hath remained singular, or at least without any adherents of repute.

And now, O most gentle Fellow-shepherds, we are come to the most delightful month of Spring. Certain unknown, and mayhap ignoble Innovators in Egypt would fain have acclaimed the month of April for its contribution to human joys, as witnesseth Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, I., wherefore they declared that

[5] *Haeres.* 51. This opinion hath at length been called in question by Père Magnan in his *Problema de anno Nativit. Christi*, p. 328.

[6] In *Sota*.

[7] Liber. II, 44.

the 24th day, or the 25th of the month *Pharmuthi,* which correspondeth to the nineteenth, or the twentieth of our April, had been that happy day, on the which there blossomed forth the fair flower from the Root of Jesse. Yet this opinion, the untimely offspring of a disordered mind, rather than the child of sound Learning, died with its sponsors; so that during the course of fifteen centuries the memory of it scarce remained in history, save in the report of the renowned writer. But it is indeed true, that to our unhappy age hath fallen the miserable distinction of seeing bud forth afresh an opinion so ill rooted. One writer, in religion a Protestant, who concealing his own name, wished to be called *Temporario,* in a Work on Chronology, which he published, having placed the Incarnation of the Word in the hottest months of Summer, afterwards placed the Nativity in the season of Spring. More recently yet, that is in 1710, there issued from the press in London a little Work on the year, and on the Natal month of Christ, with the name of Peter Allix[8] Professor of Theology. Now in this work an attempt is made to re-establish upon foundations slender, and ill constructed, the old and abandoned view that the Lord was born in April.

They have been more in number, but not more happy, nor of better repute, that have favored May. There hath shown himself inclined to May the modern Writer just now cited, Peter Allix; and the above-mentioned Clement of Alexandria relateth,[9] that certain, who were rather curious investigators of what is new, than wise discerners of the truth, had said, that on the twentieth day of May, amongst the roses and the flowers, the Great Nazarene was born. There held to this opinion with the passage of years, and for the most part embraced it, an unfortunate sect of heretics, precursors of Arianism; who, persistently denying the Eternal Word, were by the Catholic party called by the opprobrious name of Alogi. These Alogi then (as Saint Epiphanius stateth in his list of heresies, at the fifty-first Heresy)[10] divided into two factions: the one held that the Saviour had appeared amongst us on the twenty-second of May; the other party of them later celebrated the Nativity on the twenty-first of June. You could scarce decide,

[8] Vide *Memoir de Trevoux,* ann. 1715, p. 1299.

[9] *Stromata,* I, and also more recently Alfonso des Vignoles, Vol. II. *Bibliothecae Germanicae,* p. 71.

[10] *Haer.* li. I am disgusted that so disgraceful and detestable a company should influence M. de le Nauze, who in a dissertation quoted in abridged form in volume v. of the Paris Royal Academy of Inscriptions, p. 149, Amsterdam edition, 1741, maintaineth that the Birth of J. C. fell on the 25th of May. See Père Magnan quoted above, p. 333.

which of the two factions argued the more imprudently, seeing that the holy Writer hath not deemed their reasons worth relating.

The month of July lacketh (as we have said) any pretensions, or champions. August also lacked them; had not that same Johann Christoph Wagenseil,[11] who had taken February under his protection, declared himself also for August, pointing out, that it seemed to him probable, that it was at the end of August that the Virgin Birth had taken place.

As for September it is true that many Chronologists, and they of high repute, have come to believe it the natal month of the Desire of the Nations. The misfortune is, however, that the greater part of these Writers, discredited in the Catholic party by their blind enlistment on the side of the modern Heresies, at once put those of intelligence in mistrust, whether this opinion too be not the sooner espoused out of desire to oppose the Church of Rome, than because it is supported on foundations, which one may regard as solid and firm. Perhaps the first to advance this conjecture was Matthaeus Beroaldus, a very ardent Calvinist, who in the fourth book of his Chronology at the second chapter assigned the general season of the Winter Solstice to the divine Incarnation, hence setting the admirable Nativity forward to the Autumnal Equinox, about the twentieth of September, or toward the beginning of October. This novel view was embraced with applause by the parties opposed to the Church of Rome. In favor of this view Andreas Osiander, a Lutheran Heretic, declared himself; so did also Joseph Scaligar, and Sethus Calvisius, themselves also Calvinists, and vehemently defended it in their works on Chronology.[12] This view was brought to light anew in the past Century by two English Writers, who published Commentaries on the New Testament, Works esteemed in their own sect, and not undervalued by others. Of these the first was Erasmus Schmid,[13] who contenting himself with placing the divine Nativity in September, but without fixing the day, left to John Lightfoot,[14] who is the other, of whom I was speaking, the glory of fixing the Natal day of Christ on the fifteenth of September. Not for this day in particular, but certainly for the month of September, Samuel Basnagius showed himself inclined, a French Calvinist amongst the refugees in Holland, in his *Exercitationes* against Cardinal Baronius;[15] in the which I doubt not, that he has

[11] In *Sota.*

[12] In the appendix to *Opus de emendat. temporum,* and in *Isagogici Canones,* lib. iii., annot. 101, 102.

[13] *Ad Joannis* iii. 30. [14] *Ad Lucae* ii. 7. [15] *Ad ann.* xxxvii.

been followed by other Writers less celebrated, of whom I can give you no account.

Up to now, however, this strange opinion hath been confined to the Heretics, amongst whom it had its birth, but hath little interested the Catholics, who have not deemed it worthy of serious refutation; save that at the close of the past Century it was adopted, and ably defended by a Catholic Writer, a Man, to whom not alone France, that bore him, but the whole World of Letters, hath done the justice of believing him a person of really extraordinary, and perhaps unapproachable, erudition. This is that Père Jean Hardouin, who hath so greatly adorned both his own age, and my Religious Order, with the immensely great extent of his Learning; but who at the same time (if I may be suffered the liberty, my Hearers, of speaking thus of a Brother in mine own Order, whom I in other regards so highly revere, and so deservedly admire)—but who at the same time, I say, much tarnished his own lustre by showing himself at times a little too venturesome in conjecture, and a little too set in defending his conjectures. Now this author, in a book of his entitled *Anitrrheticum*,[16] wherein he maketh reply to sundry objections, with which he had been faced by a certain clever Antiquarian touching the knowledge of some ancient Medals, declared himself for the opinion, that the Redeemer had been born in September, and he employed all the penetration of his wit, and all the abundance of his erudition, in supporting this opinion, and in undermining its contrary, so Commonly received and so ancient in the Church. It would be an interesting thing to learn one by one, and to examine carefully all the reasons, which he adduceth, partly of his own invention, partly adduced by Authors, who have defended this opinion before him. But one can not embrace all within the brief space prescribed to the speaker by the wise rules of this Assembly.[17]

We proceed then the rather to mention the opinions, which favor the other months. To October incline almost all those, that favor September; whence to the beginning of October the honor of the divine Birth is willingly conceded by Beroaldus, Scaliger, Calvisius. It appeareth also to Fabricius, that to this month inclined Isaac Casaubon, a great Scholar among the Huguenots of France, and Matthias Wasmuth, a writer celebrated among the English.

[16] Antirrhet., *de Nummis antiq.*, p. 65.

[17] I will say, however, that this extravagant opinion was confuted by the renowned Monsignore del Torre in his *Antichità di Anzo*, and finally by the above cited Père Magnan, p. 336, sqq.

More ancient are those that favor November. Certain are referred to by Saint Epiphanius, who would have the Saviour born on the eighth of that month. For the eighteenth it would appear, that Clement of Alexandria held, an Author so ancient, and so highly esteemed. Nor among moderns hath there been difficulty in finding those who subscribed to these otherwise so little plausible opinions; and in fact, that the Saviour was born in November was defended, no long time since, by Salomon van Til, in the little Work, which he wrote on the year, month, and day of the Nativity of Christ.

The happiest, however, and the most commonly accepted among all the months of the year is the month of December, for which all the Churches of the East, the West, the North, the South, have as it were with one accord declared, and have during the long course of quite seventeen Centuries recognized, and praised as worthy of human redemption the twenty-fifth day of the same: a day, on which the Word made flesh vouchsafed to appear clad in our lowly nature. You may well have discovered, most gentle Fellow-shepherds, that I already hold to this, which is not exactly an opinion (saith Albinus Flaccus in his book *De Divinis officiis*), but indeed a doctrine of the Catholic Church: a doctrine which hath been planted within my bosom not merely by the reverence, with which Ecclesiastical Traditions deserve to be regarded; but by the most firm persuasion, which I hold, that they have wandered from the truth, who on this point thought otherwise. Tell me, most reverend Hearers, and do justice to my choice. Among a host of conflicting opinions, the most of which are seen to be founded rather upon caprice, and on the lust for innovation, than on the sincere, and loyal search for the truth; lacking as we do any chronological evidence, drawn either from Astronomy, or from History; is it not required by every law of sober Criticism, that that judgment be preferred, which hath in its favor the testimony of the most ancient, and the most revered writers of the Church; that one which amongst all Nations, so to say, and through almost all the Centuries was considered as the only true one, the only one handed down to us by the Apostles; that one, which is supported by all the most favorable conjectures; that one, against which no objection can be brought forth, which is not weak, and merely specious? Now such is precisely the common judgment in the Church touching the fortunate day of the Birth of the Saviour. The other opinions referred to are almost all opinions, whose origin, whose currency, whose duration, are known to be narrowly restricted and limited; they are

opinions based often upon arbitrary grounds, often upon the feeblest conjectures, advanced by few Supporters, and they of slight consideration. Where on the other hand is there one, who could now fix the beginning, who could prescribe the limits, who could report the testimonies, which buttress the judgment of the Church? Take, saith Cardinal Baronius,[18] take the Martyrologies, and the Menologies of the Greek Churches, and of the Latin Churches; I might also add, take the Liturgical Books of the Syriac Churches, the Armenian, the Ethiopian, the Coptic, the Illyrian: those will be found, it is true, to differ the one from the other, and from us in points not seldom essential to the Dogmas of Faith; but you assuredly will find no diversity of judgment on this Tradition as to the Natal day of Christ. You will not find that any Church remembereth the particular time, when the festival of the Nativity was fixed for the eighth day before the Calends of January, thus discovering the beginning of the universal Tradition; a patent sign that this commenced with the very commencement of the Church. Jan Gerard Vos[19] was for thinking, that the determination was not taken before the third century, to adhere to the twenty-fifth of December for this Festival, and that this was decided upon to the end of removing the differences, by which the Churches, in particular those of the East, disagreed among themselves in celebrating the anniversary of a Mystery, of whose precise day the Faithful had no knowledge. But beyond the fact that these differences were not so great, as some now would have it appear, Saint John Chrysostom[20] more certainly informed on this matter than Vos was, certainly doth not admit this ignorance of the Natal day of Christ among the Faithful of the first two Centuries. Saint Peter, and Saint Paul, and the other disciples of the Lord, he saith in the Homily, which he delivered on this Festival, taught in the Church that Jesus was born on the 25th of December. *Non sunt nostra, quae loquimur* (thus runneth the text of the Saint in the beautiful version, which was made by Père Fronton le Duc) *Non sunt nostra quae loquimur: majorum sententia est: a Petro, & Paulo, ceterisque Discipulis Christi Ecclesiae hoc didicerunt.* As something taught by the Apostles it is referred to in the book of the Apostolic Constitutions by that Compiler, whoever he may have been, who passeth under the name of Saint Clement,[21] and who however

[18] In *Notae ad Martyrol. die* 25.

[19] *De tempore Natalis Christi,* p. 1, cap. ult.

[20] *Homil. de Nat. Domini* 31. *de diversis Testamenti locis inter editas a Frontone Duc.*

[21] Lib. v, *Constit.* cap. 12, 13.

unknown, yet by confession of all is certainly most ancient, and of highest authority in the Church. Euthymius, and Nicephorus Gregoras, Greek Writers, cite a Sermon of Saint Evodius, that Saint Evodius contemporary with the Apostles, who succeeded Saint Peter in the Cathedral of Antioch.[22] Now in this Sermon it is clearly stated that the Virgin Mary brought forth on the twenty-fifth of December. I know that modern Critics have difficulty in believing this Sermon the production of an Author so ancient. But yet even these recognize him for very ancient; nor do I think it a reason for doubting its genuineness, that it fixeth the precise day, on which the Eternal word in the cave at Bethlehem cried as a Babe. Clement of Alexandria himself, could not deny, though he held to November, that his opinion was counter to the opinion of the Churches of the East, and of the West, in the third Century; and the beauty of it is, that on this point the conviction of the Churches was also reinforced by the public records of the Gentiles. In fact about the middle of the second Century Saint Justin the Philosopher and Martyr in the second Apology, which he wrote for the Christians, and presented to the Roman Rulers, and to the Senate, speaking of the Census, and of the Enrollment of Judea made under Quirinius, by occasion of which Enrollment the Virgin betook herself to Bethlehem, where she was to bring forth the Desire of the Nations, appealeth to the original books, where this Census was described, preserved in the public Archives in Rome. So that the Faithful of that City were able, by consulting those records, to see whether they were altogether in agreement with that, which the Churches also maintained, touching the time of the divine Birth. To these very Archives appeal was made at the beginning of the third Century by the great Tertullian.[23] Of these divers authentic notices of the day of the Nativity, Saint John Chrysostom spoke in the fourth Century; wherefore the Fathers of the earliest Church knew in what month the Lord was born, not only through teaching given by the Apostles; but because that came to them attested also by the public records, drawn from the Pagan Archives. We must not wonder after this at the universal sentiment of even the Eastern Fathers in the fourth Century, and in those that followed. In fact, both the Anonymous Author of the Work, which is called Imperfect, and Hippolytus an ancient Chronologist of Theban birth,[24] of some

[22] In Serm cui titulus *φῶς* Lumen.

[23] Lib. iv., *contr. Marcion*, 7.

[24] *Hom.* 9 *in Matth.* *ἐπὶ Αυγούστου Βασιλέως γεγένηται ὁ Χρίστος ἐν σπηλαίῳ μινός Δεκεμβρίν κέ.*

fragments of whose writings found in the Vatican Library Emanuel a Scheelstrate tells us, and Saint Gregory of Nyssa; *Cum nocti ad longitudinis, summum provectae nulla fieri potest accessio, tunc nobis in carne apparit, qui cuncta complectitur.* Saint Gregory of Nyssa, and Theophylact, and a hundred others that might be mentioned, all agree in attesting this Tradition; counter to which there is found no Writer amongst the Greek Fathers, save possibly Saint Epiphanius, whose opinion however neither appeareth clear, nor escapeth being sharply assailed by Saint Jerome. Nay the Church at Antioch, in which, when the ancient records had been lost, there had arisen some uncertainty touching this point, had in the fourth Century documents of the highest authority from the Churches at Constantinople, and at Rome, by which to assure itself of the truth; as was preached to the Innovators with defiant jubilation by Saint John Chrysostom.[25]

The Latins were even more in agreement on this head. Saint Augustine in the fourth book of his *De Trinitate,* on the one hundred thirty-second Psalm, in the twenty second Sermon *De Tempore,* in the twenty-first *De Sanctis*; Saint Ambrose in his eighth, tenth, and twelfth Sermons; Saint Jerome, Saint Fulgentius, Prudentius,[26] and then the whole company of those, that follow in the later Centuries, all mention the twenty-fifth day of December as the Natal day of the Lord, as a thing, of which there neither ever hath been, nor can be a doubt. With the Holy Fathers agree all, so to speak, of the Chronologists, and the Writers of what sort soever; if those alone be excepted, whom we have named; whose opinion, apart from their being so few in number, when placed in comparison with the rest, hath been stigmatized not only by the Catholic authors, but also by many able, and learned Protestant Authors, as capricious, and inconsistent. In fact Wilhelmus Langius was a Protestant; and yet in the Work, that he wrote on the life of Christ, in the second part, second book, second chapter, he stateth it as a thing not only probable, but certain and demonstrated, that the true Natal day of Christ fell on the twenty-fifth day of December. Isaac Casaubon was a Protestant; and yet in the Work, that he wrote with such ardent controversy against Cardinal Baronius, he had to declare, convinced by the evidence, that one must not too easily set aside the most ancient Tradition of the Church, which celebrated the birth of the Saviour on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month. Richard Montagu was a Protestant; and yet in his

[25] *Homil.* cit.

[26] Hymn 11.

Ecclesiastical Origins he criticizes as highly ridiculous and inappropriate the view of Joseph Scaliger,[27] and of those who held with him, that Christ was born at the Autumnal Equinox. And yet as that is of all opposing views the one most applauded, so is it the least ill founded: *Perridiculum est* (frankly writes the above mentioned author), *perridiculum est quod Scaliger, aliique ineptissime scripserunt.* Among the Protestants may also be placed Jan Gerard Vos previously cited (who if he was not avowedly a Calvinist, was certainly still less a Catholic), a Writer in his Scholarship bold and fearless, who never concealed what seemed to him true, out of respectful deference to Authors holding a different opinion. And yet he, in the first part of his *De tempore Natalis Christi,* in the last chapter, after examining the arguments of one who as to the Natal day of Christ did not conform his opinion to the Tradition of the Church, decideth for the old System, against which, he saith, the opinions of the Ancients are too few, and too much at variance with one another, and the arguments of the Innovating Scholars are too weak, which much as they have undertaken, have proved nothing to destroy a conviction so ancient, and so widely diffused.

It remaineth therefore, O most learned Academicians, it remaineth well established upon the universal consensus of all the Fathers, of all the Centuries, of all Nations, even of all Sects, as against the uncertain and outgrown views of a few either foolish, or capricious persons, that the Birth of our Redeemer took place in the night, which preceded the twenty-fifth day of December; the which was assumed by me as a hypothesis one year ago, though I could not, for want of time, demonstrate its truth.

It ought, in order to complete the subject, to be determined on what day of the week, in what phases of the Moon this grand Mystery befell; all the objections ought to be heard, and resolved which have been brought forward by those that support opposing systems; but to do that would be an ill-judged abuse of your gentle sufferance, O learned Fellow-shepherds; there would be risk of consuming a far longer time, than that prescribed for an Academic Discussion; and beyond this:

> "Behold, night falleth, and all Heaven groweth dark;
> And the lofty Mountains cast their shadows o'er the fields:
> The Stars yield us their company, and the Moon,
> And my little sheep are coming from the grove."[28]

[27] Part i., p. 47.

[28] Sannazaro, *Arcad. Eglog.* 2.

# SPECULATION IN SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY.

BY JOHN WRIGHT BUCKHAM.

AMONG laymen natural science is supposed to be strictly non-speculative, factual, practical. It has the reputation of being concerned solely with facts, not with theories. How far this is from the truth all who have the slightest acquaintance with modern science know. Natural science is intensely speculative. No freer confession and abler justification of *speculation* in the field of science has been made, perhaps, than that of George J. Romanes in the introductory chapter of his *Darwin and After Darwin.* After pointing out how seriously science was limited, from the sixteenth century onward, by the notion that "science ought to consist in a mere observation of facts, or tabulation of phenomena," Romanes goes on to show that it was no less a person than Darwin himself who broke this bondage. "To begin with," he writes of Darwin, "he nowhere loses sight of the distinction between fact and theory, so that thus far he loyally follows the spirit of revolt against subjective methods. But, while always holding the distinction clearly in view, his idea of the scientific use of facts is plainly that of furnishing legitimate material for the construction of theories." "Not facts, then, or phenomena, but causes or principles," concludes Romanes, "are the ultimate objects of scientific quest." "The spirit of speculation is the same as the spirit of science, namely a desire to know the causes of things."

Whether one agrees with this estimate of the value of speculation or not, he cannot but be struck by the extraordinary prevalence of speculation in present-day science. A good instance is that of Arrhenius's theory of the transmission of life. How the imagination exults in trying to follow one of those infinitesimal life spores falling for eighteen hundred years or more through space, conveying life from planet to planet. It is interesting, not to say romantic, suggestive, yes, and in a sense scientific, but boldly, strikingly, speculative. Even more speculative, because more intricate and involved, is Weismann's germ-plasm theory of heredity. Biophors and determinants and a sturdy struggle for existence within

the spacious domain of a single cell,—has speculation ever gone to greater length than this? And yet if it explains the facts better than any other theory it will win the right to stand.

The *test* of scientific speculation, Professor Romanes goes on to say, is "adequate verification," "an appeal to objective proof." But is not this too heavy a demand for even scientific speculation to meet? Surely neither of the above theories can appeal to objective proof, and adequate verification is a very flexible standard. Can science really verify her hypotheses? They stand until some as yet undiscovered fact appears to overthrow them. Their truth is empirical, relative, contingent. Verification is always progressive, never complete. It is not impossible that some fact may be discovered that will modify or annul the undulatory theory of light, or even the descent of species.

Moreover scientific explanation is at best partial, never thoroughgoing and exhaustive. The unreflective mind may think that science has a complete and sufficient understanding of electricity, but the physicist understands very well that, as for any knowledge of what electricity really is, science is as ignorant as a child and is likely to remain so for some time to come. And as for the most familiar forces and objects in nature, it is very little at best that is known of them. Light may be defined as ether waves, but what is ether? The definitions of science are at best but descriptive. The law of gravitation—what is it in itself? How it works we know, how to measure it, how to use it, but what is its nature and how did it come to be? Science bulks large, its deeds are mighty, its conquests marvelous, but after all it works in a world of mystery, handling forces that it cannot comprehend, dealing freely and familiarly with facts that it grasps only in part.

What then? Should science cease to experiment, to achieve, to speculate? Surely not. Experiment, application, speculation, have accomplished marvels. Together they have won great things for humanity. Only let not science assume that her interpretation of the universe constitutes the sole and absolute truth. Self-sufficiency and dogmatism tempt her to-day as they once tempted theology.

When we turn to the realm of the rational, the moral, the spiritual,—lying quite outside the realm of natural science and belonging to philosophy, ethics and theology,—we find that we start, as in the realm of science, with certain facts of experience (though facts of a very different order from those of science), such as

consciousness of self, worth, freedom, other selves, God. These experienced facts of consciousness, though invisible and intangible, are not less real than those of science, but more real. They touch more nearly our integrity, our happiness, our higher life. Without them science itself would be but an inconsequence, not to say an impertinence.

To understand, correlate, interpret, and thus to make best use of these facts of personality, it is necessary to speculate concerning them, just as it is necessary to speculate concerning the phenomena of the outer world. Speculation will not disclose their ultimate nature any more than in the realm of science, but it serves to throw light upon them and to render them more intelligible.

There will always be protest against speculation in the realm of the spirit, just as there has been, and ever will be, in that of science. "Stick to the facts, let theories alone," is a plausible and appealing cry. But it is timid and reactionary. It is not thus that progress is made. There may be temptations and dangers in speculation but it has an important office to fulfil. Two virile movements at the present time represent the reaction from over-speculation, —pragmatism and Ritchlianism,—the one in philosophy, the other in theology. Both have a mission, but both are partial, short-sighted, and if persisted in will prove paralyzing. It is such pleas of nescience and counsels of caution that keep philosophy and theology behind science in the path of progress. Science has dismissed her fear of the unknown; let not philosophy and theology retreat into the cave of agnosticism.

And yet when all has been said in defense of speculation, as legitimate, illuminating, essential to progress, the only defensible plea in its behalf is for *freedom,* not license, in its use. To be an illumination of truth, not an obscuration, an aid and not a hindrance, speculation must recognize its limitations and observe its boundaries. Verification, as far as it can be applied, is the indispensable test and regulator of speculation. And verification is just as possible and just as essential in philosophy and in theology as in science. The facts of self-consciousness are the stable foundation of truth here, just as the facts of sensation-consciousness are in science. Immediately one of these facts is contradicted, speculation needs revision.

A word in closing as to the relation of the two fields of speculation to one another. These fields are contiguous but distinct. Confusion comes from disregarding either their contiguity or

their distinctness. The scientist too carelessly passes from his own field of speculation into that of the philosopher and theologian, forgetting that he is dealing with another order than his own and should first familiarize himself with its *prolegomena*. The philosopher and theologian, on the other hand, sometimes push indiscreetly and heavily into the realm of science, dogmatically asserting what must be true instead of asking what *is* true. The next step toward a more comprehensive and harmonious life-philosophy lies in the mutual recognition, on the part of truth-seekers in both fields, of the distinctness of their tasks and the relatedness of their results.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT.

That progress in science cannot be made without speculation is so obvious that it is generally granted, but that imagination, yes even poetic imagination, plays an important part in it is not fully appreciated. Sometimes the great discoverers in the realm of science themselves are not conscious of the debt they owe to the poetic and artistic part of their natures in guessing at theories and excogitating explanations of facts that strike us as strange. It is well known that Kepler, before he solved the problem of the planetary movements formulated with definite exactness in the so-called three Kepler laws, had tried a most ingenious and fantastical explanation based on a mathematical formula which might almost remind us of a cabalistic imagination, but he was critical enough to find out that his fantastic theory covered the facts only approximately, and so he continued delving into the problems of the inaccuracies and discrepancies of his first guess until he found the truth, a formula which is a mere description of facts, and yet should be called just as beautiful and grand as his prior purely poetic vision. Mythology always precedes the formulation of exact truth, and mythology is not wrong but foreshadows the truth. This is true generally not only in science but also in ethics and religion. The old religious

myths are untrue only if we understand them in their literal significance. They are true if we heed only the spirit of the myth which is an exposition of the truth in its dawn. Light is thrown on this subject in Ribot's book, *Essay on the Creative Imagination,* in which he has devoted much attention to the approximation to truth by speculative imagination. In a chapter of my little book *The Surd of Metaphysics,* entitled "Truth or Mythology," the significance of allegorical formulations with special reference to the terminology in science and also in religious truths has been pointed out, and teaches us to respect the old mythology and pagan superstitions, including the paganism which is still clinging to present-day Christianity, better than we otherwise would be inclined to do.

P. C.

## HOW RUBBER IS MADE.

BY A. M. REESE.

ONE of the principal products of the Malay Peninsula is rubber. Like most people who have never happened to investigate the matter my ideas as to the way in which an automobile tire is extracted from a tree were very hazy; so, with another American, who had charge of a mission school in Singapore, I boarded the Jahore express on the F. M. S. R. R. (F. M. S. meaning Federated

Malay States) and after a run of half an hour arrived at the Bukit Timar rubber estate some ten miles northwest of Singapore.

The Bukit Timar is an up-to-date plantation of more than one hundred thousand trees, and here we saw the whole process, from tree to sheet rubber, as shipped to all parts of the world and sold by the pound. Rubber trees grow to a considerable size, but this being a young plantation most of the trees were not over six or eight inches in diameter. In the middle of the estate was a very attractive bungalow where lived the manager and his wife, a young

HOME OF THE MANAGER OF THE BUKIT TIMAR RUBBER ESTATE NEAR SINGAPORE.

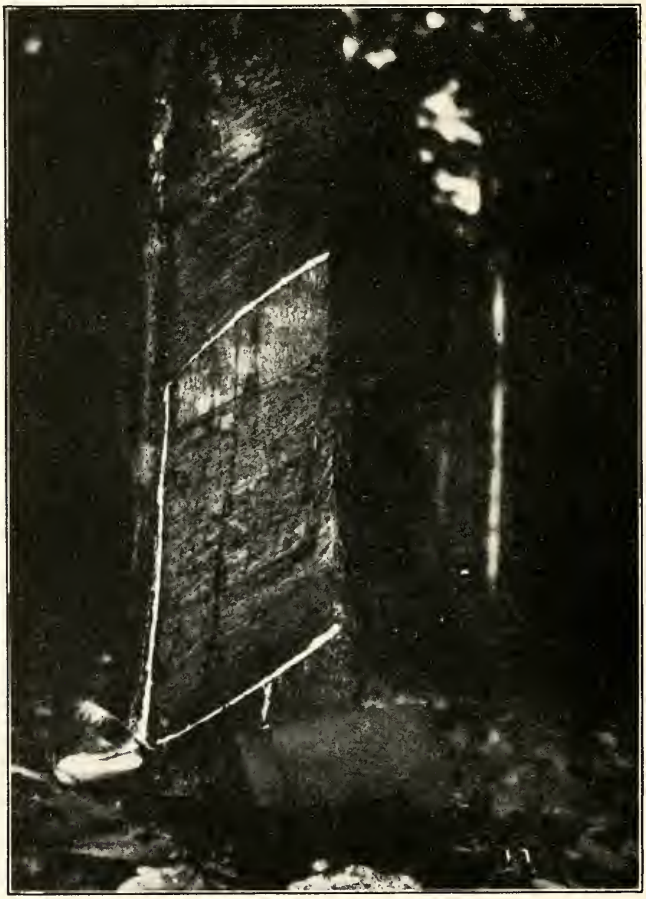
English couple, and the former very courteously showed us about his place and explained the different processes.

"Tapping" begins at daybreak, and all the juice or *latex* is collected before noon. Dozens of native and Chinese men and boys are employed in this process, some of the latter being so small that they can scarcely carry the two buckets of latex on the bamboo stick over the shoulder.

In tapping, a very thin and narrow piece of bark is gouged off, just deep enough to make the tree bleed, but not deep enough to kill it; so that by the time the bark on one side of the tree has been

cut away that on the opposite side has had time to regenerate. The process is thus a perpetual one and the tree lasts indefinitely.

The exact method of tapping varies, but usually it is begun as



A YOUNG RUBBER TREE SHOWING ONE METHOD OF TAPPING. The white lines are the latex running down the grooves into the glass cup at the bottom. Above the two slanting lines is seen the scarred tissue where the bark has beeen gouged away. When the lower end of the lower line reaches the ground the tree will be tapped on the opposite side. The amount of latex in the cup seems greater than it really is because of the water upon which it floats. The size of the tree may be judged from the kodak case at its foot.

two slanting grooves that converge to form a V. The latex oozes from the freshly cut bark, runs down the converging grooves to their point of union, and is caught in a small glass cup or other

vessel suspended under a tiny spout at the apex of the V. The method of tapping shown in the photograph is different from this somewhat, though the principle is the same. The latex that oozes from the grooves is a pure white, sticky fluid resembling milk; about a tablespoonful is obtained each day from each tree.

By the time each man has tapped or gouged all of the trees assigned to him (perhaps two or three hundred) the first-tapped trees have bled all they will for that day, so that collecting is begun at once. In each cup is a little water to prevent the latex from coagulating and sticking to the bottom.

THREE LATEX GATHERERS.

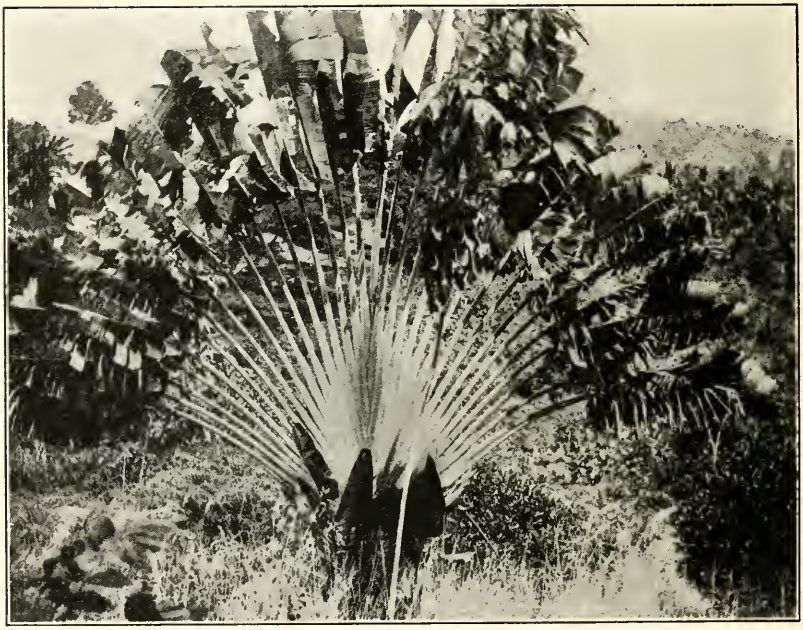
The boy in the middle of the group has the canvass bag over his shoulder in which he carries the scraps of dried rubber from the grooves on the trees.

The first V is cut several feet from the ground, and the amount that is gouged from each side of the V each day is so very thin that it will be months before the apex of the V reaches the ground, by which time the regeneration of the first cuts will be well under way.

After the flow of latex has ceased for the day a narrow strip hardens along each groove, like gum on a cherry tree. These little

strips of rubber, with bits of adherent bark, as well as any drops that may have fallen to the ground, are collected in bags and carried to the factory to be made into sheets of cheap grades of commercial rubber.

After the trees have been tapped the latex is collected in carefully cleaned tin buckets, brought to the factory and strained into huge earthenware tubs. It is then put into enamelware pans about twelve by thirty-six inches in size and three inches deep, and a very weak acid (usually acetic) is stirred into it. In about half an hour the acid coagulates the latex (like rennet in making junket



THE TRAVELER PALM, AN UNUSUAL TYPE OFTEN SEEN IN THE FAR EAST—SINGAPORE AND ELSEWHERE.

from milk) into a soft, pure white mass, about two inches thick and of the area of the pan. This soft mass of rubber is carefully floated out of the pan onto a table, where it is rolled on both sides for a few minutes with a wooden rolling-pin to squeeze out the excess of water and acid. It is then carefully lifted into a large vessel of pure water to harden until the next day.

The next day it is run several times through smooth steel rollers under dropping water, where it is flattened out into sheets of about an inch or less in thickness and of a proportionately greater

area. It is next passed through roughened steel rollers that mark it off into ridges and depressions like a waffle.

These sheets, now tough and elastic, are hung in a closed chamber and smoked until they reach a proper shade of brown, when they are ready for shipment. The smoking process, which is to preserve the rubber, often takes many days, though at the time of our visit the manager of the Bukit Timar estate was experimenting with a method that would complete the smoking in a few hours.

The production of rubber in the Malay Peninsula is of rather recent date and it has increased by leaps and bounds. In the various "booms" that have taken place many fortunes have been made—as witnessed by the palatial residences about Singapore—but many have also been lost, though the witnesses to these are not so evident.

Whether the increased demands for rubber will justify the thousands of young trees that are still being planted, not only on the Malay Peninsula but on Borneo and other islands of the Far East, remains to be seen; but, judging from the opinions of several rubber experts of Singapore, this is quite doubtful.

# HEBREW EDUCATION DURING THE PRE-EXILIC PERIOD.

BY FLETCHER H. SWIFT.

> "And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents."—Genesis xxv. 27.
>
> "Young men and maidens vied with one another in learning beautiful songs.....Shepherds and hunters at their evening rests....., sang songs to the accompaniment of the flute." —Herzog, *Encyclopädic,* 2d ed., V. Extracts, pp. 672 ff.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS.

IT is impossible to estimate even approximately the duration of the Native or Pre-Exilic Period. From the Conquest to the Exile is something over five centuries, but back of the Conquest stretch unknown unrecorded centuries of nomadism. The Native Period is marked by all those changes, industrial, political, social, moral, religious, intellectual and educational, involved in passing from the life of wandering tribes to that of a people living in walled cities, ruled over by a king, and pursuing as occupations, agricul-

ture, trades and commerce. It was a period of remarkable religious, moral and intellectual progress. It begins with a bookless people who erect heaps of stones to record events. It closes with the public adoption of a written code,[1] destined henceforth to be a national textbook. The foundations of Judaism had been laid. Already the forces which were to make the Jews a "people of the book" were at work.

Throughout the Native Period the popular ideal of manhood was twofold, the man of craft and shrewdness and the man of strength and courage. The man of shrewdness is represented by the thrifty herdsman and farmer, the shrewd merchant, the discerning and just judge, the crafty warrior. The man of strength and courage is represented by the stalwart and daring hunter and soldier. Although patriarchal life as pictured in the Scriptures is undoubtedly much idealized, the character of Jacob may be accepted as a clear and forceful embodiment of one aspect of this popular ideal: a man of shrewdness and cunning, if need be tricky and dishonest, prizing highly his religious inheritance, winning by craft against all odds. Representatives of the physical ideal are to be met with on every hand in early narrative and legend: Jephtah and other tribal heroes or "judges"; Saul, who stood higher from the shoulders and upwards than any one else; David, who slew his ten thousand.

## EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

### *Who was Taught.*

The educational characteristics of the Native Period appear in paragraphs to follow which consider the subject matter and institutions of education. The present paragraph will be limited, therefore, to a brief statement of a few general characteristics.

The Native Period was a period without schools. At first the tribe, then the family, were the chief social organizations through which education was received. The rise of orders of priests (Heb. *kohanim*) and of communities of prophets (Heb. *nebiim*) undoubtedly led to some sort of provision for giving special training to the members of these orders, but for the masses of the people there were no schools. Education was chiefly a training according to sex in the practical duties of every-day life. This training was given, as among primitive people, chiefly through actual participation, instruction playing only a minor part. In certain respects

[1] The so-called "Book of Instruction," identified with Deuteronomy xii-xix and xxvi-xxviii.

education was broader than in later times owing to the fact that physical sports, dancing[2] and music were more universally cultivated. The camp, public assemblies, temples, religious and secular festivals supplemented the training given through the tribal and family customs and occupations.

In the earlier part of the Native Period all members of the tribe of the same sex received practically the same training. It may be that the eldest son as the prospective successor to the position of tribe chief received some special training in religious rites, tribal ceremonies, institutions and laws. This view is supported by Graetz who writes: "Collaterally (with the priesthood) there existed a custom, dating from remote patriarchal ages, which demanded that the first-born of every family should attend to the performance of sacrificial rites. This prerogative could not be abruptly abolished, and continued for some time longside of the Levitical priesthood."[3] As already noted the rise of the priesthood and the prophets as distinct classes brought into existence two orders demanding special training.

## BOYS' EDUCATION IN TRIBE AND FAMILY.

In tribal days the education of the child was in the hands of the parents and adult members of the tribe. Upon settlement in Canaan the family became the fundamental social unit and the training and instruction of the children became almost entirely a matter of parental responsibility. In some cases, however, the parents delegated the rearing of their children to others. The Scriptures contain references to "nursing fathers,"[4] and "nursing mothers,"[5] male and female nurses. Ruth's child was nursed by Naomi.[6] Jonathan's four-year old son was in charge of a nurse,[7] and Ahab's seventy sons were reared by the great men of Samaria.[8]

Undoubtedly the Hebrews from earliest times in common with other primitive peoples, consciously or unconsciously, recognized distinct periods in child life and modified training and instruction accordingly. Definite recognition of such periods is found in the Post-Exilic Period, and will be described in the next chapter. In the present chapter no attempt will be made to present the activities, occupations, and training of the child upon the basis of stages owing to lack of data; a general treatment must suffice.

[2] Dancing, originally a religious and patriotic exercise, came in later times to be limited to the field of secular festive activities.

[3] Graetz, H., *History of the Jews*, I, 25.

[4] Numbers xi. 2.

[5] Isaiah xlix. 23.

[6] Ruth iv. 16.

[7] 2 Samuel iv. 4.

[8] 2 Kings x. 1-7.

## WHAT WAS TAUGHT.

In early childhood, play, in later childhood and youth, work, industrial occupations and training in the use of weapons were the activities through which physical development and training were secured. During the period of nomadism and for a considerable time after settlement in Canaan every tribesman looked forward to the life of a herdsman, warrior and hunter. To these occupations were added upon settlement in Canaan agriculture, building, and other trades and crafts.

Following the establishment of the monarchy and the rise of cities, trades and crafts of a considerable variety developed. The most important crafts and industrial occupations came now to be (1) agriculture, (2) cattle raising and grazing, (3) fishing, (4) mining, (5) building, (6) carpentry and wood working, (7) metal work, (8) spinning, (9) weaving, (10) dyeing, (11) tanning, (12) tent-making, (13) pottery-making, (14) making of tools to be used in trades and crafts.

Implements and processes were simple; nevertheless, all occupations put a value upon strength and physical dexterity. In the camp, on the march, in pasture land, in shop or in market place, the boy under the direction of his father or elder kinsmen learned to perform the tasks of his generation.

Just as the social conditions made it necessary for every boy to be given industrial training, so the troublous political conditions made it necessary that every adult male be ready at a moment's notice to answer the call to arms. Consequently every boy would learn the use of weapons. Preparation for war consisted chiefly in training in the use of the sling, the bow and arrow, the sword, shield, spear. Later in some cases, riding and chariot driving would be taught. Many passages in the Scriptures chronicle a display of skill which could not have been gained except through long and persistent practice and training. David's skill in the use of the sling[9] is known to every one. An illuminating passage in Judges reads: "among all this people there were seven hundred chosen men left-handed; every one could sling stones at an hair-breadth and not miss."[10]

That athletics and physical sports such as ball games, jumping, running races and contests in archery had a place in the life of this period is indicated by a number of passages: "He will toss thee

[9] 1 Samuel xvii. 50. [10] Judges xx. 16.

like a ball;"[11] "I will shoot as though I shot at a mark;"[12] "He hath set me a mark for the arrow;"[13] "And rejoiceth as a strong man to run his course."[14]

"Young men and maidens vied with one another in learning beautiful songs, and cheered with them the festival gatherings of the villages, and the still higher assemblies at the sanctuaries of the tribes. The maiden at Shilo went yearly with songs and dances into the vineyards;[15] and those of Gilead repeated the sad story of Jephthah's daughter.[16] The boys learned David's lament over Jonathan;[17] shepherds and hunters at their evening rests by the springs of the wilderness sang songs to the accompaniment of the flute."[18]

From the fact that David "danced before Jahveh"[19] and from other instances, it is evident that dancing was originally a religious as well as a patriotic and festive exercise.[20] It was probably combined with song and dramatic gesture. Often the Hebrew youth accompanied his own song with the kinnor[21] or played the flute while others sang. In certain families and in preparation for certain public festivals there may have been some provision for systematic instruction in dancing, singing, playing the kinnor or the flute. But probably music and dancing ordinarily were learned without any formal instruction, i. e., children picked them up by watching, imitating, and now and then joining in the performance. It was for the most part in the same informal manner that the children of each generation learned from their elders ballads, lyrics, funeral dirges, patriotic songs, chants and prayers.

The history of literature during the Native Period falls into two minor periods: (1) the age of oral transmission or the age of song and story; (2) the age of written literature. Joshua iv seem to indicate that prior to a wide-spread knowledge of reading and writing it was customary to erect heaps of stones to indicate the site of important events, and then to transmit orally from generation to generation the narrative connected therewith. Laws,

[11] Isaiah xxii. 18.
[12] 1 Samuel xx. 20.
[13] Lamentations iii. 12.
[14] Psalms xix. 5.
[15] Judges, xxi. 21.
[16] *Ibid.*, xi. 40.
[17] 2 Samuel i. 18.

[18] Judges v. 11. Cf. Herzog, *Encyclopädie*, 2d ed., V, pp. 672 *et seq.* (Quotation and reference from Briggs, C. A., *Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture*, p. 356.)

[19] 2 Samuel vi. 14.

[20] Later times came to look with disapproval upon dancing as a form of worship and relegated its use more and more to secular festive occasions.

[21] An eight-stringed lyre.

traditions, myths, songs, riddles, fables, proverbs, and prayers were handed down orally for many centuries before they were committed to writing.

"Many of Israel's traditions undoubtedly continued for centuries to be recorded simply in the minds of the people. As among the nomadic Arabs to-day they were recounted during the long evenings beside the campfires, or as the shepherds watched their slow moving flocks, or in the secret of the harem, or at the wells as the maidens went out to draw water, or at marriage feasts and religious festivals. Possibly, as throughout all the towns of modern Palestine, there were found professional story-tellers who, whenever men were gathered together for recreation, recited with gesture and action their bundle of tales. The stories appealed strongly to the imagination of the people, for they told of courtship, of marriage, of intrigue, and of the achievements of their ancestors, or else answered the quesions which were uppermost in their minds [i. e., questions regarding the origin of man and the world in which he lives, differences in races and language]. Other traditions embodying the experiences of the tribe, were transmitted as sacred from father to son. Another large group was treasured at the many local sanctuaries scattered throughout the land. Each time that the worshipers made a pilgrimage to the shrine, its especial cycle of traditions relating to its history and ceremonies would be recounted or recalled and thus kept fresh in the popular memory."[22] "In the picturesque, concrete form of popular traditions were transmitted the thoughts, the beliefs, the fancies, and the experiences of preceding generations. The variety of the motives and influences which gave rise to these is astonishing. Some were at first intended simply to entertain, other to enlighten, to kindle patriotism, to instruct in the ritual, and to inspire true faith and action. They touch almost every side of human experience, and meet in a remarkable manner man's varied needs."[23]

Gradually through the offices of priest, prophet and scribe a body of written literature began to appear. Each period produced its own group of written works or scrolls. Out of this mass of writings there gradually emerged a group accepted as canonical, i. e,, as bearing the stamp of divine authority. Every work so produced gave one more text to be studied by the rising generation. As finally established the canon included three chief divisions, (1) the Law; (2) the Prophets; (3) the Writings. "It is agreed among

[22] Kent, C. F., *Beginnings of Hebrew History,* p. 13.

[23] *Ibid.,* p. 12.

scholars that (the first division of the canon) the Law[24] was constituted and officially adopted through the influence of Ezra and Nehemiah"[25] in the fifth century B. C. The second division, the Prophets,[26] was probably not completed before the second century B. C.[27] The third division, the Writings,[28] was closed in the year 118 A. D. when the council of Rabbis meeting at Jamnia decided in favor of the canonicity of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Songs which up to that time had been in dispute.[29] From the above data it is evident (1) that the canon was not finally determined until the second century A. D.; (2) that there was in existence among the Hebrews, at least three hundred years before the Exile, a considerable body of written literature.

When did the three R's come to be of such general use as to be considered essentials in education? It is generally agreed that the Hebrews adopted, during their conquest and settlement of Palestine, the Canaanite systems of writing and of weights and measures.[30] However, this does not prove that a knowledge of reading, writing and reckoning became general at this time, nor does it preclude the existence and use of earlier systems.[31] "The Mesha stone of Dibon erected by a contemporary of....Elijah, exhibits so clearly and perfectly the characteristics of a cursive hand as to demonstrate the existence in Palestine of a long practiced art of writing."[32]

Probably the classes first to make an extensive use of writing were the priests, the prophets, scribes and court officials. The priests as the oldest of these four classes were undoubtedly the first to use it and may have employed it in certain tribes prior to the Conquest. The establishment of the monarchy resulted in the rise of the last three classes named above, each of which found a knowl-

[24] The Law includes Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

[25] Briggs, C. A., *Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture,* p. 120.

[26] Included in the "Prophets" are: (1) former prophets: Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings; (2) the later prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve "minor" prophets.

[27] Briggs, C. A., *Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture,* p. 123.

[28] Included in the Writings are (*a*) Psalms, Proverbs, Job; (*b*) The Five Rolls: Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther; (*c*) Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Chronicles.

[29] Briggs, C. A., *Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture,* p. 130.

[30] Peritz, Ismar J., *Old Testament History,* p. 118.

[31] "The cuneiform script was perhaps still in use in Palestine in the tenth and eleventh centuries B. C., meanwhile the north-Semitic alphabet appears (about 850 B. C.)" Cook, S. A., "Palestine," *Encyclopædia Brit.,* 11th ed., XX, pp. 608-609a.

[32] Cornill, Carl H., *Culture of Ancient Israel,* p. 90.

edge of the three R's a most valuable asset. The later prophets wrote extensively. The establishment of the monarchy brought with it the demand for written records of court transactions. Alliances, treaties, royal proclamations, messages of the king to chieftains absent on the field of battle, chronicles of the king's exploits, all afforded abundant opportunity for the royal secretary or scribe. "From the days of David onward recorders and scribes figure among the court official classes."[33] That some members of the nobility were able to read and write is suggested by the statement that David wrote to his captain Joab, and that Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name.[34]

It is impossible to estimate how widespread was the knowledge of the three R's during the Native Period. The Scriptures contain many passages which suggest, though they do not prove conclusively, a wide-spread knowledge of reading and writing.[35] It is related that a young man of Succoth captured by Gideon described or wrote down a list of elders and princes of Succoth.[36] The instances of David and Jezebel just referred to are frequently cited as arguments of a considerable popular knowledge of reading and writing among the masses upon the basis that both David and Jezebel took it for granted that those to whom they were writing could read. The evidence of such passages is not conclusive. David and Jezebel both may have employed scribes; moreover Jezebel was a foreigner.

In 1880 was discovered chiseled into the rocky wall of one of the aqueducts leading into the Siloam reservoir in Jerusalem an inscription as old at least as the time of Isaiah, perhaps as old as the reign of Solomon.[37] However it is not safe to conclude from this inscription, as has sometimes been done, that the three R's were in common use among the laboring classes. The inscription is in a cursive hand which suggests that it may have been traced by a scribe and then cut by a workman. Moreover, even if the hand that traced and the hand that cut were the same, the work may have been that of a highly educated prisoner of war, taken captive and enslaved. Nevertheless such an inscription scarcely would have been made unless there had existed at the time a considerable reading public.

In conclusion it may be said that it seems safe to assume that

[33] Kent, C. F., *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives,* p. 3.

[34] 2 Samuel, xi. 14; 1 Kings xxi. 8.

[35] See Deuteronomy vi. 9; xxvii. 8; Joshua xviii. 9.

[36] Judges, viii. 4.

[37] Sayce, A. H., *Light from Ancient Monuments,* p. 5; p. 82 gives a cut of the inscription. Sayce relates in detail the story of the finding, pp. 82-86.

putting into writing laws designed to be known by all the people[38] would be the beginning of a widespread demand for instruction in reading and writing. As soon as commerce became an important element in general life[39] a demand would arise for a knowledge of the elements of reckoning, moneys, weights and measures. As there were no schools whatever for the masses, any instruction children received in the three R's must have been given in the home by the parents or by private teachers.

The impossibility of treating religious and moral education apart from training and instruction in other fields of activity is already evident from the preceding paragraphs. It has been pointed out that dancing was originally a religious as well as a festive exercise. Much of that large body of literature which for centuries existed only in oral form was religious and moral in character. Although religion did not dominate life in this early period to the extent that it did in the centuries following the Exile yet there was no phase of life and no field of activity into which it did not enter. Meetings of family or tribe, the shearing of the sheep, the gathering of the harvest, the birth of a child, departure for war, victory or defeat, changes in the seasons and in the moon were all occasions for religious observance. Through beholding such observances, through assisting in preparing for them, and through listening to such explanations as parents and elders saw fit to give, the child received his religious training and instruction.

The Hebrews were no exception to the general rule that the moral qualities emphasized by any people depend largely upon industrial, social and political conditions. Surrounded by powerful enemies and forced to live in a state of continuous military preparedness, the virtues they most esteemed were courage, loyalty to kindred and to the nation's god, absolute unquestioning obedience to those in authority and to the laws of the family, of the tribe and of the nation; kindness toward kinsmen, hospitality toward the defenseless wayfarer, mercilessness toward foes. Although the antiquity of many Hebrew proverbs suggests that from very early times precepts were used to inculcate virtues, most moral education was a matter of training rather than of instruction: boys and girls learned to be industrious by working within the dwelling or in the field; to be courageous and loyal by facing concrete situations demanding courage and loyalty; to be obedient by obeying. Such training was enforced further by tales, legends, and traditions

[38] Deuteronomy xxvii. 2-3.

[39] This occurred as early at least as the days of the monarchy.

setting forth the deeds and virtues of ancestors and of tribal and national heroes.

## EDUCATION OUTSIDE OF THE FAMILY.

### *Institutions.*

Very early in life the child began to be made conscious of, and later on began to come into contact with, many communal, tribal or national institutions, customs, festivals and activities which stimulated and guided his thought and conduct. Among the most important of these were public festivals, war, hunting, expeditions, courts or places of judgment, and temples.

Throughout the greater part of the Native Period the domain of the Israelites was dotted with a multitude of shrines and temples presided over by bodies of priests. Every such temple fulfilled a variety of functions. In addition to being a place of worship, it was a place of instruction in religious rites and law. Every symbol and rite was a stimulus to religious feeling and a potent teacher of some belief, law, tradition or conception. The erection of Solomon's temple (dedicated 963 B. C.) was an event of great educational as well as of great religious importance. Its services and its priesthood must have exerted a widespread educative influence. From the story of Baruch[40] we learn that in the time of Jeremiah the temple court was used as a place of public instruction. This custom, undoubtedly far older than the time of Jeremiah, was still followed in the time of Jesus.

### *Teaching Orders.*

The rise in post-Exilic times of the order of scribes may be regarded as the beginning of a distinct teaching profession among the Hebrews. Nevertheless the Native Period was by no means destitute of orders certain aspects of whose work may well be described as educational. It would be misleading as well as confusing to designate either the priests or the prophets as teachers. The former were essentially ministers at and guardians of the shrines of Yahveh, and the latter were essentially preachers. Aside from the training and instruction they gave to novices or to members of their own orders they probably seldom if ever acted as teachers in the ordinary acceptation of the term. Certainly they organized neither schools nor classes for the masses. Yet in fulfilling the very work to which they had been consecrated, they were in a very real sense stimulating and guiding the religious and moral consciousness,

[40] Jeremiah xxxvi. 4.

furnishing it with content and with forms of expression and, in a word, were educating it. It is therefore impossible to exclude even from a brief account of ancient Hebrew education some consideration of the teaching or educational services of these two orders.

*The Levites and the Priests.*

The origin of the Hebrew priesthood is wrapt in obscurity. During the nomadic period and for some time after settlement in Canaan the head of every family acted as its priest.[41] Judges xvii seems to indicate clearly that as early as the time of the "Judges" the Levites were recognized as an order or tribe of priests whose ministrations were peculiarly efficacious in gaining the favor of Yahveh,[42] but how long before Micah's time a distinct priestly order existed cannot be stated. Early times knew no distinction between priests and Levites but called the ministers of all Yahveh sanctuaries Levites. It is probable that the reforms of Josiah (621 B.C.) were responsible to a large extent for the distinction which arose in later times. These reforms specifically provided that the Levites in charge of the many shrines outside Jerusalem should be brought to the capital city and attached to the national temple. It is easy to understand how the order of priests already in charge of the royal sanctuary would assign to the newcomers the more humble temple duties and a humbler rank in the now national order of priests, claiming for themselves a superior rank and the more important offices.

Among the most important functions of the early priesthood were divination, guarding and ministering at the shrines of Yahveh and teaching. Kent on the basis of Deuteronomy xxxiii. 10 ("They shall teach Jacob thy judgments") and certain other passages asserts not only that the early priests acted as judges but that it was through the exercise of this function that much of their most important educational influence was exerted.[43] There are however serious objections to ascribing this function of acting as judges to the priests except in cases where some matter of ritual was involved as where a tabu had been broken. But even if we deny that the priests acted as judges in any general sense and if we exclude from our conception of their work the forceful though indirect presentation through the channel of their judgments, of civic, political, moral and religious lessons, there nevertheless remain many activities in which they appear discharging a teaching function. Through their declaration

[41] Cf. above, p. 727. [42] Judges, xvii. 13.

[43] Kent, C. F., *The Great Teachers of Judaism and Christianity,* pp. 44 ff.

of the will of Yahveh, discovered by the use of the sacred lot or by some other means of divination, they created and disseminated conceptions of Yahveh. They organized and directed public festivals many of which were little less than dramatized lessons in religion and history. They taught to the individual resorting to them in private and to the multitude publicly assembled in the temple or in the open, forms of worship. They collected and transmitted (at first orally, later by writing) laws, rites, ceremonies, myths, legends and history. They compiled, edited and transmitted this literature. They put much of it into forms easy to grasp and remember and taught it to the people. Through their literary efforts they began the compilation of that great body of literature which still remains the world's unsurpassed text for religious and moral instruction. Their communities were the first organized groups in ancient Israel providing definite and special instruction for a class (the priesthood) definitely, though by no means solely, devoted to teaching.

*The Prophets or Orator-Teachers of Ancient Israel.*

Saul, unable to find his father's asses, resorted to Samuel, the seer, much as some to-day resort to fortune tellers or clairvoyants.[44] Undoubtedly long before Samuel's time many a seer (Heb. *roeh*) and diviner (Heb. *kosem*) was to be found living in the various tribes. Such individuals were believed to possess unusual means of ascertaining the divine will or of communicating with divine powers. The soothsaying priest and the *kosem*, and probably also the *roch*, based their declarations largely upon the observation of objective physical phenomena. It is probable that the prophet (Heb. sing. *nabi*$^{a}$, pl. *nebiim*) emerged by a process of continual development from the earlier *roch*.[45] It is possible also that "The signs or symbolic acts of the prophets originated in actions of sympathetic magic."[46] However that may be, "the prophet's function became in an increasing degree a function of mind and not merely of traditional routine or mechanical technique."[47] In other words the *nabi* himself became the subjective channel through which Yahveh spoke.

The Hebrew prophets were not primarily nor chiefly foretellers of the future. Their importance is due to the part they played in

[44] 1 Samuel ix. 1 ff.

[45] 1 Samuel ix. 9.

[46] Smith, Wm. Robertson and Whitehouse, Owen C., "The Prophets of the Old Testament," *Encycl. Brit.*, 11th ed. XXII, 442b.

[47] Whitehouse, O. C., "Hebrew Religion," *Encycl. Brit.*, 11th ed., XIII, 182a.

public affairs and to their service as public teachers. Their rise to the position of public leaders in Israel is contemporaneous with the rise of the monarchy. Among the causes which explain their entrance into the arena of public affairs three may be mentioned: (1) the need of seers at the royal court to declare the will of Yahveh when important undertakings were being contemplated and upon other occasions; (2) the need of religious reform; (3) the need of social reform.

Religious and social abuses (e. g., idolatry and the increasing oppression of the poor) combined with a constant fear of outside foes, resulted in bringing together devout men, endowed with a greater vision, yearning for reform and moved by religious and patriotic zeal mounting frequently to frenzy. Such bands went by the name of prophets or "sons of prophets." They appear to have lived in communities frequently in the vicinity of some famous sanctuary as Beth-El and Gilgal. Some prophets, such as Samuel and Elisha, were intimately associated with such communities; others, like Elijah, generally worked independently.

In contrast to the priestly order the prophets were a lay order. They were also an open order, i. e., the spirit of prophecy might come upon any one, whereupon he would begin to prophesy and would be numbered among the prophets.[48] Women as well as men were included in the ranks.[49] "The seer appears individually. . . With the prophets it is quite otherwise; they appear in bands; their prophesying is a united exercise accompanied by music, and seemingly dance music; it is marked by strong excitement which sometimes acts contagiously."[50]

Such prophets as Amos, Hosea and Isaiah were public poets and orators. Like Jeremiah they probably spoke their prophecies first and then later committed them to writing.[51] Their literary products included orations delivered in public, tracts intended for public distribution but not oral recitation, codes,[52] history[53] and summaries of their own actions. They cast their utterances into poetic form, choosing the meter best adapted to the message. These

[48] 1 Samuel x. 11-12; xix. 24.

[49] E. g., Deborah, Judges iv. 5; Huldah, 2 Kings xxii. 14.

[50] Smith, Wm. Robertson and Whitehouse, Owen C., "The Prophets of the Old Testament, *Encycl. Brit.*, 11th ed., XXII, 441c.

[51] Jeremiah xxxvi relates how Jeremiah dictated an epitome of his prophecy.

[52] E. g., The Book of Instruction.

[53] Kent, Charles F., *Beginnings of Hebrew History*, p. 36. The Judean prophets began writing a comprehensive history of Israel about 825 B. C.

works, oral or written, served as texts for their own disciples and for future generations.

It is futile to attempt to state how extensive was the provision made by prophet communities for training and instructing their members. It is impossible to accept the view presented by some writers that the prophets established colleges presided over by a senior member, in which music, oratory, poetry, law and other advanced studies were taught. However, in view of the general state of culture in the monarchical period and of the need the prophets would have of a knowledge of reading, writing, literature, oratory and composition, there is no valid reason against the assumption that some provision was made for instruction in some or all of these branches. Isaiah evidently had a group of disciples who wrote down his utterances and recorded his work.[54]

The prophets were wandering teachers. In their own eyes and in the eyes of the people, they were Yahveh's divinely commissioned messengers. Wherever there was an opportunity to make known his will, wherever there was need of protest against evils or of encouragement in righteousness, thither they betook themselves. "Sometimes he (the prophet) appeared in the court before the king, sometimes he appealed from the rulers to the people. Often the temple court. . . .was the scene of the prophet's teaching."[55]

Many examples might be given from the work of Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and other prophets, showing the extensive use the prophets made of symbolism, the object lesson and the dramatic method. Jeremiah, wishing to dissuade the Judeans from joining Egypt and the surrounding tribes in a revolt against Babylonia, made a number of wooden yokes. One he wore himself, the others he carried for the foreign ambassadors.[56] Isaiah, to give force to his message to king Hezekiah not to join with Egypt against Assyria, for three years dressed like a captive and went barefoot through the streets of Jerusalem to picture the captivity such rashness would bring.[57]

In early Hebrew thought Yahweh is represented as having human characteristics and performing human activities. Images are employed in worshiping him,[58] and he makes known his will through the sacred lot.[59] He seeks to kill Moses.[60] He is despotic, merciless

[54] Isaiah viii. 16.

[55] Kent, C. F., *The Great Teachers of Judaism and Christianity*, p. 25.

[56] Jeremiah xxvii and xxviii. "The account is not from Jeremiah himself but seems to rest upon good information.

[57] Isaiah xx. 3.

[58] Judges xvii and xviii.

[59] Judges xvii and xviii.

[60] Exodus iv. 24.

toward all who offend, beasts[61] as well as men. He is concerned with the minute details of ceremony and rite. His wrath is averted or his favor won and kept by elaborate ceremonies, lavish and costly offerings not excluding human sacrifices.[62] It is remarkable that nowhere amid the traces of this early stage is Yahweh associated with any of the gross immoralities which stain the biographies of the gods of Greece, Rome and other nations.[63] Out of this primitive non-ethical conception of Yahweh gradually developed the prophetic conception.

Yahweh of the prophets is a god of mercy and kindness, the protector of beasts[64] as well as of men. He is the loving, forgiving, never despairing father of all mankind. Through his universal fatherhood all men are brothers and as such are obligated to fulfil toward one another the duties of brotherhood. He is the only god: all other gods have no existence. He is the god of all nations, of Assyria as well as of Israel: to Him shall all nations ultimately come. He is the moral ruler of the universe. He is a god perfect and absolute in his own righteousness (Amos). His favor depends upon righteousness. He demands of his worshipers not rites and material gifts, but righteousness, lives pure and holy, consecrated to Yahweh and acceptable to him because reflecting his moral characteristics.

The forces which gave rise to this later conception were many. It arose partly as the reaction against the sensual worship of surrounding nations, partly through borrowing the better elements of religions with which the Hebrews came in contact, largely as the result of the deepening of their own spiritual life. National weakness and prolonged subjection to foreign masters played an important part. Between the relentless Yahweh of early times, whose anger is appeased by the hanging of Saul's seven sons,[65] and the Yahweh pictured by the Second Isaiah are centuries of subjection, persecution and suffering, and the ripening of the religious genius of the prophets.

It may be seriously doubted whether any nation has ever produced a group of religious and moral teachers comparable with the prophets of ancient Israel. Through their spoken public addresses and writings they became creators of national religious and social ideals, critics and inspirers of public policies, denunciators of social

[61] Ibid., xix. 12.

[62] Montefiore, C. G., "Origin and Growth of the Religion of the Ancient Hebrews, *Hibbert Lectures,* 1892, p. 40.

[63] *Ibid.,* pp. 37-40. [64] Jonah, iv. 11. [65] 2 Samuel xxi. 1-11.

wrongs, preachers of individual and social righteousness, and the source and channel of an ever loftier conception of Yahveh and of the mission of Israel. In fulfilling each of these capacities they were acting as public teachers. In every national crisis they were at hand to denounce, to encourage, to comfort and always to instruct. They were the public conscience of Israel, the soul of its religion, the creators of public opinion, its most conspicuous, its most revered, its most convincing teachers.

## HUME'S SUPPRESSED ESSAYS.

### EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

MY attention was called by a judicious collector of rare books to the fact that David Hume's essays on "The Immortality of the Soul" and on "Suicide" are unobtainable in the book market. They were suppressed at the time they were published and exist now only in one edition preserved in the British Museum, nor were they ever reprinted. For that reason alone they should be worthy of republication. Books or essays are never suppressed unless they are feared, and their effect is feared only if they are good or at least memorable.

Such is the argument of an old reader of *The Open Court,* and it appeals to me; decidedly he is right. A suppressed essay should be made accessible if the author is a thinker as keen and penetrating as David Hume. For this reason I at once took steps to procure a copy of this rare book containing Hume's two essays and decided, if possible, to make Hume's thoughts accessible, even if they should be disappointing and not come up to expectations.

In my attempt to procure the two essays, I addressed myself to Mr. William A. Speck, of the Yale University Library, and thanks to the courtesy of the Board of Trustees, I procured the little book containing Hume's autobiography, his two suppressed essays, also a refutation by the editor, and two letters quoted from Rousseau's *Héloise,* duly answered. These were printed originally in three separate volumes dated 1777 and 1783, and were bound together at an early date. The title of this portion reads: "Essays on Suicide, and The Immortality of the Soul, ascribed to the late David Hume, Esq. Never before published. With remarks, intended as an Antidote to the Poison contained in these performances, By the Editor. To which is added, Two letters on suicide from

Rosseau's Eloisa. London: Printed for M. Smith: and sold by the Booksellers in Piccadilly, Fleet-street and Paternoster-row. 1783. (Price 3s. 6d. sewed.)" The editor looks upon Hume's essays as dangerous, and sets forth his best arguments why these absurd propositions are untenable.

I cannot say that nowadays David Hume's views are in any way extraordinary. They are views very common at present and can be published to-day without endangering the faith of mankind. He who believes in the immortality of the soul will not be disturbed in his belief by David Hume. He will probably base his belief on other reasons than those which the skeptical philosopher tries to refute, and he bases his logic on other considerations. Moreover a man who is placed in such a desperate position as to wish to commit suicide, because in his hopeless situation he naturally prefers extinction to life, will be doubted by no one except the most brutal zealot who argues on purely theoretical grounds. Every one will have sympathy with the misfortunes of a woefully suffering brother. We no longer condemn a suicide, we pity him.

So the solution of a bigoted zealot of the old stamp is no longer upheld and the question may be worthy of reconsideration. At least it has been reconsidered in recent times and I cannot say that the problem has been solved in a satisfactory manner. Prof. Felix Adler, religiously liberal enough, proposed the idea that a man who intends to commit suicide should call together a council of some of his friends, explain to them his troubles and expect from them a decision whether he should be at liberty to do so. Queer to call upon the conscience of other people! If they gave their permission would they not feel like murderers? and if they did not, have they the right to condemn a man to a life of misery? Further, it is quite probable that a desperate situation, unless it be a hopeless or extremely painful disease, cannot be explained even to his most intimate friends by a sufferer who longs for an escape.

Considering the fact that David Hume was a thinker of great depth, it seems to me quite desirable indeed to republish his two suppressed essays. That they have been suppressed and are still omitted from all editions of Hume's works, that they are unobtainable in the book market, seems almost incredible. I have received the little book containing them only through exceptional circumstances, the rarity of the book being due to the narrowness of David Hume's age. Nowadays thinkers who hold Hume's views do not hesitate to present their arguments in just as vigorous terms and as fearlessly as he. There is no reason to suppress them. Nor

is there any need to repeat here the editor's "Antidote" published in the edition before me of London, 1773, because our present generation wants other arguments than the old orthodox convictions according to which the deism of Hume is rank infidelity. Hume is a deist, not an atheist. His belief in God, the God of deism, is just as staunch as that of many a pious Unitarian preacher of to-day, while the editor's views are rarely heard of to-day even in orthodox pulpits.

After all, how harmless is the argument of a man like David Hume! Every one clings to his conviction founded upon his own individuality. Think of a man of the type of Sir Oliver Lodge. Could he ever be convinced by David Hume's arguments? He would rather rely on the evidence of the reports given by mediums and accept their testimony as fairly creditable, however fantastic it may be.

The book before us also contains two chapters on suicide by Rousseau (in our book persistently misspelled Rosseau) "Letter CXIV" and "Letter CXV," which need not be republished because they are accessible in every edition of Rousseau's *Héloise.*

The history of Hume's two essays is briefly recorded in the preface from which we quote the following paragraphs:

"These two Essays on *Suicide* and *the Immortality of the Soul,* though not published in any edition of his works, are generally attributed to the late ingenious Mr. Hume.

"The well-known contempt of this eminent philosopher for the common convictions of mankind, raised an apprehension of the contents from the very title of these pieces. But the celebrity of the author's name, renders them, notwithstanding, in some degree objects of great curiosity.

"Owing to this circumstance, a few copies have been clandestinely circulated, at a large price, for some time, but without any comment. The very mystery attending this mode of selling them, made them more an object of request than they would otherwise have been.

"The present publication comes abroad under no such restraint, and possesses very superior advantages. The *Notes* annexed are intended to expose the sophistry contained in the original Essays, and may shew how little we have to fear from the adversaries of these great truths, from the pitiful figure which even Mr. Hume makes in thus violently exhausting his last strength in an abortive attempt to traduce or discredit them.

"The admirers of *Mr. Hume* will be pleased with seeing the

remains of a favourite author rescued in this manner from that oblivion to which the prejudices of his countrymen had, in all appearance, consigned them; and even the religious part of mankind have some reason of triumph from the striking instance here given of truth's superiority to error, even when error has all the advantage of an elegant genius, and a great literary reputation to recommend it."

Finally, I wish to express my thanks publicly to the Board of Trustees of the Yale University Library for having enabled me to have these rare essays of David Hume copied for publication. Without their courtesy it would have been impossible to present them to our readers.

## ESSAY I. ON SUICIDE.

One considerable advantage that arises from Philosophy, consists in the sovereign antidote which it affords to superstition and false religion. All other remedies against that pestilent distemper are vain, or at least uncertain. Plain good sense and the practice of the world, which alone serve most purposes of life, are here found ineffectual: History as well as daily experience furnish instances of men endowed with the strongest capacity for business and affairs, who have all their lives crouched under slavery to the grossest superstition. Even gaiety and sweetness of temper, which infuse a balm into every other wound, afford no remedy to so virulent a poison; as we may particularly observe of the fair sex, who tho' commonly possest of these rich presents of nature, feel many of their joys blasted by this importune intruder. But when sound Philosophy has once gained possession of the mind, superstition is effectually excluded, and one may fairly affirm that her triumph over this enemy is more complete than over most of the vices and imperfections incident to human nature. Love or anger, ambition or avarice, have their root in the temper and affections, which the soundest reason is scarce ever able fully to correct, but superstition being founded on false opinion, must immediately vanish when true philosophy has inspired juster sentiments of superior powers. The contest is here more equal between the distemper and the medicine, and nothing can hinder the latter from proving effectual but its being false and sophisticated.

It will here be superfluous to magnify the merits of Philosophy by displaying the pernicious tendency of that vice of which it cures the human mind. (1) The superstitious man says Tully is miserable in every scene, in every incident of life; even sleep itself,

which banishes all other cares of unhappy mortals, affords to him matter of new terror; while he examines his dreams, and finds in those visions of the night prognostications of future calamities. I may add that tho' death alone can put a full period to his misery, he dares not fly to this refuge, but still prolongs a miserable existence from a vain fear lest he offend his Maker, by using the power, with which that beneficent being has endowed him. The presents of God and nature are ravished from us by this cruel enemy, and notwithstanding that one step would remove us from the regions of pain and sorrow, her menaces still chain us down to a hated being which she herself chiefly contributes to render miserable.

'Tis observed by such as have been reduced by the calamities of life to the necessity of employing this fatal remedy, that if the unseasonable care of their friends deprive them of that species of Death which they proposed to themselves, they seldom venture upon any other, or can summon up so much resolution a second time as to execute their purpose. So great is our horror of death, that when it presents itself under any form, besides that to which a man has endeavoured to reconcile his imagination, it acquires new terrors and overcomes his feeble courage: But when the menaces of superstition are joined to this natural timidity, no wonder it quite deprives men of all power over their lives, since even many pleasures and enjoyments to which we are carried by a strong propensity, are torn from us by this inhuman tyrant. Let us here endeavour to restore men to their native liberty, by examining all the common arguments against Suicide, and shewing that that action may be free from every imputation of guilt or blame, according to the sentiments of all the ancient philosophers.

If Suicide be criminal, it must be a transgression of our duty either to God, our neighbour, or ourselves.—To prove that suicide is no transgression of our duty to God, the following consideration may perhaps suffice. In order to govern the material world, the almighty Creator has established general and immutable laws, by which all bodies, from the greatest planet to the smallest particle of matter, are maintained in their proper sphere and function. To govern the animal world, he has endowed all living creatures with bodily and mental powers; with senses, passions, appetites, memory, and judgment, by which they are impelled or regulated in that course of life to which they are destined. These two distinct principles of the material and animal world, continually encroach upon each other, and mutually retard or forward each others operation. The powers of men and of all other animals are restrained

and directed by the nature and qualities of the surrounding bodies, and the modifications and actions of these bodies are incessantly altered by the operation of all animals. Man is stopt by rivers in his passage over the surface of the earth; and rivers, when properly directed lend their force to the motion of machines, which serve to the use of man. But tho' the provinces of the material and animal powers are not kept entirely separate, there results from thence no discord or disorder in the creation; on the contrary, from the mixture, union, and contrast of all the various powers of inanimate bodies and living creatures, arises that sympathy, harmony, and proportion, which affords the surest argument of supreme wisdom. The providence of the Deity appears not immediately in any operation, but governs every thing by those general and immutable laws, which have been established from the beginning of time. All events, in one sense, may be pronounced the action of the Almighty, they all proceed from those powers with which he has endowed his creatures. A house which falls by its own weight, is not brought to ruin by his providence, more than one destroyed by the hands of men; nor are the human faculties less his workmanship, than the laws of motion and gravitation. When the passions play, when the judgment dictates, when the limbs obey; this is all the operation of God, and upon these animate principles, as well as upon the inanimate, has he established the government of the universe. Every event is alike important in the eyes of that infinite being, who takes in at one glance the most distant regions of space, and remotest periods of time. There is no event, however important to us, which he has exempted from the general laws that govern the universe, or which he has peculiarly reserved for his own immediate action and operation. The revolution of states and empires depends upon the smallest caprice or passion of single men; and the lives of men are shortened or extended by the smallest accident of air or diet, sunshine or tempest. Nature still continues her progress and operation; and if general laws be ever broke by particular volitions of the Deity, 'tis after a manner which entirely escapes human observation. As on the one hand, the elements and other inanimate parts of the creation carry on their action without regard to the particular interest and situation of men; so men are entrusted to their own judgment and discretion in the various shocks of matter, and may employ every faculty with which they are endowed, in order to provide for the ease, happiness, or preservation. What is the the meaning then of that principle, that a man who tired of life, and hunted by pain and

misery, bravely overcomes all the natural terrors of death, and makes his escape from this cruel scene: that such a man I say, has incurred the indignation of his Creator by encroaching on the office of divine providence, and disturbing the order of the universe? shall we assert that the Almighty has reserved to himself in any peculiar manner the disposal of the lives of men, and has not submitted that event, in common with others, to the general laws by which the universe is governed? This is plainly false: the lives of men depend upon the same laws as the lives of all other animals; and these are subjected to the general laws of matter and motion. The fall of a tower, or the infusion of a poison, will destroy a man equally with the meanest creature; an inundation sweeps away every thing without distinction that comes within the reach of its fury. Since therefore the lives of men are for ever dependant on the general laws of matter and motion, is a man's disposing of his life criminal, because in every case it is criminal to encroach upon these laws, or disturb their operation? But this seems absurd; all animals are entrusted to their own prudence and skill for their conduct in the world, and have full authority as far as their power extends, to alter all the operations of nature. Without the exercise of this authority they could not subsist a moment; every action, every motion of a man, innovates on the order of some parts of matter, and diverts from their ordinary course the general laws of motion. Putting together, therefore, these conclusions, we find that human life depends upon the general laws of matter and motion, and that it is no encroachment on the office of providence to disturb or alter these general laws: Has not every one, of consequence, the free disposal of his own life? And may he not lawfully employ that power with which nature has endowed him? in order to destroy the evidence of this conclusion, we must shew a reason why this particular case is excepted; is it because human life is of such great importance, that 'tis a presumption for human prudence to dispose of it. But the life of a man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster. And were it of ever so great importance, the order of human nature has actually submitted it to human prudence, and reduced us to a necessity, in every incident, of determining concerning it.—Were the disposal of human life so much reserved as the peculiar province of the Almighty, that it were an encroachment on his right, for men to dispose of their own lives; it would be equally criminal to act for the preservation of life as for its destruction. If I turn aside a stone which is falling upon my head, I disturb the course of

nature, and I invade the peculiar province of the Almighty, by lengthening out my life beyond the period which by the general laws of matter and motion he had assigned it.

A hair, a fly, an insect is able to destroy this mighty being whose life is of such importance. Is it an absurdity to suppose that human prudence may lawfully dispose of what depends on such insignificant causes? It would be no crime in me to divert the *Nile* or *Danube* from its course, were I able to effect such purposes. Where then is the crime of turning a few ounces of blood from their natural channel?—Do you imagine that I repine at Providence or curse my creation, because I go out of life, and put a period to a being, which, were it to continue, would render me miserable? Far be such sentiments from me; I am only convinced of a matter of fact, which you yourself acknowledge possible, that human life may be unhappy, and that my existence, if further prolonged, would become ineligible; but I thank Providence, both for the good which I have already enjoyed, and for the power with which I am endowed of escaping the ill that threatens me.* To you it belongs to repine at providence, who foolishly imagine that you have no such power, and who must still prolong a hated life, tho' loaded with pain and sickness, with shame and poverty—— Do not you teach, that when any ill befalls me, tho' by the malice of my enemies, I ought to be resigned to providence, and that the actions of men are the operations of the Almighty as much as the actions of inanimate beings? When I fall upon my own sword, therefore, I receive my death equally from the hands of the Deity as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever. The submission which you require to providence, in every calamity that befalls me, excludes not human skill and industry, if possible by their means I can avoid or escape the calamity: And why may I not employ one remedy as well as another?—If my life be not my own, it were criminal for me to put it in danger, as well as to dispose of it; nor could one man deserve the appellation of *hero*, whom glory or friendship transports into the greatest dangers, and another merit the reproach of *wretch* or *miscreant* who puts a period to his life, from the same or like motives.——There is no being, which possesses any power or faculty, that it receives not from its Creator, nor is there any one, which by ever so irregular an action can encroach upon the plan of his providence, or disorder the universe. Its operations are his works equally with that chain of events which it invades, and which ever principle prevails, we may for that very

* Agamus Dei gratias, quad nemo in vita teneri protest. SEN. Epist. 12.

reason conclude it to be most favoured by him. Be it animate, or inanimate, rational, or irrational, 'tis all a case: its power is still derived from the supreme Creator, and is alike comprehended in the order of his providence. When the horror of pain prevails over the love of life; when a voluntary action anticipates the effects of blind causes, 'tis only in consequence of those powers and principles which he has implanted in his creatures. Divine providence is still inviolate, and placed far beyond the reach of human injuries. 'Tis impious says the old Roman superstition* to divert rivers from their course, or invade the prerogatives of nature: 'Tis impious says the French superstition to inoculate for the small-pox, or usurp the business of providence by voluntarily producing distempers and maladies. 'Tis impious says the modern *European* superstition, to put a period to our own life, and thereby rebel against our Creator; and why not impious, say I, to build houses, cultivate the ground, or sail upon the ocean? In all these actions we employ our powers of mind and body, to produce some innovation in the course of nature; and in none of them do we any more. They are all of them therefore equally innocent, or equally criminal. *But you are placed by providence, like a sentinel, in a particular station, and when you desert it without being recalled, you are equally guilty of rebellion against your almighty sovereign, and have incurred his displeasure.* ——I ask, why do you conclude that providence has placed me in this station? for my part I find that I owe my birth to a long chain of causes, of which many depended upon voluntary actions of men. *But providence guided all these causes, and nothing happens in the universe without its consent and co-operation.* If so, then neither does my death, however voluntary, happen without its consent; and whenever pain or sorrow so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life, I may conclude that I am recalled from my station in the clearest and most express terms. 'Tis providence surely that has placed me at this present in this chamber: But may I not leave it when I think proper, without being liable to the imputation of having deserted my post or station? When I shall be dead, the principles of which I am composed will still perform their part in the universe, and will be equally useful in the grand fabrick, as when they composed this individual creature. The difference to the whole will be no greater than betwixt my being in a chamber and in the open air. The one change is of more importance to me than the other; but not more so to the universe.

—'Tis a kind of blasphemy to imagine that any created being

* Tacit. Ann. lib. i .

can disturb the order of the world, or invade the business of Providence! it supposes, that that being possesses powers and faculties, which it received not from its creator, and which are not subordinate to his government and authority. A man may disturb society no doubt, and thereby incur the displeasure of the Almighty: But the government of the world is placed far beyond his reach and violence. And how does it appear that the Almighty is displeased with those actions that disturb society? By the principles which he has implanted in human nature, and which inspire us with a sentiment of remorse if we ourselves have been guilty of such actions, and with that of blame and disapprobation, if we ever observe them in others:—Let us now examine, according to the method proposed, whether Suicide be of this kind of actions, and be a breach of our duty to our *neighbour* and to *society*.

A man who retires from life does no harm to society: He only ceases to do good; which, if it is an injury, is of the lowest kind.—All our obligations to do good to society seem to imply something reciprocal. I receive the benefits of society, and therefore ought to promote its interests; but when I withdraw myself altogether from society, can I be bound any longer? But allowing that our obligations to do good were perpetual, they have certainly some bounds; I am not obliged to do a small good to society at the expense of a great harm to myself; why then should I prolong a miserable existence, because of some frivolous advantage which the public may perhaps receive from me? If upon account of age and infirmities, I may lawfully resign any office, and employ my time altogether in fencing against these calamities, and alleviating, as much as possible, the miseries of life: why may I not cut short these miseries at once by an action which is no more prejudicial to society?—But suppose that it is no longer in my power to promote the interest of society, suppose that I am a burden to it, suppose that my life hinders some person from being much more useful to society. In such cases, my resignation of life must not only be innocent, but laudable. And most people who lie under any temptation to abandon existence, are in some such situation; those who have health, or power, or authority, have commonly better reason to be in humour with the world.

A man is engaged in a conspiracy for the public interest; is seized upon suspicion; is threatened with the rack; and knows from his own weakness that the secret will be extorted from him: Could such a one consult the public interest better than by putting a quick period to a miserable life? This was the case of the famous and

brave *Strozi* of *Florence.*——Again, suppose a malefactor is justly condemned to a shameful death, can any reason be imagined, why he may not anticipate his punishment, and save himself all the anguish of thinking on its dreadful approaches? He invades the business of providence no more than the magistrate did, who ordered his execution; and his voluntary death is equally advantageous to society, by ridding it of a pernicious member.

That Suicide may often be consistent with interest and with our duty to ourselves, no one can question, who allows that age, sickness, or misfortune, may render life a burthen, and make it worse even than annihilation. I believe that no man ever threw away life, while it was worth keeping. For such is our natural horror of death, that small motives will never be able to reconcile us to it; and though perhaps the situation of a man's health or fortune did not seem to require this remedy, we may at least be assured that any one who, without apparent reason, has had recourse to it, was curst with such an incurable depravity or gloominess of temper as must poison all enjoyment, and render him equally miserable as if he had been loaded with the most grievous misfortunes. —If suicide be supposed a crime, 'tis only cowardice can impel us to it. If it be no crime, both prudence and courage should engage us to rid ourselves at once of existence, when it becomes a burthen. 'Tis the only way that we can then be useful to society, by setting an example, which if imitated, would preserve to every one his chance for happiness in life, and would effectually free him from all danger of misery.*

* It would be easy to prove that suicide is as lawful under the Christian dispensation as it was to the Heathens. There is not a single text of scripture which prohibits it. That great and infallible rule of faith and practice which must controul all philosophy and human reasoning, has left us in this particular to our natural liberty. Resignation to Providence is indeed recommended in scripture; but that implies only submission to ills that are unavoidable, not to such as may be remedied by prudence or courage. *Thou shalt not kill,* is evidently meant to exclude only the killing of others, over whose life we have no authority. That this precept, like most of the scripture precepts, must be modified by reason and common sense, is plain from the practice of magistrates, who punish criminals capitally, notwthstanding the letter of the law. But were this commandment ever so express against suicide, it would now have no authority, for all the law of *Moses* is abolished, except so far as it is established by the law of nature. And we have already endeavoured to prove that suicide is not prohibited by that law. In all cases Christians and Heathens are precisely upon the same footing; *Cato* and *Brutus, Arrea* and *Portia* acted heroically; those who now imitate their example ought to receive the same praises from posterity. The power of committing suicide is regarded by *Pliny* as an advantage which men possess even above the Deity himself. "Deus non sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ pœnis."—Lib. II. cap. 7.

## ESSAY II. ON THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

By the mere light of reason it seems difficult to prove the *Immortality* of the *Soul*; the arguments for it are commonly derived either from *metaphysical* topics, or *moral* or *physical*. But in reality 'tis the Gospel and the Gospel alone, that has brought *life and immortality to light*.

I. METAPHYSICAL topics suppose that the soul is immaterial, and that 'tis impossible for thought to belong to a material substance.———(1) But just metaphysics teach us that the notion of substance is wholly confused and imperfect, and that we have no other idea of any substance, than as an aggregate of particular qualities, inhering in an unknown something. Matter, therefore, and spirit, are at bottom equally unknown, and we cannot determine what qualities inhere in the one or in the other. (2) They likewise teach us that nothing can be decided *a priori* concerning any cause or effect, and that experience being the only source of our judgments of this nature, we cannot know from any other principle, whether matter, by its structure or arrangement, may not be the cause of thought. Abstract reasonings cannot decide any question of fact or existence.—But admitting a spiritual substance to be dispersed throughout the universe, like the etherial fire of the *Stoics*, and to be the only inherent subject of thought, we have reason to conclude from *analogy* that nature uses it after the manner she does the other substance, *matter*. She employs it as a kind of paste or clay; modifies it into a variety of forms and existences; dissolves after a time each modification, and from its substance erects a new form. As the same material substance may successively compose the bodies of all animals, the same spiritual substance may compose their minds: Their consciousness, or that system of thought which they formed during life, may be continually dissolved by death. And nothing interests them in the new modification. The most positive assertors of the mortality of the soul, never denied the immortality of its substance. And that an immaterial substance, as well as a material, may lose its memory or consciousness, appears in part from experience, if the soul be immaterial.—Reasoning from the common course of nature, and without supposing any new interposition of the supreme cause, which ought always to be excluded from philosophy, what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable. The Soul therefore if immortal, existed before our birth; and if the former existence no ways concerned us, neither will the latter. —Animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will, and even reason,

tho' in a more imperfect manner than men; are their souls also immaterial and immortal?

II. Let us now consider the moral arguments, chiefly those derived from the justice of God, which is supposed to be farther interested in the farther punishment of the vicious and reward of the virtuous.—But these arguments are grounded on the supposition that God has attributes beyond what he has exerted in this universe, with which alone we are acquainted. Whence do we infer the existence of these attributes?—'Tis very safe for us to affirm, that whatever we know the Deity to have actually done, is best; but 'tis very dangerous to affirm, that he must always do what to us seems best. In how many instances would this reasoning fail us with regard to the present world?—But if any purpose of nature be clear, we may affirm, that the whole scope and intention of man's creation, so far as we can judge by natural reason, is limited to the present life. With how weak a concern from the original inherent structure of the mind and passions, does he ever look farther? What comparison either for steadiness or efficacy, betwixt so floating an idea, and the most doubtful persuasion of any matter of fact that occurs in common life. There arise indeed in some minds some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity; but these would quickly vanish were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those who foster them, what is their motive? Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry therefore is an argument against them.

What cruelty, what iniquity, what injustice in nature, to confine all our concern, as well as all our knowledge, to the present life, if there be another scene still waiting us, of infinitely greater consequence? Ought this barbarous deceit to be ascribed to a beneficent and wise being?—Observe with what exact proportion the talk to be performed and the performing powers are adjusted throughout all nature. If the reason of man gives him great superiority above other animals, his necessities are proportionably multiplied upon him; his whole time, his whole capacity, activity, courage, and passion, find sufficient employment in fencing against the miseries of his present condition, and frequently, nay almost always are too slender for the business assigned them.—A pair of shoes perhaps was never yet wrought to the highest degree of perfection which that commodity is capable of attaining. Yet it is necessary, at least very useful, that there should be some politicians and moralists, even some geometers, poets, and philosophers among mankind. The powers of men are no more superior to their wants,

considered merely in this life, than those of foxes and hares are, compared to *their* wants and to their period of existence. The inference from parity of reason is therefore obvious.—

On the theory of the Soul's mortality, the inferiority of women's capacity is easily accounted for. Their domestic life requires no higher faculties, either of mind or body. This circumstance vanishes and becomes absolutely insignificant, on the religious theory: the one sex has an equal task to perform as the other; their powers of reason and resolution ought also to have been equal, and both of them infinitely greater than at present. As every effect implies a cause, and that another, till we reach the first cause of all, which is the Deity; every thing that happens is ordained by him, and nothing can be the object of his punishment or vengeance.—By what rule are punishments and rewards distributed? What is the divine standard of merit and demerit? Shall we suppose that human sentiments have place in the Deity? How bold that hypothesis. We have no conception of any other sentiments.—According to human sentiments, sense, courage, good manners, industry, prudence, genius, &c. are essential parts of personal merits. Shall we therefore erect an elysium for poets and heroes like that of the ancient mythology? Why confine all rewards to one species of virtue? Punishment, without any proper end or purpose, is inconsistent with *our* ideas of goodness and justice, and no end can be served by it after the whole scene is closed. Punishment, according to *our* conception, should bear some proportion to the offence. Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man? Can any one approve of *Alexander's* rage, who intended to exterminate a whole nation because they had seized his favorite horse Bucephalus?*

Heaven and Hell suppose two distinct species of men, the good and the bad; but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue.—Were one to go round the world with an intention of giving a good supper to the righteous, and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice, and would find that the merits and the demerits of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either.—To suppose measures of approbation and blame different from the human confounds every thing. Whence do we learn that there is such a thing as moral distinctions, but from our own sentiments?—What man who has not met with personal provocation (or what good-natured man who has) could inflict on crimes, from the sense of blame alone, even the

* Quint. Curtius lib. VI. cap. 5.

common, legal, frivolous punishments? And does any thing steel the breast of judges and juries against the sentiments of humanity but reflection on necessity and public interest? By the Roman law those who had been guilty of parricide and confessed their crime, were put into a sack alone with an ape, a dog, and a serpent, and thrown into the river. Death alone was the punishment of those who denied their guilt, however fully proved. A criminal was tried before *Augustus,* and condemned after a full conviction, but the humane emperor, when he put the last interrogatory, gave it such a turn as to lead the wretch into a denial of his guilt. "You surely (said the prince) did not kill your father."* This lenity suits our natural ideas of *right* even towards the greatest of all criminals, and even though it prevents so inconsiderable a sufference. Nay even the most bigotted priest would naturally without reflection approve of it, provided the crime was not heresy or infidelity; for as these crimes hurt himself in his *temporal* interest and advantages, perhaps he may not be altogether so indulgent to them. The chief source of moral ideas is the reflection on the interest of human society. Ought these interests, so short, so frivolous, to be guarded by punishments eternal and infinite? The damnation of one man is an infinitely greater evil in the universe, than the subversion of a thousand millions of kingdoms. Nature has rendered human infancy peculiarly frail and mortal, as it were on purpose to refute the notion of a probationary state; the half of mankind die before they are rational creatures.

III. The *Physical* arguments from the analogy of nature are strong for the mortality of the soul, and are really the only philosophical arguments which ought to be admitted with regard to this question, or indeed any question of fact.—Where any two objects are so closely connected that all alterations which we have ever seen in the one, are attended with proportionable alterations in the other; we ought to conclude by all rules of analogy, that, when there are still greater alterations produced in the former, and it is totally dissolved, there follows a total dissolution of the latter.—Sleep, a very small effect on the body, is attended with a temporary extinction, at least a great confusion in the soul.—The weakness of the body and that of the mind in infancy are exactly proportioned, their vigour in manhood, their sympathetic disorder in sickness; their common gradual decay in old age. The step further seems unavoidable; their common dissolution in death. The last symptoms which the mind discovers are disorder, weakness, in-

* Suet. Augus. cap. 3.

sensibility, and stupidity, the fore-runners of its annihilation. The farther progress of the same causes encreasing, the same effects totally extinguish it. Judging by the usual analogy of nature, no form can continue when transferred to a condition of life very different from the original one, in which it was placed. Trees perish in the water, fishes in the air, animals in the earth. Even so small a difference as that of climate is often fatal. What reason then to imagine, that an immense alteration, such as is made on the soul by the dissolution of its body and all its organs of thought and sensation, can be effected without the dissolution of the whole? Every thing is in common betwixt soul and body. The organs of the one are all of them the organs of the other. The existence therefore of the one must be dependant on that of the other.—The souls of animals are allowed to be mortal; and these bear so near a resemblance to the souls of men, that the analogy from one to the other forms a very strong argument. Their bodies are not more resembling: yet no one rejects the argument drawn from comparative anatomy. The *Metempsychosis* is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to.

Nothing in this world is perpetual, every thing however seemingly firm is in continual flux and change, the world itself gives symptoms of frailty and dissolution. How contrary to analogy, therefore, to imagine that one single form, seemingly the frailest of any, and subject to the greatest disorders, is immortal and indissoluble? What daring theory is that! how lightly, not to say how rashly entertained! How to dispose of the infinite number of posthumous existences ought also to embarrass the religious theory. Every planet in every solar system we are at liberty to imagine peopled with intelligent mortal beings, at least we can fix on no other supposition. For these then a new universe must every generation be created beyond the bounds of the present universe, or one must have been created at first so prodigiously wide as to admit of this continual influx of beings. Ought such bold suppositions to be received by any philosophy, and that merely on the pretext of a bare possibility? When it is asked whether *Agamemnon, Thersides, Hannibal, Varro,* and every stupid clown that ever existed in *Italy, Scythia, Bactria* or *Guinea,* are now alive; can any man think, that a scrutiny of nature will furnish arguments strong enough to answer so strange a question in the affirmative? The want of argument without revelation sufficiently establishes the negative.—"*Quanto facilius* (says *Pliny**) *certius que sibi quemque*

* Lib. 7. cap. 55.

*credere, ac specimen securitatis antigene tali sumere experimento.*" Our insensibility before the composition of the body, seems to natural reason a proof of a like state after dissolution.—Were our horrors of annihilation an original passion, not the effect of our general love of happiness, it would rather prove the mortality of the soul. For as nature does nothing in vain, she would never give us a horror against an impossible event. She may give us a horror against an unavoidable event, provided our endeavours, as in the present case, may often remove it to some distance. Death is in the end unavoidable; yet the human species could not be preserved had not nature inspired us with an aversion towards it. All doctrines are to be suspected which are favoured by our passions, and the hopes and fears which gave rise to this doctrine are very obvious.

'Tis an infinite advantage in every controversy to defend the negative. If the question be out of the common experienced course of nature, this circumstance is almost if not altogether decisive. By what arguments or analogies can we prove any state of existence, which no one ever saw, and which no way resembles any that ever was seen? Who will repose such trust in any pretended philosophy as to admit upon its testimony the reality of so marvellous a scene? Some new species of logic is requisite for that purpose, and some new faculties of the mind, that may enable us to comprehend that logic.

Nothing could set in a fuller light the infinite obligations which mankind have to divine revelation, since we find that no other medium could ascertain this great and important truth.

## CONSOLING THOUGHTS ON EARTHLY EXISTENCE AND CONFIDENCE IN AN ETERNAL LIFE.[1]

BY HELMUTH VON MOLTKE.

[In connection with a discussion of thoughts on man's destiny after life, it will be interesting to our readers to see what a famous German general thought about death. Moltke, a man characterized as the *Schlachtendenker,* pondered on the religious problems of life and death more than we may have expected, and we see that the problem moved him deeply. Off and on throughout his life he worked at notes for a little sketch which is commonly known as his *Trostgedanken,* and there are extant no less than three distinct but very similar manuscripts of it written in his own hand. All three have been published in his collected works (Berlin: Mittler & Son, Vol. I) thus enabling

[1] Translated by Lydia G. Robinson.

readers to compare them. As a basis of our translation we utilize the last one, dated at Creisau in October 1890, which incorporates all important passages of the first two. It has been more worked up and polished than they but contains no note that does not accord with the former conceptions.

Moltke is a conservative thinker, but after all a thinker, and it is strange to observe how his preference for rationalism makes him linger with sympathy on the fate of the Arian sect, and when he justifies his confidence in a conscious life he adds: "Whether this is to be desired is another question." Considering his arguments we might say that they are equally applicable to a broader interpretation in conceiving man not as an isolated individual but as a link in a chain where we must look upon the whole evolution of life on earth as a unity. But we do not mean either to interpret or criticize the thoughts of a great man; we wish simply to present his views and let him speak for himself.—EDITOR.]

MAN feels that he is a completed whole, isolated from the rest of the world, and externally separated from it by the corporeal envelopment which serves here on earth as the dwelling of the soul.

Nevertheless I would fain recognize functions in this whole which, though closely united with the soul and dominated by it, have still an independent existence.

From the obscurity of our origin the body is developed first of all. Its nature works indefatigably in the growth of the child, and in him prepares the dwelling for higher organs. The body reaches the summit of its perfection before half of its existence is past and from the surplus of its power it awakens new life; from that time on decline and nothing more, except the painful effort to preserve its own continuance.

For perhaps one-third of our existence during sleep the body receives no commands from its mistress and yet the heart beats on without interruption, the constituents undergo chemical change and the breathing process is performed—all without our will.

The activity of the servant, however, can show resistance even against this, for instance when a cramp painfully contracts our muscles. But the pain is the call for help and assistance when the living bodily function has lost control over lifeless matter which we experience as illness of our vassal.

After all we must recognize the body, to be sure, as one part of our being, but yet as something apart from ourselves.

At least, is the soul, the particular ego, a single inseparable whole?

By a slow unfolding, reason rises to constantly greater perfection clear up to old age, as long as the body does not forsake it. Capacity for judgment grows with the fulness of life's experience,

but of course memory, that handmaid of thought, vanishes earlier, or rather loses the ability to take up anything new. Strange enough is this ability to store away everything which has become our own since earliest youth—everything we have learned or experienced—into a thousand drawers which open to the spirit at a moment's notice!

It cannot be denied that old age often seems dull of wit, but I cannot believe in an actual obscuration of reason, for it is a bright beam of the divine and even in insanity the error is only external. Yet a deaf man who strikes notes that are quite correct on an instrument entirely out of tune must himself be conscious of the correct chord while all around him hear only confused discords.

Reason is supreme sovereign; it recognizes no authority above it. No superior force, not even we ourselves, can compel it to accept as wrong what it has recognized to be true.

*E pur si muove!*

The thinking soul strays through boundless distances of shining stars; it casts the plummet out into the unfathomable depths of the smallest life; nowhere does it find limits, but everywhere law, the direct expression of divine thought.

A stone falls upon Sirius in accord with the same law of gravitation as upon the earth; the distance between the planets and the chemical composition of the elements are based upon arithmetical relations, and everywhere the same causes yield the same effects. Nowhere is there caprice in nature, everywhere law.

To be sure reason cannot discover the origin of things, but it never contradicts the law which directs everything. Reason and natural law are conformable; they must have the same origin.

Even if the imperfection of all creation leads reason on a path which deviates from the truth, nevertheless truth is its only goal.

So of course reason is often in contradiction to many venerable traditions. It struggles against miracle, "the favorite child of faith"; it cannot be persuaded that omnipotence could have needed to abrogate in individual cases the laws of nature which hold eternally, in order to attain its purpose. Yet the doubts that arise are not against religion but only against the form in which it is presented to us.

Christianity has elevated the world from barbarism to civilization. In a century of endeavor it has abolished slavery, enobled labor, emancipated woman, and directed the glance toward eternity. But was it the doctrine of faith, the dogma, which brought this blessing? One can inform oneself about everything except those

matters to which human capacity for thought cannot reach and it is over just such concepts that men have contended for eighteen centuries, have desolated the world from the time of the extermination of the Arians through disturbances like the Thirty Years' War down to the stake-burnings of the inquisition; and what is the end of all these wars? The same divided opinion as before!

We may accept the creeds as one accepts the assurance of a true friend without putting it to the proof, but the kernel of all religions is the system of morality they teach, of which the Christian is the purest and most exhaustive.

And yet people speak of a dry morality with a shrug of the shoulders, and regard the form in which it is given as the main thing. I am afraid that the zealous priest in the pulpit who persuades where he cannot convince, preaches Christians out of the churches.

In general ought not every pious prayer, whether addressed to Buddha or Allah or Yahveh, reach the same God beside whom there is none other? The mother hears her child's request in whatever language he babbles her name.

Reason does not contradict morality at any point; in the final account the good is the reasonable, but to act according to it does not rest with reason. Here it is the controlling soul which decides, the soul of sentiment, our willing and doing. To reason alone and not to its two vassals God has given the two-edged sword of free will, that gift which according to scripture leads to bliss or damnation.

But a safe counsellor is also given us. Independent of us he receives his authority from God himself. Conscience is the incorruptible and infallible judge that pronounces sentence at every moment when we will listen and whose voice finally reaches even the one who pays no heed to it, no matter how greatly he strives against it.

The laws which human society has made for itself bring only acts before its judgment seat, not thoughts and sentiments. Even the various religions make different demands on different peoples. They demand here the sacred observance of Sunday but in other places of Saturday or Friday. One religion permits enjoyments which another forbids. Moreover there is always a wide space between what is allowed and what is forbidden, and here conscience raises its voice with delicacy of feeling. It tells us that *every* day ought to be consecrated to the Lord, that even the lawful tribute levied by oppression is unjust; in short, it preaches that morality

which is within the breast alike of Christians and Jews, of pagans and savages. For even in the most uncivilized peoples whom Christianity has not enlightened the fundamental ideas of good and evil are consistent. Even they recognize breach of faith and falsehood, treachery and ingratitude as evil; even to them the bond between parents, children and relatives is a sacred one.

It is hard to believe in the universal depravity of the human race, for however it may be obscured by crudeness and illusion yet in every human breast the germ of good reposes, the sense of what is noble and beautiful, and conscience has its dwelling there, pointing out the right path. Is there any more convincing proof of the existence of God than this feeling for right and wrong which is common to all, than the consistency of *one* law dominating the moral world as well as the physical; except that nature follows this law unconditionally whereas man because he is free has been given the possibility to violate it.

Body and reason serve the governing soul, but they also make their own independent demands; both are determining factors, and so man's life becomes a constant battle with himself. If the voice of conscience does not always determine the decision of the soul oppressed in so many directions by external and internal conflict, we must still hope that the Lord who created us imperfect will not demand perfection of us.

For how many things rush upon us in our activities, how different are original natural dispositions, how unequal are education and position in life! It is easy for fortune's favorite to keep to the right path almost without meeting temptation—at least not to crime; on the other hand it is a hard matter for the starving untutored man assailed by passion. All of this must weigh heavily in the balance in weighing guilt and innocence at the final judgment, and thus mercy becomes justice, two concepts which would otherwise be mutually exclusive.

It is harder to think of nothing than of something, especially when this something already exists; harder to conceive of ceasing to be than of continued existence. It is not possible that this earthly life can be a final purpose. We did not ask for it; it was given to us, laid upon us. We must have a higher destination than constantly to renew the course of this wretched existence. Are the riddles which surround us never to be solved, to whose solution the best of mankind have devoted their lives? Of what use are the thousand threads of love and friendship which bind us to the

present and the past if there is no future, if everything ceases with death?

But what can we take over into this future?

The functions of our earthly garment, the body, have ceased; the substances which were constantly changing even during our lifetime enter into new chemical combinations, and the earth retains what belongs to it. Not the smallest particle goes astray. Scripture promises us the resurrection of a transfigured body, and of course a separate existence without limitation is not to be considered; yet by this promise we are probably to understand the persistence of personality as opposed to pantheism.

We are entitled to hope that reason and with it everything which we have painfully acquired in the way of knowledge and wisdom will accompany us into eternity, perhaps even the memory of our earthly life. Whether this is to be desired is another question. What if our whole life, our thoughts and acts, would be spread out before us and we ourselves would become our own judges, incorruptible, merciless?

But above all affection must remain an attribute of the soul if it is immortal. Friendship is based upon reciprocity, and reason has much to do with it, but love can exist without responsive love. It is the purest, the divine flame of our being.

Now scripture tells us that above everything else we should love God, an invisible and wholly incomprehensible being bestowing upon us joy and happiness but also privation and pain. How can we do it except as we follow his commands and love our fellow men whom we see and understand?

If, as the Apostle Paul tells us, faith shall be turned to knowledge and hope to fulfilment and only love will persist, then we may also hope to meet the love of a lenient judge.

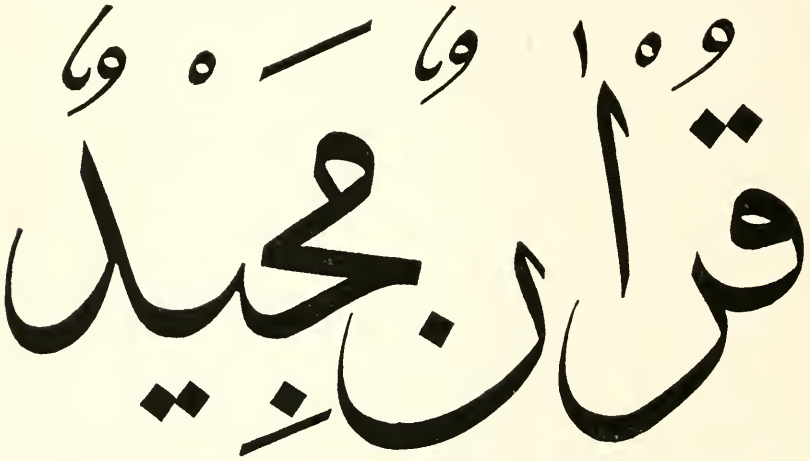
## A MOSLEM EDITION OF THE KORAN.

BY THE EDITOR.

A NEW translation of the Koran into English is being prepared by a number of modern well-educated adherents of Islam in India, and the first part of it in the shape of an unbound brochure of 118 pages lies before us. Thirty such parts are intended to make the whole, and the editors are prompted not by mercantile

motives but by the zeal of spreading the main source of the true religion. In the foreword they address the reader as follows:

"Seekers after truth and searchers for guidance! Bless your stars that the Book revealed by God for the good of mankind has been made accessible to you in an easily comprehensible form. It is the Message, yes, the self-same Message, which went forth in sweet Arabic accents from the Cave Hira 1300 years ago, at a time when Cimmerian darkness or irreligion had overspread the entire face of the earth and moral turpitude had blunted the consciousness of sin; and which, again, is repeated to-day in the English language for the guidance of those stragglers who, like their predecessors of 1300 years ago, are thirsting for truth but suffer from the lack of a guide."



THE TITLE OF THE BOOK IN ITS ORIGINAL FORM.

There are many translations of the book whose title is transcribed from the Arabic into English as "Qur-an." The "Q" replaces the more common spelling of "K" because the Arabic "K" in this case is pronounced with an emphasis that is to be differentiated from our common "K."

Our new editors find that the "former translations are too poor reading to afford anything like a regular insight into the excellencies of Islam." They have furnished the present version with annotations which render the meaning more clear and give the spirit of the text. The editors say:

"We have carefully avoided all those baseless tales and unfounded stories which have grievously misled many a translator. Such foolish stories may find room in the folklore, but it will be

a decided injustice to thrust them upon the Holy Qur-an, because, far from disclosing the truth, they give rise to childish nonsense and mental confusion. So we have taken scrupulous care to steer clear of all such unworthy stuff, and have based our translation and explanatory notes first on the Holy Qur-an itself, secondly, on the authenticated sayings of the Holy Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings of God), thirdly, on standard dictionaries, and fourthly, on reliable history. This process, we hope, will be a great help toward a right understanding of the Holy Qur-an."

The notes are indeed helpful, and we feel we cannot do better than give an instance of them by quoting the comments on the first verse of the Koran. The work begins in the name of Allah. While in English the word "god" is a noun that can be used in the plural so as to speak not only of God in the abstract sense of the only true God, but also in the sense of the gods of polytheism like Jupiter or Wodan, in Arabic *Allah* means God and can never be used in the plural. This is explained in the first note as follows:

"Allah is the name of a Being who is the sole possessor of all perfect attributes and is free from all defects. In the Arabic language, this term is never used for any other thing or being. No other language has a distinctive name for the Supreme Being. The names found in other languages are all attributive or descriptive and are often used in the plural; but the word "Allah" is never used in the plural number. Hence, in the absence of a parallel word in the English language we have retained the original name 'Allah' throughout the translation."

The first verse of the Koran reads as follows:

"I BEGIN with the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds,
The Beneficent, the Merciful,
Master of the Day of Retribution."

The edition also gives the Arabic text in clear clean print from which the first verse here quoted is reproduced in a reduced form. The text is accompanied by a transliteration which for the first verse reads:

1. Bismillā-hir-Rahmā-nir-Rahim.
2. Alham-du lillāhi Rabbil-'ālamin.
3. Arrahmā-nir-Rahim,
4. Māliki yau-mid-din.

We omit, however, the accents and characteristic dots of the letters.

We wish this new translation of the Quran the best possible success not only at home among the English-speaking Moslems but also abroad among the unbelievers who for scholarly and historical considerations take an active interest in comparative religion.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

### A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE OPEN COURT FROM OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT, M. LUCIEN ARREAT.

*(Translation.)*

PARIS, July 26, 1917.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I was very glad to hear from you (your letter of July 3 reached me on the 21st), and the more so inasmuch as I have not received your magazines for about three months. I have often thought of writing to you myself; but I did not wish to enter into the endless discussions raised by this abominable war from which our people are suffering to the point of martyrdom. In spite of the sorrows and mortifications of the times I have continued in good health, or nearly so. Though my colds become more frequent and more stubborn, still I have no other infirmity than my seventy-six years, and that is infirmity enough for me. You may have seen that I continue to do a little work for the *Revue philosophique*. Need I add that Théodule Ribot's death has affected me greatly? This war is killing men of our age just as surely as the young men. It is sad to end one's life in the midst of these horrors and in want of so many things which make life worth living, or are even most esssential to one's existence.

"Why not live and let live?" the poor people say, "Isn't it hard enough to earn our bread?" But, as our La Fontaine said of a whipped dog,

"His reasoning in a master's mouth
Very fine might be;
But from him it has no weight at all—
Merely a cur is he."

[Son raisonnement pouvait être
Fort bon dans la bouche d'un maître.

Ne venant que d'un simple chien
On trouva qu'il ne valait rien.]

My reflections? They may perhaps have some value, but unfortunately they would satisfy nobody.

Although not free from errors, the politics of the Old Régime were on the whole those of prudence and patience—they have made us the nation that we are. The same is true of the politics of the Restoration and of the July government. But our unrestrained revolutions have accustomed us to a fantastic and improvident line of conduct. The doctors and orators who have governed us for the past thirty years (excepting some men of merit like Alexandre Ribot) have, in the desire to escape war, practised a politics of alliances and vain talk, which instead of avoiding war runs the risk of provoking it, and now that the storm has come the native valor of our race has failed to rise and save us from an irreparable disaster.

As to the German government, it has, in my opinion, shown the most remarkable disregard of historical and psychological conditions in Europe. It ought to have profited by the example of the French Revolution—of which Napoleon was but the brilliant expression—and of the martial enterprise into which it madly rushed. The situation is quite the same to-day, only the parts of the actors are reversed, and this time it is no longer a coalition—it is a crusade.

It is of no avail, I suppose, to criticise the particular facts, the dates, the incidents, the intentions more or less strict or whose meaning has been forced. We must go straight to the deep causes, to the actual or falsely preconceived necessities of the different states. All then becomes clear, and the "official" lies are reduced to their correct valuation which is simply one of opportunity or circumstance. I do not wish to insist on this delicate point, and you understand what I mean without my in the least incriminating any individuals of whose perfect good faith I am convinced.

"It is not always the fact itself," I wrote in my *Reflexions et maximes*, "which is of importance in political affairs, but the romance that is built upon the facts, a romance whose every page is stained with blood. After some fifty years history will come etc."

What an enormous destruction of life, and how eternally to be deplored! What a vast number of dead and how inestimable their loss! It has been said that war is a return to savagry, and no other war ever produced more ruins and more victims than this one. Our nations will remain impoverished and leaderless for a long time. I keep silent about many dreadful things that some day the opportunity will come to reveal. Add to this the formation in every land of a bad rich class (as was the case in France after the Revolution) which will bring to our middle classes a flood of the impure elements with which it has been corrupted.

Peace! All the nations call upon it in their prayers, and all governments desire it because it is the first of all their needs. Unfortunately most of the statesmen are bound by imprudent promises and remain prisoners to their own statements. I wish with all my heart that the arrival of great America on the scene would put an end to this fratricidal conflict and permit it to come to a close with equity; that is, so that it will be settled with some consideration of mutual goodwill and not to satisfy haughty appetites for power and dominion. If our Europe does not succeed in finding some sort of a federative principle that will assure its correct place to each nation, it will end, I am afraid, by

experiencing the worst excesses of demagogy and will not soon see an end of its miseries.

These on the whole are the reflections which haunt my solitude. It would be easy to develop them and give them a more solid body if it were worth the trouble, but it does not seem that the best reasons in the world would stand any chance of prevailing over feelings which have been exasperated.

My housekeeper, as you know, has lost her husband who was mortally wounded in the Vosges, July, 1915. I am keeping her with her two small children (five and three and one-half years) and thus add to my share of the common burden—a burden already too heavy for my slender resources. There is no doubt but I shall be obliged to leave Paris and I lose all hope of ever seeing you again. Rest assured that whatever happens my feelings toward you and your dear family will always remain those of an old and faithful friend.

Cordially yours,

L. Arréat.

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## NADWORNA.

Nadworna is a town in Galicia, and when the Russians invaded it they not only forced all the Jews, men women and children, to assist them in the work of attack on the Austrian lines, but set them in the place of greatest danger as a shield for the Russians themselves. The Jews were commanded to take up bags of sand and carry them into the firing lines to build up walls of protection for the Russian soldiers. They were driven into the fire by the knout and by Russian bullets, so that they were placed between two fires, and many of them died on the battlefield as if they had been soldiers themselves, compelled to help a cause which was that of the inventors of pogroms. The facts are described in a book entitled *Der Weltkrieg und das Schicksal des jüdischen Volkes, Stimme eines galizischen Juden an seine Glaubensgenossen in den neutralen Ländern, insbesondere America,* which has been written by Benjamin Segel of Lemberg, and published in Berlin by Georg Stilke. The author mainly addresses those Jews who stand up for the cause of Russia in England and France, and also those Jews who live in neutral countries, especially in the United States, and sympathize with the Allied cause. About 1500 Jewish families were used in this way in the attack at Nadworna, and Mr. Segel says that if sons of the families of Baron Rothschild and Baron Günzburg are serving as French officers or in the English army; if Zangwill and Gottheil Ruch express their confidence that the Teutonic superman will be crushed by the Cossacks; if they speak in favor of the Allied cause, and if Lord Rothschild of London boasts of having donated a thousand pounds for the poor Galician Jews, it would be no use to argue the case with them, but they should all be answered with the one word "Nadworna!" But Mr. Segel adds that we should not condemn the Russian people themselves for the atrocities committed by order of the late Russian government. Many Russians would be shocked at the treatment of the Jews at Nadworna. Tolstoy and Solowiew, Sorolenko and Kropatkin, Gorki and Tchirikow, Dostoyevski and many others would be horrified at the reports of the Russian army's misdeeds at Nadworna.

## MOHAMMEDAN LEARNING.

A very creditable book on *Promotion of Learning in India During Muhammadan Rule (by Muhammadans)* has been written by a Mohammedan, Narendra Nath Law, M.A., B.L. of Calcutta University and author of *Studies in Ancient Hindu Polity*. Mr. H. Beveridge, retired from the Indian Civil Service, writes a foreword in which he says:

Mr. Law is to be congratulated upon the successful accomplishment of a laborious and important task, which will be a substantial contribution to the history of India. The value of the book has been considerably heightened by the interesting illustrations which he has been at such pains to bring together from a variety of sources."

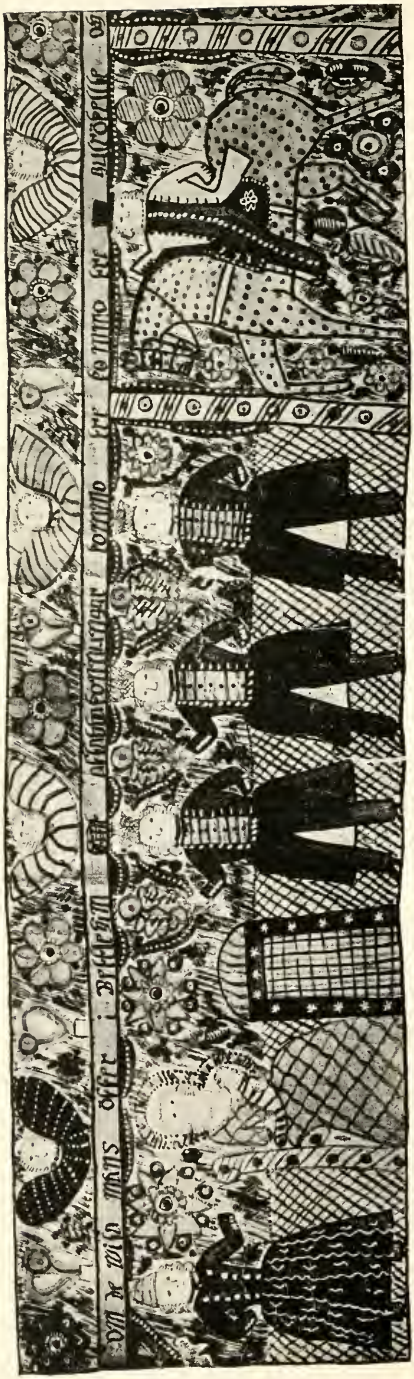
The book is published by Longmans, Green and Company, and is an admirable example of the bookmaker's art. We reproduce the frontispiece as frontispiece of our present issue. The college at Bidar is thus described in Meadow Taylor's *History of India*:

"The noble college of Mahmūd Gāwā in the city of Bīdar was perhaps the grandest completed work of the period. It consisted of a spacious square with arches all round it, of two stories, divided into convenient rooms. The minarets at each corner of the front were upwards of 100 feet high, and also the front itself, covered with enamel tiles, on which were flowers on blue, yellow and red grounds and sentences of the Qur'ān in large kūfīc letters, the effect of which was at once chaste and superb."

The explosion which wrecked the beautiful structure is related by Briggs in a note to the work of Ferishta (a Mohammedan historian of the sixteenth century) as follows:

"After the capture of Bīdar by Aurangzib, in the latter end of the seventeenth century, this splendid range of buildings was appropriated to the double purpose of a powder-magazine and barrack for a body of cavalry, when by accident, the powder, exploding, destroyed the greater part of the edifice, causing dreadful havoc around. Sufficient of the work remains, however, even at the present day, to afford some notion of its magnificence and beauty. The outline of the square, and some of the apartments, are yet entire, and one of the minarets is still standing. It is more than 100 feet in height, ornamented with tablets, on which sentences of the Qur'ān in white letters, 3 feet in length, standing forth on a ground of green and gold, still exhibits to the spectator a good sample of what this superb edifice once was. The college is one of the many beautiful remains of the grandeur of the Bahmanī and Burīd dynasties, which flourished at Bīdar; and they render a visit to that city an object of lively interest to all travelers, but particularly to those who may peruse this history."

Mr. Law adds: "The explosion is by some attributed to an exasperated soldier, who, in order to avenge himself upon a comrade with whom he was quarreling, cast the burning *guls* from his *chīlam* into a powder cell. Thevenot, the traveler, gives a different account. According to him, a faithful commander of the place took his stand in the college along with his army, and refused to submit to Aurangzib. When, however, a breach was made in the wall and signal given for the assault, then suddenly by the fall of a rocket or by the order of the commander, who preferred death to subjection, the magazine blew up at a moment when the roof was covered with the garrison who had assembled there for selling themselves as dearly as possible."



## BONATTAR.

The Nativity of Christ has always been a favorite subject for art, and also for popular festivals. Every nationality seems to paint the Nativity and the appearance of the Magi to suit their own national customs, and we herewith reproduce the Swedish conception of "Bonattar." Bonattar signifies a festive illustration of Biblical subjects, hung up during Twelfth Night, which means the time between Christmas and Epiphany. The picture shows the Magi bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the new-born Saviour.

The owner of the picture, a native Swede, Mr. Edwin Pearson, informs us that from his memory the inscription reads: "About the wise men's offer in Bethlehem (Assabba-Kings) came three, came three with frankincense and myrrh and offered, Hallelujah."

The decoration is painted in very brilliant colors, from the juices of berries, on a very tough paper. In spite of their being vivid, the colors have not faded, which seems remarkable. It was customary during the Christmas festivities to have all the walls covered with these "Bonattar," showing the different subjects from the Bible.

A hundred or more years ago, these "Bonattar" were quite common among the better class of farmers in certain sections of Sweden, but they are very scarce now except in museums — the modern cheap chromos having taken their place. However, it is still the custom to decorate the walls for the Christmas festivities.

# THE OPEN COURT

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

VOLUME XXXI

CHICAGO
THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING COMPANY
1917

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