TO-DAY.

No. 59.—OCTOBER, 1888.

Ballade of Ballades.

'TIS indiscretion to intrude
Among the shrill and tinsel choir,
Where talent trained calls genius "crude,"
And thoughts in rigid rhymes expire.
They are expert with weapons dire
Who in the form of verse excel,
And hurl at critics in their ire
Rondeau, Ballade and Villanelle!

Men patch rondeaux—a multitude
Whom living faiths do not inspire—
And for a cold-veal platitude
No fitter dish they need desire.
Hands that are nerveless on the lyre
Twang the jew's-harp extremely well,
But of such music others tire—
Rondeau, Ballade, and Villanelle!

Thin fancies which, in gratitude
For smallest favours, we admire,
Fit Ballade moulds—but would elude
A mould once touched by clay or fire;
And at true poetry's funeral pyre
Rondeaux would smirk and primly tell,
How mincing feet may miss life's mire—
Rondeaux, Ballade and Villanelle!

ENVOY.

Poets, how is it, we enquire,
Your songs and bays withstand Time's spell?
"Our wreaths are not 'made up' with wire—
Rondeau, Ballade and Villanelle!"

E. NESBIT.

Idols of the Sty.

(*Continued.*)

BUT we of the towns, it may be said, have long acknowledged that the condition of the country villager is deplorable, and that it is hopeless to expect any remedy save from democratic local institutions, and progressive resumption of land for the peasantry. The life of the towns is utterly different from that of the villages, and the same criticism may well fail to apply to both. I must say that small as is the personal utility of the country landowners, that utility seems to me to bear a larger proportion to the rent which they consume than does that of any other class of pensioner. Though the cry for Land Nationalisation preceded that for Socialism, I should not be surprised to see the Squires surviving as a recognisable class, for instance, as parochial Land Stewards, when the capitalists and ground landlords of towns shall have vanished like a smoke. It occasionally happens to me in my morning's walk to Westminster to pass through a district of Marylebone where the conditions of the dwellings and the people is as bad as anything that the philanthropists of the neighbourhood could find in the traditional hunting grounds of the East End. I explore some of these houses, in order to report their abominations to the parish sanitary authorities, who have recently been trained by pressure to compel landlords to execute some repairs. I pass the gloomy blocks of artisans' dwellings, striving to look respectable, like prisons out on ticket-of-leave, and, further on, as I traverse the parks, I see those scores of outcasts whose morning slumbers there so scandalised the *Standard's* correspondents last summer. In the morning I see the stuff that lies about the roots of the tree of wealth, in the afternoon I shall see its flowers. A few hours later the approaches to Buckingham Palace will be choked with files of carriages, and the outcasts have waked up to gaze at the procession of the wealthy unemployed, the idle women boxed up by twos and threes, covered with barbarous and extravagant adornment, each wasting on the day a year's income of a poor man's family, and thinking that a moderate outlay. But the periodical outrage of a Royal Drawing Room is but an invigorating fillip to the abiding indignation which the daily spectacle of the Park in summer keeps hot in the heart of us who pass that way. Here are the slaves and

the cattle in droves, drawing our queens of barbarism in congested procession for the edification of each other, and of the line of footpad loungers along the rails. From the activity of the park on a fine afternoon to the workshops and dwellings of the proletariat it needs some patient tracking to follow the thread of the social utility of the loafers to the labourers. The insulting pageant of the Row is the outward and visible sign of irresponsibility of wealth, it is the public glorying in the shame of parasitism, it is, however, but a small element in the life of the class. But the manner of that life we may follow far, through all its amusements, through most of its pretended occupations, before we come to any expenditure of energy on objects other than self-regarding. Let no one speak, as some are still prone to speak, of the expenditure of money by the rich, for even if the amount spent on charitable or public objects were an appreciable sum compared with the other expenditure such conscience money is returned out of the rent and interest first taken from the workers. No, to enumerate the beneficial social functions of the propertied class in the towns, we have to count up the efforts made by a few, here and there, to do something to arrest the progress of that brutishness and degradation among the workers, which the capitalist system inevitably propagates. Here and there we find wealthy ladies organising concerts, assisting to form clubs and societies for the improvement of the conditions of the poor, but it seems a mockery to mention these things (which are, moreover, mostly promoted by persons already usefully occupied) to any one who realises what is their actual extent and influence in London. Now it is frequently cast in our teeth that the Socialists disparage and contemn these efforts of the philanthropic to spread sweetness and light in the fœtid cellars of the social edifice. And their reason for doing this is said to be that they depend for their notoriety upon their power of setting class against class, and that if the rich were to become visibly friendly towards the poor, the hope of their gains would be gone. Those who think that the preaching of Socialism is a thing to get fat on, and that it offers the best opening to political ambition, had better come and try it, and then go back and answer their friends. We do disparage these attempts to heal the wounds of Society by the application of a coat of paint; and we shall continue to express our opinion of Toynbee Hall and the People's Palace until the philanthropists come to see, not that this form of poultice is not better than nothing, but that for the curing of the disease their method is utterly futile. You start co-operative shirt rooms for women, co-operative boot factories for men, clubs for boys and girls, Whitechapel

picture exhibitions, People's Palaces, and playgrounds, and you do well. Most of these things, it is true, are done, not by the propertied class, but by professional men and women administering money, wrung, after years of persistent begging and clamour, from the people whose greed and rent grabbing have rendered the whole life of the worker hideous. But if we permit you to plead that this is the kind of social work the wealthy class can do, we reply that it is no use their doing it, so long as the competitive capitalist system is continually cutting the ground from under the feet of the worker. Your co-operative shirt rooms break down; amid the lamentation and astonishment of their committees; your co-operative boot factories have to sweat their journeymen at market rates, or they fail likewise: as to your picture exhibitions and palaces what can they do for those girls of whom even "Society" has lately chosen to learn, from Mr. Walter Besant's books, or from Mr. Lakeman's recent report, whose wage is from six shilling to three shillings a week in the flush time, and who in the slack time must make up the balance by industries which the inspector refuses to name? The sweater is an incident, an inevitable product, of the capitalist system, and it is not, as Mr. Besant and the empirical philanthropist are fain to pretend, the people who buy cheap goods, it is the people who draw profits from the industries, and rent from the premises, and dividends from the industrial system on which the goods are made, that are the bullies who live upon the earnings of these women's bodies.

Let me say one word more about Mr. Besant, for he is useful as an example and a warning. Mr. Besant is the father of the People's Palace, and he has done much more good than that by convincing many hundreds of his class of the existence of evils which they would never have explored for themselves. But Mr. Besant is an incorrigible empiricist. Quack remedies are his sole resource against economic evils. He is a completely typical instance of the kind of intellectual impotence which is induced by nurture in the sty of the propertied class. He cannot conceive of any economic improvement of society except by an extension and exaggeration of the property system. We may remember the refreshing simplicity with which he expounded to the Society of Authors his grossly sordid ideal of the Utopia of the literary man, in which an universal copyright system should guarantee to each writer a royalty on every volume of his work which should be read in the English speaking world. And again, in a recent Magazine article, he proposes to solve the problem of female economic dependence, by the "endow-

ment" of all "daughters," with a deferred annuity of £35 a-year. I call this proposal charming. It is precisely what the pig would recommend if you told him that the swineherds children were starving. "I would get them," he would say, "I would get them each a little trough, and let the man fill it for them morning and evening, just as he does mine." Is it possible that there is still any one who believes that the whole population can become capitalists and live on the labour of others when there is no one left at labour?

But there is another way of presenting the argument for a propertied class. It may not be contended that they perform directly useful functions, or it may be admitted that what they do perform are insignificant in comparison with the pay which they receive, or could be performed by other persons just as well. Their use, it may be said, is not direct, but indirect, it consists not in what they do but in what they are, and their manner of existence enables them to discover fresh utilities for Society which a class perpetually occupied in special pursuits would miss. Now we must take notice that we are here approaching perilously near the plea of Postlethwaite, which a democratic society will, we may be assured, have none of. We remember the protest—"Why, dear Lady should your son enter *any* profession? why cannot he be content *to exist beautifully*?" A propertied class may have a beautiful existence, there are different opinions about that, but the question is in fact not worth discussing, for the propertied class is not like the pig, subserving the end of man, who consequently guarantees his existence, but it is a minority of comfortable people among a mob of uncomfortable people, and if the general average of beauty of existence can be raised by a readjustment of property, we may be sure that such readjustment will be made, even though nothing quite like some products of the monopoly system should survive. The more common assertion is that a leisured class is useful for the promotion of science and art. The great example with which we used to be invariably belaboured was the case of Darwin. Darwin we were told was a leisured man, a man of property, and he invented Evolution. The reply that no man is indispensable, and that the theory of Evolution would be much where it is to-day if Darwin had never lived, was not a convincing one. But we shall now no longer need to use it, for Darwin's life has been published, and any one can see that the effect of his easy circumstances was simply to plunge him into disgraceful habits of indolence and extravagance, and that if he had been under some compulsion to use his resources economically, the world would have got very much more work out of him than it did.

But is the argument ever seriously used? Is it really supposed that the artists, the sculptors, the scholars, the poets, the writers, the physicians, the chemists, the innumerable army of inventors in the economic arts, are drawn from the leisured class? It is good that a man of talent should have a free hand, but to maintain a system costing one half of our annual income, and tending directly in a hundred ways to stifle talent, on the chance of talented persons of too robust a genius to be stifled, being born among the coddled minority of our population, would surely not commend itself to practical sociologists. At present not a tenth of our people gets so much as a chance of the education which would enable them to develop any talent, and it may be safely promised, that as soon as the propertied classes cease to resist the rating of rents for the extension of universal education to such a period as they think necessary for their own children, so soon, to take that single test only, will the proletariate begin to think that the special plea for culture may be something more than cant. But when Mr. Goschen can pretend, without exciting comment, that it is impossible to raise the income tax above sixpence in the pound, because of the hardship of a higher rate on earned incomes, and ignore the fact that most of it falls on unearned incomes, and that a differential rate is possible, we take leave to doubt the sincerity of the propertied class in such argument.

Finally we come to what I have referred to as the bug-bear of the dead level. Every one knows what I mean. We have all heard the denunciation of the coming tyranny which will insist at whatever cost in luxuries that every man shall have the opportunity of regular meals, rest and recreation, and that every able person shall justify his existence by some social utility. We are familiar with the brilliant fiction that the capitalist system promotes a pleasing variety, and that the high lights of Fitzjohns Avenue would fail of their effect without the social background of the Isle of Dogs. Truly the dock-hand himself in that unsavoury district enjoys unceasing vicissitudes of experience, but though prison tweed may be of chequered pattern there are some who think a self coloured Liberty serge makes a more artistic garment. Do those who talk of variety reflect for one moment what is the meaning of the clap-trap phrase they are repeating? Do they or do they not acknowledge that the life of four-fifths of our people is one of grinding monotony, that the accessories which colour life are at present the monopoly of the few, and that the system which stunts in the majority the moral elements of human existence, the healthy family life, the love of married companions, the dignified leisure of old age, permits any more

than a minority now that access to literature and music, those facilities of travel to scenes of natural beauty and centres of artistic or historical interest, which are the chief of the advantages economic emancipation gives? In a Socialist community there would indeed be no opportunity for the individual to build up for his private edification such museums and picture galleries as the rich patrons of art now establish in their homes; but the wealth which is now buried in this manner would suffice to establish in every town and village typical collections of all that is worthy of study, and to maintain the trained musicians for the daily evening concert in the common parish church. The great surplus now consumed as rent and interest may be distributed not by addition to personal income, but by a relaxation of labour sufficient to give every man all wholesome leisure, and by the provision of communal utilities in the maintenance of public parks and gardens, free facilities for enlightenment and travel, and all those conditions that are really desired by human beings when they are thinking not of their stomachs and their clothes, as the gauge of their prosperity, but of their freedom and their culture as the satisfaction of their human capabilities.

If the defenders of individualism really summoned to their minds their own highest ideals—I do not say their religion, for though Christianity to me reads Socialism, I do not wish to impute Christianity to anyone or encourage anyone thereto, —if before they seize at their special pleas for the property system, they would reflect whether their own culture, their own efficiency for good really depends upon the figure of their dividends, and whether, after all, the guarantee of maintenance in return for service, with adequate scope for the developement of his faculties, is not all that the individual requires, they would cease, I think, to use in defence of their Juggernaut of civilisation, arguments which convince no one but themselves, and whose effect upon the awakening proletariat is to array them in the ranks of the physical force Revolutionists.

If we were to imagine, not too rigorously, of a consciousness, inhabiting Eternity, who should have made of the universe his laboratory, and the worlds as his several experiments, we might conceive that as from time he turned attention to the little film of life that creeps upon this dying planet, he had judged of the civilisations of history as a husbandman judges of his fields. No crop, it would seem, has satisfied him yet, each, one after another, has been ploughed in, flower and weed together, and the seed bed levelled afresh. Egpyt, Babylon, India, Greece, Rome, a hundred others, no society of them all has retained in any permanence its equilibrium of highest development. Our civilisation of Western Europe has put forth its stems

and flowers. Sown among the ruins of the Roman Empire in the inrush of barbarous peoples, it has produced an economic and industrial organisation unprecedented in the ancient world. The flowers may be fair and showy, the foliage crowded and luxuriant, but this harvest also may be pronounced unwholesome, this crop too foul to be garnered, and once more the plough may be prepared, and the harrow set in order, to cut down and bury weed and flower together, that another and more smiling growth may spring from the decay of our vanished society. This is how many Socialists to day, many in England, more in every other nation of Western Europe, are thinking of the Social Revolution. They have weighed in the balance the excellence of the flowers of this field, they believe that its fruits are an upper class materialised, and a middle class vulgarised, and they are determined that it shall produce no longer a lower class brutalised. They believe that any attempt to conciliate and convert the propertied class is a waste of time and energy. They look to the Revolution to come with power, and suddenly, as did the early Christians for the Second Advent. To them it says, in the words of the glorified Messiah, "Let them alone, the day is at hand. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. Behold I come quickly." I myself, and those Socialists with whom I am most in contact do not thus think of the Revolution. We believe that there may be civil war, but we believe that it is possible so to educate the propertied class that they will refrain from provoking that war. For the Revolution is already in progress. When we speak of the *status quo*, we do but play with an empty phrase. For to-day is not as yesterday, nor last month, when Mr. Morley exposed the principle of Land Nationalisation, like the month before, when we had only obtained a Democratic measure from a Tory Government. We know the steady advance of Socialism is inevitable, and that no new Cæsar will arise to comfort Mr. Froude. But we insist upon the warning that so long as the propertied class pretend that they are yielding to persuasion what the people perceive has been only wrested from them by force, that their paltry restitution of the spoils of labour are the fruits of charity and kindness, and are praiseworthy rather than contemptible, so long will the most philanthropic remain a source of friction and irritation, and increase rather than allay our social dangers. If they desire to be thought honest in their pleas for the advantages of the property system they must not shrink from admitting its inherent and essential evils, and they must work with the Socialists towards the substitution of a system that shall extend those advantages to all, *even though* it entail the sacrifice of their class monopolies.

SYDNEY OLIVIER.

A Free Fantasia on Things Divine and Human.

OUR theme is "God," and his "works," a subject not exactly new and not exactly true but possessing a perennial interest with a certain order of mind up to date. The first point to determine is what the word "God" connotes for us. A favourite device for justifying the employment of the word is to whittle it down into meaning the correlate of the feeling of awe, of immensity and incomprehensibility with which the universe, or the problems of life and knowledge inspire most of us? The "God" we are now concerned with is not this hypostasised incomprehensibility, and we cannot discover any justification, popular or historical, for a use of the word, in such a sense. Without going in detail into the philosophical senses of the term, all of which have as their first object that of being a shield against the charge of heterodoxy, we may briefly recall the Spinozistic substance—God-nature, or the sum total of all Reality. In itself this was as preposterous a perversion of the word as could well be found, and led naturally to the persistent misunderstanding of Spinoza. But it is connected with the popular usage with which we are here dealing, in so far as there is a natural and unconscious tendency, apart from any theory, to personify the nature of things in general, and we might add to damn the nature of things as thus personified, for the *real* object of objurgatory phraseology, when not a human personality, is generally, *in foro conscientiæ*, this very personified nature of things to which the objugators, when in an elevated frame of mind, and pressed on the subject of theism would apply the phrase "God." The popular formularised theory of God, and one unconsciously adopted in a refined form by many theists who profess to repudiate it, is that of a demiurge, the creator, producer, artificer and general director of all things and this is the connotation which ninety-nine out of a hundred persons in the present day connect with the word "God." It

is the connotation which obtains in all the great "ethical religions" of the world (Christianity, Judaism, Islamism, &c.) as well as in a more limited sense, though not so often, in the old nature-cults. But at all events one thing is to me clear, as established at once by history and popular usage, to wit, that the word "God" must always imply a personality, that God must always be a person in the fullest sense of the word—otherwise he is no God. No one thought of making him anything else (*i.e.*, of excluding the notion of personality) until Spinoza, who was followed after an interval by the German post Kantian thinkers in whose wake came a crowd of literateurs and heterodox sentimentalists, until in the present day among the *èlite* of culture the word is emptied of all significance whatever. This exordium is necessary, as when we use the word God here, we mean a personality, and as the fullest and only personality, properly speaking, of which we have any conception is the human, this being the only sense we can attach to the word, we mean in accordance with popular personality, a conception in some way analogous to the human in kind, however differing in degree. As such we exclude all mere objectivised incomprehensibilities all "sort of a somethings;" those fraudulent simulacra of the divinity, as they have nothing whatever to do with the question of Theism. Pantheism, we may observe, in the ordinary sense of the word, we take to be the formulated expression among cultivated persons of the anthropomorphic or personified nature of things in general, before spoken of as an instinctive theory with most men.

There is a traditional prejudice that Monotheism is a great advance in nobleness of conception on Polytheism. This is based apparently on the belief that though you can't have *too much* of God yet you can have *too many* of him. The Monotheist looks down with lofty contempt on the Polytheist as a being of inferior, not to say depraved conceptions. Now, seriously, we would really like to know in what consists the superiority of Monotheism over Polytheism? If we are to assume the existence of extra-natural personality at all what is there superior in the notion of one irresponsible despot reigning in a solitary, and as one would think, somewhat dreary grandeur to that of a society of extra-natural beings equal among themselves, or a hierarchy of such beings each, having an appointed status and function culminating, if you will, in a supreme intelligence, but not directly subordinated to its will or caprice. The first of these last-mentioned conceptions generally corresponds to the earlier period of Polytheism, the second to the later, but either of them to my mind offer a more cheerful and agreeable theory of the universe than that

of the demiurge seated all alone on high. In the first place the sense of friendship with and nearness to the unseen being is infinitely greater. The god is felt to have a peculiarly intimate and direct relation to his votary. Though powerful he is not omnipotent, his system of action is limited, but within that sphere, and as far as his power extends his worshippers are under his direct protection. It all is very well to say that the same feeling obtains with the devout Monotheist who believes in the "fatherhood of God," but as a matter of fact it does not, as is proved historically by the circumstance that the great Monotheistic religions have been unable to maintain their Monotheism unimpaired. Thus the immediate object of the Catholic's devotion is not the Christian God but his tutelary saint or the Virgin. Even the Protestant shows his want of appreciation of Monotheism by preferring in his meditations and devotions the definite human personality embodied in his conception of Jesus to the lofty but vague one of the Omnipotent demiurge. The Oriental similarly finds relief from his invocations of Allah in doing homage to some departed dervish of local renown. Then again, owing to the absence of the notion of Omnipotence, and in general even that of creation, the difficulties connected with the existence of evil which beset the Monotheist at every turn are entirely obviated on a Pagan theory of the universe. The Pagan had no need to resort to subterfuges in order to exculpate his divinity or to seek to explain away what refuses to be explained away, for his god was not necessarily a demiurge, and he admitted among his society or hierarchy of supernatural beings some which were avowedly evil, and he did not postulate any absolute power in the rest to hold these in check. So that there is no necessary or even apparent contradiction between his religion and the facts of life. His god was his "patron" who would exert his powers to protect him but who is not all-powerful, and, therefore, not accountable for any and every evil which might befall him. As against this, Monotheism postulates a god who is sponsor for every atrocity in nature and its laws. The only consolation the Monotheist has is in persuading himself that to use a popular metaphor "it will all come out in the washing." His theistic faith pays him with bills realisable in an indefinite futurity. The evil is real; the "good" which is to be "the final goal of ill" is, to say the least, hyperbolically ideal.

But says the Monotheist "you would then conceive nature as without an all-pervading mind? What can be sublimer than the thought of the universe as the work of one supreme intelligence, &c., &c. We venture to think that our Mono-

theistic friend here confounds sublimity with mere abstractness. That Monotheism implies a larger and more abstract generalisation than Polytheism is out of question, but that sublimity is necessarily involved in this increased scope is not altogether out of question. If barrenness and abstraction mean sublimity then Monotheism is sublime—"if not, not." For what is gained in extension is lost in fertility of conception. The god of Monotheism, though far removed from humanity, is barren and dull as compared with the more concrete inhabitants of Olympus, of the Pantheon, of the city or of the domestic hearth, of the ancient world. Hence the difficulty already pointed out of Monotheistic creeds maintaining their principle intact.

But the strangest claim of all on the part of the Monotheist is that there is anything edifying in the notion of nature as having been consciously produced by a mind. Yet this is often put forward as an added charm, nay, an indispensable adjunct to the full æsthetic appreciation of nature. On this principle the singing of a mechanical nightingale ought to be infinitely more enjoyable than that of a real one, since the former it must be admitted, even by the "natural theologians," is much more obviously the product of conscious intelligence than the latter. But it seems to the present writer that what gives the charm to the contemplation of nature—to the glittering summer sea, the forest glade in the twilight, the Alpine sunrise, etc., etc., is precisely the absence of mind—of the design or conscious intention of an artificer. We irresistibly impute to the whole of nature a naïve life of its own, of impulse and feeling, a spontaneity as it were. But the moment you introduce your "divine artificer" nature becomes mechanical, and the poetry of nature is destroyed. The fact is one may have too much of "consummate wisdom." "Consummate wisdom" may become consummately boresome to us weak mortals. So far from nature without God being dead, it becomes not merely dead but mechanical the moment it leads up to a "divine author." Probably the most thorough-going Monotheist that has ever lived was the eighteenth century deist, and he, though full of sentiment of a certain order, was assuredly also the most thorough-going Philistine in matters of æsthetics that the world has ever seen.

Now let us take the conventional natural theological apologetics. One of the great aims of "natural theology" is to string together a number of natural facts which can be twisted into an argument for benevolent design in nature. Some of these are naturally of the most trivial character, as may be seen by reference to any work on natural theology. But has

it never suggested itself to the natural theologian that an equal number of facts might be adduced in favour of a theory of malevolent design and yet another set which would bring the character of the Demiurge and regulator of mundane affairs out in that of a *Spottgeist*, a *Rübezahl*, full of mischief and schoolboy tricks? To deal with the latter aspect of the case first.

We will put ourselves in the position of the theologian and see everything in God, that is, everything as though it happened by design, and trace the experience of the average (as opposed to the exceptionally "lucky") man. One of his earliest objects of conscious interest is bread and jam, and that object sometimes drops out of his childish fingers on to the floor. There being no apparent reason why it should fall on one side rather than another, one would naturally suppose in accordance with the theory of probabilities that in a long series of cases it would fall equally on the jammed and on the non-jammed surface. But does it? Ask any child whether on almost every occason it does not fall on the jammed surface? Myself, I know this phenomenon early attracted my attention. Now here, on theological principles is clearly a case of Providence. A playful disposition of Providence which amuses itself at the infant's expense. As the average human being grows up he finds the same principle holds. Nine out of every ten "coincidences," coincide the wrong way for him. We will enumerate a few instances in point, which will be familiar with most people and which are admitted by all those I have questioned on the subject. There is no apparent causation involved in any of them. They are in the true sense of the word coincidences, and yet they do not seem to follow the law of probabilities. If we admit a Providence at all, therefore, they would seem to fall within the scope of Providence or a Supernatural Will, which directs human affairs. Among the common occurences of life referred to, is something of this sort; (1) a particular thing, a letter, a book, or whatnot, otherwise constantly obtruding itself on one's notice is impossible to be found when urgently wanted. This everyone must have noticed as an almost invariable occurence. Again every one must have observed the following: (2) He is generally at home say on a certain day, but on one occasion for the first time in a twelvemonth, happens to be out. A friend whom he has not seen for a long time, happens to call that very day, on important business. (3) After repeated experience that letters forwarded by the Post Office from some old address contain nothing but worthless circulars or suchlike postal flotsam and jetsam, one refuses to receive any more, only to learn that the next missive,

i.e., the first one refused, had contained a cheque or postal order for a large sum. (4) Again one is searching for a particular house in a street, say No. 361, one carefully watches the odd numbers, as they progress from 1 onwards till one arrives at 359. What follows 359 is not 361 but 363, or perhaps a blank wall or a hoarding. No one has heard of 361, till at last after infinite time and labour spent one discovers that No. 361 has been pulled down, or that it is up some corner or bend of the street, the existence of which no one would have ever guessed. This has occurred so often in my experience that I am now surprised if on some rare occasion the number I am in search of, follows in the natural order. Now, here is a most striking apparent violation of the law of probabilities the normal chances being some hundreds to one as against the actual occurrence. (5) The case of the persistently winning man and the persistently losing man, in games of chance, no uncommon one, seems almost irresistably to suggest a "hand unseen" so utterly inexplicable is it on any theory of probabilities. (6) It is a trite observation that married couples who earnestly desire children have the greatest difficulty in acquiring them, while those who do not want them endeavour in vain to dam the surging influx.

I conclude the few cases mentioned, out of the innumerable instances of which life is made up, of coincidences which seem to violate the theory of probabilities in a sense adverse to one's interest or convenience, with one which may seem to be grotesque but which in spite of its triviality is significant. On putting on a pair of boots one instinctively raises one's foot as one picks up one of the boots. I have calculated that nineteen times out of twenty the foot raised is the opposite to the boot picked up. Thus if the right foot be raised the left boot will be lifted and *vice versa*.

Now if theologians were really in earnest with their "evidences" they might find in these "coincidences" a mine of plausibility in favour of the theory of a superintending providence. But as a matter of fact they ignore an argument which would appeal far more more powerfully to many persons than far-fetched attempts to prove benevolent design in Nature, for the simple reason that though it might lead many to believe in the existence of a deity, it would make the deity appear in a ridiculous light. Instead of the glorified metropolitan police magistrate of the churches, who stands upon his dignity and has a rooted aversion to any chaff at his expense, Providence would come out as a knavish sprite, a veritable poltergeist made up of mischievous and ill-natured pranks.

We now come to the point as to the benevolent intention, the wonderful adaptation of means to good ends, alleged by

theologians to exist in Nature. Here again it is easy enough to read design into natural forms and processes if one is determined to do so. But I maintain that for every instance of apparently beneficent design in Nature there are two of malevolent design. I do not propose here to go into the cruelty, the wanton pain and distruction which enters into the scheme of Nature as an essential element in that scheme, the strong animal preserving itself at the expense of the weaker, the existence of parasitism, etc., etc. This has been often and ably done before, and this, of course, constitutes the gravamen of the indictment of Theism. But I wish to point out two cases of apparently elaborately organised design in Nature to ends which are not precisely beneficent. Take the nerves of the teeth and face, the complicated network which connects the lower wisdom teeth with the temples. Now here is an exquisite piece of workmanship beautifully adapted to an end—to wit, the production and perpetuation of neuralgia. It is through this arrangement that the tortures of neuralgia are rendered possible, and the arrangement has no other visible purpose. Of course, I am aware that the champion of Nature, driven hard, is quite capable of alleging that he thinks neuralgia rather a good thing. In answer to this I need only say I write for the majority of men who have no argument to subserve and who do not think so. The mere existence of nerves in teeth can but be viewed from the teleological standpoint, as an institution designed for the exclusive purpose of producing toothache, for there is no conceivable reason why the means of the mastication should not have been furnished outside the nervous system, like the hoof of animals, the nails or the hair. The only answer that can be given to this is that it was not and therefore it could not be, which though otherwise valid is from the present standpoint merely a begging of the question. Yet again, take the disease of rabies. The animals among which this disease originates are dogs and those of a cognate race whose weapon of offence and defence is their teeth, that is to say, precisely that class of animals by whom a disease transmissable through the saliva would be most readily communicated both to other animals and to human beings. Were rabies a disease affecting sheep, oxen or even horses or pigs or indeed any non-canine animal, the danger of contagion would be infinitely reduced, since with no other animal is the biting instinct developed as with the so-called "friend of man."

The Esquimaux always speak of the Polar bear with reverence, out of fear lest the beast which they credit with supernatural power should resent any slight cast upon him. We are inclined to think a relic of this class of superstition is

at the bottom of the apologetic attitude of the ordinary man towards Nature. We all know the indignation real or feigned with which the aforesaid ordinary man of "natural religion" greets any suggestion that Nature is not perfect. His zeal for the honour and glory of the author of Nature finds vent under such circumstances commonly in irrelevant rudeness to his interlocutor. Thus, he will tell the latter he supposes he thinks he could have arranged things better—its a pity he hadn't the doing of them &c. &c., all of which may be very true but does not in the least exonerate the creator for having arranged them badly. From this point of view when our friend has ordered a pair of shoes and finds that they don't fit him, that they have nails left protruding, or that they are otherwise so ill-constructed that after half-an-hour's walking the epidermis has disappeared from the most salient portions of his foot, let him by no means blame the shoemaker, lest the shoemaker retort "its a pity you didn't make your own shoes." Naturally the rejoinder of him of the wounded foot would be, "If I were a shoemaker I would undertake to make better shoes than you do, but as I am a tailor (a candlestick maker or what not) I don't profess to make shoes at all." Similarly, the impugner of the creative excellence, may fairly retort on its rude apologist, "I have never been brought up to the demiurgic profession, but if I had and had had the disposal of the amount of power which is displayed in Nature, I should regard it as a discredit not to have turned out something better."

But, as we said, the ordinary man has a lurking superstitious dread of offending Nature and God, and so tries to persuade himself, like Dr. Pangloss, that everything is, on the whole, for the best in the best possible of worlds. The professed Theist swells himself out to his largest possible dimensions on hearing such a criticism as we have attempted,and in indignant tones pompously declaims against "the finite intellect presuming to measure itself with the infinite." The finite intellect when it produces results flattering to the demiurgic character, may, without hesitation, proceed to deal with these matters. Theists, and they sometimes have very finite intellects indeed, may descant with unction on the beneficence displayed in Nature, and on their conviction of everything being ordained for a good purpose. It is only when the result happens to be unfavourable to the pretensions of demiurgic wisdom or goodness that the argument from the finitude of the intellect comes into play. The Theist assumes all-wisdom and all-goodness in the ordering of the cosmos, and claims the right to support his assumption by arguments drawn from Nature. The worst he can say of the Anti-Theist (as we may call him) is that he traverses the original

assumption with arguments of the same nature as those used in support of it. The contention of the Anti-Theist as we have stated is that the ordering of the cosmos does not display wisdom or goodness commensurate with the power visible in it (and his case against the Theist who claims perfect wisdom and perfect goodness is made out by a simple instance to the contrary) is perfectly justified from the anthropomorphic standpoint which the ordinary Theist occupies. The Theist cannot rebut the Anti-Theist argument which gives him the alternative of viewing the demiurge as either pre-eminently foolish or pre-eminently wicked.

Once we are outside the vicious circle of Theism the case is otherwise. The Pagan, although he, too, views the universe anthropomorphically, is not open to the above criticism, since the idea of conscious creation is absent or subordinate with him; and, besides, as already observed, his gods are limited each to his own sphere, they formed a society or hierarchy and are all subordinated to that special bogie of the Theist, an irresistible and impersonal Fate. Hence the Polytheist might constantly, and without any self-deception, worship his god as perfectly good in intention even if his acts fell short. Again, the Atheist who rejects entirely the notion of a personal demiurge (not as according to the common and convenient misrepresentation because he thinks he can *prove* the negative proposition, but because he finds the positive absurd and unsatisfactory as a theory of the universe) is in still better case since he does not read morality into nature at all. He does not postulate like the Theist, a benevolent demiurge nor like the Anti-Theist, a malevolent demiurge. Nature for him is neither moral nor immoral, but extra-moral. To the Atheist, nature is not like the works and deeds of men, the product of conscious willing intelligence, but the outcome of an immanent neccesity. Below and beyond all actuality, reality or finitude, of things is presupposed the infinite potentiality, the Eternal Becoming involved in all experience; of which concrete consciousness with its *time* is the supreme expression, but which for this very reason can never be adequately manifested in any *paticular* or actual consciousness, or in any *particular* or actual time. We try to fix the I or subject which we find posited as the core and root of all thinking and knowing, and we find we have merely got an object, a particular memory-synthesis, *i.e.*, a particular body of thoughts or experiences which presupposes an infinity of other thoughts and experiences not expressed in them. We try to define or explain the undetermined *nisus*, or Becoming presupposed in all conscious action of the

individual, and we find in any given case we have merely got a given determining motive or motives. So the Becoming, the neccessity in nature, to which no beginning nor ending can be assigned, when we analyse it in any given case, resolves itself into a chain of modifications of matter in motion. This is the ultimate fact discernable in the world of space, that is, on the plane of external nature.

"Above the gods is fate." If we accept the ancient Greek motto as translated into the terms of modern thought, we have no need to perplex ourselves with specially pleading the goodness of a hypothetical creator nor is there any point in damning the nature of things, although the apparent malice discernable in the ordering of the world does, it must be admitted, offer strong temptations to personify with a view to objurgation. If we personify we have *Dieu l'ennemi*. If we don't personify we have no *Dieu* but then we have no *ennemi*. Supposing, then, we reject the demiurgic view as an ultimate theory of the universe and thus reject the Theistic theory are we driven to Pessimism? The true statement of the case as regards this point it seems to me is that Optimism and Pessimism are alike abstract and onesided theories of teleology, just as the old dogmatic metaphysics and modern Empiricism or Agnosticism are one-sided and abstract theories of Human knowledge. Many persons are doubtless led to Pessimism, or at least Cynicism, by the reflection that the categories of Good and Evil, with the subordinate ones of knowledge, and ignorance, beauty and ugliness, are correlative, and therefore alike and equally, necessary and eternal, in the nature of things. But does such a reflection justify the attitude in question? Is the fable of the victory of Ormuzd over Arhiman therefore devoid of meaning? Can we no longer believe that "good shall fall—at last—far off—at last to all, and every winter change to Spring?" Perhaps not in the old sense, but not the less so in *a* sense. The metaphor of the light in which is no darkness may, it is true, cease to be apt when we reflect that such a light would be indistinguishable from darkness. The conception of an absolute happiness, an absolute knowledge and an absolute beauty, such namely, which exclude all further possible increase is obviously abstract and unreal and must be abandoned. A happiness, knowledge, beauty, which had no vista before it, which was static, would lose its character as such, as a very little reflection will show. The abstraction in question loses sight of the true nature of the concepts themselves. What shall we say then? What is the nature of these concepts? Shall good not be the final goal of ill? Our answer is the "good," (*i.e.*, happiness, knowledge, beauty,)

partakes of the nature of all reality. It is essentially a process, an eternal Becoming which is never complete. Evil is always pre-supposed as an element by good, *e.g.*, ignorance by knowledge, ugliness by beauty. Viewed universally and abstractedly the one of these concepts is as necessary as the other. This is true; but what is not true is that any particular or real evil shall not give way to good. The moment these things put on the vesture of reality or concreteness, the moment they are so particularised, the moment they have become embodied in *this* evil, they have become mortal. Every evil falling within human experience must pass away. All unknownness that has become definite must vanish in knowledge. The fact that it is known as unknown is the first step towards its extinction. The ugliness that is recognised as ugly is already doomed. All evils, physical, moral or æsthetic that are at any moment within the field of experience are in the nature of things transitory. What remains is the universal, abstract evil. The fallacy of the modern Agnostic consists in laying out an enclosure and saying, within is the unknowable, without is the knowable. Inasmuch as he can say this is the unknowable, he shows that he is not dealing with an unknowable. The unknown may always be with us, but any *this* unknown we may rest assured must one day cease to be unknown. You cannot formulate a problem as unknowable. The fact of your being able to formulate it is sufficient proof that it is not *per se* incapable of solution. I am here speaking, of course, of *real* problems and not such as have their origin in a misunderstanding or a false assumption.

Similarly with other kinds of evil, physical, moral, and social. The concrete realisation of evil in any given thing is the signal for its destruction. A physical fact no sooner assumes the character of an evil in consciousness than conscious energy is aroused against it, and sooner or later it disappears. As an illustration take epidemic disease. As soon as Zymosis loomed big as an evil in human consciousness the improved sanitary science began to arise which has found increasingly successful means of checking it with every prospect of its ultimate extinction. The recognition by a William Morris and a Burne Jones and others of the ugliness of modern English decoration has denoted the beginning of its end. But this is particularly noticeable in the moral and social sphere. Any institution, form of society, belief or practice, which man has become conscious of as evil has speedily disappeared. Three centuries ago, and more or less until the French Revolution, the evils of Feudalism filled the mental horizon of good and thoughtful men. It seemed to them that were the cruelties and abuses of the Feudal noble, the tyrannyof priesthoods, the restrictions of the

guild-system of local jurisdictions, and the unrestrained caprice of monarchs abolished or mitigated all would be well. Those evils have been all, at least mitigated, and some of them abolished. Earnest men to-day see another and totally different set of evils, and the fact of their seeing them as evil is one indication of their disappearance within a measurable distance of time.

But it may be said if "evil" as concrete or particularised is necessarily absorbed through the pressure of the evolutionary process, and thus passes away, is this not also true of its opposite. The good of to-day becomes the evil of to-morrow. The abolition of serfage and chattel slavery paves the way for wage-slavery. As a matter of fact the case is not precisely the same. The "good" in any evolutionary process is always the last term in that process, is its *telos* or end. The evil which that "good" may engender or which may ensue is the beginning of a new process, or a phase of an incomplete process which in its turn is absorbed in another "good," organically higher than the preceding. Again, taking the evolution of human society in illustration and speaking as a Socialist, I should say a co-operative social state, in which use was for each and possession for all, in which the powers of nature employed for the common advantage, the maximum of production with the minimum of labour; a society of equals interpenetrated by a true culture, a culture not an exotic adjunct to, but an intrinsic element in, everyday life; a society in which superstition while regarded with interest and even affection as an historical phenomenon had ceased to be operative as a thought-factor—such a society I should say is the end, *telos* or "ultimate good" of human evolution regarded as one process from its beginnings in the darkness of pre-historic ages till the realisation of that society.—All the evils we now see around us will then have disappeared for ever, every good we can even imagine for human society will then be realised never again to be completely lost. Mankind will be happier than ever before. For an indefinite period there will be no consciousness of anything but satisfaction. Sooner or later, however, we cannot doubt that new needs and new longings of which we now can have not the remotest conception will dawn on the horizon of consciousness which will indicate the beginning of a new process opening up the vista of a still higher "good" or *telos* and so on, till may-be our time-consciousness itself shall enter upon a completely new phase. If the above be admitted it will thus be seen that supposing we could fix an end to all things in time, a final stage to evolution, optimism would in a measure be justified for the "last things" would be the

embodiment of the highest "good." The final state of willing and conscious beings would be that of absolute happiness. It is because we cannot fix this *terminus ad quem*, either in the logical process or its temporal manifestation that we cannot pronounce for optimism. All that analysis of this process discloses to us is an infinite spiral ascent. We have to do with no mere circle continuously returning in upon itself but with a movement which never touches the same actual spot twice, though it continuously recurs to one analogically the same. All concrete evil, etc., passes away never to return and the issue of the process of which it forms part is a relative "good" (happiness, knowledge, etc.). That a new cycle follows also embodying the category of evil in another shape, need not trouble us since we know that here also the final result must be similar, and that the end of every cycle is the "good."

E. BELFORT BAX.

Parted.

In Summer, when the year with lavish hand
  Strews stars among the grasses at my feet,
And veils in dreamy mists the golden land,
  And breathes through all the scent of roses sweet,
My heart cries out for Autumn wind and rain,
For these will bring the winter-time again.

Ah, Love! when Winter comes once more to bring
  The earth's ice-jewels and her robe of snow,
In leafless orchards where the robins sing
  Again we'll pluck the fairy mistletoe:
Forgotten then will be the ache and smart
The Summer brings us now we are apart.

A. HOATSON.

Modern Mis-education.

Part I.

THERE is no word more in the mouths of the public to-day than the word *Education*; yet there never was a time when the *thing* education was less understood. I should be glad if I could honestly say we had *no* education. That would be, not a calamity, but (in comparison with what we have) the highest of blessings. With minds clean and fresh, eager and untainted, enthusiastic and plastic, a noble worker in human clay can do with his sacred charge what his highest aspirations dictate. (Those who have taught men and boys know the difference well.) It is another matter when the mind is warped, jaded and paralysed with excessive and poisoned food. The difficulty then is not to teach, but to *un*-teach; not to feed, but to provoke the vomit of the deadly substance already taken. Had we to-day a nation of pure minds to begin on, the question of National Education would not be the intricate one it is. But one is tempted to despair of life and the future of mankind altogether, when one sees (as many see now) that we have a so-called National Education which I do not scruple to call a scandal and a lie from top to bottom.

Of course our great personages will not admit this. "We are," they will say, "no doubt a little behind Germany. We must have technical education. But we are improving: progress, you know, and that sort of thing." Yes, progress; but progress *whither?* To make man God, or to make him Devil; divine and loving spirit, or satanic chaos of competitive passions.

The modern world presents this curious spectacle. It is trying (unconsciously) to combine the most antagonistic qualities. It is trying to combine God and Devil by a sort of nuptials; to manufacture men by the million who shall play the part of the devil in a holy sort of way. To have chosen Satan for ideal, and to have trained in our child-factories imitators to follow the devil and all his works, this would have been innocent and harmless compared with what has been

done. Men might have recoiled from conscious descent into hell. It was, however, reserved for modern times to devise the subtlest of all snares for man, and to plot the most ridiculous of all impossibilities: to efface the difference between light and darkness, between good and evil; subtle, because it flatters man's vanity; impossible, every heart knows, for, as said the divinest of mortals, "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

Our "National Education" to-day has then embarked on this most impossible of all enterprises, to teach our children *how holily to serve the devil.* We English have not even the luxury of no-education; we are cursed with a horrible system of mis-education.

I am aware that Socialists are of all men most *likely* to be prepared to believe this. But I have hardly less doubt that they will still think me mistaken, that I speak at random, or as members of Parliament speak before the elections. Not at all. I speak seriously and as accurately as the English language will permit. I believe, nay, am certain, that the whole machinery of education, public and private, of state and church, is applied to turning our children and us into slaves of the devil—or of mammon. Is there very much difference?) This is my opinion, now see if I am not right.

WHAT IS EDUCATION?

First our judgment all depends on this: what do we mean by Education. Words used to have a meaning; when they were made they expressed some thought in man's mind. Now-a-days words are not meant to have a meaning but to hide our thoughts as if we were ashamed of them. (Newspapers and advertisements are sufficient example.) The words which, by accident, have some meaning are mostly old words made before our modern shoddy-mills, and before living and thieving became equivalent expressions. Education is one of these. It has a meaning, but though it is daily on our lips it means to us exactly the reverse of what it meant originally. This turning things upside down is a habit especially prevalent to-day. Education means *drawing out;* applied to the training of youth, it means *drawing out what is in the child.* Is this what *we* mean by *educate?* To find out what a child or man is (that means *is worth*)? Our meaning is best expressed by a word which is no longer slang. Slang is too often too honest for polite ears, but polite people are rapidly losing even the pretence of modesty. Much which may now be said was, a few years back, so coarse (that is, true and honest). Our true and honest word for the process of child-manufacture is appropriately termed "*Cram.*" People are now "crammed" for

everything; for army, navy, bar, medicine, for the "church." Only think, these five careers which alone a "gentleman" could follow without losing caste (till lately), actually "crammed" for. We have crammers and crammed, and indeed both one and the other recall to our minds another and even less polite meaning of the word "cram." Yet there is a good deal of lying done by the modern crammer. How else can he compete?

The real genuine modern educational establishment is, then, the cram-shop. Shop, observe, where we can buy so much cram-stuff. The old education was conducted in places called "schools." The word school is going out of fashion. We have the School Board, and this will (by accident) keep "school" from extinction. But all the new places which set up with brass plate or grand prospectus are no longer schools, but "colleges." It is not, however, really an accident that the word school is dying. I have said we moderns delight in words which mean something other than the true thing. Still, murder will out. We are instinctively truthful, and when not, are compelled finally by nature to call things by the true name. Hence school is going out in favour of college and cram-shop. What does "school" mean? It means leisure (not idleness). Our forefathers knew that true education needed leisure. The places devoted to education they called then rightly schools, or places of leisure. Can any one cast this in the teeth of our School Board? Are their schools places of leisure? They are much more like lunatic asylums. Nor are the most modern and most successful "public schools" very different. One of these I know, and can only say that though I have worked hard all my life, I never had such constant, harrasing, silly and useless work in my life as I had there. And yet this school has been called the model-school of England.

But these modern schools are called "colleges." I will not go into the lengthy question what a college is or means exactly. I gather it originally was this: a collection of persons, or community or guild composed like all ancient guilds of three orders, corresponding to masters, journeymen, and apprentices, or masters (or doctors), bachelors, and scholars, the names more common in University guilds. The only fragment of the old meaning left is the collecting—of boys and fees. Our modern college is a collection, herding, of human beings, 500 to 1000 strong. But there is not much of the other element there, which made the old guild a *community*, one brotherhood, knit by affection (not of the buildings, the site, the mechanism, but of man for man). What bond unites members of our colleges? Observe, the three grades have disappeared.

In place of masters we have a czar, an autocrat; under him the so-called masters (the bachelors of the old guild) are merely the hired servants of the head master. And the old bond is gone. These colleges have no longer one spirit dwelling in them. They are made of units kept together by laws, force, and commercial need. They are factories where under the tyrannical hypocrisy of the few over-paid, the many underpaid are exploited to provide cheap cram to save the pocket of the wealthy *bourgeois*.

What, then, is true education? It is, at once, the most intricate of sciences and noblest of arts. To be the sculptor to mould living clay and transpose into it immortal life; this highest of all crafts our modern world leaves well-nigh to chance, and proposes to await the evolution of good schools and masters when the struggle for existence has exterminated or ruined the majority, and so, of course, left the best surviving. The endowed schools of our pious ancestors have, with all the prestige of age, been run hard lately in the struggle for existence, notwithstanding their advantages. Their great foes are the new colleges, which, begun as commercial speculations of shareholders, too often will betray the competitive spirit which produced them. The nation knows little, and cares little, about the vast numbers of minor public and private schools. When a Royal Commission comes, what does it do? End some glaring peculation which scandalised even our corrupt public opinion, but leave a thousand questions untouched. Public opinion is not fit yet to organise education. And its present cry for technical education can only lead to still greater calamities.

Until lately, the prejudices, or faith, of a nobler age still survived in our homes. The law of competition was at least kept for the office. But in these hard times, when money no longer yields such high interest, the question, what to do with our children, is getting more pressing. The result is that even rich parents regard their children as investments. The child is precious because it may be made to coin money. The result is furious competition between the children of the rich for distinctions, which bring more solid advantage in money, prizes, scholarships, and fat appointments, all which add a plentiful grist to the paternal mill.

The whole system of scholarship is a gigantic fraud. What is the origin and intention of these endowments. Everyone knows they arose thus: pious persons left property for the sake of helping the education of talent among poor persons, whose life, if spent in ordinary toil, would be a social loss, because their mental powers, if cultivated, were likely to prove of higher value. This is the origin of nearly all our colleges

and schools of the middle ages. The endowments were thus left to provide *free* education for the poor, *i.e.*, those who could not pay for the necessary leisure, instruction, and implements.

Who are in possession of these endowments to-day. Is it some poor man? Occasionally yes; but almost always quite the reverse. As a matter of fact, it is almost always someone in a comfortable position, if not actually wealthy, who secures this *Free Education*. It is someone, who not only need not struggle to educate himself, makes no sacrifice of lower pleasures in order to pursue the nobler and more difficult training of the mind, but who is incapable of the least sacrifice when (as sometimes happens) it ought to be made.

But the rich, or comfortable, not only get, but, in almost every case, must get, these scholarships.

To capture scholarships is the purpose for which most schools are "run" now-a-days. It is the profit of the school-firm. A school is ranked according to the number of prizes it captures in this low scramble. But, as said a headmaster to me lately: how else can you judge of work save by results? Yes, "by their *fruits* ye shall know them." But are scholarships the only, or the chief, fruits of a school?

Now-a-days an enterprising father with intelligent children says, "What shall I do? It is true I have amassed some money by dint of always looking well after myself; by, in short, a holy kind of selfishness. My children inherit this capacity from me. I see they invariably get the better of all they meet. They quite understand the cardinal principle of *getting on, i.e.*, of getting on someone else's back and making him carry them. They take as much and give as little as they can. This is a good start. I have also money, I can provide good teachers, ensure good health, arrange their studies to secure the greatest diligence with least risk of illness."

This pattern father thereon scans the papers for the interesting advertisements of preparatory schools. "At Mr. Cram's Academy, 3 scholarships, £50, £40, £30, per annum Competition in July, etc., etc.

A private tutor crams Jack for this examination. He goes up, succeeds. One child, is thus launched on the inclined plane which will, with moderate care, lead infallibly to a "splendid career." To enter a good public school it is almost necessary, but to obtain a scholarship there, quite essential, to go to some such successful Preparatory School. From this he goes up for a scholarship. If he succeeds, he is patted on the back and petted a bit as a good boy. His goodness consists in enabling his crammer to advertise "another brilliant success," and so secure more patronage for his cram-shop. And a grateful public forgets that the cram of the

unsuccessful is made so much the dearer to provide these deceptive advertisements. They think it is Mr. Cram's generosity and admiration for good boys. Oh, no! He simply taxes the dull or less selfish boys to give a still better start to the boy who least of all needs help.

Jack goes to the Public School. As scholar his name appears probably in capitals, to remind him what a noble fellow he is, and his masters that here is another possible source of advertisement. He gets probably rather more attention than the less fortunate, is at least egged on to great exertions, and is finally sent up and gets an Oxford or Cambridge scholarship. This leads to more honours; a fellowship, a "living" or some lucrative appointment, and our young friend is regarded as a very fine fellow, eminently fitted to guide the young, as schoolmaster; or explain the mysteries of philosophy or religion to the vulgar, or to sit on the woolsack and regulate the punishment of criminals—the unsuccessful.

But observe; our young friend has done precisely this. Born of parents, who are obviously selfish, because wealthy, he started well, with an inborn greed. His education was complete. Costly tuition prepared his infantine brain. He moved from prize to prize. All this, because he happens to be born *rich*, not merely rich in money, but in the acquisitive or selfish qualities. It is not enough to reward him once for this. A grateful people hand him purse after purse. For is it not written: "Unto him that hath, shall be given"?

If he be human and a little idle, the outcome often of a gentler, more social, less grasping instinct, the parental wrath is aroused. Accustomed to senseless luxury, his enervated moral nature cannot face the possibility of parental rejection. If papa really were to stop his pocket-money, he would die of vexation. For what would Tom and Dick, his schoolfellows, say? So his nose is kept steady at the grindstone, not by the moral influence of his parents, but by the coercion of their money-bags.

Nor is his fate much better, if he fail in any contest. No holiday; but more cramming till this next stile is overstepped. He has no time to help his neighbour, no time to read what his soul needs. Indeed his soul has ceased probably to have needs, save the one insatiable craving for more scholarships and prizes.

Thus this youth, who was born more than ordinarily fit for the race of life, is assisted by the infatuated ignorance of the Nation all along the course. He not only got a big start, but at each stile finds some one stationed to hand him a lemon or help him over.

The unfortunate fellow who happened to be born poor is

punished for such incredible folly by meeting extra difficulties at each turn. If by amazing talents or splendid industry he get level with his rich competitor, some one steps in and aids the rich man, *because he is rich.* For how else are our appointments given. Suppose two candidates of equal worth. He will get the post, who can get most strings pulled, or who can stroke the waistcoats of most rich old gentlemen, called trustees. If a "living" be vacant, doesn't the peer's nephew, of ordinary capacity, but "such nice manners," and face properly expressionless, get it?

Thus, if by chance the poor man alone and unaided by friends or scholarships climbs the steep ladder, he fails at the top round because he is unknown. And we know that in our delightful modern Society to be second is to be no-where at all.

Wherever we look; among the rich, in Army, Navy, Church, Law; or among the poor in Trade Union, shop, everywhere, a man is not selected mainly for his worth, but generally for his illth; not because he is a good fellow, but because he is grasping, and therefore capable—"of getting on."

With the length of time all this may last, I have nothing to do. My concern here is to maintain its eternal wrongness and therefore its ultimate failure.

CECIL REDDIE.

Capital:

A Criticism on Political Economy

By KARL MARX.

Translated from the Original German Work,

By JOHN BROADHOUSE.

(Continued from our last number.)

The rolling mills, furnaces, buildings, machinery, iron, coal, etc., do not simply transform themselves into steel. Their purpose is also to absorb surplus labour, and of course can absorb more in 24 hours than in 12. In other words, they enable Messrs. Sanderson to make a draft upon the working time of a number of people for the whole 24 hours, and directly the labour absorbing process is checked, they lose their character as capital, and become a dead loss. "But then," Mr. Sanderson says again, "there would be the loss from so much expensive machinery lying idle half the time, and to get through the amount of work which we are able to do on the present system, we should have to double our premises and plant, which would double the outlay." But why should this firm enjoy a privilege which is not enjoyed by other capitalists who are content with a day's work, and whose machinery, etc., is idle during the night? Mr. Sanderson answers: "It is true that there is this loss from machinery lying idle in those manufactories in which work only goes on by day. But the use of furnaces would involve a further loss in our case. If they were kept up there would be a waste of fuel (which would correspond with the present waste of the life's energy of the workers), and if they were not, there would be a loss of time

in laying the fires and getting the heat up (while the loss of sleeping time, even to children of 8 years old, is a gain of working hours to the Sandersons) and the furnaces themselves would suffer from the changes of temperature." (But these furnaces do not suffer at all by the day and night change of labour.) (*m*)

(To be continued.

(*m*) Glass manufacturers have similar scruples that it is not possible for the children to have their meals at regular times, because a certain amount of radiated heat from the furnaces would be wasted. To them, however, Commissioner White says: "A certain amount of heat beyond what is usual at present might also be going to waste if mealtimes were secured in these cases, but it seems likely not equal in money-value to the waste of animal power now going on in glass houses throughout the kingdom from growing boys not having enough quiet time to eat their meals at ease, with a little rest afterwards for digestion" (*l.c.*, p. 45). And this in the year 1865! Disregarding the expenditure of strength required in carrying and lifting in the bottle and flint glass sheds, the children generally walk from 15 to 20 miles in every 6 hours' work! And it often continues 14 or 15 hours! In many glass factories, and in the Moscow spinning mills, the 6 hour relay system is in vogue. "During the working part of the week 6 hours is the utmost unbroken period ever attained at any one time for rest, and out of this has to come the time spent in coming and going to and from work, washing, dressing, and meals, leaving a very short period indeed for rest, and none for fresh air and play, unless at the expense of the sleep necessary for young boys, especially at such hot and fatiguing work. . . . . Even the short sleep is obviously liable to be broken by a boy having to wake himself if it is night, or by the noise, if it is day." Mr. White mentions a boy working for 36 consecutive hours; and others working till 2 a.m., and snatching a 3 hour's doze in the works till starting time, 5 a.m. "The amount of work done by boys, youths, girls, and women in the course of their daily or nightly spell of labour, is certainly extraordinary" (*l. c.*, 43 and 44). Meanwhile, at midnight, Mr. Capitalist reels homewards from his club, well primed with choice old port, and singing, as well as his condition will allow, "Britons never, never, shall be slaves!"

Books of To-Day.

FOUR or five years ago a well-known London publisher stated that there were not fifty persons in England who would think of reading any new book on Economics. The British reading public vaguely believed that there was a science of Political Economy, which proved that the working classes could never get more than the "market" rate of wages, and that it was wrong to give pennies to beggars; just as many of them believed the late Dean of Chichester when he said that there was a science of Theology which, if you went deep enough into it, proved that Genesis and the Athanasian Creed were perfectly credible documents.

The re-opening of the Social Question in England, which dates from the depression of Trade and Mr. Henry George's crusade, and was first noticed by the newspapers when the windows of *Pall Mall* were broken in February '85, has produced a new interest in economic questions even among the "reading public." Accordingly we find Mr. Cannan's shilling Political Economy,* together with Professor Symes' Manual and the pamphlets of the Liberty and Property Defence League on sale at all the cheap book-shops.

Mr. Cannan's work, under the form and style of an elementary school treatise, is really an able and searching criticism of the whole "orthodox" method of expounding the subject. With an admirable pretence that he is doing nothing unusual, he declares himself unable to see any distinction between Land and Capital, Rent and Interest, Employer and Employed, or Productive and Unproductive Labour. So far is he from being interested in the question whether Milton's pen was Capital, or in the difference between Fixed and Circulating, Auxiliary and Remuneratory Capital, that he does not once use the word Capital from one end of his book to the other. He does not even mention Ricardo's Law of Rent, apparently because he considers it an obvious and unimportant corollary from the Law of Diminishing Returns. As to much of this he is in complete agreement with the ideas discussed by the more ardent economists of the Fabian Society, and expounded *e.g.*, in the tract on "Land and Capital," and in Mr. Sidney Webb's article on Interest in the Quarterly Journal of Economics, while there is a curious and almost verbal coincidence between a passage on the power of majorities and a similar passage in Mr. G. B. Shaw's "Refutation of Anarchism," though both were probably in the printer's hands at the same time. He is able to make very short work of various arguments founded upon merely verbal distinctions, and indeed, pages 53 and 61 could well be used as statements of the Socialist case against the Co-operators and

* *Elementary Political Economy*, by Edwin Cannan, M.A. (London: Henry Frowde, 1888.)

Georgites. At the same time he expounds with force and freshness the points which seem to him to be of real importance. His description (p. 28) of the "kinds of things which can be exchanged," and the attention which he calls to the "income" that a man derives from the direct enjoyment of his own Labour or Property, will probably remain as permanent additions to Economic analysis. He must have read a good deal of Socialist literature and reveals every here and there a grave enjoyment in refuting those who suppose that the line between Wealth and Capital can be easily drawn, or that it will ever be feasible to allow the Duke of Argyle full use of his Scotch estates provided that he does not take a tenant.

The weakest parts of the book are those in which he deals explicitly or implicitly with the Socialist criticism of Society as it is. For instance, after stating that the rate of interest is in itself no guide to the proportion of the total income which goes to Property, he proceeds, "This fact is not one over which much regret need be felt, since it is of no practical interest to any human being whether the income of Property bears a large or small proportion to that of Labour. . . . Nearly all independent adults (he explains this by excluding "children, those supported entirely by their relations or friends, indoor paupers, prisoners, and bankrupts) in every civilised country both own some property and do some work and are therefore both proprietors and labourers. Moreover, a considerable number of these proprietor-labourers receive about half their income from property and the other half from labour, and are consequently as much proprietors as they are labourers" (pp. 113-114). Is Mr. Cannan really aware that according to the Probate duty returns (Mulhall's Dict. of Statistics, p. 279) only 39 out of every 1,000 persons dying annually in England, leave behind them property of any kind whatsoever worth £300, and that only 61 out of every 1,000 leave any property at all worth speaking of? Again, after stating that men may offer to make ships when ships are not required, he says, "Before there can be a general scarcity of work the world must be completely supplied not only with ships but with everything it desires to have; and this is obviously impossible," being apparently unconscious that shirtmakers may be dying for want of bread, and bakers may be freezing for want of shirts in the same street, without either being able to help the other. But at Balliol that sort of thing may easily escape one's notice. In another passage (p. 131), he apparently treats the interest on capital expended on making a state railway as a permanent charge against the community, and argues the whole point of state or private ownership as a question of management. If his argument is worth anything it will not matter whether the state or private individuals own improved land of any kind provided both charge the same rent.

But these are only incidental faults in a book which well deserves to be bought (for 9d. cash) by every Socialist. Our business is to know the essentials rather than the mere phraseology of Economics and we shall be better able to do so after studying Mr. Cannan's hundred and fifty pages of carefully argued scepticism.