Fernando Pessoa

REVALUATIONS:
HISTORICAL AND IDEAL

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BY

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> "Zarathustra has found no greater power on earth than good and evil."—FR. NIETZSCHE.

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VERNON LEE

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PREFACE

THE title of this volume may possibly remind some readers of an expression—"Umwerthungen," in English "Transvaluations"—first brought into vogue by Nietzsche; the motto of the book is taken from Nietzsche; and one of the essays which it contains is devoted to a criticism of Nietzsche's ethics. Under less provocation than this, hasty or superficial reviewers might be tempted to label me as a Nietzschian. Under less provocation than this, quite friendly reviewers have actually labelled me as a Hegelian. If I know anything about my own opinion, I am neither the one nor the other. But, if I had to choose, of the two I had rather be called a Hegelian. And anyone who takes the trouble to read my study of the great immoralist will find that he is treated from the point of view of one who accepts in principle the traditional morality—

> As one compelled in spite of scorn
> To teach a truth he would not learn.

My re-estimates, in fact, where they depart from the views generally accepted, relate not so much to standards as to their application, and not so much to things as to persons. Thus the paper which has been put first, and which in some ways is most diametrically opposed to the current commonplaces, does not find the ethical value of Hellenism in any opposition to the highest modern ideals of conduct, but in its approach to or anticipation of what we cherish as most essential to modern civilisation. Of course, I am prepared to hear that there is nothing new about what I claim for the Greeks, that every scholar knew all this already. It may be so; but I am not aware that any scholar has said it in so many words; and I know one scholar who, writing some time after the first publication of my essay, dogmatically stated the exact contrary. Professor De Sanctis, the most recent Italian historian of old Rome, comparing together the different branches of the Aryan race, finds in the Greeks "a certain atrophy of the moral sense." When a man who has access to Homer and the tragedians can say this, neither would he be persuaded though one rose from the dead. It is not, therefore, in the vain hope of inducing Professor De Sanctis to reconsider his verdict, but because it may interest my less prejudiced readers, that I venture to lay before them some very striking evidence on the subject derived from an unexpected quarter—the recently disinterred comedies of Menander. One of these, called *The Arbitration*, has for its argument the following story :—

> Charisios, a young Athenian of good family, has recently been married to Pamphila, a girl of his own class. Four months after the wedding Pamphila, unknown to her husband, gives birth to a child, of which Charisios, although unaware of his paternity, is the father. For in the course of a drunken frolic he had met and done violence to his future wife one dark night in the streets of Athens. Neither of them had seen the other's face, but in the struggle Pamphila had possessed herself of and retained a ring belonging to Charisios. On discovering what he supposes to be her ante-nuptial frailty, the young man separates from his wife and returns to his former associates. One of these, a slave-woman named Habrotonon, with whom he had once cohabited, gets hold of the ring and uses it to persuade Charisios that she has become the mother of a child by him. Her story reaches the ear of Pamphila's father, who, as some modern readers will be surprised to learn, is so scandalised by this evidence of his son-in-law's youthful misconduct as to propose that Pamphila, of whose misfortune he is ignorant, should immediately demand a separation. This, however, the young wife refuses to do, declaring that it is her wish to stand by her husband in good and evil fortune alike. Charisios accidentally overhears the conversation, and is so conscience-stricken by the contrast between his own resentment and the generous fidelity of his wife as in his

> turn to forgive her supposed lapse from virtue, even before everything is happily cleared up by a disclosure of the real facts of the case.

Professor De Sanctis places his countrymen at the head of the whole Aryan race for the perfect balance of their mental qualities, among which, of course, moral feeling holds a leading position. Now, the Latin comic poet Terence wrote for an Italian audience, and, although Julius Cæsar called him a half Menander, we do not find in his plays, charming as they are, the faintest trace of the moral delicacy which is now shown to have been a distinctive trait of his Greek prototype.

The instance quoted does not stand alone. In another comedy, of which considerable fragments have recently been discovered, Menander introduces a girl, supposed to be of foreign birth, who as a consequence of her inferior social position has been living in concubinage with a soldier, and, having innocently provoked his jealousy, experiences very rough treatment from him. Being subsequently recognised as of Athenian parentage, her first impulse is to exclaim, "Then I shall be reconciled"; on which her father observes:

> I love that word "be reconciled,"
> Proving in thee the right Hellenic strain—

in which, as would seem, the forgiveness of injuries was a leading trait.

Depreciation of Hellenism has been associated, in such writers as Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan, with an exaggerated and distorted estimate of Hebraism, of the values represented by Israel as a factor in universal history. My essay on "The Alleged Socialism of the Prophets" has for its object to point out the very serious misstatements of Renan on this subject. It is not offered as a revaluation of my own, but as a criticism on a revaluation which, in my opinion, is much more remote from truth than the generally accepted view. And I have tried to show in another essay, largely based on the researches of German scholarship, that Socialism is not a Hebrew but a Greek idea, subsequently imported from Greek philosophy into the teaching of the early Church—not, as Renan thinks, taken up by the Gospel from the prophetic tradition.

My essay on "Pascal's Wager" goes to prove that the great Jansenist's celebrated defence of Christianity is, as logic, utterly worthless; and that, as morality, it credits God with proceedings for which the most audacious Jesuitical casuistry would blush to apologise.

When the essay on Buckle first appeared, now more than a quarter of a century ago, I was privately censured by an eminent living critic for wasting my time in exposing the fallacies of a philosopher whose memory only survived "in half-educated German circles." The revival of Buckle's fame and the diffusion of his wonderful work in cheap editions during the last ten years will, I hope, be found a sufficient apology for reprinting what, I believe, is still the only complete explanation of his system ever offered to the public. I may mention also that, as the literary executors of Lord Acton have recently thought fit to republish two most bitter and pedantic articles of his on Buckle, there ought to be room in contemporary literature for a somewhat more appreciative estimate of one who, if he did not equal the Roman Catholic historian in some branches of erudition, far surpassed him in speculative genius.

A generation has passed since the word "Agnosticism," originally created by Huxley, was first put into general currency by Leslie Stephen. But the full meaning of the term, instead of being elucidated by constant use, has become ever more obscured. I cannot hope to correct the evil; but I shall at least have the satisfaction of putting on record in a somewhat more permanent form my protest against the misuse of what, whether it stands for truth or for error, serves at any rate to mark off in contradistinction from older forms of rationalism an interesting and, it may be, a permanent phase of speculation.

A. W. B.

July, 1909.

REVALUATIONS

THE ETHICAL VALUE OF HELLENISM

CORRECTIONS

P. 47: "Nicias consummated the ruin of the Sicilian expedition by postponing his retreat a whole month in consequence of an eclipse of the moon." In point of fact, Nicias was compelled to begin his retreat a few days after the eclipse; but his wish and intention was to put it off for a month, and the delay of a few days proved equally fatal.

P. 86: "Some such measure......as the Licinian Rogations." It is now the opinion of the most authoritative Roman historians that the Licinian Rogations included no agrarian provisions.

P. 111, *note*: For "Emmanuel" read "Emanuel." The passage referred to occurs on p. 36 of Deutsch's *Literary Remains*.

cultivating and enjoying them to the full." Apparently John Inglesant had not read the Epistle to the Romans. Another writer of fiction, Mr. Benjamin Kidd, seems to think that altruism was unknown before the Christian era. Mr. W. D. Howells implies in one of his novels that monogamy only dates from the same period.

REVALUATIONS

THE ETHICAL VALUE OF HELLENISM

If we are to judge by certain estimates current in the popular literature of the present day, the ethical value of Hellenism is either zero or a minus quantity. The ancient Greeks were Pagans in the sense that they were neither Jews nor Christians; and the word "Paganism" is commonly used to connote the complete absence of moral restraints, more especially of those which are imposed on the sexual relations. An epigrammatic novelist describes a group of young people, among whom marriage seems to have been replaced by connections of a more transitory character, as living in a world of Christian names and Pagan morals. Mr. Shorthouse, speaking through the mouthpiece of John Inglesant, refers to "the old world of pleasure and art—a world that took the pleasures of life boldly, and had no conscience to prevent its cultivating and enjoying them to the full." Apparently John Inglesant had not read the Epistle to the Romans. Another writer of fiction, Mr. Benjamin Kidd, seems to think that altruism was unknown before the Christian era. Mr. W. D. Howells implies in one of his novels that monogamy only dates from the same period.

And a far higher authority, Matthew Arnold, has made the antithesis between Hellenism and Hebraism common form in literature—Hellenism standing for science and art, Hebraism for conduct; that is to say, for three-fourths of life.

Before inquiring into the justice of this summary and wholesale condemnation, I would call attention to the singular circumstance that a directly opposite estimate of Pagan virtue prevailed all through the Middle Ages. It might have been supposed that during the centuries when Catholicism reigned without a rival over the Western conscience, and when the traditions of the *régime* which it had displaced were fresher than among ourselves, observers, especially ecclesiastical observers, would have been still more deeply impressed by the moral regeneration assumed to have been wrought by the Church. Such, however, is not the case. Among mediæval authorities there seems to be but one opinion as regards the moral superiority of classical antiquity over their own contemporaries. "The Gentiles," says Abélard, "who had no scriptural law and heard no sermons, put us to shame by the example of their virtue, by the excellence of their precepts, and by the consistency of their lives with their teachings. Their philosophers boldly rebuked wickedness and suffered for truth's sake. Nor was it their philosophers only who shone so brightly in comparison with us. There is abundant evidence going to prove that the same virtues were practised by the worldly and the unlearned, and by women as well as by men."[1] It may be urged, and, indeed, it has been urged, that Abélard was a freethinking rationalist who sought to undermine Christianity. A much-scandalised apologist refers us to John of Salisbury for a very different view of the matter.[1] We turn to the pages of that excellent prelate, and find, to our surprise, that he confirms rather than contradicts his master's statements. Examples of every virtue are to be found among the characters of antiquity. The perfect model of what a sovereign ought to be is furnished by no Christian prince, but by the heathen Trajan. The Socratic teaching is a well of morals undefiled. If people find the Christian religion too severe, let them go to the Greek philosophers for lessons in chastity. And, indeed, if John is to be believed, they were in sore need of such lessons, for nothing so bad has been written about imperial Rome as his descriptions of court society in the Europe of the twelfth century. Doubtless the anarchy that prevailed under Stephen is largely responsible for the corruption laid bare in the *Polycraticus*.[2] But no such extenuating circumstances can be pleaded for the ages of faith and chivalry when, a century later, we find Roger Bacon repeating in more definite and explicit terms Abélard's exaltation of Pagan over Christian morals. If, says the great Franciscan, we cannot emulate, or even understand, the wisdom of the ancient philosophers, it is because we do not possess their virtue. Wisdom is inconsistent with sin, and demands perfect virtue in its professors. And of all sins the most fatal to learning is unchastity, from which none but a very few, and those by special grace, are exempt in their youth. Nor is this a mere general statement. He proceeds to relate how a number of professors and students of theology had the year before been expelled from Paris for the practice of unnatural vices. Such was the state of morals shortly before the death of St. Louis, at the very climax and flowering-time of mediæval Catholicism.[1]

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[1] *Opera,* ed. Cousin, II., p. 409.

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[1] Reuter, *Religiöse Aufklärung*, I., p. 317.

[2] *Polycraticus*, Lib. III., cap. 13.

I am not aware that any such clear and emphatic testimony to the superiority of Pagan morals is given by Dante, but it is at least suggestive of the same leaning that he should ascribe what little good Florence possessed to the descent of some few of her citizens from the ancient Romans. And we know from a brilliant chapter in the *Convitto* how highly he rated the virtues of the Romans, referring them even to divine inspiration. Whether he had an equally high opinion of the Greeks cannot be positively affirmed, but there is a significant passage in the *Inferno* pointing in that direction. The motive to which Ulysses appeals when urging his companions to sail beyond the Pillars of Hercules is the remembrance that they were not born to live like brutes, but to pursue virtue and knowledge. And to this appeal the Greek sailors, according to Dante, readily respond.[2]

It may be objected that Dante was a poet and a scholar, more in sympathy with the old than with the new spirit; Roger Bacon a man of science sheltering himself under the Franciscan habit—

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[1] *Compendium Theologiæ*, ed. Brewer, pp. 398 *seq.*

[2] *Inferno*, Canto xxvi., 118 *seq.*

both, perhaps, Christians only under compulsion. There is, however, one more authority, to which no such exception can be taken—the authority either of Aquinas or of one whose speculations were permitted to pass under his name. This writer, while confessing a preference for the republican form of government, admits that it is "only fitted for men living in the primitive state of sinlessness, or so wise and virtuous as the ancient Romans were"[1]—clearly not for a society so corrupt as the crusading chivalry of France.

To what cause shall we ascribe this extraordinary revolution in Christian opinion as to the moral value of classic civilisation? A sufficiently easy solution suggests itself at once. The mediæval scholars romanced about Pagan virtue because they did not know what Paganism was. The Greeks and Romans were to them what the Chinese were to the philosophers of the eighteenth century; and they used them just like those philosophers, as a stick to beat their contemporaries with. The far more complete knowledge of Pagan life and literature that we owe to the Renaissance and to modern research has led to very different conclusions, and it is on these that the estimates quoted at the beginning of this essay are based.

But the suggested explanation seems insufficient. If the schoolmen knew less than we know of Pagan literature, the fact remains that for all practical purposes they knew enough. If they had not read Aristophanes and Plato, they had read Aristotle's *Politics*, Terence, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, Suetonius;

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[1] Aquinas (?), *De Regimine Principum,* II., 9.

above all, they had read the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans; nor does there seem the smallest reason to believe that a wider and deeper study of the Greek authors would have altered their estimate of the Greeks, except, perhaps, to raise it still higher, by making them more familiar with the whole range of Greek virtue. The truth is that their reading of classical antiquity was not biassed as ours is by an apologetic interest. They accepted Christianity because it was true, not because it strengthened the hands of the social reformer, the magistrate, and the policeman. Hence, there was no particular motive for exaggerating its services in that direction. Religion, no doubt, was useful, but its utility consisted not so much in making people better members of society as in saving them from eternal damnation. Baptism gave a chance, absolution *in articulo mortis* gave a certainty of escaping from that dreadful fate; and the possession of so precious a privilege was the great advantage that the Christian possessed over the Pagan. Otherwise, as we have seen, he had nothing to boast of—rather the contrary. Whatever vices the Church condemned had been condemned by Greek philosophy. Whatever vices had been practised among Pagans were repeated with aggravating circumstances in the most famous seats of Christian learning; and those whose experience had familiarised them with the cesspools of Paris and Bologna listened with more blunted sensibility to the unsavoury records of Thebes and Athens.

It might, indeed, be imagined that the appalling penalties inflicted on such offences in this world, and imagined for them in the next, bore witness to an entirely new sense of their flagitiousness in the mediæval conscience. But no mistake would be greater than to use the criminal jurisprudence of the Middle Ages as a gauge of their moral susceptibility. Difficulty of detection for one thing, and the supposed slight cast on the honour of an earthly or heavenly sovereign for another, counted for incomparably more in the assessment of punishment than the actual wickedness of an offence as measured by the animosity that it excited in the public opinion of the times. Now, of that public opinion no austerer representative can be quoted than Dante; and what Dante really thought about the vice that is always brought up as the special opprobrium of Greece is sufficiently indicated by his extreme cordiality towards the lost soul of Brunetto Latini,[1] and by the fact that he subjects all sins of unchastity to an equal intensity of torment in the cleansing fires of purgatory.[2] Evidently the great Catholic poet was no more of a rigorist than the Platonic Socrates whose half-tolerant attitude so much shocked Professor Huxley.

We must, then, look elsewhere than to a mere increase of knowledge for an adequate explanation of that great revolution in the historical conscience which has led many of our contemporaries to reverse the mediæval view so completely that in the popular imagination Paganism, or, more precisely, the Græco-Roman spirit, has become identified with impurity, while Christianity has come to be regarded even more as the chief instrument of

[1] *Inferno*, Canto xv., 30 *sqq*.

[2] *Purgatorio*, Canto xxvii.

moral reform than as the God-given means of salvation.

So far as I know, the change began with Luther. If in one way the Reformation was the last fruit of the Renaissance, in another way it was a reaction against the Renaissance. In returning to the standpoint of primitive Christianity Luther and his successors could not fail to become imbued with the hostility felt by the first Christians, and above all by St. Paul, towards the Pagan world; and all the more so as the worst vices of Paganism were being resuscitated under their eyes in papal Rome. Moreover, the dogmas that Luther attacked had been bound up in a peculiar way with the philosophy of Aristotle, and, therefore, the Aristotelian ethics became a special object of his animosity. The doctrine of moral habits seemed radically inconsistent with the doctrine of instantaneous regeneration. Men do not become just by performing just actions; they perform just actions because they have been made just. Speaking generally, Rome had apostasised from the purity of the gospel by incorporating with it much that was Pagan in doctrine and ritual; therefore with Paganism in all its forms war must be waged.

Rome naturally enough refused to accept this account of her parentage; but it made her all the more anxious to disclaim so compromising a connection. Hence both great divisions of western Christendom have united in vilifying the civilisation to which mediæval scholars looked back with fond regret as an unattainable standard of excellence. And before long their joint hostility was still further aggravated by a new provocation. Undeterred by the double tide of reaction, the Renaissance continued to pursue its victorious career. Taking up human progress at the point where it had been let fall by Greek culture, the modern mind set itself to replace feudal Catholicism by a new art and a new science, a new morality and a new State. Concurrently with this great enterprise it carried on an unceasing criticism on the existing *régime*, its institutions and its beliefs. Both processes, the constructive and destructive, were powerfully aided by principles and examples derived from classical antiquity. All these efforts culminated in the French Revolution, whose leaders avowedly looked for their models to Greece and Rome. And as the Hellenic spirit had shared in their momentary triumph, so also it shared in the ruin and disgrace that speedily overtook their cause. For the first time since they came into existence the products of the Greek genius were systematically neglected and defamed by educated men; recourse being had to mediæval art, literature, and politics for new ideals to put in their place. The Romanticists consciously ranged themselves behind the forces of reaction in Church and State; and it was not without reason that Byron, the glorious standard-bearer of European progress, directed against them his fiercest attacks. So, too, the cause of Greek independence for which Byron gave his life became the battle-cry of resurgent Liberalism, and perhaps helped to win back Canning, the future Liberal leader, to the Liberal principles that had been his first love. Conversely, the Holy Alliance thwarted Greek aspirations to the utmost of its ability; and its literary agents carried the war into historical literature. Writing in 1834, J. S. Mill observes that "the most elaborate Grecian history which we possess [Mitford's] is impregnated with the anti-Jacobin spirit in every line; and the *Quarterly Review* laboured as diligently for many years to vilify the Athenian republic as the American."[1] Even greater bitterness was displayed by reactionary theologians. The Abbé Gaume in France and Dr. W. G. Ward in England joined in making the grotesque proposal that the Greek and Latin classics should no longer be taught in school, their place being supplied by patristic literature.[2]

The leaders of the reactionary movement against the French Revolution and the philosophy of the eighteenth century were, in truth, anything but Conservatives. They caught the spirit of innovation from their opponents, and even sympathised to a certain extent with their aims. Agreeing with them that the world needed to be reformed, and agreeing also that its reformation should be effected by social reconstruction, by education, by popular literature, by journalism—in short, by all the machinery that the schools of enlightenment had set in motion, they differed from them chiefly in holding that all these instruments should be animated by religious ideas, used for religious purposes, and wielded by the ministers of religion or by laymen to whom their confidence had been given. This is not the place to expatiate on that vast movement, nor, indeed, has the time come for its history to be written. The important thing for us to observe is that it led to a new interpretation of Christianity, of the Church, and of the Bible. In rivalry with the ideals bequeathed or inspired by Hellenism, these also were represented as embodying a scheme of social reform, an ideal polity, a new reading of life. Thus it came about that Pagan and Christian morals, ancient and mediæval civilisation, were ranged in an unreal opposition and unhistorically contrasted as darkness and light. And so strong was the prejudice generated by the unscrupulous assertions of the reactionary party, so skilful were the rearrangements by which facts were disguised or set in a false light, that a generation taught to discard supernaturalist metaphysics has continued to accept a supernaturalist version of history, according to which the highest elements of human nature, intelligence and conscience, may exist and be developed in complete isolation from one another.

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[1] *Dissertations and Discussions*, vol. i., p. 113.

[2] *W. G. Ward and the Catholic Revival*, pp. 114, 118, 194, and 454.

So much has seemed necessary by way of preamble in order to clear the ground for a candid consideration of the thesis I am prepared to support, which is no less than this—that the ethical value of Hellenism fully equals its intellectual and artistic value; that the Greeks were as great in what belongs to the conduct of life as they confessedly were in the creation of beauty or in the search for truth. They were, what Huxley called them, the real Chosen People, and that in a more absolute sense than he would have dared to maintain.

To avoid all possible misconstructions, I wish to state at the outset that I accept the current English and American estimate of morality. I have no desire to be classed with the neo-Pagans—if the persons calling themselves by that name still exist as a class; I detest their theories, and I believe that in most ancient Greek communities they would have been summarily lynched had they tried to put those theories into practice.

It must be further understood that when I speak of Hellenism and of the Greeks I speak of what was highest and best in the race and in its bequest to posterity. This amounts to no more than is assumed in estimating the claims on our gratitude of any other extinct race or civilisation, or of any religion whether extinct or not. We really know little more than this, nor does it concern us to know more. The good lives on, the evil dies. The point needs emphasising because it has been particularly neglected in discussing the subject on which we are engaged. Instead of comparing Greek practice with the practice of other communities, Greek ideals with other ideals, we ignore the ideals and compare the practice with our own highest theoretical standards. I do not propose that the question of practice should be left out of account; on the contrary, I wish that it should figure largely in the estimate. An ideal to deserve the name must sooner or later, and sooner rather than later, influence conduct; failing that, it becomes worse than nothing, mere lying cant and hypocrisy. At the same time, in default of other evidence, it ought to count for something that a particular ideal should have been entertained in a particular society; it must, we may argue, have been suggested to our authority—poet, orator, or the like—by some happy experience of his own or by the tradition of a better age. And this is more especially true when we are dealing with a frank and sincere people, as the Greek, or at least the Ionian race, will presently appear to have been.

Another point also should be borne in mind. In placing the ethical value of Hellenism on a level with its intellectual and æsthetic value I am claiming for it no chimerical perfection. The art of Hellas was not perfect, nor was its philosophy; still less its science. In all three the Greeks have been surpassed by the successors who, profiting by their lessons and their example, have taken up their tradition and carried it to a higher pitch of excellence. And what is more to the point, other races, working simultaneously with them, or at a later period in complete independence of their influence, have in some ways shown a more delicate æsthetic perception, a truer sense of objective reality, a more penetrating reach of reflection, a more successful ingenuity in devising methods of calculation. So also with morals. The virtue of chastity may have been better taught and more generally practised among the Jews, self-devotion among the Romans, personal loyalty among the Germans, sympathy with all living things on the banks of the Ganges. But just as no alien philosophy and no alien art, taken altogether, could compete with the philosophy and the art of Hellas, so neither was the moral life of any other people so rich, so well balanced, so identified with its inmost nature, yet so capable of a world-wide diffusion or of expansion and adaptation to altered circumstances in after ages.

That the Greeks were so great in art and science furnishes a certain presumption that they attained, to say the least of it, some eminence in morality. To part off the æsthetic life and the intellectual life from the life of conduct, as Matthew Arnold does, is a mere conventional abstraction. It would be little to say that there is no hard-and-fast line of demarcation; there is, in fact, no line at all. Conduct is co-extensive with activity, and falls under different laws of obligation as its subject-matter varies; but it never escapes from obligation altogether. As regards fine art, this truth is now widely recognised, and finds expression in such common terms as "good work," "conscience," and "sincerity" in connection with the production and the criticism of æsthetic objects. And as regards scientific investigation it is almost too obvious to need emphasising. Of course the artist and, although more rarely, the philosopher may be faithful to the duties of his special calling and faithless to the ordinary duties of a citizen, like Benvenuto Cellini or Francis Bacon. But the same possibility of a high moral development in one direction, combined with grave deficiencies in another, runs through the whole circle of human activity. There seems to be no solidarity among the virtues. Sovereigns exemplary in their domestic relations, and ready to undergo martyrdom for their religion, have been false to their word like Charles I., or false to their country like Louis XVI. And conversely the highest public loyalty may co-exist with gross private vices as in the case of William

III. A keen sense of beauty may have its temptations in the direction of sexual immorality; and the impersonation of Aprodite Anadyomene by Phryne, so picturesquely described by Matthew Arnold, may indicate a weak point of this kind in Hellenism. But Puritanism, too, has its temptations in the direction, among others, of savage cruelty towards women, abundantly illustrated in the history of our own civil wars.

Intellectualism, likewise, may have its moral dangers, among which want of common honesty will probably occur to most readers as the chief. But as this deficiency seems also to accompany every degree of stupidity and ignorance, the connection after all is very possibly accidental. However this may be, love of knowledge, as represented by the Greeks, has one great and characteristic virtue—the love of truth. The claim will excite some surprise. From Cyrus to Hobart Pasha the enemies of that people have habitually spoken of them as liars. I cannot say that my own small experience of the modern Greeks has given me that impression. On the contrary, they struck me rather as a frank and straightforward race, very inaccurate certainly, but without any intention to deceive. Our business, however, is not now with the average Greek, ancient or modern, but with the *élite* of the Pagan period; and of these it may be said, I think, that they have set an example of truthfulness unequalled except by those moderns who have been trained in their school. "Hateful to me as the gates of Hades is he who hides one thing in his breast and tells another," says the Homeric Achilles; and Plato, with a still more exacting standard of veracity, censures Achilles for uttering threats that he does not mean to execute.[1] Sophocles, in what is, ethically at least, the noblest of all his tragedies, makes Neoptolemus, the son of Achilles and the guardian of his tradition, quite incapable of carrying out the scheme of deceit into which he has been reluctantly drawn. "Tell no lies" was a maxim of Solon. Thucydides, himself a historian of admirable sincerity, seems to cast a slight shade of censure on the heroic Brasidas for making a statement that was untrue, although useful from the diplomatic point of view.[2] Epaminondas was famous for his strict adherence to truth; and Marcus Aurelius, known as Verissimus, ascribes his hatred of falsehood to the teaching of a Stoic tutor.[3]

A Roman satirist has charged the Greek historians with mendacity on a point where their accuracy has been signally confirmed by modern research.[4] He might with more justice have extended the accusation to his own countrymen. Early Roman history has been in many instances deliberately falsified by national or family vanity; nor are the later portions altogether trustworthy. We are told of Dr. Arnold that "the falsity and corruption of the Latin historians was for ever suggesting to him the contrast of their Grecian rivals." And if Arnold had directed his studies more systematically to what is called "Sacred History," the same contrast might have suggested itself in a more unpleasant form. If we are to credit the Higher Criticism—which is the only honest criticism—whole masses of ancient Hebrew literature are deliberate forgeries, in the sense in which we speak of the forged Decretals of Isidore; and the incidents related in them are to a great extent fictitious. Theologians tell us that the fabrication of documents purporting to contain a divine revelation did not at that period and among Orientals imply the same guilt that a like proceeding argued in the Middle Ages and would argue now. If so, it seems rather audacious to refer us to such a quarter for elementary moral instruction. However that may be, we have to congratulate ourselves on the fact that in Attica, at any rate, public opinion had early risen to a stage at which truth and falsehood were more accurately discriminated. Herodotus has preserved an anecdote that well illustrates the contrast offered by Hellenism and Hebraism in this respect. During the sixth century B.C. a great religious revival, now known as Orphicism, sprang up in the Greek world and had Attica for its principal seat. One of the leaders of the movement, a certain Onomacritus, stood high in the favour of the Peisistratid Hipparchus, and seems to have been employed by him in editing the prophecies of Musaeus, a somewhat mythical authority of the school. Having, however, been detected in the act of interpolating a prediction of his own in the collection, the unlucky forger was summarily expelled from the country by his indignant patron, one of whose maxims, engraved where every passer-by could read it, was, "Do not deceive thy friend."[1]

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[1] *Hippias Minor*, 370 A.

[2] iv., 108.

[3] *Meditations*, i., 15.

[4] Juvenal, x., 174.

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[1] Herodotus, vii., 6.

Hipparchus was not, in other respects, a model of virtue, but it is fortunate that in this matter of pious forgeries we have been brought up on his principles rather than on Hilkiah's. But our excellent training has its occasional inconveniences. It makes some honourable persons too reluctant to admit that forgery and fabrication on a great scale were actually practised by holy men among the Jews. Moving in a world of Hellenic sincerity, and not without the simplicity that a wise Hellene has called the principal element in a noble nature, they have failed to realise the possibilities of Hebraic duplicity. A typical example of this uncompromising attitude is furnished by the manner in which that great and high-minded theologian, F. D. Maurice, was impressed by the speculations of Colenso. "I asked him," writes Maurice, "if he did not think Samuel must have been a horrid scoundrel if he forged a story about the I AM, speaking of Moses, and, to my unspeakable surprise and terror, he said 'No. Many good men have done such things. He might not mean more than Milton meant.'"[1] Most educated theologians have come to agree with Colenso, except that they would place the composition of the Elohistic narrative considerably later than the time of Samuel. But their whole tone as regards the limits of truthfulness in religious teaching is such as to inspire plain men with something of the "surprise and terror" felt by Maurice.

It may be objected that Plato, a typical Greek and the greatest of Greek moralists, took similar liberties with the truth, to the extent even of leaving it doubtful whether he really believed in any God or in any future life. The fact is so; and his warmest admirers must always regret that it should be so. Such prevarications show the mischief that comes of trying to combine mythology with philosophy. But, at any rate, Plato knew what he was doing. Unlike our modern theologians, he avoided what he called the "lie in the soul," not deceiving himself, however much he may have wished to deceive the people. Even here we can see how admirably well Ruskin has said of the Greeks, "they have not lifted up their souls unto vanity."

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[1] *Life of F. D. Maurice,* II., p. 423.

From the consideration of veracity as practised in Greece we pass to that part of conduct which is more directly concerned with the mutual relations of human beings, to the great interests of justice and beneficence.

It is a familiar fact that the people of whom we are speaking divided all mankind into Greeks and barbarians. By the latter they originally meant only those whose language they could not understand. But in time barbarian came to mean much more than this. With the Greeks, as with ourselves, it stood for the opposite of civilised. But the civilisation with which they identified Hellenism was no mere material good. The barbarians might have better roads, more accumulated capital, a more highly developed industrial system, larger and even better disciplined armies than theirs. In the eyes of a Greek these things were desirable, but they were not the one thing needful. That one thing without which there could be no real civilisation was the reign of law in opposition to the rule of a despot on the one hand, and on the other to that anarchical state of society where wrongs are redressed, or rather perpetuated, by private vengeance. It is a blessing, says the Jason of Euripides, to live in a country that is governed not by brute force, but by law.[1] And the same poet makes Tyndareus tell his son-in-law Menelaus, who has been excusing the matricide of Orestes, that he has become barbarised by living out of Greece so long. Otherwise he would see that the right course for Orestes was to bring his mother before a court of justice on the charge of murdering her husband. For when one homicide is requited by another the blood-feud goes on for ever, to the total destruction of orderly and peaceful relations.[2] Let those who expatiate on the moral superiority of Hebraism to Hellenism remember that this barbarous principle of blood-vengeance is sanctioned by the Priestly Code promulgated by Ezra in the middle of the fifth century B.C., and that it was in full force at the very time when the noble verses of Euripides were being recited before the assembled people of Athens.

And this suggests another contrast. Thanks to the eloquence of Renan and the still more fervid declamations of James Darmesteter, himself a Jew, much attention was drawn ten years ago[3] to the passionate preaching of justice by the Hebrew prophets. It was well that this should be done, and done so well. It was well that devout readers of Scripture should be made to realise the fact that the prophets of Israel had something else to do than to mystify their hearers by discussing the affairs of modern Europe between two and three thousand years in advance. And it was well also to remind pious company-promoters and guinea-pigs that subscriptions to missionary societies would not have purchased absolution for wholesale robbery from Amos and Isaiah. All honour to the preachers who, whether at Samaria and Jerusalem or in London and Paris, identify religion with justice and mercy rather than with dogma and ritual! But let not our recognition of their services blind us to the still greater services of those who, unaided by supernatural promises or terrors, actually accomplished that for which the prophets vainly strove—the legislators, magistrates, and orators who established and carried on the righteous governments of Greece under which the poor working man could not be plundered with impunity as he was plundered in the Holy Land.

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[1] *Medea*, 536–38. [2] *Orestes*, 485 *sqq.* [3] Written in 1901.

Certain historical errors die hard, and one has just occurred to me against which it would be well to enter a caution. I can imagine some readers exclaiming, "There were no paid working men in Greece; the free Greek citizens were an oligarchy living in idleness on the produce of slave labour." Such, indeed, seems to have been at one time the prevalent belief, and it may still survive in certain circles. To assert that the Greek democracies were not democracies at all in our sense of the word, but aristocracies of a particularly oppressive kind, was part of the reactionary and anti-Hellenic propaganda carried on after the French Revolution, to which reference has been already made. The assertion is, however, untrue, and anyone may easily

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convince himself by consulting the Greek literature of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. that the bulk of the Athenian voters consisted of petty shopkeepers, peasants, and day labourers. Slaves no doubt there were, and a good many of them, although their number has been enormously exaggerated, as Professor Beloch shows in his brilliant work on the population of the ancient world.[1] But slavery existed everywhere in antiquity, in Judæa as well as in Greece. White slavery, indeed, lasted far down into the Middle Ages, with the partial approval of the Church, and was finally extinguished by purely economical causes; while black slavery, after being actively promoted by professing Christians, and attaining portentous dimensions without a protest from the Christian conscience, owed its final destruction to a movement set on foot by freethinking philosophers and then taken up by that most rationalistic of Christian sects, the Society of Friends. But the original impulse to abolitionism came, as will presently be shown, from Greek thought.

Returning to the contrast between the Greeks and other nations, it has to be observed that the barbarians, too, had their laws—a fact of which we cannot suppose Euripides to have been ignorant, as it was already familiar to Herodotus. The really important distinction was that, while the Greek laws gave a far more effectual protection against the arbitrary will of the rulers and against the passions of private individuals, they did not become, as with the Asiatics, an instrument of irremediable bondage. Where men's habits of thinking took their whole shape and colour from the traditions of despotism the law itself could not be conceived but as a despot armed with divine authority and raised above criticism or emendation. There may have been something of the same feeling in Greece also. But at a comparatively early period it was met and overcome by the idea of law as an expression of the collective will, and therefore as something that might be altered with the altered needs of the community, or with the increase of general enlightenment. Her teachers expressed this principle in various ways, one by declaring that man was the measure of all things, another by contending that the measure was rather supplied by nature, by the rules of conduct that experience showed to be observed at all times and in all places.

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[1] J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der griechisch-römischen Welt*, pp. 84 *sqq.*

Either of these methods would serve to accomplish the step that first makes morality what it is, the transition from the letter to the spirit of legal obligation. We owe to Rome the word equity by which that essential element of law is ordinarily expressed; but the notion is purely Greek. It is that ἐπιείκεια—rather oddly translated "sweet reasonableness" by Matthew Arnold—which Aristotle has defined in a manner that leaves nothing to be desired. He tells us that the equitable man fulfils the intention of the legislator in cases for which the legislator, being tied to general terms, could not provide. In cases of disputed right he will not grasp all that the letter of the law gives him, but will take somewhat less than his strict right. And as the laws must be interpreted in the light of their original intention, so also the merit of the obedience paid to them, or the demerit of disobedience, must be measured by the agent's intention. Involuntary transgressions, according to Aristotle, are not deserving of punishment, but of pardon, and sometimes of pity. That anyone can justly be made to suffer punishment for a wrong committed through no fault of his would, from this point of view, have been absolutely unintelligible. So also would be the theory that crimes can be expiated by the sufferings of the innocent. And at the present day such beliefs are explicable only as survivals or recrudescences of Hebraic barbarism, quite impossible in a completely Hellenised society.

A spiritualised morality relieves the individual from all responsibility for actions not committed intentionally by him or through any negligence on his part. But within the sphere of individual life it extends responsibility from overt acts to thoughts and desires. A Spartan who consulted the Delphic oracle on the desirability of appropriating a deposit that he had sworn to return received for answer that his very question amounted to a crime, and would be punished as such.[1] When the poet Sophocles dwelt somewhat too rapturously on the charms of a beautiful stranger, Pericles reminded him that the eyes of a general should be as pure as his hands.[2] And, in what is believed to be a portrait of Aristeides, Aeschylus describes him as wishing not to seem but to be the best.[3]

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[1] Herodotus, vi., p. 86.

[2] Plutarch, *Pericles*, chap. viii.

[3] *Seven against Thebes*, 588.

An intention or wish may be made the subject of human, or at least of divine, penalties, as we saw in the case of the fraudulent Spartan, and may be repressed solely through the fear of such. Therefore, to complete the spiritualisation of morality it must become wholly disinterested, or dependent on none but internal sanctions. Greek philosophy rose to this height. It pronounced the distinguishing mark of a sage to be that he would act as before if the laws ceased to exist. And Plato pushed the principle to an extreme when he maintained that, even if the just man should live in obloquy and die in torment, he would have chosen wisely in preferring righteousness to prosperous iniquity.[1]

The sanction of disinterested virtue lies in the pain given by a wounded conscience to those who violate its dictates. Both the notion and the name of conscience are Greek creations, and first received wide currency from the Stoic philosophy, whence they passed to St. Paul and became so thoroughly incorporated with Christian theology that, in the opinion of many, the existence of such an inward monitor was unknown to Paganism. But we find it distinctly recognised by Isocrates[2] a century before Zeno taught at Athens; nor can we suppose that a popular rhetorician was the first to formulate so profound a thought. Indeed, the thing itself goes back to Homer, in the character of whose Helen it is a distinguishing trait. Alike in the supreme triumph of her beauty on the walls of Troy and in the dignity of her rehabilitated matronhood at

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[1] *Republic*, p. 361.

[2] *Demonicus*, i., p. 16.

Sparta, the sense of forfeited female honour is ever present to her thoughts, and that without the least admixture of supernatural terror—for the goddess Aphrodite is offended by her scruples—or of shrinking from public opinion, for no voice is raised against her but her own.

"In justice," says Phocylides, "is summed up the whole of virtue." "Justice," says an unknown Greek author, "is more beautiful than the morning or evening star." But what, after all, did they mean by it? Aristotle, who quotes these lyrical expressions, gives no very helpful definition; nor does Plato, although his *Republic* was written to develop the idea of justice. Here, again, we may profitably consult Isocrates. That excellent teacher tells us not to do to others what would make us angry if it were done to us[1]—the first and far the more important part of the golden rule. The principle is not enunciated as if it were particularly new; but Isocrates applies it elsewhere in a way that was new to his contemporaries, that had not occurred to anyone outside Greece, and that even now is not universally recognised. He tells husbands that they have no right to exact from their wives what they do not give, and that the fidelity which they demand is equally obligatory on themselves.[2] Monogamy had been a law with the Greeks so far back as we can trace their history, and they regarded polygamy with abhorrence as a custom of the Barbarians[3]—a fact which those should remember who set the Hebrews, a polygamous people, on a higher moral plane. And we see by this passage in Isocrates that some, at least, among the Greeks were prepared to draw the logical consequences of monogamy. Nor was the principle here enunciated ever quite forgotten. Plato also in his last period enjoins the same constancy on husbands, though rather on grounds of social utility than of justice;[1] and although the first Stoics, like some moderns, advocated free love for both sexes alike, Epictetus, writing four centuries later, returns to the same standard of conjugal fidelity, with the recommendation, which is also Platonic, of antenuptial chastity for men as well as for women.[2]

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[1] *Nicocles*, p. 61.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 40.

[3] Euripides, *Andromache*, 177, 243, 464.

According to the Greeks, the obligations of equality and reciprocity rested on natural law. The invariable return of physical phenomena at equal intervals of time, the co-existence and mutual limitation of the everlasting elements that make up the universe, were so many object-lessons in justice, so many silent protests against the abuse of superior strength or the violation of sworn pledges among men. And unmeasured indulgence in sensual gratifications was similarly interpreted as a derogation from the rationality by which nature had expressly distinguished men from brutes. Thus the maxim, Follow nature, came to be accepted as the great constitutive principle of morals. And it was not merely used as a general sanction for the accepted code of conduct, but still more as a potent engine of reform, as a protest against inveterate abuses, or as an index to new ideals of perfection. We have not now to discuss the logical value of the physiocratic method. It may be used at all times, and it was more than once used at Athens, as an apology for anti-social egoism on the part of individuals or of States. Civilisation itself has been condemned as a departure from nature; and, conversely, nature might be denounced as the great enemy of civilisation, with the further deduction that no artificial refinement on our original pleasures should be tabooed merely on the ground that it is unnatural. But good causes are often supported by bad reasons; and, whether logical or not, the Greek appeal to nature seems on the whole to have made for righteousness. Certain detestable vices were once for all stigmatised as unnatural, and a constant warfare kept up against them by the philosophers from Prodicus to Plotinus, until the attack was taken over by Christianity to be prosecuted with more drastic methods, although, if we are to believe Roger Bacon and Dante, for a long time with no greater success.

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[1] *Laws*, pp. 839-40.

[2] *Encheiridion*, xxxiii., p. 8.

Another application of the same principle led to the denunciation of slavery as contrary to nature. The cry was apparently first raised to justify the revolt of Messenian Helots against their Spartan masters, but it soon received a far wider application. Certain philosophers struck at the root of what was not then a "peculiar institution" by declaring that all men were born free. This assumption has been mercilessly criticised by Bentham, and more recently on the same lines by Huxley. As a question of logic, their triumph is complete; but the crudeness of the naturalistic formula should not blind us to the truth that it contains. To enslave a human being is to treat him like a brute, or, in the still more degrading phrase of Aristotle, like a living tool; and no reasonable being will, in the long run, submit to such treatment, or regard it as anything but an outrage. Reasonings of a more elaborate and far-reaching character show that the exploitation of one class by another leads to the ruin of the whole community; but nothing so surely rouses the oppressed to revolt, or the brave and disinterested to the championship of their cause, as an appeal to this wounded sentiment; and it is part of our ethical debt to the Greeks that the appeal was first made by them.

To assert one's own rights, and to respect the rights of others, is much, but it is not all; and, human nature being what it is, a well-organised community cannot rest on the single virtue of justice. After law, and the spirit of law which is equity, we must bring in the third and completing element of morality, which is love. I am not sure what is the current estimate of the Greeks in this respect. Perhaps the same popular writers and preachers who deny them morality and conscience think of them also—*ad majorem Dei gloriam*—as a heartless and selfish people, wrapped up in a sense of their own superiority to the rest of the world. Mr. Stillman, who stood up for the modern Greeks, called their Pagan ancestors (or predecessors) a cruel and bloodthirsty *canaille*. Burckhardt, with more scholarship than Stillman, seems to have arrived at pretty much the same conclusion. In fact, they suffer from being so very modern. We judge them not by comparison with the Jews or the

Romans, or even with mediæval Christendom, but by our own ethical standards.

Here again the antithesis between Hellenes and barbarians may prove helpful. In English and other modern languages "barbarous," as we know, has the secondary meaning of inhuman and cruel. But this association has come down to us from the Latin, and was adopted by the Latins from the Greeks. In Greek literature the instances where "barbarous" is used in the sense of cruel are certainly late and few, but they are sufficient to show that cruelty was regarded as essentially alien to the Greek character. Nor was the belief unfounded. History and literature testify to its validity, to the relative humanity of the Greeks, and more especially of those among them in whom the Hellenic type most perfectly realised itself. Homer's Achilles was a merciful victor until the death of Patroclus almost extinguished pity in his breast, and even then it could be reawakened by the tears of Priam. Euripides tells us that to slay prisoners of war was against the laws of Athens.[1] The Spartan Gylippus pleaded, though in vain, for the lives of the captive Athenian generals at Syracuse; and another great Spartan, Callicratidas, declared that no Greek should be sold into slavery with his consent.[2] With the spread of philosophy this feeling received a wider extension. Agesilaus impressed on his troops the duty of treating their Persian prisoners with humanity.[3] Epameinondas refused to participate in a political assassination.[1] Dion, the pupil of Plato, declared that he had learned in the Academy not merely to be loyal to his friends, but to forgive injuries and to be gentle to transgressors;[2] and we know from Plato's *Laws* that this was really what the master taught. Philip and Alexander too, though ruling over a semi-barbarous people, and not without a deep taint of barbarism in their personal habits, showed in their hour of triumph a clemency hitherto unknown to the possessors of irresponsible power.

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[1] *Heracleidae*, 961-66.

[2] Grote, *History of Greece*, vi., pp. 179 and 387.

[3] *Op. cit.*, vii., p. 429.

These, it may be admitted, are no more than individual instances of a merciful disposition. But language may fairly be quoted in evidence of its wide diffusion. The very word humanity is of Greek origin, being a translation (through the Latin) of φιλανθρωπία, which conveys the same meaning with a somewhat warmer tone. And there is the more direct evidence of Plato, who tells us that one expects the inhabitants of a Greek city to be good and gentle. Gentleness and humanity, says Isocrates, are of all qualities the most highly esteemed among men; and the Athenians, at least, liked to be complimented on their possession. But the best proof of their prevalence is afforded by a passage where it is quite incidentally and unintentionally disclosed. In what is meant to be a very satirical picture of democratic society, obviously drawn from his own native city, Plato mentions that the last extreme of popular liberty is where "the slave is just as free as his purchaser." Even allowing for exaggeration, where so much as this could be said slaves must have been very kindly treated. And it is a fresh tribute to Athenian humanity when Plato adds that "horses and asses have a way of marching along [in the streets of a democratic city] with all the rights and dignities of freemen." He also mentions, what to many will sound the most surprising thing of all, that under an extreme democracy—*i.e.*, at Athens, there was complete equality between the sexes.[1]

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[1] *Op. cit.*, viii., p. 78.

[2] Plutarch, *Dion*, p. 979, A.

To appreciate fully the humanity of the Greeks we must compare them with the other leading nations of antiquity. Little need be said of the great Oriental monarchies. Of these Egypt seems to have been the least barbarous; yet Egyptian sculptors loved to represent their most famous kings in the act of butchering a crowd of defenceless captives, and their labourers as fainting under the taskmaster's stick. The Phœnicians, with their crucifixions and human holocausts, may also be summarily dismissed. If the early annals of the Israelites as recorded in the Hexateuch were authentic, we could no more ascribe any feeling of humanity to such a sanguinary and fanatical horde than to the Huns or to Abdul Hamid. Happily, and to the no small satisfaction of enlightened modern Jews, the wholesale atrocities recounted with so much complacency by the priestly historian are demonstrably fictitious. But the fiction has a historical value. It shows what were the ideals of the Jewish nation in the fifth century B.C., and presumably of their descendants for many centuries afterwards; and the impression thus created is deepened by the testimony of the equally fabulous book of Esther.

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[1] *Republic*, viii., p. 563 (Jowett's translation).

The only people of antiquity who can dispute the moral supremacy of Greece are the Romans. They had, no doubt, their good qualities; but of these humanity was not one. In reference to the political struggles of the early Roman republic, Macaulay has indeed credited them with a tenderness for the lives of their fellow-citizens unknown to Greek factions.[1] But Dr. Arnold has conclusively vindicated the Greeks from this aspersion. He points out that the bloodless struggles between the Patricians and the Plebeians are more properly paralleled by the equally bloodless contest of the "party of the coast" at Athens with the Eupatridæ; while the more sanguinary faction-fights of later Greek history answer to the proscriptions of Marius and Sulla, or of the Triumvirs.[2]

Apart from such episodical outbreaks of passion, we have indubitable proofs of the inhumanity of the Romans in the barbarous character of their punishments—especially their custom of flogging before executing, even in the case of prisoners of war—and still more of their amusements. It must indeed be admitted that through the contagion of Roman example the gladiatorial games spread at last over the whole Hellenic world. But Greek philosophy kept up a steady protest against this barbarity; and, when it was proposed to introduce the games into Athens, Demonicus the Cynic called on the people to begin by pulling down the altar of pity. According to the modern writer who has studied the civilisation of the Empire most profoundly, this amusement was never popular with any but the dregs of the people in Greece;[1] and it was finally abolished in the West through the heroic self-sacrifice of a Greek. Everyone has heard how the monk Telemachus made his way from the heart of the Eastern Empire to protest against the cruel exhibitions still kept up at Rome; how he descended into the arena of the Coliseum, threw himself between the combatants, perished by their swords, and produced such an effect by his death that public opinion insisted on the abolition of the gladiatorial games. But how few think of this pathetic story except as redounding to the glory of Christianity! Assuredly the death of Telemachus does honour to his religion. But it also does honour to his race and to that philosophical training which had been preparing it through long ages to accept with enthusiasm the new faith that was to give Greek philanthropy a mystical consecration and a world-wide diffusion.

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[1] In the Preface to his *Virginia*.

[2] Arnold's *Thucydides*, i., p. 519.

Before the advent of Christianity the diffusion, if not the consecration, had already begun. Renan, if I remember rightly, has said that the Greeks despised the Barbarians too much to embrace them in a single fraternity. But here, as elsewhere, the great French critic betrays the ineradicable prejudices of a seminarist. No ancient race was so generous to its neighbours or so beloved by them as the Greeks. Already in Homer the note of generous sympathy with a foeman is struck, and it never ceases to vibrate through the hearts of his successors. Cyrus and Anacharsis were Greek ideals; even Xerxes obtained a meed of admiration; and Rome owes much of her glory to the rapturous eulogies of Greek historians. It was seen that the superiority claimed — and justly claimed—over the Barbarians did not belong to the Hellenic race as such, for in earlier ages there had been no marked difference, and the primitive barbarism still survived in some Hellenic tribes, but was, as we should say, an evolution due to favourable circumstances. Hellenism, in fact, meant culture, and culture could be communicated to all who desired it. In the language of Hippias, the distinctions of birth are conventional; by nature all like-minded persons are kinsmen, friends, and fellow-citizens.[1] In the language of Isocrates, the partakers of Athenian culture should sooner be called Hellenes than those who were merely of the same race.[2] And in the same spirit a doctrine of human collectivism was subsequently preached by the Cynic and, with more elaboration, by the Stoic school. Finally, Eratosthenes, followed by Plutarch, proposed to abolish the distinction between Greeks and Barbarians, and to replace it by a classification based entirely on the contrast between virtue and vice.[3]

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[1] Friedlander, *Sittengeschichte Roms,* ii., p. 384, 5th ed.

Had more of the earlier Stoic literature been preserved, we should, doubtless, have more such generous sayings on record. As it is, the philosophic writers of the Empire—some of them

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[1] Plato, *Protagoras*, p. 337.

[2] *Panegyricus*, p. 51.

[3] Quoted by Strabo, I., 9.

Romans—must remain our principal authorities for the idea of a common humanity with its implicit obligations of mutual service and love. But even if Seneca and Marcus Aurelius did not directly copy from the older masters, the spirit of their teaching remains purely Hellenic, and is derived by an unbroken tradition from the schools of Athens.

Moral reform is the verification of ethics. If the lectures delivered at Athens exercised no regenerating influence on their hearers, then they were what the enemies of philosophy called them, mere chatter, sophistry, waste of time, at best an abstract expression for what had been felt and done in the uncorrupted prime of Hellas. And this is what we are still—or were until lately—taught to regard as the net result of speculative Paganism by theologians who fail to see that as good a case might be made out against Christianity if its enemies employed the same logic. But the facts are beginning to be more impartially studied and better understood. A brilliant historian, to whom I have already referred, Professor Beloch, points out how much more humanely war was conducted by Greek generals in the fourth century B.C. than in the fifth, and what better ideas as to the position of women were beginning to make their way in the society of the same period. And he has no hesitation in ascribing this improved tone to the new standards introduced by philosophy. Nor can it be truly said that this advance was paid for by a proportionate decline in the manlier virtues. Courage and patriotism continued to be displayed when circumstances called them forth. The defence of Athens against Demetrius, against Antigonus, and, much later, against Sulla, was not inferior to the deeds of the Persian and Peloponesian wars; and numerous examples of a like heroism are to be found in the later history of other Greek states.[1]

Still more striking is the evidence offered by the history of the third century A.D. Alone among the inhabitants of the Empire the Greeks of that period spontaneously took up arms against the Gothic invaders and largely contributed to their destruction. This successful resistance is significant in more than one way. It bears witness not only to a revival of the old heroism, but also to the existence of an abundant and vigorous population. It would seem, then, that there had been a cessation or decrease of those immoral practices which in the classic age of Greek civilisation made war on family life. The improvement has been ascribed to the spread of Christianity,[2] but there seem to be no grounds for such an assumption. It does not appear from independent evidence that the new religion had made the advances that would have been necessary to account for so great a change; nor were its doctrines favourable either to family life or to the military spirit. And, what seems decisive, the most vigorous resistance to the invaders was offered at Athens, the last city in the Empire to be converted to Christianity. But even were the contention true, it would detract little if at all from the ethical value of Hellenism. Christianity could only convert the Greeks into heroic patriots by acting on the latent possibilities of the Greek genius itself. It exercised no such magic in Gaul and Britain.

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[1] Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte,* II., p. 441.

[2] In Sir Richard Jebb's *Modern Greece,*

If, indeed, the question of obligation be once raised, we shall have to ask not so much what the Greeks owe to Christianity as what it owes to them. The answer has been already given by modern criticism. Catholicism in its original and only true sense is but the theological expression for universal Hellenic humanity. The much-decried Tübingen school has made good at least one point—that the Church was first converted from a Jewish sect into a world-wide society by the Hellenist St. Paul, who in his turn owed his conversion to the martyr-death of the Hellenist Stephen. And, quite apart from the question of admission to church-membership, the root-ideas of Pauline theology are only intelligible when interpreted in the light of Stoic metaphysics. In other words, where Christianity differs most widely from Judaism it approaches most nearly to Greek thought. And this applies not only to faith, but to morals. The antithesis between Hebraism and Hellenism still remains valid, though in a sense different from that assumed by Matthew Arnold. We do not exactly go for lessons in veracity or in justice, in gentleness or in breadth of sympathy, to the Jewish Scriptures; if we want them, we shall find them given with incomparable charm in the literature of the Ionian race. And so long as moral training shall be imparted through Christian agencies it is vitally necessary that those agencies should be kept in touch with the sources whence the early Church derived its most human inspiration. For present purposes, then, the ethical value of Hellenism may be defined as its influence in fixing attention on the purely moral side of the popular religion, and in preparing men's minds for the eventual reception of a morality independent of religious sanctions.

THE INFLUENCE OF PHILOSOPHY ON GREEK POLITICAL LIFE

For nearly a century the theories of ancient philosophy have been studied with an industry and a sagacity that leave nothing to be desired, and the results have been not incommensurate with the effort put forth. We know early Greek thought better than it was known to Plato and Aristotle ; we understand Plato and Aristotle themselves better than they were understood by their immediate disciples ; we can enter into the mind of the Stoics, Epicureans, and Sceptics better, perhaps, than Cicero, Plutarch, or Sextus could. More recently, also, attention has been drawn to the immense practical influence of philosophy on the life of the Roman Empire during the first two centuries of its existence, as revealed in literature, religion, and law. Not only in the declamations of its satirists, but also in the decorations of its tombs ; not only in the lives of its most virtuous, but also in the rescripts of its most vicious rulers ; not only in heathen polemics, but also in Christian apologetics and dogmatics, the same all-pervasive spirit may be traced. But what philosophy did for Greece, except to destroy religion and to undermine public life, is a question that has not been very deeply studied. In these matters most of us bow to the authority of Zeller, who is deservedly considered the greatest master of the subject. From him we have learned to look on Greek speculation as tending to detach itself more and more from the concrete realities of life, and particularly from political life, as tending more and more to seek refuge from the lawlessness and oppression of the outer world in the inviolable sanctuary of the self-possessed, self-enjoying spirit. This isolating movement, begun during the Peloponnesian war, is supposed to have been consummated after the destruction of Greek liberty by Macedon, and to have realised itself, under various forms, in the doctrines of the Porch, the Garden, and the later Academy. Except in the negative sense there can, it would seem, be no question of any social influence exercised by such a philosophy as this.

But the later ages of Greek history may have been less degraded and hopeless than we imagine. In estimating the relative importance of men and things, our judgment is apt to be swayed by the prepossessions of a classical education. To know what happened in the sixth, and still more what happened in the fifth, century B.C. is justly deemed essential to liberal culture. That period is filled with some of the greatest events in human history, and illustrated by some of the most splendid monuments of human génius; to make them more interesting, some of the events may be studied in the narratives of eye-witnesses, and we may inspect some of the monuments for ourselves. But after the close of the great struggle between Athens and Sparta our sources flow more scantily and their purity becomes more suspected. The great stream of lyric and dramatic poetry entirely dries up, architecture and sculpture become weaker in themselves and are less definitely related to contemporary life. Prose composition, indeed, attains the greatest excellence it has ever reached, but the very beauty of its masterpieces withdraws the attention of scholars from their historical setting by lifting them into a region of ideal and undated perfection. So, too, while the fourth century gives us some of the foremost characters of all time, they seem constructed on such a superhuman scale that we cannot think of them as being what Themistocles, Pericles, and Alcibiades had been, the leaders and representatives of their generation. The impression produced is that of a few colossal figures surrounded by mediocrities, and projected against a background of petty and sordid intrigue. So far from redeeming their age, they seem to make its baseness more evident, and the widespread conviction of its degeneracy more credible. Indeed, the conviction is one that originated with the philosophers and statesmen of the time. Those who hold that Greece succumbed to the Macedonian arms through her own inherent viciousness may quote Plato and Demosthenes in their support.

As we approach the third century matters become far worse. If, as the late Professor Freeman used to complain, many Greek scholars seem to think that all history ends with the sacrifice of Tissaphernes, the number of those must be few who pursue their studies beyond the Lamian war. Henceforth we are almost entirely without the guidance and stimulation of contemporary documents, and few modern historians have attempted the ungrateful task of piecing together a connected narrative out of the fragmentary materials that have survived. Grote breaks off his work in disgust at the beginning of the Hellenistic period. Thirlwall carries his down to the destruction of Corinth, but Thirlwall is out of print, and is supposed to be out of date. Freeman's *History of Federal Government in Greece,* though abounding in eloquent passages, is, as a whole, unreadable. Droysen's *Geschichte des Hellenismus* would, both for style and scholarship, do honour to the literature of any country; but it has not, I believe, been translated into English. Adolf Holm has recently gone over the same ground in the fourth volume of his *Griechische Geschichte,* an English translation of which has appeared. He throws fresh light on some important points, but his closely packed summaries will be consulted by a very limited class of readers. And the same remark applies to Professor Julius Beloch, whose recently published volumes (*Griechische Geschichte*, III. and IV.) represent the last word of scholarship on this period.[1]

This lamentable dearth of information is the more to be regretted because the Hellenistic period was a time, not of decay and death, but of overflowing and fruitful life. It saw the seeds of a higher civilisation scattered over a region extending from the Ganges to the Atlantic. Nor did the universal diffusion of Greek ideas mean, what the diffusion of French and English ideas too often has meant, the effacement of national differences, the world-wide triumph of a single not very elevated standard of opinion, feeling, taste, and manners. On the contrary, what was vital and original everywhere sprang up into rejuvenated activity under that electric stimulus. At the contact of Alexander's armies all India united herself under a single chief; and, as a consequence of that union, Buddhism was carried in triumph from the Himalayas to Ceylon. Persia recovered much of her ancient energy, and her religion first received a complete literary expression under her Philhellenic Parthian kings. Judæa, while clinging more passionately than ever to the Thora, felt her imagination swept by a new whirlwind of apocalyptic visions. A series of colossal temples rose along the banks of the Nile, reared by the munificence of the Ptolemies, as if to show that the land they ruled was Egypt for the Egyptians even more than Egypt for the Greeks. After the visit of a single Spartan general, Carthage enters on the most heroic period of her existence. Rome first develops her whole potentialities of greatness in the light of Hellenic thought.

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[1] In writing the above I was not aware that Professor Mahaffy's excellent work on *Greek Life and Thought from Alexander to the Roman Conquest* (2nd ed., 1896) supplied the English reader with an account, at once popular and erudite, of the period in question.

Our own civilisation is more in touch with the age of the Diadochi than with the age of Pericles. The form of our tragic drama, the form and substance of our comedy, the love-interest of our novel, are derived from Menander. Our poets owe more to Theocritus than to Pindar. Before the present century the most admired statues in our museums came, without exception, from the later schools of sculpture. Above all, our science has been but the resumption and continuation of methods then first organised. Euclid systematised the geometry of the straight line and the circle; Apollonius worked out the geometry of conics;

Hipparchus taught men how to construct terrestrial and celestial maps; Aristarchus of Samos discovered the heliocentric system of astronomy; Archimedes created rational mechanics.

While the artistic and intellectual powers of the Greek genius were being exercised with unabated vigour, her military and political ability had not become extinct. Setting aside mythological characters, one-third of Plutarch's Greek heroes belong to the period after Alexander; and there were others whose lives he did not write. It seems incredible that this could have been an age of moral degeneracy, or that philosophy, possessing such an organisation as it had never enjoyed before, should not have been interested in the systematic reconstitution of society, especially since the revolutionary character of the times offered boundless opportunities for experiment. My object is to show that such an influence was actually exercised, proceeding from the schools of Athens, above all from Stoicism, as its source and centre. But to make this intelligible it will be necessary to trace briefly the relations that had connected philosophy with life in the previous course of its evolution.

With the Greeks the liveliest curiosity about the world was ever accompanied by the desire to make that world a worthier habitation for man. Their first thinkers were noted above all for a purely speculative interest in the constitution and origin of nature. Yet Thales, the acknowledged founder of philosophy, was quite as famous in his day for practical wisdom as for reach and daring of thought. We are told that he advised the twelve Ionian cities to form a confederation for the purpose of resisting the aggressions of Crœsus—advice which, unhappily for themselves, they did not follow. If Heracleitus withdrew in disgust from public life, none the less did he recognise an identical law of existence and of conduct, a wisdom that is common to all things. "Those who speak with intelligence," he declares, "must hold fast to the common, as a city holds fast to its law, and even more strongly; for all human laws are fed by one thing—the divine."[1] How he thought of nature as governed by an essentially moral law is shown by the saying that, if the sun were to transgress his measures, the Erinyes—the avenging handmaidens of justice—would find him out. In the same manner his predecessor, Anaximander, had represented the transitoriness of all individual existence as a vindication of eternal justice. Nor did the more mystical form assumed by Greek thought in Italy and Sicily lead to quietism or to paralysis of the moral will. Empedocles headed the democratic party in Agrigentum; Zeno of Elea died in attempting to deliver his native city from a tyrant; Melissus of Samos, who also belonged to the Eleatic school, defeated the Athenians in a sea-fight. Great uncertainty prevails about the history and teaching of the original Pythagorean school; but thus much seems clear, that they combined an attempt to explain the universe by mathematical principles with an attempt to carry analogous principles into education and social discipline. Plato's scheme of social reform seems to have been largely suggested by their example.

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[1] Burnet's *Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 139.

In all these instances the leading inspiration was evidently ethical. The organisation of the Greek city-state gave men ideas of law and order which they read into the physical world, conceiving it to be animated by a spirit like their own. But, so far, nature taught them no lessons that might not equally be learned in the Agora and the Boulê. An independent action of philosophy on life suggests itself to us for the first time in the relations between Anaxagoras and Pericles. For one thing, the new knowledge tended to clear the mind of superstition—no trifling advantage, when we remember how Nicias consummated the ruin of the Sicilian expedition by postponing his retreat a whole month in consequence of an eclipse of the moon. It is quite certain that Pericles, who had learned the cause of eclipses from Anaxagoras, would not have let his movements be hampered by any such scruple. But, if Plutarch is to be trusted, the mind of the great statesman was strengthened in a higher and more positive sense by his intercourse with the Ionian sage. The august spectacle of a universe where Reason reigned supreme gave, we are told, a certain inflexible majesty to the character of the democratic leader, and raised him above all subservience to the gusts of popular opinion. Whether it be historically true of Pericles or not, the idea remains important and suggestive. It has often seemed to me that Positivism, with its Religion of Humanity, leaves the individual insufficiently protected against the tremendous pressure of the race. Adequately to resist that pressure we need the conception of an existence beside which humanity itself shrinks into insignificance, but which, so far from crushing or absorbing our own personality, fills and expands it to infinity. The enthusiasm of humanity finds its corrective and counterpoise in cosmic emotion.

Before Pericles was dead, a revolutionary idea, of which neither he nor Anaxagoras ever dreamed, had perhaps been already evolved from the Ionian philosophy. This was the idea of Nature, considered not merely as the indefeasible order of objective existence, but as the original and supreme standard of social equity, the ultimate court of appeal against whatever seemed arbitrary or oppressive in positive law, custom, tradition, and temporary fashion. Each speculative thinker had sought, with undoubting confidence that it was there and could be found, for a primordial reality at the root of things, calling it water, air, fire, the Infinite, and so forth, but meaning just what persisted or periodically reasserted itself in a world of change. This constant element was not necessarily conceived as a single material substance; it might be a variety of substances, or simple extension, or a definite relation, or a process; but it was always what we call a phenomenon, never a metaphysical abstraction or noumenon. In Kantian language, it lay within the limits of a possible experience. Opposed to it were the baseless, unstable, illusory opinions of the vulgar. Such in its first intention was the meaning of Nature, the philosophical equivalent for the greater gods of the old religion. As scientific curiosity extended itself from the material to the moral world, to the human race with its division into numberless nations, each speaking a different language or dialect, and characterised by infinitely varying institutions, customs, and laws, yet in their dealings with one another appealing to a common standard of reasonableness and rectitude, there arose the obvious idea, Have we not here also to ask for a common principle from which all partial and local customs are so many ignorant, it may be mischievous, aberrations—in a word, for what exists by nature, as opposed to what exists by convention or law?

It is certain that the question was asked and the distinction drawn between φύσις and νόμος, but when or by whom the distinction was first drawn we do not know.[1] It occurs for the first time, unless I am mistaken, in the *Protagoras,* a somewhat early dialogue of Plato's, where we find it put into the mouth of the Sophist Hippias; and the evidence of Xenophon's *Memorabilia* goes to prove that it was associated with his teaching by others besides Plato. Modern historians of philosophy speak as if this distinction was the common property of all the Sophists, and was used by all with the same implications. In their opinion, the antithesis between Nature and Law was a mere pretext for invalidating the authority of Law, for releasing men from their obligation to obey the ordinances of the State, and therefore a powerful agent in the work of public demoralisation, at least when the oppression of the weak by the strong was defended as a natural right. If we are to believe Thucydides and Plato, such a justification of successful violence was actually attempted at the time of the Peloponnesian war; but to make Hippias or any other of the great Sophists responsible for such a perversion of their teaching would be like making Socrates and Plato responsible for the defence of injustice for delivering which their successor, Carneades, was expelled from Rome.

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[1] It has been ascribed to Archelaus, the disciple of Anaxagoras, on the very doubtful authority of Laertius Diogenes.

Let it be remembered that the only Sophists about whom we have any right to speak are Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, and Hippias. The last is the only one who is known to have directly distinguished nature from law or convention. His words, as reported or imagined by Plato, are: "All of you who are here present I reckon to be kinsmen and friends and fellow-citizens, and by nature and not by law; for by nature like is akin to like, whereas law is the tyrant of mankind, and often compels us to do many things which are against nature. How great would be the disgrace, then, if we who know the nature of things......should quarrel with one another like the meanest of mankind."[1] There is surely nothing sceptical, corrupting, or anti-social about the sentiment here expressed. Further, we have to note that arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy are mentioned among the subjects taught by Hippias[2]—a fact which seems to show that he studied the nature of man in connection with the nature of things. So far as we can make out, a somewhat similar method was followed by Prodicus. With regard to this teacher we have the precious, though scanty, contemporary evidence of Aristophanes, who, in the *Clouds*, compliments him on his eminent wisdom and learning, while in the *Birds* he playfully announces a new theory of evolution that is to send Prodicus away howling—a clear proof of the interest taken by the Ceian moralist in such inquiries. How far he attempted to connect ethics with physics must, in the absence of more detailed information, remain uncertain; but his own well-known apologue, *The Choice of Hercules*, as reported to us by Xenophon, affords some suggestive hints of a tendency in that direction. The word "nature" itself occurs three times over in a few lines; and throughout there is a genuinely naturalistic assumption that pleasure is altogether censurable when it has not been purchased by a corresponding outlay of effort and fatigue. Here, for the first time, we catch sight of a principle pregnant with momentous and far-reaching consequences. For, by parity of reasoning, it might be urged that no man has any right to wealth that he has not earned by an equivalent amount of useful work, which is the root-idea of socialism; or, again, that one class of the community should not receive gratuitous benefits at the expense of another class, which is the root-idea of Spencerian individualism. Plato, who, for reasons unknown, particularly hated Prodicus, only mentions him to ridicule the pedantic precision with which he insisted on the accurate use of language.[1] Altogether, we have here a master of encyclopædic range — physicist, philologist, and moralist—with Hippias, the earliest precursor of Stoicism and of modern university training.

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[1] Plato, *Protagoras*, p. 337 B.; Jowett's trans.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 318.

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[1] Curiously enough, the late Mr. R. H. Hutton dwells on the extreme accuracy and precision of the late Professor Malden as a trait of distinction between that scholar and the ancient Sophists (in the Memoir prefixed to Bagehot's *Literary Studies*, p. xv.).

We gather from the report of Xenophon that the moral censure of Prodicus was directed against the vices of the rich and luxurious, special emphasis being laid on their artificial, unnatural character. The polemic thus begun would easily extend into an attack on all civilisation considered as a departure from the state of nature, from the innocence and simplicity of savage man; and it would be accompanied by a tendency to hold up as examples for imitation the nations who had remained at or near the primitive condition of mankind. We generally associate this tendency with the philosophy of the eighteenth century; but it is now known that Rousseau and Diderot were merely taking up the tradition of Greek thought. Although it may be traced back to Hesiod, the theory of a golden age still partially surviving among savages did not reach its full expansion before the middle of the fourth century B.C.; but there is evidence that it was already eagerly canvassed in the circles which gathered round the great Sophists, and could show that most satisfactory proof of vitality which is afforded by the rise of an antagonistic theory. To the glorification of nature was opposed the glorification of progressive civilisation; to the study of astronomy and physics was opposed the study of poetry, eloquence, modern history, and political institutions; to the ethical standards and sanctions derived from the healthy balance of the organic functions were opposed other standards and sanctions derived from the exigencies of the social state and the steady pressure of public opinion. At the head of this humanistic school apparently stood Protagoras; and nothing can better illustrate the sharp antagonism of the two ethical methods than a remark put into his mouth by Plato, so unlike anything else in the *Dialogues* that we must accept it as characteristic, if not as the reproduction of an actual utterance. "I would have you consider that he who appears to you to be the worst of those who have been brought up in laws and humanities would appear to be a just man and a master of justice if he were to be compared with men who had no education, or courts of justice, or laws, or any restraints upon them which compelled them to practise virtue—with the savages, for example, whom the poet Pherecrates exhibited on the stage at the last year's Lenæan festival. If you were living among men such as the man-haters in his Chorus, you would be only too glad to meet with Eurybates and Phrynondas, and you would sorrowfully long to revisit the rascality of this part of the world."[1] A somewhat similar vein of hostility to barbarism may, I think, be traced in the introduction to the history of Thucydides. It is significant, too, that, with many a tale of Greek cruelty to relate, his strongest expressions of horror are reserved for the savagery of the Thracians, and particularly for their massacre of all the children in a large boys' school at Mycalessus.

Greek thinkers habitually sought to clothe their principles in the most paradoxical form they could devise. Protagoras and Gorgias were not content to advocate humanistic studies at the expense of physical science; they tried to destroy the idea of

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[1] Plato, *Protagoras*, 327 C (Jowett's Trans.). Robert Lowe once quoted this passage with the keenest enjoyment.

Nature, root and branch. Protagoras taught that "Man is the measure of all things"; in other words, moral obligations and distinctions must be founded on the needs of a progressive society, not on the abstraction to which the physiocratic philosophers appeal. Gorgias set to work in a still more radical fashion. He wrote a treatise with the significant title, *On Nature or Nothing,* in which he maintained, first that nothing exists; secondly, that if anything existed it could not be known; and thirdly, that if anything existed and could be known, the individual possessing that knowledge could not communicate it to others. This, as the worthy Tiedemann observes, was "going much farther than common sense permits"; but the Greeks, as I have said, loved paradoxical statements; and Gorgias probably meant no more than Joseph de Maistre when he asked the apostles of "la Nature," "Qui est donc cette femme?" or than Alfred de Musset, when he put the equally difficult question, "Le cœur humain de qui, le cœur humain de quoi?"

Like the opposing cosmologies of Heracleitus and Parmenides at an earlier period of Greek thought, the rival theories of the physiocrats and the humanists each contained an element of truth, and the future progress of ethics depended on the recognition and combination of both. Since Protagoras a number of thinkers, among whom Professor Huxley may be mentioned as the last, but not the least, have shown that nature, apart from man, is anything but a safe moral guide, and that what she seems to inculcate is, in fact, the supremacy of brute force. On the other hand, the great diversity of moral codes observed at different times and in different places points to the necessity of some objective principle by which they must be tested, unless we are to resign ourselves to complete scepticism on the subject of right and wrong. Here physical science comes to the rescue by teaching us to look at things rather than words, and to follow the lines of demonstrative evidence rather than the shifting currents of popular opinion. But only the study of human interests as such can tell us what things we should look at, and what kind of proof the nature of the case demands. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, by creating the dialectic method and applying it to ethics, made a good start in this direction—so good, indeed, as completely to overshadow the predecessors whose ideas they appropriated and combined. Worse than this, some loose declamations of Plato and some special attacks on the rhetoricians and oligarchs of his own time have been construed into a distinct charge of immoral teaching brought against the great Sophists of the fifth century. Undoubtedly the naturalistic and humanistic principles severally admit of being pushed to anti-social consequences. The claim of the strong man—or, as he would call himself, the born ruler of mankind—to lord it over his fellows, and to gratify all his appetites at their expense, may be upheld as a natural right. A misinformed or deluded public opinion may be erected into the supreme standard of truth and justice, while the art of misinforming and deluding it may be inculcated as the first qualification of a statesman. But the Socratic dialectic, with its principle that the germs of truth exist in every mind and in every belief, is also capable of disease and corruption. We owe to it—beginning with Plato, or, perhaps, even with Socrates himself—the organised hypocrisy that defends the public profession and propagation of superstitious beliefs as the only form under which philosophic truth can safely circulate among the ignorant masses.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that the teaching of the Sophistic schools, based as it was on principles of everlasting validity, possessed merely negative or transitional significance. There is reason to suppose, from incidental references in Plato and Aristotle, that it continued to win adherents through the two generations that followed the death of Socrates. Above all, the note of naturalism became increasingly dominant, and powerfully affected the Socratic schools themselves. Plato's writings are a good example of the tendency. His earliest dialogues are almost entirely humanistic, with only slight or depreciatory references to nature; but in the *Republic* physiocratic considerations are already prominent, and in the *Laws*, a very late work, they meet us at every step, in connection, be it observed, with a very high and pure morality. Aristotle also refers to nature as a moral standard, the validity of which he recognises, although he cannot accept all the consequences drawn from it by some other philosophers.

Authorities are still divided on the question whether the influence which we have seen to be so potent in speculation was, or was not, mischievous in practice. Most German historians continue to believe that a decline in Greek morality began with the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, and continued without intermission down to the advent of Christianity; and they make Sophisticism responsible for at least the inception of the process. Traditions are very strong in German universities, and it has become a tradition in those seats of learning that to take fees for lecturing and to throw doubt on the popular mythology is very reprehensible conduct—when practised by an ancient Greek. It sometimes actually led people to believe in the right of the stronger! Fortunately there is one German, Professor Julius Beloch, who, having the advantage of living in Italy, has dared to think for himself. This brilliant and original historian not only vindicates the Sophists, as Grote and others had done before him, but makes short work of the whole charge of demoralisation brought against the Greeks. There is no surer test of a nation's moral standing than its conduct in time of war. If there is a virtue admitting of ocular and statistical demonstration, a virtue that can neither be concealed nor assumed, that virtue is humanity. Now Professor Beloch opportunely reminds us that the Greeks of the fourth century were much more humane than the contemporaries of Pericles.[1] Such horrors as the slaughter of the Theban prisoners by the Platæans and of the Platæan prisoners by the Thebans, of the Corcyræan aristocrats by the opposite faction and of the Melians by the Athenians, for no other crime than having refused to give up their independence, are justly branded with execration; but it is unjustly forgotten that they find no counterpart in the next generation. We do not again hear of prisoners of war being shut up to die by thousands of slow torture in the quarries of Syracuse, nor yet of their being put to death by the more summary method of Lysander at Aigos Potamoi. The historian knows of only two cases in the wars of the fourth century where the storm of a besieged town was followed by the massacre of its male adult citizens—the capture of Orchomenus by the Thebans and the capture of Sestus by Chares.[1] The outburst of popular passion to which Phocion and his friends fell victims, though lamentable enough, is not to be compared with that which wreaked itself on the victorious generals of Arginusæ. Whether the persecution and exile of so many generals and statesmen, from Miltiades to Alcibiades, was due more to ingratitude mixed with envy on the part of the people, or to treason on the part of its leaders, may be doubted ; in any case there was guilt of the blackest kind somewhere, but guilt which we meet with only under a greatly attenuated form in the fourth century.

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[1] *Griechische Geschichte*, I., p. 595.

If we ask what was the cause of this wonderful change, the only possible answer is, the great revolution that philosophy had wrought in the minds of men. The mere habit of looking at things from a universal point of view has happily a certain power to enlarge the sympathies. Thus the rulers of Babylon, surrounded as they were by a learned priesthood, seem to have been much more merciful than the rulers of Assyria. Further-more, the three great ethical schools characterised above must, through their various principles, have exercised a still more direct influence on the social feelings. The physicists, by drawing attention to the universal elements of human nature, helped to break down the barriers of race, language, and nationality that so powerfully foster feelings of mutual hostility among men. The humanists saw with perfect clearness that a state of nature meant lawless violence; but their object was by means of systematic instruction still further to develop the tendencies that make for peace, order, mutual helpfulness, and elevated enjoyment. Such of them as taught rhetoric or the art of persuasion by words must have looked with peculiar horror on the régime of brute force; indeed, it is impossible to study the writings of Isocrates, the chief teacher of rhetoric in the fourth century, without recognising through all the man's vanity, inconsistency, and subservience to success a sense of justice and mercy utterly alien to the tone of the Melian Dialogue. Especially significant is the declaration of Isocrates that Hellenism is a privilege not of race but of culture, and therefore open to all mankind.[1] Finally the Socratic school, with its willingness to learn from every one, its appeals to the reason that is actual or latent in every man and in every woman, its exaltation of the soul above the body, and of the higher over the lower psychic activities, must have contributed largely to the good work of humanisation that was going on.

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[1] *Griechische Geschichte,* II., p. 441.

In attempting to trace the general influence of philosophy on the spirit of the age we have been dealing with probabilities, of a high order indeed, but not affording the satisfaction of absolute certainty; and in the dearth of documentary evidence no more can be expected. But, on passing to the study of philosophy as an influence on the character of individual statesmen, we are no longer limited to conjecture; we have definite facts to show. Here our whole case might be staked on the name of Epaminondas, whom Professor Mahaffy calls "far the noblest of all the great men whom Greece ever produced, without a single flaw or failing."[1] This illustrious patriot was a pupil of Lysis, the Pythagorean, and became himself, in turn, a teacher of the whole state, devoting himself for years to the moral and intellectual elevation of his fellow-citizens. But what speaks most for the moral earnestness of Epaminondas is his refusal, after all those years of preparation for the deliverance of Thebes, to take part in the secret assassination of the oligarchs who were governing her as the servile agents of Lacedæmonian oppression. Philosophy had taught him a delicacy of conscience not only far in advance of the best public opinion of his own time, but also in advance of the sentiments entertained till a comparatively recent period by some Christian moralists. Another but inferior example of philosophy in action is furnished by Dion, the friend of Plato, and the first liberator of Syracuse. I am well aware of the prejudice under which the memory of this unfortunate patriot must suffer in the minds of all English-speaking scholars. There is nothing in Grote's *History of Greece* to equal for interest and pathos his narrative of the two Sicilian expeditions of Dion and Timoleon; and the total effect of that narrative unquestionably is to make the ill-starred philosophic aristocrat play the part of a foil to the higher and purer glory of the successful Corinthian democrat. It is, however, only fair to remember that Timoleon had the inestimable advantage of coming after Dion, and of profiting by his mistakes. We have also to note that the one blot on the fame of the great liberator, his not interfering to save the innocent wives and daughters of Hicetas from the cruel vengeance of the Syracusans, was the very last sin of which his predecessor would have been guilty. When pressed to put a treacherous enemy to death, Dion answered that his prolonged studies in the Academy had for their object the conquest of anger, envy, and all contentiousness; that it was not enough merely to reciprocate the goodness of others, it was necessary also to forgive injuries and to be merciful to the transgressor; that for the person who is first attacked to revenge himself, though legally justifiable, is by nature no less censurable than the attack, as springing from the same root of ungoverned passion; that human wickedness, however savage, must at last yield to the effect of unwearied beneficence.[1] For us the most interesting point to note is that, as Curtius says, the expedition of Dion was an enterprise undertaken by the whole Academy in its collective capacity—a fact quite irreconcilable with the subsequent statement of the same historian, that philosophers were at this time more and more withdrawing themselves from the repulsive contact of public affairs. Very significant also of the increased power now exercised by ideas is the desire shown by the younger Dionysius, and in a less degree even by his detestable father, to stand well in the opinion of Plato. So also is the selection of Aristotle as the tutor of young Alexander.

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[1] See above, p. 35.

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[1] *Rambles and Studies in Greece*, p. 227 (2nd ed.). I do not agree with the last words quoted. See Plutarch, *Eroticus*, xvii. 15; Athenæus, *Deipnosophistæ*, xiii., lxxxiii.

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[1] Plutarch, *Dion*, p. 979 A. The distinction between nature and law seems to point to a much older authority than Plutarch, probably a contemporary of Dion's. I have slightly paraphrased this sentence in order to make it more intelligible.

Thus far we have seen philosophy occupied in the work of systematising the moral law, reducing it to simple principles, connecting it with the eternal constitution of the universe, and developing it in the direction of a more comprehensive humanity. We have now to study it under the more stirring aspect of a reforming and revolutionary force, as an endeavour taken up by serious statesmen to reconstitute society on a basis of economic justice. In this connection the briefest reference to Plato must suffice, as that master's searching criticism of contemporary life and his twofold attempt to reconstruct it from the bottom up are, or ought to be, familiar to every student, if only for the unrivalled literary splendour of the writings in which they are embodied. Moreover, the subtlety and complexity of his genius raise Plato so high above the age that he cannot be taken as representing its general philosophical tendencies, although his works may be used as affording valuable evidence of the direction in which they pointed. The great word of that age, as of our own eighteenth century, was "Back to Nature!" and then also, as with Rousseau, the ordinances of Nature were interpreted in a levelling, democratic, socialistic sense, quite remote from the sharp class-distinctions of Plato. We have seen how Hippias, whom the young Plato made a butt for his ridicule, implicitly proclaimed the natural brotherhood of mankind. We learn from a fragment of Aristotle that a later Sophist named Lycophron declared nobility of birth to be a baseless privilege,[1] while another Sophist, Alcidamas, vindicated freedom as a natural right[2] —a principle which, as we know from Aristotle's *Politics,* was unhesitatingly pushed on to the absolute condemnation of slavery.

Those who, like these generous philosophers, have persuaded themselves that liberty, equality, and fraternity are natural to man, easily come to believe that this happy state was realised in the primitive condition of the race. We get a glimpse of their belief on this subject from the *Laws* of Plato, who, as I have said, came very much under their influence in his old age. He tells us that the men who lived immediately after the Deluge were "simpler, more manly, more temperate, and more just" than his own contemporaries (*Laws*, 679 E); and he attributes their superior virtue to their undeveloped industrial condition, to the absence alike of poverty and of wealth. The next step was to look round for a people among whom these delightful traits of primitive humanity had been preserved. It was found in the Scythians. Ephorus, a pupil of Isocrates, and the greatest historian of later Greece, seems to have constructed a fancy picture of that barbarous race, which was received with unquestioning faith through the whole of antiquity, and in a revived form has even affected modern thought. Justice was represented as the most essential characteristic of these nomads; envy, hatred, and fear were unknown among them; such was their horror of taking even animal life that they subsisted entirely on milk; and they lived in a state of perfect communism, holding property, wives, and children in common, so as to constitute a single united family.[1]

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[1] Quoted by Stobæus, *Florilegium,* p. 494, 24.

[2] *Oratores Attici* (Didot), II., p. 316.

Various causes combined to familiarise Greek social philosophy with the idea of communism. To a certain extent it had no doubt prevailed among the Hellenic tribes before they left the nomadic state, and the tradition was never entirely lost. When they settled in a new country the land would be most naturally distributed in equal portions among the conquerors, and any fresh territory that was subsequently annexed would be similarly disposed of. The rise of manufactures and commerce, with the accompanying introduction of a metallic currency, brought about a great inequality of wealth, leading to violent political disorders, which, in the case of Solon's legislation, necessitated a forcible remission of debts by the State—a precedent never afterwards forgotten. Democracy, which at first meant deliverance of the poor from the oppression of the rich, afterwards came to mean a more or less disguised distribution of the property of the rich among the poor, and of the tribute paid by the subject cities among all classes, without any disguise whatever. Meanwhile a first rough analysis of social phenomena had led philosophers to the conclusion that covetousness was the root of all evil, that murder, robbery, and other crimes arose from the unequal distribution of property, or rather from its mere existence, for, as Menander said—

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[1] Pöhlmann, *Geschichte des antiken Kommunismus,* I., pp. 117 *sqq.*

> With naught to take no man would e'er be wicked.

From the prevalent view of marriage it followed that wives, like any other kind of property, were to be held in common. Strange as it may seem, the idea of such a revolution, so far from being regarded as a degradation, was welcomed with joy by the women. When, in 392, Aristophanes took communism as the subject of one of his wittiest comedies, the *Ecclesiazusæ,* he represented it as the work of the Athenian women, who go to the poll disguised as men, and change the institutions of the State by a snatch vote; and Epictetus, writing five centuries later, attributed the enthusiasm of the Roman ladies for Plato's *Republic* entirely to its proposal that there should be a community of wives.[1]

Aristophanes is our earliest authority for the existence of communism as a political ideal. It has, indeed, been maintained that his exhibition of it on the stage was intended as a satire on the proposals of Plato. But it seems most unlikely that even the first half of the *Republic* had been completed when the philosopher was only thirty-four; unlikely also that Plato should not have been mentioned by name in the play, if not actually brought on the scene. Moreover, in the *Republic* communism is carefully restricted to the governing class; not till long afterwards, in the *Laws*, is it proclaimed as the ideally best arrangement for all mankind. I have already called attention to the remarkable fact that the *Laws* is saturated with a naturalism quite foreign to the earlier dialogues. What is the inference? Plainly, that communism (in both kinds) was a standing doctrine of the naturalistic school, and that it probably originated with the immediate successors of Hippias and Prodicus. Most unfortunately, we only know that such persons existed through incidental references in Plato and Aristotle; the Cynics, who bore the same relation to the philosophic naturalists that the Franciscans bore to the Dominicans, have completely superseded them in the notices of later compilers. But, even in the scanty utterances of Antisthenes and Diogenes, clear traces of a communistic theory have been preserved; and it emerges full blown in what was practically by far the most important of the ancient philosophies, Stoicism.

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[1] Didot, *Fragmenta,* p. 53.

We are apt to think of the later Athens as divided among four or more equally serious or equally frivolous schools of philosophy. But in reality the Lyceum was devoted almost exclusively to physical science; the Epicureans were a small, uninfluential group of recluses; the Academicians, after abandoning the mathematical mysticism of Speusippus, contented themselves with a negative criticism chiefly directed against the doctrines of the Porch. This last alone gave a training at once positive, encyclopædic, and fruitful, mingling with every honourable pursuit, delivering its message to all men, and holding up, by the example of its teachers, no less than by the rigour of its tenets, such a standard of righteousness and purity as none but the prophets of Israel had raised before. So strong, indeed, are the traces of a Semitic origin among the chief Stoics, beginning with its founder, Zeno, that their moral earnestness has been attributed to a peculiar quality resident in the genius of the race to which the prophets also belonged. But this seems a very fanciful explanation of Stoicism. Taking them altogether, the Semites have never been remarkable for a high moral tone, least of all the Phœnician branch to which Zeno belonged. If the foreign extraction of the early Stoics betrayed itself at all, it was in a certain absolute, unconditional, uncompromising tone of thought common to all Asiatics, and due less to any racial idiosyncrasy than to the habits inbred by immemorial despotism. How little race has to do with it is evident from the reappearance of a precisely similar tone among the Russian novelists of the present day, who have imbibed it from the same environment. As a consequence of this rigorous absolutism, the Stoics abolished the distinction between mind and matter; they placed the world under the unconditional control of reason; they asserted the unbroken regularity of natural law; they substituted determinism for free will; they insisted, against Aristotle, that virtue constituted not the leading element, but the whole of happiness; and they claimed for perception an unerring certainty. But in every point of their system they did but develop ideas long familiar to Greek philosophy; and in their love of paradoxical statement, at least, they were entirely Greek. As a means of drawing attention, their paradoxes were perfectly successful, so much so, indeed, that down to the present day public opinion assumes almost without question that every philosopher is indifferent to pain and inaccessible to emotion; that he knows everything and can do everything, provided it be not of too frivolous a character; and that he is, or would like to pass for being, impeccable and infallible—in other words, that he answers to the ancient caricature of a Stoic. In reality, the Stoics never professed or required insensibility to pleasure and pain; they merely asserted, as we also do, the supreme and incommensurable value of moral goodness; and in ascribing all manner of merits and accomplishments to their ideal sage they merely demanded, as some of us also do, the systematic application of scientific principles to the whole field of human activity. But that the ideal sage had ever been realised on earth they did not believe; and if their principles suffered any sense of humour to survive they must have smiled at the *naïveté* of a Macedonian officer who, hearing that the wise man was an excellent general, joined the school in hopes of becoming one himself.[1]

At the moment when Zeno first proclaimed his message under the painted portico of Athens it seemed as if all free and noble public life had come to an end in Greece. That fourth empire, so well described by the Book of Daniel as "a beast terrible and powerful and strong exceedingly with great iron teeth, devouring and breaking in pieces and stamping the residue with his feet," had devoured her last patriots and trampled her liberties into the mire. To the unexampled clemency of Philip and Alexander had succeeded the terrorism of their brutal generals. A successful military adventurer, Demetrius Poliorcetes, remarkable not less for his frightful profligacy than for his shining abilities, was lodged in the Parthenon, and received divine honours from the servile Athenians. All the most virile elements of the community were drawn off to Asia and Egypt by the lucrative prospects of mercenary service. It would not have been surprising if, in the circumstances, no lesson but that of fatalistic indifference to outward events had been learned by the degenerate youths who divided their time between the boudoir of the hetaira and the lecture-hall of the sage. Nevertheless, Zeno lived to see the last great struggle for Greek independence begin; his successors saw its temporary victory and its development into a movement that seemed to promise the realisation of their own social ideals.

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[1] Plutarch, *Aratus,* xxiii., p. 1037 f.

In the year 280 B.C. a Gallic storm, like that which had devastated Italy more than a century before, broke on the Hellenic world. Macedonia, whose proud boast it was to shield civilisation against barbarism, succumbed at once to the shock, and her usurping king, Ptolemy Keraunos, fell in battle with the invaders. The human deluge poured on, but was arrested and flung back by the unsupported levies of central Greece. Their heroism still lives for us embodied in the form of the Apollo Belvedere, the marble copy of a bronze statue erected to commemorate the repulse of the barbarians from Delphi, and representing the god in the act of shaking his shield in their faces.[1] Other famous works of plastic art owe their inspiration to the same desperate conflict, as it afterwards raged in Asia Minor, such as the dying Gaul of the Capitol; the group of a Gaul supporting the body of the wife whom he has just slain, and plunging a sword into his own breast, in the Museo delle Terme at Rome; also, perhaps, those Pergamene reliefs which are now the glory of Berlin. But it was not merely in art that the victorious consciousness of resurgent Hellenic life found expression. Sparta exhibited all her ancient heroism in repelling an attack made on her by Pyrrhus, the greatest general of the age; a few years afterwards Athens made a desperate but unsuccessful effort to shake off the Macedonian yoke. This, which Droysen calls her last but her most honourable attempt to recover her ancient liberty—an attempt first rescued from oblivion in modern times by the great historian Niebuhr—is known as the Chremonidean war from its leader, Chremonides, a friend, perhaps a disciple, of Zeno. Droysen has no doubt that the movement was inspired by Stoicism, which had now been taught for a whole generation at Athens, and was diffused through all Hellas by the students who had flocked from every quarter to the intellectual metropolis, as well as by Arcesilaus, the high-minded scholarch of the Middle Academy.[1] Not that Zeno himself was an enthusiast for republican liberty; the tenour of his doctrine was rather favourable to monarchy, and he was personally the friend and confidant of King Antigonus Gonatas, against whom this rising was directed. But the lessons of moral earnestness and zeal once learned cannot be appropriated by any political party; they can, however, raise partisanship to a higher level by investing it with the authority of a divine mandate or consecrating it to the service of an impersonal ideal. Thus the modern Stoicism of Carlyle[2] gave fresh energy to aspirations that he misunderstood or despised; and at the moment when the master was inditing his *American Iliad in a Nutshell* many of his unknown disciples may have been dying in order that human beings should not be engaged as servants for life against their will.

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[1] According to Beloch (III., p. 582), the Gauls actually took and plundered Delphi; but, as they were subsequently defeated by the Greeks, the Apollo retains its symbolic value.

The Chremonidean war only served to rivet the Macedonian yoke more firmly on the necks of the Athenians. But the emancipating movement spread like wildfire in the Peloponnesus. Two disciples of Arcesilaus, Ecdemus and Demophanes, slew the unlawful ruler of their native city Megalopolis, and restored it to freedom; they then aided Aratus in achieving the still more glorious deliverance of Sicyon, and finally, at the invitation of Cyrene, crossed the sea to give that great African colony the blessing of an orderly republican government.[1] Federation, an entirely new political experiment, was tried with success by the famous Achaian League; its President, Aratus, drove the Macedonian garrison from Corinth, and gave Athens the independence that she could not achieve for herself. How high the tide of enthusiasm was running appears from the story of Lydiades, a noble youth who, having possessed himself of supreme power in Megalopolis, and exercised it some years for the public good, voluntarily surrendered his autocracy and descended to the rank of a private citizen, whence he was soon raised by the free votes of the people to the presidency of the Achaian League.

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[1] *Geschichte des Hellenismus,* III., pp. 228 *sqq.*

[2] Of course this is not to be understood as meaning that Carlyle was a Stoic in *practice*.

So far philosophy had done wonders, but its greatest triumph still remained to win. This was the reconstitution of the Spartan State. One of the most curious chapters in the history of speculation relates to the use made of Sparta and her institutions in the schools of Athens. Professor Edward Caird has called attention, from a Hegelian point of view, to the remarkable union in Rousseau's mind of faith in nature with faith in education.[2] Just the same combination was exhibited by Rousseau's Greek predecessors; and as they found a model of uncorrupted natural virtue in Scythia, so they found an equally perfect model of artificial training in Sparta. It was supposed that the much-admired system which produced a Leonidas and a Gorgo, an Argileonis and a Brasidas, had been created in all its pieces by the legislator Lycurgus and preserved intact during several centuries after his death. But in truth the educational and semi-socialistic romance that we read in Plutarch, while it embodies some features common to the more primitive Dorian tribes, was in great part evolved out of their own moral consciousness by several generations of philosophers. Lycurgus is a pure myth, the human incarnation of an old Spartan god;[1] the equal division of land attributed to him no doubt represents an actual distribution of conquered territory among the predatory warriors who had established themselves by the Eurotas; but we have no reason to believe that a permanent equality of landed property was legally provided for; at any rate, in the historical period we find the distinction between rich and poor as sharply emphasised at Sparta as anywhere else.[2]

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[1] Polybius, X., 22. The reference is wrongly given in Droysen.

[2] *Essays on Literature and Philosophy*, I., 120 *sqq.*

The Greeks are a people who have always been more influenced by memory or hope than by immediate reality, and neither the complete overthrow of Sparta by Epaminondas nor her subsequent isolation from Panhellenic politics detracted anything from the traditional adoration paid her by popular rhetoricians and philosophical historians who continued freely adding to the picture of her primitive perfection. At last the glamour that she had so long exercised on others was reflected back on herself, and the fictitious legislation of Lycurgus was taken up in all seriousness by her more educated children as a charter still claiming their obedience and support. A reform of some kind was, indeed, imperatively needed, for the concentration of property in a few hands, everywhere a pressing evil, had been carried further, perhaps, in Sparta than in any other Greek state, and was eating away what still remained of her defensive military power. A modern historian has explained this economic revolution by the peculiar position that Sparta occupied as an emporium for what was then a kind of merchandise in extensive request—namely, mercenary soldiers.[1] Then, as always, the Peloponnesus supplied the best material of this description, and the *condottieri* who dealt in it brought enormous sums of money into the country. But not many benefited by the traffic. While the ruling class in Sparta had dwindled to seven hundred families, only a hundred of these possessed any property whatever. The young king Agis proposed to remedy this state of things by abolishing debts and dividing the land among the poorer citizens and the Periœcians. He led the way by surrendering to the State his own vast estates, together with personal property to the value of six hundred talents (£150,000). Some members of the royal family and some leading politicians were won over to the scheme, which at first seemed to carry all before it. But Agesilaus, the young king's uncle, was only anxious for the abolition of debts, in which he was personally interested, and found means to postpone the division of land, by which he would have been a loser. Meanwhile the Conservatives rallied their forces, a reaction set in, and Agis was seized by the Ephors and strangled in prison, together with his mother and grandmother. His widow Agiatis, the richest heiress in Sparta, was obliged to marry Cleomenes, son of King Leonidas, the official head of the reactionary party. But the noble Queen contrived to inoculate her young husband with the ideas of the martyred Agis; and the teaching of his heroic mother Cratesicleia was doubtless thrown into the same scale. Nor was his mind only subjected to the passionate impulses of feminine affection and grief; a higher and steadier discipline lent its aid to the great work.

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[1] I am aware that an attempt has recently been made to vindicate his historical reality.

[2] Pöhlmann, *ut ante*, p. 102.

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[1] Holm, *Griechische Geschichte,* IV., p. 287.

If in the case of Agis we can only assign to philosophy a remote and general influence, in so far as his animating ideals were a creation of thought, in the case of Cleomenes it becomes a direct and demonstrable agency. One of Zeno's most eminent disciples, a certain Sphærus, was at that time living in Sparta. He came from a Greek colony on the northern shore of the Euxine, and had grown up in the neighbourhood of those Scythians whose primitive communism excited such admiration in the schools of Athens. Among his numerous treatises, one on *Socrates and Lycurgus* and another on *The Laconian Constitution* are mentioned. This man became the intimate friend of Cleomenes, and assisted him in planning the great reforms which the young king, on gaining supreme power, pressed through with relentless vigour. For details I must refer to the stirring narrative of Plutarch. The agrarian reforms are carried out in the teeth of all opposition; a new body of stalwart citizen-soldiers is created; city after city opens its gates to the champion of the poor; Sparta resumes her old place as the leading state in Peloponnesus, in all free Hellas; her victorious king hopes to supersede the clever but cowardly Aratus as president of the Achaian League. Then comes the fatal reaction. Those who had hoped for a general abolition of debt turn against the reformer whose measures were dictated only by the public interest; Aratus, to his eternal shame, purchases the help of a Macedonian army against Cleomenes by surrendering the Acrocorinthus to Antigonus Doson. Defeated in battle, and already heart-broken by the loss of his adored wife Agiatis, the Spartan king refuses to end his sufferings by suicide. The sayings put into the mouths of great men are generally apocryphal; but the sentiment attributed to Cleomenes on this occasion is at least characteristic of the Stoic philosophy in which he had been bred. When urged to choose death rather than an ignominious flight to Egypt, he answered, as Plutarch tells us, that it is disgraceful either to live or to die for ourselves alone. But Egypt, as usual, proved a broken reed, and Cleomenes perished in an attempt to rouse the Greek population of Alexandria against its effeminate tyrant. The reformed constitution of his beloved Sparta had already been destroyed by Antigonus.

These events occurred between the years 243 and 221 B.C. Less than a century later a series of events took place in Rome offering such a close resemblance to the agrarian revolution in Sparta that, were not the historical reality of both proved by irrefragable evidence, we might almost suppose the one story to be a replica of the other. I refer, of course, to the reforms of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. Again, we find a generous, enthusiastic, and high-born young man seeking to rescue the pauperised masses from their degradation by the re-enactment of an obsolete law; again, the first reforming effort is stifled by illegal violence in the blood of its originator; again, it is resumed by a younger and far stronger successor, the transition being this time also effected through the instrumentality of a woman, the illustrious Cornelia; again, after a brief and brilliant period of success, the democratic autocracy succumbs to an energetic reaction of the propertied classes, passively aided by a fickle populace. But what interests us most of all is to observe that the Gracchi also were prepared for their generous enterprise by a Stoic philosopher, the Cuman Blossius, a pupil of the great school of Tarsus—"no mean city"—whose intellectual atmosphere was destined to exert an incalculable action on the Apostle Paul. Here, then, we have a signal corroboration of the historical deduction that seeks in Greek philosophy, and more especially in Stoicism, or more generally in the physiocratic school, for a key to the systematic socialistic enterprises of antiquity.

It cannot be said that the result of those enterprises was in any way satisfactory. Discord, bloodshed, anarchy, and despotism were their most evident fruits. The movement set on foot by Agis was followed by nearly a century of class-warfare, that at last necessitated the armed intervention of Rome and the reduction of the Peloponnesus under her sway. In Rome itself the period of civil wars dates from Tiberius Gracchus. In so far as they contributed to the foundation of the empire, we have no reason to complain of the result, but it was one that he never anticipated; while the distributions of cheap corn introduced by his brother Gaius proved a permanent source of demoralisation to imperial, as well as to republican, Rome.

Socialism as we know it to-day is lineally connected through French and German thought with the socialism of the Greek naturalists. There is, however, at least one marked distinction between the two, corresponding to the different forms of society that gave them birth. Ours is of the industrial, theirs of the military type. Every ancient city-state was more or less in the position of a besieged garrison or of a predatory band, and for the officers to appropriate most of the rations and all the booty was not only unjust, but suicidal. Cleomenes had for his sole object to restore the military supremacy of Sparta; the Gracchi must certainly have wished to recruit the population, and with it the armed strength of Italy. Hence, the redistribution of land was their watchword, capital being associated in their minds, not with the payment of low wages to the poor by the rich, but with the payment of high interest to the rich by the poor. The inference is obvious. If socialism failed to make way under a *régime* with which it had a natural affinity, its chances must be still weaker under an industrial and capitalist *régime.*

The social influence of philosophy in Greece is far from being exhausted by the humanitarian tendencies of the fourth century and the agrarian movement of the third century. The great part played by women in the Spartan revolution belongs, I think, to a very much wider movement, inaugurated and sustained by philosophy. But this is a subject on which I am not now prepared to enter.

THE ALLEGED SOCIALISM OF THE PROPHETS[1]

M. ERNEST RENAN'S *History of the People of Israel* is a disappointing work. Of course, it has great merits. M. Renan can write well on any subject, and any man of ability can write well about the events recorded in the Old Testament. The book contains eloquent passages, masterly sketches of character, flashes of profound historical insight, and renderings from Hebrew poetry, such as might have been expected from the pre-eminent translator of Job. Some at least of the results of modern criticism are distilled into as easy reading as the feuilleton of a Parisian newspaper. Above all, the whole subject is treated with a freshness and freedom that it would be vain to expect even in the most unfettered theological professor. Still, we expected something more from M. Renan. As a Semitic specialist, a historian, and a philosopher, he might have added somewhat to our knowledge of Hebrew life and thought. Not only has he added nothing, he has not shown himself on a level with the best knowledge of the age. According to Professor Robertson Smith, he "simply ignores the more modern criticism."[2] A notion has somehow got abroad that the author of the *Vie de Jésus* represents the extreme of negation in questions connected with the Biblical narratives. In fact, the leanings of M. Renan, like those of his countrymen generally, are to the conservative side. It will be remembered how through a dozen editions of the *Vie de Jésus* he upheld the apostolic authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and I do not know that he has ever given up the passage about Jesus Christ in Josephus. There is in truth a good deal of eighteenth-century rationalism about this author, a summary *à priori* rejection of the miraculous element combined with a rather uncritical acceptance of the narratives in which miracles occur; hence the effort to explain miracles as natural events, and, where this method cannot be successfully applied, the tendency to charge the narrators of such events with sheer, deliberate fraud.

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[1] Written in 1893.

[2] *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church,* 2nd ed., p. 392.

It is not, however, of what M. Renan has left out that we have to complain so much as of what he has put in; or, perhaps, the less admirable side of his work might be summed up in a single phrase, "playing to the gallery." His audience consists very largely of persons whom I desire to mention with all respect—persons of the brightest intelligence, and, at least in the things of the intellect, of the most delicate taste. To their exacting demands, to their keen appreciation of what is excellent in style and brilliant in ideation, we owe the lucidity of French prose, the ingenuity and grace of French literature. Their opinion of a new play or a new novel is most valuable, and even on subjects requiring a certain amount of scholarship it is not to be despised. But you must not tell them to take much trouble; they like to think that their author is deeply read and laborious, but the result must be put before them in a finished form, and it is only in their appreciation of form that they are severe. Inaccurate or inconsistent statements are allowed to pass under cover of epigrammatic phrases, and the critic that exposed them would forfeit his reputation for good breeding.

For the last thirty years M. Renan has been falling more and more under the influence of such a public as I have described. His first popularity was won by no unworthy acts; it came to him unsought, and, one fancies, as a not altogether agreeable surprise. As a seminarist he had learned to despise the lay public, and he has recently let us know that his sentiments towards them still savour of sacerdotal scorn. As a professor of Hebrew he has never, like some of his colleagues, laid himself out to attract the large mixed audiences that infest the lecture-rooms of Paris. It was not his fault if he wrote in a style of unrivalled delicacy and distinction, or if his profoundly disinterested historical studies supplied new weapons to the anti-clericalists with whom he sympathised rather less than with their opponents. But no man can be popular with impunity; common politeness seems to require one to take into consideration the tastes and wishes of one's most numerous admirers. M. Renan has never, I think, quite equalled either in expression or in thought the essays published a few years before his *Vie de Jésus*, and then only known to a select few. In comparing the later with the earlier volumes of his great work on the history of primitive Christianity, can one escape the impression of an increasing vulgarity, a growing sensationalism, and a tendency to enlarge on scenes of lubricity and horror? The unfortunate series of dramatic attempts beginning with *Caliban*, and culminating in *L'Abbesse de Jouarre*, are only explicable on the theory that the great religious historian wished to win the applause of a class for whom the liveliest work on religion is not exciting enough. In the work of which I write, the *History of Israel*, the desire to please *les honnêtes gens*, as they are called in France—not, by any means, necessarily "honest people," but rather what we call "nice people," accomplished men and women of the world—has produced the most mischievous results. Unlike Carlyle's horse, M. Renan thinks that his first duty is to say clever things, and his efforts in this direction are not always very fortunate. At his best, no one has ever shown such perfect delicacy of touch, but he exercises this gift only on the condition of treating serious subjects in a serious manner. The gay Voltairean mockery that he sometimes affects does not seem to come natural to him; it sounds like the light talk of a heavy man; often flippancy has to do duty for wit.

This, however, is a mere matter of taste, and has little to do with the intrinsic value of the work. What the reader has to complain of is a thorough-going perversion of history in the interest of a flimsy theory. One might have expected from M. Renan a satisfactory treatment of the prophets of Israel. He is fully alive to their importance. He fully accepts the modern view of their teaching as the very soul of Hebrew history, and its highest documentary evidence as the first proclamation of absolute monotheism, the first ethical interpretation of religion, the immediate and adequate antecedent of Christianity. To many his account of the prophets came as a revelation. Professor James Darmesteter tells us that even the *boulevardiers* were, for a moment, thrilled by the vision of those Titanic figures with their awful denunciations of idolatry and oppression, of selfish luxury and shameless vice. But I fear that the historian of Israel caught the ear of the *boulevardier* by accommodating himself freely to the language and sentiments of that cheerful and pleasure-loving personage, the modern Parisian equivalent of "the man about town." M. Renan has elsewhere told a certain story about a country curé who preached on the Passion of Jesus Christ in such moving terms that the whole congregation were melted into tears. "Do not weep, my children," exclaimed the kind old man, in much concern at their grief; "all this happened a long time ago, and perhaps it is not quite true either." It sometimes looks as if he had taken a leaf out of that excellent curé's book. The *boulevardier* must not make himself too anxious. Let him bear in mind that the prophets were very uncivilised persons, without a notion of politeness, who wrote a long time ago, "when morality needed to be affirmed and established." It will relieve him to hear that moral rigorism, although, after all, it was once of use, "now does humanity nearly as much harm as good."[1] Professor Darmesteter, who is a friend and admirer of M. Renan, might profit more by the master's example. He actually quotes Jeremiah's fierce sarcasm about "every man neighing after his neighbour's wife" as "an excellent description of the drama and fiction of our own day."

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[1] III., p. 155.

Not only did the prophets live a long time ago (before morality became superfluous), but the *boulevardier* may be comforted by the assurance that what they said was not quite true. "There is great exaggeration in the picture drawn by Amos of the crimes committed in the palace of Samaria. ......His ideas about rich scoundrels, thieving merchants, men of business, and monopolisers of corn, are those of a man of the people without any knowledge of political economy"[1] One cannot help being reminded of the same writer's remarks on the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans explaining the apostle's terrible picture of heathen vices, by his complete ignorance of good society.[2] St. Paul, we are told, entertained much the same absurdly exaggerated ideas about the debaucheries of the higher classes that an honest and simple-minded Socialist working man entertains now. I should not give much for the morals of good society in our own time if they at all resemble what we know to have been the habits of Græco-Roman society on the evidence of writers who had every opportunity for observing and not the slightest motive for maligning it. The secular literature of Samaria has perished, nor do we know what sort of songs those were that her nobles sang on their ivory couches; but the testimony of the other prophets, some of whom mingled freely in court-circles, goes to confirm the denunciations of Amos.[3] When the shepherd of Tekoa raises his voice against the oppression of the poor, he is silenced in the same off-hand manner. What he describes as monstrosities are, it seems, simply the plainest social necessities — lending money on security, payment of debts, and taxation. To the *boulevardier*, living under tolerably just laws tolerably well administered, the answer may seem conclusive; but a scholar and an Eastern traveller ought not to be so limited in his ideas. M. Renan must surely know that taxation may be so adjusted as to become an instrument of the most hateful oppression, and that, though it may be a social necessity, it has over and over again endangered the very existence of society. We know no more of Ephraim than Amos and Hosea tell us; but, fortunately, we are in a position to study the early history of Athens and Rome, the late history of the Roman Empire, the antecedents of the French Revolution, and the contemporary administration of Asiatic despotism—notably of Egypt before the English occupation—in the light of information that is above suspicion. From the Eupatrides to the pashas, every governing class invested with absolute power and unrestrained by moral scruples not only drains the people of their life-blood, it also brings the State to destruction unless it is saved by some such measure as Solon's partial cancelling of debts, the Licinian Rogations, or the Revolution of '89. For the indebtedness of the poorer classes is a direct consequence of the exorbitant taxes levied on them by the rich, to meet which they have to borrow money at usurious interest, at first to the no small profit of their oppressors, who continue to grow richer, while their subject grows poorer, until the weakening of the foundation involves the whole edifice in ruin. Thus the artisan or peasant sees his tools and household goods wrung from him bit by bit, while the fruits of his industry, exchanged for foreign luxuries, are wasted in unproductive expenditure. The political economist would be faithless to common honesty if he condoned the rapine, whether lawless or legalised, by which the wealth of the Ephraimite nobles was acquired, and faithless to the principles of his own science if he sanctioned the vulgar ostentation and the vile sensuality to gratify which it was wasted. Luxury has been defended in modern times on the ground that it checks the growth of population. The practices described by Amos and Hosea would assuredly have that effect; but to check the growth of population was simple suicide among a handful of highland clans struggling for existence against the armies of Damascus and Assyria.

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[1] II., p. 432.

[2] *Les Apôtres*, p. 309.

[3] Cf. Hosea iv. and Isaiah xxviii.

So far there is no difficulty in understanding the attitude of the prophets towards the rich and powerful class. An elementary knowledge of history explains it, and a deeper knowledge can but confirm the explanation. But M. Renan is quite put out by this attitude ; this is not exactly the language that he or his friend the *boulevardier* would hear uttered in a fashionable Parisian pulpit. Strange to say, the spokesmen of God did not think twice before they damned persons of that quality. But a solution of the mystery is forthcoming. "The most deeply rooted idea of those old times," he informs us, "is that there are poor people because there are rich people......wealth being always the fruit of injustice."[1] Only a single fact is cited in proof of this sweeping assertion. Travelling in the East, M. Renan was once particularly struck by the goodness of the inhabitants of a certain village where he had spent the night. "It is because they are poor," explained his dragoman.[2] Probably the dragoman was right. One may experience the same contrast without going beyond Southern Europe. But to say that wealth produces wickedness is not to say that wickedness produces wealth. Of all authorities, the Hebrew Scriptures, with their not very refined doctrine of material and temporal rewards and punishments, seem least to sanction such an idea. The Book of Job, that admirable compendium of Hebrew philosophy, furnishes us with an excellent test-instance. Job has fallen from the greatest prosperity into extreme destitution and suffering. His friends are most anxious to prove that the catastrophe is due to some fault of his own. What then, on M. Renan's principle, would be more natural for them to urge than that the very fact of his having been so rich proves him to have been a public robber? Now it is true that Eliphaz the Temanite advances an argument (Job xxii. 5–10) tending this way; but Job victoriously asserts his innocence against this as against all the other purely constructive accusations of his friends. Alike in the stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph, written down shortly before the appearance of the first literary prophets, and in the character of the virtuous woman,[3] composed after prophecy had died out, we find the same intimate association between wealth and worth.

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[1] II., pp. 424, 425.

[2] III., p. 38.

[3] Proverbs xxxi. The character of the successful woman of

If the East can supply no parallel instances of such wanton attacks on the established social order, such denunciations of the rich simply because they are better off than other people, as the oldest written prophecies are here interpreted to be, the West comes to the rescue with illustrations of a kind peculiarly intelligible to a Parisian reader. The prophets were "radical and revolutionary journalists, declaiming their articles in the street. ......The first chapter of Amos is the first opposition leader that was ever published," and Amos himself the father of all such as contribute to the subversive press.[1] Like the modern Nihilist, the Hebrew thinker held that if the world cannot be just it had better not exist.[2] But by justice the prophets mean Socialism, and "Socialism is of Hebrew origin. It has regard above all things to strict justice, and to the happiness of the greatest number."[3] It is a point of honour with M. Renan to contradict himself frequently, and isolated phrases of his must not be taken too seriously; but here he carries on the same idea from volume to volume, and when the scene changes from Samaria to the Southern kingdom we are again assured that "*mutatis mutandis* Socialism comes to us from Jerusalem."[4] "The Jahvism of the prophets of Judah is essentially a social religion; its object is the reformation of society in accordance with justice."[5] "The Judaism

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business, in that very *bourgeois* novel, Ohnet's *Serge Panine*, seems to have been taken straight from this Judaic ideal.

[1] II., pp. 422, 425.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 438.

[3] P. 541.

[4] III., p. 2.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

of the eighth century was a theocratic democracy, a religion consisting almost entirely in social questions."[1] "The party that supported this ideal of religious Puritanism was hostile to the secular power *(l'état laïque)*, opposed to military preparations, and would hear of nothing but social and religious reforms."[2] "Jeremiah was much less interested than his predecessors in the social question,"[3] but he certainly contributed his share to its solution if, as the historian bluntly expresses himself, he was "the soul of the fraud" by which Deuteronomy was palmed off on Josiah and the people as the last Tora of Moses[4]; and Deuteronomy was an attempt to put the new ideas into practice, "the programme of a sort of theocratic Socialism, merging the interest of the individual in that of the collective mass."[5] I cannot say whether we are to understand the Levitical law, framed during the Captivity, as a contrast to or a continuation of Deuteronomy, when we find its object stated to be "the happiness of the individual guaranteed by the social group to which he belongs";[6] nor, again, is it easy to see how the Semitic thirst for justice implies egoism,[7] if ignoring the individual was a part of its programme under Josiah; but this is possibly a specimen of the noble daring with which a man of genius sets himself above logic.

It seems, indeed, very hard to study the prophets in a disinterested, historical spirit. For a long time exegesis was thoroughly perverted by the attempt to read into them a complete system of Christology, including both the biography of Jesus and the metaphysical doctrines of his followers. Then followed a period, the last days of which some of us can remember, when their pages were ransacked for predictions of a future that never came and never will come, or when the events of modern history were read out of symbols that find their adequate interpretation in reminiscences of the prophet's own experience. It is said that Wilberforce, the anti-slavery statesman, having ascertained to his own satisfaction that the little horn in Daniel meant Bonaparte, rushed into Pitt's cabinet with the exciting intelligence. "Good God, sir," exclaimed the much-tried Minister, "do you call Bonaparte a *little* horn?" More recently, in accordance with that law by which supernatural beliefs become ever more degraded and grotesque as they are abandoned to a lower class of believers, we have witnessed that monstrous product of ignorance, fanaticism, and delirious racial vanity, the derivation of the Anglo-Saxon people from the lost tribes of Israel, presented as the clue to prophetic literature. Scarcely less preposterous, and, considering the scholarship of its author, still more astonishing, is the view that parallels the preaching of righteousness with the utterances of that sinister press which begins with Henri Rochefort and ends with Ravachol. No doubt there are analogies between a chapter of Amos or Isaiah and an anarchist article. Both are short, and both contain violent denunciations of the rich. But while the resemblances go no farther, the contrasts are nearly inexhaustible. Let us begin with the most obvious, though not the most important. To the journalist the very condition of success is that his paper shall be popular. The prophet, too, had to draw an audience, and, as M. Renan points out, he sometimes attracted it by sufficiently strange methods of self-advertisement. But he depended neither on their plaudits nor on their pence, and therefore, unlike the democratic journalist, he could speak the whole truth, or what seemed to him the truth, without adulteration or reserve. In this respect the Neapolitan capuchin, to whom M. Renan also compares him,[1] occupies an equally independent position; but there is the enormous difference that the capuchin belongs to a vast organisation of immense antiquity. He occupies a place in its hierarchy, and is amenable to his official superiors; he fights for their aggrandisement, and his successes score as points in their game. In a less degree the same remark applies to the revolutionary journalist. He also has an organised party behind him, who shelter him in adversity and give him a share of the spoils when they win. Any day he may be carried into place or power by a wave of popular feeling as Rochefort was in 1870, as he would again have been had General Boulanger triumphed in the elections of 1889.

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[1] P. 41. [2] P. 96. [3] P. 154. [4] P. 209.

[5] P. 229. The exact words are: "*procédant par la solidarité, ignorant l'individu.*"

[6] P. 427. [7] P. 496.

The great prophets were essentially independent of all such corporate obligations and party ties, and above them. It was the fashion not long ago, and still is in certain quarters, to speak of them as an organised body in the Israelite or Jewish community, actuated by a spirit of jealousy towards the priesthood, and forming a centre of opposition to its claims. All such ideas have been finally dispelled by the great critical discoveries of the last generation, which prove that the priesthood itself as a powerful hereditary corporation did not exist until after the return from Babylon, and was then rather the creation than the opponent of prophetism. Schools of the prophets there undoubtedly were, but they seem to have resembled the dancing dervishes of our own day rather than the great writers to whom we now give the name, and who, indeed, included them in a common denunciation with the corrupt nobles and priests. Speaking for himself, Amos indignantly repudiated all connection with the guild. When Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, bade him "flee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there"—turn an honest penny by lecturing, as we should say—he answered: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees, and Iahveh took me from following the flock, and Iahveh said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." In like manner Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel describe themselves as receiving individual, unexpected, and even unwelcome calls. No doubt, like the journalist, the capuchin, the socialist agitator—one may perhaps add the temperance lecturer—they spoke and wrote as the mouthpieces of a cause infinitely higher and greater than themselves. The vital difference was that they bore no party banner, that they preached no partial reform. They were animated and borne up in death-defying courage and faith by the vital, victorious spirit of Israel as a nation without distinction of class or tribe, and —mounting higher, further still—by the spirit of the world as a whole without distinction of imperial or vassal states.

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[1] II., p. 423.

Hence follows another fundamental contrast. The journalist is almost always, from the nature of his calling, a revolutionist—sometimes of the mild and sleepy type that prefers lying on the left to lying on the right side, or *vice versâ;* sometimes of the violent and furious type that would turn the house upside down; but always a revolutionist in the sense of desiring a transfer of power. We are all unhappily familiar with the method employed for accomplishing this end—a perpetual, microscopic criticism of the words and actions of the office-holders for the time being, varied by corresponding puffery of their rivals, and promises of the great things they will do when their innings comes, and seasoned by appeals to the lowest passions of human nature, to the impulses of destructiveness and greed. Far otherwise was it with the prophets. Like true Orientals, they recognise only one form of government, an absolute monarchy, and their evident wish is that it should be transmitted by hereditary succession. I speak only of the writing prophets, not of those earlier half-legendary seers —Samuel, Ahijah, Elisha—who were always pulling down one king and setting up another. How different was the spirit of Hosea ; with what feelings he contemplated the treacherous massacres that accompanied the overthrow of the house of

Omri—massacres evidently condoned or approved by Elisha—may be seen from the name given to his child: "Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu." The experience of two centuries had taught the prophets the uselessness, and worse than uselessness, of merely replacing one dynasty by another; and they were deeply impressed by the tranquillity of Judah under the legitimate sceptre of the house of David. Nor did they believe much in a change of ministry. Only on a single occasion did Isaiah interfere to effect the substitution of one high official for another. Being much displeased with the conduct of a certain Shebna, who was so confident of holding office for his whole lifetime as to begin hewing out a sepulchre for himself, apparently within the precincts of the royal palace, the prophet, speaking in the name of Iahveh, recommended that he should be replaced by Eliakim. M. Renan refers invidiously to this passage as a puffing advertisement (*réclame*) of Eliakim; yet he candidly admits that, if Shebna had not been counterbalanced by Isaiah, Jerusalem under Hezekiah would probably have shared the fate of Samaria. We shall have to consider later the importance of the part played by the prophets as political advisers. We are dealing now with their general attitude towards the community and the state. Here Isaiah's interference on behalf of Eliakim is, as I have said, a solitary exception to the rule they generally observed of leaving the constitution of society as they found it, while inculcating on all classes the same principles of purity, justice, and mercy. To speak of their ideal as in any sense democratic betrays a thorough confusion of Western with Eastern, of modern with ancient modes of thought and action. Amos and Isaiah had no notion of setting class against class, or of putting themselves at the head of a popular faction to redress the wrongs of the oppressed. M. Renan does indeed fancy that he has discovered the existence of such a faction under Hezekiah, calling themselves the *anavim*, or poor and needy; he quotes long passages from the Psalter, giving expression to their enmities and their griefs;[1] but here, again, we see the danger of ignoring the results of criticism. In the opinion of the best judges the Psalms referred to, so far from belonging to the age of Isaiah, date from a period not less than two hundred, and possibly three or even four hundred years later. Indeed, M. Renan himself, with his usual candour, reminds us that the word *anavim* is never used by Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Nothing can well be imagined more wearisome and profitless than an old newspaper article; in many instances nothing could seem more hollow or insincere. To this rule the articles of an irreconcilable French journalist offer no exception. How artificial is the indignation! How shameless the misrepresentation of facts! How poisonous the misconstruction of motives! The words of the prophets, on the other hand, have continued through all ages as fresh as when they were first uttered, and even now, when we no longer regard them as magical revelations of the unseen world, they are studied with unabated interest. This is a point on which I need not enlarge, as their claim to a superhuman origin is now most frequently rested on their marvellous power over the conscience and the imagination. They have earned an immortal life because the men who uttered those words rose far above all the petty and partial and transitory antagonisms by which the ingenious French historian would explain their activity.

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[1] III., pp. 41, 45 *sqq.*

M. Renan urges that the prophets resemble the radical journalists of our day in the vagueness of their charges and the violence of their declamations.[1] Some of their charges sound distinct enough, and are reproduced with amplifications by himself. "The administration of justice was the greatest curse of the age; false witness was the commonest thing in the world; thus the dominant party held the lives of its adversaries in its hands." Very true; but observe what follows: "The fanatical party (Isaiah and his friends) did not fail to use this means of ridding themselves of their enemies."[2] Not a tittle of evidence is adduced in support of this accusation, which I quote only to show the animus of the writer. On two occasions Jeremiah specifies the grievances of the oppressed poor plainly enough. At a time of utter destitution and imminent danger of complete national ruin, when Pharaoh Necho had stripped the country of its gold and silver, King Jehoiakim found nothing better to do than to build a new palace of the costliest materials and on the largest scale. He either employed forced labour, or refused to pay his workmen their stipulated wages, thereby bringing down on himself a stern and well-merited rebuke from Jeremiah. It seems incredible, but it is a fact that the effeminate tyrant finds an apologist in the philosophical historian, to whom ruinous luxury seems meritorious as a protest against moral rigour. M. Renan is good enough to admit that "*if* Jehoiakim left his workmen unpaid he was certainly in the wrong," but hastens to add that, "when we find those that now give work to the people habitually spoken of as robbers by the organs of the democracy, we become cautious about putting faith in such allegations."[1] This new method of writing history savours somewhat of reasoning in a circle. First the prophets are likened to radical journalists, and then they are assumed to speak according to the same standards of veracity and good sense. The contrast drawn by Jeremiah between Jehoiakim and his father, the great reformer Josiah, gives his critic occasion for a not very creditable sneer. "Did not thy father," says the prophet, "eat and drink and do judgment and justice? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well." How, it is asked, can Josiah be called happy when he was killed at Megiddo? Strange that a Frenchman of Athenian culture should call any life unhappy that ended with a heroic death on the battlefield.

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[1] II., p. 493.

[2] III., p. 124.

Despite repeated warnings from Jeremiah, who alone had courage and foresight enough to speak unwelcome truths, Zedekiah revolted against his lawful suzerain, Nebuchadrezzar, and speedily found his capital invested by a Babylonian army. The Jewish king, in his terror, proclaimed the emancipation of all the Hebrew men and women who were at that time held in bondage. It appears that this was no more than the remedy for a grievous wrong, for the year of Jubilee was passed, and by the Deuteronomic law they were entitled to their freedom; which, however, on this occasion seems to have been only granted on condition that they should join in the defence of the city. The decree was obeyed; but soon afterwards Nebuchadrezzar raised the siege, and the freedmen were again reduced to slavery by their former owners. Then the avenging voice of the prophet made itself heard in accents of terrific sarcasm: "Thus saith Iahveh: Ye have not hearkened unto me to proclaim liberty, every man to his brother, and every man to his neighbour; behold I proclaim unto you a liberty, saith Iahveh, to the sword, to the pestilence, and to the famine.......And I will give the men that have transgressed my covenant......when they cut the calf in twain and passed between the parts thereof, the princes of Judah and the princes of Jerusalem, the eunuchs, and the priests, and all the people of the land......I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and......of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven and to the beasts of the earth" (Jer. xxxiv. 17–20). It is admitted that this time the indignation of the prophet was

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[1] III., p. 274.

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[1] III., p. 358.

perfectly justified.[1] Yet one fails to see how, on M. Renan's principles, the whole story is to escape suspicion, or why the breach of faith should not be excused on grounds of State necessity. Meantime I must ask the reader to bear in mind the latter part of the quotation, as it will be referred to in the sequel.

If, however, it could be shown that the prophets were Socialists—if, that is to say, their quarrel was not with the abuses and corruptions, but with the very structure and foundation, of civilisation as they knew it—then, indeed, our estimate of their trustworthiness, of their ethical value, and of their historical importance would be seriously affected. More than this, we should have to frame a new philosophy of history, race, and religion—a philosophy that would claim for Judæa, for the Semites, for monotheism, what has hitherto been claimed for republican Athens and Rome, for the Aryans, for free Hellenic speculation. So great a change in opinion could be justified only by the strongest arguments. But M. Renan, after his manner, produces no arguments at all—gives us nothing more than repeated assertions. If he should live to write the history of Greece, we may expect to find him making assertions of a directly opposite tendency, which will then have the advantage of being true. For we are in a position to show that the prophets were not Socialists in any sense of the word; that Socialism had never dawned on their horizon; that it was, on the contrary, a creation of the Greek genius, and an outgrowth of democratic institutions.

Socialism is now generally understood to mean the abolition or restriction of private property, in order to the more equal diffusion of wealth and happiness through the entire community.[1] The question whether such an arrangement is practicable or desirable need not delay us here. The important thing is that we should distinguish it from all legislation directed towards the protection of the poor against the fraud or violence of the rich, and against administrative oppression, as well as from all exhortations to private charity. A very little consideration will enable us to perceive that Socialism, so understood, can be developed only at a late stage of civilisation. Property must have come to be clearly distinguished from its owners—not such an easy process as some may imagine; attention must have been called to the moral evils arising out of its appropriation by a few, a high ideal of disinterestedness must have been framed, if it is hoped that the rich will voluntarily surrender a part of their superfluities; or a high degree of concerted action must have become possible among the poor if it is expected that they will possess themselves by force of what is wanting to them. By a still harder effort of abstraction, men must have learned to distinguish the community as a whole from its component members, and they must have had long experience of a centralised administration successfully managing the affairs of the nation, before they feel disposed to trust it with the office of regulating industry and distributing its fruits where they are needed. Only in the centres of Western civilisation has such an elaboration of ideas ever been possible. An equally important consideration is that entertainment of them implies a transformation of theological beliefs wholly inconsistent with Eastern habits of thought. Men must have convinced themselves that the social organism is a machine that they have created for themselves, and can alter at their own discretion, rather than a divine creation to be altered only at the good pleasure of God. The more primitive faith has hopes of its own, but they are not hopes that take the direction of Socialism. God can create wealth to any extent; therefore he can supply the wants of the poor without depriving the rich of their property. According to the Messianic visions of the prophets, this is exactly what he will do at last. Meantime they invoke his retributive justice to punish the rich for depriving the poor of *their* property. For there comes a period in the history of every community when this worst of all iniquities is habitually perpetrated—when the suppression of it is the one engrossing problem of human thought. On the diverging methods adopted for its solution the future courses of theology and politics once depended.

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[1] Written in 1892. The word most generally used now is "Collectivism."

The pinch of poverty makes itself felt at an early stage of social progress. But the remedy first tried is the occupation of more fertile land—a process generally accompanied by the destruction or enslavement of its previous possessors. When the simultaneous expansion and mutual pressure of the various tribes has restricted each within certain limits, government and religion become organised. Kings and gods are then looked on as a refuge for the distressed, and are freely exchanged for others when they fail to give satisfaction. After a time the notion of law becomes dissociated from its human enactors, and is placed under the guardianship of superhuman beings, who are credited with the origination of this as of every other institution. The divine power, being plastic to reason, is thought of as perfectly just; while sad experience shows that human powers are too often the contrary. When the military class has become differentiated from the industrial class, and governmental functions are monopolised by the former, their increased authority is pretty sure to be exercised for their own profit, and the more so as the king, whose weight is ordinarily thrown on the side of the people, sees himself overshadowed or reduced to a puppet by the nobility, and his jurisdiction set at naught by their lawless violence. As appeals were formerly carried against the chiefs to the king, so they are now carried against both to the gods, or to God conceived as the supreme ruler of the world. Such was the stage of social evolution, and such also the moment of reflection reached almost simultaneously by Hesiod in Bœotia and by the older prophets in Samaria and Jerusalem. There was this difference, however: that, as the shadows of actual iniquity were probably much darker in Palestine, the splendours of idealised and personified justice were there more intense, the vision of impending retribution more imminent and appalling than in Hellas. But in both alike oppression seemed the one great evil; and no more appeared to be needed to make men happy than that every one should possess what his fathers had left him, and be permitted to reap the fruits of his labour in peace.

After this the paths of the two races rapidly diverge. In the elegies of Solon we find much the same story of social antagonism as in Amos, with the same protests against the rapacity of the rich. Solon's touching lamentations over the Athenian citizens who were sold away from their homes vividly recall the organised white slave trade between Israel and Tyre.[1] But the remedies adopted differed as widely as the European differs from the Asiatic character. Solon passed an ordinance relieving the oppressed debtors from a considerable portion of their liabilities; and, by giving the people a large share in the government, he guaranteed them against injustice for the future. So much for M. Renan's assertion that "social questions were severely eliminated in the Greek city-state."[2] Had such been the case, Greece could not have "furnished the complete model of a civilised society."[3] It might more reasonably be maintained that in Greece the social question took precedence of every other. The whole object of a Greek democracy was first to secure the poorer classes against oppression, and then to provide for them a larger share of material advantages. In Athens not only was the principal weight of necessary taxation thrown on the rich, but at last, under the pretence of payment for the performance of public functions, the poor were subsidised out of the exchequer and supplied with amusements free of charge, besides being frequently settled as colonists on conquered territory. Complete Communism was the logical outcome of such tendencies; and accordingly we find Communism ironically suggested by Aristophanes, and most seriously adopted by Plato as part of a comprehensive scheme for the reformation of society.[1] Religion was also the subject of Plato's most anxious consideration—a fact which M. Renan must have forgotten when he rashly declared that "social and religious questions escaped the infantile serenity" of the Greek mind. Neither is it true that no protest against slavery came from Greece.[2] On the contrary, we know, by the evidence of Aristotle, that certain Greek philosophers said what no Hebrew prophet had said before them, what no Christian apostle said after them: Slavery is wrong, because all men are naturally free. If we cannot so peremptorily answer the allegation that "Greece did not, among her other great achievements, create humanitarianism; she despised the barbarians too much for that,"[3] it is simply because the evidence in her favour, if adequately presented, would fill a volume. Here I need only observe that the Greek contempt for barbarians opposed no insuperable obstacle to their admission into the ranks of Hellenism; for, according to Isocrates, what made a Hellene was not race, but education. Our own use of the word

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[1] II., p. 427.

[2] III., p. 43.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 91.

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[1] I am aware that in the *Republic* Communism is limited to the guardians of the State, who are necessarily but a small minority of the citizens; but in the *Laws*, while recognising private property as the only practicable arrangement in the actual condition of civilisation, Plato pronounces Communism in the most absolute sense to be the ideally best constitution. And Plato's scheme is always criticised by Aristotle in reference to its universal applicability.

[2] III., p. 91. I am not quite sure whether Renan's words imply as much. In form they are limited to the Homeric age.

[3] *Ibid*, p. 504. *Cf.* the first Essay in this volume.

"barbarous," as synonymous with inhuman, shows how we identify the opposite of barbarism, which is Hellenism, with humanity itself.

The history of the social question in Rome runs for a time much the same course as in Athens. There is at first the same oppression of the poor by the rich,[1] the same redress of grievances through the instrumentality of political institutions, and subsequently the same wholesale maintenance of the necessitous classes at the public expense, the chief difference being that what was done by a democratic assembly in the one State was done by a democratic despot in the other.

Far different was the method followed in Judæa. There the prophets sought for salvation by purifying the Iahveh religion from every vestige of polytheism and idolatry, from every intermixture with the cruel and licentious orgies of Syrian superstition. M. Renan does full justice to the enlightened, beneficent, and progressive character of the war waged against heathenism by the noblest spirits of Israel.[2] "In no Greek city," he observes, "was the struggle against idolatry and against selfish priestly interests carried on with such originality as at Jerusalem." At the same time, it should be remembered that nowhere in Greece were those evils so rampant or so noxious. However this may be, the share taken by Jeremiah in the great conflict of the higher against the lower forms of religion might, one would think, have saved him from the outrage of being compared, at least for one side of his character, to an implacable Jesuit.[1] But the experience of the *boulevardier*, and indeed of most modern Frenchmen, stands so far from the prophetic spirit that any attempt to illustrate the one from the other must be hopelessly misleading.

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[1] This remains true of the age of the Gracchi, whatever we may think of the stories told in Livy and accepted by Niebuhr.

[2] III., pp. 180–81.

Monotheism in the abstract is, as F. D. Maurice observed, a mere negation, and not more refreshing than any other negation. The first commandment of the Decalogue, in Clough's cynical version, is a particularly easy one to obey :—

> Thou shalt have one God only ; who
> Would be at the expense of two?

The real value of monotheism lies in its relation to ethics. Unity of person and power implies unity of will. A plurality of gods may pull different ways, what is a virtue to the one being a vice to the other. This, as Mr. Shadworth Hodgson has well observed, gives peculiar interest to the Hippolytus of Euripides, where the hero is punished by Aphrodite for his obedience to Artemis. A single supreme ruler can have only one law—a law which tends to uphold the order that he has created, and which, so far, must make for righteousness. The Creator of the universe is also conceived as omnipotent, and therefore able to enforce his decrees by irresistible sanctions. Thus to the prophets every calamity that befell their own people, or the world in general, was a punishment for sin. Nor is this all. Monotheism promotes, as no other religion can, the idea of a common humanity, or at least of a common nationality, with its accompanying obligations of mutual kindness and mercy.

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[1] III., p. 350.

Among the Greeks Zeus was looked on as the god of suppliants and fugitives. The Iahveh worship supplied a common ground where rich and poor could meet. The foreign cults introduced from Damascus or Assyria, the revivals of Canaanite heathenism, or the survivals of ancestor-worship in old Israelite families, would have no such reconciling influence. It is not to be supposed for a moment that this association between the religion of Iahveh and the practice of righteousness was the result of any conscious reasoning in the minds of the prophets or of their disciples. They preached what we call monotheism, not because it was beneficent, but because it was true, and because its observance was imposed on Israel by the strongest obligations of gratitude for the great deliverance from Egypt.[1] But a connection was established by the logic of feeling, more potent than the logic of thought, when he who loved Iahveh with his whole heart was drawn through that high affection to love his neighbour as himself.

In all this there was nothing, and could be nothing, that we call socialistic. To an Israelite thinker the institution of property must have seemed a primordial ordinance of God, and so also must the inequality of its distribution among men. In fact, what the prophets condemn is not wealth, but wealth procured by violence or fraud. The Deuteronomic legislation is generally admitted to have been compiled under prophetic influence, however alien its ritualistic prescriptions may have been to the spirit at least of Jeremiah. Deuteronomy assumes at every step the existence of private property and the distinction between rich and poor, and virtually sets on them the seal of divine approbation. M. Renan, as we have seen, has the hardihood to call it the programme of a sort of theocratic Socialism ; but we need not go beyond his own pages for a contradictory instance. He refers with approval to the commandment bidding the employer pay the hired labourer his wages before sunset, "for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it."[1] Evidently the Judaic working man had no thought of abolishing the capitalist, or of claiming a share in the profits exactly equal to the amount of wealth created by his labour; he was only too thankful if his small wages were punctually paid. Nor did the Deuteronomist foresee any termination to this state of things. "The poor," he tells his hearers, "shall never cease out of the land" (xv. 11); and, accordingly, sundry provisions are made for relieving their wants—provisions which few would call socialistic, even if they were enforced by the authority of the State, whereas in this instance they were more probably rules laid down for the guidance of private charity. Had there been any germ of Socialism in Deuteronomy, we should expect to find it still further developed in the Priestly Code. Such, however, is not the case. The Levitical legislator sanctions private property to the full extent of permitting it to be inherited; he regulates sacrifices according to the means of the person offering them ; he allows the very poor to sell themselves to the rich, provided they are not kept in perpetual bondage; and, reviving a very ancient recommendation, he bids the judges "not respect the person of the poor" any more than they are to "honour the person of the mighty"—a clear proof that the poor were not to be released from the duty of fulfilling their legal obligations (Lev. xix. 15). The section containing this passage is supposed to date from the time of Ezekiel, or not much later, and therefore ought to show more immediate traces of prophetic influence than the rest of the Priestly Code. In the oldest collection of laws the rule runs: "Neither shalt thou favour a poor man in his cause" (Exod. xxiii. 3). The Deuteronomist omits it, possibly because in his time there was no danger of any such partiality.[1]

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[1] I am not assuming that the Exodus was historical, but only that it was believed to be historical when the great prophets wrote.

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[1] Deut. xxiv. 14, 15; Renan, III., p. 230.

That a learned, acute, and candid historian should pervert, or at least miscall, patent facts to such an extent is a phenomenon demanding some explanation. One cause of M. Renan's aberrations is, as I have already said, his growing appetite for popularity. Maurice spoke of the *Vie de Jésus* as a translation of the language of the Gospel into the language of the boudoir. We have it now supplemented by a translation of the language of the prophets into the language of the boulevard. But other causes have also been at work to bias the judgment of the eminent writer. Regarding as he does, with perfect correctness, the ethical teaching of Jesus as springing directly from the teaching of the older prophets; and regarding as he does, with less correctness, primitive Christianity as Socialism put into practice, he naturally looks for a germ of the later in the earlier morality, and, looking for it, he finds it.

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[1] It is a curious instance of learned ignorance that Emmanuel Deutsch, the great rabbinical scholar, should have credited the Talmud with the subtle observation that judges are liable to be prejudiced in favour of the poor. Readers of Charles Reade's novel, *A Simpleton,* will remember how a London magistrate, taken from the life, will not listen to a charge of theft against a servant-girl, though supported by the clearest evidence.

But it is by no means certain that the early Christians had their goods in common, or condemned the possession of wealth. No such idea is to be found in the writings of our earliest contemporary authority, St. Paul; in the oldest Gospel, that of Mark, it only appears on a single occasion —the story of the young man seeking salvation; while the third Gospel and the Acts, in which it becomes prominent, are considered by good authorities to be idealising works of later date. Granting, however, that the early Church was communistic, we have to ask under what inspiration the tendency arose; and the answer at once suggests itself that here, as in other points, the influence of Essenism is apparent. Now, Zeller has, with great plausibility, traced the Communism of the Essenes, as well as some other practices of theirs, to a Pythagorean—that is to say, to a Greek—source.[1] And, although frequently disputed, this derivation has been recently fortified by the adhesion of no less a scholar than Professor Schürer.[2] Thus the Socialism of Christianity, questionable enough in itself, affords no ground for ascribing any such doctrine to the prophets of Israel.

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[1] Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen*, V., pp. 325 *sqq*. (3rd ed.).

[2] *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, II., pp. 491 *sq*. (2nd ed.).

Perhaps another and still stronger consideration operated to suggest to M. Renan what seems so utterly mistaken an interpretation of Hebrew prophecy. It may have seemed to him that the demand for justice so powerfully expressed by Amos, and, in a less degree, by the prophets of Jerusalem, necessarily carried with it a condemnation of the existing system of property, with its resulting inequalities of material happiness. We do hear it sometimes urged that for one man to be rich and another poor, when the former works no harder than the latter, or, as frequently happens, does not work at all, is unjust on the face of it. Again, it is urged that it is unjust to pay the labourer less than the exact pecuniary equivalent of the wealth he creates, or to ask interest for a loan. Such arguments may be good or bad; I have no wish to enter into a discussion of their validity. As a matter of fact, very few Individualists would accept them. Certainly the chief philosophical representative of Individualism, Herbert Spencer, far from admitting the abstract justice of Socialism, would call it the negation of justice. But on this point M. Renan occupies a very peculiar, perhaps I may say a unique, position. He evidently looks on Socialism as being at one and the same time perfectly just, perfectly humane, and perfectly inexpedient. Such a paradox is quite in keeping with his general philosophy, if we can dignify with that name his cheerfully ironical way of looking at things. The world, he has told us elsewhere, is essentially unjust *(l'injustice même)*, and the thought does not seem to cause him much distress. Perhaps it will be set right some day; perhaps not. Meantime the brilliant intellectual culture, the decorative adjuncts, the charm of high-bred manners that make life worth living for him, are rooted in social inequalities. But Socialism also has its æsthetic side, and appeals to romantic imaginations. Thus through his very culture he can admire while he condemns the fanatics who would replace it by a measured and monotonous happiness.

Fortunately, we are relieved from entering into a discussion of this alleged antinomy between justice and civilisation; for to the prophets, at any rate, justice did not mean the equalisation of social conditions. It meant that every one should continue to possess his own in peace, his own being what law and custom entitled him to. It seemed no hardship to Nathan that one citizen should have exceeding many flocks and herds, and another only one ewe-lamb; the injustice began when the rich man robbed his poor neighbour of that solitary possession. Elijah did not propose to nationalise Ahab's ivory house, but only that the royal family should not seize Naboth's vineyard, and do its owner to death through the agency of perjured witnesses. Jeremiah would not have grudged Jehoiakim the pleasure of a new palace if he had paid the masons and carpenters for building it. However strange it may seem to the present generation, the prophets, and indeed all good Israelites, held that to keep one's word was an essential element of justice, or rather its very foundation. To the Psalmist the man who "walks uprightly and works righteousness" is also the man who "swears to his own hurt and changes not." Let me add that he does not take usury; but on this point Aristotle, the great anti-Socialist thinker, would have professed the same opinion. Looking back now to Jeremiah's denunciation of the faithless nobles who re-enslaved their emancipated bondsmen, we are able to appreciate the full significance of their crime. They had broken a contract made according to the most ancient Semitic custom, by cutting the sacrificial victims in two, arranging them in parallel rows, and walking between the severed halves. This was called "cutting a covenant," and the parties so pledged invoked on themselves the fate of the slaughtered and divided animals should they be faithless to their contract. Next to kinship, this was the firmest bond of moral obligation between man and man, and eventually it seems to have assumed a higher sanctity even than the ties of blood; for, while all other duties were placed under the sanction of religion, the binding force of religion itself rested on the duty of fulfilling the covenant made on Sinai between Israel and Iahveh.

Emerson has finely observed that it is the privilege of the intellect to carry every fact to successive platforms. The things of the intellect have no more distinguished living representative than M. Renan.[1] Let us, then, grant him this privilege to its utmost extent. Let us not take it amiss if he smiles with tolerant, good-humoured irony at our attempts to tie him down pedantically to the accepted meanings of words; if he attributes our excessive logical punctiliousness to a lingering strain of the Puritanism that we profess to have disregarded in theology. A Socialist, he may observe, is not necessarily a Communist, with a cut-and-dried scheme for handing over land and capital to the State; nor did he ever represent the prophets as so many Fouriers and St. Simons. It is enough that they give a somewhat disproportionate share of their attentions to the sufferings of the poor, and that the earlier prophets at least treat religion and government mainly as instruments for redressing the wrongs of the oppressed, to the neglect or disparagement of other, perhaps more important, considerations, such as the national defences, the adornment of life, and the study of pure truth. By this concentration on a single class of interests, and by the violence of their language, they differ from the Greeks, while to the same extent they resemble the modern irreconcilable journalist. Agreeing to use the word "Socialism" in this extended sense, I must still demur to the application. For what we call the social question did not even exist for the prophets. What they demanded was the enforcement of the ordinary criminal law, the expediency of which is no longer a question, except perhaps among the irreconcilable journalists. The rest of us, at any rate, hold it to be the first condition of existence to a civilised community, and it is fairly well fulfilled by the modern State. Such brigandage as the prophets describe, if practised at all now, is practised by members of the poorer classes. But experience shows that social order, ever so well maintained, leaves an enormous mass of human misery untouched; the problem how to get rid of this misery is precisely what we call the social question. That it should be asked at all presupposes a rather high standard of morality; it assumes that the well-to-do classes are seriously interested in the welfare of their less fortunate fellow-citizens. But neither morality nor religion will tell us how to solve it, any more than they can tell us how best to reform the Government, or to organise the national defences. Rather must social organisation help morality, if it be true, as some insist, that our present commercial system makes honesty impossible. In other words, the problem is not moral, but intellectual, because the question is not one of ends, but of means. All admit that the welfare of the masses is supremely desirable; what inquirers differ about is the way in which to set to work in order to obtain it. The Socialist has one scheme, the Individualist another; the party politician says that he has more pressing business to look after. The Hebrew prophet, could we consult him, would tell us to be very good and religious, and Iahveh would make everybody happy. He saw the end, but not the means.

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[1] Written in 1892.

Thus, if we cannot say, with M. Renan, that the abuses denounced by the prophets are social necessities, neither can we say, with M. James Darmesteter, that their teaching, reinforced by modern science, suffices to meet our present needs. In the first place, the simple injunction of morality, even when backed up by any amount of supernatural terrors and hopes, seems scarcely enough to make men good; and, in the second place, even if men were all individually to become good, the working of the whole industrial machine as at present arranged would not necessarily become beneficent in its operation. We must either come to recognise a large residue of misery as inevitably resulting from the constitution of things in themselves, or we must devise a scheme for getting rid of it by some great concerted series of associated actions. In either case it will be the tradition of Greek philosophy, not of Hebrew prophecy, that we shall continue. Philosophy teaches us to understand the eternal concatenation of causes and effects, and this leads to resignation; or to practise the successful adaptation of means to ends, and this brings about reform.

The prophetic view of life was what the Germans call "unvermittelt"—unmediated—or, to use a barbarous but expressive word, unmachined; and the void the prophets left was destined to be fatally supplied, first by the priests, and afterwards by the Scribes and Pharisees. But as a moral programme it was complete. No one virtue is favoured at the expense of the rest. Recent critics have dwelt, with excessive emphasis, on their inculcation of justice and mercy; but the prophets give quite as much prominence to truthfulness, temperance, and purity. If we do not find exhortations to courage and patriotism, the reason is that these virtues could take care of themselves. Like all the other Semites, the Hebrews were ready to fight for their country to the last drop of their blood; the duty of wise counsellors was rather to restrain than to urge them on.

We pass to the charge most often brought or insinuated by M. Renan against the prophets, that they were bad citizens—factious fanatics, who habitually obstructed the Government in providing for the national defence. Let us remember what was the position of Judæa during the last century and a half of her existence as a kingdom. She was for the whole of that period, with one brief interval of subjection to Egypt, a vassal State of the great Mesopotamian monarchy, under the headship first of Nineveh, and afterwards of Babylon. She owed this position to the pusillanimity of Ahaz, who, contrary to the advice of Isaiah, had sought the protection of Tiglath-pileser against the combined forces of Israel and Damascus, consenting in return to become his tributary. The yoke thus voluntarily assumed seems to have been very galling—at least to the Judæan nobles, who were constantly endeavouring to shake it off. As Judah was evidently far too weak to resist Assyria single-handed, their invariable policy was to call in the help of Egypt. This step was resolutely opposed by the prophets, who well knew into what a decrepit condition the once formidable monarchy of the Nile had fallen, and how untrustworthy were any promises from that quarter. We may well believe also that, subjection for subjection, they preferred the rule of their ancient kinsfolk on the Euphrates to that of their ancient taskmasters in the Delta. At any rate, their advice was eminently judicious, and it even extorts the reluctant approval of M. Renan, who allows that, "on the whole, Isaiah was right, notwithstanding the strangeness of his arguments. Egypt was not a solid support."[1]

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[1] III., p. 14.

But Isaiah was no advocate of peace at any price. When Sennacherib insolently, and it would seem in defiance of sworn treaties, demanded the surrender of Jerusalem, and when the hearts of her defenders were failing, the prophet at that decisive moment confronted the emissaries of the great conqueror with a defiance still haughtier than their own, and saved the future of religion by his timely assurance. Here, again, M. Renan admits that "the conduct of Isaiah seems to have been most correct."[1] On another occasion, when Baladan, king of Babylon, sought to draw Hezekiah into a compromising alliance, the prophet is said to have uttered a significant warning of the danger involved in such a scheme; and once more his policy is coldly commended by the historian.[2]

The part imposed on Jeremiah a hundred years later differed in some essential respects from that played by his great predecessor. He had not to rouse the nobles of Judæa from a state of careless frivolity or of mournful apathy, but rather to discountenance their overweening confidence and spasmodic energy. It would seem that the Iahvistic movement, with its accompanying conception of Zion as the chosen dwelling-place, the holy and inviolable temple of Judah's God, had already taken such a hold on men's imaginations as to inspire them with a belief in its impregnability to attack. On the other hand, the overlord of Palestine was no mere conqueror, no blind destroyer like Sennacherib, but probably the greatest and wisest ruler that the East has yet seen. Nebuchadrezzar united distinguished military abilities to an equal eminence in the arts of peace; all that later generations attributed to the mythical Semiramis was really done by him. For an Oriental despot he showed exceptional clemency, or at least exceptional moderation. M. Renan, indeed, says that the chief men of Judah were scalped after the fashion of Red Indians in the presence of Nebuchadrezzar before they were put to death at Riblah.[1] The Biblical narrative gives no support to this assertion. The only evidence adduced in its favour is a figured representation on an Assyrian bas-relief—as if the Babylonians had the same customs as their savage northern neighbours![2] There is every reason to believe that Nebuchadrezzar wished to leave Jerusalem standing as an ornament and bulwark of his empire. In such circumstances the repeated attempts of her nobility and priesthood to shake off the Babylonian yoke were sheer madness, closely akin to the revolt of the Zealots against Rome long afterwards; their faith in divine assistance was inspired by the same obdurate fanaticism.

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[1] III., p. 107.

[2] "Isaïe fut encore inspiré par un politique assez sage" (p. 118).

Jeremiah, alike by his counsels of submission and by his proclamation of a purely spiritual religion independent of sanctuaries and priesthoods, showed himself the true predecessor—more than that, the master and model—of Jesus. Yet M. Renan is so misled by false modern analogies that in this sober, sagacious, far-sighted prophet he can see nothing better than a howling fanatic, half a Félix Pyat, half an implacable Jesuit—a monkish soul without an idea of military honour. In order to understand him, we are told to imagine a French political writer in July, 1870, calling the Prussians the ministers of God.[1] The letters that passed between the Jewish captives in Babylonia and the remnant left in Jerusalem are compared with what we may suppose the correspondence between the transported Communists in New Caledonia and their friends in Paris after 1871 to have been.[2] Most probably the letters from a Parisian Socialist to his more unlucky fellow-conspirators beyond the sea were filled with hopes of a fresh revolution, of a speedy and triumphant return to France, of signal vengeance on the bloody Versaillese. There were, indeed, some among the captive Jews who cherished such hopes of deliverance, and there were some among the priests and prophets of Jerusalem who encouraged them. These, however, were the bitter enemies of Jeremiah, and nothing incensed them more than the true prophet's advice to settle down quietly in their new country, building houses and planting gardens, as they and their posterity were to live there for seventy years, but, above all, to behave as law-abiding citizens. Consulted by Zedekiah, during the final siege, about the best course to pursue, Jeremiah advised, what was in fact the only rational plan, immediate surrender; as if, says M. Renan, military honour was nothing! The historian ought to know that honour in our sense was then undiscovered, and that even now honour does not require that an untenable position should be held at the risk of utter destruction.

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[1] III., p. 365.

[2] For a juster appreciation of the great Chaldæan king see Eduard Meyer's admirable *Geschichte des Altherthums.*

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[1] III., p. 289.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 319.

Zedekiah's motive was really not honour of any kind, but moral cowardice—the fear of being ridiculed by the Jews who had already gone over to Nebuchadrezzar. After all, M. Renan honestly admits that "Jeremiah's fierce declamations, had they been listened to, would have prevented frightful massacres";[1] but his supposed case of a Frenchman foreseeing and announcing the disaster of 1870 is not an instructive parallel. France was no weak vassal State, bound by solemn engagements to pay tribute to the king of Prussia, but an independent Power, and, as many thought, fully the equal of Germany in military strength; nor was there any danger that Paris, in the event of capture, would incur the fate of Jerusalem.

To represent Jeremiah as a religious enthusiast, opposed to the lay element, the military and political leaders of the Jewish State, is an entirely mistaken view. No such distinction then existed, for the simple reason that all parties were imbued with religious ideas; the only difference was in the relative purity and enlightenment of the faith held. The party of resistance *à outrance* was represented not merely by selfish and treacherous oppressors of the poor, but by prophets who vehemently predicted that the foreign yoke would be broken and the sacred vessels brought back from Babylon within a year, by priests who kept shouting that Iahveh would not permit his temple to be destroyed. In answer to their chimerical expectations of divine assistance, Jeremiah was obliged to keep on repeating that a people so plunged in immorality and superstition would deservedly be abandoned to the doom their own folly had incurred. But he was not, as seems to be popularly supposed, a mere prophet of evil. Taking up and giving a still higher development to Isaiah's great idea of the Remnant that was to be saved, he trusted—as the event proved, with perfect correctness—to the purifying influences of exile for the filtering out of a new people that had been "poured from vessel to vessel," not "left standing on his own lees" like Moab, whose "taste remaineth in him and his scent is not changed." Thanks to those prophets whom we are now asked to look on as a subversive and dissolving force, working only for individual happiness and indifferent to great public interests, Israel again became a united and heroic nation when the ruin which they foretold had already long overtaken Edom and Moab, Philistia, Tyre, and Damascus—if by ruin we may understand the forfeiture of their political existence. To say that "the Hebrew thinker, like the modern Nihilist, holds that if the world cannot be just it had better not be at all,"[1] presents an unmeaning alternative. The Hebrew thinker held that justice was the foundation of all stable existence; that when the divinely commissioned forces, ever operating for the destruction of iniquity, had done their work of denudation, an everlasting core of righteousness would remain to be the centre of a new world of life and light and joy.

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[1] III., p. 333.

One more charge remains to be noticed. It is said that the victory of the pietists under Josiah was followed by a literary decline; that no more such works as the Song of Solomon, Job, and Proverbs were produced.[1] Here, too, we see the fatal effect of ignoring the results of modern criticism. There is a growing consensus of opinion in favour of placing Job and Proverbs long after Jeremiah; and more than one critic would assign as late a date to the Song of Solomon. In fact, we have to thank the monotheistic movement for a great literary revival succeeding to a century of almost utter sterility. No nation could have gone on for ever producing such wonderful works as the old heroic and patriarchal legends, the cycle of prophetic narratives, and the earliest written prophecies. An age of reflection could do nothing better than give us what the perfected Iahveh religion actually gave, the visions of Ezekiel, the nameless voices of the Exile and the Return, the Psalter, and—*pace* M. Renan—the Book of Job.

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[1] II., p. 438.

This, then, is the result of our inquiry. The prophets no more anticipated the problems of modern society than they predicted the events of modern history; but if we desire a fitting modern parallel to their spirit and influence, it must be sought among the wisest, calmest, and best balanced, rather than among the flightiest and most feverish heads of our time. Balance and harmony are, in truth, the most pervasive characteristics of their teaching, by whatever tests it is tried, with whatever order of interests it has to deal. In the existing remains of their discourses the directly anti-social actions are not more severely condemned than the vices whose deleterious operation is less obvious and immediate. The rights of the poor are vindicated, but without prejudice to other rights on which the future of civilisation depended. There is nothing in the religion of the prophets that the purest morality can condemn; there is nothing in their morality that the most prudent or patriotic statesman need ignore. They wrote both for an age and for all time, using the utmost exaltation of imaginative sublimity, the keenest arrows of sarcasm, the tenderest entreaties of wounded yet unconquerable affection, and the most concentrated energies of language as an embodiment and expression of the highest spiritual verities then attained. No minds were ever, in T. H. Green's sense, more truly organic to the eternal consciousness. None ever placed the divine so far above the human, but none ever wrought more surely for the reunion and recognition of both as interdependent elements of a single absolute existence.

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[1] III., p. 250.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM AND THE SUPERNATURAL

THEOLOGICAL orthodoxy, even orthodoxy of the most rigid type—the orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Church—has made its peace with physical science. The nebular hypothesis, the antiquity of the earth, the antiquity of man, the development of our race by natural selection from purely animal ancestors, the intimate connection between psychic and nervous processes—whatever, in short, we sum up under the convenient name of evolution—may be accepted and taught without prejudice to the religious belief, whose very foundations such theories were but lately supposed to threaten. A cynic might observe that, if it takes two to make a quarrel, it also takes two to make peace, and that, so far, science has received the overtures of her old enemy very much as the overtures of Darius after the battle of Issus were received by Alexander. Let us assume, however, that the conflict is at an end, or that the abandonment of a few indefensible outworks has left the ecclesiastical citadel more secure than ever against assault. Still, the conflict, so happily concluded, may not be without its warnings. Was it not, to say the least, ill-advised on the part of theology to provoke such a conflict at all, and still more so to stake her very existence on points as to which, by her own admission, she was quite in the wrong? Is the present moment a well-chosen one for renewing the conflict in another quarter, with at least an appreciable chance of seeing it terminated by another humiliating surrender?

These are questions that answer themselves; yet, from the tone habitually employed by the accredited defenders of orthodoxy in reference to what is called the Higher Criticism, one would imagine that they had never been asked. With some honourable exceptions, it is a tone marked by the same curious mixture of fear, contempt, ridicule, and ignorance that characterised the official denunciations of Darwinism in the last generation, and of geology in the generation before the last. To make the parallel more complete, just as certain timid or jealous or retrograde specialists were acclaimed by the religious and conservative press as the only genuine or authoritative representatives of physical science, so in our own time scholars who uphold the traditional opinions are habitually spoken of by the same press as if they had a monopoly of learning, honesty, and good sense.

But among the controversial devices most freely used to discredit the results of the Higher Criticism there is one not paralleled in the old warfare against advanced physical science. While no one with any pretensions to culture ever supposed that Laplace, Lyell, Darwin, Helmholtz, Claude Bernard, and Berthelot constructed their scientific theories in a spirit of hatred to natural religion, and in order to dispense with the necessity of a Creator and an immortal soul, it is assumed, not only by the vulgar ruck of apologists, but also by many among the most learned and highly-placed teachers of official orthodoxy, that men like Baur and Renan

Kuenen and Wellhausen, have spent their lives in the study of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures only that they might destroy the documentary evidence of revealed religion, although from their point of view the disproof was wholly unnecessary. For these critics, it is said, start with a conviction, based entirely on *à priori* reasoning, that the supernatural does not exist, or cannot be known. Divine omnipotence never intervenes to change the course of nature; divine omniscience never discloses the secrets of futurity to man. So, when the exercise of such miraculous powers is authenticated by historical evidence that would be enough to satisfy the most exacting in the case of any ordinary event, the evidence is rejected as insufficient, or as anonymous, or as of late date, or even as a deliberate fabrication. The most arbitrary hypotheses are put forward to explain how the narratives came into existence, while the documents embodying them are taken away from their reputed authors and assigned in part or wholly to late dates, with no other warrant than the individual caprice of the critic. As fast as one such hypothesis is refuted, another succeeds it, and is proclaimed with equal confidence. Their production is limited only by the ingenuity of unbelief, which, however, exhausts itself in vain efforts to undermine the "impregnable rock" of traditional faith.

Such is the uniform reply made to the Higher Criticism by all its assailants, lay and clerical, Catholic and Protestant. One and the same note sounds through the grave and guarded admonitions of Leo XIII., the smug insular self-satisfaction of Bishop Ellicott, the mild jocularity of Dr. Salmon, the truculent misrepresentations of Dr. Wace, the tortuous evasions of Mr. Gladstone, the supercilious man-of-the-worldism of Mr. Arthur Balfour, and, I am sorry to add, through the efforts, only too successful, of the dying naturalist, Romanes, to sophisticate away his own scientific conscience. Grant, they contend, the credibility of the supernatural, and the Higher Criticism is ruined, the credibility of the Biblical narratives restored.

One must wonder at the moderation with which so irresistible a weapon has been employed. It might be wielded with equal effect in other fields than that of Biblical criticism. Was not the acceptance of evolution a little hasty? Let us see whether the ground abandoned to physical science may not yet be regained.

The nebular hypothesis, as originally framed by Kant and Laplace, is now, I believe, universally abandoned. A spherical body, containing the same amount of matter as our solar system, and filling up the orbit of Neptune, could not revolve on its own axis nor throw off those successive rings out of which the planets were once supposed to be formed. Indeed, the so-called ring of Saturn, which first suggested the hypothesis, is now known not to be a ring at all, but a collection of minute satellites. Nevertheless, astronomers continue to hold a nebular hypothesis of some sort —that is, they believe that the stars and planets were originally formed by the aggregation of smaller bodies. Here, then, is an excellent opportunity for the theologian to intervene and to taunt the physicist with having recourse to the most desperate shifts in order that he may escape from the unpalatable alternative of admitting that the celestial orbs, as we now behold them, were the work of a Divine Hand, which, in the poet's words, "bowled them flaming through the dark abyss."

Turn we now to geology. It is no secret that the authorities on that science are at sixes and sevens with regard to the antiquity of the globe, its actual consistency, and the nature of the forces by which its crust was shaped. But all are agreed in assuming that its age must be counted by millions of years, and that during the whole of that immense period none but material agencies, such as fire, air, water, and ice, have been at work beneath or above its surface. Here, again, there seems to be an admirable opportunity for our orthodox friends to come to the rescue. I can imagine them exclaiming: "You are struggling with difficulties of your own creation; accept the miraculous, and they will disappear by enchantment. Only prejudice forbids you to believe that God made the world in six days. The story of the Deluge is perfectly in harmony with the catastrophic theory of Cuvier, which you abandoned for the uniformitarianism of Lyell merely because it necessitated an occasional intervention of Divine omnipotence." I can imagine such a speech, but I do not hear it.

Many of my readers will remember the controversy that raged some time ago between Herbert Spencer and Dr. Weismann on the question whether natural selection alone is sufficient to account for the origin of species, or whether it should be supplemented by the transmission of acquired parental qualities. The controversy was conducted with conspicuous ability on both sides, and other physiologists took part in the discussion, scarcely, if at all, inferior to the original disputants in knowledge and reasoning power. Which party got the better of the argument is out of my power to decide, and, indeed, it is not yet concluded; but one point struck me very forcibly as having been established beyond the reach of doubt, to judge by the unanimity with which it was assumed by all who expressed an opinion on either side. No one seemed to question for a moment that, however species originated, they were brought into existence by purely natural causes. Again, the supernaturalistic philosophers had an opportunity for urging the insufficiency of a mere physical hypothesis, the unreasonableness of rejecting miracles where their aid appeared most necessary; and again the opportunity was missed, or so feebly used that public opinion remained uninfluenced by the reminder.

Among various explanations of this strange anomaly that might be offered, the following seems the most probable: Physical science is understood to proceed solely by the method of induction, and it is as a result of induction that the theory of evolution has been accepted as applicable to the whole range of physical phenomena. Facts guaranteed by observation and experiment go to show that the heavenly bodies either are, or have been, in a state which can be fully accounted for only as a result of the aggregation of diffused matter moving in obedience to the law of gravitation, while opinions may well differ as to the precise manner in which the aggregation took place. An examination of what is going on over the earth's surface shows it to be subjected to processes of upheaval, subsidence, denudation, erosion, and accumulation of fluviatile deposits; the prolonged action of these processes would account for any changes known to have ever occurred. Other inductive evidence justifies us in concluding that such action was actually exercised in the past; although the *modus operandi* in any particular instance leaves room for considerable diversity of opinion. Finally, ascending to biology, the anatomy and physiology of contemporary plants and animals, and the stratigraphical arrangement of extinct species, as demonstrated by geological research, carry home the conviction that, since the first dawn of life, no species has ever come into existence except as the offspring of some different and older species; and all that Darwinism, or any rival theory, attempts is to account for this admitted fact. To put the point somewhat differently, in those sciences that deal with the material universe naturalism holds the field; supernaturalist explanations only begin where our knowledge ends, and perpetually give way as it progresses. On the other hand, in the case of documents embodying the record of a revelation—assuming that a revelation has actually been given—the relation is reversed. Here supernaturalism occupies the positive pole, and naturalism the negative pole; the reference to ordinary causation only comes in when our faith ends, as the expression of an abstract possibility, the blank form of a scientific explanation where the theological explanation has been arbitrarily rejected, and nothing definitely convincing can be put in its place.

Let us assume that the conservative theologians would accept such a vindication as I have here suggested of their very tolerant attitude towards physical science, contrasting so vividly with their contemptuous repudiation of the Higher Criticism; and I have tried to put the case for them as strongly as I could. Observe what its adoption implies. Simply this, that when criticism employs the methods of induction it is entitled to the same respect as any other inductive science. Now, in point of fact, the Higher Criticism uses no other methods and makes no larger assumptions than any physical inquirer, while it takes much less for granted than the conservative theologians themselves.

So far I have spoken of the Higher Criticism as if the meaning of the term were universally understood. But, in truth, there are many worthy people to whom it conveys nothing more than a vague emotional association of mingled dread and contempt. Very often we find the mysterious bogey shut up in a cage of quotation marks, as if it were a detected impostor, not fit to go at large. Whether it is intended to cast doubt on the adjective or the substantive, or both, does not appear. We may talk without offence of the higher education and of the higher mathematics—nay, even of the higher theism or the higher pantheism; but not, it would seem, in any serious sense, of the higher criticism. Yet, what the unfortunate name denotes is, after all, something very simple and very necessary. It merely means an inquiry into the composition, authenticity, and date of ancient documents. Such criticism is called "higher" in contradistinction to the "lower" or more elementary criticism which deals with correct readings and the exact meanings of words. No claim to superior dignity or difficulty is necessarily implied, only that the one criticism rests on and presupposes the other, just as the upper story of a house rests on its ground floor.

All ancient literature is amenable to the Higher Criticism; although, from the language sometimes employed, one would think that it had never been heard of except in connection with the Bible. The Vedas, the Zend Avesta, Homer, Hesiod, the Platonic Dialogues, and some patristic writings, are favourite subjects for its exercise, often with results completely subversive of pre-conceived opinions. Certain Biblical critics have distinguished themselves in profane as well as in sacred literature. Eduard Zeller, the great historian of Greek philosophy, and Albert Schwegler, one of the greatest authorities on early Roman history, both belonged to the much-decried Tübingen School. Within the range of Biblical studies, even the humblest believers must sometimes become higher critics in their own despite, at least if they care to know when the Book of Job was written, or who was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The Book of Job suggests considerations highly relevant to our subject. It will scarcely be pretended that the results reached by a critic who sets himself to determine the date and authorship of that wonderful drama need in any way be affected by his opinions about the supernatural. Miracles are related in it; but the most rigid conservatism does not insist on our believing that they actually happened. The story may be a parable, and not literally true. Accordingly, when the higher critics bring it down to the Persian period, or even later, the bitterest intolerance cannot pretend that they are actuated by sinister motives. Whether we assign it to the age of Moses or to the age of the Maccabees, its doctrinal value remains unaltered. So with regard to the alleged interpolations. It would be monstrous to assert that the critics who consider the speech of Elihu to be a later addition of workmanship inferior to the rest of the poem, do so because they find that it stands in the way of their private theories. The question is one of pure literature, of artistic taste, not of theological dogma at all. Of course, a similar remark applies to the other condemned passages, such as the descriptions of the mines, of Leviathan, and of Behemoth.

Another good instance is supplied by the Book of Ecclesiastes. Not long ago nearly everyone believed that this caustic satire was what it professes itself to be—a genuine work of Solomon. Thackeray would have been greatly surprised to hear that his favourite *Vanitas Vanitatum* was not really written by "King David's son the sad and splendid." Yet few scholars would now care to dispute the critical verdict which assigns Ecclesiastes to a date at least six centuries later than the time of Solomon. Here again no rationalistic or *à priori* principle was involved. Inductive evidence alone decided the question, above all the late and debased Hebrew in which the book is written.

All the Hagiographa have in like manner been brought down to post-exilian times, and we might go through them all without finding a single instance to confirm the charge brought against criticism of arbitrarily rejecting whatever testifies to the supernatural, until we come to the Book of Daniel. Here, certainly, are miracles and prophecies of the most astounding description which must be given up as discredited fictions if Daniel is, what free inquiry has ever since Porphyry's time pronounced it to be, a Maccabean forgery. To a Rationalist the prophecies are of course in themselves decisive. But the inductive evidence is quite strong enough to carry conviction without the rationalistic argument, and, were it not for theological prejudice, would long since have been found convincing. The charge of forgery is brought home to pseudo-Daniel not by his true prophecies, but by his false history; by his false prediction of the coming judgment; by his corrupt Hebrew; by the silence of every witness who might have been expected to allude to him from Ezekiel to Ecclesiasticus.[1]

Travelling backwards through the Hebrew Bible, we find ourselves in the second great division known as the Prophets, and embracing, besides the writers now exclusively so-called, Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Here, also, the Higher

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[1] The reference in Ezekiel is not to a contemporary, but to a very ancient celebrity.

Criticism has played havoc with old traditions, but only one of its achievements has excited much attention or called down much obloquy on its representatives. I refer to the assignment of many portions of Isaiah, and more particularly of chapters xl.–xlvi., to exilian or post-exilian authors. Here, at first sight, the apologist has an easy game, and can triumphantly carry an uninstructed audience along with him. "You look up and down the book," he will say, "for predictions of the fall of Babylon and of the Return from the Captivity, and wherever you find them you pronounce the whole chapter or section containing them to be a late interpolation or addition. That may be what you call scientific criticism. We, for our part, call it arbitrary, unscrupulous, and 'tendentious,' to use a word invented by your German friends." Those who use such language assume the possibility or, rather, the actual occurrence of miracles which not merely transcend the experience of life, but also transgress the laws of probability and reason. If God ever interferes with the order of nature to the extent of revealing the course of events in the distant future, it must, one would suppose, be as a warning or as a consolation for those to whom the vision is vouchsafed, not as a theatrical exercise of superhuman power. But the contemporaries of Isaiah knew Babylon only as a subject city of Nineveh and a possible ally of its enemies, not as the conqueror and despoiler of Judah ; to be assured of its downfall some two centuries later would neither have purified their morals nor strengthened their faith, even supposing them to have listened to the prophet, which they most certainly would not have done. But what gives the Higher Criticism a solid inductive basis is the evidence of language, and by this it is prepared to abide in every instance where a received date has been changed.

In the Hexateuch we have a series of narratives swarming with miracles and prophecies, while in the higher criticism of the Hexateuch we have results of the most revolutionary character that Biblical inquiry, or indeed any branch of ancient history, has ever known. But neither in this instance can it be shown that the criticism was prompted by a desire to get rid of the miracles and prophecies, nor if they were reduced to the proportion of ordinary occurrences would the convincing force of the new views be appreciably diminished. The literary analysis into three distinct series of documents running through the whole compilation would still hold good; the evidence of Hebrew historians and prophets would still prove that the series constituting the Priestly Code was unknown till long after the Return from Babylon, and that the Deuteronomic series was unknown before Josiah and Jeremiah; the analogies of legend would still render it overwhelmingly probable that the patriarchs of the earliest narratives were eponymous heroes who never existed; physical science and ancient history would still prove to demonstration that the stories of the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge, and the Tower of Babel are simple myths. If it be once granted that these results have been obtained by a trustworthy method, it is not, I think, assuming too much to say that such prophecies as the Blessing of Jacob and the

Song of Moses were composed after the event, and may be used for dating the passages in which they occur.

When Bishop Colenso entered on his epoch-making examination of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua, he expressly disclaimed any intention of assailing the credibility of the miraculous narratives as such. At the time a very clever woman observed to the present writer that the Bishop resembled a man who should say, "My dear little fish, you need not be afraid of me, I don't want to catch you; I am only going to drain the pond in which you live." At the present moment the water is very low not only in the Hexateuch, but throughout the Old Testament; most of the fish are dead, and the rest are gasping for breath. Starting, as we have seen, with no prejudices whatever on the subject, the Higher Criticism has proved far more fatal to supernaturalism than that old-fashioned rationalism which was content to strike out or explain away the miraculous portions of Biblical history, while leaving their reputed authorship and general authenticity intact. Rather I should say that the Higher Criticism, without departing from the prudent reserve with which it began, has furnished ample materials for an authoritative judgment to a still higher science for whose sake alone it is worth studying—the science of historical evidence. This science refuses to accept any story not intrinsically probable, except on the testimony of eye-witnesses, or, at the very least, of contemporaries. If a narrator is proved to have made false statements on matters of ordinary experience, his testimony to extraordinary occurrences has no value. If such occurrences are not mentioned by older and apparently more trustworthy narrators of the same history, then the probability that they did not take place becomes extreme. If two narratives of equal value give inconsistent accounts of the same alleged occurrence, the improbability of its having taken place in the manner described is proportioned to the extent of their divergence. One need only apply these canons to the Hexateuch, Judges, and Samuel, as they now may be studied in the light of the Higher Criticism, for the consequences to become at once apparent. The oldest and best "Mosaic" narratives are probably at least five centuries later than the events that they relate; the most recent are nine centuries later. The Priestly record is a deliberate wholesale fabrication; the Deuteronomist, where he does not copy his predecessors, is a pious romancer; the Elohist and the Iahwist differ from one another, in some respects rather widely; the Iahwist document itself shows signs of being a disjointed amalgam. The story of Balaam is made up of at least two contradictory versions, and one of these versions excludes the incident of the talking ass, which belongs to the Iahwist. Let who will believe in the abstract possibility of that performance: can anyone seriously believe that an ass was endowed with a human voice in order to rebuke her master for doing a thing which he had been divinely commanded to do, and which, when he did it, redounded to the glory of Israel and of Israel's God? Literary analysis, when applied to the story of Gideon, leaves it in its original form a series of perfectly natural incidents; and the same may be said of the story of Saul's election to the kingdom. Professor Cheyne has shown in his last work on Isaiah how the story of the moving back of the shadow on the dial—one of the very few miraculous incidents in the history of Judah—was gradually built up in three successive redactions. Of the Elijah and Elisha group of miracles we can only say that they are unsupported by evidence as good as might be quoted for the most extravagant stories of the mediæval saints.

With regard to prophecy in the sense of supernatural prediction, little need be said. As we have seen, the Higher Criticism shows by inductive evidence that the Second Isaiah and Daniel spoke not of future but of contemporary events; the same is true of the Pentateuchal prophecies; many alleged predictions of the literary prophets were not offered as such by their authors, but owe their traditional character to a perverted exegesis; while the announcements, certainly numerous enough, of Israel's redemption and glorification have been signally falsified by history. As to the pretended "Christology of the Old Testament," it has long been dissipated by such a sober interpretation of the texts as would be admitted without dispute in the case of any other document.

I fear that before this some of my readers may have been getting a little impatient. They have perhaps been saying to themselves: "Yes, of course this is all very true of the Old Testament, and we knew every word of it before. But the real question, the only interesting question, is about the New Testament, and especially about the Gospels. They stand on quite a different footing from the Hexateuch and Judges. There are certain stories in the latter that we are not sorry to get rid of. The revelation of Jesus Christ is quite another matter. We neither wish nor are we obliged to part with it. And why should we? Because some stories are mythical does it follow that all are? Because the heroic legends of Greece and Rome are worthless as history, does it follow that we are to lose all confidence in Thucydides and Julius Cæsar, in Demosthenes and Cicero? Ought not the evidence that suffices to prove an ordinary event suffice to prove a miracle where miracles were to be expected, as in this instance they were? For Christianity is itself the standing wonder, only explicable by reference to the personality of Christ as set forth in the Gospels. And then"— But this is not a dialogue, and I am not a thought-reader. Let me recall the question to its original limitations. Our object was to inquire into the truth of a grave charge brought against the Higher Criticism—the charge of preferring a less to a more probable explanation of the same facts, because the more probable explanation would involve the admission that miracles may happen. I have tried to show that, so far as the Old Testament goes, this charge is unfounded. So complete an acquittal of the critics in respect to so important a branch of their activity furnishes at least a strong presumption that in dealing with the documents of early Christianity they have not thrown scientific method to the winds. Sometimes the same men have cultivated both fields, as Ewald, Reuss, and Samuel Davidson; in all cases they have been trained in the same schools and are animated by the same spirit. Suppose it true that they have sometimes gone too far in their negations, or at least farther than a cautious conservatism would approve: their temerity may be easily paralleled in the labours of classical scholarship where hostility to the supernatural cannot be supposed to bias the inquirer. No aspersion is ever cast on the scientific honour of a Hellenist who holds that the speeches in Thucydides are entirely manufactured by that historian, or that Socrates never uttered a single sentence that is put into his mouth by Plato, or that several of the Platonic Dialogues are spurious. Not long ago Xenophon's *Memorabilia* was generally accepted as a genuine account of the Socratic teaching. Several portions of it are now suspected to be very far from deserving that character, yet no outcry has been raised.

Again, it is entirely unwarrantable to assert, as Dr. Salmon does,[1] that critics who disbelieve in the supernatural are on that account interested in denying the authenticity of the books where miracles are related. I should like to ask Dr. Salmon, or any other orthodox Protestant divine, whether he believes in the miraculousness of that extraordinary series of cures related in full detail by St. Augustine at the end of his treatise *De Civitate Dei*, and, if not, whether his incredulity has ever inclined him to reject the treatise itself, or this particular part of it, as a forgery. I have little doubt that he would manage to combine the most absolute disbelief in the miracles as such with the most unhesitating acceptance of the record as coming from the pen of the great Father. At any rate, if I cannot answer for Dr. Salmon, I can answer for the higher critics. If the evidence of eye-witnesses could convert rationalists to a belief in miracles, incredulity on this point would long ago have ceased to trouble the apologist, and Protestantism would have ceased to trouble Rome.

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[1] *Historical Introduction to the Books of the New Testament*, p. 8.

But, as I have said before, there are miracles that the Higher Criticism does reject in a very summary manner—miracles that would be wonders without being signs; miracles that, so far from being of any evidentiary value, would, if they were established, be the destruction of all logical evidence whatsoever; miracles that are a derogation, not from the course of nature, but from the laws of reason. Now these are miracles that apologetic orthodoxy accepts, and attacks the critics for not accepting. If the story of the Virgin-birth were true, how could two such inconsistent accounts of it as those given by the first and the third Evangelist both be current in the early decades of Christian history? How could St. Paul not know it; or, knowing, not allude to it? If the raising of Lazarus is a historical event, how could it escape the notice of the Synoptics? How could the same teacher deliver to the same audience during the same period discourses differing so widely, both in form and matter, as the speeches of Jesus in the First or Third and those in the Fourth Gospel? How could one so gifted with supernatural prescience as to foretell the circumstances of the siege and capture of Jerusalem in the minute detail of the Third Gospel, be so utterly mistaken as to declare, in the words of the Second Gospel, that the end of the world would come within the lifetime of some who were then born (Mark xiii. 30)? Surely modern criticism is entirely within its rights when, just as in the case of Daniel, it uses these two predictions, one fabricated and the other falsified, to place "St. Mark" and "St. Luke" at such a distance from the events they record as to take them out of the category of eye-witnesses, or even of those who derived their information from eye-witnesses.

The question whether the Fourth Gospel was or was not written by St. John is often ignorantly or wilfully confused with a quite different question—the value of Baur's theory as to the evolution of primitive Christianity. In reality the two are quite distinct. First, the untrustworthiness of the gospel was proved. Then and only then did there arise the necessity of asking when and where and by whom was it written. It would no doubt be highly satisfactory if these points could be cleared up. But no constructive solution of the problem could add to the real strength of the destructive criticism which it necessarily presupposes, nor can the fragility of any particular solution take away from that strength. As to the Tübingen theory, it probably retains as much value as any other scientific theory that has now been before the world for fifty years. Let it not be supposed that science alone shares with woman the privilege of changing her mind. Orthodoxy changes also. Compare *Lux Mundi* with *Aids to Faith;* compare the present attitude of Rome towards the higher criticism of the Old Testament with her attitude in Renan's youth. Of course I know what orthodox theologians will say. They have discovered that propositions once supposed to be *de fide* are really open questions. But that is enough. The definition of faith changes with startling rapidity, and perhaps we have not yet reached the limit of its transformations.

We have seen that the higher criticism of the Old Testament, although it did not begin by denying the miraculous, ended by denying it, or rather by leaving the science of historical evidence free to deny it. What, then, it may be asked, is the result towards which New Testament criticism points? It seems to me that the final verdict must be the same. That miracles should go on increasing in magnitude, the farther we go from the place and time of their alleged occurrence, is a circumstance that cannot fail to awaken suspicion. Now the miracles of the Fourth Gospel are the most astounding of all, and are related with the strongest emphasis on their supernatural character and on their evidentiary value as manifestations of the divine omnipotence. There is something particularly Hellenic about the writer's consciousness in this respect—his extreme anxiety to differentiate the miraculous sign from the ordinary course of nature, and to surround it with every guarantee of authenticity. What we find is a wise economy, not, as with the Synoptics, a rank profusion of marvels. There are no cases of diabolical possession, because the Fourth Evangelist, believing though he did in a supreme power of evil, belonged to a society that was too philosophical to explain epilepsy and hysteria, as the lowest savage might, by the presence of malignant spirits. Now it is just this gospel that criticism, for quite other reasons, considers last in order of time, and in the order of ideas most remote from Jewish or Palestinian habits of thought.

Criticism has disengaged from the Acts of the Apostles a contemporary document of high value, supposed to be written by a companion of St. Paul, and known as the "we-source"; it has also subjected the earlier portions of the book to a searching comparison with the parallel narratives contained in the genuine epistles of St. Paul himself. Confining our attention to the supernatural, we find least of it (if, indeed, there be any) in the "we-source," and most in the legendary narratives bearing marks of a comparatively late origin; while the Pentecostal gift of tongues, which in Acts offers such an extraordinary spectacle of divine power, shrinks in St. Paul to a performance very much on a level with the phenomena of the Irvingite church.

On grounds of literary analysis, criticism declares the Second Gospel to be the oldest of the Synoptics. But this document has nothing about the virgin-birth of Jesus, and, when freed of later additions, nothing about the Ascension. According to it, Jesus died with an exclamation of despair on his lips quite incompatible with the prevision of his speedy return to life. His reported refusal to work miracles is probably authentic, as there would have been no reason for inventing it at a time when thaumaturgic powers were freely attributed to him; and we can still see how his appeal to the "sign of the prophet Jonah" was afterwards apologetically corrected into a prediction of his own death, burial, and resurrection. The words "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," by the way, point to a variation of the resurrection-story not otherwise recognised in our gospels.

My object in the foregoing pages has not been to defend the methods and results of the higher Biblical criticism, nor even, except in the briefest manner, to recapitulate them. Nor have I attempted to discuss the general problem of the supernatural in its relations to the order of nature. My object has been to show the hollowness, if not the insincerity, of a plea put forward for the purpose of suppressing discussion by denying the right of rationalistic critics to speak at all about subjects to which they have devoted their lives. At the same time, I have suggested the motive that lies at the bottom of this discreditable attempt. Beyond doubt, many, perhaps most, of the higher critics disbelieve in miracles and supernatural predictions. I will go further still and freely grant that with some of them, such as Strauss, Renan, and Mr. Walter Cassels (the author of *Supernatural Religion*), the denial is based on philosophical considerations. But Renan, at any rate, combined for many years with his absolute disbelief in miracles a belief that the gospels were written by the men whose names they bear; and when he partially abandoned this position, it was under the stress of historical, not of philosophical, arguments. Now this is just what the enemies of criticism find so irritating—that the evidence of history is turning against them; that the documents, when scientifically investigated, should, as it were, of themselves, fall into a progressive series exhibiting more and more of the supernatural the farther removed they are from the original events, and a decline of truthfulness going along with an increase of intellectual culture in the narrators the farther removed they are from the original eye-witnesses. Such is the power and flexibility of modern philosophy that, once released from the necessity of verification, it can be made to prove or disprove anything. So the modern apologist flies to speculation whenever he has the chance, in the hope that his ark of faith may ride triumphant on a deluge of scepticism.

> Verachte nur Vernunft und Wissenschaft,
> Des Menschen allerhöchste Kraft,
> So hab' ich dich!

said Mephistopheles a hundred and twenty years ago. The new Mephistopheles, disguised as an angel of light, sees in historical reason and historical science alone the barrier that separates him from his victims. "Thank heaven we have got rid of history!" a Jesuit Father is reported to have exclaimed when Papal Infallibility was voted. His Protestant brother would gladly get rid of it also. As good a device for the purpose as any other is to damage the reputation of the laborious inquirers who clear the way for true history and accumulate the materials for its edifice; to substitute for the decisive issues of experience the interminable wrangles of metaphysics; above all, to convert an appeal to reason into an appeal to authority. Perhaps there would be a good case for anyone who chose to maintain that there is a greater weight of learning and ability and disinterestedness on the progressive side. But we have no wish to exchange one bondage for another. Our object is not that the Higher Criticism should be reverenced, but that it should be read. Doubtless the official apologists will say that in this respect they have done their duty. Let them then prove their familiarity with the arguments of their opponents by fair statements and fair replies, not by confusing the outcome of an inquiry with the assumptions from which it sets out.

PASCAL'S WAGER[1]

A CERTAIN rustic moralist in Mr. Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd* gives his opinion about the relative chances of salvation contingent on attending church or chapel in the following homely but telling terms:—

"We know very well that if anybody goes to heaven they [chapel-folk] will. They've worked hard for it and they deserve to have it, such as 'tis. I'm not such a fool as to pretend that we who stick to the church have the same chance as they, because we know we have not. But I hate a feller who'll change his old ancient doctrine for the sake of getting to heaven."

So far the excellent Coggan, for such is the name of Mr. Hardy's pot-house philosopher. Whether churchmen or dissenters should be credited with the better chance of salvation is a deep question in which I do not now propose to enter. The Conformist and the Nonconformist conscience may safely be left to take care of themselves. But the ingenuous confidences of this particular churchman suggest a problem of wider interest on which I propose to offer a few remarks. Is there any method of salvation that may be called distinctly mean? I believe there is at least one such, and I am sorry to say that it is a method recommended by no less an authority than Pascal.

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[1] A remarkable passage in Dr. McTaggart's work entitled *Some Dogmas of Religion* (pp. 213–16) presents so close a parallel with one of the arguments put forth in the following pages that I might incur the charge of borrowing without acknowledgment were the fact not mentioned that my essay was originally published in the *International Journal of Ethics* for April, 1905, a year before the appearance of the work referred to, and that Dr. McTaggart had certainly read it, as is proved by the quotation from Pascal on p. 213 of his book.

What the French call "*le pari de Pascal*"—in English, Pascal's wager or bet—forms the theme of one of the most celebrated passages in his fragmentary defence of Christianity, published after his death and universally known as the *Pensées*. A very elaborate edition of this work, filling three large volumes in the great series of French classics, which is one of the glories of French bibliography, has recently appeared.[1] Nearly the whole of the first volume is occupied by an elaborate Introduction, in which all the literary facts necessary for the full understanding of Pascal's position are brought together. Then comes a presumably immaculate text accompanied by an ample array of critical and explanatory notes, the Thoughts themselves being so arranged in sections as to exhibit themselves to the best logical advantage; and the whole is completed by what is rare in French books, an excellent index. So far as externals go, we cannot expect that this splendid and sombre genius will ever make a better appearance before the world than in M. Léon Brunschvicg's edition.

Pascal's apologetics are as obsolete as his satire on the Jesuits is fresh and living. The Higher Criticism has ruined his theory of Christian evidences. Evolution has ruined his theory of the

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[1] The references in this essay are to this edition.

Fall. And what some modern mathematicians defend with arguments no more solid than his would not have been recognised by him as the true faith. But one, at least, of his points has secured an undying literary interest from the extraordinary energy and passion with which the case is put rather than from any peculiar ingenuity or originality in the thought itself. This is the argument of the wager to which I have already referred.

It runs as follows. Speaking by the light of nature, says Pascal, God, supposing him to exist, must be out of relation to ourselves. Being without parts or limits, he is infinitely incomprehensible. We can neither know what he is, nor even that he is. This admission goes beyond that form of modern Agnosticism according to which we can say with certainty that the Unknowable exists, but not what it is. And, of course, it goes very far beyond Herbert Spencer's affirmation of an Unknowable which is infinite, eternal, an energy, and the cause of all things. But we are not to take so sceptical a confession as defining Pascal's own position. Being a Christian, he has other sources of information than the light of nature. His supposed sceptic—who turns out to be a very real sceptic with a place in French literary history—has none. But the sceptic's ignorance cuts both ways. It leaves the non-existence of God as uncertain as his existence. Reason supplies no means of choosing between the two alternative possibilities. Nevertheless, we are obliged to back one side or the other, to play at a game of hazard in which, at an infinite distance, heads or tails will turn up. "But," answers the sceptic, "I do not want to play at all; in such a doubtful case as what you describe prudence bids us abstain." To which Pascal replies: "You must bet; you are in for it; it does not depend on your will." For as his Port Royalist editors put it, in an elucidatory addition to the text, "Not to bet is to bet for the non-existence of God."

Plato observes, in the *Republic,* that he "hardly ever met a mathematician who could reason" (531 E). So, at least, Jowett translates the passage—not, perhaps, without a spice of malice. According to some, the word he uses (διαλεκτικοί) does not exactly imply what we mean by ability to reason. But I think it will be admitted to imply the power so signally displayed by Plato himself in the *Parmenides*—the power, that is, of exhaustively enumerating the possible issues in a given question, and of deducing the necessary consequences in each instance. And it seems to me that, whatever may be the case with modern mathematicians as a class, Pascal shows himself remarkably deficient in that sort of dialectical ability—so much so, indeed, as to ruin the basis of his whole argument at the very start. The deficiency may or may not be connected with his great mathematical genius; anyhow it is there.

Why must I bet? No reason whatever is given, but it needs only a very slight acquaintance with the dogmatic Christianity of Pascal's time to supply what he leaves unsaid. To be saved man must believe positively in the existence of God; to leave it an open question is to incur the same penalty as complete atheism—that is, eternal damnation.

Here we come at once on a flagrant self-contradiction, which, even if it stood alone, would leave the sceptic triumphant. Pascal began by saying that God, as infinite, is unrelated to us (*il n' a nul rapport à nous*). But, if so, he can neither save nor damn us: our future fate has nothing to do with his existence or non-existence, still less with our opinion or absence of opinion on the subject.

I do not profess to know much about the turf; but I strongly suspect that anyone who had such loose notions as Pascal about the laws of betting, if he acted on them, would soon be cleared out of every penny he possessed—that is, supposing his ignorance to be real; while, if it were assumed for the purpose of eluding payment, he would before long find himself turned off every race-course in England.

However, we will let that pass. We will suppose that the words "out of relation" slipped in by an unfortunate oversight, and would have been deleted had the author lived to see his work through the press; noting, however, that they were allowed to stand by the logicians of Port Royal, who otherwise made free enough with his manuscript. Let it be granted as not impossible that the infinite Being, if he exist, is no other than the God of Catholicism. But there is a long way from possibility to certainty, and Pascal himself has warned us that the knowledge, if any, of God's existence is quite distinct from the knowledge of his attributes. Assuming there to be a God, that bare fact leaves us in absolute ignorance about his character. Now it might fairly be contended that the number of different characters which may possibly be ascribed to an infinite being is infinite, and even infinite in the second degree on account of the possible permutations and combinations of attributes. Accordingly, the conditions of the wager must be altered. Pascal has appealed to the light of reason, and to reason he must go. Apart from objective evidence, of which there is at present no question, the chances against his theology's being true are at least infinity to one.

It is, however, on the cards that Pascal, admitting so much, might still maintain that a man of sense was justified in staking his life on the existence of God. In order to make this clear we must examine the conditions of the wager.

"If you win," he tells us, "you win everything; if you lose, you lose nothing." In the more concrete language of religious belief, if there is a God and you have faith in his promises you gain everlasting felicity; if there is no God, death ends all. It is not precisely explained what is meant by staking your life; but, as Pascal is addressing himself to a careless worldling, he must be supposed to mean what such a person would call "life"—that is to say, an existence of sensual and social enjoyment. The author of the *Thoughts* would not admit that the abandonment of such a life involved any real sacrifice; and so far the serious moralist of any religion or of no religion would not be disposed to quarrel with him. But in fact, as we shall see presently, there is much more involved—certainly more than the sage who finds life "very tolerable without its amusements" is prepared to give up.

Of course no Christian, and Pascal less than another, believes that eternal felicity can be won as the fruit of such a cold-blooded calculation, such brutal cynicism, to use M. Sully Prudhomme's blunt phrase,[1] as would seem to be implied by the aleatory proceeding recommended. Simply as a bet it would, to the Searcher of all hearts, be no more than the celebrated short prayer, "O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul!" In fact, it is only the first step towards acquiring a genuine conviction. And Pascal does not leave us in doubt about the second step. His sceptic is made to reply: "I fully acknowledge the force of your reasoning. But is there no way of seeing the faces of the cards?" "Yes, there are the Scriptures, *etc.*" "But what if I am so constituted that I cannot believe?" "Do what others in your position have done before. Act as if you believed; take holy water, attend Mass, *etc.* The natural effect of all that will be to make you believe, and to stupify you *(vous abêtira)*." "But that is just what I am afraid of." "Why so? What have you to lose?"

I do not think that such a method would commend itself to the ingenuous mind of Mr. Hardy's rustic. I fear Coggan would "hate a feller" who submitted to such a degradation "for the sake of getting to heaven." Even the Port Royal editors were ashamed to print this precious advice, softening it down into a harmless recommendation to imitate the conduct of believers. Victor Cousin was the first to publish the words as they were originally written. That brilliant rhetorician was neither a deep nor a sincere thinker; but he still retained some respect for truth and reason. He asked, Was that, then, the last word of human wisdom, and can we only approach the supreme Intelligence by the sacrifice of our own? But nowadays, among orthodox Frenchmen, Victor Cousin would pass for a dangerous character—an "intellectual." M. Brunschvicg defends Pascal by putting a sense on his words which they will not bear. *S'abêtir*, he tells us, means no more than that we should get rid of the prejudices which stand in the way of faith. Surely, if so great a writer wanted to say this, he had command enough of the French language to say it for himself. A course of dogmatic theology, however disagreeable, would, one might suppose, be more effective against rationalistic prejudices than a course of holy water. Pascal was a shrewd observer, and understood the effect of mechanical devotion better, perhaps, than his apologist. One need only study the faces in a Bavarian *Corpus Domini* procession or at a Breton *Pardon* to see what "abêtissement" means.

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[1] In his article entitled "Le Sens et la Portée du Pari de Pascal," in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of November 15th, 1890.

Besides a natural if sinful objection to part with his reason, the sceptic has still a difficulty. The hope of salvation is all very well, but against the happiness it gives we have to set the fear of hell. To which Pascal replies, sensibly enough from his point of view: Which has more reason to fear it, he who remains in ignorance if there be a hell, with the certainty of being damned if there is one, or he who is certainly persuaded of its existence, with the hope of being saved if it does exist?

This is a very important passage. Both Ernest Havet, in his notes to the *Pensées*, and M. Sully Prudhomme, in his essay on the wager, have assumed, as not needing discussion, that backing the wrong side involves not only the loss of eternal felicity, but also the positive payment of an infinite penalty under the form of everlasting torment. A more recent critic, however, repudiates their interpretation. The eminent philosopher M. Lachelier, writing in the *Revue Philosophique,*[1] declares peremptorily that hell has no place in the wager. As the terms are first stated it certainly is not mentioned; but to insist on the omission seems more like a lawyer than a philosopher. And even from the strictly legal point of view M. Lachelier's contention seems unjustifiable. In drawing out the full significance of the wager we have a right to interpret its conditions in the light of its author's known and unconcealed opinions about the future fate of unbelievers. To say that I am obliged to bet must mean that my refusal would entail the same consequences as if I betted against God's existence and lost. And that must be more than the mere privation of eternal felicity, for so much the sceptic is already prepared to face with equanimity. Besides, when he asks to see the faces of the cards played Pascal refers him to Scripture for information ; and we know that in the eyes of a seventeenth-century Catholic Scripture consigns the infidel to eternal torment.

One is almost ashamed to labour so obvious a point. But it is a question of some interest why the chance of damnation is left to be inferred when it might have been made to figure with such tremendous effect in the wager as originally stated.

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[1] June, 1901, p. 625.

I apprehend that the reason is one of simple politeness. Pascal, as Walter Pater reminds us,[1] was a gentleman; and the sceptic for whose benefit he started the whole idea of making the supreme verities a subject of betting was also a gentleman and a dear friend of his, the Chevalier de Méré, a man of the world, and apparently, like others of the kind, a gamester. That is why Pascal addresses him in terms borrowed from the favourite amusement of his class; and that is also, I suggest, why he spares him words not suited to polite ears. Both, however, understand perfectly what the truth of the Catholic theory would imply. A losing bettor not only misses infinite happiness, but has to pay the stakes by suffering infinite misery. And with great tact the first reference to this unpleasant aspect of the wager is put into the mouth, not of the Christian advocate, but of the hesitating sceptic. Méré, not Pascal, is made responsible for introducing it into the discussion. To convince ourselves that the softening down of the risk incurred by infidelity is a mere concession to the rules of personal politeness, we need only turn to the passages where Pascal has to deal with mankind in general. Here the loss of felicity is not mentioned as a motive for belief. With his usual and incomparable splendour of rhetoric, he describes death as infallibly destined to place the impious and indifferent under the horrible necessity of submitting either to eternal annihilation or to eternal misery, without knowing which of these eternities has been prepared for them for ever.[2] And this alternative, such as it is, must not be thought of as existing objectively in the nature of things, or rather in the unknown purposes of Providence, but subjectively in the reasonable apprehensions of the doubter.

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[1] *Works,* VIII., p. 63.

[2] II., p. 121.

Judged by Jesuit or modern Ultramontane standards, the author of the *Provinciales* and the *Pensées* may have been a heretic. But he was far too good a Catholic to entertain for a moment the idea that hell could mean annihilation. He speaks *ad hominem*. If you are right in your unbelief, you will cease to exist at death; if you are wrong, you will certainly be tormented for ever.

So much being established, let us return to the wager and its implications. It was presented under the form of an even chance, with nothing to lose (except one's reason) on the one event, and everything to gain on the other. One is struck by the suspicious resemblance to a plea sometimes advanced for trying a quack remedy. It may do good, and it can't do harm. Now, in the case of a drug about which we know nothing—for the modesty of that "may do good" is really a confession of complete ignorance—the possibility of harm is precisely measured by the possibility of benefit. For us the chances are equal, because neither event is anything more than a chance. And an attentive examination shows that Pascal's reasoning suffers from the same fatal flaw.

From respect for so great a name two enormous assumptions have been let pass. We withdrew our objection to the logical impossibility that a Being out of all relation to man can affect man's future fate. And we accepted as an even chance the infinitesimally small probability that an infinite personality, supposing it to exist, has exactly the character of the God in whom Jansenist Catholics believed. But our concessions must end here. What security has Méré that in accepting the wager he sacrifices no more than his reason and the healthy enjoyment of life? "You have," says his friend, "the word of God." Is that so certain? or is it a sufficient guarantee? It will not do to call the question blasphemous, for our moralist has imbued us with the idea that truth is a matter of geography, and we know what the Nicene Creed would be called across the straits of Gibraltar.

Here we have the nemesis of agnosticism as a method of faith. A universal solvent is created and then poured into some consecrated chalice in the ingenuous expectation that the holy vessel will resist its corrosive action. In a series of brilliant aphorisms congealing the loose and lazy scepticisms of Montaigne into a hailstorm of diamond-pointed epigrams, Pascal had denounced the supposed eternal laws of human morality as a set of arbitrary expedients, varying from country to country, and merely intended to win respect for the authority of their princes. From such a discordant medley of customs no fixed moral standard or natural system of ethics can be elicited. Still less can our ideas of what is right and good be applied to the criticism of God's ways with man. Anterior to revelation we cannot predicate morality, more than any other attribute, of the infinite Being; nor can a self-revealing Deity be expected to act in conformity with human notions of right and wrong when those notions are not conformable with one another.

Pascal accepts the consequences of his sceptical theology with cynical candour. "What," he exclaims, "can be more opposed to our wretched rules of justice than the eternal damnation of a child without any will of its own for a sin in which it seems to have had so little share that it was committed six thousand years before the said child came into existence?"[1] In fact, moral distinctions are created by God; and "the sole reason why sins are sins is that they are contrary to his will."[2] Were the whole human race to be eternally damned, God would stand acquitted of injustice.[3]

Nevertheless, with an inconsistency not uncommon among sceptics Pascal recognises one kind of moral obligation as universally binding, so much so as even to impose itself on God in his relations to man. And that is the obligation of keeping a promise. It is mentioned quite naïvely as a self-evident truth, valid apparently on both sides of the Pyrenees. "There is a reciprocal duty between God and man.......God is bound to fulfil his promises."[4] If we have backed the winning card, the stakes will be honestly paid.

I know not what answer the Chevalier de Méré made to the aleatory apologetics of his illustrious friend; but his conversion was delayed so long as probably to have been effected by considerations of a different order. He might well have required a better security for the divine fidelity than Pascal's guarantee. It seems rather rash to infer that, because a gentleman keeps his word and pays his debts of honour, the Jansenist God will. A Being who is wholly unaccountable may mean something different from what he says, or the exact opposite, or nothing at all. An irresponsible despot is generally not less remarkable for perfidy than for cruelty. He who predestines little children to eternal damnation may quite possibly be reserving the Sisters of Port Royal for the same fate. We were told that the whole human race might justly be sent to hell, and how do we know that the full divine right may not after all be exercised. "We have the word of a King for our Church, and of a King who was never worse than his word." Such was the confident answer of the English Bishops to those who suspected the intentions of James II. History tells how their credulity was rewarded.

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[1] II., p. 348.
[2] III., p. 104.
[3] I., p. 125.
[4] III., pp. 277-8.

What is more, Pascal's interpretation of Scripture goes to prove that deceit and treachery are among the revealed attributes of his God. A particularly nauseous quality of that personage is that, not content with exercising his undoubted privilege of damning human beings at sight, he tries to manufacture a colourable pretext for their condemnation by introducing difficulties into the Bible. "There is obscurity enough to blind the reprobate, and clearness enough to make them inexcusable."[1] "Do you suppose that the prophecies quoted in the New Testament are mentioned to make you believe? No, it is to prevent you from believing."[2] The whole Jewish people were purposely blinded to the real meaning of the Messianic prophecies in order that their rejection of Jesus Christ might render them unsuspected witnesses to the authenticity of the evidentiary documents committed to their charge. Had they accepted the gospel, it might have been said that they had forged the predictions by which its supernatural origin is attested, and of whose antiquity their word is the sole guarantee.[1]

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[1] III., p. 23.

[2] III., p. 15.

It would surprise me to learn that there was any greater distortion of truth and justice in the casuistry of Escobar than in the sophistry of his Jansenist satirist. And the Jesuits, if they erred, had at least the excuse of erring on the side of mercy. They constructed fire-escapes where Pascal opens *oubliettes*.

Our only knowledge of God, our only proof that there is a God, comes through the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament and their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. But it is of the very essence of these prophecies to be ambiguous and misleading. We asked to be shown the cards with which that awful game for our soul's salvation is being played "at an infinite distance," and our wish has been gratified: the cards are no other than the pages of Scripture. And now we learn that their colour and value depend entirely on the inscrutable will of the dealer. He can call black red and a king a knave. He can change trumps at pleasure and count an ace as eleven points or as one. That is how his antitype, Napoleon, played chess, moving the pieces just as he liked, regardless of rules. Our Ariel-souled thinker constructs a God meaner if not more malignant than the Setebos of Caliban, in that wonderful study of Robert Browning's which is also such a scathing satire on the creed of his youth. Granting that such a person exists, our conduct cannot be affected one way or the other by the fact. Being unable to take his word for anything, we are exactly in the same position as if he had never spoken. Perhaps after all he is less amenable to the charms of adulation and submission than his more abject adorers would have us believe. Our moral superiority over him may at last make its ascendancy felt. Possibly in that case his first impulse would be to wreak vengeance on the reptile souls who sought to stupefy their reason by the copious use of masses and holy water. Then we who never stooped to that degradation will intercede with the converted Moloch for the shivering wretches, who may escape with no worse penalty than transmigration into the bodies of apes.

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[1] II., p. 16 ff.

Briefly, then, the existence of an infinite Being out of relation to ourselves cannot possibly influence our future fate. In the absence of positive evidence it remains infinitely improbable that an infinite Being actively related to us should have a character identical with that of the Jansenist deity. Assuming such a deity to exist, the chances are precisely equal that he will or that he will not behave towards us in any particular manner. Therefore, so far as theology goes, Méré is rationally justified in adopting the line of conduct that seems most agreeable to his own desires. When the door of death opens it is even betting whether the lady or the tiger will receive him.

Metaphor apart, no revelation can be of any practical value unless it is assumed to come from a person whose word we can trust. But the veracity of God is only guaranteed by his general moral perfection, and such perfection can only be conceived as the consummation of human goodness. But goodness includes justice as known to us by earthly examples, and these, according to Pascal himself, forbid us to believe that innocent little children can merit eternal torments—or, we may add, that Méré could merit them for honestly using his reason to find out the truth, or even the judges of Galileo for suppressing it. In theology the method of Descartes is a surer guide than the method of Montaigne.

The idea of accepting Christianity (understood in an orthodox sense) as a probability which seems safer to believe than to disbelieve has been traced back to Arnobius, from whom Pascal is supposed to have derived it through Raymond Sebond, whose *Natural Theology* he had certainly read. But the after fortunes of the argument are more interesting than its origin. It had the singular good fortune to be taken up by Butler and made the very keynote of his *Analogy*, whence it passed to the leaders of the Tractarian Movement, betraying its inherent weakness by the conflicting interpretations respectively put on it by Newman and Keble.

I do not know whether Butler had or had not read Pascal; but his theory of probability as applied to the evidences of Christianity is a distinct improvement on the wager, in so far as it encourages instead of abolishing the use of reason. On the other hand, his appeal to the most degrading of all "pragmatic" motives is considerably more explicit, and will hardly be denied even by the most unscrupulous of apologists. After detailing the arguments for revealed religion based on the performance of miracles and the fulfilment of prophecy, he shows an uneasy consciousness of their insufficiency, but urges as a make-weight that "a mistake on the one side may be, in its consequences, much more dangerous than a mistake on the other."[1] Butler alleges, it is true, that he gives this ominous warning, not to influence the judgment, but the practice, of his readers. The distinction, however, is not easy to grasp, nor is any attempt made to illustrate it. If his sole object was to strengthen the motives for virtuous action irrespective of creed, he ought to have made his meaning plainer. Many of the Deists would have agreed with him in recommending a high and pure standard of morality, while deprecating the attempt to compromise it by a reference to selfish hopes or fears. In any case, judgment and practice cannot be isolated from one another, nor made amenable to different orders of motives, least of all when we are discussing a creed most of whose advocates consider that a man is morally responsible for his belief. It is difficult not to think that Butler knew this, although he avoids committing himself to an open use of the argument *ad terrorem*. Nor will any reservation make his theoretical assumption anything but a gross fallacy. There is no safe side in religion, for there is no experience to show where safety lies. To seek safety may, for aught we know, be the most dangerous, as it is certainly the most pusillanimous, of choices.

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[1] *Analogy*, Part II., chap. vii., *sub fin.*

In the controversy between theology and rationalism it requires a greater effort of abstraction than most minds are capable of to grasp this possibility, and to appreciate its bearing on the aleatory method of belief. And as between Roman Catholicism and the various Protestant sects all doubt would vanish. The superior safety of belonging to the Church which alone claimed to monopolise the means of salvation was constantly urged as a motive for submitting to its pretensions, and proved, in fact, a most efficacious method of proselytism. Henry of Navarre is said to have put the argument in a particularly pointed form. The Protestant divines whom he consulted on the subject reluctantly admitted that he might be saved if he became a Catholic. The Catholic divines told him without hesitation that he would certainly be damned if he remained a Protestant. He therefore chose that side which, by universal agreement, offered the best prospect of escaping from perdition. What the great King had offered, more than half in irony, as an excuse for his politic apostasy was accepted in deadly earnest by many persons of quality in England under Charles I. as a reason for deserting the cause of the Reformation. Charles II.'s deathbed conversion was probably dictated by the same motive ; and, if so, it offers a crowning example of the adroit opportunism by which his whole life was guided. In this as in other respects the ablest of all the Stuarts bore a close resemblance to his grandfather, the ablest of the Bourbons. When Butler wrote the danger from Rome had greatly diminished, but had not wholly disappeared, as we learn from Neal's *History of the Puritans* (1732) and Middleton's *Free Inquiry* (1747).[1] It is therefore rather surprising that he did not observe what consequences might be drawn from an argument, perhaps derived from Pascal, in favour of Pascal's creed.

If English churchmen did not draw the logical consequences of their greatest champion's apologetic method, their escape is due not only to the happy inconsistency of the theological intellect, but also to the pervasive influence of eighteenth-century rationalism, extending as it did far beyond the small circle of avowed freethinkers. Whatever else Englishmen might believe, their own Deists and the Voltairean movement abroad gradually convinced them that Popery was a superstition too absurd for even a Frenchman to accept—destined to speedy extinction, Horace Walpole thought, if the ill-advised abrogation of our penal laws had not given it a new lease of life. It would have surprised the dilettante of Strawberry Hill to hear that his own experiments in Gothic architecture had rather more to do with the dreaded revival of mediæval faith than the repeal of some obsolete statutes. Anyhow, by accident or otherwise, he proved a true prophet. Whether as grim wolf or good shepherd, two centuries after *Lycidas* Rome once more put in play the arts against which Milton had raised his warning voice. Or rather the natural magnetism exercised by the larger on the smaller body acted without the help of any direct proselytism on the part of Jesuits or others to disintegrate the Church of England and to draw its detached fragments into the central orb of Christendom.

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[1] The date of the *Analogy* is 1736.

Now it is interesting to note that in this process the method of Pascal and Butler played an important part, and was appealed to with confidence by both parties, by those who clung to the Via Media of Anglicanism and by those who scorned it as an illogical compromise between the right way and the wrong.

Cardinal Newman briefly refers to Butler's doctrine of probability as the guide of life as that whence his own theory of faith took its rise. Keble treats it at much greater length, and in particular connection with the issue on which he and his greater friend parted company in a very interesting but little read document, the preface to his *Sermons, Academical and Occasional,* published in 1847, soon after Newman's secession.

The principle in question is stated as follows: "In practical matters of eternal import, the safer way is always to be preferred, even though the excess of seeming evidence may tell in any degree on the opposite side. Thus, if one mode of acting imply that there is an eternity and another contradict it......the tremendous, overwhelming interest at stake ought to determine a man's conduct to the affirmative side. He should act, in spite of seeming evidence, as if eternity were true."[1]

Keble had not the same lingering regard for truth as such that still distinguished Butler; and the context clearly shows that "acting" means not merely conformity to Christian ethics, but also that adhesion to the Catholic creed which, in the supposed circumstances, some, among whom the present writer is one, would call, in plain language, cowardly and deceitful.

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[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 6.

Fortunately, or rather inevitably, systematised immorality is suicidal; and a recent incident has reminded us that when sailors fall into a panic they are apt to fire into their own ships.[1] Keble very frankly admits that "the principles of Butler and Pascal" cannot be limited to "the controversy with unbelievers."[2] And if personally he had been disposed so to limit them, Newman would not have allowed him to stop short. So he proceeds to state the argument for going over to Rome in terms which I shall not transcribe, as they are substantially identical with the Bourbon argument (white plume argument, let us call it) already quoted.

Keble's way of getting out of it is amazing, and practically amounts to an abandonment of the whole principle. It is that "the argument put in this form proves too much, for it would equally show that Puritanism or Mahometanism, or the ancient Donatism, or any other exclusive system, is the safer way."[3] And he also goes on to remark, rather late in the day, that there seems to be something "cold and ungenerous" about the method—in short, what we call mean. Accordingly, it is to be reserved for the exclusive benefit of unbelievers, and not mentioned in controversies among Christians. But we have seen that as against unbelievers the probabilist method is quite invalid. When the factor of inscrutable and irresponsible omnipotence has been introduced into our calculations the adoption of one particular alternative becomes no more advisable than the adoption of another. Whatever creed we profess or reject, the chances of our being saved or lost remain precisely equal. For a Being who is morally capable of damning us at all is capable of damning us for taking him at his word. Nor has the orthodox believer any right to charge those who advance such an argument with irreverence or flippancy. To the God whose existence he assumes their reasoning may appear perfectly reverent and serious.

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[1] The reference is to the Dogger Bank incident of October 22nd, 1904, when Admiral Rozhdestvensky mistook the Hull trawlers for Japanese torpedo-boats. On that occasion some of the Russian ships are reported to have suffered from the misdirected fire of their consorts.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 7, 8.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

Pascal's method was destined to one more singular development before it silently took its place among the obsolete weapons of religious controversy. With the collapse of the Tractarian Movement the rationalistic movement which it had temporarily arrested returned in a flood, and before many years had passed became predominant at Oxford, at least among her more serious and intellectual residents. To meet this new danger Mansel delivered his famous Bampton Lectures in 1858. He does not, I think, ever mention the argument *ad terrorem*, but he follows Pascal in denying that our moral distinctions are applicable to the proceedings of an infinite Being about whose real nature we are totally ignorant; and he follows Butler in contending that every other system is open to as many objections as Christianity, or rather as his own particular version of Christianity.

Mansel was hailed by his admirers as a second Butler; but the reception of his work by the intellectual public generally showed that such methods had passed out of date. I question whether, in the controversy that it provoked, a single name of distinction is to be found on his side. Against him were such writers as F. D. Maurice, James Martineau, R. H. Hutton, and Professor Goldwin Smith. Herbert Spencer, accepting his premises, pushed them to the length of an Agnosticism which absolutely excluded belief in revealed religion, and reduced natural religion to the most attenuated of abstractions. But the most resounding stroke of all came from John Stuart Mill. In the course of his destructive attack on the philosophy of Mansel's teacher, Sir William Hamilton, the great thinker and moralist, then at the very height of his fame and power, turned aside to tear up the flimsy pretences under which the Bampton Lecturer on the *Limits of Religious Thoughts* had attempted to eliminate morality from religion. Pascal is not named; but here at last Pascal's method receives its final quietus. Convince me, says Mill, that the world is ruled by an infinite Being of whom I know nothing except that his proceedings are incompatible with the highest human morality, "and I will bear my fate as I may. But there is one thing he shall not do: he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go."[1]

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[1] *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 124 (3rd ed.).

Mansel sneeringly forbore "to comment on the temper and taste of this declamation."[1] But what he said or did not say mattered equally little. The ghastly idol had fallen and fallen forever.

It has been said by some who are in full sympathy with Mill's contention that the sentiment here expressed, however admirable, is irreconcilable with his utilitarian ethics. I am not so sure of that. The moral degradation of worshipping an omnipotent demon through eternity might conceivably be more painful than any punishment in the demon's power to inflict. Or, on finding himself defied, he might "tak' a thought and men'"—to the great increase of the general felicity. But there seems a sort of pedantry about such considerations. If the supreme ironies are partly serious, supreme seriousness may well be a little ironical. There is such a phrase as "I bet you all to nothing," and as the language of the gaming-table has once been introduced it may here be appropriately used as best describing Mill's position. There is no more than an infinitesimally small chance that Mansel's non-moral theology may be true; but neither on that chance nor on any other will a high-principled human soul forfeit its self-respect.

My object has been to show that to incur either intellectual or moral degradation on a calculation of selfish interest would be not only mean, but unavailing. For with the limitation of our knowledge assumed by the theologians who appeal to such motives there is no safe side, the chances either way being precisely equal whatever attitude towards the hidden arbiter of our destiny we assume. It remains, then, that our conduct should be determined by considerations equally applicable whether the supernatural does or does not exist.

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[1] *Philosophy of the Conditioned*, p. 168.