



Beyond the Grave.

By A. P. Martin.

Beyond the grave—most cherished of her creed—
There gleams a brighter world, from sorrow free,
So most men hold; but, ah! it seems to me
But the mere reflex of our earthly greeds,
We deem this life too narrow for our needs,
And so demand heaven's high felicity,
But of our after life what sign have we?
In vain man prays and tells his futile beads.
Alas! he never hears the faintest sound
Of voice divine in answer to his cries.
He knows full well, then, when at length he dies
He must be laid with grief in burial ground;
If in celestial glory he shall rise,
Why do the weeping mourners stand around?

Temperance by Instinct.

By F. L. Oswald.

Instinct is hereditary experience. The lessons derived from the repetition of pleasant or painful impressions have been transmitted from an infinite number of generations, till impending dangers have come to proclaim themselves by instinctive dread, opportune benefits by instinctive desire. The shudder that warns us to recede from the brink of a steep cliff is felt even by persons who have never personally experienced the peril of falling from the rocks of a precipice. Mountain breezes are more attractive than swamp odors; the fumes of a foul dungeon warn off a child who has had as yet no opportunity to ascertain the danger of breathing contaminated air. A few years ago I bought a pet fox, with a litter of cubs, who were soon after orphaned by the escape of their mother. They had to be fed by hand; and, among other proceeds of a forage, my neighbor's boy once brought them a bundle of lizards and a dead rattlesnake. For the possession of those lizards there was at once an animated fight, but at sight of the serpent the little gluttons turned tail and retreated to the farther end of their kennel. They were not a month old when I bought them, and could not possibly have seen a rattlesnake before, or known the effects of its bite from personal experience; but instinct at once informed them that an encounter with a reptile of that sort had brought some of their forefathers to grief.

The vegetable kingdom, that provides food for nine-tenths of all living creatures, abounds with an endless variety of all kinds of edible fruits, seeds, and herbs, but also

with injurious and even deadly products, often closely resembling the favorite food-plants of animals, which in a state of nature are nevertheless sure to avoid mistake and select their food by a faculty of recognizing differences that might escape the attention of even a trained botanist. The chief medium of that faculty is the sense of smell in the lower, and the sense of taste in the higher animals. In monkeys, for instance, the olfactory organs are rather imperfectly developed, and I have often seen them peel an unknown fruit with their fingers and then cautiously raise it to their lips and rub it to and fro before venturing to bring their teeth into play. The preliminary test, however, always sufficed to decide the question in a couple of seconds. The Abyssinian mountaineers who catch baboons by fuddling them with plum brandy, have to disguise the taste of the liquor with a large admixture of syrup before they can deceive the warning instincts of their victims. Where copper mines discharge their drainage into a water-course, deer and other wild animals have been known to go in quest of distant springs rather than quench their thirst with the polluted water.

That protective instincts of that sort are shared even by the lowest animals is proved by the experiment of the philosopher Ehrenberg, who put a drop of alcohol into a bottle of pond water, and under the lens of his microscope saw a swarm of infusoria precipitate themselves to the bottom of the vessel.

Animals in a state of nature rarely or never eat to an injurious excess; the apparent surfeits of wolves, serpents, vultures, etc., alternate with long fasts, and are digested as easily as a hunter, after missing his breakfast and dinner, would be able to digest an abundant supper. Instinct indicates even the most propitious time for indulging in repletion. The noon heat of a midsummer day seems to suspend the promptings of appetite; cows can be seen resting drowsily at the foot of a shade tree; deer doze in the mountain glens and come out to browse in moonlight; panthers cannot afford to miss an opportunity to slay their game at noon, but are very apt to hide the carcass and come back to devour it in the cool of the evening.

The products of fermentation are so repulsive to the higher animals that only the distress of actual starvation would tempt a monkey to touch a rotten apple, or quench

his thirst with acidulated grape-juice. Poppy fields need no fence; tobacco leaves are in no danger of being nibbled by browsing cattle. Nature seems to have had no occasion for providing instinctive safeguards against such out-of-the-way things as certain mineral poisons; yet the taste of arsenic, though not violently repulsive (like that of the more common, and therefore more dangerous, vegetable poisons), is certainly not attractive, but rather insipid, and a short experience seems to supplement the defects of instinct in that respect. Trappers know that poisoned baits after a while lose their seductiveness, and old rats have been seen driving their young from a dish of arsenic-poisoned gruel.

Certainly no animal would feel any natural inclination to seek arsenic or alcohol for its own sake, and there is no reason to suppose that man, in that respect, differs from every known species of his fellow-creatures. Our clerical temperance lecturers rant about "the lusts of the unregenerate heart," the "weakness of the flesh," the "danger of yielding to the promptings of appetite," as if Nature herself would tempt us to our ruin, and the path of safety could be learned only from preternatural revelation. But the truth is that to the palate of a child, even the child of an habitual drunkard, the taste of alcohol is as repulsive as that of turpentine, or bitterwood. Tobacco fumes and the stench of burning opium still nauseate the children of the habitual smoker as they would have nauseated the children of the patriarchs. The first cigar demonstrates the virulence of nicotine by vertigo and sick-headaches; the first glass of beer is rejected by the revolt of the stomach; the fauces contract and writhe against the first dram of brandy. Nature records her protests in the most unmistakable language of instinct, and only the repeated and continued disregard of that protest at last begets the abnormal craving of that poison-thirst which clerical blasphemers ascribe to the promptings of our natural appetites. They might as well make us believe in a natural passion for dungeon air, because the prisoners of the Holy Inquisition at last lost their love of liberty, and came to prefer the stench of their subterranean black-holes to the breezes of the free mountains.

The craving for hot spices, for strong meats, and such abominations as fetid cheese, and fermented

cabbage have all to be artificially acquired; and in regard to the selection of our proper food, the instincts of our young children could teach us more than a whole library of ascetic twaddle. Not for the sake of "mortifying the flesh," but on the plan of recommendation of the natural senses that prefer palatable to disgusting food, the progeny of Adam could be guided in the path of reform and learn to avoid forbidden fruit by the symptoms of its forbidding taste.—Bible of Nature.

Dawn Of the New Day.

By R. G. Ingersoll.

Beyond the universe there is nothing, and within the universe the supernatural does not and cannot exist.

The moment these great truths are understood and admitted, a belief in general or special providence becomes impossible. From that instant men will cease their vain efforts to please an imaginary being, and will give their time and attention to the affairs of this world. They will abandon the idea of attaining any object by prayer and supplication. The element of uncertainty will, in a great measure, be removed from the domain of the future, and man, gathering courage from a succession of victories over the obstructions of nature, will attain a serene grandeur unknown to the disciples of any superstition. The plans of mankind will no longer be interfered with by the finger of a supposed omnipotence, and no one will believe that nations or individuals are protected or destroyed by any deity whatever. Science, freed from the chains of pious custom and evangelical prejudice, will, within her sphere, be supreme. The mind will investigate without reverence, and publish its conclusions without fear. Agassiz will no longer hesitate to declare the Mosaic cosmogony utterly inconsistent with the demonstrated truths of geology, and will cease pretending any reverence for the Jewish scriptures. The moment science succeeds in rendering the church powerless for evil, the real thinkers will be outspoken. The little flags of truce carried by timid philosophers will disappear, and the cowardly parley will give place to victory—lasting and universal.

The idea of certain supernatural gifts being conferred upon certain men is the common error of the most advanced races, as well as of the most degraded peoples of antiquity.—Renan.