

**Natural Laws, or Miracles?**

Concluded from 1st page.

flat, inspiration and authority were cited in vain for the received theory; fact said it was round, and it was proved to be so by men sailing round it. The law of gravity was considered a very dangerous heresy, and for a long time pious divines held out against its conclusions, and contended that it was no better than atheism to doubt that comets were signs of God's anger sent to warn a sinful world. But Halley calculated the time of his comet's return according to the laws of gravity, and appeal being made to fact, the comet returned true to time.

This has occurred so often that few are left who doubt the universal prevalence of law in the material universe, where former generations saw miracles at every turn. Nor is the defeat of miracle less conspicuous in the spiritual world. Where former ages and rude races saw, and still see, possession by evil spirits, modern doctors see fevers, epilepsies or insanity.

In like manner, demonology and witchcraft, with all their train of cruelties and horrors, once universally believed even by men like Justice Hale, have passed into oblivion as completely as the Lamiae, Phorkyads and other fantastic figures of the classical Walpurgis-night. Is the world the better or the worse for this triumph of natural law over supernaturalism?

The triumph has been so complete in innumerable instances, without a single one to the contrary, that belief in the permanence and universality of natural law has become almost an instinct in all educated minds, and even those who cling to the old beliefs must admit that the most cogent and irresistible evidence is requisite to establish the fact of a real supernatural interference. It may be taken as an axiom that wherever a natural explanation is possible, a miraculous one is impossible.

Now this is just the point on which, as knowledge has increased, the evidence for miracles has become weaker, almost in the exact ratio in which the necessity for evidence has become stronger.—[A Modern Zoroastrian.

**God.**

Four thousand years ago, man made God of the earth; today he makes him of spirit. Then God was an image, now he is an ideal.

Four thousand years ago, God was what man saw; today he is what man thinks. Then God was limited, defined; now he is unembodied, unconfined.

First, God was perceived by the senses, then he was fashioned by the hand, now he is felt by the soul. Power, art and love have re-

spectively created and worshiped the Deity.

A thousand faced Deity has this world had. The ground shows not where God has trod; the heavens reveal not where God has lived. Though we are told that God is everywhere, we are not able to find him anywhere. Every time man thinks he has found God, he finds he has something else. Man has defined God, and then made him fit the definition.

The greatness of God depends upon the size of man, in a certain sense. Men today are larger morally, mentally, scientifically, and, consequently, can make a larger God than could the Jewish barbarian or the superstitious Christians. God is still but a human thought, larger than formerly, as man is larger, better than heretofore, as man is better; kinder and more forgiving, as man is kinder and more forgiving.

Knowledge of the universe destroys faith in God. When man has learned that there is no necessity for gods, he ceases to make them. Gods must be useful or they will not be tolerated. It is not enough to show us the works of God to prove his claim to our respect; we must see him work. When we are told that God made, or created, the earth and all it contains, we demand the proof. Say-so does not make a thing so. No one objects to having a God, but intelligent people object to being damned for lack of faith in what evidently is not a fact. We cannot accept God's name today without a good endorser.—[Investigator.

**A Hoosier Poet Appreciated.**

A. L. Rice received a check from the New York World this morning in payment for a poem, the price paid being 30 cents per line. He also received these lines from Indianapolis: "Allow me, an entire stranger to you, to offer my congratulations on your little poem, 'A Dead Bee,' in tonight's news. It suggests Keats to me in the phrasing and delicate shading, and it sings as it runs down the lines. The first six lines are as near perfect as our imperfect taste could consider them."—[Indianapolis News.

The poem on the first page of this issue of the Torch is from the pen of Mr. Rice and is another evidence of his ability. We are glad that he is a Secularist and can turn his talent to good account.

**Club Rates.**

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