

For the Torch of Reason.

Easy Lessons in Philosophy.

BY CHARLES CLARK MILLARD.

III.

Cells are the units of animal life. A mass of cells, or of stuff being formed into cells, is called protoplasm. A cell can be seen by the aid of a microscope of high magnifying power, and is found to be a highly-organized, minute animal. The water in a stagnant pond is full of these cell animals, and every part of animal tissue (excepting the solid part of bones, teeth, hair and nails) is composed of living cells "essentially the same" as those found living independent in the pond water.

In the "Literary Digest" of March 11th are extracts from an article on "The Physical Basis of Life," by Prof. W. H. Conn, from which I gather some interesting facts about the cell, which are indicated in the following by quotation marks. The cell is globular in form and contains a central substance called a nucleus, and about twenty different parts or organs adapted each to all; and it is just as complete and independent in its mental character as it is in its physical form and organization. "When the cell is in action, the centrosome sends out rods or fibres from itself; these rods seize the bits of chromatin, pull them around into new positions, separating them from each other, and sometimes actually pushing some of them out of the cell for the purpose of getting rid of them. The centrosome acts almost like an engineer, and seems to be the controlling center of the complex machine."

"All of the parts are adjusted to each other and act in harmony, and the life activities are the resultant of the action of the machine. It is true that not all types of living matter are quite as complicated, but in all there is found, in a similar way, a complex machine with part adjusted to part."

Professor Conn makes clear what other scientists have pointed out more or less plainly—that the one-celled organism carries his intelligence right along with him. He calls the cell "a living machine," but what more is any other animal or man than a self-acting, self-repairing, feeling and knowing machine? The cell is the same, but there is no engineer in the cell, for the cell is its own engineer; the centrosome only performs its part as the brain of man performs its part, moved and controlled by the whole organism. As Prof. Conn says, "the life activities," mental as well as physical, "are the resultant of the action of the machine;" that is, of the whole organism. "Certain it is that the scientist is at present baffled in his search after this ignis fatuus which we call life.

If any scientist is seeking to

duplicate any of the living processes of nature by artificial means, he is certainly following an ignis fatuus; if he expects to make a cell, he might try his hand at an apple or a blade of grass. Science discovers and explains phenomena; it can do nothing more, for the good and sufficient reason that there is nothing more to be done except to dream, speculate or imagine. No scientist who is free from superstition is seeking or expecting to find "that inexplicable something which the scientist thinks is power and the theist calls God." All intelligence is in something which is intelligent. The knowledge which enables the cell to run its own machinery is in the cell; it does not come from anywhere. It is developed, created on the spot from the materials at hand, just as the drops of dew and the spears of grass are created.

Right in this line of thought are some statements of the Rev. Dr. Henry Frank, widely known as a theologian and psychologist, in the Chicago Tribune of recent date. He says: "The soul is in the hand just as much as in the head, and in the foot just as much as in the hand." If by soul he means intelligence, or what is intelligent, Dr. Frank is evidently correct. "It is not true that the nervous system gets all its orders from the brain." Certainly it is not, for every cell and organ can, and does, act independently on its own authority more or less of the time. There is no individual soul; when life passes the force known as the soul returns to the parent force from whence it sprang."

I agree that there is no individual soul, but not that force and soul mean the same. If force is the "cause of motion," it is nothing else, only a push or a pull; it is neither intelligence nor soul. Force returns to force, and it is one and not many; and when used in the plural it means parts of the same thing. The force that operates the cell, or the human brain and nerves, comes from the same source, is of the same kind, and is as devoid of intelligence as that which draws a street car, holds a stone together, or sends the earth whirling around the sun. Herbert Spencer in "First Principles," in the chapter on the "Transformation of Forces," proves this beyond doubt or question, and I believe it has never been controverted by any scientist of international reputation; and when Dr. Frank writes of "a force which is the soul" and Prof. Conn writes of "discovering forces," the learned gentlemen are adhering to error when the truth is known. I refer any who may doubt the intelligence of the cell to "The Psychology of Micro-organisms," by Alfred Binet.

In my next I will give examples of the use of the mental faculties by "Micro-organisms," and show that all animal knowledge is like ours in kind and only differs from human knowledge in degree.

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A Protest Against the War Against the Filipinos.

BY B. F. UNDERWOOD.

As an American, interested in whatever relates to the welfare of the American Republic; as a Free-thinker, interested in whatever relates to the cause of intellectual freedom, and as a man interested in whatever concerns the well-being of mankind, I wish to record my protest against the present war of the United States against the people of the Philippine archipelago.

It is, in my opinion, a most unrighteous war—the greatest crime of the century.

The Filipinos have done nothing to justify this invasion of their country, and there is no reason or excuse for our slaughtering them by thousands on the pretext of maintaining order.

We have disregarded their aspirations for self-government and murdered them ruthlessly because they loved their country and dared to resist our sovereignty over them, a sovereignty transferred to us by Spain which we had no right to receive, because Spain was their oppressor from whom they had nearly won their independence when Dewey sailed into Manila Bay.

The fundamental principle of the American Republic is that all just governments derive their authority from the consent of the governed. This principle we have disregarded in our war for the subjugation of an Asiatic people 10,000 miles from our seat of government.

The American government has killed thousands of innocent people, women and children as well as men, and burned, pillaged and devastated a vast territory ostensibly to preserve order, but really to gain possession of distant islands to make them a part of our national domain. Could there be a greater crime?

It was clearly the duty of the United States, having completed the freedom of the Philippines from Spanish rule, to assist the people in organizing such a government as they desired and to withdraw its naval and military forces, leaving the Filipinos to govern themselves in their own way.

The religious press and clergy are almost unanimous in support of the policy of subjugation, because they think it will give them a new sphere of missionary conquest. Unable to make converts at home among enlightened people, they are, like all forms of slave domination, anxious for fields in which skeptical inquiry and knowledge will not impede their progress.

If we deny to the Filipinos self-sovereignty, how can we ever again quote the thrilling words of Paine, Adams, Franklin, Otis and Hancock in favor of American independence?

Back of this brutal war against the people of the Philippines is the greed of commercialism, the selfishness and avarice of American trusts and syndicates, that aim to exploit those distant islands and to make vast fortunes by employing cheap coolie labor.

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