



"TRUTH HOLDS THE TORCH IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH."—*Lucretius.*

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Theophilus Brown.

BY ISAAC A. POOL.

A MODEL young man was Theophilus Brown, Not given to "Theos," the pride of the town; So modest and manly, so gently behaved, Only lacking in one thing—he hadn't been saved.

With "Phileo" plenty for all of his race. The church sought to get at his "ducats" thro' grace, But all their advances he steadily braved, Concluding from them it was best to be saved.

So they got a new preacher; the choir a new song; They got up revivals, and blew it in strong; They told how good morals and manhood enslaved; That only by Christ, and his blood, we are saved.

Through the merciful Savior, the anger of Heaven At last is appeased, and our errors forgiven. The banner of mercy high over them waved, Proclaiming that sinners by God would be saved.

He told them that sinners forever would dwell, 'Mid fire and brimstone, with devils in hell! Then women and children His providence craved, And prayed from the torments of hell to be saved.

As the men from the "anxious seat" still staid away, He told about Christ's pyrotechnic display! Only those with his mark on their foreheads engraved, On the great final day would by Jesus be saved.

He told of the devils' sea-trip in the shoats; Of the sheep on the right, on the left-hand the goats; How hell with the skulls of small infants was paved, Whose parents, impenitent, wouldn't be saved.

No need in "the kingdom" of treasure or pelf; That God cannot save, you must do it yourself. Theophilus shuddered, and finally caved, Then prayed from his former good deeds to be saved!

He has left the broad road of good reason and sense, And passed thro' the wicket, behind the board fence. No staggering now, for "the kingdom" he staved: Through a passage so narrow he ought to be saved!

The revival is ended; the gossips in town Declare this carousal was got up for Brown, While he got a notion, that one so depraved Would never by God nor by Jesus be saved.

So the preacher was ordered to come and baptize This fruit of excitement, religion, and lies; Then down to the water he went to be laved, To wash out the stains of the ransomed and saved.

He rose from the water with teeth and eyes set, Overcome with excitement, religion, and wet, And ever thereafter he foolishly raved How the devil and he would together be saved.

He is lost to the church, they have made him insane; But the gold of the madman they finally gain; While he shouted aloud, as his noddle they shaved, By God and by Jesus I mean to be saved!

Escanoba, Mich., March 5, 1885.

No "Why" Concerning Nature.

BY W. H. MAPLE.

IT is common with theological writers of an advanced type to speak of the "how" and the "why" of natural things. They say that science has the "how" to deal with, and religion the "why"—that science has for its object the explanation of the immediate causes of phenomena but that it is left, largely at least, to supernatural revelations to account for the purpose of things. They insist, by inference, that nothing exists except by reason of a pre-existing purpose of something else.

Now, it seems much more rational to admit the existence of things, absolutely, unqualified.

Existence itself is before purpose, and requires no apology for its being. Hence there can not have been purposes before a being (a something).

Things are, and with the exception of some of the works of man and other finite intelligences, if such exist, there is no reason why for their being.

The writer's position is, therefore, that the "how", the *modus operandi*, of things being knowable without limitation, and there being no "why" for natural things (with the above exception), there is no fact in nature but what the intellect of man is competent (the opportunity being given) to know.

If it is claimed that simple existence or being is a fact and an unknowable fact, it is perhaps a sufficient reply to say that substance or essence however conceived of is known by its properties—its characteristics, and that simple being, in the sense of substance without character, is probably not a fact. This seems so, for how better can we arrive at the idea of complete non-entity than by eliminating from matter all its known properties? It is most evident that to take from matter the one quality of extension is to destroy it; and to take from force the idea of influence exerted is to annihilate force; so that it must be illogical to speak of a supposed thing that is reduced to non-entity in the very effort to conceive of it as an actuality.

The mind is adapted to know realities, and realities have properties making them objects of knowledge—making them knowable; and hence a thing supposed to be a reality, but found to have no knowable nature, is necessarily discarded by the mind (if the mind is not under duress) as a false conception and as not existing at all as a verity.

The "unknowable" is possibly only another name for the unreal.

Knowledge is of or concerning nature's methods, and nature's methods are all knowable. To go further than this and to say that back of and anterior to nature there existed an infinitude of purposes in the mind of an infinite personal intelligence, is without reason and without results. It is simply an attempted explanation for what needs no explanation, in that it resolves itself into seeking a reason for existence, an excuse for being, when being must necessarily be (and is, even in this attempt to account for being) accepted as a first truth. Existence, in some sense of the word, cannot, it is clear, be thought of as contingent. It necessarily is, and needs no reason for being. To seek to get back of it for the purpose of ascertaining a why for it is to doubt its necessity and to make of all existence something that need not have been.

As to the forms of matter or the modes of force, or however the idea of character in necessary being may be expressed, it seems equally clear that character, or quality, is inseparable from being and no more needs explanation than does existence itself. No thing, whether it be named matter, force, or simply essence, without properties can be determined by the intellectual powers of man to exist, for the reason that all our knowledge of the existence of any thing comes from the character of such thing. It is only through its qualities that a thing is recognized by the mind at all. A characterless thing is no thing.

Being is, being is something, is some way—has characteristics, attributes, properties; but cannot be the result of an anterior purpose, because purpose itself is a characteristic of something. Modes of nature, therefore, no more need or demand a prior purpose than "God", in the popular sense of the term, requires a creator or a reason for his attributes. Nature's movements, nature's acts are her attributes, and there can be no "why" concerning them.—[No Beginning.

Perversion of the Laws of Health.

BY F. L. OSWALD.

HABITUAL sin against the health-laws of Nature was originally chiefly a consequence of untoward circumstances. Slaves, paupers, immigrants to the inhospitable climes of the higher altitudes, were forced to adopt abnormal modes of life which, in the course of time, hardened into habits. Man, like all the varieties of his four-handed relatives, is a native of the tropics, and the diet of our earliest man-like ancestors was, in all probability, frugal: tree-fruits, berries, nuts, roots, and edible herbs and gums. But the first colonists of the winter lands were obliged to eke out an existence by eating the flesh of their fellow-creatures, and a carnivorous diet thus became the habitual and, in many countries, almost the exclusive diet of the nomadic inhabitants.

Alcohol is a product of fermentation, and the avarice of a cruel master may have forced his slaves to quench their thirst with fermented must or hydromel till habit begot a baneful second nature, and the at first reluctant victims of intoxication learned to prefer spoiled to fresh grape-juice. Sedentary occupations, however distasteful at first, are apt to engender a sluggish aversion to physical exercise, and even habitual confinement in a vitiated atmosphere may at last become a second nature, characterized by a morbid dread of fresh air. The slaves of the Roman landowners had to pass their nights in prison-like dungeons, and may have contracted the first germ of that mental disease known as the night-air superstition, the idea, namely, that after dark the vitiated atmosphere of a stifling dormitory is preferable to the balm of the cooling night wind.

In modern times an unprecedented concurrence of circumstances has stimulated a feverish haste in the pursuit of wealth, and thus indirectly led to the neglect of personal hygiene. The abolition of the public festivals by which the potentates of the pagan empires compensated their subjects for the loss of political freedom, the heartless egotism of our wealthy Pharisees, venal justice, and the dire bondage of city life all help to stimulate a headlong race toward the goal of the promised land of ease

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