

The New Life in the New World.

Continued from 3d page.

Trinity or Godhead. We start with the Catechism and New Testament definition of God: "God is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth;" or, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." All things were made by him.—John 1:1. So was it written, "With what truth?"

The conception of God, Descartes and all the great thinkers agree to be the fundamental concept which is the major premiss of life, determining everything. Science approaches it with all reverence, but because of its importance, the best solution our age admits must be had, or there can be no solid foundation to or for anything. At the start it is evident that the word "spirit" will not hold. It is a mere simile or personification—a figure of speech—derived from the air currents (winds, Greek *pneuma*), or the breath of animals (Latin, *spiritus*), or the vaporings of substances, as for instance, of Alcohol. All other supposed "spirits" arose from these physical facts and processes, and are simply personifications and fanciful extensions of them by the imagination. As Goethe says in the conclusion of his Faust, such fancies are the "spooks" which are the cause of all of our trouble, and which we must now begin our intelligent lives by dropping utterly, and getting "out into the clear."

Wenn Geister spuken, geh'er seinen Gang!

When ghosts spook, let man go straight on his way.

We should not waste time nor patience on this word. God is not a spirit, ghost or spook, "holy" or other. Our spiritist friends must learn the simple facts and lessons of Science. Life, sense, mind, will, and all vital and mental processes are the properties of the protoplasm found only on the surface of our earth and at the bottom of our air ocean, which is about five to ten miles in depth. Until it is discovered that protoplasm exists elsewhere, or that the processes or properties of protoplasm can exist without protoplasm, it is simply childish and idle to talk the old "spirit" words, which can have no possible reality nor meaning, except as figures of speech. The pleasure of being the victims of our own rhetoric is often very great, but it is not scientific, and is the reverse of useful. Let us drop it thoroughly.

God is not a "spirit," or "spook" of any kind. The old Greek philosophers had pretty well reached this conclusion, and about the first and darkest, yet greatest, of them, Heraclitus, translated this word "spirit" into "word," or Logos, i. e.,

Logic; the divine reason, order, or Geometry that was then begun to be discovered in the Cosmos. This living word solution, taken from the Neo-Platonists, opens the last of the Christian gospels, that of John. Like the word "spirit," it has many, and even so-called scientific, adherents to this day. Its side and complementary variations, such as "Force," "Power," etc., are very many, and its uses in spirits-cosmic Philosophy, like that of John Fiske, and theo-cosmic poetry, like that of Wordsworth, is very great. But what is it really worth? Goethe's "Faust" stands as the last chapter in the Bible of Humanity, and its answer to this question is the one that has well stood the crucible of Science. It condenses the ages of thought. Let us see what it says and what it means, remembering that he uses the word "Spirit" or "Spirits" as a part of the poetic machinery of his drama—a part of himself.

Faust opens a volume, applies himself, and says:

It stands written: "In the beginning was the Word."

Here at once I stumble. Who can help me on?

Impossible for me to rate THE WORD so high!

Quite otherwise must I translate, If by the Spirit I am enlightened aright.

Now stands it written: "In the beginning was THOUGHT."

Bethink thee well this first of lines, That thy pen pass not too rashly on!

Is it the THOUGHT that works and weaves THE ALL?

No! it should stand: "In the beginning was the POWER."

Yet even this while I'm writing it down, Something warns that by it I can never stand;

Now the Spirit aids: All at once The Truth I see,

And, confidently, I write: "In the beginning was the ACT!"

Thus after Spirit we have the ultimate concept, as (WORT) Logos; but back of that must be the (SINN) Thought, Mind, Intellect; but back of that must be (KRAFT) Power, Force, "Energy;" but back of that is (DIE THAT) Fact, Action, doing, going on, or process, CHANGE—from which was inferred the power, thought or mind. The ultimate objective, or "Not I," is, therefore the continuous act or FACT of action, the eternal PROCESS of existence.

Faust's other phrase for it is the "Action's storm, the tide of life, the roaring loom of time," weaving the "living dress" of the Godhead. Or, as Nature speaks finally, in his "Parabasis:"

Always changing, yet fast holding,
Near and far, far and near;
So, ever forming and re-forming,
To thy astonishment am I here.

Notice, astonishment! nothing more!

This was Poetry when written in 1820, but it clearly says that the objective, the "Not I," is a continuous, eternal process of change, upon which the Poet, in his latter days, admonished his Eckermann to rise to the "highest point of view" and avoid all possible subjective teleological considerations in his contemplation of nature—

else he would have no truth or comfort in his life. The THOROUGH achievement of this purely objective view of the changes in the world is now our great difficulty. The avoidance of anthropomorphism is a slow but necessary process. Until that is done, there is no solid bottom to human effort and life.

See how it stands: The theologians gave us the old Mythology of Theology; but our fanciful metaphysicians are now giving us a sort of new Mythology of Science, with all sorts of moral and religious ends and objects. Instead of settling right down to the simple, continuous fact that any change here is the correlate and equivalent of so much change elsewhere, with no moral, teleological or ultimate object knowable, we have constantly the words, Force, Power, Energy, Mind, Will, Object, etc., held up before us as entities, or some pre-designed purposes or results. This is simply the return of the old Theology in its metaphysical form. It has no evidence, warrant or justification except the wishes and imaginations of those who desire some kind of mental or emotional anodyne. The popularity of books of this kind is the most lamentable sign of our times. Those who persist in talking in various phrases about a Power, Energy, or other entity or purpose outside of man, "that maketh for righteousness," or wisdom or goodness, or any moral or human end or purpose, are guilty of anthropomorphism and of misleading good, but sentimental and innocent, people. The sympathetic ignorance which sustains the literature of this phase of the old illusions is one of the greatest obstacles to the realization of the New Life. It has no basis in truth. There is no test, method or law by which its assumed intent or purposes can be known. It is therefore simply a sentimental sanction, assumed at will, and put forward to sustain or countenance any inclination of avarice, ambition, lust, selfishness or vanity that may become a motive to the weakness of human nature. But even if there is no such evil impulse, human efficiency is paralyzed or weakened by doubt and hesitation, as soon as it is afflicted with the belief that it may either rely upon or become thwarted by some dubious divine or inscrutable influence or purpose; some propitious or unlucky star, that dominates the world and human affairs. The one attribute for which God has not been worshipped is the one which would have been the best for mankind—the one which Science now discloses as the crowning glory of the Cosmos which takes his place, that is, an utter, enduring and impertable IMPARTIALITY. Goethe has set this forth most gloriously in his Pindaric Poems, such as "The Limits of Humanity" and "The Godlike." Note especial-

ly these lines, which are literally translated:

For all-unfeeling
Is Nature ever.
Alike shines the Sun
O'er the evil and the good;
Alike to the evil-worker
As to the best, gleam
The Moon and the Stars.

Under eternal, brazen,
Changeless laws,
Must we all
Our being's
Round complete.

MAN, and he alone
May dare the impossible [to Nature];
He distinguishes,
Chooses and judges;
He to the moments [time]
Can continuance lend.

He ALONE can
Reward the good,
Restrain the bad,
Heal and save;
All the erring, straying
Usefully combine.

NOBLE, then, let man be
Rich in help, and good;
Unweariedly must he weave
The Useful and the Right.
So for us the fore-life be
Of our ideal ones.

But all are a part of the continuity of the Race, thus:

A little link
Is our life's limit,
But many generations
Join enduringly
In their Being's
Unending chain.

No excuse is needed for recalling these words of Goethe. They are classic, and have been thoroughly vindicated by Science, and are generally approved by Liberals. The sentimentalists may listen safely to our last great poet. Many of our "Liberal" authors seem to think that because the world (universe or cosmos) has objectively taken the place of the old Deity, that it has in some way succeeded to the old moral and anthropomorphic ideas and notions which were his supposed attributes. But in this change those human qualities have been properly returned to Man and Humanity, from whence they originally sprung. As Goethe puts it, the objective world of matter and its changes are rigorous, impartial, changeless Law. The subjective world and memory of Man ONLY gives "endurance to time," and moral qualities to actions, motives and events. The world objective has under Science become the impartial Father-God, the same, Eternal, All!

The Humanity has become "The CHRIST that is to be," of Teanyson, to whom alone human, or moral, or social qualities and designs can be truthfully or properly attributed. Idol-making and idol worship by head or heart is now worse than the old Fetich idols of the hand. Personification of Nature, or of the "NOT I," is only permissible in poetry. TELESIS, that is, the use and adjustment of means to effect preconceived ends, is a human trick, the result of our limitations, wants and weakness. The God and Nature of Science never condescend to indirection. He and