

to show the awful robbery that has been committed by this chief of mental thieves—immortality.

And when you come to think real hard, dear believing friend, you will not wish to live on forever. It is nothing to be desired. The fashion of desiring immortality is only a long-drawn-out fad. To meet your dead friends and relatives again is not to be desired after all. Those whom you may wish to meet are in better condition, in your mind, than they might be after you had met. And what would you do after you had greeted them? You could not caress them, or sing, or play, or work with them, or anything you can think of, forever and ever, without its becoming monotonous, unless you could change at will. And if you could change whenever you wished, you would soon wish to do things that you could not do, and thus would become unhappy; or, if infinite in power to change, you would be a god and there would probably be another war in heaven; or, as a great ruler, you would become sick of a heavenly throne and immortality and would long for a heaven of rest.

And again, our minds are at ease when accepting the scientific solution instead of the theological one. The believer in immortality is the one who is troubled with doubts. To him eternal rest seems awful, and the fear that it may be so after all is wearing on the nerves and draws one nearer and nearer to death, while he who is content with what his troubled brother thinks the worst, is happy indeed and grows more contented as he continually learns that nature's laws are in perfect harmony with his happy thoughts of light, liberty and love here, and a blessed continuity of his good works, and perfect rest hereafter. Poor, ignorant despised Infidels, who, in the past, have been frightened when they came to their deathbed, have been made so by the cruel dogmas to which they were obliged to listen all their lives. But things are changing, and today the most pious Christian dreads the approach of the awful judgment day, much more than the well-informed so-called "Infidel."

A copious knowledge of nature's laws is the best antidote for such mental poisons as we babes of superstitious heathen ancestors are apt to eat. Some time since, we heard a drunken man shout, "Hurrah for hell! Who's afraid of fire?" A pious old maid, standing by, thought, if one could judge by her words and actions, that what he said was just awful, and she probably prayed for him for several weeks; but his state of mind was not as bad as hers, for his trouble was curable while hers was chronic. His brain was injured, but he was not filled with fear by his poison, while her poison kept her intoxi-

cated with holy fear continually.

How much better off the man or woman is who, neither recklessly drunk on alcoholic spirits, or holy spooks, nor hopelessly frightened by superstition of any kind, counts as his brothers the civilized, the semi-civilized, the savage among men; yea, and all forms of life—one who is neither afraid of fire for himself nor for his friends, but who believes that, if given half a chance, he and his friends are capable of making a heaven out of the worst hell the gods and their priests can build.

Do the Rev. J. P. Bland's "Immortality and Deity" Really Exist?

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his ancient imagination overburdened by sentiment.

To suppose otherwise is to be ignorant of the consequences of the bottom law of Science, "the correlation and equivalence of the changes", i. e., forces of the universe. Each fact of correlation is the result of, and has back of or beside it, and could only take place as the result of, the infinite correlations which have been. So, too, in the future, the correlations which succeed it or accompany it will be the correlate equivalents of the universe as it is. And because equivalent correlates, they are necessarily a continuance of the same laws under and by which all of the changes of the universe have occurred or do occur. But no correlate is like its antecedents. Therefore, the infinite and changing laws of the universe insure to us an infinite variety, which can never repeat itself, and never vary nor violate those laws. The past is, thus, our solid foundation, the present (world) is a becoming, the future is our reliance and hope. And why? Because our wills, as Prof. Huxley well said, are conscious factors in the active-becoming of the present which correlates the future; but that is the ground of hope and reliance in the future only because the facts, laws and results of Science, that is, of the universe, are "absolutely and conclusively" certain as against all conceivable "actualities or possibilities." The violation of, or change in, those laws is absolutely inconceivable (see Spencer's First Principles) under the law of correlation.

Of course, it is open for any one to try to show that the laws of nature do not apply to the "soul" of the mosquito or of man, and that it is a supernatural and unaccountable entity. But this our friend wrote to show to be overwhelmingly against the evidence, and we wholly agree with him.

Of course, also, our knowledge of the facts, laws and results of nature's processes will be extended, probably beyond what we can now

even imagine, but that can, by reason of said laws, only show the continuation, confirmation and enlargement of the facts and laws already known.

It is, therefore, unscientific and demoralizing in the extreme for a Liberal, "reverend" or other, to encourage the notion that there are "actualities" or "possibilities" of the universe which may "hold up" its laws to continue the post mortem consciousness of a mosquito or the immortal selfishness of man.

II. MR. BLAND'S "ENERGY" DEITY A SPOOK.

It is also a matter of course that, in order to get a "hold up" or change in the processes and laws of nature, so as to endow a mosquito with "Immortality," our reverend friend must cease to be a Liberal, must become a Theologian, and invent a "Deity," which shall be superior to, and the "Creator" of the universe. This he does right handily. But we respectfully submit that this new Deity is of the old spook variety, and only ineffectively replaces the god Science has dethroned. He introduces the new Divinity thus: "In 'The Gospel of Evolution,' as in other recently published matter of mine, on the Energy or Deity—call it what you will, the all reveals, I simply take the ground to popularize the views that Spencer, Huxley, and those who agree with them, hold. In doing this, it is, of course, possible that I have sometimes misconceived their teaching."

The "Deity" he evolved out of their teaching is further explained thus, in his "Gospel of Evolution," viz.: "Evolution is that system of thought which regards all things as proceeding from an immanent and omnipresent Deity, who eternally creates and decreates by the ceaseless and orderly movings of his indwelling presence."

When we respectfully asked for some elucidation of this divine definition we were overwhelmed with a dash of "sarcasm," and the assurance that "the subject is one of which the less one usually really knows, the more absolutely and conclusively dogmatically does he usually speak."

These words certainly do describe our friend, who made this dogmatic, mysterious and presumptuous definition of his God, but he strangely and ungraciously applies them to me for simply asking him "to explain his explanation." Not now that he has begotten or become sponsor for this God, it is too late for him to plead presumptuous ignorance and take refuge in silence. Yet this is just what he tries to do. He pleads intellectual irresponsibility or weakness; says that "he only took the ground to popularize" what had been written by certain great philosophers and scientists, to wit: Spencer, Huxley, Haeckel and Tyndall. He adds that he may

have "misconceived their teaching," or he and they "may have erred!" He was morally and intellectually bound to know before he began to teach. The "Professor" who puts himself in this humiliating predicament is in no position to cast the stones of his wit and ridicule at the humblest of his "well-intentioned" students. But if he has erred, the great names he mentions give him neither excuse nor refuge. Let us see as to them.

Spencer was always a growing man and so risky to quote, but he covered this Deity business in his reply to Balfour, the last of his works. Judge Waite, in "Herbert Spencer and His Critics" (C. V. Waite & Co., publishers, Chicago), pp. 56, 57, shows his evolution up to this reply, where he finally drops all anthropomorphism and dualism, if any he had to drop, and reaches the "positive state of thought," using the term "Nature" to designate the "Unknowable" or ultimate cause of things. Nature is now the great artificer, and the philosopher deems it sufficient to study her manifestations." Spencer gives not the slightest countenance to the notion that there can be an "Actuality" or "Deity," who created or can suspend or vary the laws and processes of the universe.

Huxley and Tyndall were not philosophers except as they were enlightened special scientists, but their jealousy of the absoluteness of the laws of nature as against any "Deity" was the ruling passion of their lives, and it would be useless to quote. In this they were heartily in accord with the great scientist, philosopher and Monist of Jena, Ernest Haeckel. He has spent a life of earnest work and protest against the notions covered by our Friend's "Immortality and Deity." That protest has been the great motive of his career. We need only refer to his latest works. In his "Monism" (A. and C. Black, publishers, London, 1894, pp. 48 to 57), he exposes and denounces the whole personal immortality business as unscientific, impossible and absurd. He says: "If any antiquated school of purely speculative psychology still continues to uphold this irrational dogma, the fact can only be regarded as a deplorable anachronism." And in note (p. 113) he adds: "We now know that the light of a flame is the sum of electric vibrations of the ether, and the "soul" of man a sum of plasma movements in the ganglion cells. As compared with this scientific conception, the doctrine of immortality has the same value as the red Indian's notions about a future life in Schiller's "Nadowessia n Death Song."

Prof. Haeckel's last and decisive work, "Weltrathsel" (World Enigma), has yet to be translated, but it is summed up in "Watts' Liter-