



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

VOL. 4.

SILVERTON, OREGON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, E. M. 300 (1900.)

NO. 44.

The White Flag

BY WILLIAM WINTER.

I.

BRING poppies,—for this work is vain!
I cannot mould the clay of life.
A stronger hand must grasp the rein,
A stouter arm annul the strife,
A braver heart defy the pain.

Bring poppies—that I may forget!
Bring poppies—that I may not learn!
Then bid the audacious sun to set,
And bid the peaceful starlight burn
O'er buried memory and regret.

So shall the slumberous grasses grow
Above the bed wherein I sleep:
While winds I love shall softly blow,
And dews I love shall softly weep,
O'er rest and silence hid below.

II.

Dark Angel, counselling defeat,
I see thy mournful, tender eyes;
I hear thy voice, so faint so sweet,
And very dearly should I prize
Thy perfect peace, thy rest complete.

But is it rest to vanish hence,
To mix with earth or sea or air?
Is death indeed a full defence
Against thy tyranny of care?
Or is it cruellest pretence?

And if an hour of peace draws nigh,
Shall we, who know the arts of war,
Turn from the field and basely fly,
Nor take what fate reserves us for,
Because we dream 't were sweet to die?

What shall the untried warriors do,
If we, the battered veterans, fail?
How strive and suffer and be true,
In storms that make our spirits quail,
Except our valor lead them through?

Though for ourselves we droop and tire,
Let us at least for them be strong.
'T is but to bear familiar fire;
Life at the longest is not long,
And peace at last will crown desire.

So, Death, I will not hear thee speak!
But I will labor—and endure
All storms of pain that time can wreak
My flag be white because 't is pure,
And not because my soul is weak!

The Unshackling of the Spirit of Inquiry.

BY CARUS STERNE.

THE Berlin Academy of Science in the year 1779 chose as the theme for a prize essay the question, "Whether it be beneficial for the masses to be deceived?" Not less than thirty-three different treatments of this question were submitted, of which, according to Bartholomess, in his "History of the Prussian Academy," twenty took the negative side and thirteen the affirmative. The judges were evidently embarrassed, for they themselves did not know which side to favor, and gave a decision which earned much derision for their "impartiality," awarding two prizes, one to the best argument for the affirmative, the other

to the strongest presentation of the negative.

Formerly the prevalent opinion of philosophers affirmed this question with Plato, and even Rousseau, 1762, replied to the Economical Society in Bern that he would take the affirmative of the question whether there be sacred prejudices which would be respected. Even to-day there are still many anxious souls who decide, though unwillingly, in favor of deception. Almost as questionable a proposition is that of the physiologist, Rudolph Wagner, to suffer religion and science to grow independently side by side and for the sake of peace of mind to adopt what he calls "double-entry bookkeeping," or, in plain words, duplicity. Others have recommended concealing one's inmost convictions, which are based on their investigations, as soon as they prove to be opposed to the statutes of the State and Church; still others would carry out the proposition of Renan, who would teach an esoteric doctrine, a more spiritualized religion for the educated (as the Greeks are said to have done in the Eleusinian Mysteries), and an exoteric and more earthly religion for the masses. There can be no doubt what the answer of these propositions should be; for they advocate in place of truth a system of scientific hypocrisy, and forget moreover that in our age of printer's ink it would be wholly impossible for the temple guardians to preserve such a secret doctrine.

The answer will be, no; but the remark will be added that the truth is no staff for halting souls, and the dazzled eyes cannot endure it. Consequently, the harm lies not in scientific knowledge, but in the weakness of the souls and eyes. Here, then, is where the mistake lies, and where relief must be administered. It is not the new truth which threatens danger, but the old error, in which the human mind has been kept so long, and which some would like to retain longer. The danger is that all our institutions, home, school, church, public life, social order, and system of government, being based on and adapted to these old errors, should fail to perceive that it is their business gradually to adapt themselves to the better knowledge. Only on condition that they do this can the widening of the chasm and the violent collapse of what has become antiquated be avoided. Attempts to bridge the chasm, which are the order of the day in

France and England, where they are still trying to harmonize the Bible with scientific investigation and to make the days of creation correspond to the geological ages, only win for those who make them the suspicion of hypocrisy and a purpose to deceive the people, while they render the inevitable collapse more dangerous.

In this connexion the excellent proposals of Condorcet should not be forgotten: "The transition from error to truth," he wrote over a century ago, "may bring with it certain evils. Every great change has several such evils in its train, and even if they are collectively less than the evil against which the change is directed, yet the utmost should be done to diminish them. One must not only do good, but must do it in a good way. Certainly we are to remove old errors, but since they cannot all be removed in an instant we should do as a good builder does in pulling down a house: he knows how the separate parts are joined together, and directs the tearing down so that a dangerous collapse is avoided."

It would be too much to affirm that no progress can be noted in this direction. Truths which were considered so dangerous several hundred years ago as to be combated with the Inquisition and the stake, may be fearlessly expressed to-day, and are even taught in the schools. To be sure, those investigators who add to the general conception of the universe new points of view, and fearlessly express their convictions, will have to submit as formerly to excommunication by the temple guards. The French Church Journal wrote of Alexander von Humboldt, as he himself good-humouredly reports: "They say the assassin of souls has literary merit. This will be no excuse. Satan has more wit than M. de Humboldt."

But upon the whole no one longer doubts that every one has his incontestable right to assert and announce as truth all that he has recognized as correct, and that it should be the duty of the Church willingly to surrender those doctrines which are opposed to the general world-view of the time,—especially if they in no way affect the essence of religion,—and to acknowledge that they are a part of an ancient metaphorical language of human origin.

The ideals of mankind will of course change somewhat, for the better condition of humanity must

no longer be sought in the mists of errors of the past, but, according to the principles of the doctrine of evolution, in a more enlightened future—[Open Court.]

The Nature of Consciousness.

BY TH. RIBOT.

WE are confronted by two hypotheses; the one, a very old hypotheses, which regards consciousness as the basic property of "soul" or of "mind," constituting its essence; the other a very recent theory, which regards it as a simple phenomenon, superadded to the activity of the brain—as an event having its own conditions of existence, and which appears or disappears according to circumstances.

Like all general terms, consciousness must be resolved into concrete data. Will, in general, does not exist, but VOLITIONS; and in a like manner there is no consciousness in general, but only STATES of consciousness. The latter are the reality.

It would be idle to define consciousness as: "the fact of being conscious," for this is merely a datum of observation, a final fact. Physiology teaches that its production is always associated with some activity of the nervous system, particularly of the brain. The reverse however does not take place. All psychic activity certainly implies nervous activity; still, all nervous activity does by no means imply psychic activity—nervous activity being far more extended than psychic activity. Consciousness, accordingly is something superadded.

This hypothesis easily explains how all manifestations of psychic life, sensations, desires, feelings, volitions, memories, reasonings, inventions, etc., may alternately be conscious and unconscious. There is nothing mysterious in these alterations, since in all cases the essential conditions, i. e., the physiological conditions ever remain the same, and consciousness is but a perfectionment, a resultant.

Yet why is this perfectionment sometimes superadded, and at other times lacking.

In every psychic event, the basic and active element is the nervous process, the other is only a concomitant. As a consequence of this, there will be no longer any difficulty in understanding the propositions, that all manifestations of psychic life by turns can be either unconscious or conscious