The History of the NINETEENTH CENTURY PROTESTANTISM.

By REV. ALEX. V. G. ALLEN.

(Copyright, 1900, by The Sun Printing and Publishing Association.

THE MOTIVES which have acted upon religion in the nineteenth century, either by way of directly enhancing its power or by restricting its influence, are these: (1) Humanitarianism; (2) The Historical Spirit; (3) Science; (4) Nationalism. Although the course of religious history has varied somewhat in different countries as well as in the different Churches, yet it is possible to form an approximate picture of the resultant of these forces which will reveal the progress of the Kingdom of God in the world.

I.

The first of these motives—humanitarianism—has powerfully influenced the Christian world by asserting the rights of man, liberty, equality, and the spirit of fraternity, the sense of human brotherhood. The germs of the humanitarian movement may be traced in the eighteenth century, as in the teaching of Lessing, and Herder, and Rousseau; in religious movements like the great awakening in the United States, the revival in England under Wesley and Whitefield, in tentative efforts for the abolition of slavery (Hopkins and Clarkson), and prison reform (John Howard). But the nineteenth century has been distinguished above all the other Christian centuries in the results achieved by the sentiment of humanity. It has led to the abolition of slavery under English rule, in the United States, and in Russia; to many reform movements of every kind and degree, wherever there existed actual or latent tyranny, which robbed humanity of its inherent privileges.

The humanitarian sentiment is Christian in its origin, derived primarily from the conviction of the incarnation of God in Christ. Christ appears in history as the leader of humanity in the struggle for freedom. Slowly but surely, ever since his advent the world of man has been moving forward to the attainment of the ideal of humanity revealed in him. "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. And if the Son of God shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The progress toward freedom inspired by him who taught the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men has been accomplished in the face of great hindrances and long reverses, overcoming obstacles which would have been insuperable without Christian faith. In the nineteenth century the movement toward human freedom seems almost to have reached its culmination. Within the sphere of religion the progress is most manifest in the spread of Christian missions, which stand out in any review of the century as one of its most extraordinary achievements. It might be justly designated as a missionary age. So intense and persistent has been its devotion to the gospel of Christ as essential for man that when the century closed it might be truly said that the round world had been girdled with Christian missions, whose results are more significant for civilization, as well as for religion, than any statistics can reveal. The missionary has been the pioneer, it is becoming increasingly evident, of momentous changes yet to appear.

The sentiment of humanity has operated as a motive in the study of human history, giving to historical enquiry a new interest and impetus. No age has been so fruitful in the results of historical research, with conclusions of vital importance for every department of life, but chiefly this, that an independent place has been vindicated for humanity, as having a life of its own distinct from and above the natural order of the physical world. The study of man as he appears in history has tended to strengthen faith in the essential truths of religion, opening up, as it has done, the deeper knowledge of the nature of man to which the religion of Christ appeals; for the modern method of studying history, as compared with earlier methods, consists in seeking for those inward subjective moods of the human soul which lie beneath creeds or institutions, and not solely in the accurate description of the objective fact. The facts of human life call for interpretation, and for this the historian must search. Thus has been born what is almost a new department of enquiry—the philosophy of history (Hegel and many others). Differ as do these attempts at a philosophy of history, they yet possess one ruling idea—the conviction of a development in the life of humanity when viewed as a whole. The idea of development controlled the higher intellectual life of the first half of the century. It was applied with important results to the study of ecclesiastical history, by Schleiermacher, Neander, Gieseler, Baur, Rothe, Bunsen, and many others, by the Roman Catholic Mohler, in his "Symbolik," and by John Henry Newman, in however one-sided and imperfect manner. The doctrine of development found its classic formula in the lines of Tennyson:

> Yet, I doubt not through the ages
> One increasing purpose runs,
> And the thoughts of men are widened
> With the process of the suns.

The influence of the doctrine of development has been felt in the study of Scripture, leading to a recognition of progressiveness in the divine revelation, whose record has been preserved in the Old and New Testaments (Mozley, "Ruling Ideas in the Early Ages"). By means of this truth have been overcome, till they now seem unworthy, the objections to the Old Testament on the ground that it gave sanction to cruelty, deceit, or an imperfect morality. But the inference has also followed that the revelation of God to humanity must be searched for in the sacred records, and even by the light of close critical scrutiny, if the divine utterance is to be distinguished from crude misapprehensions or misapplications. Forms of literary expression, current usages, the historical environment of the time—for these allowance must be made as their influence is recognized. The science of biblical criticism has gained from the study of general history a larger knowledge of the nature of man, which, in turn, has made the study of the Bible more profound and thorough, because more real and human than were the biblical studies of the eighteenth century. The primary question which it has been found necessary to ask in regard to any doctrine or institution is not whether it is true—for the canons of truth may vary with the relative position of the enquirer; but, rather, what does it mean? When the meaning of the record is seen, the question of its truth has answered itself.

The effect of these studies, even of what is called the "higher criticism," has not lessened the authority of the Bible or changed the character of Christianity as "a religion of the book;" but their tendency has been to vindicate the unique and essential place of the Bible in literature as containing the veritable record of a divine revelation. Some things, indeed, have been changed; the order in which the books of the Bible were written is not the order in which they stand; some of them are of composite authorship, whose various parts were written at different times; the traditional chronology, known at Ussher's (1650), has been abandoned, nor is there anything in the Bible which places it in opposition to the teachings of geology relative to the length of time during which man has occupied the earth; the historical order of priest and prophet has been reversed, so that the voice of prophecy comes before the decline into ritual (Wellhausen and others). Popular misapprehensions tend to vanish in the light of a true insight and interpretation, such as that the first chapter of Genesis was intended to be an infallible record of the divine order in the creation of the world. That a similar account of the creation is found in Babylonian literature only shows that the Bible writer was illustrating by the best scientific knowledge of the time the vastly higher spiritual truth with which the Bible opens, that the creation is the work of God, thus leading man to the worship of God and away from the lower worships of sun and moon and all the hosts of heaven.

The mechanical conceptions as to the mode of inspiration and revelation tend to give way before a larger and truer conception of the process by which the revelation is made—that God speaks to man actually and authoritatively through the experience of the events of life. Thus revelation becomes a living process, and all later history may become a commentary on sacred history, renewing and confirming the primal utterance of God to the soul of man. Much, it is true, yet remains to be done in bridging the gulf between the learned and scientific interpretation of the sacred record and the popular apprehension, which, formed in the uncritical moments of youth, often persists to mature years and constitutes a source of confusion and weakness. A similar situation was seen in the Middle Ages in the wide breach between the scholastic theologians and the popular mind.

A new department has been added to religious enquiry in Comparative Religion, which aims at an impartial investigation and free from prejudice, and is also moved by the sentiment of a common humanity to respect all utterances of religious feeling in the soul of man. How widely the nineteenth century has advanced in this respect is seen by recalling a statement of Dr. Johnson: "There are two objects of curiosity—the Christian world and the Mohammedan world. All the rest may be considered as barbarous." One of the most representative monuments of religious scholarship in the last century is Prof. Max Muller's "Sacred Books of the East." Some enquirers in this unfamiliar department have worked under the impression that these ancient religions were equal in value to the Christian revelation; others even have thought them to be in some respects superior. And, in general, the first effect of the discovery that there was truth in other religions had a tendency to weaken the claim of Christianity to be the absolute religion. But as the results of the study have been placed in their normal perspective, it becomes evident that they only confirm the words of St. Paul, that God has at no time left himself without witnesses in the world. Revelation also is seen to have been a universal process, and profound spiritual motives are to be discerned beneath the diverse manifestations of the religious instincts. Yet, on the whole, the preponderating judgment leads to the conclusion that Christianity contains the larger, even the absolute, truth; that while it confirms some features in these religions as true, it condemns others as false; that Christianity also has for one of its essential characteristics an assimilative power, which not only enables, but forces, it to appropriate as its own any aspects of truth contained in other religions which have not hitherto been illustrated in the history of the Christian Church. Nor is the familiar test applied to religions wholly an unworthy one which judges them by their historical fruits or associations. In accordance with this test, Confucianism is represented by China, Hinduism by India, Buddhism by Ceylon and Siam, Mohammedanism by Turkey, Christianity by Europe and America.

The influence of the humanitarian sentiment may be further traced in softening the asperities of some forms of traditional theology, as, for example, the Calvinistic doctrine of election with its alternatives of reprobation or preterition. These certainly have not been the favorite doctrines which have commended themselves to the spirit of the age. The effort has been made to bring the doctrine of the atonement within the limits of human experience. It has been found impossible to present the doctrine of endless punishment after the manner of an earlier age. Many causes have combined to deepen the sense of mystery in which is enveloped the destiny of man, and there has been begotten in consequence an unwillingness to dogmatize where in earlier times such a reluctance was not felt. In this connection may be mentioned two religious bodies, which took their rise about the beginning of the century—Universalism, proclaiming ultimate salvation for all men; and Unitarianism, asserting the dignity of man and his divine endowment. But in all the Churches alike has the same humanizing force been felt, leading to efforts in theological reconstruction in order to make it apparent that the primary truths of Christianity are not merely arbitrary principles or arrangements unrelated to life and to the needs of the soul, but that in their essential quality there is conformity with the larger reason of humanity, with that feeling for the inherent worth of things out of which reason proceeds, and with which its conclusions must conform.

II.

Thus far the humanitarian sentiment has been regarded in its combination with Christian faith, and as giving new force and distinction to Christian life and thought. But, on the other hand, it must now be noted that the same force working apart from the Church, and often in opposition to it, has been a limitation to Christian progress. In the French Revolution humanitarianism was associated with a negative, destructive tendency, which overthrew the Church, disowned God and immortality, and set up in the place of deity a so-called goddess of reason. This negative tendency has continued to exist and has found constant manifestation. It has attempted the deification of humanity, as though the human race were worthy in itself of being an object of worship. It has exalted man at the expense of God, conceiving of humanity as alone immortal, as competent to steer its own course without supernatural direction. It has weakened the sense of nationality, has injured and endangered family life, has taken away the highest sanctions from morality, and has reduced religion from being a revelation from God to a purely subjective process in the soul of man, worthy of respect, but without authority. It has created an abnormal sensitiveness in many directions. It has swayed socialistic movements, aiming at the rights of man and seeking to achieve universal happiness, but with an antagonism sometimes latent, sometimes expressed, to God and Christ and the Christian Church. The prejudice remains which had its birth in the French Revolution, that religion is a creation of priests for their own selfish ends, and the Church an agency for robbing humanity of its rights, liberty, equality, and fraternity.

Principles and convictions like these found utterance in the philosophy of Comte (1798-1857), who called himself the "founder of the religion of humanity," and who proposed the scheme of a humanitarian church, limited by no national boundaries, whose only deity was man, whose ritual found a place only for great men who had been the benefactors of the race. Theology and metaphysics were discarded as outgrown methods of explaining the phenomena of the universe, and in the place they vacated stood the so-called "Positive philosophy," which rejected all supernatural influence. The church of humanity had, indeed, no history, and was a failure from its birth. But the combination, first seen in Comte, of humanitarianism with the methods and principles of natural science, has been the most formidable opponent against which Christianity was ever called to struggle. It has been represented in England by John Stuart Mill and by Herbert Spencer and many others. To the influential writings of this school of thinkers is due in great measure the widespread, deep-seated skepticism since the middle of the century. To the same cause, by way of reaction, are owing the spiritualistic movement, the so-called "Christian Science," and other kindred tendencies toward a crude supernaturalism.

Those who entered the controversy in behalf of Christianity and against the adherents of the Positive philosophy suffered at first for the lack of any adequate philosophical method on which to rest in the effort to overcome this stupendous alliance between a humanitarianism working for the improvement of social conditions in combination with natural science, whose postulates involved the denial of the miracle, and indeed of all supernatural agency (agnosticism). It seemed for a time as though the philosophy of Hegel would serve the purpose of a stronghold to which Christian warriors might resort while in the stress of a conflict which involved not only the readjustment of Christian doctrines to their new environment, but also the maintenance of the idea of God, of the kingdom of God in this world, and of a future life for the immortal soul. In Germany systems of theology were worked out on the basis of Hegelian principles, which, as interpreted by orthodox theologians, stood for a principle of surpassing value if it could be maintained—that the life of humanity, while dependent in the present order on physical conditions, was yet above the life in external nature with which the natural sciences deal; that the very definition of humanity implies the power of rising to the knowledge of God. Nature has no knowledge or consciousness of God, or intimation of immortality. It is in bondage to natural law and without freedom. The life of humanity must not be studied from the point of view of natural science, but is seen in the records of human history. The influence of Hegel deepened the interest in historical enquiry at a moment when the absorption in the natural sciences threatened to gain the ascendency. But the Hegelian philosophy, for reasons which it is not possible here to render, failed to accomplish the service expected from it. It may be that the failure was temporary only, and because it was not fully understood. There arose a school of thinkers—the Hegelian left wing—who, while retaining their interest in history, yet fell under the influence of the presuppositions of the natural sciences. Thus Strauss, in his "Leben Jesu," conceived of the person of Christ as a casual product of the human imagination, while Feuerbach, in his "Essence of Christianity," reached the conclusion that religion begins and ends in a subjective process in the soul. Thus, instead of overcoming the Positive philosophy, German thought gravitated to the same result, with this difference, perhaps, that it assumed the form of pantheism rather than of atheism. In the Tubingen school, led by F. C. Baur, whose contributions to the study of Church history are yet of high value, there was reserve about the miracle, if not its tacit denial, and a conception of the Christian Church as a product of human origin rather than the purpose of Christ.

But the effect of Strauss was beneficial in that it sent enquirers back to the study of the person of Christ and of his age. Never before was attention so concentrated upon the life of Jesus, as illustrated in a large number of biographical works, too large to be enumerated here. As a result of these studies the conviction grows that while there is a local aspect of the person of Christ, so that he reflected the peculiar opinions and living interests of his age, and availed himself of current beliefs, yet he was also infinitely above his time. What he was and did and said in Palestine nineteen hundred years ago must be supplemented by what he has been to the world in subsequent ages, or what he is and is doing in the present age.

III.

While Christian thinkers were struggling with the problems raised by the Positive philosophy, the natural sciences were commanding in an increasing degree the world's attention, until Darwin made his great discovery of a law of evolution, when it seemed as though natural science had become the arbiter and final tribunal before whose judgments the world must bow. Then there followed the sharp, even bitter conflict between science and theology, when scientific men whose lives had been spent in devotion to the study of natural phenomena were tempted to write expositions of religious history in order to show the fallaciousness of the religious attitude, and theologians, accustomed only to the postulates of the spiritual sphere, ventured into the domain of science to put a spiritual interpretation on its conclusions and discoveries. It was a confusing and painful moment when a subtle skepticism pervaded the Churches and haunted even the minds of Christian believers. Now that the smoke of the battle has cleared away, while many tragedies are disclosed, it does not appear that the Churches have been weakened by the strife or have yielded any essential truth or conviction. The belief in God, and in his creation and government of the world, the incarnation of God in Christ, the miracle for which Christ stands, and preeminently the miracle of his resurrection—in a word, the supernatural interpretation of life, remains unshaken. It is unjust to charge, as has sometimes been done, dishonesty and a spirit of evasion against those who, while the fierce battle was in progress, kept silence, unable to defend by cogent argument what yet they cherished still as true.

In the latter part of the century there came efforts at the reconstruction of theology in order to a better adjustment of the increase of knowledge regarding the nature of God and his relation to the world. The doctrine of God as immanent in the world, and not only transcendent or above and apart from it, has proved valuable in reconciling many of the discoveries of history and of natural science with the Christian faith. Efforts have also been made to simplify theology by the reduction of the large and complex, even conflicting, mass of Christian tenets and beliefs, given in history or represented in various Christian sects, to a few simple principles in which all must agree, resting for their confirmation not on metaphysics, but on the genuine Christian instincts as revealed in the New Testament. There has been attained also a better philosophical method for meeting the difficulties and perplexities of the age.

But these attempts at the better interpretation of revealed religion and the formation of more consistent theological systems have found a temporary rival in efforts to create, first of all, a better system of "natural theology," as it may be called, which shall take account of the doctrine of evolution and other discoveries of natural science since Paley's time and the day of the "Bridgewater Treatises." Those who aim at a reconciliation of religion with science treat the idea of evolution as a mediating principle by which the conflict between science and religion may be overcome. This effort is the more significant, in view of the popular interest in evolution—a word which has become almost the watchword of the age. From this point of view the invasion of religious territory by scientific men (Huxley, Tyndale, Haeckel, and others), and the counter-invasion of scientific territory by philosophers and theologians, give promise of some mutual understanding in the future.

IV.

It remains now to turn to another most potent motive which has affected the fortunes of religion in the nineteenth century. It may be called Nationalism, meaning by the term that higher conception of the life of the state or nation, slowly but most effectively asserting itself throughout the nineteenth century, never apart from religious convictions, always indeed in their support and furtherance. In illustration of this point, we turn again to the French Revolution, as giving the momentum, both directly and by way of reaction, to the conception of the sacredness of the State, as an ultimate fact in God's government of the world. In that fearful outburst of the French people, their long pent-up indignation was vented no less against the State than against the Church—the one a device of kings and lawgivers for holding mankind in subjection, as the other was a scheme for the same end by a designing priesthood. The humanitarian sentiment received in consequence at this impressive moment a direction of antipathy to nationality as an evil to be overcome, or at least to be kept in subjection to some higher principle, if the rights of man were to be secured. Something even of this negative mood entered into the formation of the American Constitution, where there is to be noted a singular omission of any reference to deity as the author and preserver of the national life. On the Continent of Europe there was the phenomenon of Napoleon building on the ruins of the French Revolution, while yet preserving the destructive motives which inspired it. Napoleon revived the dream of empire, in whose expansive embrace the nations of Europe were to be subordinated, if not suppressed altogether. He proposed to reconstruct the map of Europe, as though nationalities and crowns were purely human artificial arrangements to be disposed of at his sovereign pleasure.

The failure of the French nation, its demonstrated inability to do the proper work of a State, as well as the fact that the career of a Napoleon was possible, indicates inherent weakness in all the nations of Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. They existed either in repose, and even stagnation, after the long turmoil of the age of the Protestant Reformation, averse to change, distrustful of enthusiasm, or were content to strive for purely selfish aims. In accordance with the principle that the people existed for the State, rulers followed their personal whims, indifferent to moral sanctions, heedless of the growing evils calling aloud for redress. Such in particular was the condition in France. It was better in England, but even there the national selfishness, hardness, and cupidity were so strong that England became offensive to the world, and especially to the American colonies, so that after the lapse of a hundred years the dislike of England still remains deeply rooted in America, and it seems as if any alliance between these peoples of common descent were forever impossible. However this may be, there has been a reaction against nationality during the nineteenth century. The nations have been forced to struggle against this opposition, and through the struggle they have attained their purification.

The subject is connected with the fortunes of religion in many ways. The indifference to nationality, the distrust of the nation as incompetent for the exigencies of life, the placing of an abstract humanity as an ideal above nationality, so that to labor directly for the interests of humanity apart from the well being of the nation, and even in its defiance, became the motive of reformers—these characteristics, when seen in the religious sphere, have led to a reaction against the various forms of Protestantism, and especially as represented in the State Churches. The Roman Catholic Church, which in all its history has subordinated national distinctions to the higher interests of a common Christendom, had fallen into inefficiency in the eighteenth century, and was no longer reckoned a force worthy of consideration, either by religious thinkers or by statesmen. But in the first third of the nineteenth century there came a change, when the Roman Church arose from its lethargy to meet the demand imposed upon it by the timid fears of statesmen and ecclesiastics, as the safeguard of religion and morality, where national Churches or particular Churches were thought to have failed. The Napoleonic aspirations after universal empire and the frantic effort to realize it by rearranging or suppressing nationalities has its counterpart in the religious world in the effort to restore a Christian Empire with the Papacy at its head, as in the Middle Ages. The effect of this ambition may be seen in Germany and other countries, but is most clearly manifest in England, where the Oxford movement (1833) appears as an unnational, if not anti-national, uprising in behalf of some imperfectly conceived cosmopolitan Church—the so-called "Catholicity." The date of the "Movement," as Newman fixed it, was Keble's sermon on the "Apostacy of the National Church." This same feeling, that national existence is inferior in importance to humanitarian reforms or to the expression of religion in some other shape than in any particular or national Church, has been shown in the break with the Established Church in Scotland, or in the difficulties experienced in Germany in consolidating the forms of Protestantism in a strong State Church, or in the aspirations after some universal form of religion to be accomplished by a parliament of religions. Beneath these various schemes there is the common principle that humanity is a worthier object of devotion than the State, and constitutes a higher ideal in whose cause to labor. This conviction, it may be added, has been strengthened vastly by the extraordinary way in which during the nineteenth century the whole world has been brought together by the material forces of steam and electricity.

That there is here a great truth no one can deny, but the point to be noticed now is that nationality has been at a disadvantage in the competition with humanity. Out of the necessities of the situation there has been born the spirit of a deeper enquiry into the place and significance of the nation as the indispensable medium by which the highest result can be secured for the world at large. Thus we have the studies in this direction of German students, Hegel and Stahl, Trendelenburg and Bluntschil, Maurice in England, and in America Mulford in his book, "The Nation," all of them combating the motive of Comte and setting forth the essential, even the eternal, significance of nationality. The ancient doctrine is still preserved that the people exist for the State, but it is justified on the ground that the State also exists for the people, for the freedom of the individual man, so that through the State the rights of man are better subserved and more securely guaranteed than by an exclusive one-sided devotion to the cause of an abstract humanity.

As the nineteenth century drew to its close, it became increasingly apparent that the nations had emerged from the depression in which they were found when the century opened. America may be said to have attained the consciousness of nationality in its highest form in consequence of the civil war, and to have entered from that time upon a new career. In that awful conflict, whose origin dates back to the rise of the anti-slavery movement, may be discerned the issue of the century—humanitarianism, on the one hand, contending for the rights of man, careless, if need be, for the national unity if only a great reform could be secured; and on the other hand, the nation, slowly realizing that slavery was a force hostile to national unity and integrity, and on this ground demanding its suppression. The two attitudes in this instance appear organically related, while yet they spring from distinct and separate motives. In 1870 Germany and Italy took their places in the family of nations. Nor should there be omission to mention Greece, which, after its subsidence for hundreds of years, again attained its national independence.

It has become further apparent that it is to the Protestant nations, including Russia, which is also outside the pale of Latin Christianity, America, Russia, England, and Germany—it is to these nations that the leading place must be conceded, together with the determination of the world's fortunes. Those nations remaining in alliance with the papacy are, for the present at least, in an inferior position.

The triumphant assertion of the spiritual significance of nationality in the latter part of the nineteenth century has made it further apparent that the forces working for religion, and especially for its Protestant forms, were stronger than the forces in opposition. The nation enters the arena of the controversy as a spiritual force, assuming as a first principle the existence of God and his supernatural government of the world. Never was this truth more impressively illustrated than in the experience of Lincoln, who, when he became President of the United States in the supreme crisis of its history, ceased to be indifferent to religion and passed into a devout belief in the mysterious control of the destiny of the nation by a sovereign, omnipotent hand. As the indifference to nationality was among the causes of religious doubt and of the weakness in the Churches in the middle of the century, so the triumphant assertion of nationality has contributed to turn the tide toward theistic belief and the Christian faith.

To give a full exposition of the inner relationship of the nation to religion and the Churches is not possible here, but some remarks may be offered which will tend to illustrate their organic connection.

(1) In any large historical survey the nation appears as guided by religious leaders. Religion is seen to have flourished in proportion as the nation is conscious of its strength and destiny. When the Roman Empire broke down the nationalities and merged them in a large composite unity, it broke down also religious faiths, and its own religion as well, till skepticism was the result and a consequent immorality. All attempts to build up religion on the basis of empire, as distinct from nationality, ended in failure.

(2) The Christian religion tended from the first to break up the empire and to restore nationality. Ultimately it became manifest that the cause which undermined the Roman Empire and accomplished its downfall was the Christian Church. In its eastern half the Empire was resolved into nationalities. In the west a Church, Latin Christendom, rose upon its ruins, but within this Latin Christendom the spirit of nationality began at once to work, forcing its way against the opposition of the Papacy till in the age of the Protestant Reformation, when nationality was felt as a conscious motive, it sundered Latin Christendom into fragments.

(3) The Old Testament in its form as a whole is simply the history of a nation from its birth through all its fortunes. Never did religion rise to a diviner and fuller expression than under the realization of the conviction that God was protecting the nation and determining its career. The Hebrew prophets were primarily statesmen, devoted to the nationality as the incarnation of the divine will, in whose fortunes were revealed the divine purpose. Any nation which has not the similar conviction that it is the chosen people of God, and called to some important task, cannot maintain its independence and integrity, and has no future. This conviction today inspires the leading nations of the world.

(4) The nation mediates between humanitarianism and individualism. In serving its own ends and seeking to accomplish its mission, it works for the good of all, and also for the freedom of the individual man. The tendency of humanitarianism as a motive apart from the higher life of the State, or apart from its impersonation in Christ as its head and leader, is to weaken individualism and to defeat the very end it wishes to subserve, the achievement of the rights of man. Humanity as a whole lacks the visible, tangible embodiment of the nation. It has not yet the consciousness of itself nor of its unity. It cannot respond to the needs it awakens. It does not, as a whole, realize its relationship to God, nor is it placed in such a position as to make it feel the need of God. It is in danger of becoming an abstraction in so far as it exists without relationships. But the nation is close at hand, near, and felt as a moral personality or being, seeking ideal ends which are also within the bounds of possibility. Humanity as a whole undertakes no enterprises which make it tremble as it comes to unknown, trackless seas. But when the nation comes to great crises, where human wisdom is powerless to direct its course, it falls back instinctively and by necessity upon the belief in the guidance of God. Thus the nation as a whole appears in a higher form of personality than individual men can achieve, even the greatest men, and so prepares the way for the belief in the still higher, the invisible, infinite personality of God.

(5) The nation as a moral personality and depending upon God becomes the safeguard of morals. If there has been a decline in morality in the nineteenth century, as some maintain, shown in the general weakening of moral sanctions, or by the increase of divorce and indifference to the sacredness of family life, it must be attributed in some measure to the indifference to nationality from the time that political liberalism resting on an abstract humanitarianism, or in combination with a scientific naturalism, gained the ascendency. So far as this tendency has in any degree invaded the Christian Church it has been powerless to effect a change for the better. The great men whom humanity is directed to worship do not constitute a moral standard, nor can scientific postulates be made a basis for moral culture; for nature is at least unmoral, if not, as some assert, immoral, and it is only as acted upon by man that nature gives response to the increasing purpose of the world. Religious truths—the personality of God, his creation and government of the world, immortality, and the freedom of the will—these are shattered, we are told, "by the great eternal iron laws of the universe," or "are in hopeless contradiction with the most solid truths of empirical science." And so, it must be added, are the sanctions of ethics and moral law. It is when we turn to the State, to the moral personality of the nation, that we encounter other laws and living forces which restore what an empirical science or a transcendental humanitarianism has broken down. Here the supreme test is spiritual—the well-being of the nationality. The State must build upon the family as its cornerstone; it must enforce those moral laws which the history of nations, as well as human experience in its best estate, reveal to be the inmost expression of the normal life of man.

The beginning of a new century may seem like an artificial division of time, but the self-consciousness with which the nineteenth century closed, the efforts at introversive estimates of its place in history, and of the work it had accomplished, indicate something more than a conventional barrier to be passed. Prophecies in regard to the new age may be futile, for God reserves to himself the knowledge of the future. But it is much if we can to any extent read the meaning of the past and detect the sources of its strength and weakness. And for the rest, Christian faith and hope are inextinguishable, looking forward to the fulfillment of the Christian ideal—that higher unity where Christ appears as the embodiment of humanity and the voice of its yearning for a perfect brotherhood; where the nation also acknowledges him as its overlord, so that, in the words of Christian prophecy, the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ. In that ideal conception the dominium belongs to the State and the ministerium to the Christian Church.

CONFIDENCE IN ASTROLOGY.

Belief in Its Influence Held by Wise Celestial Scholars.

Students of the ancient science of astrology, if any still exist, of a more intelligent class than that which sometimes appears in the police courts for having abused the credulity of servant girls and country bumpkins, will be pleased to see that they can still count an emperor among true believers. Reuter tells us that the Emperor of China has ordered his official astrologers to search for a propitious day for the return of the Court to Pekin. No doubt it is possible that even in China no very great importance is attached to this proceeding. We have plenty of "survivals" ourselves in our court ceremonials, as well as in the cut of our dress clothes. Perhaps the Chinese recourse to astrology may also be only a ceremonial "survival" or a convenient excuse for putting off that famous return a little longer. But it is none the less interesting to remember that the first definite mention of astronomy in the world can be traced back to the predecessors of the Chinese astrologers who are now called into requisition. We read that Hi and Ho were the royal astronomers, or astrologers—in those days the terms were synonymous—of a very early Chinese Emperor. It was their duty to study the heavenly movements with care and give timely warning of any unpropitious arrangement of the planets, which might, if it arrived unexpectedly, perplex the throne with fear of change and expose the land to the anger of the gods. Unfortunately Hi and Ho were not so attentive to business as we are accustomed to find modern official astronomers.

Sir George Airy is said to have been in the habit of stirring up any member of the Greenwich staff who missed an observation by oversleeping himself or otherwise with a cutting little calculation. "The royal observatory," he would say, "was founded for observations of the moon during the year in all and the observatory costs the nation £6,000 a year. Hence each observation of the moon is worth £20, and by losing one last night you have cost the nation £20!" Hi and Ho were not kept up to their work by any such reflections. They gave themselves up to riotous living and so failed to predict an eclipse of the sun. The religious rites due in such a case were not performed, China was exposed to the anger of the gods and the unfortunate astrologers were seized and put to death—with the usual accompaniments of boiling oil and melted lead. Prof. Simon Newcomb says that the date of this affair has been computed in the twenty-second century before Christ, which makes it the earliest astronomical transactions of which profane history has left us any record.

We have said that astronomy and astrology were originally one. In fact, it is safe to say that astrology came first, and astronomy was gradually developed out of its mists and mysteries. Most of us now look at the stars with the very practical feeling that they help our ships to find their way across the trackless wastes of ocean. Navigation still depends on the work done at Greenwich for its efficiency, and all the mechanical inventions that have done so much to transform the sailor would be useless without the labors of the astronomer.

If we have any higher regard for the celestial phenomena, stars and planets, meteors and comets, and so forth, than is involved in this utilitarian view, it is connected with the dazzling wonders of which the astronomer has to tell us, and his fairy tales concerning the origin of the universe and the nature of the systems in which "other planets circle other suns."

But when man first raised his eyes to the heavens—whether he did so in dignified obedience to his Creator or in dull amazement that he no longer went on four feet—it was rather in the spirit preserved by the Chinese Emperor, alone among potentates, that he regarded the stars. Anthropologists have given us many theories to account for the undisputed fact that the stars and planets were, in all parts of the world, looked upon by primitive man as the rulers of his fortune and arbiters of his fate. No doubt the obvious control of the sun over the seasons and harvests—so important a part of early life—and that of the moon over the tides, were the first factors in the worship that man soon learned to pay to the lights of the heavens. After the actual identification of the heavenly bodies with the gods, which found a very recent avatar in the medieval theory that each planet was kept in its complicated orbit of cycles and epicycles by an attendant angel, came the later and more reasonable belief that the movements of the stars must be signs of the celestial will, even if they had not such actual influence on the affairs of men as the moon obviously had over the tides. Its natural origin could hardly be better explained than in the fine verses of Byron, which sum up the feelings that made Chaldeans and Zulus, Ojibways and Eskimos, Tycho Brache and Paracelsus, Wallenstein and Napoleon, agree in the attribution of such powers of prediction, if not of influence, to the stars:

> Ye stars! which are the poetry of heaven!
> If in your bright leaves we would learn the fate
> Of men and empires—'tis to be forgiven,
> That in our aspirations to be great,
> Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
> And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
> A beauty and a mystery, and create
> In us such love and reverence from afar
> That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

We need only refer to such words as "disastrous," "ill-starred," "ascendency," or "jovial" to remind ourselves of the depth to which this ancient belief rooted itself in European ways of thought. As late as the seventeenth century the wisest man held with Bacon and Sir Thomas Browne that there might be much truth in a sober and regulated astrology. The House of Commons called the famous William Lilly before it in 1666 to enquire how he had been able to predict the great fire and the plague, as he certainly had done under cover of one of his ingenious hieroglyphics, and treated him with "great civility" on his assurance that the prediction had been made according to all the rules of Ptolemy and Avicenna. The scientific belief in astrology was first really broken down—as it was in the mind of Dominic Sampson—by the opinion of "Sir Isaac Newton, knight, and unwhile master of his Majesty's mint, that the (pretended) science of astrology is altogether vain, frivolous, and unsatisfactory." Indeed, when the law of gravitation and the immense size and distances of the heavenly bodies were once accepted the theory that the stars and planets were designed merely to foreshadow the destines of man could hardly be continued. Among the vulgar astrology got its most serious blow about the same time from the wit of Swift, who amused himself by attacking "Partridge, the almanacmaker," and leading astrologers of the time. The series of pamphlets that clustered round Bickerstaff's famous prediction of this wretched man's death, and in which Swift showed how unreasonable it was of Partridge to attempt to maintain that he was still alive, form one of the most amusing and useful squibs in literature. Astrology was fairly laughed out of court. All the same, Napoleon believed most firmly in his star, and the Chinese Court—where Swift is perhaps not read—still keeps official astrologers. It is not easy to kill a natural and pleasant superstition in the mind of man, whether by science or by literature.—The London Mail.

IN THE DARK CONTINENT.

Work of Surveyors in the Trans-African Telegraph Service.

(From the London News.)

Ujiji, Lake Tanganyika, German East Africa, Dec. 10, 1900.—The surveying party for the African and Transcontinental Telegraph line arrived here on the 3d instant, having partly surveyed the country from Karema. At the present moment the line has been laid for about sixty miles north of Kasanga—that is, it now runs from Edituta, at the south end of Lake Tanganyika, eighty miles up the east coast of that lake. The survey is pegged out to Karema, 150 miles north of Kituta, and the preliminary survey between Karema and Ujiji is being made. The line will then go from Ujiji round the southeast coast of the Victoria Nyanza, cross the Uganda Railway, skirt the country west of Lake Rudolph, and then follow the Abyssinia frontier and work round slightly to the west, and so to the Nile. The country between Karema and Ujiji is extremely mountainous, and in order to find a suitable route a wide extent of country must be surveyed.

The surveyors found the natives between Karema and Ujiji, inland, extremely shy of a white man. Arabs, or rather half-caste Arabs, and coast natives abound everywhere, hardly a village being passed without some of these people being located in them—trading rubber with the natives. These villages are, by the type, very strongly stockaded, and the natives own quantities of guns. Powder is, however, scarce, and bits of stones often do duty as bullets. The guns are muzzle-loaders, with flint locks and caps, and are calculated to do more harm to the man at the butt end than to the target, whatever it may be. Ujiji is a very interesting native and Arab centre. The standing white population numbers on an average ten, seven being German Government officials—all military men—and three Greek traders. Arabs are very plentiful, a number being men of considerable wealth. The chief trade is in ivory and rubber, the former crossing the lake and coming mostly from the Congo Free State. The total population of Ujiji is 8,000. It is the second largest native and Arab town in Central Africa. Tabora, which is also a German Government station, is the largest, and has a population of 10,000. The Boma, or Government enclosure, is a well-built stone building. The Greek stores are also well-built, two-story stone houses, and the principal Arabs own similar dwellings. The native huts are scattered all around these Arab houses.

The currency throughout German East Africa is the German rupee and copper coins called pesas, going sixty-four to the rupee. Fifteen German rupees go to the pound sterling. The Germans pay their workers and Soudanese soldiers very high wages for Africa, and so one sees nearly all the natives about here clothed well and cleanly in cotton, white and colored goods. The language is Swahili. Scattered all over Ujiji, which lies generally about one mile from the lake shore on undulating country, are mango trees. These, with their thick and dark green foliage, present a pleasing appearance, and just now, the coming season, when the grass all around is green, and the atmosphere, in between the showers, so very clear, Ujiji is a very pretty place, and the view of the mountains across the lake is simply enchanting. The new German steamer Hedwig von Wissmann has made its trial trip, and has proved a great success. The other two steamers, the Flotilla Company's and the Tanganyika Possession Company's, are well on the way to being launched. All is again quiet at the north end of the lake. There is some more trouble brewing with the natives bordering the lake between here and Karema, and some sort of an expedition will be sent against the chief offender, Katunka, who ran away when visited two or three months ago by Lieutenant Funck.

A Queer Discovery.

(From the London Morning Post.)

When the library of the learned John Selden—who was known as "the incomparable" long before Cinquevalli balanced bathtubs on billiard cues—was handed over, in accordance with his will, to his old university, the strange discovery was made that he had used pairs of spectacles as bookmarkers and forgotten all about it so often that several score of these aids to eyesight were found within the pages of as many volumes. A number of more valuable markers were left in the books of an elderly lady who died intestate the other day in Paris. Her unpretentious goods and chattels were to be sold by auction, and the commissionaire employed to convey them to the saleroom, being of a literary turn of mind, perhaps, discovered that nearly every volume contained a share certificate or security of some kind or other. He did not actually regard these documents as treasure trove, but he concealed his knowledge of their existence and purchased the books containing them at the sale. At the last hearing he was engaged in conversation with a juge d'instruction. How far the code will cover such a use of "special information" remains to be seen, unless, indeed, the case has already been decided.