

for such a summons hearing the words, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The profound joylessness with which that which to all around is the highest joy would be greeted by such a one, is no more than the type of that strange dislocation of possession and desire which all, we suppose, have felt in some degree, but which none have felt, and none can feel, as it would be felt by him who, choosing with his whole heart the happiness appropriate to either of the ideals we are endeavouring to contrast, should be encompassed by that which is appropriate to the other. He would discover that the portal which bore for his eyes the warning to abandon all hope, was that which led to his neighbour's heaven.

If one man's ideal of happiness thus differs from another's, their ideal of duty cannot possibly coincide. It is not only that my duty is different from your duty, but my duty in your place would be different from your duty. "A man must strive to be a better citizen, a better father, a better son, a better husband," says the most emphatic of recent opponents of Christianity; and the most earnest advocate of Christianity would use the same words. But would they mean the same thing? We are all agreed that a man must strive to be a better father; no other fact is so important, about almost every man that ever lived, as the kind of influence he exercised over those for whose existence he was directly responsible. But do the two persons whose ideal we are contrasting mean the same thing by a good father? Can we not all recollect occasions on which the words meant one thing on the speaker's lips, another in the hearer's ears? It is conceivable that a man shall look back on his education with an almost passionate wish that everything had been different in it, while his father reviews the same series of events with a calm sense of having, on the whole, lived up to his ideal, and done his best for his son. Here there is as simple a case as you can imagine, where two persons, thoroughly and completely acquainted with the facts, would differ as to the question whether you should call the result good or bad. It seems to us a very small specimen of the difficulties which would start up on the right hand and the left, if two persons exchanged their ideas on duty, one looking up to an unseen ruler above him and an endless future before him, the other exchanging the unseen ruler for the "tribal self" and the endless future before him for a very long continuance of his posterity.

No doubt, large practical aims remain in common, to those who inhabit an unseen world and those who dwell solely in the visible one. The poor have to be fed, the weak have to be sheltered from outrage and plunder, life has to be made safe, property has to be protected, this is what we all want to have done. But we must all wish to fit ourselves for the permanent condition of our existence, and while all are sensible of desires that belong to the visible, some of us also know something of those that belong to the invisible universe. The former, we cannot too emphatically concede, are always the keenest. They are also the most regularly present. As the animal life is more intermittent than the vegetable life, so is spiritual life more intermittent than animal life. The fainter and more intermittent desires are easily stifled, and easily forgotten. But they assert an absolute predominance, while they are felt at all. And does not the idea of human welfare take a different tinge, according as we see in these desires mere uneasy stirrings, bequeathed by a forgotten legend, the fading impress made on sentiment by a past intellectual delusion; or prophetic impulses, foreshadowing the permanent condition of every human being?

Whenever we are thrown with those whose moral aims are profoundly different from our own, we shall discover that men are grouped by their ideals, no less than by their nationality. Christianity seems to mean very different things, as long as it is contemplated from the outside. "See how these Christians love one another," has been a deserved sarcasm on the mutual hostilities of those who acknowledged a common Lord. But after all, might not party spirit be set in an equally telling contrast beside the supposed bond of our English blood? Radical and Tory, in the ordinary intercourse of life, may feel each other more alien than Englishman and foreigner. But let Englishman and Englishman meet under tropic skies, amid a dusky race and an unknown tongue, and are not their common speech, their common reminiscences of green lanes and trim homesteads, more to them than any difference which, with that background, is felt to divide them? Thus it is with the fatherland of the spirit. So long as the world was

with Christianity, the differences between Christians were more glaring than the difference between them and any common opponent. Yet let the world declare itself once more their foe—and every day seems to us to bring that declaration nearer—and they will feel, as in the infancy of their faith, that the differences that divide them are but as the Doric and Ionic of a common Hellenic tongue. There is a beautiful apocryphal legend narrating how St. Peter and St. Paul, after many dissensions and many wanderings, met in the streets of the great metropolis of the ancient world, and there, as for the first time, understood each other. "Postremo in Urbe, quasi tunc primum, invicem sibi cognitos." It seems to us a kind of parable of what many may be led to feel in our own day. We have misunderstood each other, we have persecuted each other, we have hated each other. But meeting at the heart of a mighty world which regards us with scorn as aliens, shall we not recognise a common hope, a common allegiance, which no other differences can destroy?

If it be so—if, in spite of all that divides us, we are one, in the face of those who deny that which binds us—you cannot take the residuum left when our divergences from our opponents are removed, and make that stand for the human ideal. You will find that in that case the human ideal is the animal ideal. To say that Christian morality is an effete thing, to be swept aside with an outworn creed, is intelligible; to bring forward a morality which is to supersede it, is conceivable; but to suppose that Christian morality has a value which the enemies of Christianity can appropriate,—that the ethical lessons it has taught mankind remain unaffected by the removal of its main assumptions, this seems to us strange delusion. Every year, if the present movement of thought continues, will, we believe, make it more clear to impartial minds that Christians and Materialists, so far as they are consistent, confront each other, not as persons who differ about one important subject, and setting that on one side have the rest of their aims and views in common, but as inhabitants of different spiritual continents. They will speak a different language, they will need a different atmosphere. They may for a moment cross the chasm, they may, as members of the most dissimilar nations may do, meet in mutual friendship, and strong sympathy on particular departments of interest. But a common life, a common body of desire and hope and aim, is as impossible to them as would be a common home to a fish and a bird.

Something we could say of the nature of these differences, for the new ideal seems to us already to gather a certain distinctness of outline, and some points in which it is to be contrasted with the old one are becoming clear. But we have exhausted our space, in the mere protest against the confusion of the two. Any attempt at a further distinction between them must be referred to a subsequent article.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

DOUBTING DOUBT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—It appears to me that both Mr. Gladstone's address to the students at Glasgow, and your very interesting comments upon it lose something of the force with which they might state their case, from their use of the word "doubt," instead of "denial." You, indeed, do speak of Socrates as "applying to the creed of *denial* the touchstone of doubt," but I should say hardly with an adequate sense of the importance of the substitution. Surely it is of the greatest importance. If such men as Professor Clifford had come to *doubt* the existence of a spiritual world, the change would be almost as startling as if they came to believe in it. Their state of mind is as unlike doubt as that of some old-fashioned Evangelical. I cannot but fancy that what Mr. Gladstone meant by the doubt he desired to meet was unbelief, and what he meant by the doubt he desired to awaken was doubt in the proper sense of the word.

But I should not trouble you with mere verbal criticism—for in your article, at all events, the substitution of "*denial*" for "*doubt*" and "*negative*" for "*sceptical*" would obviate all my objections—if this substitution of doubt for denial did not appear to me to point out the answer, on its intellectual side, to the negative thought of our day. There is a strong conviction, wrought into the very warp and woof of the mind, that mere denial cannot rise above a doubt. Certainty, we all feel, must be certainty of *what is*; it can never transcend the limits

of existence, and discern that this or that supposed reality lies beyond them. Perhaps the only general assertion we can make about all knowledge whatever is, that in the last resort its expression must be affirmative. We know that a friend is in London, if we have just parted with him in Regent Street. We may know also that he is not in London, if he has just telegraphed to us from Edinburgh. But what is our certainty in the latter case? Is it not that he is present elsewhere than in London? Can we ever be sure that A. B. is *not here*, unless we know he is *there*? We may have a very strong opinion that he is not in London, if we go to all the places which he is wont to frequent, and do not find him. But so long as we do not know where he is, it cannot be said (except in reference to such spaces as the eye can take in at the moment) that we know where he is not.

Affirmation, speaking roughly and broadly, affords evidence as to the objective realities of the external world. Negation, speaking in the same general manner, may afford this evidence, or it may afford evidence simply as to the incapacity of the speaker to observe. "I heard some one call," is evidence that some one did call. "I heard no one call," is evidence either that no one did call, or that his call fell on deaf ears or preoccupied attention. Of course, there is such a thing as hallucination. Still, we carry on life on the assumption that what a man asserts himself to have seen, was there to be seen; that what he asserts himself not to have seen, may not have been there, or may have been overlooked by him. Every affirmation thus points towards one result, every negation towards a choice between two. In other words, affirmation, when it is absolute, should be an expression of belief; and denial, in the same case, *i.e.*, when it contains no affirmative elements whatever, should be an expression of doubt. And it is an instructive error by which men confuse what should be with what is. Yet surely it is an error to say that what we have to deal with in our day is the spirit that *questions* the reality of the unseen world. This is the very result which, as compared with the actual state of things, we should desire to produce. I do not agree with you that what Socrates combated was *doubt*. The cross-examining elenchus seems to me to have been directed not against doubt, but against the false persuasion of knowledge. At all times, and never more than in our own day, the data which should lead men to doubt do actually lead them to this false persuasion. I am struck continually by seeing how men of really powerful minds, trained thoroughly to doubt on their own field of observation, when they come to a region with which they are unfamiliar, think that if they do not believe any statement, they must perforce disbelieve it. These seem the intellectual alternatives even to men who give evidence of a capacity for that rare and arduous intellectual attitude,—a continued attention, and a suspended judgment. It is a dangerous error to assume that men have reached this arduous position, when they have simply slipped into that blank negation which is testified, not only by the words of such outspoken men as Professor Clifford, but quite as effectually by many of his fellows, who show in all their words that they account for the beliefs which they cannot share by assuming hallucination in believers, and not allowing for the possibility of blindness in unbelievers. I think we thus run the danger of confusing a condition which every observer of this mysterious world must acknowledge to be a part of the discipline appointed for us by its ruler, with one which seems, to me, a flat defiance to our trust in that which is noblest in human beings,—a want of reverence for the thoughts of men who have profoundly influenced the world, and to whom, in some measure, we all owe it that we are what we are.—I am, Sir, &c.,

JULIA WEDGWOOD.

MR. JOHN MORLEY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—Your comment does no more than justice to the quality of the speeches at this meeting, and no report I have seen gives any idea of the intense enthusiasm that prevailed. The fine sentence you quote from Mr. Morley's speech had not the purport you attach to it, and certainly was so true and so vivid as to deserve reproduction. After referring to the unsettled condition of Europe, with its millions of men under arms and the perils and anxieties that would mark the next few years, the speaker proceeded:—"You have often heard—it is a commonplace of orators—how in high mountains there are sometimes masses of snow so delicately poised, that the guide warns the

traveller not to raise his voice above a whisper, lest he should bring down the avalanche upon them. I confess I am dismayed when I think of the Angel of Peace threading her way through the perils of European politics, side by side with a loud and bitter railer like Lord Salisbury."—I am, Sir, &c.,

F. H. A. H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—May I correct a rather important mistake you make in an occasional note of this week's *Spectator*? You speak of Mr. John Morley's "growing admiration" for Burke. So far from this being the case is it, that Mr. Morley's admiration is manifestly a diminishing one. This can be proved by a comparison of his "Edmund Burke: a Study," published twelve years ago, and the "Edmund Burke" which has just appeared in the "Men of Letters" series. I venture to think that a diminishing admiration for Burke is a higher recommendation of Mr. Morley as a Radical, than a growing admiration would be. There is some excuse for a young Liberal admiring Burke who has only considered his career in connection with the American Colonies, who has been brought up in the common Whig and Tory Burke *culte*, and enchanted by the beauty of Burke's rhetoric, but, to my mind, there is some cause for astonishment at such admiration on the part of a mature and thoughtful Radical—the finder of his own way to the spirit of principles—who has noted the disastrous effect of Burke's teaching upon the French Revolution, his childish bigotry towards Freethinkers (as in the case of Condorcet and others), and his constant eulogy of the oligarchic, tyrannical institutions of his time.

May I say this furthermore, or is such a heresy beyond the proprieties of newspaper publication? The most successful, clever man in England is he who undertakes to defend the stupidity of the country. In this fact lies the whole secret of Lord Beaconsfield's political success, and it is likewise the secret of Burke's common popularity. I say "common," advisedly. Burke was the most unpopular man in England when he defended a just cause, as that of the American Colonies. His renown commenced when he joined and deliberately justified the average, prevalent stupidity of the country. He told Englishmen not to cast away their prejudices, but to cling to them *because they are prejudices*; and worse than this, which I cannot quote from memory. He was immediately and for evermore placed in England's highest niche of fame.—I am, Sir, &c.,

Paris, December 15th.

FREDERICK A. MAXSE.

[We have not the means at hand of referring to Mr. Morley's earlier essay on Burke, and our correspondent no doubt has. But so far as our memory serves us, we cannot acquiesce in the view that the earlier essay is so favourable to Burke on the whole as the later.—Ed. *Spectator*.]

MR. GLADSTONE'S SCOTTISH ANCESTRY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—Your correspondent of last week gives Mr. Gladstone's Scottish origin on his father's side. On his mother's side, it is purely Highland. The Editor of the *Celtic Magazine* gives it as follows, and I have verified the statement by reference to the valuable genealogical tables of the Clan Mackenzie, recently published by Major Mackenzie, of Findon:—

"Mr. Gladstone is descended on the mother's side from the ancient Mackenzie of Kintail, through whom is introduced the blood of the Bruce, of the ancient Kings of Man, and of the Lords of the Isles and Earls of Ross. . . . Andrew Robertson, a Writer in and Provost and Sheriff-Substitute of Dingwall, married Anne Mackenzie, daughter of Colin Mackenzie, a Baillie of Dingwall, by his wife Mary, only daughter of Kenneth Mackenzie, II. of Torridon."

Provost Robertson's daughter, Anne, was Mr. Gladstone's mother.

I may add that the genealogical tables of the Clan Mackenzie further show that by the marriage of Kenneth na Cuire, X. of Kintail, with the Lady Elizabeth Stewart, daughter of the second Earl of Athol, the royal blood of the Plantagenets was brought into the family.—I am, Sir, &c.,

A. B.

THE VICTORIAN REFORM BILL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—Will you allow me to call the attention of such of your readers as take an interest in Victorian politics, to the present aspect of the Constitutional struggle in that colony?

The Legislative Council has passed a Reform Bill, the chief points of which are that its own numbers are to be increased,