

been neutralised by his excessive seriousness and a faultiness of intonation, which it is no longer heresy to lay to his charge. Of the merit of Madame Albani's performance throughout the Festival it would be difficult to speak with exaggeration. Every portion of the new work allotted to her had been so carefully thought out that in the rare cases where the vocal resources of the singer fell short, her intention and artistic conception disarmed criticism. One sole error in judgment to our mind marred the admirable achievements of this great artist, the introduction, namely, at a miscellaneous concert, of Handel's "Sweet Bird," a florid song with flute obligato which brought down the house, although expressly designed to expose the deficiencies of the singer's shake, which is neither "close" nor tuneful in her extreme register. And as the shakes constitute a chief feature of the piece, her otherwise fine rendering of it was not sufficient to redeem the failure. Of Mr. Santley's share in the work of the week it will be enough to say that it was marked by that fine fervour, finish, and dramatic incisiveness which reconcile us to a loss of volume and sonority hardly to be wondered at after so long and arduous a career. Mr. Lloyd was himself, which is equivalent to saying that he sang with the refinement and consistent excellence of an artist who has much to give and always gives it.

Among the new choral works produced, it is an open secret that Herr Richter—an incompetent judge—considered Dr. Stanford's oratorio, "The Three Holy Children," to be the finest, a verdict which was perhaps borne out by the splendid reception accorded to that work. And yet gratifying as this must be to the patriotic mind, we cannot for a moment believe that the broad choral and instrumental effects of the oratorio have any chance in the race for immortality against the freshness, the inspiration, and exquisite melody of Dvorak's "Spectre's Bride." This splendid and original work, written by commission for the Festival, lays the latest emphasis upon Berlioz's declaration that Bohemia was the most musical country in the world. It is, indeed, something to be proud of, that by the practical recognition accorded to his genius by English Festival Committees and publishers, Dvorak will be enabled in future to devote himself exclusively to composition. One of the most pleasing episodes of the week was the modesty with which the composer sought to shift the credit of creation on to the shoulders of his interpreters, and, with deprecatory gestures, signified his indebtedness to Madame Albani, whose singing of the number, "O, Virgin Mother," an air of extraordinary beauty, was, perhaps, the vocal event of the Festival. The absence of M. Gounod must be taken in some measure to account for the comparative coldness of the reception of his new work, "Mors et Vita." Abounding as it does in graceful melody for soloists and chorus, this oratorio is too often tedious where it is meant to be impressive. Studied efforts after the awful, result in downright ugliness, so far as the orchestra is concerned; and the interest awakened by the first section is in no way sustained, but leads to a long anti-climax. Mr. Cowen's contribution, "The Sleeping Beauty," is a graceful and melodious work, but does not call for special mention; and the same, or rather the latter formula, applies to "Yuletide," the composition of Mr. Anderton, a local musician of repute. With a less feeble libretto, this writer would probably have done better, seeing that by far the best number of the work was inspired by the interpolation of a passage from "Hamlet." "Yuletide" is a string of stories related by a company gathered on Christmas Eve, and includes the Icelandic version of the "Spectre's Bride," already mentioned. The analytical notes expounding the poem and its musical setting are of so remarkable a nature that we make no excuse for quoting a few specimens of what threatens to become a new branch of literature:—"Trembling with horror and dismay [thus the librettist], From the horse the maiden fell."—*The sorry condition of the hapless girl is next related, and with the self-same breath her marvellous escape by a beneficent (sic) intervention at a supreme moment is tacked on to the phrase:—"Fainting: but in her fall she caught The rope of the lychgate bell."* With the clang of the bell the spectre knight vanishes, and Gudrun remained alone, "Saved by the bell that rang out well, saved by the holy bell." On which the commentator adds:—"With the chronicle of the departure of the baffled visitant from the nether world, the key changes temporarily to A flat minor, and with the recital of Gudrun's safety sonorous chords for the wood-wind accompany the vocal formulation." The foregoing extracts illustrate, it is true, an advanced stage of analytical in-

aptitude; but even the notes contributed by so practised a hand as Mr. Bennett err on the side of over-technicality, and are calculated to repel, rather than assist, the lay reader. On the other hand, such a commentary as that on the "Choral Symphony," specially prepared by Sir George Grove, is a perfect model, full of interesting details, and instinct with an enthusiasm that never degenerates into gush. A brief mention of some of the features of the miscellaneous selections which concluded the programme of the first three evening concerts must suffice to conclude this imperfect notice. The enthusiasm awakened by Liszt's "Hungarian Rhapsody" (No. 1) must have been trying to those critics who see in his brilliant orchestration only a glorification of the music of the tea-garden. The character of Mr. Prout's new symphony was in contrast with the author's known preference for the advanced school of modern music; but was none the less welcome on that account. Mrs. Hutchinson, as at the Worcester Festival last year, was conspicuous by her "Absence" (Berlioz), while Madame Trebelli, one of the last of the great Italian opera-singers, gave the familiar *Il Segreto* in her own incomparable style. Mr. Maas was hardly at his best in Siegmund's song, but none the less deserves commendation for breaking new ground, if we are right in supposing this to have been his first Wagnerian venture.

DEMOCRACY AND TRUTH.

THE recent advice given by two clergymen to the farm-labourers of England, respecting their vote in the ensuing election—advice on which we have already commented, and to the political aspect of which we do not propose to return—must have revived an old problem to the minds of many of our readers. Where do the claims of truth stand, when they are weighed against other claims? May we not give false information to those who have no right to any? This question is one we have considered before, and we will now merely remark, as a contribution towards the answer, that the claims of truth and of every other duty should be looked at from a different point of view, according as the breach is a matter of retrospect or of prospect. There is no inconsistency in looking mainly at the excuse for an accomplished action, for which, while it was still in the future, we had nothing but disapproval. If anybody were to pour forth a flood of righteous indignation against a ploughman who failed to keep a promise he had given his landlord about the ensuing election, we should feel no sympathy with the denunciation; but when, on the other hand, we hear the ploughmen of England encouraged to make promises they intend to break, the fact we are most sure of in an entangled question is that to guard against any exaggerated scruple about an extorted promise in addressing a set of working-men is about as necessary as to put on the drag in going up-hill. The first question anybody who gives advice to a class should ask himself is,—How will it look *from below*? How will it tell on a weak nature? Not to allow for this in any social maxim is like making arrangements for machinery and not allowing for friction. And what would be the effect of teaching uneducated people that *any* falsehood is comparatively innocent, is a problem we should have thought to which the answer was at least as clear as that to any political question whatever. It might probably be expressed in the confession once made by a candid gamekeeper, “I suppose *anybody* would tell a lie to save a noise.” However, these considerations are too obvious to need any elaborate discussion.

But it does not seem superfluous, nor is the occasion unfitting, to point out the claims of that part of duty which we sum up in the word *truth*, and especially to consider how far it is desirable to be on our guard against untruthfulness as characteristic of a class. We may, without offence, assume that whatever is characteristic of a nation is characteristic of a class, and respect for truth is certainly unknown to some of the most civilised races of the globe. This quality forms a link between the intellectual and moral halves of our nature, and shows its complex character in its varied aspects. No two desirable things are more dissimilar than the eagerness of a scientific man to verify some new principle, and the resolution of a poor man to refrain from some lucrative lie. The scientific man, it is evident, is considering truth as it is opposed to *ignorance*; the poor man is considering truth as it is opposed to *falsehood*. Now truth, as it is opposed to ignorance, is evidently not an idea that suggests itself to an ignorant mind. And truth, as opposed to falsehood, is wholly a negative ideal. Reserve is

no breach of truthfulness. Properly speaking, the love of truth is a wrong expression. We are obliged to use it if we would make ourselves understood; but if any one thinks what the "love of truth" means, he will see that the words are absurd. "The love of truth!" The love of the fact that a man's income stands at so much, when he has to state it with a view to income-tax! The love of the fact that a servant-girl has broken a jug, on the part of that servant-girl! Falsehood is an original act which may very well be hated, an initial movement of authorship which creates a very definite sense of responsibility in the mind. Truthfulness is a mere repression of one's own individuality in the face of a course of events which one may regard with feelings the very opposite of love. A virtue so purely negative has no root in the emotional part of the nature, and can have but a comparatively slight hold on an uneducated mind.

And while it has weak allies, it has strong foes. The desire to see things as they are may often become the antagonist of the desire to make things what they should be. Some characters need nothing more urgently than an atmosphere of such anticipation as none could form who knew them. It is not anxious precaution which most soothes an irritable temper; the fearless touch of one who knows nothing of sore subjects has often a marvellous power to soothe a spirit that anxious and guarded tenderness would only ruffle. It is not burning indignation which best represses the first promptings of the lower impulses of our nature. The neighbourhood of unconscious purity silences many a whisper of evil which the denunciation of righteous severity raises to a deafening clamour. Woe to the nation that is divided between vice and wrath! The last loses its best instrument, the first its most healing medicine, when they stand face to face, and each considers the other alone. A thinker in the extreme twilight of the old world saw in the fable of Orpheus a warning to the spirit which, escaping from the shadow of sin, turns back to gaze into the darkness even for the sake of some precious thing that it hopes to recover. It is a profound truth, which Boethius here read into the legend of a race perhaps not deeply enough exercised in the experience of moral conflict to have discerned it; and so far as it is a truth, it must be allowed to be an enemy to what we mean by truthfulness.

If the claims of Truth be only of a negative character, and if it has so many foes, it is surely far more necessary to give it all the influence that words can give, than it is in the case of that other hemisphere of duty which belongs to a part of our nature more remote from all that language can express. The duty of love, in all its forms—pity, reverence, kindness, pardon—is not one which is much elucidated or strengthened by any words that human lips can utter. We must preach that with our lives, rather than with our lips; and as there is not much help in what can be said for it, so there is no very great danger in what can be said against it. Its advocate is often silenced by passion and interest, but rarely confronted by sophistry. But with the duty of truth it is different. This unemotional, unimpulsive duty, this sternly impersonal virtue, demands an intellectual soil to attain its full vigour; it should be the especial duty of the cultivated classes to strengthen its claims upon those whose circumstances are such as sufficiently to exhibit all the excuses for transgressing it. A member of the wages-receiving class, who is as truthful as the average English gentleman, probably overcomes more temptations to deceit in a week than the gentleman does in a year. These considerations about what one would do if one could save one's life by telling a lie, which we have been reading in the newspaper for the last week or two, have not indeed been presented to the intellect of a poor man; but whatever truth they contain has been distilled into his daily experience, and drawn into his moral constitution. The necessities of life have impressed on him the excusableness of sometimes telling a lie. Whatever *theory* we present to his mind should go the other way. And we must always remember that if our sermons in favour of difficult duty go but a little way, our arguments *against* difficult duty may go a great deal further than we intend that they should. Truthfulness on a non-intellectual soil becomes honesty, and an argument which in a cultivated mind is discerned as merely pointing out the relative character of the claim of truth, tells on an uncultivated one as lowering the claim of honesty. It is quite as true that the lady who leaves her change on her dressing-table must share the responsibility of the theft with the servant who takes it, as that the squire who canvasses for his party must share the responsibility of the lie with the tenant who deceives him, and no one, surely,

would think the first fact was one to put before the tempted party. It seems to us just as wrong in the case of the second.

What the duty of the poor man is who has had a promise extorted from him to vote for the candidate he disapproves, we do not attempt to decide. It seems to us a mistake for one man ever to decide for another when he should relax a principle in favour of a strong inclination. We cannot see the distinction between truth and any other duty in this respect set forth by a correspondent in these columns. Nothing would justify us in committing a murder, says Sir Edward Strachey. If that be a truth, it is an identical proposition. A murder has no other meaning than a homicide that nothing can justify. Prove that you could save your own life only by killing the man who rushed upon you, mistaking you for a burglar, and you have *not* committed a murder in killing him. It does not follow that that man deserved to be put to death; society may possibly be the loser by his life having been sacrificed to yours. When the man is slain, when the untruth is told, we must decide whether the killing was murder, the deceiving was a lie. In both cases it is surely a mistake to put before the person whose interest would be to kill or deceive, the innocence of such an action in possible cases. To have addressed the arguments which justified the acquittal of Baretta for murder, to a man who was likely to be thrown among a set of vicious ruffians like the one he stabbed, would be as wrong as to tell the labourers they may innocently break their promise. When a wise man deceives another person, if he ever does so, he is choosing what he supposes to be best. "*This is better than that*" is the form in which he makes his decision. But it is a strictly individual decision. "*This*" and "*that*" are both concrete lines of action, clearly discernible to his mind's eye; the moment they were generalised into rules of conduct, he would feel that he was committed to something he might condemn. The reason why this is more obvious in the case of truth than in the case of such a duty as not taking life is partly because the ways of civilised life remove the last temptation from our habitual contemplation, but still more because the reasons against taking life are rooted in our moral sympathies and apparent to everybody, and the reasons for telling the truth are of an intellectual nature, and fully apprehended only by a cultivated mind.

Although the aspects of truth are various, its root is one. The truth of science is as closely connected with, as it is entirely separate from, the truth of honesty. The connection between the two seems to us strikingly illustrated in the address of one of the clergymen who recommended his parishioners to give a false promise to canvassers. He reminds them of the prayer of Solomon, and suggests that they should consider their acquisition of the vote as a similar opportunity to the invitation given to the Jewish monarch to ask for whatever he desired. The clergyman who made this suggestion did not, of course, suppose that there was any real analogy between an offer from Omnipotence to grant the desires of its creature and the opportunity given to a voter to bring the claims of his class before Parliament. No educated man is so ignorant as to be capable of such a notion, though unfortunately many uneducated men are. What he meant, probably, was something of this kind:—'Here are these poor creatures suffering from all sorts of need and misfortune that legislation might do a good deal to alter, and unless they ask for it very urgently they are not likely to get it. Political life is new to them; they want some strong stimulus to put their energy into that channel. I am quite aware that Parliament is very far indeed from being omnipotent; but still, it might do a good deal more than it does for the poor, and till it has done that, the poor may as well think it could do everything.' We should desire no better illustration of what irreverence for truth means than the translation of such a fact into such a fiction. It was probably allied with a real compassion for the sufferings of the poor; but it is calculated to do them more injury than any misfortune "that laws could cause or cure." We want to impart to the uneducated a firm, unalterable conviction that behind all the laws that men make and execute are laws which they must simply obey, or take the consequences. We want to save them from the misery of believing that we are close to the garden of Eden, and that somebody has hidden the key. We want to encourage that fortitude of which the worst foe is the belief that all suffering and privation is somebody's fault. The poor need, above all things, to be taught that we inhabit a world of inexorable sequences,—a world in which Will finds granite barriers, and works efficaciously only when it recognises them. And

those who would benefit the new electorate begin by teaching them that when a few hundred Englishmen seat themselves in a large house at Westminster, they suddenly become omnipotent! In the name of Truth, in the name of political science, in the name of a true Liberalism, we protest against the propagation of such fictions.

Perhaps it is from the last side that the protest may be made with most effect. We would entreat all who think it no harm to translate their belief that Parliament might do for the poor more than it has done, into the assertion that a claim on the Legislature may be made in the same spirit in which a prayer was recorded by the Jewish Scriptures to be made to the Almighty, to consider whether they are not preparing a vehement reaction in favour of any party which has not opened the door to such anticipations as these words create and foster. A wise Conservative would desire nothing more ardently than that such preachers as these should have a large audience. Their advice might take a great effect for the time, and it might not be very soon that that effect would pass away; but there is no recoil so hopeless as that from unreasonable hope, and no infidelity so deep as that which has sprung from the confident application of a wrong test. It is not, however, on the *impolicy* of such Liberalism as this that we would base our remonstrance with Liberals. We would appeal to that reverence for the humanity in every man which should be the strength of Democracy. Nothing more contemptuous than the theory that truth is a luxury for the rich was ever invented by an aristocrat who looked down on the *canaille*. Let us try to give the poor man twenty shillings a week by all means, if there is any possibility of doing it. But, in the meantime, let us treat him as a freeman. Do not let us initiate his civil career by the hypothesis that he *must* tell a lie. Let us beware how we implant on the soil of a new Democracy the weeds of a region we have left behind us. It is far easier to transport the tares than the wheat. There are excellences in an aristocratic Constitution which we must consent to forego in the new scheme of things. Let us not incorporate in that new scheme its worst evils; let us not confuse the barriers of the moral and the social world, and suppose that when we cross the line which separates the gentleman from the peasant we have left behind us all aspirations after truth, all fortitude in danger, all resolution to bear ills rather than to lower the standard of right and stain the purity of a lofty ideal.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE CHARITY COMMISSION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—I am one of a body of trustees who until recently, like yourself, laboured under the delusion that the Charity Commissioners had no power to force schemes upon trustees for charitable endowments yielding an income of more than £50 per annum.

I am this week returning to the Charity Commissioners a scheme which we none of us approved, and do not approve, although it is less unworkable in its present than in its original form as first submitted to us.

This scheme has been forced upon us without any assignable reason whatever, after our having willingly submitted to one moiety of our income being diverted from the objects assigned by the original deeds to an educational purpose.

On consulting our legal adviser in the matter, we found we were practically powerless unless we fought a costly battle in Parliament, which in our case was out of the question, and we were advised to make the best terms we could, and then trust to being forgotten and left pretty much to ourselves.

The objection in our particular case is that the scheme is in great measure unadapted to our local circumstances, and therefore must remain in great part a dead-letter.

As a matter of fact, your view of the function of the Charity Commission is derived from the Act establishing it, not from practical experience in its working out in the hands of past and present Commissioners, and only the wealthiest and most influential Corporations can resist the interference of the Commission.

I have been more or less in correspondence with the Commissioners in relation to various trusts for the last fifteen years, and I notice they have recently become more imperious and less suggestive in their tone than they were formerly. Even in the present scheme the word *may* in the draft proof as submitted to

us has been altered into *shall* in the final form, and they do not even invite our approval of the scheme. They merely request us to correct clerical errors and return it with a payment for stamps, &c. With reference to the action of the Charity Commissioners in relation to Endowed Schools, the practical working of the Commissioners' schemes has been in many cases particularly unsatisfactory, and Mr. Chamberlain's charge that they have robbed the poor to give advantages to the comparatively well-to-do can be easily and abundantly proved to be true. The Educational Endowments of the nation ought to be treated as national property directly under the control of the Education Department responsible to Parliament and the nation.

You speak of the Charity Commission as a Government Department; if it is one, it ought to be made politically and ecclesiastically neutral, which it certainly is not in practice, whatever it may be theoretically.—I am, Sir, &c.,

JOHN W. CROMPTON.

Rivington, near Chorley, September 1st.

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—Many persons will dissent from the opinion expressed in your article of the week before last, that the Church holds a stronger position now than she did in Mr. Miall's time, twenty years ago. It will, indeed, be admitted by all that in some large centres of population she exercises more influence now than she did then. My contention, however, is that this increased influence has been acquired through agencies which make her less, instead of more national. If the claim of the Church amounted to nothing more than what was claimed on her behalf fifty years ago; if it were said that the Church is established and endowed by legal authority for the purpose of promoting a religious faith which is in general accordance with the sentiments and belief of the great majority of the nation,—then and in such case, her claim to be called national might be granted, even by that very numerous body of religious-minded men who do not attend her services or conform to her ritual. Moreover, the increased life and energy which she has shown of late years would be held to strengthen her title to such recognition. But in point of fact, the claim made on behalf of the Church is something very different from this. It is claimed on her behalf that her ministers enjoy a monopoly of divine authority, and that the form of worship and ritual of the Church must be conformed to by all, under penalty of being guilty of what is called the sin of schism. Nor must we think that this claim is dormant, or that it subsists merely by a strained construction from ancient rubrics on the minds of a few fanatics. On the contrary, this claim is asserted most actively, and especially in those parishes where the boast can be most confidently made of "vigorous Church life." What you refer to as evidence of strength is in fact an operative cause through which the position of the Church must become, within a brief period, altogether untenable. For what is this state of things? We have the authority of the State invoked on behalf of a principle which is growing year by year into more prominence, and against which the intellect of the great mass of the nation must rebel,—the principle, namely, of sacerdotalism. There are no doubt vast numbers of excellent men and women scattered throughout the land who accept sacerdotalism, and who are working with holy fervour and great zeal to extend what they call "Church principles." But you, Sir, can judge how far these persons are, or ever can be, a majority of this nation, or how far such principles are likely to be accepted in a democratic State.—I am, Sir, &c.,

LIBERAL.

THE BISHOPS AND MR. KENNEDY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF THE "SPECTATOR."]

SIR,—This controversy may be briefly summed up. To lie about the vote you have given, is evil. To give a dishonest vote, is evil. To force another to choose between the two, is evil. As to degrees, may I cite two well-known texts as bearing on the question? Matt. xviii., 6, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me [or "shall cause one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble," as the Revised Version has it], it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Acts v., 4, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." It is clear which St. Peter thought the most of, though, rightly or wrongly, differing from the Bishop of Carlisle. It might, I think, be wished that the Bishop had reserved some of his indignation for certain brother-princes of