SUPPLEMENT TO "THE NEW AGE."

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Jack Ashore.
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[An reply to Lord Haldane's lecture on German literature delivered at the summer meeting of the University Extension Society at Oxford.]

MARVELLOUS! Do you see that ship yonder—that mighty ship? Incredible! The mighty ship of State has just cast anchor off our shores. Only yesterday we saw it still ploughing along proudly on the high seas of politics, an awe-inspiring monster, her belly full of fire, her engines thundering, her funnel reaching forth a tremendous quantity of black smoke, and her screws leaving behind a broad highway of froth. There was plenty of life in her yesterday, and life—even over-heated life—is always a splendid sight. But then something must have happened, for the ship has just left her first engineer to our coast—that forgotten coast with its hidden village where the artists, the poets, the philosophers and other useless individuals dwell. The ship must consequently stand in need of something. The engine in question, I suppose, is going to see whether there are any coals—ideas—to be had on our shores. He has probably pointed out to his captain that they have not enough of this precious material on board to go on what seems to everybody a perilous voyage. And he has been sent amongst us to make inquiries, to have a look at our treasures, to purchase goods he esteems of value, and to condemn all those he thinks unfit for consumption.

Theorist apart, the ship of State could not have sent a better man. The fact that he persuaded himself and the authorities to go on shore proves that he knows the need of his time and of his ship. For Lord Haldane is one of the few politicians who know that politics depend upon ideas. He also knows to a nicety where ideas are to be purchased, and he has deliberately gone to Germany to get what he wants. He is an experienced connoisseur of her goods; he is a man who is sure of his own mind, and he is thus enabled to tell everyone what coals are good and what coals are bad. This is well: for it always facilitates the bargain if the buyer has made up his mind beforehand about what he requires. And his recent lecture at Oxford (reported in the "Times" of August 4, 1911) is, so to say, "pronunciamiento" of what the Minister of the English Crown will buy in the German market and what he will reject without hesitation.

It seems to me, however, that Lord Haldane suffers from one undue disadvantage. It is such a long time since an Englishman has come to our shores—an Englishman of any intellectual importance, I mean—that the newcomer is of necessity somewhat bewildered. It is such a long time, for example, since an Englishman has had to destroy know-how for the paper god and thus has by nature some affinity to Kant. It is therefore no wonder that he defends his countryman against Heine or any one else. Heidegger may have had to destroy knowledge—its proprietor does not keep any such despicable dissolvents in stock: he wants you to have gin and nothing but gin. "I have had to destroy knowledge in order to make room for faith": such is the publican's confession, such is his reason for forcing his gin upon you. If you do not happen to stand in need of artificial consolation or alcoholic exaltation, it does not matter: all that does matter is that you swallow the gin and pay and go.

For the owner is Scotch, you know, or at least a descendant of a Scotch family that settled in Northern Germany in the seventeenth century. His name is Kant. I do not think Lord Haldane needed much persuasion to enter his shop. It was probably a case of Goethe's fisherman: "Halb zog man ihn, halb sank er hin." For Lord Haldane, if I am rightly informed, is of the same descent as the German Puritan philosopher and thus has by nature some affinity to Kant. It is therefore no wonder that he defends his countryman against Heine or any one else. Heidegger may have had to destroy knowledge—its proprietor does not keep any such despicable dissolvents in stock: he wants you to have gin and nothing but gin. "I have had to destroy knowledge in order to make room for faith": such is the publican's confession, such is his reason for forcing his gin upon you. If you do not happen to stand in need of artificial consolation or alcoholic exaltation, it does not matter: all that does matter is that you swallow the gin and pay and go.

Lord Haldane, however, Kant's countryman, knows better, and thinks that Heine, whom he otherwise keenly admires, was wrong about Kant. In Lord Haldane's opinion, got something back for what he had lost, something which was much more valuable than what he had formerly possessed—which sounds probable enough if you remember that you are dealing with a philosopher of Scotch descent. Scotchmen harp none the less, however, on the gift of losing anything graciously and with smiling lip: they must have it back—be it a lost good or a lost god. And Kant—Lord Haldane is quite right about this—was something back for his lost god. He got it back, as a Scotchman must, with splendid interest. He did lose the Christian god, but received in exchange the Christian morality—which was pure gold for paper; for the god Kant had lost and "decapitated" had been replaced by a paper god—the seven-day Bible. Not a bad bargain—what do you think? Almost a stroke of mercantile genius, this "golden" Christian morality saved and safely stored away!

This is what Lord Haldane appreciates in Kant, this is what he calls Kant's constructive part, or in his lecture, "the foundation of a far greater conception of God than any he destroyed." Heine in Lord Haldane's opinion had overlooked this. But Heine, it might be answered, was a very well aware of the so-called constructive part of Kant, only he did not think it worth very much. Heine probably had a suspicion—I beg to be allowed to point this out to Lord Haldane—that the gold this great Kant received for the paper god was counterfeit coin. The paper god may have taken revenge for his decapitation by leaving bad coin to his executor. The paper god, as Lord Haldane will remember, was a Jew; and the Jew may have succeeded in swindling even a Scotsman—a difficult thing, no doubt, to do; but still a possible one, and, as everybody will agree, a very good joke of the old Jew into the bargain. After all, he was a great God: he died with a joke.

For, let me ask the question: What was Kant's golden morality? Or, first, this other one: How did Kant lose his God? And then another: How did Heine manage of a very ingenious trick, worthy of a mercantile philosopher. The Christian God, though excluded from the
philosophic market, was smuggled in again by the clever Scotch contrabandist of the 18th century as Mr. Kruger's Krupp guns in the now famous piano-cases. The piano-case for the Christian God was smuggled in likewise.

Somebody else, somebody who forms God's counterpart, without a shell, was smuggled in likewise. Kruger's Krupp guns in the now famous piano-cases. The piano-case for the Christian God was not contraband enough for the ingenious smuggler. And without whom Christianity is like a Krupp gun. And without whom Christianity is like a Krupp gun.

Nothing that could not likewise be done by everybody else, in short, to be a "good man." And as no one is by nature a good man, Kant recommended a kind of alteration of Nature, a change of heart, a spiritual rebirth, which, if generally accepted, would by-and-by bring about God's Kingdom on earth. We have heard this before, have we not? We have heard it in church, and read it in the Bible, and it sounds nice to our ears, and so meek, so self-forgetful, and so peaceful too; and it sounds like a piece of great truth that it is, and that the millennium would at last come to stay with us. And good old Kant thought indeed it had come, or would come by-and-by, and he admonished people to live up to it, and the people really tried to live up to it, or (what is always easier with millenniums) to preach up and we could really imagine that there is truth in it. That, too, sounds lovely to our ears, does it not?

It was a further part of Kant's moral law (or Categorical Imperative, as he called it) that "no one should consider another fellow creature as a means," but that everybody else should be considered as an end in himself. This thought, if peeled out of its philosophic swaddling clothes, in which the deep Kant deeply imbedded it, simply means "Don't exploit anybody for your own benefit." That, too, sounds lovely to our ears, does it not? The whole point would be lost if everybody else were not to be done by everybody else, in short, to be a "good man."

By forbidding any sort of exploitation. Kant coolly cut the patriarchal bonds that kept society together, he abolished the fatherly master in favour of the capitalistic sweater, and he gave the freed individual nothing but what he considered a comparatively harmless side. I will now have to deal with a more dangerous offshoot. Kant, by abolishing God and Devil outside us and by placing both within us; Kant, by making the individual both God and Devil; Kant, by claiming universal freedom for the individual, has thus made everybody his own master, his own judge. In this he was only following the Protestant and Lutheran tradition, which had declared every man to be his own priest. This, of course, means neither God, nor State, nor Church, nor priest matters; it matters that their philosophy would bring order back to human society; that religion, which had been undermined by the French Revolution, would have a firmer basis; that—in Lord Haldane's phrase—a "wonderful conception of God" was re-created by their deeply religious leader.

There was one man in Germany, however, who protested against this philanțic Christian, between the howling democrat and the preaching Kant! It was now almost certain that, in the light between the two, art, culture, beauty, life, health, knowledge—in short, everything Goethe stood for—would fall to the ground. The poor poet foresaw it, but he could not help it, and he suffered. All through his life he endured those agonies which the gods in their indifferent revival of the Middle Ages in modern times; one man who had but scant respect for the Königsbergian philosopher, this last Father of the Church, as a witty Frenchman has once called Mr. Kant. This man was Goethe. Goethe was the anti-philosophic system of Kant, and for Goethe, the outbreak of his Kantian philosophy, which spread like wildfire all over "moral" and "old-maidish" Germany, was the misfortune of his life. Or, it should be said, his second misfortune, for his first and principal had been the French Revolution. And a second misfortune it was, a cure, an antidote for the first! Goethe knew this was not so; his eagle eye pierced through the meaning of both these movements, and he discovered that the disease as well as the remedy was of the same wrong. It was a terrible blow to him; for he, the poet, saw himself hemmed in between the revolutionary and the philosophic Christian, between the howling democrat and the preaching Kant! It was now almost certain that, in the light between the two, art, culture, beauty, life, health, knowledge—in short, everything Goethe stood for—would fall to the ground. The poor poet foresaw it, but he could not help it, and he suffered. All through his life he endured those agonies which the gods in their indifferent revival of the Middle Ages have reserved for their most beloved children only.

For Goethe was far from being the harmless pantheist and evolutionary scientist that Lord Haldane makes him out to be. Anybody can be a pantheist or an evoluționist, but Goethe was a Greek, a pagan. As much as Luther, did Kant know this: that the pantheism of Goethe, like all true Christian pantheism, was tinged with a very strong anti-Christian bias. Goethe was a Greek, a pagan. As such, and as a lover of the South and of light, he protested against Kant's foggy philosophy of the Asiatic, and he fought for the philosopher with having brought scholasticism back to his age. He accused him of soothing humanity again with the concepts of original sin and radical evil. He reproached him with trying to lure the Christians to his own agnostic way of thinking. He called Kant's philosophic system a labyrinth which he would take good care not to enter. He complained with healthy instinct that such a philosophy would kill all the poetry in him. For Goethe, like all real poets, knew that Christianity and poetry are two incompatible entities who, unlike Christianity and science, can never make peace with each other. His outbreaks against the Nazarene Creed were very numerous and very strong, and this in spite of the fact that Goethe was—and had to be—a very cautious man. He was a man who did not very easily commit himself, so that his friends used to say of him that what he said was better than what he wrote; what he wrote was better than what he printed; and what he printed was better than what he published. Anyhow, there can be no doubt about the paganism of a man who openly declared in one of his Xenien that he disliked four things in this world: bugs, garlic, tobacco and the Cross, and who applauded the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in one of his Venetian Epigrams:

Crucify every fanatic before his years number thirty;
If they get used to the world these simpletons turn into rogues.
All this Lord Haldane wisely withheld from his public, following in this, again, his German professorial guides, for within two minutes he and Kae is a crux—nay, a veritable nightmare. For Goethe is the greatest of the early nineteenth-century poets, and he has to be made to "fit in somehow," he has to be smuggled into "modern Germany." No one must know that Germany has ignored Goethe and cares naught for him to this very day; that modern Germany is not a creation of her great poets, but of her philosophers. For philosophers have something dry, gnostically, and inhuman, something asexual and impotent about them; something which unites them unto the children of beneficent children. This may be studied, indeed, in the case of Germany—poor Germany—which all the more, with the eagerness of ignoble blood, years for a decent pedigree. A poet in the family (no matter how that family has treated the poet)—that is something nice, something to talk about, something that gives us credit, that tells the world that we, too, are children of health and light. Let us, therefore, get hold of that poet by hook or by crook.

And they have hooked him! Done the trick—these wonderful prestidigitators! And Lord Haldane has learned it from the German professors, and he mentions Goethe under the heading, "The Idealism of Germany," and adds, "I am afraid this wonderful "brand," though known outside Germany as well, is, like beer, found best in the German Fatherland. But it is really too flippant on my part to mention German Idealism in the same breath as German beer—and it is worse than flippant; it is also false. German Idealism is really the opposite of German beer. It is its antidote, and stands in the same relationship to German beer as the Christian God stands to the Christian Devil. It is, like the Christian God, the consequence, the outcome of this Odyssean idealistic and secular school. When this materialistic, this plebeian, this lemming, this Devil. When this materialistic, this plebeian, this lemming, this Devil, has no Katzenjammer, the taste of the "herring" is not so strong. The herring cures a drunkard, as little as the ham cured a peasant. If it does not kill people outright, it makes them worse by the suppression of the body—theoretically—ought to be dead there. Happily this is not the case. The survivors, however, mostly come from a stock of people who were not very much affected by the law, because their passions were tame, their emotions lukewarm, their sentiments unaffected. We are indebted for this to their strict adherence to the Christian faith, or better to the Christian morality. We ought to be all the more indebted to them, as even to them this was no easy work, and plenty of self-denial, one may say—"make progress" and reach that wonderful goal, our latter-day civilisation. Nor has this abstinence and self-denial, practised by generation after generation, quite killed the natural longing of that human heart which still lives on in the breast of every modern German; he has always, and in all Protestants up to this very day, existed a sub-conscious feeling that everything was not right with them or the world, that things must have a higher purpose, that a human being ought to have a soul attached, as a poet says, to a deity, although the machines should not be the slaves of machines; there has always been, in short, a kind of discomfort amongst them, which made them wish for a fuller, a better, a different life. In England it is Christianity which is employed to cure this feeling of spiritual unrest, in Germany (where Christianity is somewhat discredited) it is Idealism, which is Christianity under a philosophic or pseudo-artistic cloak.

It will not easily be seen that neither Christianity nor Idealism will cure the disease of materialism for the simple reason that they are the cause of it. This reminds me of a rather terrible incident which happened some time ago when I was a medical student in Germany. Mills raw ham, as is well known in England, is eaten all over Germany, and thus a very dangerous pig disease called trichinosis is sometimes produced amongst the population—this in spite of the fact that all the animals are subjected to a very close medical inspection. Cases of trichinosis occurred with time to time, and one of them concerned a peasant of the Black Forest who had eaten a slice of diseased ham, after which, of course, he became violently ill and nearly died. The doctor, never suspecting that this might be a case of poisonings, tried to cure the patient by some disorder of the liver, but after a very long time, and in spite of the doctor's wrong diagnosis, the patient at last found himself better. He was, of course, still very weak, but he showed some signs of returning appetite, and when the doctor who attended him was told about it he said to the man's wife: "Now I think we must give him something more substantial, something that will make him pick up his strength again; perhaps a good piece of nice raw ham." The wife, following the advice of the doctor, got her old ham from the larder and gave a good slice of it to her husband, who now promptly died. This story always comes to my mind when I hear of any philosophic doctor trying to cure materialism by means of the same old poisonous ham that has set up the old disease.

No, Idealism never cures Materialism, as little as a herring cures a drunkard, as little as the ham cured the peasant. If it does not kill people outright, it makes them worse by the suppression of the disease, which, of course, means nothing. A disease which has been in existence for a thousand years, and again in quite unexpected places, all the worse for the suppression. An observer from the outside, like Lord Haldane, is naturally surprised about it and at a loss to understand it. Lord Haldane, for example, is astonished that the most successful systems of physics are those of Schelling, that, above all, the philosophy of Hegel, which had profoundly transformed the Kantian
philosophy, could not cure it. He is surprised that Marx and Lassalle could call themselves Hegelians who were not really founding a revolutionary movement. But had Hegel really transformed the Kantian philosophy? Had he not accepted its Christian basis, which, as we have seen, spelt Socialism and Anarchy? Was it to be wondered at that the disease broke out unexpectedly? And Marx and Lassalle were by no means the worst cases of Hegelitis. I know of another and even more thorough Hegelian, a man who is known under his pseudonym of Max Stirner, who in 1845 published—as a Hegelian, if you please—his book, "Der Einzige und sein Eigentum," which has become the gospel of theoretical Anarchy. What wonderful people these Germans are! And how careful an Englishman should be who goes to that coal market! He may buy dynamite instead of coals, might he not? Who would have thought it of the good-natured Germans! They seem so simple, so trustworthy, so honest! Yet in the useful State officials have again misled our naïf Englishman manufacture the bombs which the livelier nations of Europe throw at the heads of their Emperors, Kings, Queens, Presidents, and Prime Ministers.

It would, however, be an injustice to Germany if one were to consider it only as a hotbed of theoretical Anarchy under a philosophic or religious cloak. The German, no doubt, is, as a French friend of mine once said, "le docteur en Révolution," but he is also, as I answered this friend, "le docteur de la Révolution reactionary. Germany produced medical scientists, whose cleverness exceeds that of any other nation, and who have learned to fight the monstrous evil of the revolution with very powerful weapons. These are the great German poets. The German, however deep, all-embracing, grandiloquent he may appear, stands—knowingly or unknowingly—for revolution; the German poet, on the other hand, is, like every true artist, the instinctive enemy of revolution. Bismarck, the patriotic type was his faithful wife, Johanna; the romantic, and the German Empire. Bismarck and Goethe are again two antagonistic German types, who, just like Kant and Goethe, and like Hegel and Goethe, have to be "squared" or adjusted somehow by the academical tailors in order to fit in to the standard patriotic measure of Germany. These useful State officials have again misled our naïf English visitor, who does not seem to suspect that there can be anything wrong with patriotic literature. They have informed Lord Haldane that they did not listen to Heinrich Heine, their great poet, "who knew so much." They likewise, as we have seen, ignored their Goethe; they followed their Hegel, with whom Goethe (this is another hint to Lord Haldane) would have as, little to do as with Kant. They followed their Bismarck, who indirectly, by way of Lassalle, has something to do with Hegel, and who by means of iron, blood, and Hegelian principles created German unity and the German Empire.

Bismarck and Goethe were again two antagonistic German types, who, just like Kant and Goethe, and like Hegel and Goethe, have to be "squared" or adjusted somehow by the academical tailors in order to fit in to the standard patriotic measure of Germany. These useful State officials have again misled our naïf English visitor, who does not seem to suspect that there can be anything wrong with patriotic literature. They have informed Lord Haldane that "without Goethe no Bismarck," or at least "without Kant and Hegel no Bismarck." For it was Kant with his stern recommendation of "duty," it was Hegel with his glorification of the State, who prepared the way for that mechanical and drab organization whose flower was the German Army, to which latter Bismarck owed all his successes as a statesman. But what has a warm-hearted child of nature like Goethe to do with that ice-cold monster the State? What has a Bismarck in common with Goethe?

The one was a child of the dreary Mark, where sombre pine forests frown and howl at you when the autumn wind moves them, as the non-commissioned officer in the barracks yonder howls at his miserable soldiers and slaves. The other was a child of the majestic Father Rhine, that benign saint, haloed with the arches of wonderful bridges, who rolls along with a good-natured smile between vineyards and castles, between old, rich and cultured cities. The one had consequently all his life something of the Prussian in him: his harshness, his rudeness, his barbarity, his lack of culture and his desire to succeed at the cost of the world. Goethe, on the other hand, belonged to the artistic type of humanity: a certain effusiveness of spirit, a healthy joy in the things of this world, a sun-like eye transforming even the doubtful into something beautiful; a sincerity towards himself and others, and with all this a great power of resignation and asceticism for the sake of artistic concentration—such were the Goethian characteristics. In addition to this he enjoyed a perfect freedom from national prejudices. When Bismarck, on the other hand, was a decidedly national man, a man above the average German through the possession of a great will and the absence of idealism; but a mere German in psychological matters, his misunderstanding of the Frenchmen of the Italians of the Catholic Church, and also of women. A still more patriotic type was his faithful wife, Johanna v. Puttkammer, who during the Franco-Prussian War wrote letters to Bismarck praising the "godless Babel" (Paris), and quoting the verses of the Old Testament, in which the ancient Jews (who knew how to do the business!) asked the Lord to break out the teeth of their enemies. All these enemies she wanted to see shot and stabbed to death, down to the little babies! What would Goethe have said to all this? He who detested the wars of liberation; who turned the back to his country's soldiers when they passed his window on the way to fight their "arch-enemy," who loved a absence of ignoble feelings, a sincerity towards himself and others, and with all this a great power of resignation and asceticism for the sake of artistic concentration—such were the Goethian characteristics. In addition to this he enjoyed a perfect freedom from national prejudices. When Bismarck, on the other hand, was a decidedly national man, a man above the average German through the possession of a great will and the absence of idealism; but a mere German in psychological matters, his misunderstanding of the Frenchmen of the Italians of the Catholic Church, and also of women. A still more patriotic type was his faithful wife, Johanna v. Puttkammer, who during the Franco-Prussian War wrote letters to Bismarck praising the "godless Babel" (Paris), and quoting the verses of the Old Testament, in which the ancient Jews (who knew how to do the business!) asked the Lord to break out the teeth of their enemies. But Goethe was a cosmopolitan, an enlightened cosmopolitan, a man of universal love and the brotherhood of nations. He had an open eye for the good and the great in all nations, and above the heads of merchants and politicians, he wished to keep the way open to that republic of letters which even the Middle Ages possessed, which had existed down to the eighteenth century, but was destroyed by the national democracies of the nineteenth.

Goethe easily saw that the evil which threatened Europe remained a political affair, but one of general European concern. He eagerly looked for a new basis upon which to lay the foundation of that new structure which was going to take the place of the old. As a poet, that is, as a man of deep and practical insight, he had to be careful and cautious, for he knew that in all things it is the foundation, the beginnings that matter most. Hence his ceaseless scrutiny into all sorts of human conditions, art, literature, nature, religion. A politician, however, is a man who has no time for explorations of this kind. In him the heart unceasingly cries, "Action, action, action!" If they are asked, "Action to what end?" they have no answer—thus apparently believing in action for action's sake, like a man undergoing a course of Swedish gymnastics. This premature building on shifting ground, called in the Bismarckian phrase "Real-Politik," seems to arouse Lord Haldane's admiration. The only fault of "Real-Politik" is that after a time nothing "real" remains and "Politics" have to begin again. Such are the consequences of making politics in a hurry, of ignoring the poets, the creators of ideas. Bismarck ignored Goethe. He felt a secret antagonism towards the poet. Nay, he even despised him. Poor Bismarck! He was a man of honour and (in spite of his usual frame of nerves too;) and consequently very susceptible to every kind of attack, of which he had to endure many. His method of defence was to bring libel actions against his detractors and enemies, and the "Bismarckbeleidigungen" had in his...
time become a standing feature of the German courts. But the worst libel was not committed against him, but by himself. It was committed on that fine day when Bismarck accused the genius of Goethe of effeminacy. That was not a libel, that was a "crim laesae majestatis" against a politician to a poet. That could not be forgiven, that was not forgiven, and Bismarck had to pay for it dearly.

His outward life, though, was one of success. Three lucky wars brought about the unification of Germany, and Bismarck, the statesman who had advised them, who had prepared for them. But then the spirit, the spirit of the dead, the libelled poet knocked at the door. The spirit of Goethe revenged itself for having been forgotten in the German Empire. Spirit was none in it. The German Empire was not built upon an idea. There was plenty of materialism and idealism in it (as in all things Teutonic), but the idea had been forgotten by the practical statesman. He had used the brilliant organisation of Germany to no purpose, he had fired off that mighty gun without an aim. Organisation for organisation's sake—Lord Haldane, although a believer in organisation, points this out himself—is not an ideal without the spirit that organises and incites a worker for the man, for the leader, for the thought. And thought there was none. Now the reaction set in. The new German Empire was cursed from inside and outside. Inside the German Empire Christianity—or Kant's, "Goldenes Buch", or, if you will, that hyphen, the disease, materialism and idealism—broke out again, and that with a fury never expected. Bismarck, it will be remembered, had built with only a political aim—dismissing old Goethe's ideas and, above all, his healthy paganisation—and now the result made itself felt: Socialism. The German workman broke away from the German Empire. And this enmity of the working classes towards the Empire and himself was all the more painful to Bismarck as he was of a somewhat aristocratic, that is to say a patriarchal nature, and had done everything to protect the working classes from their heartless enemies, the Liberal middle classes of the manufacturing towns.

Worse still than the enmity from within was the enmity of Europe. Europe with some instinct began to see what the military success of Germany meant; it meant similar "organisation for organisation's sake" for all other countries as well. It was not only vanquished France that was driven into an armed peace which was to last longer than the Napoleonic wars, and will certainly prove in the end more detrimental. It meant armaments all round, it meant organisation to no purpose. It was, as Bismarck, a man of will and few ideas, was lacking. Bismarck, in his later years, saw this, and he suffered. He suffered severely, for he began to fear for his work. Thus the spirit of Johann Wolfgang Goethe had had its revenge upon his Hessian brother of the north, the disbeliever of the spirit, the spirit of the German Empire. Bismarck's bitterness increased after his dismissal, not because he was dismissed—he was not a vain or ambitious man—but because he saw through the character of the man whom he dismissed, because he saw through the weakness of his successors. He then called the Germans a nation of non-commissioned officers. "I have had but little satisfaction from my political activity," he once said in his later years in Varzin. "I have never made any bones about being a German, not myself, not my family, nor anybody else. But for me three great wars would not have been fought, 800,000 men would not have perished, parents, brothers, sisters and friends would not have been driven into mourning. . . . I have settled that with God, however." Easily, I should think. The Christian God, the God of the poor in spirit and ideas, will have had to forgive his faithful servant Otto von Bismarck.

Everything in this world, however, has its meaning and purpose—even the German Empire. Its purpose, if only like Goethe's Devil, as:—

That ever wills the wrong, but makes the right.

Out of and against the "evil of evil!" Germany arose a great and good man such as the world had never seen before. *

Have you ever been at the Vatican in Rome? You will see a picture there full of terrible life. It represents a man, a god, without purpose. A man who was a second Bismarck, a man of will and few ideas, is the prototype of this picture. It is a picture there full of terrific life. It represents a man in a passion that has secured entire possession of him. It has brought his heart upon his tongue, and a heart full of fire and anger it is. A heart that fears nothing, that respects nothing, that dares everything, that is ready to consume the whole world in its burning wrath, if this world will not listen to its message of love. The picture represents the Jewish prophet Ezekiel, and it is painted by the great Michelangelo, Michelangelo the Terrible.

We have seen that Germany, the country of the philosophers, is, by reaction, also the country of the poets. And all poets are prophets. We saw the majestic Isaiah—Wolfgang Goethe—passing our way. We likewise admired the second German prophet, a man of the very same stamp, but with a more passionate lyric, we were moved by the deep melancholia of Jeremiah, of Heinrich Heine. But who on earth is the Ezekiel who takes up the reticent message of Goethe and the more outspoken one of Heine, and only gave a small nod of acknowledgment to Friedrich Nietzsche? He also seemed to add a shrug of the shoulders, even a regret about the "brutality" of Nietzsche's message.

I will, of course, not dispute Lord Haldane's right to
to his own taste, which, on the contrary, I understand and appreciate. Lord Haldane, like many of his countrymen (I know exceptions, though) has more affinity to the philosophical side of German thought, which is, indeed, as we have seen, to a large extent an outgrowth of the Protestant religion. And the religion of Germany—Lutheranism—of Scotland—Presbyterianism—have many things in common. They are really similar forms of Protestantism, both belonging to that class which in England is called "Low Church." Hence the interest of the Scots and the Germans, nor that of impartial observers from without. Nobody can wonder if Lord Haldane is also, in his taste, a German, and does not know how to appreciate Friedrich Nietzsche. And Nietzsche's reputation in Germany—Lord Haldane has been rightly informed this time—has (in spite of the enthusiastic appeal of some nobodies in the early 'nineties) always remained under a cloud. High-spirited Nietzsche is no poet for the Low Church.

There is, however, one objection I wish to raise against Lord Haldane's decision. His lordship is a sincere admirer of Heine, and deeply regrets that Germany did not listen to the message of this intellectual prophet who "knew so much." "If Heine's counsel had been listened to, there would have been no Nietzsche period in Germany"—such is the concluding sentence of this interesting final pronouncement, which seems to breathe a certain regret about even the temporary aberration of the great nation.

And here a disturbing suspicion crosses my mind, a terrible suspicion about our able seaman. I cannot suppose, however, that it will come out with the question: "Oh, Jack, perhaps, more fond of gin than music? More fond of a gin than a jigger?" There are plenty of seamen who love music and like a jigger, a lively dance under the mast or on shore, even more than a gin-shop. But is it because we have no sympathy with the conductor, in occupation with the muses, belongs to the unmusical kind.

To drop the simile: Does Lord Haldane perhaps belong to that class of critics in whom the philosophical spirit has killed the feeling for poetry? In whom the ethical spirit has got the better of emotion and imagination? One, in short, who does not feel art very distinctly? Is he perhaps too German—Lord Haldane will take this as a compliment—to allow himself to be carried away by the sweet tunes of the poets and the sacred music of the prophets? In a word, are we dealing in this case with an unmusical critic?

For how can anyone admire Heine and not admire Freud? Where do you find a more poetical critic of the poets it is impossible! It is nearly the same tone, only given out by another, a more powerful instrument: the great Heine playing the violin in the German orchestra, and the great Nietzsche's trumpet repeating the same melody with some additional fanfares of triumph, thus carrying the sound further and to more distant ears. Lord Haldane sees the orchestra, he sees the conductor; some of the musicians and none of their movements escapes his critical eye. He has also studied music, he has toiled over harmony and counterpoint, nobody knows so much about counterpoint as he does; but—great Apollo!—the thing for which music exists, for which harmony and counterpoint are studied—the melody—entirely escapes him. Lord Haldane is not musical!

I am speaking here of Heine before his "conversion," of Heine before he was struck down by disease. This Heine of the Eternity of Man, as I once called him, although a Nietzsche, although born a Christian, Heine, like Nietzsche, hated the creed of self-loathing and self-humiliation, the creed that despised and neglected the body, that ruined the body by exalting an imaginary soul over it and impressing its commands upon it. He divided the humankind into two classes, into Nazarenes (amongst whom he reckoned both Jews and Christians) and into Greeks: the first being ascetic, puritan, anti-artistic people, the latter, the Greeks, belonging to a type which is joyful, realistic, and "entfaltungsstolz." The word "entfaltungsstolz"—literally "pride in self-development"—is nothing but the "will to power" of Nietzsche's "Will to Power." For both Heine and Nietzsche were men of healthy and aristocratic instincts: Heine, though he hated the weak aristocracy and timid bourgeoisie, which neglected the self-loathing creed, was after all the child of the people himself. He always knew what to expect of the people; he kept away from the Democrats of his time, and utterly abhorred Socialism, wild talk, and tobacco. Both Heine and Nietzsche were (what a Liberal thinker will always esteem one of the pinnacles of his art) lovers and despisers of the people. Heine, even on his death-bed, wrote:—"We are glad to sacrifice ourselves for the people, for self-sacrifice is one of our most refined pleasures—but the cleanly, sensitive nature of the poet rebels against all close personal contact with the people, and still more do we shudder at the thought of the people's caresses, from which Heaven preserve us! A great democrat once said that if a king shook hands with him he would at once put his hand in the fire in order to clean it. In the same way I should like to say that I should wash my hand if the sovereign people honoured me with its handshake."

Heine, no doubt, would have subscribed to Nietzsche's doctrine of the "will to power," but the kind of "will to power" that Nietzsche has to fight for is the will of a despising aristocracy, the "will to power" of a despot, a "will to power" that tramples the people, the "will to power" of the ruler. The great prophet (the poet) has broken his fetters and has escaped to the freedom of the mountains. Here he indulges in big talk, abuses all men as "human aristocrats," calls upon the other beasts to free themselves, and proposes absolute equality of bears and beasts with that concreted aristocracy of men which thinks itself superior to the bears. After a time of freedom, wasted in fine phrases and idleness, Atta Troll comes to a miserable end: he is detected, trapped, and shot down by one of the "human aristocrats," a man named Lascaro (the representative of government), a man of wood, without smiles, without any human touch, nay, without even much life or health or belief in himself—a monster as icy cold as Atta Troll is stupid. . . . How ghastly modern that story sounds! Was I really telling you about Atta Troll, or was I reading yesterday's newspaper?

Both Heine and Nietzsche admired Napoleon, who attempted to kill the French Revolution. Both belonged to the same decent literary family: Heine's ancestors were Spinoza and Goethe, just as Nietzsche's avowed predecessors were Spinoza and Goethe. Heine despised the Germans as much as Nietzsche did, and both poets despised the miserable "Protestant religion." Both Heine and Nietzsche were (what a Liberal thinker will always esteem one of the pinnacles of his art) a "friendly nod for the Latin and his sunny South." The beginnings of both poets were the same, as was their life, as was their end. Both broke the fetters of romanticism which had chained them to their age and to a school. Heine, as he expressed it, "left this school after having given a good thrashing to the schoolmaster," and the thrashing which Nietzsche gave to his romantic schoolmasters, Schopenhauer and Wagner, was equally thorough. Both men were driven into exile by the stupid opposition of their nation. Both, brave soldiers to the end, continued their battle in foreign lands until they were both struck down in their prime, nearly in the same year of their lives, the one by an incurable nervous disease, the other by lastingly insanity. Both died at the same age. Even an allusion (and more than that) to Nietzsche's doctrine of the "will to power" is to say to Heine— that terrible doctrine which I, though a disciple of both Heine and Nietzsche, absolutely repudiate, if only because I do not wish to fight German professors and their unenlightened clients of all nations a million times over. What a prospect!

No, let once be sufficient. Let me hope that my voice will be heard in England when it raises its warning against Scotland and Germany. Let me hope that the English, when they stand in need of "coals" for their
As the first attempted complete study of the Roman royal women, Mr. McCabe's volume will arrest an attention which it may scarcely expect to maintain. It is a little difficult to know whether the book is offered to students or to the library public. Mr. McCabe's contribution to the student's view of Roman history (save his industrious and meritorious marshalling in order of the numerous and constantly vanishing empresses) is a championship of Livia. That Livia should still seem worth any attempt at whitewashing is amazing, and Mr. McCabe's chivalrous endeavours very nearly turn his opening chapter into pure fiction. But a word first as to the beautifully simple plan of the book for general reading. A child could follow it. With, presumably, much restraint, the author has resisted the temptation of straying down the by-paths which might confuse and weary anyone to whom the period happened to be rather unfamiliar. In the introduction, Mr. McCabe states his intention of drawing the empresses from their historical semi-obscurity into the foreground. The student may not find this distortion of perspective amusing. The foreground was never the natural place for royal Roman women; and history, contemporary and recent, has viewed them naturally. Their usually malevolent activities were exercised from behind curtains, and the results of these activities were rarely more notable than the secret work of nameless eunuchs and temporary favourites. Where private revenge and murder were not the aim, the Roman empress is seen, monotonously amid poison and daggers, busy for the advancement of some individual, son or lover, whose triumph would imply her own. There is small evidence of public-mindedness; and it is easy to understand the grateful enthusiasm for Portia Calpurnia and the few other "prosy matrons," to use Mr. McCabe's term, who at least kept out of murderous intrigue. The rise of women in Rome began when the proud Romans bowed before foreign women. The road from Calpurnia and the few other "prosy matrons," to use Mr. McCabe's term, who at least kept out of murderous intrigue, was at once an excuse for them and an attraction with what the woman who had exhausted the possibilities of mean and sordid crime to place him, a professionally reluctant sovereign, upon a throne from which he took favourable opportunity to murder his wife. Mr. McCabe is driven to some remarkable contradictions and very open special pleading in his desperate efforts to make Livia respectable. Referring to the Roman authorities on Livia's career, he writes: "I need only point out that later Roman writers borrowed and combined Livia from the Empress Agrippina (a descendant of the first wife of Augustus), and we must be wary of accepting their statements." But when the business is of judging Valeria Messalina we hear another story: "These writers had in their time official records and something like public journals belonging to the earlier period, which put the malignant and unscrupulous action of Messalina beyond question." If beyond question in the case of that ancient empress, is it not beyond question in the case of Livia? We reflect upon the appalling death-roll in the Augustan family—Marcellus, Drusus, Lucius, Calius, Agrippa—all young men or mere boys threatened by the menace of the noble name; all named executed (Mr. McCabe says, curiously, "One cannot call it murder, for Agrippa was unfit to be restored to society"), "executed" the instant Augustus was dead, before he was buried. Mr. McCabe inquires, with a judicious air, "Who gave the order for this execution?" He replies to his own question by suggesting that Augustus himself "most probably" had left directions with the custodians of this exiled youth! But Tacitus, writing with "official records and something like public journals belonging to the period," says: "By her (Livia's) contrivance Agrippa was banished to Planasia; he was a stranger to the liberal arts, stupidly valuing himself on his bodily strength, yet free from vice or the imputation of a crime." Again, with direct reference to Livia: "The people added to their reflections their dread of a mother ruling with all the impotence of female ambition . . . and the first exploit of the new reign was the murder of Agrippa . . . Augustus never imbrued his hands in the blood of his kindred." It is no shame for a retailer of history to a general audience to try and set up as many pleasing figures as possible among the fearsome women who move in the downward procession of Rome, but it is stretching amiability too far to make one of those figures the "malignant" Livia, of whose virtues no contemporary soul has mentioned more than that she was "a proud mother." The son, for whose succession she had steeped herself in the blood of innocent children, did not attend her funeral.

The interesting Sabina, consort of Hadrian, was one of the few Roman empresses one would care to have met, and Mr. McCabe moves a justly sympathetic pen in telling her proud and melancholy life. Married to a husband whose vice she would deign neither to overlook nor resent, she retired to her books, and for a quarter of a century lived a recluse in the Imperial Palace. Sabina had for companion upon her travels with Hadrian a Greek poetess, Julia Fadilla, a woman of celebrated virtue and attainments. An existence scarcely to be excelled, provided one's husband was not vicious.

B. H.

LIGHT AT EVENTIDE.

"The way of the wicked is as darkness. . . ."
—Proverbs iv. 19.

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