

I may be wrong; I often am, but I feel sure that the policeman on that beat, all the passers by, including a dozen hoodlums, and alas! a young woman residing on West End Avenue, and to whom my unbelieving friend is tenderly attached, will bear me out in saying that he created a sensation.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE BASIS OF DUALISM.

To the Editor of *The Monist*:

WHILE thanking you for the review of my pamphlet "Der Materialismus, eine Verirrung des menschlichen Geistes, widerlegt durch eine zeitgemässe Weltanschauung" in the last number of *The Monist* (April, 1893), I take the liberty to make, in the interest of the subject, the following remarks:

It is well known to me that Kant regarded the sentence "*cogito, ergo sum*" as a fallacy; and this is the reason why (on page 54, footnote 8) I expressly remark that "We must not pass over in silence the fact that such men as Hume and Kant, we are sorry to say, regarded the ego as a sum of spiritual activities. The ego has to be regarded as the vehicle of these activities, and consciousness is, strictly considered, only an activity of the ego."

Descartes's "*cogito, ergo sum*" means to me nothing but that the thinking ego assumes its existence as a fact which is guaranteed by our self-consciousness.

Nothing is at the start more certain, when I attempt to investigate something by reflection, than the fact that the ego exists. There is no "it thinks," but an "I think." Taking issue with your statement in the review, I have to add that, strictly considered, we should say "the lightning lightens," and not "it lightens." Every activity demands a something from which it proceeds.

This being a fact which to me is beyond all doubt, I cannot surrender my dualistic world-conception which in the course of my argumentation is a necessary consequence of this axiom.

Descartes's mistake is that he gives to this axiom, "*cogito, ergo sum*" the form of a syllogism.

In this sense I maintain, on page 66 of my pamphlet, "Descartes's axiom, '*cogito, ergo sum*,' is and remains the unshakable foundation of all thought. When we deny this fundamental certainty everything falls. If I am not, what do I know of the All, what do I care for it?"

"Let me add that with Dühring I do not consider in this motto of all true philosophy an abbreviated syllogism, but the immediate expression of certainty which together with the act of thinking postulates the thinking subject as given. Matter of whose existence the materialist is convinced from the start, because his senses make its existence appear to him as possessing immediate certainty has a claim of existence in the eyes of the criticist, only on the account of the ego which on the basis of its perceptions cannot help concluding that matter exists, and which is constantly conscious of the fact that an unconditioned reality is to be attributed to our sensations and ideas."

Will you kindly publish this letter or inform the readers of your periodical concerning its contents?

Respectfully Yours, DR. EUGENE DREHER.

[Dr. Dreher is consistent. His dualism is thorough-going. There is the act of thinking and the ego which is the bearer of conscious thought; there is the act of lightning, and that something which does the lightning. There is the thundering and the thunder which does the thundering, etc. He to whom this duality is an indubitable fact cannot escape dualism. Dualism is an inevitable consequence of this postulate.—Ed.]

## NOTES.

*The Prang Educational Company* has published a handy little volume of one hundred and eighty-seven pages, entitled "Suggestions for a Course of Instruction in Color for Public Schools, by Louis Prang, Mary Dana Hicks, and John S. Clark." This little book is intended to be a help to parents and teachers in their attempts to develop the perception, appreciation, and enjoyment of color.

Two fundamental ideas of the book are new. First, the book proposes an ideal color-unit, and second, it introduces a method of investigating the color-perception of the child as the starting-point of color instruction. The authors propose a new color-unit as the embodiment of all pure color. Hitherto the solar spectrum has been used for purposes of defining colors. The solar spectrum, however, is incomplete, as it lacks a series of blues found in nature, that can easily be supplied. Nature nowhere gives a complete color-unit, and thus Mr. Prang regards it as necessary to construct an ideal color-unit as the basis of color instruction. While formerly colors were given to the child arbitrarily, without any consideration of his power of color-perception, Mr. Prang's little book presents a course of exercises leading to a knowledge of color, through the development of the color-sense.

The book contains, besides many other helpful plates and illustrations, two charts showing the standard normal colors according to the Prang system.

The work of this book and all it implies, is apparently a work of love, for everything is finished with great care and diligence. As it is intended to serve as a text-book for public schools, we expect that the price will be very moderate.

It is certain that no one else in the United States can be better fitted to present us with a school-book in color instruction than the Nestor of Art Publishers of our country, Mr. Louis Prang.

## THE OPEN COURT.

"THE MONON," 324 DEARBORN STREET.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, Post Office Drawer F.

E. C. HEGELER, PUBLISHER.

DR. PAUL CARUS, EDITOR.

TERMS THROUGHOUT THE POSTAL UNION:

\$2.00 PER YEAR.

\$1.00 FOR SIX MONTHS.

N. B. Binding Cases for single yearly volumes of *THE OPEN COURT* will be supplied on order. Price, 75 cents each.

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# THE OPEN COURT.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO THE RELIGION OF SCIENCE.

No. 309. (Vol. VII.—30.)

CHICAGO, JULY 27, 1893.

Two Dollars per Year.  
Single Copies, 5 Cents.

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## WHAT IS CHRISTIAN FAITH?

BY CHARLES S. PEIRCE.

It is easy to chop logic about matters of which you have no experience whatever. Men color-blind have more than once learnedly discussed the laws of color-sensation, and have made interesting deductions from those laws. But when it comes to positive knowledge, such knowledge as a lawyer has of the practice of the courts, that can only rest on long experience, direct or indirect. So, a man may be an accomplished theologian without ever having felt the stirring of the spirit; but he cannot answer the simple question at the head of this article except out of his own religious experience.

There is in the dictionary a word, *solipsism*, meaning the belief that the believer is the only existing person. Were anybody to adopt such a belief, it might be difficult to argue him out of it. But when a person finds himself in the society of others, he is just as sure of their existence as of his own, though he may entertain a metaphysical theory that they are all hypostatized the same *ego*. In like manner, when a man has that experience with which religion sets out, he has as good reason,—putting aside metaphysical subtleties,—to believe in the living personality of God, as he has to believe in his own. Indeed, *belief* is a word inappropriate to such direct perception.

Seldom do we pass a single hour of our waking lives away from the companionship of men (including books); and even the thoughts of that solitary hour are filled with ideas which have grown in society. Prayer, on the other hand, occupies but little of our time; and, of course, if solemnity and ceremony are to be made indispensable to it (though why observe manners toward the Heavenly Father, that an earthly father would resent as priggish?) nothing more is practicable. Consequently, religious ideas never come to form the warp and woof of our mental constitution, as do social ideas. They are easily doubted, and are open to various reasons for doubt, which reasons may all be comprehended under one, namely, that the religious phenomenon is sporadic, not incessant.

This causes a degeneration in religion from a perception to a trust, from a trust to a belief, and a belief

continually becoming more and more abstract. Then, after a religion has become a public affair, quarrels arise, to settle which watchwords are drawn up. This business gets into the hands of theologians: and the ideas of theologians always appreciably differ from those of the universal church. They swamp religion in fallacious logical disputations. Thus, the natural tendency is to the continual drawing tighter and tighter of the narrowing bounds of doctrine, with less and less attention to the living essence of religion, until after some *symbolum quicumque* has declared that the salvation of each individual absolutely and almost exclusively depends upon his entertaining a correct metaphysics of the godhead, the vital spark of inspiration becomes finally quite extinct.

Yet it is absurd to say that religion is a mere belief. You might as well call society a belief, or politics a belief, or civilisation a belief. Religion is a life, and can be identified with a belief only provided that belief be a living belief,—a thing to be lived rather than said or thought.

The Christian religion, if it has anything distinctive,—and must not aspire to be the necessary ultimate outcome of every path of religious progress,—is distinguished from other religions by its precept about the Way of Life. I appeal to the typical Christian to answer out of the abundance of his spirit, without dictation from priests, whether this be not so. In the recently discovered book, "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,"\* which dates from about A. D. 100, we see that long before the Apostles' or any other creed was insisted upon, at all used, the teaching of the Lord was considered to consist in the doctrine of the Two Ways,—the Way of Life and the Way of Death. This it was that at that date was regarded as the saving faith,—not a lot of metaphysical propositions. This is what Jesus Christ taught; and to believe in Christ is to believe what he taught.

Now what is this way of life? Again I appeal to the universal Christian conscience to testify that it is simply love. As far as it is contracted to a rule of

\* Edited with translation and notes by Roswell D. Hitchcock and Francis Brown. New York: Scribners. 1884. Also, by Philip Schaff. 3d Edition. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. 1890.

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ethics, it is: Love God, and love your neighbor; "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." It may be regarded in a higher point of view with St. John as the universal evolutionary formula. But in whatever light it be regarded or in whatever direction developed, the belief in the law of love is the Christian faith.

"Oh," but it may be said, "that is not distinctive of Christianity! That very idea was anticipated by the early Egyptians, by the Stoics, by the Buddhists, and by Confucius." So it was; nor can the not insignificant difference between the negative and the positive precept be properly estimated as sufficient for a discrimination between religions. Christians may, indeed, claim that Christianity possesses that earmark of divine truth,—namely that it was anticipated from primitive ages. The higher a religion the more catholic.

Man's highest developments are social; and religion, though it begins in a seminal individual inspiration, only comes to full flower in a great church co-extensive with a civilisation. This is true of every religion, but supereminently so of the religion of love. Its ideal is that the whole world shall be united in the bond of a common love of God accomplished by each man's loving his neighbor. Without a church, the religion of love can have but a rudimentary existence; and a narrow, little, exclusive church is almost worse than none. A great catholic church is wanted.

The invisible church does now embrace all Christendom. Every man who has been brought up in the bosom of Christian civilisation does really believe in some form of the principle of love, whether he is aware of doing so, or not.

Let us, at any rate, get all the good from the vital element in which we are all at one that it can yield: and the good that it can yield is simply all that is any way possible, and richer than is easily conceivable. Let us endeavor, then, with all our might to draw together the whole body of believers in the law of love into sympathetic unity of consciousness. Discountenance as immoral all movements that exaggerate differences, or that go to make fellowship depend on formulas invented to exclude some Christians from communion with others.

A sapient critic has recently blamed me for defective cocksureness in my metaphysical views. That is no less than an indictment for practising just as I have always preached. *Absurd* was the epithet ever coming to my tongue for persons very confident in opinions which other minds, as good as they, denied. Can you induce the philosophic world to agree upon any assignable creed, or in condemning any specified item in the current creeds of Christendom? I believe not; though doubtless you can gather a sequacious little flock, quite

disposed to follow their bell-bearer into every vagary,—if you will be satisfied so. For my part, I should think it more lovely to patch up such peace as might be with the great religious world. This happens to be easy to an individual whose unbiased study of scientific logic has led him to conclusions not discordant with traditional dogmas. Unfortunately, such a case is exceptional; and guilt rests on you who insist on so tautening the lines of churches as to close them against the great body of educated and thinking men, pure and undefiled though the religion of many of them (you are obliged to acknowledge it) be. Surely another generation will witness a sweeping reform in this respect. You will not be permitted to make of those churches a permanent laughing-stock for coming ages. Many things are essential to religion which yet ought not to be insisted on: the law of love is not the rule of angry and bullying insistence. Thus, it seems plain to me, I confess, that miracles are intrinsic elements of a genuine religion. But it is not half so important to emphasise this as it is to draw into our loving communion, almost the entire collection of men who unite clear thought with intellectual integrity. And who are you, any way, who are so zealous to keep the churches small and exclusive? Do you number among your party the great scholars and the great saints? Are you not, on the other hand, egged on by all the notorious humbugs,—votaries of Mammon or of Ward McAllister,—who deem the attitude of a church-caryatid to be a respectable or a genteel thing? Your voting-power, too, is repleted with many who, as soon as they are a little better informed and educated, will drop away from you; and in these days that education will come speedily.

To those who for the present are excluded from the churches, and who, in the passionate intensity of their religious desire, are talking of setting up a church for the scientifically educated, a man of my stripe must say, Wait, if you can; it will be but a few years longer; but if you cannot wait, why then Godspeed! Only, do not, in your turn, go and draw lines so as to exclude such as believe a little less,—or, still worse, to exclude such as believe a little more,—than yourselves. Doubtless, a lot of superstition clings to the historical churches; but superstition is the grime upon the venerable pavement of the sacred edifice, and he who would wash that pavement clean should be willing to get down on his knees to his work, inside the church.

A religious organisation is a somewhat idle affair unless it be sworn in as a regiment of that great army that takes life in hand, with all its delights, in grimdest fight to put down the principle of self-seeking, and to make the principle of love triumphant. It has something more serious to think about than the phraseology of the articles of war. Fall into the ranks then; fol-

low your colonel. Keep your one purpose steadily and alone in view, and you may promise yourself the attainment of your sole desire, which is to hasten the chariot wheels of redeeming love!

## GOOD LUCK TO ALL.

BY HUDOR GENONE.

"WANTED: an amanuensis—must be well educated, and capable of correcting manuscript. To a young man who fulfils these requirements a permanent position and good salary is offered. Apply in person, at 7 P. M. sharp, to Dan'l Dexter, No. 6 West Oddth street."

This advertisement appeared in the *New York Daily Era*, and was read early in the morning by two men, to both of whom it presented a strong attraction—by Willett Beekman, young, of olive, Latin complexion, brown hair and eyes, journalist, up town over his modest breakfast, and by Johann Geldstein, grizzled and gray, forty-five and an immigrant, at a news-stand in the Bowery.

Poor, hungry Geldstein, only half a year in the savage city, almost penniless, weary of ransacking the streets for work, seized the chance like a drowning man, and at five—his well worn clothes and hat furnished up as best he could—appeared at Mr. Dexter's door.

Early as the hour was, Beekman was there before him. By six a dozen more applicants were on hand, but on the stroke of seven the brown stone steps of Mr. Dexter's house were cluttered with fifty or more, all, it is safe to say, ravenous for a chance to work.

It seems a pity, does it not, in a great, half civilised land that some call Christian, so many cultured men should find it hard work to get work?

Something of this sort Geldstein said to Beekman, and in the two hours together the men got friendly and compassionate, each after his own fashion. At last the time came, the door opened, and the American went in.

Twenty minutes later he came out.

"I can't say I'm sorry," said he to Geldstein and the rest, "but Mr. Dexter has engaged me, it's no use for you to wait."

A few, perhaps incredulous, or very, very hungry, stayed on, still hoping for a chance, but the German took his new acquaintance's word as final.

"Would you tink it impertinent to ask vot he pay for dot work?" he asked as they walked towards the avenue.

"It's no impertinence," answered Beekman good humoredly, "the pay is twenty dollars a week, ten hours a day."

"Twenty dollars," muttered Geldstein, "zo mooch as dot. Vell—glück auf!"

So he was about to turn away when a thought occurred to him.

"Bote it may be you vill not vant to stay. Something better may durn up vor you. Here—here is my address. Vill you not gif me vord?"

Beekman promised, and they parted at the corner. This was Thursday. On Saturday evening Geldstein received a postal card:

"I am going to quit. Couldn't stand it. If you would like the place meet me in the park Sunday, at six P. M."

At the time appointed the German came.

"Don't be in too big a hurry to thank me," said Beekman gloomily, "wait till I tell you the sort of man you'll have to deal with. I doubt if you can stand it either."

"I assure you," replied the other, "I am not particular; I dink I could stand anyding, yes, anyding—" Beekman shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, perhaps. For one thing, I suppose you do not mind working on the Sabbath—"

"On Sunday! No, vy should I?"

"I suppose not," continued Beekman; "most Germans are, I believe, indifferent. Well, that was one thing I couldn't do. I was brought up by a Christian mother. I have always kept the day holy, and I always will. Mr. Dexter insisted upon my coming to work to-day. I declined, and that was the end of it. I spoke of you though before I left. You asked me to, and I did. But that wasn't all, nor the worst, as I look at it, for you; the man is rich, but he is a low, illiterate blackguard. He did not want help in what he called his literary work,—he wanted a flatterer. He was profane, coarse, and vulgar. I need employment, but not badly enough to sink my manhood or forget that I am a gentleman."

"I respect you for dot," said Geldstein.

"You say you respect me; I suppose you intend to apply for the place, and yet you, too, are a gentleman."

"Yes," responded Geldstein slowly, "I am, or perhaps I better zay—I vos."

"And could you stand to be cursed and sworn at?"

"Could I?" Geldstein smiled. "Oh yes, I dink so; I would like to dry it vonce."

"Then you'll have the opportunity; Dexter said he saw you out of the window last Thursday and liked your looks—"

"He did—he did zay dot?"

"Yes, and he told me to tell you he'd keep the place open till to-morrow at ten."

"I dank you," exclaimed Geldstein earnestly; "Gott knows I dank you. I vill be dare, be sure I vill be dare. I dink I can serve dis man's purpose. I am a university graduate—Bonn."

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