

TOPICS OF THE DAY

THE TENNESSEE TRIAL: EVOLUTION: "BRYANITY": LACK OF
CANDOUR: GRATUITOUS ADVICE: THE LOCOMOTIVE AGE:
IMMIGRATION: IMAGINARY ANNEXATION.

THE so-called judicial trial of a young man named Scopes, at the village of Dayton, Tennessee, for violation of a recently enacted statute of that State, was noteworthy only as an exhibition of gullibility and of ignorance. The gullibility and ignorance were displayed by the general public, North American and European. Those who took an extravagant interest in the published proceedings of the "Court" were no doubt firmly convinced that the ignorance and gullibility were all on the part of the Daytonites. It probably never occurred to most of them that they themselves were the "gulls" and the uninformed.

This case, in itself, was wholly devoid of interest except for those immediately concerned. The Legislature of Tennessee, at its last session, passed an Act apparently quite within its competence as the parliament of a State. That Act forbade the teaching in State-supported schools of anything contrary to the narrative of Creation set forth in the Book of Genesis, and it made such teaching a misdemeanour. The young high-school teacher, Scopes, prompted thereto by others, set the law at defiance, and was indicted for this. His case was as simple as case could be. All that the court of origin had to determine was whether the accused had or had not violated a certain law of the State of Tennessee. There were neither religious nor constitutional complications. The statute made no mention, direct or indirect, of religion. It simply regulated, in certain respects, the instruction to be given in the schools affected by it. The primary court had nothing whatever to do with the constitutional power of the State to pass such legislation. That was entirely for decision, on appeal, by higher and competent courts. These were the conditions of the trial. They were no more interesting in themselves and involved no more interesting issues than would the trial in a Canadian province of a "bootlegger" whose counsel might or might not, in the event of an adverse ruling, contemplate an appeal as to the constitutionality of the governing Act.

Yet we know what happened in connection with the Dayton case. The press and the telegraph news agencies saw their opportunity for a popular "sensation," and took full advantage of it.

The worthy villagers of Dayton saw or thought they saw their chance, through unrestricted free advertising, to make a few dollars, honest or less so, out of expected visitors, and seized it. Advertising lawyers were quite certain that luck had thrown open a path to unique notoriety for them, and dashed into it at top speed. The public felt sure they had a feast of rare things spread for their delectation, and promptly swallowed all set before them by the press and the news agencies. Few seemed to recognize that they were merely watching, through reporters' magnifying glasses, the smallest kind of a tempest in the meanest possible tea-cup, which in no way concerned them or anyone outside of Tennessee.

OF all the various forms and degrees of ignorance displayed at the Dayton trial, the most striking was that concerning Evolution itself. Few connected with the case appeared to have taken the trouble to inform themselves with regard to the supposed cause of the uproar, which was variously spoken of as "Darwinism" and "Monkeyism." The latter term was of course used opprobriously by some, with intent to slander, but seriously by far more. Evolution is evidently regarded by the "Fundamentalists" not as what it actually is, a mere scientific working theory, but as a dogma, a doctrine, a creed, even a religion, or the negation of a religion. It should surely be unnecessary to explain again that it is the former, and in no sense any one of the latter. It is no more the negation of religion than it is the assertion of a final truth. It does not of necessity conflict with the religion of any man, in any essential article. It affirms nothing. It merely suggests something as a possible explanation of observed natural phenomena, and proposes investigation as to the truth or falsity of the suggestion.

Darwin was not the originator of the theory. It was propounded by philosophers before the Christian era. Darwin merely set it forth more specifically, more scientifically, and in greater detail. He did not make it applicable exclusively or even principally to man, but to "the origin of species" of every living sort. Not a few of Darwin's ideas have been tried and found wanting by later and better-equipped scientists. It is quite incorrect to ascribe the constantly evolving Evolutionary Theory to Darwin.

The story of Creation, narrated in Genesis, was the scientific theory of origins of its time. It was contemporary with the Ptolemaic theory, which assumed the earth to be the centre of all things, and surrounding it a system of concentric, crystalline spheres or firmaments supporting and permitting the movements of the heavenly bodies. That theory still held sway when the earlier books of the Old Testament were written. No doubt "Funda-

mentalist" of that time would have protested fiercely against any questioning of it. The Genesis theory depended entirely on an anthropomorphic conception of Deity, as did the Ptolemaic system on the earth's central place in the universe. It viewed Deity as operating from without instead of within His creation. Was it a more rational or a more reverent idea than that of Evolution? Which idea glorifies both God and man more; which debases either less? That an individual human being was modelled out of clay and afterwards had life (not spirit) breathed into his previously inanimate shape, or that Deity so permeated His works with His spirit that life, from its lowest to its highest forms, was generated therefrom and thereby?

Why should a "Fundamentalist," who raises no objection to the modern astronomic assumption, as opposed to the Ptolemaic and Old Testament theory that the earth—instead of being the centre of the universe—is a mere insignificant fragment of it, be shocked by the suggestion that Creation was not completed in a six-day period by an anthropomorphic Deity Who had merely to descend from one of the super-imposed concentric firmaments to complete the task? Is the Great Spirit, Who shapes and directs the infinite universe, made less majestic or less comprehensible and less truly man's Heavenly Father because of our new conceptions of Him, or because of the new knowledge which we owe to the life that springs directly from Him, and of which we are but beginning to make adequate use? If the ill-informed and the un-informed could but be got to comprehend even dimly the theory of Evolution, they would beseech pardon for having railed against it in their ignorance.

In all reverence be it said that no one could more concisely and simply state the Evolutionary Theory than did "Topsy" in answer to the question who made her—"I specs I grewed." The Evolutionist thinks it safe to assume that the universe, including this little world and ourselves, grew and will continue to grow, under Divine inspiration and direction.

OF the dead, nothing unless good, is a maxim for application even in the case of the late William Jennings Bryan. Indeed, one is not tempted to say aught ill of him. He appears to have been, in the main, simple-minded and honest,—characteristics which may well take the place of charity as a cloak, not in his case to cover a multitude of sins, but to extenuate his vagaries and intellectual limitations. No one doubted the sincerity of Mr. Bryan's beliefs, or suspected the worthiness of his intentions in

either public or private life. One merely wondered at the operations of his mind, and the extent of his incapacity for thinking rationally, or comprehending the rational thinking of others. Although he reached the mature age of sixty-five in years, he never seems to have got much, if at all, beyond fourteen or fifteen in mentality. It was at somewhere about the latter age that he became known as "the silver-tongued boy-orator of the Platte." It is difficult to determine whether that title was an indication of the cause, or was rather a consequence of his prematurely arrested mental development. One thing is certain, the rest of his life was devoted mainly to puerile oratory. Those, and they are obviously many, who enjoy that sort of "oratory," found much delight in his "eloquence." The entire absence of light in his utterances did not disconcert them at all. Light was not what they were seeking.

While he was personally one of the most innocent and well-meaning of men, Mr. Bryan's career cannot but be recognized as an outstanding warning against one of the chief perils and prices of democracy. It is a well-established fact that a very large percentage of people are quite incapable of thinking lucidly or of forming intelligent abstract opinions. That is a deplorable handicap against democracy, to begin with. When to it is added the disposition, as so conspicuously manifested in the case of Mr. Bryan, to yield unconditionally to the sway of any deft handler of mere "oratory," the consequent danger to the community can scarcely be exaggerated. It is well-expressed in the terse American political term, "spell-binders," as applied to the class to which Mr. Bryan belonged. He was a "spell-binder," *et praeterea nihil*. Notwithstanding all his long and continuous outpouring of words, he has left no other memorial of himself than leaves the wind that blows over a desert and swirls the sand, momentarily, to settle back as before with the exception of a few new dunes and furrows. Bryan is gone. Other American "spell-binders" remain. In the words of Burns,

That e'er they nearer come oursel,
'S a muckle pity.

WHILE explaining and upholding Evolution as a scientific theory, and while maintaining that it is not inconsistent with and that it does not in any way contravene the teachings of Jesus, honesty requires us to acknowledge that it is not only directly contrary to the archaic assertions of Genesis, but is wholly irreconcilable with "systematic theology." Many "Modernists," who accept Evolution as a probable truth, manifest a disposition

to gloss this consequence of its acceptance. Possibly they excuse themselves to themselves for their lack of candour by the mental suggestion that it is due to a desire to avoid shocking "simple faith." The excuse is not satisfactory. No one has a right to decide for himself that although intellectual "strong meat" is a proper diet for him, he must dispense "milk" to others whom he chooses to regard as "babes." Truth never does harm. There is always evil in a lie, direct or constructive. The simple truth, in this matter, is that Evolution flatly contradicts Genesis, and is wholly at variance with accepted theology. Preachers who avow themselves Evolutionists owe it to themselves as well as to their hearers to make open confession of these obvious facts. To do otherwise is, if not to "palter with eternal God for power," at least to play the coward for temporary advantage. It is not heroic. It is not the attitude which presages great spiritual or moral achievements. It is utterly un-Christ-like.

Evolution teaches that the universe is infinite and eternal, in the ordinary sense of these words; that the earth, instead of being its centre and crowning—though grossly defective—jewel, is a mere relatively insignificant part of the inconceivable whole. It teaches that the earth, instead of being the one specific creation of Deity, by the labour of "six days," is the natural product of indefinite time and inscrutable Power. It teaches that all life is of similar origin and continuous development. It teaches that the process of "creation" is continuous and unending; that the Supreme Power knows and has known no limitation or abatement of energy. It teaches that mankind, instead of declining or "falling" from any primeval state of physical, mental or spiritual excellence, has been and is being constantly exalted in the scale of existence, is steadily mounting on stepping-stones of its dead self to higher things, and will continue to mount indefinitely. In plain and simple words, Evolution absolutely denies "The Fall." It utterly negatives "Original Sin." It makes theological vicarious "redemption" unnecessary and impossible. In other words, it destroys the very foundation and absolutely overturns the super-structure of classic theology. It is useless to deny this. It is dishonest and immoral, if not worse, to make the attempt. The facts should be stated plainly; and men should be left to choose for themselves. Those who prefer Genesis to Evolution should be permitted to make their choice with open eyes. One who pretends to reconcile belief in Old Testament cosmogony with Evolution can scarcely be deceiving even himself, if he is endowed with a modicum of intellect. And why should any true man desire to deceive himself, much less to mislead his fellows?

The great and all-important fact is that Evolution, while at natural and complete variance with Israelitish tradition and primitive "science" as recorded in the Old Testament, is entirely reconcilable and practically in full harmony with the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, the Founder of Christianity. In no respect are the two divergent. In every particular they are perfectly compatible. No Christian need shrink from acceptance of the theory of Evolution. It repels only the Hebraic, the extreme Old Testament devotee. It brings the Creator into His world instead of excluding Him from it. It implies His immanence, or in-dwelling, and His direct, perpetual supervision. It exalts the spiritual, and reduces the physical to the mere "material." It clarifies the eye of faith, and enables it to see Deity in and through all. It verifies every word and movement of the Christ as the spiritual teacher of the world. It makes the Supreme Being actually and naturally *The Universal Father*.

PARTISAN blatancy has done much of late to misrepresent and humiliate the Maritime Provinces of Canada. Not only "none so poor," now, "to do them reverence," but none so ignorant as to refrain from tendering them gratuitous advice. "One way to save money," is the heading placed over an editorial article proposing "Maritime Union," in a leading Canadian newspaper. Another "way to save money" would be for all the people of the world to unite, regardless of racial and historic differences, under a common government, or for all the nations of Europe to accept Russian Sovietism and hegemony. The main objection to the suggestion is that most people have deep-seated, traditional preferences which they are seldom, if ever, willing to sacrifice for mere pecuniary considerations.

The youngest of the Maritime Provinces is over a century old. Three generations of men and women have participated in its history. A fourth generation is in possession. Can any sane person, whose ignorance of human nature is not hopeless, imagine that all the traditions and sentiments of all those years would now be sacrificed by those people for the sake of the few thousand dollars of annual public expenditure required for the maintenance of their independent status? Sir John Macdonald was a legislative unionist when he set out to unify British North America. It took very little observation and experience to convince him that only a federal union was practicable or possible. What he discovered with regard to all the provinces is quite as true as to the Maritime group, and will continue true indefinitely.

“One way to save money” in the United States would be for the New England States to re-unite. Little Rhode Island is no larger than Prince Edward Island. Together, the New England population would be scarcely larger than that of the single State of New York. Their joint territory would not be more than a fraction of that of almost any one of the new western States. Can one fancy such a reunion and abnegation of historic Statehood possible? If not possible in New England, why should it be thought practicable in what was once New Scotland,—for all the Maritime Provinces of Canada originally constituted Nova Scotia. They were separated more than a hundred years ago by deliberate act of the home government. And the separation was justified. Prince Edward, formerly St. John’s, is a self-contained island, best fitted to deal with its own local affairs. The present province of Nova Scotia is, in effect, another island, with interests wholly different from those of its territorial neighbours. New Brunswick is completely separate from either. What would any of them have to gain, apart from the few thousands of dollars annually that the maintenance of independent government costs each, by entering into political union? And the records of the Canadian Dominion hardly encourage the belief that even economy would be served by Maritime Union. Outsiders who feel an irrepressible call to offer advice to the Maritime Provinces would do well to consider, in the first place, whether they comprehend what they presume to talk about. Well-considered co-operation among the Maritime Provinces is what is indicated, not political union.

ONE hundred years ago, on September 27th, the first railway train in the world made its initial run from Stockton to Darlington in England. The venture was intended, primarily, for coal hauling purposes. The locomotive achieved a speed of from five to ten miles an hour. It could make sixteen. The train was composed of cars of the pattern of the horse-drawn coaches then in use. But it was a “ninety-ton” train, affording accommodation, of a sort, for 300 passengers, and it actually carried, during part of its journey, more than 500. That, small as it now looks, was a striking commencement. It fired the imagination of the public. It led directly and speedily to great things. It demonstrated that while stage-coaches could deal with passengers only by the dozen at most, a railway could handle them by the hundred, and could transport them as speedily and more certainly to their destination. The development of the railway since then has been so rapid and so great that we have ceased to wonder at it. Moreover, we have

had many new causes of wonder. And the wonders are not ceasing. When, if ever, will they cease?

The greatest wonder of all is in looking back at things within our own ken. One hundred years ago Canada, at night, was lighted only by candles, mainly of tallow. Its highways, such as they were, were mere forest trails or bridle-paths intended—except in a few urban centres—for horses rather than for vehicles, and for no vehicle less substantial than a modern cart. Travel, except by water, was restricted to the absolutely necessary. Trade was proportionally limited. But little material progress had then been made from the earliest historic times. The world was still in the “iron age,” a little, but very little, in advance of the bronze and stone ages. It had gunpowder, and could fight more destructively. It could not do much else better, except book-making. And that was in the time of the grandfathers, and some of the fathers, of the present generation! It is significant to recall, as an indication of how men’s minds run in identical channels, that the earliest efforts towards the development of locomotive traction were directed mainly to the existing highways. Inventors spent their wits in devising steam road-carriages, just as their successors did, two generations later, in applying the self-motor principle to carriages of the prevailing type. It is obviously hard to get away from the usual and accepted. The earliest railway cars were ordinary coaches of the time, on rails. They are still called “coaches” in the Old Country, and the man in charge a “guard.”

Locomotive railways in the United States closely followed their introduction in England, but did not long precede their advent in British North America. To Nova Scotia belongs the distinction of projecting and completing the first railway in what is now the Dominion of Canada. It was begun in 1837. It was opened in 1839, only 14 years later than the first railway in the world. The civil engineer who made its surveys and plans was a Nova Scotian, Peter Crerar of Pictou, uncle of a present-day Halifax lady, Mrs. McKeen of “Maplewood.” The parents of not a few Nova Scotians still living witnessed the formal opening of the road from the Albion Mines at Stellarton to the tidal waters of Pictou Harbour, at the mouth of East Pictou River, at a place still known as the “Loading Ground.” So closely do the present and the past meet and mingle, although in some respects they seem so far apart! This earliest Canadian railway was six miles in length, and its track still stands as substantial evidence of the engineering ability of its time. But it is a long, long way, in material advancement, from that day to this. Has there been corresponding intellectual and cultural progress? We had better not all answer at once in the affirmative.

IMMIGRATION is vitally interesting to Canadians, and of the utmost importance, in many respects. The time has come for considering it in the light of actualities rather than of imagination and fond hopes. We have made costly and elaborate preparation for a population far in excess of what we can count at present. We have built railways on the basis of our desires rather than of reasonable expectations. We have opened up new territories on fancy instead of fact. We have incurred vast liabilities. Where do we now stand?

The answer, as usual, must be sought in history. What has been, tells most surely what is to be. Canada became finally British in 1763, and the Maritime Provinces were immediately opened to settlement. Previous to that, a small British colony had been established in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia, and a semi-military settlement made at Halifax. Quebec was French. Ontario was a forest. The West was "Hudson Bay Territory." As soon as news got abroad that Nova Scotia was available for colonization, settlers began to flock in. There were corporations and individuals in those days interested in promoting immigration, just as at present, and they did effective work. From and after the establishment of the "Hope" settlement at Pictou, in 1767, followed by the "Hector" party in 1773 and various disbanded military plantations in early following years, immigrants flowed into Nova Scotia as rapidly as they did into the Northwest after the signing of the Canadian Pacific Railway contract in 1880. The limitations of transportation alone restricted the influx. In fifty years practically the whole of Nova Scotia was overrun by settlers. The population had grown from 5,000, mostly at Halifax, in 1750, as in the case of under that number at Winnipeg in 1880, to more than a quarter of a million, fifty years later. Manitoba's rate of growth was no more rapid, relatively, than Nova Scotia's. New Brunswick ran a similar course, although it made a later start with the advent of the United Empire Loyalists to St. John at the close of the American Revolution, in 1783. Prince Edward Island's experience was of a like character; and it was amply justified, for there is no richer or fairer agricultural land in all Canada, not even excepting the famous Red River Valley, than that singularly beautiful and favourably situated little island province possesses. These are the primary, historic facts concerning the Far East of Canada. As to the centre, Quebec and Ontario grew in almost the same way, at the same rapid, early rate, and for about the same length of time. Then their increase of population by immigration ceased. Later it began to decline. Ultimately, neither of these two provinces,

as in the case of the Maritime Provinces, was able to retain its natural increase. The attractions, first of the American West and American cities, and later of the Canadian prairies, were too seductive.

The arrest of immigration to the Maritime Provinces and, afterwards, to Quebec and Ontario, and the beginning of general emigration from both eastern sections of Canada, was synchronous with the commencement of western development. The East's loss was the gain of the West. From 1880 onward, the prairies grew rapidly at eastern expense. Old Canada poured out its money for western development. The West absorbed not only the capital but the population of the East. It grew and flourished like a green bay tree. The Dominion government built the railways and furnished the advertising which poured immigrants upon the prairies and into British Columbia. By far the larger number of immigrants were from eastern Canada. Even yet, there is a mere sprinkling of Old Country and foreign settlers in the West. The present population of the western part of the Dominion is, in the main, homogeneous with that of the East. In other words, all Canada is now, in effect, *an old country*. Its population is almost exclusively native. It is no longer attractive as a field of adventure or rapid fortune-making. The newcomer is rather looked down upon by the native population as a mere "immigrant." He can have none of the feeling of solidarity which the newcomer among newcomers once enjoyed. He is an "outsider", who has to establish himself gradually and sometimes painfully. To all intents and purposes, the western provinces are as old to-day as are the Maritime Provinces and Central Canada. They are almost as old, with regard to their people, as the Old Country itself.

Such are the actual facts with respect to immigration, which have to be faced. Canada can no longer expect to draw settlers in crowds as in days gone by. We must offer to individuals direct advantages and inducements, or they will cling to home surroundings with which they are familiar and which they love. No Englishman, Scotsman or Irishman will abandon his native land unless assured of great material advantages in Canada. Foreign nationals might easily be tempted to come, if they were desirable. It is for us to determine whether they are or are not desirable, whether we want our native British blood diluted by foreign admixture, or do not. We must reach a conclusion of some sort, and that speedily. The situation is urgent. We need more people to lighten our war burdens and justify our railway preparations for a greatly increased population. We must either accept and make the best of the

actual situation, or prepare ourselves for something quite different and possibly much less desirable.

WHILE western Canadian journals are displaying the most affectionate interest in legislative union for the Maritime Provinces, the press of the United Kingdom is concerning itself profoundly over the political future of this Dominion. Its writers will have us on the steep down slope to annexation, no matter how resolutely we may hold back, or how unanimously protest. "Observer," in the *Weekly Westminster* of London, writes: "How much longer Canada will continue to be a British Dominion seems—in certain quarters—to be a rather favourite speculation." "In certain quarters" is an inadequate way of putting it. In all four quarters, and on the brain, would be nearer the present mark. And "Observer" adds: "Not so much so in England as in Canada itself, and to an even greater extent in the United States." "In Montreal clubs", he asserts, "one hears annexation discussed, at times, as though it were merely a business proposition." What is the probable prognosis of a case with such symptoms? Is it the victim's native mentality that is at fault, or is the thing due to the absence of Prohibition in the province of Quebec? It is a historic fact that they once discussed annexation in Montreal, "as though it were merely a business proposition," of a local partisan character, but that was in 1841. The discussers all died long ago. The "business proposition" of that ancient year of grace did not turn out to be encouraging enough to warrant its later pleasing remembrance, except "in certain quarters" or at very late club hours when a few lingerers were seeing as it were—and probably was—through a number of glasses, very darkly indeed. It must have been thus that the *Weekly Westminster's* "Observer" saw, or dreamt he saw or heard, something of importance. The absence of effective Prohibition often has a very pronounced influence on naturally vivid imaginations. How, when and where "Observer" can have heard, or fancied he heard, annexation discussed "to an even greater extent in the United States" than in "Montreal clubs," is beyond conjecture; and he makes no revelation. The "18th Amendment" is in wonderful operation in that "land beloved of Heaven, o'er all the world beside." No longer can there be possibility of seeing through glasses, darkly, there. And no one, on this side of the atlantic, not endowed with a special gift of hearing and interpreting "voices", such as Joan of Arc once claimed to exercise, has heard or read anything of the very least significance concerning Annexation

from the United States for many years. The subject died a natural death in that country, too.

England is now enjoying a monopoly of "annexation talk," and is exercising its exclusive privilege excessively, with recklessly imaginative persons like "Observer" in the lead. Of the impertinent chatter on this subject going on around him, and in which he participates so cheerfully "Observer" remarks:

In this country (the United Kingdom) there is not a great deal of informed opinion on the subject. Widely different types of journals—political, financial and commercial—have been discussing Canada's present and future prospects during the past few months, but not always with an intimate knowledge of the situation.

There is truth in this utterance at least. No one can or will dispute the fact that "not a great deal of informed opinion on the subject" has been displayed; or that the "opinions" so freely expressed have not always been "with an intimate knowledge of the situation." For so much of reality let us be truly thankful. But "Observer" will not leave it at that. He continues: "Yet many of Canada's nine million people talk about annexation as a possibility in the not very far distant future." How does he know? How could he possibly know? How many score of "Canada's nine million people" can he ever have seen, much less heard "talk about annexation," even in private? It is safe to say that he has not heard one so much as mention it in public. He can never have read a public word in its favour, for it has not a single press advocate in the whole Dominion. The unpleasant but actual fact is that "Observer", like far too many recent English writers and some speakers, is dispensing pernicious nonsense with regard to a matter of which he shows himself utterly ignorant or grossly misinformed. Such utterances are as offensive to Canadians as they are unworthy of other Britons. It is time to have done with them. We have endured far more than enough. When Canada begins to think of annexation—which seems likely to be at or about the Greek Kalends—her developing inclination will be made known elsewhere than in obscure Montreal club rooms, at belated hours, and otherwise than through the echoing of things fancied to have been heard in those clubs by Old Country peregrinators, very much abroad when in Canada, and still more so when they return home to retail their imagined "impressions."

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