it is written by authors apparently brought up in the Jewish traditions and habits of thought; because it is a book bearing upon a subject that has come prominently to the front of late, and because this book is unknown and has a claim to be known and valued beyond others of a more pretentious character.

The question here debated is whether the forms of justice were violated at Our Lord's trial or not? Such a theme must in the eyes of all be one of paramount importance. In the Gospels the trial as it stands is evidently one-sided and unfair. It is well to have this drawn out and made a subject of study for all.

WILFRID LESCHER, O. P.

Hinckley, England.

THE PROGRESS OF THOUGHT AND THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

IT HAS become a fashion of late, if indeed it be not a fashion nearly as old as the dogma which it professes to wish recast, to express a desire for a restatement of Christian truth upon lines in keeping with the rapid advance of modern science. Our language, as is natural in a vehicle that embodies and conveys a thought not so much really changing or developing as growing in completeness of detail, itself changes so rapidly and so continuously in its shades and gradations of meaning, that for a Christian dogma to be correctly grasped and even to be understood at all, it must be stated as clearly and as definitely as is possible in those terms in which we actually and habitually think. This is doubtless true, even to a marked extent in some cases, in the mere modification of meaning which a word insensibly undergoes in consequence of a long service in popular usage. But it is the more striking, and in some senses the less to be looked for, in those cases in which our old concepts of things have received, or seem to us to have received, a sudden shock; when our philosophy or our science has summarily closed an old, to open a new, road upon which, under pain of solecism, to say nothing of positive error, we are thenceforth to travel if we are ever to reach a true and human solution of the great problems as to the real nature and meaning of the universe or of our own place within it. The progress of the century just closed has done more to remodel and reconstitute our mental horizon than perhaps any other in the long history of the Christian era. The greatest impetus, possibly, to the popularization of a scientific terminology, though

certainly not at the same time to an outpouring of the true scientific spirit, was given by the French encyclopedists. The fascinating charm of the style in which the famous "Dictionnaire Raisonné" was written was doubtless the cause chiefly contributing to its popularity; but while the materialistic science it inculcated was absorbed into and spread through the literature of the period, it steadily sapped the vigor alike of science and of philosophy. As Merz has appositely pointed out, the brilliant literary work of the encyclopedists, the witty sarcasms of Voltaire, the irreverence, skepticism and flippancy of Diderot and D'Alembert, the scientific monism of Holbach, did nothing to advance the genuine spirit of scientific research and accuracy, while, on the other hand, it undoubtedly had the effect of slurring over that exactness of significance in precise terms and ideas which is the first requisite of all knowledge. Thus begun, the work developed under the hands of La Mettrie and Cabanis. "It is unnecessary to say," I quote one of the most sober and able of modern authors,[1] "that none of them had the sanction of their great masters for the application they made of principles which had been established and used for special scientific purposes. From his (Lange's "History of Materialism") exhaustive references, it is evident that the extreme views of La Mettrie, Diderot and Holbach cannot be fathered on any of the great scientists or philosophers." It was an attempt, foredoomed to logical failure, though emulating and attaining a certain degree of popular adhesion and applause, to apply scientific principles, true enough in their place and for the purposes of science, to political, ethical and religious problems. It did not register or record new discoveries in the realm of concrete experience; but it attempted to build a new edifice of interpretation upon the old.

Far different was the work of the real men of science—Lavoisier, Gay, Lussac and Pasteur, in France; Liebig, of Giessen; Schleiden, of Jena, and Schwann, of Louvain; Harvey, Bell, the English chemists and natural philosophers. If they, too, drew conclusions reaching sometimes beyond the borders of their actual experiment and observation, they at least advanced the true cause of science at the same time by the work they did. And, whatever the shortcomings of certain scientific hypotheses advanced may be when they are used in connection with problems for which they were not framed and to which they will not apply, no exception can reasonably be taken to them as long as they are urged in the name of science for scientific purposes and with all the safeguards of scientific limitation. The doctrine of chemical equivalents, the periodic law, the molecular,

[1] John Theodore Merz, "A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century."

atomic or electronic hypotheses, the discoveries connected with the phenomena of life and consciousness—the circulation of the blood and sensory and motor nerve action—the cellular theory in botany and in biology, the empiric work of Priestly, Cavendish, Dalton, Herschel, Davy, Faraday, Kelvin, Clerk-Maxwell, the observations as to combining weight, pressure and density of gases, structural crystallography and right and left handedness in atomic combination, bacteriology—all these things, with the innumerable other observations and hypotheses of science, both theoretically of interest and practically of use to mankind, have enormously increased the horizons. They have done that much at least, if they have not been able to alter our power of vision, so that throughout the extended plain of our knowledge we still read the old philosophical problems in the same old way.

On the lines of applied science, too, the advance has been increasingly rapid. In chemistry, both inorganic and organic, in electricity and mechanics, in the prophylactics and antiseptics of medicine and surgery, in the increased knowledge of anatomy and the use of anæsthetics—to record again only a few points—the greater comfort, ease and health of the individual and of the race has been studied. Hardly is a new discovery made but it is the next day on the market in one practical form or another. The first grain of radium was scarcely separated out in the laboratory of the Curies when it was to be found in the hospitals. Indeed, so great is the respect for science in its utilitarian—and financial—points of view that, were it not for the genuine devotion of men of science, it would almost seem to be in danger of ceasing to be science at all and becoming a purely huckstering and mercantile affair.

In any case, its having become vulgarized in at least one of its aspects, and its terms having slipped quietly and persistently into more or less general use, have insensibly had the effect of shifting, if not actually changing, the outlook. People, as a rule, are in too much of a hurry to ask what the true inner meaning of the phenomenon is when they are anxious only to apply it as soon as possible to some practical purpose.

And yet it might occur to the most ardent of modern exact scientists (using the term in its broad contradistinction to "philosophers") to enquire as to whether he ever breaks loose from the bonds of the actual phenomena with which he has to deal; whether the very forms of thought in which he habitually thinks and the terms with which he enriches the vocabulary are not actually forging fresh bonds of the purely phenomenal in which he becomes more and more shackled in any search for the noumenal and the real. It is a simple question to ask, even if it is not one that is asked often;

and it admits of a simple answer. There is one test, easy of application, that will show whether science enfranchises itself and gets beyond the boundaries of phenomenal observation. A child may describe something that he has seen—a small island, for instance—fairly accurately. He may draw a picture of it from the observations that he has made as to its position, contour and elevation, noting its principal bays and promontories, its greater hills and valleys. The surveyor or geographer would go further. With the aid of his theodolite and chain he would measure and calculate accurately. His trained observation is more careful and more detailed than that of the child; and his map of the island will be more complete, truer to scale, in every way more correct. Just so the man of science pushes his accurate observations as far as they will go. He adjusts the nicest of instruments to aid his senses. But take two, out of the many, of his doctrines to examine. In the seventeenth century Harvey discovered the systematic circulation of the blood. Now the systematic circulation of the blood is itself a phenomenon. It may be traced, as to a cause, to the muscular expansions and contractions of a living heart, sending the blood pulsing through the arteries in a systematic circulation. But that also is phenomenal. The working of the muscular tissue may be referred to the stimulation of involuntary nerves and nerve centres; but all this is phenomenal also, and the true explanation ever eludes and escapes behind it. A certain section of modern science is intolerant of any "vital principle;" and, to a certain extent, rightly so, since the vital principle is not in itself a phenomenon that can fall under any observation that science is capable of making. Consequently, so far as the observational method applies in Harvey's discovery, no advance whatever is made in the explanation or understanding of the realities; and this obviously, since the methods of experimental science and of essential philosophy are incommensurate.

To throw further light upon this distinction, one might do well to consider the latest theory, or hypothesis, of ions. Sir William Ramsay tells us that "it is always advisable to form a mental picture, if possible, of any physical phenomenon, *pour préciser les idées,* as the French say." He goes on to form for his readers such a mental picture of the motion of anions and kations. Now a mental picture is an imagination; and we are incapable of imagining anything whatever that has not, in some guise or another, come to us through the channels of sense and remains in our memory as a sense-impression. But whatever comes to us direct through sensation is phenomenal. Indeed, Ramsay quite concedes the phenomenal nature of ions in the sentence quoted. So that, here again, no advance

is made towards ultimate reality or its explanation. But it is quite clear that anything that is capable of taking up an electrical charge and of moving locally from anode to kathode, or *vice versa,* is a particle of matter, and that to explain it is quite as difficult, or quite as easy, a task as to set out at the beginning to explain matter before its structural delineation is presented in "mental pictures" to our minds.

Notwithstanding this very obvious distinction, drawn by such undoubted men of science as Sir William Ramsay, there is a very general feeling that science really *has* penetrated to the arcana of nature. And the glibness with which scientific terms and formulæ fall from the lips of the multitude would apparently force a reconstruction of views even in the sphere of religion.

What were, before this cheap popularization of science and of scientific terminology, questions confined to purely theological limits —the conflicting of theological systems, which all, however illogical some might be as a matter of fact, had a basis in common upon which to argue upon common topics; what in other centuries was a duel between revealed religion on the one hand and pure speculation upon the other, as exemplified in the Deists and Theists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, has latterly become narrowed down, in the popular estimate at any rate, to a newer and a more pertinent issue. There is not now so much need to sharpen the weapons of logic or to furbish up the defensive armor of Holy Writ against those who, while calling themselves Christians, have lost touch with the centre of Christian unity. There is little advantage, even, in taking the field against professedly philosophical systems apparently inimical to the sure data of divine revelation. The conflict to-day, if indeed conflict there can be said to be at all, is supposed to lie between the results of modern science and religious truth. I use the safeguarding words with purpose; for there is in reality no conlict between science and faith; as a matter of fact, science and revelation are incommensurable. Still, certain interpreters and popularizers of science have so far made it their business to evolve theories that apparently militate against the explanations and general bearings of dogma that there seems to be and is, in common opinion at any rate, a very real discrepancy between the findings of the exact sciences, as they are called, on the one hand, and the truths of divine revelation on the other.

For many people the strong *a priori* presumption that the one divine Author of revealed and of rationally discovered truth cannot contradict the one in any part of the other becomes a weapon that is drawn, in the name of a sturdy and certain faith, to check the more daring sallies of a wildly speculative scientific spirit. Such men are

accustomed to point to the Church and to advance no other reason for any one particular point of dogma than that the Church teaches it. And this they do wisely, for they know that lacunæ lie behind the assumptions of all science; and while they may realize that similar lacunæ may lie between the natural interpretation of the world and the supernatural verities, they have the scaffolding of personal religious experience and the inviolable pillar of faith to connect them in such fashion that there can be no room for doubt as to the reality, truth and continuity of the two.

For others the experience of observation seems to furnish so good a ground for the "scientific" beliefs that are raised upon it, that it is practically impossible for them not to stigmatize the claims put forward in favor of any supernatural revelation as altogether childish, effete and untrue.

Between these two extreme positions, the one filled by such men of faith as have little interest in or desire for scientific study pure and simple, the other holding few besides materialists of whose principles the most notorious exponent at present is, perhaps, the somewhat discredited and much overrated professor of Jena, there are many half-compromises.

The true theologian of the twentieth century, imbued with some such spirit as St. Thomas Aquinas poured out upon the schools of his day, invokes the presumption of identical authorship of both kinds of knowledge, revealed and natural, not to suppress or degrade either, but to harmonize and explain them both.

A fact that is often lost sight of, and indeed that seems again and again to have been wittingly distorted and misrepresented, may well be alluded to in this connection. St. Thomas, as the best representative of the truest and highest phase of the philosophy of the mediæval schools, was quite accustomed to treat the problems upon which he wrote and taught by a method that would do credit to any modern man of science. We often hear of the baseless speculation, the trivial hair-splitting, the *a priori* argumentation of the scholastics. We are all familiar with the samples of reasoning that these misguided spinners and weavers of logical webs employed: "How many angels can stand on the point of a needle?" "Is it possible for God to substitute Himself for the devil, for an ass, for a gourd, for a flint? If so, in what way would the gourd preach, work miracles or be fixed to the cross?" These and similar samples are given to the world as a fair specimen of the scholastic doctrine and discipline.[2] Any one, however, who has made any pretence of reading such works as those that bear the name of St. Thomas, is

[2] And in the Prefatory Note of such a volume as Pront's translation of the "Cur Deus Homo?" in the Christian Classics Series.

aware of the utter ignorance and crass stupidity that makes such a presentation of scholasticism possible. When we are told, for example, in a note appended to the twenty-first chapter of the second book of St. Anselm's work that "this was one of the speculations of the Schoolmen. It is assumed that angels are distinct and isolated creations of God. They are of the same nature, but not of one race," we can only wonder hopelessly as to where the writer of that note obtained his knowledge of the Schoolmen and their teaching. The youngest students upon the benches of the theological class room could have put him right. Nothing of the kind is *assumed*. The doctrine, to which the writer of the note refers so cavalierly as "one of the speculations of the Schoolmen," flows logically and necessarily from the conception of the angel as a created being composed, not of matter and form, but of essence and existence. He may well be excused his ignorance in so difficult and so abstruse a question; but the same excuse cannot by any stretch of charity be extended to those whose knowledge of the scholastic work is so limited that they are able to stigmatize it as unscientific, puerile and absurd.

In the monumental work which he has bequeathed to posterity, the "Summa Theologiæ," St. Thomas reasons wherever it is possible from actual experience and observation. He at least cannot be blamed if his experimental data were meagre. They were as good for his purpose, to all practical intent, as the most modern of modern investigations, and from them he reasoned in the light of the great metaphysical principles to conclusions that will weather all the stress and strain of time. Until the mind of man changes, and that is to say, until man ceases to be man, the "Summa Theologiæ" will prove to be the norm of theological thought. Its principles are *the* perennial guiding principles of reason. It enshrines the truest philosophy and it embodies the most perfect scientific method.

In such a spirit, as I have said, the true theologian approaches his task of reconciliation. In such a spirit, too, the true man of science—and by far the majority of eminent scientific men have, as a fact, been, and are, men of this stamp—envisages the multifarious problems set him by nature. Not, indeed, that it lies in his province to concord his discoveries and the inferences correctly or incorrectly drawn from them with the teaching of the Church—for to science has not been accorded the guardianship of all truth—but rather because, interested as he naturally may be in revelation, he at least has no previous bias in favor of one apparent scientific truth rather than another, and, having none, he leaves revelation, which is not his subject, untouched in order that he may work out to their conclusions the actual problems which he finds before him.

It will be found as an almost invariable rule that the great men of science have not themselves been responsible for the difficulties of reconciliation that prompt, in the first instance, the desire of a dogmatic restatement. Some, no doubt, may be found who have added philosophizing to investigation and speculative to the exacter and more mathematical treatment of their subject. But, for the most part, the popularizers of scientific results, the small philosophers of new discoveries, are to blame for the apparent contradictions and difficulties that so make themselves felt. For in no case can any result of an exact science transcend the matter and material measurements with which all science deals. To be exact science must be experimental and observational; it must be formulated mathematically. And if the formulæ of one department of science be found, as in several instances they have been found, to hold good in others, they are none the less formulæ expressing the relations of mass, measurement or distance and time. Even in the science of chemistry, in which time is neglected and space only beginning to enter into the calculations, the proportional masses of bodies fixes the fundamental concept.

Consequently it is fairly obvious that it does not belong to exact science, so long as it remains exact, to probe the real questions which are so familiar in theology. And if, leaving the spatial, temporal and material conditions which are its guarantee of experimental accuracy, science attempts to formulate for itself a system of realities, it has then and there ceased to be science and is philosophy, and, moreover, it has no cogent scientific proof whatever to offer for the validity of its new speculations. Such speculations, at any rate, could never rightly lay claim to a scientific continuity, though, in a sense, they might point to an obscurely scientific origin.

This is a point which is often forgotten or lost sight of. It is so easy, so alluring, so entirely human, to speculate; so extraordinarily difficult to practice the abnegation of methodical exactness. The line separating science from philosophy is so thoughtlessly crossed and recrossed, that it is always with greatest veneration and respect that we ought to look upon those geniuses of science who resolutely refused to leave the noble lowliness of pure investigation for the alluring, but oftentimes perilous, heights of an imagination unfettered by the yoke that sober fact imposes.

On the other hand, such a well bestowed veneration should put us upon our guard against those who, while professing to tread steadily in the paths of science, in reality beguile us with a pseudo-scientific philosophy.

For to these latter knowledge is not so much growing in detailed extent as changing in nature. Old established principles of thought

are breaking down that new forms may take their place. Venerable arguments are being set aside as not fitted to the requirements of the modern mind. It may be that a merely relative value is given to the new forms of thought; but, if it is so, in the same breath all absolute values are swept away; and the principles by which human reason is governed—and we must concede human reason as it actually is, not as it might or ought to be—by being catalogued as relative, are rendered absolutely worthless.

But if they be wrong, these scientist-philosophers, leaving their miscroscopes and their balances, their test tubes and their calculus, and filling up the gaps in their data by creations of their own fertile minds, logically enough evolved there, no doubt, if the principles they seek to establish be granted beforehand; if they turn from their measures and retorts to a theoretical construction of matter, which *may* represent fact as it does spatially picture it, but which undoubtedly leaves the only real point of the problem to be solved without even the ghost of a solution; if they be wrong in this, then the theologians have no need to adapt their teaching to new principles or theories, but only to explain and unfold the old dogmatic truths upon the old lines in the light of modern exact research, discovery and statement.

As an example of the explanation rather than adaptation which is urged, the treatment due to-day to almost any theological term would suffice. Consider, for example, the word *person* and its meaning. Has exact science in any sense caused the conception expressed by this word to shift? It is not here a question of the etymological changes accompanying and denoting the growth of language. When we employ the word, even in this twentieth century, we know perfectly well that we do not mean a masked actor; and if any doubt exists as to what is the precise signification—the full extent and content—of the word, the old philosophical definition, fitting the root thought congenial to our minds, will easily banish it.

Has, then, modern science discovered in its researches that we, who are persons, are anything else than "individual substances of a rational nature?"

Doubtless we should be assailed with a storm of criticism for such an exact definition. Atomistic philosophers and upholders of the broader theory of evolution would come to the attack armed with hypothesis and theory. We should be told that there is no such thing as substance in the sense in which we employ the term; that an individual is the aggregate result of as many individuals as there are atoms in his composition; that the rational nature is the outcome of the irrational, and that, were our record of nature perfect we should find included in it an infinity of variations and degrees of rationality.

But it is certainly worthy of notice that not one such criticism—if we except, perhaps, the second—comes from a scientist speaking formally as a man of science. They are the cavils of scientists, if you will, but of scientists speaking as philosophers, indulging in speculations, imagining realities and freed from all the tests of scientific exactness. And with these Catholic theologians are familiar, with the familiarity of long acquaintance gained by several thousand years of recrudescent heresy.

Is it necessary, then, to accommodate dogmatic teaching to the newer phraseology of pseudo-scientific philsophy? Would there be any real gain in translating our terms, supposing that such a proceeding were feasible, into their equivalents in these self-confessed relative schools? If we wished to present the truths of dogma in an easier form to the world there would undoubtedly be such a gain, in the one supposition that these schools of philosophy had caught the public ear and at the same time were radically true or, at least, not radically false and incapable of correction. But since it is impossible to suppose that the scholastic doctrine, say, of matter and form, is in any real sense translatable into the chemico-philosophical theory of physical atoms, *plus* their shape and position in space and *minus* a substantial reality determining the resultant, before attempting to make so radical a change in a terminology that has crystallized around the root theological ideas and been consecrated by an immemorial service, it would be pertinent first of all to examine as to which of the two theories claims with the better right our allegiance.

It might be easy—to continue the use of the term *person* as our example—to suppose that we were, as a matter of fact, no more than aggregates of uniformly similar atoms in a perpetual state of violent vibration, kept in order and thus relatively in place by some such principle as the soul. And this would doubtless hold good, when adjusted, for all material beings. They would—we would—be as it were porous; and omitting any mention of the undoubted difficulty of one formal principle extending itself to separated individual atoms, the aggregate of particles, existing as such because of the soul, would take the place of what scholastics know as *materia prima.*

But the modern philosophical atomists would have us consider the constituent atoms as already of themselves matter of a definite kind, necessitating our labelling them substances. In this event we should be as far from a reconciliation as ever; for we should be obliged to look upon the human person as an accidental, rather than as a substantial, unity.

It is quite obvious that whichever view of these two is to be trans-

lated into the terminology of the other must undergo an extraordinarily labored accommodation. No matter to what extent the molecular particles be theoretically attenuated, they can never cease to be of a definite material nature, possessing definite material qualities and constituting in their aggregation a definite mass. From the various activities of the resultant being certain structural, physical, chemical, biological and internal alterations can be inferred; and, it is conceivable, could be written down in the symbolism of atomic formulæ with an almost surprising degree of mathematical exactness. It is likewise obvious that this view leaves altogether out of account the question of the possibility of spiritual natures, since it is unable to include them under its own specific terminology.

More than this; it is unable to explain or to refer to any of its own formulæ the immaterial functions which are manifested and acknowledged in the case of man. The crudities of those who would refer to thought as a secretive product of organic tissues will never be taken seriously by the thoughtful, much though it might be desirable to include many, and indeed all, processes, physical and psychical alike, in a single algebraic concept.

The mind is confronted here with a consideration which does not have reference to degrees of organicity but to real diversity of principle; and, although we may well adopt everything that exact science has had to tell us in the past and be prepared to listen with respect to all that it may teach us in the future, we should do well to pause before admitting too readily the extraordinarily far-reaching conclusions that are not seldom built upon its exact, though meagre, data. It is well to remember that Cavendish, who first separated the constituents of water; Liebig, whose laboratory at Giessen was perhaps the most fertile of all in results, and Michael Faraday did not admit any possible existence of physical atoms. For the same reason, Sir Humphry Davy used the word "proportion," and Dr. Wollaston "equivalent," in place of that which has now come into general use. Sir William Ramsay warns us that "we must beware of confusing this (the atomic) theory with the facts on which it is founded." Indeed, though in the preparation of mere text-books of chemistry or physics we should hardly be led to expect any very deep philosophical considerations set before the student, there are books in which some reference is made to the fact that the theory is, after all, a chemical or a physical one in the strict sense of the words, and not in any way an attempt to account for the ultimate constitution of matter; and, if this is not the case with all text-books, it should not be forgotten that such works are written for the sole purpose of teaching the sciences of chemistry, or heat, or electricity.

When in the hands of the scientist philosophizer, the laws of proportions, affinity, periodicity are exalted into an explanation of the essential nature of matter, the beauty of the whole fabric of the science of chemistry vanishes in an instant and shrinks into the distorted semblance of a philosophy like that of Democritus or Leucippus. The actual data will not support the theory when it goes from an imaginative structural account of matter to a description of its essential nature.

Comparatively long as this discursus into a particular aspect of transmuted science has been, it is far too brief to do anything like full justice to the better claims of the really philosophical theory that wisely distinguishes between the actually and the potentially existent. But it does bring out to some extent the force of the contention that the old explanation of the essence of material beings has had and has nothing to fear from the advance of exact scientific learning. It puts the fact in its true light—that philosophy must ever strive with philosophy, that there is really no level meeting ground between an exact science and one that, transcending all the conditions upon which that exactness is based, professes to account for natures and essences.

The concept which we denote by the word *person* has in no sense been changed by the enlarging of the boundaries of science. That a revived philosophy should attempt to change it only puts the hands of the clock back some twenty-five hundred years in the history of reason. Is it, then, the case that those who urge a reconstruction of theological statement in the light of modern science really wish to have dogma explained and retranslated into the terms of new or revived philosophical systems?

While speaking of the theological term chosen as one example out of many, I have naturally spoken of it as denoting a reasonable rather than a revealed concept. We must have the stable and common elements of thought that are conveyed by the elements of language before any revelation can, by combining them, make any real impression whatever upon our understanding; unless a revelation is so purely unique and personal as to be incommunicable.

And even where revelation has deepened and broadened our native ideas by unfolding the possibilities of the radical concept, as it has in the case of the word we have been considering and its true signification, it has had those natural and necessary ideas as its primitive data, else it could not have conveyed supernatural truth to us at all, save, as I have said, as a unique, intuitive, incommunicable vision.

Hence, though for the purposes of an exact theological system as much of the full content and extent of every concept and cor-

responding term as is possible should be gained, to teach consistently and accurately the truth of Christ, the exact natural meaning of words and the exact natural value of concepts is all that is required. And with no less than this is such teaching possible.

In this, rather than in any accommodation or adaptation of theology to either science or systems of philosophy, a clear statement and a simple explanation of the perennial and unchanging natures of things and of thoughts is to be desired.

To take refuge in the exaltation of mysticism would appear to be as fatal as to yield without a struggle to false philosophies; for the supernatural does not conflict with natural truth. To give credence to every wayward theory that is proposed with any faint shadow of a truthful consistence with observed facts is one of the worst traits, and a vicious trait, of the modern mind; a trait neither scientific nor philosophical. And if the taunt that a virile science has at length been found to combat the pretensions of an antiquated philosophy or theology irks or shames in any way, those of us who hold that even humanly gained truth is inviolable and unchangeable may comfort ourselves with the reflection that as in the infancy of philosophic thought lips babbled their crude explanations of reality, so now, in the extreme decrepitude and decay of the philosophic temper, they again babble in the halting syllables of their childhood.

What, then, is the true attitude that churchmen should take up with regard to science? Ought they to neglect it altogether in all religious questions as offering neither possible support nor possible criticism? Ought our theology to be closed up in some secret part of our mind as having nothing whatever in common with our other knowledge—in something the same way that the religion of some people is shut up by itself, away from and out of touch with the other influences and interests of their lives? Surely not. While remembering that the brilliant forward march of exact science has done nothing of itself to invalidate the claims of revelation or the truth of its teaching, we should surely not throw it over as of no possible use to theology. But whereas upon its findings conclusions have been raised that are in the highest degree untrustworthy and dangerous, upon those same findings, correctly understood, ought to be arranged and consolidated the eternal and natural verities that are at the same time the bulwark and interpretation of God-given truth.

Few men can acquire even a moderately comprehensive view of their own subject from outside—seen, as it were, in its place in the totality of knowledge. Fewer still seem to attempt to adjust the growing mass of exact observations to the changeless forms in which

we all must of necessity think. It would be a real service to science to relate it to the great comprehensive principles of sane philosophy.

It is necessary that theology should be taught in plain terms. But the plainest terms are, after all, those that are in themselves the truest; and they are not to be found in any pseudo-scientific philosophy.

F. AVELING.

London, England.

THE FRENCH ECCLESIASTICAL REVOLUTION.

II.

IT WILL be useful to record here a translation of an Inquisition decree dated March 6, 1907:

"The Supreme Congregation has already with the greatest care decreed major excommunication against Joseph-Rene Vilatte. It is related that having several times unsuccessfully tried to obtain priestly or episcopal dignities which he ardently desired, he at last found two heretic and schismatic men alleging themselves to be Bishops, although not known by the Church. One of them conferred the priestly, the other the episcopal, dignity on him. Vilatte visited Rome to ask pardon and absolution, which were not granted because it was perceived he was not sincere. Subsequently he went so far as to presume by a sacrilegious ceremonial to consecrate as Bishop the rebellious priest, Paul Miraglia.

"In consequence of these acts the major excommunication was pronounced on June 13, 1900, against the pseudo-Bishop. Vilatte being now established in Paris and unblushingly provoking a schism by profaning Catholic worship, the Congregation of the Inquisition deems well to renew the sentence of excommunication already pronounced against the said Vilatte.

"Accordingly, let the faithful, especially priests, take care not to participate in or favor his sacrilegious actions, lest they, too, fall into the same situation he unfortunately occupies; let such persons as, deceived by him, are in any manner communicating with him, return immediately to wiser thoughts in order to escape ecclesiastical penalties and to avoid utter ruin!"

This charlatan had to leave the former Barnabite Chapel after eight weeks' tenure, from Sexagesima to Easter Day, inclusive, and to notify no function elsewhere for Low Sunday, at the instance of the liquidator who is selling those premises. Lecturing there on the Mass, he declared it would be more logical and conformable to