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The Ursinus Weekly, January 23, 1903

Walter E. Hoffsommer

J. Lynn Barnard

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The Ursinus Weekly

VOL. 1. NO. 16.

COLLEGEVILLE, PA., FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 1903.

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"AN EPISTLE OF KARSHISH" —ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

A study of Browning's "Epistle of Karshish" almost invariably induces or suggests the thought that the Christian ideal set forth in that poem is an impossible one,—an ideal which the ordinary mortal may never hope to realize or attain. And yet the life and acts of Lazarus involve no moral precept or obligation that is not enjoined alike upon all followers of the Christian religion. It is the pre-natural death, the too early glimpse into the great unknown, which has capacitated this one human soul for attainment of perfection in a second lease of life.

In the character of Lazarus we have an ideal Christian type, the perfect self of spiritual aspiration and experience. All sensual, material and objective externals of the world are subdued to an internal, spiritual, all-comprehensive subjective self. The rise and fall of nations, degradation and slavery, destruction of house and home, the death of son or daughter, the cry of the passing street vender,—'tis all one to such a being. For to him they are all but a natural part of a perishable, temporal system.

"He will live, nay it pleaseth him to live,
So long as God please, and just how God please.

He even seeketh not to please more
(Which meaneth otherwise) than as God please."

And yet he is not a mere apathetic machine, a determined creature. There is no restraint or constraint upon his life except that which is imposed by the loftier, superior knowledge of life's ultimate purpose and meaning. His knowledge has been increased "beyond the fleshly faculty." The soul has been divorced from the body "by premature full growth." Heaven has opened up its mysteries to "a soul while yet on earth." Free to follow impulse and desire like the rest of his fellow creatures, yet, knowing the divine will and purpose, he cannot act otherwise than he does,—rationally, perfectly.

It is such a character that Karshish meets in Palestine; and in his epistle to his former master and instructor, he is forced to recur to this strange subject again and again. The effect of the strange, abstract teachings of a new cult upon the symbolistic Oriental mind is at the best but unsatisfying and mystical. The Arabian physician is left in doubt and indecision. The truth is a great truth. The life is a life beyond his most ideal conception. And yet, "it is the life to lead forcedly." But is the poem alone a study of a faultless—even though super-human—character, the exposition of an ideal Christian life, together with the effect of the Christ life, and of its higher spiritual concepts, upon the wild, untamed, Oriental mind, or has the poem another significance?

Taking the character of Lazarus as a setting forth of an ideal to which we may approximate or even attain, how does such a view harmonize with Browning's theory of life and religion, as found in his other poems? Did he mean to set before us a possible human ideal in the character of Lazarus or has it spiritual

significance and meaning underlying it which conforms to his religious optimism?

The theme or central idea of the poem is implied in the line, "Earth forced on a soul's use while seeing heaven," or in the line, "Heaven opened to a soul while yet on earth." In this soul knowledge has been expanded "beyond the fleshly faculty;" the divine supersedes the human. Here we meet with none of those inner conflicts of the divine and the human impulses that tear the human soul in its higher, spiritual struggles. Impulse and duty with him appear to coalesce. If the slightest sign of any such conflict is present, it is merely tentative and is at once inhibited without the evidence of internal strife.

"Only impatient * * * * *
At ignorance and carelessness and sin—
An indignation which is promptly
curbed,"—

curbed by a superior knowledge, a far-seeing discernment that blends concomitantly with soul disturbing impulse.

The character of Lazarus stands for a type, and even though a perfect type, it is a type of passivity, and of unresisting inaction. It is at once impracticable, unattainable and impossible. It is incongruous with the necessities of modern civilized thought and action. The demands of social evolution and progress, the requirements of home, church and state, the central principle of self-preservation, and all the stern duties of the daily routine are at cross purpose with it. It was this palpable conflict (still more apparent in the less modified nature of the Arab) that led Karshish to exclaim wonderingly and incredulously, "It is the life to lead forcedly." It was the same paradox, though in its modern setting, that led Browning to have Ben Ezra say,

"A paradox * * * * *
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail,
What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me."

For Browning, it was not the life to lead. Even though the modern spiritual and ethical concept has progressed far beyond that of the barbarian Oriental mind, the impossibility of such an ideal state is shown in that it is forced on a soul's use while seeing heaven.

Browning is too firm a believer in the value and place of formative experience in human life to set forth an unattainable perfection in a poem, or even any perfection at all. For Browning the life ideal consists in what we aspire to be. It lies in the striving, the strain and the pursuit and not in the attainment of perfection. "It is but to keep the nerves at strain,
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled, get up and begin again."
On the rounds of experience, through the buffets and rebuffs of life man rises to that which he aspires. The chief "pain and glory of the human estate" is achieved in the character refined from all dross in the life-purport of experience.

"What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be."

Ours is that which we have worked out and fashioned for ourselves; and the final product, not only that which we have wrought, but

"All we have willed or hoped
Or dreamed of good shall exist;
Not its semblance, but itself."

Both task and reward are found in the endless striving, in the renewed seeking and boundless aspiration of "the passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky;" the highest good, the supreme reward of life, and the inward peace of the individual soul are in the living of life, even though we fall short of it.

"All I could never be,
All men ignored me.
This was I worth to God,
Whose wheel the pitcher shaped."
G., 1903.

A LESSON FROM THE LIFE OF MIRABEAU

Dr. Barnard first briefly described France in 1789, giving a picture of the abuses which over-centralization, and the separation of the monarchy and aristocracy from the people had brought about. The extravagance of the government and bad financiering had so burdened the lowest classes with taxation that they were in a state of degradation and alienated in feeling from the ruling classes.

The question arises, was there a possible way of escape for France by which she might avoid the Revolution with its subsequent tyranny. There was only one statesman who might have coped with the situation and he was the Marquis de Mirabeau.

Mirabeau had inherited a fine intellect, together with a passionate, sensuous nature. He came to the Revolution hampered by a bad reputation, with his health broken by imprisonments and excesses, loaded with debts, and with vicious habits from which he never wholly freed himself. Rejected by his own order, Mirabeau was elected to the States General in 1789 by the Third Estate. There he won a foremost place by his political sagacity and power as an orator. He believed that royal absolutism and feudal privilege must go down together, but that France must retain a constitutional monarchy. He urged the government to be ready with a plan of its own, desiring as he expressed it, a constitution that would save France alike from the plots of the aristocracy and from the excesses of democracy.

The truly great man is he who succeeds in doing something for humanity well; in rendering a social service. But to do this the man must conquer, first himself, and then the obstacles that stand in the way of success. In 1789 there was one possible savior of France; and he failed, not from lack of courage or devotion, but from a still greater lack, moral fibre. No one believed in him, and no one would work with him. Mirabeau failed to conquer success, because he failed to conquer himself.

[From Dr. Barnard's talk Sunday evening.]

ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

At its meeting Tuesday, Jan. 20, the Athletic Association decided to join the Intercollegiate Amateur Gymnastic Association, comprising Rutgers, Yale, Haverford, Swarthmore and others. The annual contest will be held at New York University, March 28.

J. H. Poorman, '03, was elected President of the Association to fill the vacan-

cy caused by ex-President Smith's leaving school. R. F. Wismer, '05, was elected to fill the vacancy on the Athletic Committee.

Action was also taken making "Varsity" managers of Athletic teams ex-officio members of the Athletic Committee during their respective seasons.

The following resolution was adopted: "The Athletic Association of Ursinus College extends to Dr. E. A. Krusen, whose professional services and generous encouragement have been a source of strength and inspiration to the athletic teams of the College, its deepest sympathy in the affliction which has come upon him and his family in the death of Mrs. Krusen,—whose death the members of the Association lament as the loss of a loyal and devoted friend."

MID YEAR EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

Thursday, Jan. 22.

- 9-11. Philosophy 1 and 5.
- 11-1. English 2 and 4.
- 2-4. Mathematics 1, Biology 3.

Friday, Jan. 23.

- 9-11. Greek 1, Political Science 1, English Bible.
- 11-1. Chemistry 1 and 2.
- 2-4. English 1 and 7.

Monday, Jan. 26.

- 9-11. Greek 2, Biology 1, Physics A and 1.
- 11-1. French 1, History 4, Hebrew 1.
- 2-4. German 1.

Tuesday, Jan. 27.

- 9-11. Greek 3, French A and 3.
- 11-1. Philosophy 2, History 2.
- 2-4. History 1, Political Science 3.

Wednesday, Jan. 28.

- 9-11. Philosophy 4, Latin 1 (9-10), Greek A (10-11).
- 11-1. Mathematics 2 and 3, Physics 2, German A and 3.

(Subject to change).

ALUMNI NOTES

During the week ending January 18, the congregation of Trinity Reformed Church, Waynesboro, Pa., celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the pastorate of Rev. F. F. Bahner, D. D. '73. Doctor Bahner preached his anniversary sermon on the 11th inst. In the services of the week, the various interests of the church were presented by men prominent in the various lines of church life, the pastor having planned with characteristic modesty, that the exercises should have reference to the work of the church and not to himself. On Tuesday evening, however, a splendid ovation was given this popular pastor and citizen by his fellow pastors and professional and business men of the town. Among the Ursinus men prominent upon the program were President Spangler and Rev. Dr. Chas. H. Coon of Philadelphia.

The Rev. H. J. Welker, '76, pastor of the historic Tulpehocken Reformed church near Myerstown, Pa., spent a few days at the college last week.

At a special meeting of the Heidelberg classis at Marion, Ohio, last week, H. G. Kopenhaver, '99, was received and will be ordained and installed pastor at Waldo, Ohio.

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FRIDAY, JAN. 23, 1903.

EDITORIAL

A word from Helen Keller in the *Ladies' Home Journal*, with no comments, may not be amiss at this time.

"The examinations are the chief bug-bears of my college life. Although I have faced them many times and cast them down and made them bite the dust, yet they rise again and menace me with pale looks, until, like Bob Ackers, I feel my courage oozing out at my finger-ends. The days before these ordeals take place are spent in cramming your mind with mystic formulæ and indigestible dates—unpalatable dates—until you wish that books and science and you were buried in the depths of the sea. At last the dreaded hour arrives, and you are a favored being indeed if you feel prepared and are able at the right time to call to your standard thoughts that will aid you in that supreme effort. It happens too often, however, that your trumpet-call is unheeded. It is most perplexing and exasperating that, just at the moment when you most need your memory and a nice sense of discrimination, these faculties take to themselves wings and fly away. The facts you have garnered with such infinite trouble invariably fail you at a pinch. 'Give a brief account of Huss and his work.' Huss? Who was he, and what did he do? The name looks strangely familiar. You ransack your budget of historic facts much as you would hunt for a bit of silk in a rag-bag. You are sure it is somewhere in your mind near the top—you saw it there the other day when you were looking up the beginnings of the Reformation. But where is it now? You fish out all manner of odds and ends of knowledge—revolutions, schisms, massacres, systems of government; but Huss—where is he? You are amazed at all the things you know that are not on the examination paper. In desperation you seize the budget and dump every thing out, and there in a corner is your man, serenely brooding on his own private thought, unconscious of the catastrophe which he has brought upon you! Just then the proctor informs you that time is up. With a feeling of intense disgust you kick the mass of rubbish into a corner and go home, your head full of revolutionary schemes to abolish the divine right of professors to ask questions without the consent of the questioned."

SOCIETY NOTES

"Resolved, That the negro should be admitted to all educational institutions on equal terms with the white" was the question for debate in the Schaff Society Friday evening, January 16. The question was timely and aroused the ardor of the debaters. The daughter of Booker T. Washington recently entered a prominent institution but, owing to the race prejudice and the pressure brought to bear upon her, she was compelled to leave.

The affirmative side tried to show that the negro, given an equal chance, becomes the intellectual equal of the white man. The Caucasian has been going through this process of development for centuries, while the colored man has been doing the same for less than fifty years. When we take this into consideration, his advance has been marvelous.

The opposing team undertook to prove that he as a whole is capable of no high plain of intellectuality. He is essentially different from his white neighbor. His natural tendencies are rather away from civilization.

The judge gave the decision in favor of the affirmative and the house unanimously decided the same on the merits of the question. Mr. F. B. Miller, '91, was among the visitors present.

"An Evening with Bachelors and Old Maids" was the subject of the program in the Zwinglian. Miss Behney, '06, and Mr. Butz, '05, presented their "ideas" about bachelors and old maids respectively in essay form.

"A Bachelor's Dream" was read by Miss Shipe, '05; Miss Boston, A., recited "An Old Maid's Reverie." An original story entitled "A Bachelor and an Old Maid, or Joe Simmonds and Mehitabel Jenks" was read by Mr. Hoyt, '04. A vocal and an instrumental solo were rendered by Mr. Wise, '06. The Review was read by Editor Price, '05; an oration on "The Moral Rights of Property" was delivered by Mr. Sando, '04. Extemporaneous speeches completed the program.

J. H. Poorman, '03, was recently elected Attorney to fill the unexpired term of H. B. Smith, non-grad. '03.

MONDAY NIGHT CLUB

The "Monetary Evening" Monday proved interesting. Lively discussions followed the reading of papers. The officers for the second term are: President, F. H. Hobson, '03; Vice-President, R. G. Gettel, '04; Secretary, Mary E. Behney, '06.

"Some necessary Reforms in our National Banking System" by Mr. Hobson was the first paper. An abstract follows:

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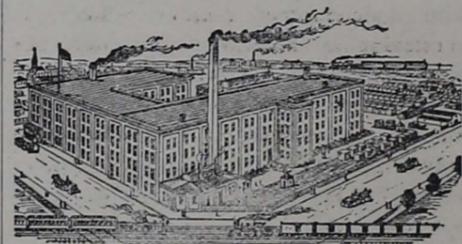


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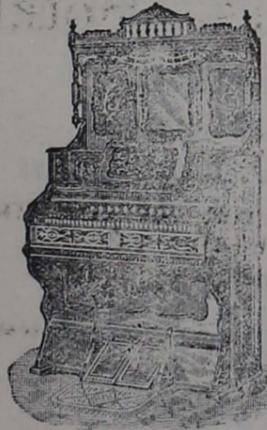
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Secretary of the Treasury, Shaw, has seen the weakness of our present system and has urged some radical reforms which, in his opinion, will prevent a repetition of the present crisis. Our National Bank currency is at present too inelastic and will not adapt itself to conditions. This must be remedied by giving the banks more liberty in the issuance of banknotes. The only means provided for the National Bank issue at present is based upon Government bonds and these will in a very short time be paid off. Thus, unless some other security is accepted, the banks will be compelled to stop issuing currency. It is at present a much debated question whether the National Debt shall be continued as a basis for National Bank currency or whether a new method should be adopted. It seems to be the almost unanimous opinion of financiers and bankers that banks should be permitted to issue notes based upon general credit and that a small tax on circulation be levied. Of course, there are many safeguards that must be thrown around such a change in our system, but all difficulties can be easily met.

The system of reserve in our National Banks has been proved to be inadequate to meet crises, and a law compelling banks to keep a certain per cent. of the deposits in their vaults should be passed at once.

The principal reforms suggested by the crisis through which we have just passed would be:

1. A more elastic currency, permitting banks to issue and retire circulation at will.
2. That new circulation shall rest upon general credits of the banks.
3. That provision be made so that government surplus can be deposited with the banks.
4. That banks should be required to keep on hand a certain cash reserve.

The next paper was read by Elliot Frederick, '05, on "The Wrong Tendency in Monetary Reform:"

"Reforms in our banking system are

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necessary, but care must be taken, lest such reforms do more evil than good. The abolition of the Sub-Treasury and depositing the entire gold reserve in the banks is one of these. The money thus held by the government is the base of security for the entire currency system. Its removal would cause depreciation in value of all money in circulation and in this way injure the business of the country. Such a removal would only cause a larger amount of speculation and defeat its object. Another reform proposed is the issuance of a distinct bank currency. This would compel the banks to carry a reserve that would destroy all their profits, unless a similar rise was made in interest rates, which would seriously affect business."

A. G. Peters, '03, conducted the last discussion on "Gold Monometallism or International Bimetallism.—Which?"

"In accordance with the tendency of our age, the establishment of a universal monetary system is bound to take place. Gold monometallism exists in many countries. Its frequent change in supply renders gold unstable as a standard of value, and prices always vary as the standard of money. In our country, from 1873 until the recent discoveries of gold insufficiency of the amount of standard money, not cost of production nor overproduction, was the prime cause of the decline in prices and business depression. Because of its instability of value and since the supply of gold may at some time become exhausted, universal goldmonometallism is not desirable. In addition, the traditions, habits and customs of half-civilized nations require the use of silver.

International bimetalism covering an area so large as cannot be drained of either metal by the effect of Gresham's law would be feasible. Its double or alternative standard would be more stable. Hence, it would warrant equality in prices and greater business prosperity. International bimetalism would also establish an immediate par of exchange between all countries, and by lessening the inconveniences and evils of present conditions in the commercial world, would accomplish what could not be attained otherwise."

PUPILS' RECITAL

The Department of Music held a pupils' recital in the chapel Saturday evening. The program included a number of piano solos, four and six hands.

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AUDUBON SCIENCE MEETS

The club met Monday, Jan. 12. A paper on "Primary Batteries" by I. M. Rapp, '03, discussed the constitution of a primary cell, the meaning of polarization and how the latter is overcome in the leading types of cells. A practical demonstration of the simple Voltaic, its formation and the effects of polarization upon the current was given. Other leading types of cells in every day use were shown and the methods of depolarization in each pointed out.

Part of a paper on "The Influence of Insects on the Health of a Community" by H. S. Gottshall, '04, is quoted below: "During the last few years parasitologists have given much attention to the means by which infectious diseases are spread, to the role played by insects which may serve either as carriers or intermediary hosts of disease-agents. Flies and mosquitoes are the two great disease carriers.

That flies are transmitters of the anthrax bacilli was proved by Rambert, who placed common house-flies and meat-flies under a bell-jar containing a vessel of anthracic blood. They drank the blood and soiled their bodies with it. Later he saw anthrax bacilli in preparations made of their proboscides and also observed them in the excreta. He inoculated the preparation into guinea-pigs, which died of anthrax. Bollinger made similar experiments with rabbits and with the same results. Thus flies that have come in contact with animals, dead of anthrax, or their refuse, on which they have fed, are able to transmit the anthrax virus and deposit it on the skin of susceptible animals and man.

That flies are active agents in the spread of cholera has been proved by Cattani, Simmonds and others who took flies from the bodies of cholera victims and were able to isolate spirilla from them in large numbers. Roll cultures made with contaminated flies yielded as high as 10,500 colonies of cholera spirilla, and sterilized milk with which infected flies were allowed to come in contact, yielded as high as one hundred colonies.

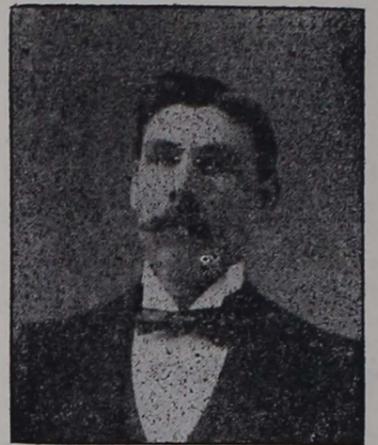
The common house-fly is the principal agent in the spread of typhoid fever because it is attracted to, and will lay its eggs into human excrement and under favorable conditions, will breed to some

extent in this excrement. Therefore, with an abundance of flies and excremental deposits in the neighborhood, and with a perhaps unsuspected or not yet fully developed case of typhoid in the immediate community, there is no reason why through the agency of contaminated flies alighting upon food supplies, the disease should not spread to healthy individuals. That under the unusual condition of the army camps of 1898 it was thus spread to a shocking extent has been demonstrated by the Army Typhoid Fever Commission. The remedy is plain: (1) Proper care of excreta; (2) the destruction of flies.

One of the most important of these disease-transfer relations of insects is the recently proved carriage of yellow fever by certain mosquitoes. The mosquito *Stegomyia fasciata* serves as the intermediate host of the parasite of yellow fever. A house is therefore only truly disinfected when protected from mosquitoes and a mode of destroying them is brought about.

The old idea that malaria is caused by breathing the miasma of swamps has been exploded. Malaria is contracted through the bites of mosquitoes of the genus *Anopheles*. The cause of malaria is the growth and development within the red corpuscles of a very minute parasitic organism belonging to the Protozoa. This parasite reproduces in the body by subdividing, finally bursting the corpuscle and entering the blood serum as a mass of spores. Broadly speaking, when the blood of a human being is sucked into the stomach of the *Anopheles* mosquito, the malarial parasite undergoes a sexual development and gives birth to a large number of spindle-shaped cells or blasts which enter the salivary glands of the insect and are ejected into the system of the next person bitten by the mosquito.

In Egypt and the Fiji Islands there is a destructive eye disease, the germs of which are carried by the common house-fly. Pink-eye is carried by a fly of the genus *Hippelates*. There is good reason for supposing that the germs of the bubonic plague are transmitted by the bites of fleas. Other discoveries of this nature are constantly being made and even the common bed-bug is strongly suspected in this connection."



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