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# SEXUAL ECONOMY,

*AS TAUGHT BY*

CHARLES BRADLAUGH, M.P.

BY

PETER AGATE, M.D.

*WITH ADDENDUM BY SALADIN.*



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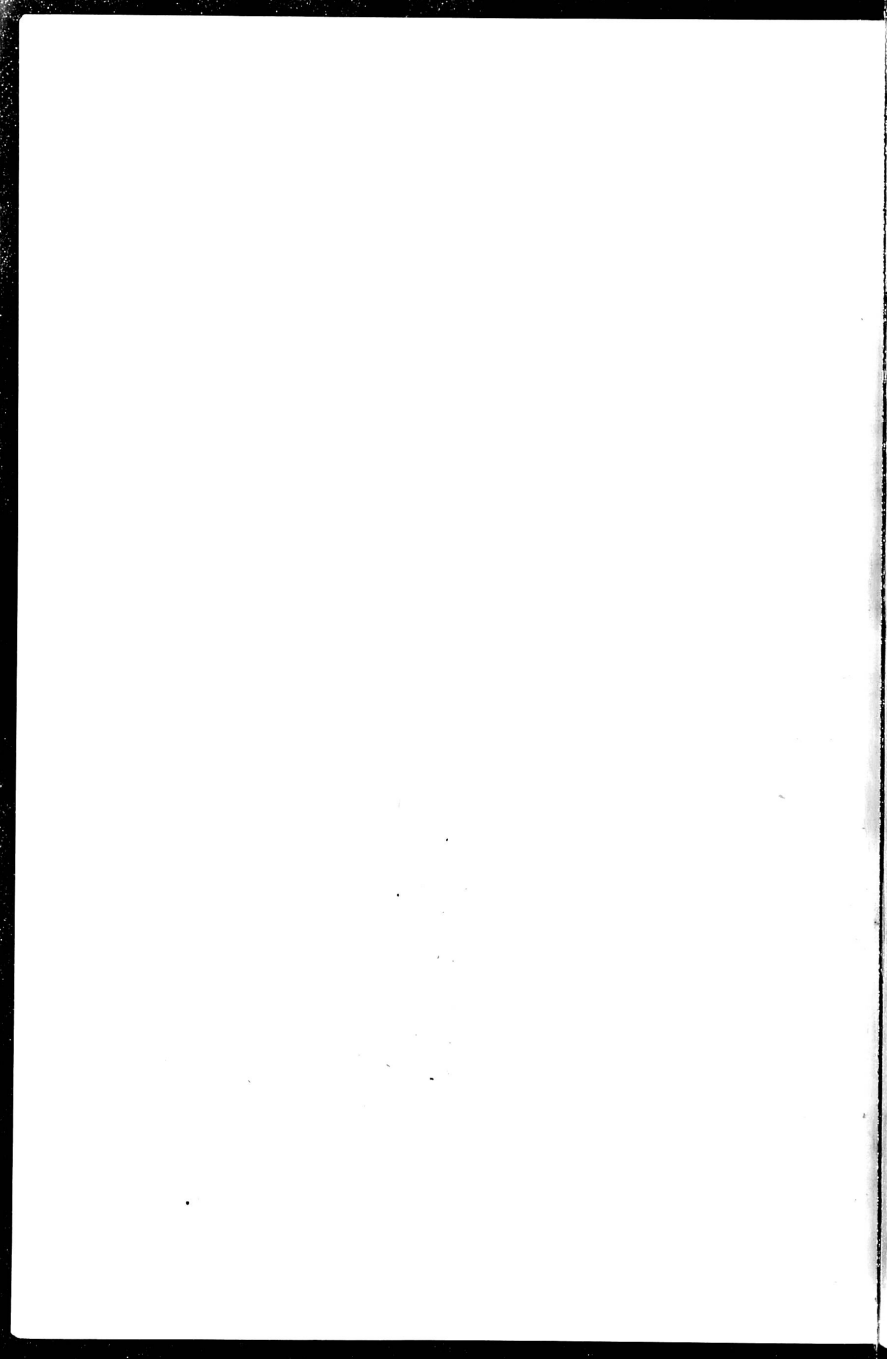
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## CONTENTS.

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|                                                | PAGE |
|------------------------------------------------|------|
| Introduction ... ..                            | 5    |
| The Two B.'s and "The Elements" ... ..         | 15   |
| Bradlaugh's Quarrel with Joseph Barker ... ..  | 18   |
| Sexual Religion ... ..                         | 22   |
| The Neo-Malthusian Doctrine of Marriage ... .. | 28   |
| Palæo-Secular Views of Social Evils ... ..     | 32   |
| Palæo-Secular Medicine... ..                   | 37   |
| The Palæo-Secularist Malthusians ... ..        | 45   |
| Palæo-Secularist Society ... ..                | 51   |
| Addendum, by Saladin ... ..                    | 53   |



## INTRODUCTION.

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SALADIN, chaste knight of Secularism, Freethought, Agnosticism, says my essay, or compilation, illustrative of Bradlaughism, Cat-and-Ladleism, Knowltonism, and the moral sewage question generally, needs an introduction. He knows better than I ; so probably it does. My instant and eager reply was : Who so fit and proper to introduce an unknown volunteer, meddling in a matter which does not in the least concern him personally—who so competent as the illustrious SALADIN—poet, philosopher, moralist—whom I have never seen, and only read a year or two, from week to week in his *Secular Review* ?

But why not give the letter as I wrote it ? Here it is, *verbatim et literatim*. In a matter which future ages will consider so important every scrap relating to the champion of Freethought and purity of morals will have its interest and value. I wrote :—

“MY DEAR SALADIN!—You think I need to be introduced. Well, why not introduce me ? You know the whole matter of this controversy so much better than I do. A few lines from your vigorous pen will be better than any thing I could write. I agree that they should be written ; but, as you have the matter so much better in hand, and as I really need to be introduced, why not prettily and gracefully introduce me ?

“I remember, many years ago, reading an English book which defended—in fact, recommended—incest, Sodomy,

and bestiality, and denounced the laws against them as superstitious tyranny. It was a nasty, bad book; but I do not believe it was a tenth-part so mischievous as this work of Dr. ———, which I hold to be false in science—which is, of course, to be bad in morals. Man, as the highest, or most developed, animal, should be better, more natural, than the lower species. Why man goes wrong, and how he goes wrong, in these matters, I do not know, as I do not know the ultimate *why* or *how* of anything; only that all vices seem to me unnatural, and all unnatural practices vicious—two words for the same thing.

“When I can get to it I mean to go into all these questions as thoroughly as I can. In the meantime, or just now, will you write the few needed lines of introduction, as you so well can, or must I write them as well as I can under the circumstances? You knowing so much better the reasons why my small pamphlet should be written at all, and occupying the leading position in this really important controversy.

“P.S.—It strikes me that the reason for these excesses of early Secularists was the disposition to defend and recommend whatever had been denounced or forbidden by religious teachers: the Bible denounced Sabbath-breaking, so they made it a duty to break the Sabbath; the Bible burnt up people with fire and brimstone for Sodomy, therefore they defended Sodomy; and so on.

“Now, if I were to write the introduction or preface, it would be something like this note. With this note will you be so kind as to write the introduction?

“I presume you will, at the proper time, also publicly introduce, as you have announced, the pamphlet. And I fancy that, just because it is a scrimmage, it will be read by a great many who, perhaps, might hesitate to read the *Secular Review*.”

That is what I wrote to SALADIN. I leave it to the candid

reader to say, to himself, whether it is not a reasonable letter. And here is SALADIN'S reply, or, rather, part of it; for he "private"-ly assures me that he has tried and failed, and then goes on in this way:—

"Although, at the date of the publication of the Knowlton pamphlet, I was hardly known in the party at all, I managed to have my name placed on the list of speakers in the first meeting that met to protest that anti-Christian thought was not necessarily associated with an adoption of the practices of Onan. The meeting was held at Cleveland Hall, and was a crowded and excited one. Those who could not accept Christ, but who seemed eager to accept Onan, were largely in the ascendant. Mr. Bradlaugh was evidently the hero of the hour, as he always is with the rougher and less-cultured order of Freethinkers, who let him do the thinking, after his fashion, in order to save them the trouble of thinking at all.

"Mr. Charles Watts was in the chair, and on the platform were Mrs. Harriet Law, Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, Mr. G. W. Foote, and myself. Mr. Holyoake was, as usual, excessively prudent. He diagnosed the temper of the meeting, and, instead of venturing to sail against the stream, delivered himself of a few colourless platitudes. His shilly-shallying prudence cast its spell over the other speakers. Mr. Watts, as I told him afterwards, made a timid and half-hearted speech, from which I gathered that he wished to still keep the door open for reconciliation with 'our chief.' In fact, in spite of its fleshliness, he had published the Knowlton pamphlet down to the point where publishing it became dangerous, and there he had deserted it. Mrs. Law looked ludicrously sagacious, and half stood to her guns and half ran away from them. Confronted by that meeting (probably packed), Mr. Foote alone, of all the prominent speakers, did not allow his heart to sink down to his boots. His platform experience was to him invaluable; he uttered

some cutting and caustic things, but adroitly managed to secure as many cheers as hisses. I followed, more in earnest and more bitter than Mr. Foote, and sadly lacking in his tact and platform experience. In reply to the hiss of opposition, which I cared not to conciliate, even if I had known how, I raised my voice to a shout of defiance. I managed to make myself heard over the hiss and groan of Onanic disapprobation, till I thundered forth the words, 'Charles Bradlaugh has dragged the standard of Free-thought through the mire of Holywell Street.' Upon this the storm which had been raging burst into a hurricane. There were clenched fists, and an angry and ominous surging towards the platform. I stood facing the mass, mute and defiant. Mr. Holyoake seized my coat-tail, to pull me back to my chair. Still facing the audience, I lifted my arm, and, not over gently, dashed away his hand. The audience noticed this incident, and, for a moment, their cries and hisses of anger were mixed with a peal of laughter. Close to my ear I heard, 'Draw it mild,' from the thin, tin-kettle voice of Mr. Holyoake. I still stood facing the audience, erect and motionless; and when, at length, the storm of groans and hisses died away, I took one step forward, and repeated, with firm, slow, and syllabic deliberation: 'Charles Bradlaugh has dragged the standard of Freethought through the mire of Holywell Street!'"

There—that is how a poet tells you he *cannot* write. How he *can* write is shown in the *Secular Review* and, as to the matter in hand, in "Knowltonism,"\* which he issued four or five years ago, and which every one who can command twopence-halfpenny may read. In its preface Mr. Charles Watts recognised the "unique ability" of SALADIN in his attack upon "the vulgar teachings of Knowltonism," and also expresses the opinion that this "must be acknowledged as the great social question of the day."

\* "Knowltonism," by Saladin. (London: Watts & Co.)



In this essay, well worth reading for the powerful condensation of its style, SALADIN distincts Malthus from Knowlton with a cut of his sharp scimitar through the bone and marrow of the Neo-Malthusian Trinity. He insists "that the means specified to prevent conception are inadequate to that end," as any physiologist can see with half a glance, and as many a poor girl, no doubt, has experienced to her infinite sorrow and shame. SALADIN maintains that, "even if Knowltonism were practicable, *per se*, it would be unconformable with physical, and an outrage upon ethical, law." It is better, he holds, that the struggles of life should go on, and bring about their natural results in the "survival of the fittest." He holds with nature all through, yet quotes the delicate and forcible lines of the Marquis of Queensberry:—

“Go, tell mankind, see that thy blood be pure,  
 And visit not thy sins upon thy race;  
 Curse not thy future age with poisoned blood,  
 For, cursing, it shall curse thee back again.  
       \* \* \* For there are they  
 Who, either from hereditary sin,  
 Or from the sin they have themselves entailed,  
 Possess no right to be progenitors. \* \* \*  
 Alas! that such a cruel wrong should be,  
 Of sins upon the children visited.  
 And shall these grow to be progenitors  
 Of other souls, more burdened than themselves  
 With feeble bodies of impurity?  
 Ye gods, forbid it!”

SALADIN eloquently—how could he say anything otherwise than eloquently and poetically?—defines the right of every human being to be born, and fight his way in this beautiful world. “The cardinal duty of humanity,” he holds, is “to discover the processes of cosmical law and obey them, not try to reverse or modify them in the plenitude of spurious science and the hauteur of unphilosophical arrogance. Down amid the green algæ and the gleaming shells of the ever-swinging and thundering ocean it is joy to be a bright

and agile herring, even for an hour, before the jaws of the shark snap rapaciously, and one egoism in the vasty deep ceases to be. The babe born on the straw of a hovel, or amid the silk and down of a palace, inspires and respires the glad air of being—for life is a boon, whether in cottage or in castle—sucks from its mother's breast the nectar of life and love, stretches out its fingers and its toes, elate with the rich wine of vital existence; and what is death at seven days or seventy years?—Only a forgetting of what has gone by and an arrestment of what is to come; only a returning to where you were before the sun shone in the heavens, to where you may be when the sun may be no more.

'Tis better to have loved and lost  
Than never to have loved at all.'

And it is better to have lived under some circumstances than never to have lived at all. The trifling differences between brown bread and water and roast beef and champagne, between the ingle of the cottar and the saloon of the duke, are insignificant when taken into consideration with the cardinal luxury of life. The sky is as blue to the peasant as to the peer; as sweet is the fragrance of the hawthorn, as magnificent is the vista of hope; as joyous is the action of muscle and nerve; as sublime and holy the first ecstasies of 'Love's Young Dream.' It is an unfounded assumption, resulting from the wide social hiatus which separates class from class, that postulates all the sweetness of life with riches, and all the bitterness of existence with poverty. If it be true that the poor man does not eat his dinner because he has no dinner to eat, the rich man as frequently cannot eat his on account of dyspepsia and want of appetite; and perhaps the latter evil is worse than the former. The worn fustian, with its spots of grime, ministers as well to the animal caloric as does the purple and the ermine, flashing with gold lace and resplendent with jewels. I ask, with him

of Galilee, 'Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment?'

"The Knowltonian, by implication, admits himself to be a coward, who would shirk the cosmical conditions which are successfully coped with by the frog and the thistle, and even by the ephemera, which at the utmost has only an hour to live, and has to plunge into the Struggle for Existence for the privilege of entering upon the part or the whole of the brief span of its life. With its stifled hum as it buzzes in the blue air, or expands its wings in the flash of the summer sun, it recites a homily that the Knowltonian might con with profit. It enjoys the few minutes it has to live, provides that there shall be ephemerae when it is no more, and hums itself into the eternal non-ego of which it knows as much as the wisest man that ever lived or ever will. Is man afraid he may succumb to conditions which are successfully coped with by the *aphis*? Even if absolutely isolated from the male, the female *aphis*, by the peculiar method of reproduction known as *parthenogenesis*, will produce female young, and female young only, at the rate of fourteen or fifteen a day; and these, in their turn, and in a very short time, give birth to a third generation, and so on; and this will go on for years without any male *aphis* whatever being for once admitted. And yet in the whole world there is, perhaps, not a single *aphis* more than there was a thousand years ago. The rapacity of the lady-bird, the lace-wing fly, and other enemies which prey upon the *aphidæ*, keep them within their legitimate bounds; and so the lady-bird of disease and the lace-wing fly of famine will keep *homo sapiens* in his proper bounds without troubling him to tax his ingenuity to degrade himself off the face of the earth.

"With the Knowltonian the earth is analagous to a boat at sea crammed with fifty shipwrecked men, but with food for fifteen only. Under such circumstances it is normal to cast lots, and the Jonahs are thrown overboard. But it is

better to ultimately get thrown overboard than never to have been born. A struggle for six minutes in the deep is not so much more terrible than a six months' wasting disease in bed. The man upon whom the lot falls to be drowned may strip his coat and dive resolutely to death with the consciousness that he has, at least, had a grim and wild extension of fairplay. Thus Knowltonians had better, than exercise their sexual 'checks,' go to the denizens of Whitechapel and the Seven Dials at regular intervals, and mark out, Valkeyry-like, the particular individuals they deem redundant in their microcosm, causing each to take a dose of strychnine, so that only the correct number of 'genteel' people may take the place of the plethoric *fauna* of the slums. As I have pointed out, it is incalculable what philosophers and poets and statesmen the 'checks' may dam back in the stream of human existence. If the Knowltonian must adjust the supply of the *hoi poloi* to the demand, he had surely better do so in the light than in the dark; he had better engage in a game of discriminating skill than in one of indiscriminating hazard. By his 'checks' you know not whom he is *keeping out* of the world; but, by his gallows, you would know whom he is *sending out* of it. If the Knowltonians were to erect a gallows in Vincent Square and clear out the Westminster slums by the simple and drastic resource of good plain hanging, one could have some voucher that they had not robbed the world of a Shakespeare or a Bacon or a Gladstone. But by their empirical pottering with sexual physiology and pathology, with a view to make woman less of a mother than a sort of safety-valve to sensual passions, we know not whether we have not lost a spermatozoonal Milton or a foetal Cromwell."

In another place he says: "I ask any of my readers to note for themselves whether a non-Knowltonian mother of fifty, and who has borne six or seven children, is not stronger and healthier and happier than the Knowltonian mother of the same age, and who has borne only one or

two. I ask any of my readers to further note whether every boy and girl of the family of six or seven is not stronger, healthier, and happier than any member of the family of one or two. If a woman do succeed in evading her natural functions of parturition and lactation, she can do so only by incurring greater sacrifices than parturition and lactation entail. It is not my purpose to enter here into the nosology of women who attempt to shirk their natural and incumbent duty of Motherhood; but the diseases, ailments, and mental and moral affections incident to such are many and complicated; and I aver unhesitatingly that the careful and extensive observation of any of my readers, directed to this subject, will corroborate my allegation on this point. You can, of course, prevent the apple-tree from bearing apples; you can bark it, or dig it half out of the ground, or cut it half through with an axe. It is just as natural for a woman to bear children as it is for an apple-tree to bear apples; and in neither case can you prevent production without doing violence to the producer."

The Spartans settled the question in their fashion long ago. Ignorant of, or scornfully rejecting, preventive checks, they weeded out all babies that could be better spared. The weaklings went early to the wall. The survival of the fittest was decided as soon as fitness or unfitness was apparent. They took also nearly as much trouble in the breeding of the best qualities of men and women as our stock-breeders and dog-fanciers now do in producing the finest specimens of our favourite quadrupeds. Sensible, practical people, those Spartans; but not quite what we should call moral.

My object, in preparing this pamphlet, scarcely needs explanation. It is simply to show what is the actual position of Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., on important questions of morals and society. I show where he has stood for twenty odd years. I do not question his right to stand there, nor the right of the burghers of Northampton to have him for their

representative, nor his right to have a seat and vote for his constituents, the worthy cordwainers, pig-drivers, and Cat-and-Ladleites. He may stand before Mr. Speaker and shout, "So help me God!" (or "god") to his heart's content. When Charles Bradlaugh swears allegiance to Queen Victoria, and asserts his belief in god or God, or publishes "The Fruits of Philosophy," or Mrs. Besant's improvement upon Knowltonism, or patronises "The Elements of Social Science," it is no affair of mine. I hold to free thought and free discussion; but I hold also that a man who aspires to an eminent and responsible position should be clear, open, above-board, and responsible for his words and deeds.

I have referred to Bradlaughism or Cat-and-Ladleism as Palæo-Secularism, and to Saladinism or Anti-Cat-and-Ladleism as Neo-Secularism.

P. A.

# SEXUAL ECONOMY,

*AS TAUGHT BY CHARLES BRADLAUGH.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE TWO B.'s AND "THE ELEMENTS."

FOR about thirty years Mr. Charles Bradlaugh has been a speaker and writer in the cause of Freethought, Secularism, and Atheism. Ambitious of political distinction, he obtained, a few years ago, an election to the House of Commons from Northampton. He also managed, in connection with a lady who has for some years assisted him in his labours as writer and public speaker, to get convicted of the misdemeanour of publishing an immoral pamphlet, and both were sentenced to a term of imprisonment by the then Lord Chief Justice ; but both managed to escape what many considered a merited punishment by a technical informality. Not that a man or woman is the worse for being legally convicted and unjustly punished. Mr. Bradlaugh and his partner in this supposed iniquity are Malthusians, and the pamphlet for which they were condemned was written to teach people how they could gratify their animal propensities without increasing an already burthensome population. The law, as represented by Judge and Jury, considered this immoral and criminal. The "Fruits of Philosophy" was suppressed, and the lady in the case wrote another pamphlet, which she considered better and more effective than Knowlton's.

When elected member of Parliament for Northampton nothing stood between Mr. Bradlaugh and the object of

his ambition but the oath, which he declared was meaningless to him, but which he was, nevertheless, quite ready to take. That is, Charles Bradlaugh, an avowed Atheist, was more than willing to declare his belief in a God, in the most solemn and public manner, by an act of religious faith and worship—by kissing the Bible and saying, "*So help me God!*" He actually did this. He read the oath and kissed the book, putting up a public prayer to God in the House of Commons; but the House, by a considerable majority, refused to accept the solemn sacrifice. The Atheist's prayer remains unanswered.

I am not condemning Mr. Bradlaugh for not believing in a God; I am not justifying the House of Commons for requiring a declaration of such belief from all its members. Belief is not a voluntary act of the mind, though supposed to be necessary for admission to heaven and—at least, its pretence—for taking a seat in Parliament. Mr. Bradlaugh has for years insisted upon his right to kiss the Bible he publicly denounces, and to say, "*So help me God!*" Whether an avowed Atheist, a public teacher and defender of Atheism, can consistently and publicly put up this prayer, or make this act of faith, is a question of conscience.

Thought is necessarily free. The advocacy of Free-thought is not needed. The question is only whether any expression of the free thoughts of men should be restrained or punished. When such expression is considered a libel the law punishes it by fine and imprisonment; when it is considered treason it may bring heavier penalties. Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant were sentenced to imprisonment for the publication of their free thoughts as to the policy and the means of satisfying sexual desires without increasing population.

As editor, for a long period, of a Freethought and Secularist newspaper, and while until recently President of a Secularist organisation, Mr. Bradlaugh publicly promoted the sale of a book, entitled "*Elements of Social Science*"—a work infinitely more demoralising, according to the common ideas of morality, than "*The Fruits of Philosophy*;" a book which denounces as a sin and a crime in men and women what the civilised world has for ages considered virtue and morality. I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of Mr. Bradlaugh and his amiable coadjutor, Mrs. Besant



I am not questioning their right to think and feel as they can or must on all matters of religion or morals. The policy of electing persons who promulgate such opinions to Parliament is quite another matter, which constituencies must settle for themselves. My sole object in this pamphlet is to show what Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., has avowed as his belief, and what he has publicly taught and, if a consistent man, privately practised; but that, of course, is no one's business but his own and that of "whom it may concern." I have nothing to do with any portion of his life but his public teachings. For many years he has been the friend and associate of the author of "The Elements of Social Science." He has defended, eulogised, and, to the extent of his influence, promoted the circulation of that book. What I do and all I do is to show what that book is by extracts from its pages. I only review the book, as might be done in any magazine or newspaper, with such extracts as show its scope, intention, and character.

I have nothing to do with the motives of either the anonymous author or the well-known promoter of "The Elements." I think I shall do a public service by showing the character of the book and its promoter, even if its sale is thereby increased. It is better, in all such cases, that the truth should be known. If, knowing the facts, people choose to stand by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, that is their affair, not mine. I have no animosities to gratify. If a majority of the electors of Northampton wish to be represented by Mr. Bradlaugh, that is *their* business. If the people of the United Kingdom wish to adopt the opinions of Mr. Bradlaugh and his co-workers, it is no affair of mine. If the palæo-Secularist sect or party wants him for its leader, champion, and chief, their choice is free. They can throw over SALADIN, stand by the Neo-Malthusians, fatten on "The Fruits of Philosophy," and revel in "The Elements of Social Science."

## CHAPTER II.

BRADLAUGH'S QUARREL WITH JOSEPH  
BARKER.

STRANGE as the fact may seem, it is quite true that the Secularist party in Great Britain has divided on the question of social or sexual morality. The party of Bradlaugh and Besant—the readers of the *National Reformer*, the Neo-Malthusians and Knowltonites—have taken their stand irrevocably on the doctrines of the Malthusian League and “The Elements of Social Science.” This book was first published about twenty years ago. It purports to be written by “A Graduate of Medicine,” whose name has never been made public; but, as the articles on Political Economy and Malthusianism, in the *National Reformer* in 1860, signed “G. R.,” are evidently by the same hand, and as “G. R.” is the annotator of Mr. Bradlaugh’s and Mrs. Besant’s edition of “The Fruits of Philosophy,” we cannot be wrong in attributing to “G. R.” the authorship of “The Elements of Social Science.”

In the *National Reformer* of July 20th, 1861, Mr. Joseph Barker, co-editor with Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, denounces, in his half of the Secularist organ, people who are filling the other half with “follies, indecencies, immoralities, and crimes.” “The Elements of Social Science” having been commended by Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Barker declares that “a work that exhibits, in ranker abundance or grosser hideousness, all the bad qualities of the most revolting books we never read;” and he denounces it as containing “the greatest amount of evil in the world,” and full of “demoralising sentiments and odious vices;” as containing “population fallacies,” things “as foul as filth, the best of which a man of sense and decency would sooner die than recommend;” and yet this book, Mr. Barker complained most bitterly, had been advertised and strongly and repeatedly recommended in the other half (Mr. Bradlaugh’s half) of the

*National Reformer*. He complained also that Mr. Bradlaugh had sent a secret circular to the shareholders of the *National Reformer*, and had formed a conspiracy with some of his friends to get exclusive possession of it, "and so exclude all articles of a moral tendency, and devote it to the spread of negative and purely demoralising forms of Secularism," their object being, he said, "to destroy all sense of moral obligation, and curse mankind with an unbounded sensual license." "G. R." came to the rescue and defended Mr. Bradlaugh.

Mr. Barker, August 3rd, admits that many public advocates of liberal views had been notoriously immoral, and had published indecent and immoral works. Mr. Holyoake, more scrupulous than many others, would not publish Rousseau's "Confessions" entire; but another Freethought publisher did, and his edition was recommended in Mr. Bradlaugh's side of the *National Reformer*. Then Mr. Barker goes on to denounce immoral Sceptics, and declares that, if he cannot find moral ones, he will bury himself in the wilds of America; as he did, poor man, some years later. He says: "Mr. Bradlaugh is terribly mistaken if he supposes he can drag down Buckle and Mill into the filthy slough in which he is wallowing, or raise himself from his horrible position by an abuse of their honourable names." To "G. R." he says: "I expect to shortly expose in a pamphlet the revolting doctrines which you and Mr. Bradlaugh are endeavouring to promote;" and speaks of "the atrocious 'Elements of Social Science,' which Mr. Bradlaugh has so often and so loudly praised."

Finally, in the last number of the *National Reformer* which he was permitted to edit, he fills pages with extracts from the book to prove what he had said of its horrible and revolting character.

Later, in his own paper, *Barker's Review*, vol. i., p. 118, he vigorously denounces the doctrines taught by Mr. Bradlaugh and the *National Reformer*, and points out that "the principle that the animal appetites should rule; that powerful animal appetites are great virtues; that there is no danger in their free, unlimited indulgence, is represented by the author of the loathsome publication in which this theory is taught and defended, and by those who commend the work and aid in its circulation."

And in *Barker's Review*, vol. i., p. 170, he says: "Only

one public man among the Secularists condemned the book until we exposed it. It has been advertised, recommended, and circulated by Secularist lecturers; its author almost worshipped, and the moment a Secularist retracted his commendation of the work he was savagely assailed by the editor of the *National Reformer*."

It was in vain that Joseph Barker worked for the separation of Freethought from immorality, and called his opponents "the unbounded license party." The majority was against him. Mr. Bradlaugh was consistent, and stands today where he did twenty years ago, with Mrs. Besant as his first Vice-President of the National Secular Society, and the eloquent defender of the doctrines denounced by Mr. Joseph Barker, who had vainly tried to carry the morals of Methodism into the advocacy of Secularism. From that day, up to a recent period, during sixteen years, "The Elements of Social Science" was advertised in the then leading organ of Secularism, and its principles advocated in its columns; and in "The National Secular Society's Almanack for 1878" I find the following advertisement:—

**E**LEMENTS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE; OR, PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, AND NATURAL RELIGION. An Exposition of the True Cause and Only Cure of the Three Primary Social Evils—Poverty, Prostitution, and Celibacy. By a Doctor of Medicine. Sixteenth Edition. Twenty-eighth Thousand.

Translations of this Work have been published in the following languages:—

In French—*Éléments de Science Sociale*.

In German—*Die Grundzüge der Gesellschaftswissenschaft*.

In Dutch—*De Elementen der Sociale Wetenschap*.

In Italian—*Elementi di Scienza Sociale*.

In Portuguese—*Elementos de Sciencia Social*.

And among the "Opinions of the Press" we read:—

"This is the only book, so far as we know, in which, at a cheap price and with honest and pure intent and purpose, all the questions affecting the sexes, and the influence of their relations on society, are plainly dealt with. It has now been issued in French as well as in English, and we bring the French edition to the notice of our friends of the International Working Men's Association, and of our subscribers in France and Belgium, as essentially a poor man's book."—*National Reformer*, edited by Mr. Charles Bradlaugh.

The *Medical Press and Circular* says :—

“We are told that it has been largely read in London by medical men.”

The *Examiner*, in one of its many phases, said :—

“This is, we believe, the only book that has fully, honestly, and in a scientific spirit, recognised all the elements of the problem, How are mankind to triumph over poverty, with its train of attendant evils? and fearlessly endeavoured to find a practical solution.”

The *Reasoner*, edited by Mr. G. J. Holyoake, said :—

“It is, in one sense, a book which it is a mercy to issue and courage to publish.”

The *Boston Investigator*, the leading palæo-Secularist paper in America, says :—

“We have never risen from the perusal of any work with greater satisfaction.”

Italian and German Secularist writers even more emphatically commend it.

This book, “The Elements of Social Science,” was thus for years advertised, eulogised, and promoted by Mr. Bradlaugh. He has never, to my knowledge, withdrawn his commendations or repudiated its teachings. It remains, therefore, only necessary to show what are the doctrines of the book, in order to show what are the social and moral beliefs of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, M.P., etc.

## CHAPTER III.

## SEXUAL RELIGION.

THE religion of Palæo-Secularism, as accepted and promulgated by Mr. Bradlaugh and his associates, consists in the love of the world and the worship of matter, and especially of the human body. Thus, in this "Bible of Secularism," we have sections on "Natural Religion" and "Physical Religion;" but nearly the whole book is occupied with teaching the most important principle, or doctrines, of "SEXUAL RELIGION."

According to this religion, the chief end of man is to glorify his animal desires, and, this being his only world and only life, to have in it all possible sensual enjoyment. This great duty of humanity is enforced as a matter of natural religion, sexual religion, science, and philanthropy. It is urged for physiological and pathological reasons, and recommended as a means of preserving health and of curing disease.

The union of the sexes in marriage has been supposed by moralists to have for its principal end the production of offspring and the continuation of the human race on the earth. The Palæo-Secularist Bible teaches an entirely different doctrine. The great object of such intercourse is pleasure; and the production of offspring is, beyond a very narrow limit, an evil which it is our duty to avoid. Chastity, it contends, is a violation of natural law; continence is a crime; marriage, so far as it limits or hampers the enjoyment of the senses, is a superstitious and tyrannical institution; fidelity is an evil; prostitution, as far as it goes, is a remedy for bad institutions; but it may be abolished by the universal acceptance of Palæo-Secularist doctrines and practice as recommended in "The Elements of Social Science," a book which is so warmly commended and widely circulated among Palæo-Secularists all over the world, and especially by Charles

Bradlaugh and Annie Besant, who say, in the Publishers' Preface to "The Fruits of Philosophy," last edition, 1877: "Physiology has made great strides during the past forty years, and, not considering it right to circulate erroneous physiology, we submitted the pamphlet to a doctor in whose accurate knowledge we have the fullest confidence, and who is widely known in all parts of the world as the author of 'The Elements of Social Science.' The notes signed 'G. R.' are written by this gentleman." Thus it appears that "G. R.," the annotator of "The Fruits of Philosophy," is the author of the Bible of Secularism, "The Elements of Social Science;" while Dr. Drysdale, also a distinguished physician, is President of the Malthusian League, whose offices are those of the publishers of the *National Reformer* and "The Fruits of Philosophy;" and Mrs. Besant, first Vice-President of the National Secular Society, is Hon. Secretary of the Malthusian League and the author of "The Law of Population," a pamphlet written to take the place of the legally-condemned and rather obsolete one of Dr. Knowlton, and which is intended to aid people in carrying out more thoroughly the most important duties of "sexual religion," as laid down in "The Elements of Social Science."

I have stated briefly what these duties are. It is evident that they are the exact opposites of the duties taught and practised more or less by what are called respectable people. Christians are supposed to renounce "the world, the flesh, and the devil;" Secularists, of "The Elements" type, glorify the world; they teach the duty of revelling in sensuality, and, rejecting all ideas of spiritual existence, they do not, of course, believe in angels, good or bad.

It remains for us to show, by extracts from the book, which contains the most comprehensive and authoritative statements we can find of Mr. Bradlaugh's doctrines respecting sexual morals, or "sexual religion"—a book so thoroughly endorsed in the *National Reformer* that we have not mis-stated nor over-stated the purport of such doctrines as he so warmly approves, and mean to do simple justice in this matter by giving the doctrines as set forth in the words of the writer of "The Elements of Social Science," as well as the reasons he gives for maintaining them.

This book, so highly commended by Mr. Bradlaugh—

written by one of his most active partisans, as well as his teacher in morals—holds that all men and all women should, not only as a right, but as a duty, and as a religious duty appertaining to “sexual religion,” live in the free, full, frequent exercise of their sexual propensities. It teaches as duties what moralists condemn as lust, and fornication, and adultery. It teaches that continence and chastity, commended by others as virtues, are unnatural vices and deadly sins. It teaches the necessity, and therefore the right, of marital infidelity and the duty of seduction. It defends and honours prostitution, while it regards universal license and promiscuity as a more natural and desirable condition.

These are the doctrines which some of the chosen, or self-appointed, leaders of the Palæo-Secularist party have for many years accepted and defended, and which they have propagated in their far-reaching organisation.

It is probable that many Palæo-Secularists will be disposed to deny, and angrily resent, this indictment. I can sympathise with them ; but I am obliged to do what is much worse than to make such charges—I am obliged to prove them. To do this I must give a few extracts from “The Elements of Social Science,” as Joseph Barker did twenty-four years ago in his portion of the *National Reformer*, before he ceased to be one of its editors.

Here, then, are the doctrines and morals set forth in a book highly commended by Mr. Bradlaugh, M.P., circulated wherever the English language is read, and translated into the most important languages of Western Europe.

In the section on “Sexual Religion: Laws of the Sexual Organs,” it is stated that:—

“One physiological law of supreme importance and  
“universal application in our constitution is, that every  
“several member must, in order to be vigorous and  
“healthy, have a due amount of exercise, and that of the  
“normal kind. Thus the eye must have light, the limbs  
“motion, the intellect reflection, and our appetites and  
“passions their normal gratification, else will they infallibly  
“become enfeebled and diseased. Either excessive or  
“deficient exercise is injurious ; and, in order to have a  
“well-balanced bodily constitution (just as much our  
“honour and our duty as a well-balanced mind), we must



“obey this law. The generative organs are subject to it  
“as well as every other; and hence we shall see the duty  
“and necessity of their having due exercise from the time  
“of their maturity, which takes place at puberty, till that  
“of their decline” (page 78).

“Hence we must acknowledge that every man who has  
“not a due amount of sexual exercise lives a life of natural  
“imperfection and sin; and he can never be certain how  
“far Nature’s punishment for this will proceed in his  
“case” (p. 83).

“The commonly-received code of sexual morality is  
“most erroneous, and erected in ignorance of, and opposi-  
“tion to, natural truth; the real natural duties of every  
“human being (however social difficulties may interfere  
“with the discharge of them) towards his reproductive  
“organs, and the passions connected with them, consisting  
“in their due and normal exercise, for which the social  
“provision of marriage is quite inadequate. Nature lays  
“one command on us: ‘Exercise all thy functions, else  
“art thou an imperfect and sinful being” (page 153).

“It is absolutely certain that Nature meant the sexual  
“organs in either sex to have a due amount of exercise,  
“from the time of their maturity till their decline; and  
“no one who knows anything of the bodily laws can  
“doubt that every departure from the course she points  
“out is a natural sin; and she shows this herself by the  
“punishments she inflicts. She forms no organ that she  
“does not intend to be exercised, rouses no desires merely  
“to torment by their self-denial. It is not by shutting  
“our eyes to these facts that we can hope to progress  
“either in knowledge or in virtue” (page 163).

“Chastity is considered one of the greatest of all virtues  
“in woman, and in man too, though in his case it is  
“practically less regarded. We have no longer voluntary  
“nuns, but of involuntary ones there are myriads—far  
“more, in reality, than ever existed in any Roman  
“Catholic country. Millions of women pass a great part  
“of their sexual lives, and immense numbers pass the  
“whole, in total sexual abstinence, without any of the  
“enjoyments of sexual pleasures or the happiness of a  
“mother’s affections. For all this incredible self-denial,  
“which causes more anguish and disease than any mind

“can conceive, they have for their reward the barren  
“praise of chastity” (page 162).

“Chastity, or complete sexual abstinence, so far from  
“being a virtue, is invariably a great natural sin. We are  
“short-sighted beings, full of errors and false theories ;  
“but Nature is absolutely unerring, and it is only by con-  
“sulting her that we can gain a true knowledge of our  
“virtues and vices. If we attend to Nature, we shall find  
“that all our organs are subject to the same law of health ;  
“the great law of normal and sufficient exercise. There  
“is no organ in our body, nor any faculty in our mind,  
“which, to be healthy (or, in other words, virtuous), does  
“not require its due share of appropriate exercise. The  
“sexual organs are subject to this law exactly as all others ;  
“and, whatever theories we form about them, Nature in-  
“variably rewards or punishes them, according as the  
“conditions of their health are observed. She cares not  
“for our moral code ; marriage has nothing sacred in her  
“eyes ; with or without marriage, she gives her seal of  
“approbation to the sexually virtuous man or woman in a  
“healthy and vigorous state of the sexual organs and  
“appetites, while she punishes the erring by physical and  
“moral sufferings” (p. 162).

“The two natures [of man and woman] are built on  
“the same original model, and, in the main, they are alike  
“in their laws. The great law of exercise of every part  
“applies equally to both sexes ; and in woman, as in  
“man, physical strength is more virtuous than weakness ;  
“courage than timidity ; nervous power than nervous  
“debility ; and it is a sign of an effeminate and un-  
“natural theory of life that these truths are not deeply  
“felt by all of us” (p. 163).

“We may do what we please in the way of other healthy  
“influences ; we may bestow every other care on the  
“nurture and education of our beloved ones ; but it is  
“absolutely impossible to make women healthy or happy  
“without a due amount of sexual enjoyment” (p. 175).

“When the universal applicability of the great law of  
“exercise to all our organs is understood, every one will  
“perceive that he is *morally bound* to exercise duly his  
“sexual organs throughout the period of sexual life. Thus  
“the young man, on entering upon puberty, will feel that

“ Nature commands him to indulge, to a moderate extent,  
“ his sexual desires ; and, when once he is fully convinced  
“ of the natural rectitude of this, he cannot fail to perceive  
“ the insufficiency and unnatural character of our moral  
“ code ” (p. 176).

We need not extend these quotations, which cover the whole ground of sexual morality as taught by the highest Malthusian authority, and as accepted and taught by prominent Secularist leaders. The book from which they are taken is to be found in most Secularist libraries, and it is read in six languages.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE NEO-MALTHUSIAN DOCTRINE OF  
MARRIAGE.

MARRIAGE, according to the principles laid down in the preceding chapter, is an unnatural institution, a hateful monopoly, a delusion and a snare. The one fact of a large surplus female population is, with Palæo-Secularistic Malthusians, sufficient to condemn monogamic marriage. Polygamy would be a partial remedy for that evil; but in other countries, and in all new colonies, there is a surplus male population—sometimes a very large one—whose requirements are to be provided for, which would introduce the opposite institution of Polyandry, said to exist in Thibet, where one woman is married to several husbands. The only other resources are prostitution, as it exists in nearly all communities, or general promiscuous intercourse, such as is advocated by the author of "The Elements." He is too scientific, in his way—too logical, and too honestly outspoken, to leave us in any doubt on a matter of such importance. He sees clearly that "Sexual Religion," as he preaches it, cannot be practised with the existence of legal marriage. This is a clear deduction from his "Law of Exercise;" but it is enforced, as we shall see in another chapter, by reasons drawn from what he considers medical science.

In "The Elements of Social Science" (department of "Sexual Religion") we read:—

"Many of the sexual evils most widely spread among us depend directly upon the errors of our code of sexual morality. According to this code, all love except married love is considered sinful. Marriage, it is held, moreover, should bind people together for life, without leaving them the power of indulging in any other sexual intimacy, or of divorce from each other, unless either

"the husband or wife commits adultery. If this, which  
 "is the view of marriage generally entertained in this  
 "country, were to continue, there are very many fearful  
 "sexual evils which could not be removed. In the first  
 "place, what is, or should be, the grand object of any  
 "social institution for uniting the sexes? It is, that *each*  
 "*individual in society, every man and woman, should have*  
 "*a fair share of the blessings of love and of offspring, and*  
 "*that the children should be duly provided for.* But, if  
 "marriage be the only honourable way of obtaining sexual  
 "and parental pleasures, very many must be excluded  
 "from them; for, even supposing that there were room  
 "for the exercise of all the reproductive powers, as in  
 "America, or that, by preventive intercourse, the propor-  
 "tion of children in each family were to be small, so as  
 "to allow of a great many marriages, still there would be  
 "a large number of women, and even of men, who, from  
 "plainness and other unattractive qualities, would find no  
 "one who would be willing to be rigidly bound to them  
 "for life" (p. 356).

"The irrevocable nature of the marriage contract, and  
 "the impossibility of procuring divorce, lead to the most  
 "fearful evils. Mr. Hill shows this in his work on  
 "'Crime,' telling us that the great majority of murders  
 "and brutal assaults now-a-days are committed by  
 "husbands upon their wives, and showing that it is in the  
 "nature of all long and indissoluble contracts to cause  
 "similar evils. All contracts binding two human beings  
 "together in an indissoluble manner for long periods are  
 "the fruitful source of crimes and miseries.....The  
 "custom, moreover, of selecting one sole object of love,  
 "steeling one's heart, as far as sexual desires are con-  
 "cerned, against all the rest of man or womankind, has a  
 "very narrowing effect on our capacity for affection and  
 "appreciation of what is good and amiable in the different  
 "characters we see around us. Hence, in great measure,  
 "has arisen that *fastidiousness* in love which is so marked  
 "among us, and is the sign of a narrow and effeminate  
 "culture" (p. 358).

"The great *natural sexual duties* of man and woman  
 "do not, as is commonly imagined, consist in being a  
 "constant husband or wife, or in avoiding unmarried

“intercourse, but are of a very different nature. It is of the highest importance that the attention of all of us should be steadfastly concentrated upon the real sexual duties, and not dazzled by mere names. *Marriage diverts our attention from the real sexual duties*, and this is one of its worst effects” (p. 363).

“Every individual man or woman is bound to exercise duly his sexual organs, so that the integrity of his own health shall not be impaired on the one hand, and so that he shall not, on the other, interfere with the health and happiness of his neighbour. Every individual should make it his conscientious aim that he or she should have a sufficiency of love to satisfy the sexual demands of his nature, and that others around him should have the same. It is impossible, as has been shown before, that each individual should have this in an old country, unless by the use of preventive means. The use of these means, therefore, comes to be *incumbent* upon all those who seek to enjoy the natural pleasures of love themselves without depriving their neighbours of them” (p. 366).

“It is *absolutely impossible* to have a free, sincere, and dignified sexual morality in our society as long as marriage continues to be the only honourable provision for the union of the sexes, and as long as the marriage bond is so indissoluble as at present.....It is only by relaxing the rigour of the marriage bond, and allowing greater sexual freedom, that it is possible to eradicate prostitution, and with it venereal disease” (p. 368).

“Now, in reality, *facility of divorce does away with marriage*; it thoroughly alters the theory of the institution, and makes it in reality nothing more than an agreement between two people to live together as man and wife, so long as they love each other. And such is the only true mode of sexual union; it is the one which Nature points out to us; and we may be certain that any institution which defies the natural laws of love, as marriage does, will be found to be the cause of immense evils; ever accumulating as the world rolls on, and mankind become more free and more enlightened in the physical and moral laws of their being.....Let those who will marry; but those who do not wish

“to enter upon so indissoluble a contract, either on account of their early age, or from a disapproval of the whole ceremony, should deem it perfectly honourable and justifiable to form a temporary connection” (p. 371).

“As I have already endeavoured to show, the present system of prostitution and indissoluble marriage (which are closely connected together), might be, or ought to be, superseded by preventive intercourse, and by a relaxation of the marriage code, when the diseases of abstinence and abuse might not only be satisfactorily treated, but effectually prevented” (p. 504).

“The noblest sexual conduct, in the present state of society, appears to me to be that of those who, while endeavouring to fulfil the *real* sexual duties, enumerated in a former essay, live together openly and without disguise, but refuse to enter into an indissoluble contract of which they conscientiously disapprove” (p. 504.)

It is needless to multiply quotations on this point, for the whole science and logic of the book are utterly irreconcilable with the institution of marriage; so that this book, so highly commended by Mr. Bradlaugh, M P., in its chapters on “Sexual Religion,” is a protest and a conspiracy against it; and, if the teachings of “The Elements of Social Science” are carried into practice, marriage, as commonly understood, becomes impossible.

## CHAPTER V.

## PALÆO-SECULAR VIEWS OF SOCIAL EVILS.

LET it be understood that I do not impeach the motives of the author of "The Elements of Social Science." No doubt he would abolish marriage and chastity, and what men have for so many ages called purity and virtue, for what he believes to be the best interests of humanity.

The author of "The Elements" is earnestly, and even pathetically, philanthropic. In the last paragraph of the book he says :—

"It is not for myself that I ask consideration ; it is for  
 "the unfortunate sufferers to whom this work is devoted,  
 "and for whose benefit I would readily submit to any  
 "amount of obloquy—even from those I wish to serve.  
 "Alas ! when I see around me the poor perishing in their  
 "squalid homes, the forsaken prostitutes wandering in our  
 "streets, the sexual victims pining in solitude and bitter-  
 "ness ; when I look down into the fearful abyss of our social  
 "miseries and wrongs, and think, moreover, of the mutual  
 "destruction by which all this suffering is attended, the  
 "reflection overpowers me—that it matters little what  
 "becomes of myself. What am I better than they that  
 "I should be happy when so many are miserable ? If I  
 "can help my suffering fellow-men, it is the dearest wish  
 "of my heart—that for which I live—that for which  
 "I would willingly die ; if not, I am indifferent to  
 "my own fate. But I have a deep and abiding convic-  
 "tion that these evils are not insuperable ; that the future  
 "of our race will be brighter than the past ; and that what  
 "I have written has not been written in vain" (p. 592).

In another place he says :—

"Morality, medicine, religion, law, politics, are solemn



“ farces played before the eyes of men, whose imposing  
 “ poms and dazzling ceremonies serve but to divert the  
 “ attention from the awful tragedies behind the scenes.  
 “ We may be absolutely certain of this, that, unless we can  
 “ attain to some other solution of the social difficulties,  
 “ our society must for ever continue, as it ever has been,  
 “ a chaos of confusion, of wrongs, and of misery.”

The ground he takes in regard to our great social evil, prostitution, proves his humanity, as the whole book does his sincerity. He regrets its evils, he mourns over its degradation, he pities its victims, but thinks “ the life of voluntary celibacy led by these ladies ”—who try to reform prostitutes—“ quite as sinful a one as that of the prostitutes they endeavour to convert,” and asks :—

‘ In what light, then, is prostitution to be regarded  
 “ when we take into consideration the great primary  
 “ necessity of sexual intercourse ? It should be regarded  
 “ as a valuable temporary substitute for a better state of  
 “ things. It is greatly preferable to no sexual intercourse  
 “ at all, without which, as has been shown, every man and  
 “ woman must lead a most unnatural life. Therefore, the  
 “ deep gratitude of mankind, instead of their scorn, is  
 “ due, and will be given in future times, to those unfortu-  
 “ nate females who have suffered in the cause of our sexual  
 “ nature. We shall find that, if we love and reverence  
 “ these girls (at the same time that we endeavour totally  
 “ to remove from our society the fearful evil of prostitu-  
 “ tion), they will love and reverence us, and on no other  
 “ consideration. If Society enfold them in her bosom,  
 “ they will soon learn gratefully to repay her love ; but,  
 “ if she continue to spurn them, her punishments and  
 “ sufferings will be no less than theirs. Her unnatural  
 “ treatment has made them so degraded, and from that  
 “ degradation only her repentant love and reverence will  
 “ uplift them ” (p. 270).

In the present social state, the only resource of a young man, he says, is one of three necessary evils, of which mercenary love is the least. But—

“ Mercenary love, besides the fearful dangers of venereal

“disease, is exceedingly degrading ; and the amount of  
 “evil done to men, as well as to women, by this general  
 “degradation of their first sexual experiences is little con-  
 “ceived. The young woman is in a much worse sexual  
 “position than even the young man, for even mercenary  
 “love is far better than total sexual abstinence” (p. 239).

Here, as elsewhere, our author seems content to make woman the victim of what he considers the necessities of man ; but the social system he advocates would make men and women equal, and there is, from his point of view, both justice and good feeling in the following observations :—

“Clandestine love fills the whole of society with deceit  
 “and suspicion ; every one suspects his neighbour, and is  
 “in his turn the object of suspicion ; and even were there  
 “no other obstacles to the elevation of the human cha-  
 “racter, this alone, as long as it continues to exist, must  
 “be fatal to the hopes of the moralist.

“But, if man be placed in so humiliating a position in  
 “sexual matters, unfortunate *woman* is infinitely more so.  
 “In the first place, we have the vast multitude of  
 “*prostitutes*, on whose awful degradation one cannot think  
 “but with dismay and anguish. That there should be  
 “among us a class of unfortunate women, who are  
 “treated worse than dogs ; who are hunted about by the  
 “police, despised and abhorred by their own sex, and  
 “abused and neglected by man, to whose wants they  
 “minister, is a page of human shame too dark for tears.  
 “It is the greatest disgrace of civilised society—a dis-  
 “grace deeper even than negro slavery. And for what  
 “are these poor girls hunted down in this merciless  
 “manner ? In truth, for acting exactly the same way as  
 “all of us—as all young men, who go with them, enjoy  
 “ourselves with them, and then desert them, and leave  
 “them to their fate ; for supplying a want in our society,  
 “which man, by the necessities of his nature, cannot do  
 “without, and which only they, who know little of human  
 “nature, imagine may be withheld without the most de-  
 “structive consequences. Instead of contempt, these  
 “poor neglected girls deserve the warmest thanks of  
 “society, for the heroic mode in which they have borne

“the misery and the burden of our shame. Notwithstanding the enormous evils which they aid in causing, they have been in the main *exceedingly serviceable* to mankind, by palliating in some degree the other alternative evils of the law of population—namely, sexual abstinence or premature death; and thus, as already mentioned, they should be regarded as sexual martyrs.

“If youth is to be humiliated and disgraced for indulging in sexual intercourse, at least let all of us bear our share, and be ashamed to throw the whole burden on poor helpless woman. While so glaring an injustice exists, how can we talk of the nobility or dignity of man? In truth, no one member of the human family, no prostitute nor criminal, can be degraded, without dragging down all the rest. In the case of prostitution the whole of society is concerned in it. Men, it may be said, are as a general rule all prostitutes; for there are but an inconsiderable section of them who do not indulge more or less at some period of life in mercenary loves, and it matters little in such a case whether the money be given or received. The general character of woman also is exceedingly debased, and their dignity and freedom lessened, by the existence of such a class among their sex” (p. 409.)

He feels deeply and he complains bitterly of this unnatural state of things, and says :—

“As long as the present sexual system lasts there is no such thing as a dignified life for youth. Mercenary love, in itself, is an abomination, utterly abhorrent to Nature, and full of degradation to all concerned in it.....In fact, in all sexual intercourse, except in marriage, the young man has to act and feel like a pick-pocket, shunning the light, and being for ever on his guard against discovery; and it can readily be perceived what an effect this must have in degrading his character” (p. 407).

Condemning prostitution as abominable, utterly abhorrent to nature, full of degradation, our philosopher can still look upon prostitutes as heroic martyrs, who “deserve the

warmest thanks of society." But a scientific philanthropist can look charitably even upon what are called unnatural vices. He says:—

"All these vices have met with an opprobrium far\*  
 "greater than they deserved ; for the public mind loses all  
 "sense of justice when it comes to consider a sexual fault,  
 "and is always far too harsh in its judgments. I should  
 "say that, of all acts, none are viewed with such unjust  
 "severity as these unnatural vices.....As long as the  
 "present obstacles continue to the gratification of the  
 "normal desires ; as long as all unmarried love is regarded  
 "in a harsh and degrading light, so long will prostitution  
 "and unnatural vices flourish, and it will be out of human  
 "power to suppress them" (p. 249).

The present obstacles to perfection are the institution of marriage and the common ideas and feelings opposed to universal license and promiscuity. The great evil—almost the only evil in the world—is the repression of what Christian moralists call licentiousness. The greatest good possible for humanity would be the removal of all such prejudices and restrictions, so that prostitution, shameful, unnatural, abhorrent as it is, is to be preferred to civilised morality ; and our author says :—

"As long, however, as prostitution continues to be, in  
 "many cases, the only attainable intercourse, although I  
 "deeply deplore its existence, it seems to me a far smaller  
 "evil that a man should indulge in it than that he should  
 "waste away under the miseries and evils of abstinence  
 "or unnatural and diseasing abuses."

In a word, the "social evil" is to be tolerated, and even cherished, until women generally become so far Malthusianised—or, may I say, Bradlaughised?—as to make it no longer a necessary evil.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PALÆO-SECULAR MEDICINE.

It could not be expected that a "Graduate of Medicine" would write a book upon "The Elements of Social Science and Sexual Religion" without treating largely of the diseases which are caused by civilised morality, and are to be cured by the opposite system, accepted, adopted, and recommended by the partisans of the seatless M.P. What are called the sexual diseases of men and women are, therefore, described at length; but it is not necessary that we should enter into these unpleasant professional details. It will be sufficient to show that, according to this author, all these diseases have their origin in the one evil of sexual restraint or chastity, and their one cure is sexual license.

Writing of "Hysteria," the author of the "Elements" says:—

"Chastity or sexual abstinence causes more real disease and misery in one year, I believe, in this country than sexual excesses in a century. We must not include venereal disease among the evils of excess, as it has nothing to do with it; it depends always on infection, not on over-use of the sexual organs" (p. 186).

"Woman's peculiar torments begin at puberty, and from that time, in innumerable cases, till her marriage, she is the constant prey of anxiety. Ungratified desires distract her, endless temptations and excitements surround her, marriage is for her so critical a step, and yet she has not the power of selection. The fatal question, Shall she be married at all? gradually dawns upon her, and the clouds and whirlwinds of anxious and conflicting passions darken her sky..... The only one who can cure a hysterical young woman is a young man whom she loves, and with whom she may gratify her natural feelings, and have a free and happy outlet

“for the emotions which have been so long disordering  
“her” (p. 183).

“I am convinced,” says this high medical authority, “that, if sexual intercourse were used early enough in these diseases [mentioning some to which young girls are liable], very few cases would exist” (p. 172).

Treating of “Chlorosis,” a disease of girls, he says:—

“The crippling idea of chastity and female decorum  
“binds her like an invisible chain, wherever she moves,  
“and prevents her from daring to think, feel, or act, freely  
“and impulsively.....If we examine into the origin and  
“meaning of these singular ideas with regard to woman,  
“we shall find that they are based upon no natural distinc-  
“tion between the two sexes, but upon the erroneous  
“views of man, and especially upon the mistaken ideas as  
“to the virtue of female *chastity*. It is to guard this  
“supposed virtue that all the restrictions on female liberty  
“and female development in body and mind have arisen.  
“.....Society is itself to blame for all such errors as  
“unnatural sexual indulgences in either sex. Until we  
“can supply to the violent sexual passions of youth a  
“proper and natural gratification, we may be absolutely  
“certain that an unnatural one will be very frequently  
“resorted to.....The only true and permanent remedy  
“is a proper amount of sexual exercise” (pp. 167-171).

Of course, the same remedy is prescribed in diseases of a similar character in men, and there is no doubt that this kind of practice has spread to a considerable extent in the medical profession, and that—

“It is now comparatively common among our most  
“skilful medical men to recommend sexual intercourse to  
“young men suffering from genital debility.”

With them there is little difficulty in carrying out such a prescription; with women it is different. Our author says:—

“But for suffering woman no one has yet raised his  
“voice, no one has applied to her case the only true and  
“scientific remedy; that remedy which is the keystone of

“female therapeutics, and without which all treatment or  
 “prevention of female disease is a vanity and a delusion.  
 “The great mass of female sexual diseases, even more than  
 “those of men, arise from sexual enfeeblement, consequent  
 “on the want of a healthy and sufficient exercise for this  
 “important part of the system. From the want of this,  
 “the green sickness, menstrual irregularities, hysterical  
 “affections without number, proceed; and it is utter  
 “vanity to expect to cure, and still more to prevent, these  
 “miserable diseases, without going to the root of the  
 “matter. It is a certain and indubitable fact that, unless  
 “we can supply to the female organs their proper natural  
 “stimulus, and a healthy and natural amount of exercise,  
 “female disease will spring up on every side around us,  
 “and all other medical appliances will be powerless against  
 “the hydra” (p. 163).

But, in addition to the slavery of one sex to prejudices and superstitions about chastity, virtue, and morality, there are still but comparatively few physicians who have the science and the courage to make the proper prescription:—

“How few English physicians are there who have the  
 “courage, even if they have the knowledge, to prescribe—  
 “nay, even to tell the patient of this one and only physio-  
 “logical remedy! No; overawed by the general erro-  
 “neous moral views on these subjects, they shrink from  
 “their duty of asserting the sacredness of the bodily laws  
 “in opposition to all preconceptions” (p. 81).

In some cases physicians advise marriage; but how seldom can such advice be taken! What man or woman would wish to be administered in that way as a remedy for disease? Our author sees and admits the difficulty. He says:—

“*Marriage deserts us at our greatest need*; and, if it  
 “should continue to be the only attainable sexual inter-  
 “course, the cure of vast numbers of genital diseases  
 “would be, as at present, impossible, and might be given  
 “up in despair. But not only the cure, the *prevention* of  
 “these diseases in any satisfactory degree would be  
 “impossible; for, unless all young people were to marry

“about puberty, which would create the most fearful subsequent repentances, an immense amount of genital disease would be certain to arise, were no other honourable provision made for the gratification of the first and most impetuous passions. It is very generally about and shortly after the age of puberty that masturbation begins to be practised among both sexes; chlorosis is most frequent in girls still in their teens; in short, it is an *absolute impossibility* to prevent the development of an immense amount of genital disease and morbidity if marriage be the only sexual provision for youth.”

The sole alternative, as we shall see more fully stated later on, is to abolish marriage, and adopt universal promiscuous intercourse.

Treating of “Dysmenorrhœa,” our author, after prescribing his panacea, says:—

“To *prevent* this disease, we must endeavour to eradicate throughout society the causes which lead to it. Of these by far the most important is sexual abstinence... ..And I believe that by far the most important class of sexual diseases are those which arise from sexual abstinence or abuse, and which are characterised by genital enfeeblement, giving rise to general debility and mental irritation, discontent, and despondency. These are universally spread throughout our society in the present day, and spring naturally from the universal difficulties opposing the healthy exercise of the sexual organs” (p. 238).

Young men suffering from a very common form of nervous exhaustion are advised to use “the natural remedy” very moderately at first—once a week or so—gradually increasing with the waxing powers (p. 105).

I regret the necessity of entering into these particulars, but can see no other way of bringing this very important subject to the attention of thoughtful men and women. It is right that fathers and mothers should know what kind of advice such a “Graduate of Medicine,” and all who may agree with him, may give their sons and daughters, and it is right that society should know what kind of medical doc-



trines are approved and widely promulgated by those who sympathise with the author of this book, and those who have done most to aid its circulation. But for the fact that this book, from which I have so liberally quoted, solely because I do not wish to do any injustice to its distinguished author, or his more distinguished or better known patrons and supporters, has been and is a recognised text-book of a great movement, or one branch of a growing organisation, I might have hesitated to lay such doctrines or such opinions, claiming to be scientific and medical, before the possible readers of these pages. But since I have decided that it is best that the real facts of life should be known—whether of the slums investigated by Royal Commissions, or the moral slums of false science and false philosophy, I think it right to give the author's defence of what most men, and, one may hope, nearly all women, will consider horrible doctrines. It is also but just to the unseated member for Northampton, who has so long and steadfastly stood by the book and worked with its author, who was, it will be remembered, the professional endorser and friendly annotator of "The Fruits of Philosophy," published by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant.

The author of the "Elements" says:—

"Every act of every organ is essentially *good*. This law applies exactly in the same way to all the intellectual and moral operations; every thought and feeling of the mind must, by the necessity of our being, tend to the preservation, and not to the destruction, of the organism, and therefore must be in like manner essentially *good*" (p. 415).

"In health and disease," he says, "this is alike true;" so that it is impossible for a man to think a bad thought or do a bad act.

All thought and all action is the result of material forces, which can, of course, have no moral character. He says:—

"Matter, when in the form of a muscle, can contract; when in the form of living nervous substance, *it can think*. Thought is, in some mysterious manner, connected with *phosphorus*, and must, in some way or other, be an exaltation and refinement of properties naturally

“inherent in that substance and in the other elements of  
 “the brain, but in what way is yet totally unknown. On  
 “reflection, we perceive that, as there is a chemical action  
 “attending every mental process, just as there is one  
 “attending every act of life, every change in the mind  
 “must be connected with an exactly corresponding change  
 “in these chemical actions” (p. 440).

Certainly no one would think of attributing free will, responsibility, and morality, or immorality, to chemical combinations ; and here is the whole philosophy of Materialism. There is no longer any question of morality, since morality cannot exist.

Mr. G. J. Holyoake, a less logical Materialist than the “Graduate of Medicine,” admits accountability for the operations of phosphorus, carbon, and oxygen, but limits it. He says (“Principles of Secularism”): “No man or woman is accountable to others for any conduct by which others are not injured or damaged.” As it must be difficult to determine when or how much others are injured by our acts, this rule is not easy of application ; and it clearly denies the right of interference with any act whose consequences may be supposed to be confined to the individual, as suicide or murder ; since it cannot be certainly proved, according to palæo-Secularist principles, that for a man to hasten his own annihilation can be an evil to society ; while it may be a decided benefit ; and the “painless extinction” of the lives of others might be, under conceivable circumstances, a mercy to them and a favour to the community. In any case, it would only interrupt unpleasant chemical action.

The action of phosphorus, according to the author of “The Elements,” has hitherto been very unfortunate. He says :—

“When we look around us among our friends and  
 “acquaintances we can scarcely find a single individual  
 “whose life we could call a happy one. For my part, I  
 “do not think that I know in this country a single such  
 “case, and I have heard the same opinion from others.  
 “All of us are worn by anxiety, and depressed by the  
 “atmosphere of misery that overspreads our society.....  
 “*Hitherto all happiness has been built on the misery of*

"others. No man at present can be happy himself without "inevitably causing his neighbour's misery" (p. 335).

The remedy for this miserable condition of the chemicals by whose reactions we think, feel, and suffer we have given in abundant extracts from the palæo-Secularist's text-book and Materialist's *vade mecum*. It consists in unbounded freedom of "Sexual Religion," and the artificial prevention of its natural consequences—only a very slight interference with the chemical operations of phosphorus, carbon, etc.; for he says:—

"An increase of sexual connections is, indeed, in itself, "one of the greatest blessings; but it is only a subject "for true and unqualified congratulation when it is not "followed by a corresponding increase of offspring" (p. 481).

Mrs. Besant, the present shining light of Bradlaughism, though a devout believer in "The Elements," whose doctrines she has written a special pamphlet to promote, attributes the miseries of human life to that peculiar result of the operations of phosphorus and other chemicals called Christianity. In No. 10 of the National Secular Society's tracts, "The Fruits of Christianity," which are "black, bitter, and poisonous," she says: "How Christianity has darkened the innocent brightness of the world is known to every student. Roman Catholic Christianity made a miserable life a holy life, but was content to leave it to the religious only: Protestant Christianity forced it on all alike. The Swiss Calvinists set the example of austerity, and the French Huguenots quickly followed. They forbade theatres, private theatricals, dancing, gay dresses, conjuring, puppet shows, etc., making gloom synonymous with piety. In Scotland the Protestants made the Sunday a misery." And she quotes Buckle as saying of them: "Men, in their daily actions, and in their very looks, became troubled, melancholy, and ascetic. Their countenance soured, and was downcast. Not only their opinions, but their gait, their demeanour, their voice, their general aspect, were influenced by that deadly blight which nipped all that was genial and warm..... Thus it was that the national character of the

Scotch was, in the seventeenth century, dwarfed and mutilated." Astounding effects of chemical reactions, natural selection, and the survival of the fittest! and only to be remedied by joining the National Secular Society and the Malthusian League, sending Mr. Bradlaugh to Parliament, and making a diligent study of "The Elements" and Mrs Besant's "Law of Population."

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE PALÆO-SECULARIST MALTHUSIANS.

MR. MALTHUS was a respectable English clergyman, who thought that there was a danger that the population of a country might increase faster than its supply of food, and he proposed that people should prevent the calamity of having more children than they could take care of by avoiding early marriages.

As a matter of fact, the people of several European countries do postpone marriage from prudential motives, and, in England, while the lower classes in towns marry at twenty, in the upper ranks the average age at marriage is about thirty.

The calculations and warnings of Malthus made some excitement in his time, and his ideas were adopted by James Mill, John Stuart Mill, and other political economists, and also by Richard Carlile and some Socialist writers. Some of these were not, however, content with the prudential checks to population of late marriages, or of married people living in continence, to limit the number of their children; and they recommended the use of certain methods for preventing pregnancy. Some went further and advocated infanticide, or what was called the "painless extinction" of every unwelcome babe at the moment of its birth. There is no doubt that, more or less in consequence of such teachings, a vast number of children have been wilfully murdered; as a vast number are also dying continually of unsanitary conditions and parental neglect.

The Population Question, as it is called, has been taken up by the leading Cat-and-Ladleites, and they have generally advocated "preventive intercourse" in preference to late marriages or married abstinence. Carlile in his "Every Woman's Book," Robert Dale Owen in his "Moral Physiology," Dr. Knowlton in his "Fruits of Philosophy," the

“Graduate of Medicine” in his “Elements of Social Science,” and Mrs. Besant in her “Law of Population,” have all taken the same ground—the dangers of too great and rapid an increase of population, and the necessity of finding some check; and they have adopted some mechanical or chemical method of preventing conception.

After Richard Carlile, Watson, a Secularist publisher, sold “The Fruits of Philosophy,” which was also sold by the Holyoakes, and by Charles Watts until his prosecution, when it was taken up by Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant.

But the great authority accepted by nearly all the Secularist leaders is the book from which I have made so many extracts. The “Graduate of Medicine” is a thorough Malthusian; only he rejects Malthus’s remedy for over-population. He is not in favour of late marriages—he prefers that people should not marry at all; but he is in favour of perpetual and limitless licentiousness, and of preventing its natural result. Here is the case as he puts it over and over again, with all his force and eloquence:—

It is absolutely necessary to health and happiness that every male and female should have frequent sexual intercourse, from the age of puberty as long as the propensity exists.

It is absolutely necessary that the number of children born should be limited to the supply of food.

Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to prevent the natural result of sexual indulgence.

Granting the premises, it is impossible to arrive at any other conclusion.

Let us give the concise statement in his own words:—

“The *Law of Exercise*. The health of the reproductive organs and emotions depends on their having a sufficient amount of normal exercise; and the want of this tends powerfully to produce misery and disease in both man and woman.

“The *Law of Fecundity*. Each woman tends to produce from ten to fifteen children or thereabouts.

“The *Law of Agricultural Industry, or Diminishing Productiveness*. The proportional returns to agriculture tend to diminish. In other words, the produce of the soil tends to increase in a less proportion than the labour bestowed on it.

“ From these three laws arise—

“ The *Law of Population, or Malthusian Law*. The natural increase of population has always been, and will always continue to be, most powerfully checked in all old countries, and in new colonies also, as soon as their cultivation has reached a certain extent, by Celibacy (that is, Sexual Abstinence), Prostitution, Sterility, Preventive Intercourse, or Premature Death, whose collective amount varies inversely in proportion to the rapidity with which the population of the country is increasing, and to the number of emigrants *minus* that of immigrants; while the amount of each individually varies inversely in proportion to the others.

“ From these laws arise two duties—

“ The *Duty of Limited Procreation*. In an old country it is the duty of every individual, whatever be his or her station in life, to bring into the world only a very small number of children.

“ The *Duty of Sexual Intercourse*. It is the duty of every individual to exercise his or her sexual functions during the period of sexual life, abstinence and excess being alike avoided ” (p. 558).

This is, briefly stated, the doctrine of the book which has been, and is, accepted by the Palæo-Secularist leaders, and we may fairly conclude is approved by the great body of their followers; for this is the doctrine set forth in the speeches of Mr. Bradlaugh and Mrs. Besant, with great ability and eloquence, in our courts of justice and in their lectures to crowded houses in the principal towns in Great Britain. After giving an abstract of the essay of Malthus on “ Population ” in “ The Elements,” the author says :—

“ Thus finishes this wonderful essay, the most important contribution to human knowledge, it appears to me, that ever was made. On rising from it, with a mind overpowered by the vastness of the subject, and the incomparable way in which it has been treated, I cannot but consider its author to have been the greatest benefactor of mankind, *without any exception*, that ever existed on this earth ” (p. 315).

Describing the evils of poverty, he can find but one remedy:—

“Poverty is a *sexual* evil, depending on a sexual cause, and admitting only of a sexual cure” (p. 484).

“If the proportion of the people to the food can be made a smaller one, poverty will be benefited [prevented?], but by no other conceivable means. The only possible way to remove poverty is to have fewer children” (p. 341).

Admiring Malthus as he does, the author condemns his advice in regard to marriage; besides, there is a vast number of women for whom marriage is impossible:—

“In some parts of England, and in many counties in Scotland, the proportion of spinsters is as high as forty-one per cent. of the women, from the age of twenty upwards. There are 1,407,225 women between the ages of twenty and forty who have never married, and 359,969 old maids of the age of forty and upwards. Those who are at all aware of the misery and disease of sexual abstinence will be able to form a slight idea of the suffering arising from this form of the preventive check” (p. 343).

“The great error in Mr. Malthus’s reasoning was that he, like most of the moralists of his and our own age, was unaware of the frightful evils and fearful natural sin of sexual abstinence. *The ignorance of the necessity of sexual intercourse to the health and virtue of both man and woman is the most fundamental error in medical and moral philosophy*” (p. 345).

Here, as in every instance, the italics are those of the author.

“There is a way, and but one possible way, of surmounting these evils and of securing for each individual among us a fair share of food, love, and leisure, without which human society is a chaotic scene of selfishness, injustice, and misery” (p. 347).

“The means I speak of—the only means by which the



“virtue and the progress of mankind are rendered possible—is PREVENTIVE SEXUAL INTERCOURSE. By this is meant sexual intercourse where precautions are used to prevent impregnation. In this way love would be obtained without entailing upon us the want of food and leisure by overcrowding the population.....Women, if they had not the fear of becoming pregnant before their eyes, would indulge their sexual desires just as men do. Hence the vehement prejudices in favour of our present code of sexual morality, and of the institution of marriage, together with the determined hostility to anything in the shape of unmarried intercourse—at least, on the part of women—are the chief obstacles to the consideration of the most important of all subjects—preventive sexual intercourse” (p. 349).

“Preventive sexual intercourse, then, is the mode, and the only possible mode, of reconciling the opposing difficulties of the population problem, and is the only possible solution for the great social evils of this and other old countries. I stake my life—I would stake a thousand lives—on the truth of this. There is no subject on which I have thought so long and felt so deeply as the sexual one. It has been ever present to me for many years; and, long before I read the works of Mr. Malthus and Mr. Mill, my mind was absorbed in the evils I saw and read of from sexual abstinence and other sexual difficulties and diseases” (p. 352).

“Therefore, any man or woman, it matters not what be their station in life, whether their destiny be a palace or a hovel, who has more than the small proportion of children which the circumstances of an old country allow, as the fair average to each individual, is an irreligious being, and disregards one of the most sacred of all the moral duties, thus inevitably causing disease and misery to some of his fellow creatures” (p. 362).

This must end our quotations from a book which we need not characterise; written, as the reader may be able to judge from the examples we have given, with great earnestness and with considerable ability. We have quoted fairly, but could not properly go into medical and surgical details, and we refrain from publishing the methods suggested

for securing the end proposed. They are similar to those given in "The Fruits of Philosophy" and in Mrs. Besant's "Law of Population."

Will it be pretended that these are merely the teachings of one man, for whom the great body of Secularists are not responsible? Mrs. Besant thinks otherwise. "What is morality?" she asks, in her "Law of Population." "It is the greatest good of the greatest number. It is immoral to give life where you cannot support it. It is immoral to bring children into the world when you cannot clothe, feed, and educate them."

And she goes on to instruct women as to how they can avoid the greatest evil of life, and justifies herself by quotations from a long list of Secularist philosophers: Francis Place, James Watson, Robert Dale Owen, the two Mills, the two Holyoakes, and several others. But we have already had abundant evidence that "The Elements of Social Science" embodies the principles of Cat-and-Ladle Secularism, and we should as soon expect to see the Koran repudiated by Mohammedans, or the New Testament by Christians, as "The Elements" by any palæo-Secular organisation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## PALÆO-SECULARIST SOCIETY.

It is time that we consider what is involved in these Palæo-Secularist doctrines, and what would be the condition of human society if they were universally adopted and carried out in practice. Either boys and girls, as soon as they arrived at the age of puberty, say from fifteen to seven teen years, would marry, or would engage in sexual amours without marriage. If the rule were marriage, it would necessitate polygamy in old countries where there is a surplus of women, and polyandry where there is a surplus of men. Virginity in either sex is denounced as a state of mortal sin, dangerous to health and life. For the married some provision must be made for husbands during the periods of maternal disablement, necessary absence, or the illness of either wife or husband; and there could be permitted only very brief widowhood.

Palæo-Secularists stipulate for free and easy divorce, and that means simply a system of concubinage such as now exists to some extent, and is not considered of sufficient importance for legal registration. If the physiological doctrines of "The Elements" are true, special arrangements should be made for the army, navy, and all sea-going vessels. Women should be enlisted in all the services as well as men. Prostitution, as we have seen, though degrading, is honourable; but, if all women would adopt these principles, there would be no need of a particular class, because all women would be virtually prostitutes, and the now necessary and useful profession would be abolished. Seduction would be neither actionable nor immoral—in fact, as soon as all women are converted to palæo-Secularism it would cease to exist. As common hospitality and common humanity would forbid men and women to deny to others any necessary of life, there could no longer be any jealousy,

or miserably selfish suits in the Divorce Court about adultery. With free divorce the court could be abolished, and marriage itself, in its legal form, must quickly disappear. All poems, novels, tragedies, and comedies, based upon past or present ideas of virtue, chastity, fidelity, and what have been considered manly and womanly virtues, would be obsolete, and read only as antique curiosities. We should have a practical palæo-Secular world, satisfying its animal propensities and using artificial means to prevent having too many children.

Men and women of England, this is the picture of the society of the future set before you by the palæo-Secularist leaders and the author of "The Elements of Social Science." These are the lessons taught to the young men and young women in the halls of science, advocated in newspapers and pamphlets, and studied in Secular reading-rooms.

Look at these doctrines :—

Chastity is a crime.

Unbridled sensuality is virtue.

The Law of Nature commands the constant exercise of the pro-creative function.

The Law of Population forbids that this act should be allowed to produce its natural result in the production of offspring.

There have been Atheists who worship Nature ; but the Secular Malthusians hold her in small reverence. They mend her blunders with their superior wisdom. Nature has united pleasure with the function which continues the life of the race. They seek to enjoy the pleasure and prevent the object for which the function was made. This is the outcome of development by natural selection. There must be, however, some old-fashioned people in the world to whom these results of "science, falsely so-called," are what the Bible has characterised them, in three words :—  
"EARTHLY, SENSUAL, DEVILISH."

## ADDENDUM.

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WE have heard a good deal about the heroism involved in the publishing of such works as "The Elements" and the Knowlton pamphlet. There is no heroism in the thing at all; but there is a good deal of cowardice, not without a dash of greed and avarice. A section of the public is prurient, and the publication of "nasty" books like "The Elements" and "The Fruits of Philosophy" is profitable. It is a trait of a coward to insult when he deems he can do so with impunity. The publishers and abettors of these feculent works have insulted society, but they dare not defy it. If a certain lady and gentleman be earnest and consistent teachers, they surely ought to *practise what they preach* re promiscuous coition and artifices to escape maternity.\* Dare they state in the press that they do so? Dare they mount the platform and illustrate before the audience animal as they might do vegetable physiology, as regards fructification and reproduction? They dare not do this because of the police. They have the avarice and truculence to insult society; but they have not the earnestness and heroism to defy it. They can put their names to obscene works out of which they can make notoriety and money, but beyond this they dare not go: decency they have already set aside, but they are deterred by fear.

\* It must be strictly understood that I deal with the two persons referred to as public teachers, and as public teachers only. As individuals I have nothing whatever to do with them.

While we execrate their indecency, let us be thankful for their fear. Let us congratulate ourselves that, although by their pruriency Freethought has been insulted, we owe it to their cowardice that Freethought has not been outraged. Talk of the Pagan Saturnalia and Eleusinian Mysteries; talk of the early Christian Agapæ: what were these to the Bradlaugh and Besant theory carried out to public demonstration "in the interests of the poor"? Split in the party! Better a thousand splits than a moment's acquiescence in such inexpressible subter-beastliness! Attacking fellow-Freethinkers! Fate forbend that I should acknowledge them as fellow Freethinkers of mine. The cross is the symbol of Christianity; and, if the syringe is to be the emblem of Freethought, I must mourn without ceasing that, in virtue of my mental and moral organisation, it is impossible for me to be a Christian and accept the creed whose symbol is the cross and not the syringe.

Do I state a far-fetched and false corollary when I allege that the propagandists of Knowltonism should resort to practical demonstration if they were consistent and had the courage of their convictions? I submit that the corollary is a pertinent, inexpugnable one. Knowltonism involves practical physiology, practical chemistry, and practical mechanics, and I contend that those branches of science cannot be taught effectively without demonstration and experiment. In a little theoretical treatise at sixpence I deny that they can be taught effectively "in the interests of the poor." Why, in the name of courage and consistency, is the demonstration lacking?

Do I write on an indelicate subject? The fault is not mine. I am a Freethinker, and those describing themselves by the same specific term have committed themselves to abominations against which I, in the name of Freethought, must protest. I must protest, too, that the only organised Society of "Freethinkers" in England perpetually elects as President one who has done worse than blasphemed fifty

gods, has outraged the highest and purest instincts of human nature. Do I write harshly? It is because the language of mortals lacks in bitterness that I do not write more harshly still. The *gentleman* who could sit down with another gentleman's wife to edit in conjunction with her a work on sexual commerce should be painted in pigments the due manipulation of which is beyond my skill as a limner. Is it well to place in the front of English Freethought a gentleman who, in conjunction with another gentleman's wife, edited a work which dealt with making sexual intercourse abortive, and which work a jury of his countrymen pronounced obscene? I say it is not well. And, since on the subject every other voice in the Freethought ranks is dumb, I lift my voice in the name of the mothers and daughters of England who, in renouncing Christ, did not also renounce chastity; who, in disbelieving that their bodies were temples of the Holy Ghost, did not necessarily believe that they were mere organisms for the gratification of carnal desire. In the name of the English wife and mother I plead and I appeal. Against obscenity in office and filth in high places in our party I, a man in the ranks, lift up my testimony, execrating all that would sully the purity of woman and the sanctity of home.

I am willing to admit that our existing social arrangements are not all that can be desired; that the social machine works with considerable friction. This may be a reason why the machine should be lubricated; but it is no reason why it should be broken to pieces. That wives are not always happy is no reason why all women should be unmarried harlots. The besetting sin of mob-Freethought of the Richard Carlile school is the prejudiced assumption that everything that is is wrong, simply because it is. "Down with all that's up!" is practically the motto and watchword of the unthinking outcasts and rebels who, for the last seventy years, have made Freethought stink in the nostrils of everybody whose adhesion would be valuable.

*Primâ facie*, because a thing is up it should be up, and because a thing is down it should be down. The world was not "created" yesterday; and, by the doctrine of Evolution, about which mob leaders prate so loudly, and which they understand so imperfectly, it has had considerable time and opportunity to arrange itself according to evolutionary law. Evolution must be permitted to work till we rise to higher and purer social levels. In the home and the family centre the most dearly-cherished love and the holiest sentiment of the English race. This cannot and must not be overthrown by cataclysm. We cannot and must not substitute for the family only isolated children, whom sulphate of zinc have spared, and who may know their mother, but who cannot possibly know their father; while their mother's ignorance on the subject would necessarily be nearly as profound as their own. The bare idea is a crime, because it is revolting to the holiest instincts of our nature. Would man gain as much by the free exercise of sensuality as he would lose by having no home—for a wife a supply of harlots, and for sons and daughters promiscuously-begotten and promiscuously-supported children, the results of sensuality having failed in its devilish artifices?

The Freethinkers, so-called, persistently place at their head a man who, as I have said elsewhere, the gentlemen of the British House of Commons will not permit to sit on the same benches with them, even though, by keeping him out, they break the law and outrage the Constitution. On technical pretexts he is prevented from taking his seat; but the true reason for the aversion to him is not heresy and Radicalism—there are plenty of heretics and Radicals in the House already—but men turn away, as from a toad or a serpent, from a person who teaches that marriage is an evil and chastity a crime, that promiscuous coition is most desirable, and that seduction is a virtue. Liberal and Conservative alike bolt the door in the face of this Caliban who would, by his teachings, make every woman a prostitute, every



home a *maison-de-joie*, and licentiousness and the manufacture of syringes the staple industries of England. And this person, not permitted to sit with the most abandoned rake and reprobate the House can produce, the English "Free-thinkers" elect as their President, and then they wonder that they do not succeed, that they have to meet in tenth-rate public-houses, and clank their applause with pewter-pots; while not even a solitary thinker of distinction has ever joined them—not one scientist of reputation, not one poet or man of letters, not one individual of the slightest social weight. The Freethinkers proper—the Herbert Spencers, the Huxleys, the Tyndalls, the Frederic Harrisons, the Matthew Arnolds, and the Algernon Swinburnes—would never dream of touching the mess of Secularistic pottage into which the "fighting President" has dropped his syringe, in order that no respectable person may put a spoon in it. Popular Free-thought can never reach the Ai of success while Achan, the son of Carmi, is in its ranks, treasuring "the accursed thing"—the shekels of silver and the goodly Babylonish garment\*—in the shape of profits from the sales of works that contend that man should be a sensualist and the world a *numero*.

We have, more than once, been assured that "The Elements" and kindred works are issued with the best intentions. Even if we take this apologetic allegation as genuine, we cannot forget that a certain mythical locality is paved with good intentions; and surely this advocacy of unbridled lust is the largest and most prominent paving-stone in all hell. I am free to admit that the author of the book is evidently a man with more than average ability, and there is a certain Machiavelian insidiousness in his pages which greatly enhances their danger to the morals of the young and inexperienced, and they make up a very large component part of the public.

\* See Joshua vii., *passim*.

True, the Divorce Court and the existence of such social hideousness as was only too distinctly indicated by the Mary Jeffries exposure\* may afford a pretext for a desperate measure to counteract a desperate malady ; but surely, in the name of common sanity, to abolish the Divorce Court by abolishing marriage, and to suppress houses of evil fame by making all women courtesans, is a measure drastic even to madness. Monogamic marriage *may* set up a standard which is too high to be generally attainable ; but all social standards should be high, and public teachers should ever be urging on the public conscience to an attempt to reach the highest moral level. This, with its thousand faults, Christianity, through its ministers, has not failed to do ; and we must not censure it too harshly because it has not always succeeded. As long as Christianity insists on sexual purity and restraint, and debars the transgressor from her sacraments, she does the world a service which goes some way to compensate for many crimes and errors of which she has been guilty. As long as Freethought gives countenance and encouragement to sensuality, she perpetrates against society an error and a crime for which all the good she has done the world can hardly compensate. As long as the Christian teaching as to sexual morals obtains and has Society's endorsement, the most pronounced evil-liver is constrained to be remorseful that he has fallen short of the standard ; and that very feeling of remorse acts as a restraint to still further excesses. But he who adopts the teachings of "The Elements" has no high ideal up to which he tries to bring the measure of his conduct ; with him there need be no remorse and no regrets ; there is no standard of purity after which to struggle and to strive ; there is only the inexpressible Malébolgé of unbounded sensuality and shameless lust : no woman you love that it is not proper for another to love to-morrow ; no maid such as

has heretofore blessed the bridegroom's arms, but only a shameless and deflowered harlot who has responded to the desires of others as she responds to yours; a social convenience, like a drinking fountain or a *chalet*; a creature liable to be called into use anywhere, at any time, and by anybody, and who constantly carries a syringe in her muff, in the name of Bradlaugh and "Freethought!"

SALADIN.



