

THE FRAME.

I marvelled, while I saw
On the one hand, death, death,
Dead men, dead faith, dead law,
Till none might draw a breath.
But awful tidings came
This age alone knoweth:
Yet calm and free from blame
Upon the other hand
Stood some who held a frame.
And when the frame I scanned,
I saw the world therein,
But as perfection planned.
These are they who begin
To keep the record plain
Of all that might have been:
That though great hosts lie slain,
The song, the thought, the word
They lived by may remain.
When like a far-flown bird
This age has vanished quite,
Still shall its voice be heard.
The framers toil aright,
They save the dream that goes,
The seed that war would blight.
They save the Secret Rose,
And—what was scarce begun—
Beneath their wise hand grows
Our City of the Sun,
A world immaculate
Where all our thoughts have run.
Not wholly whelmed by fate,
Not all consumed by fire,
Our wonder-world shall wait:
Let not the framers tire!

NETTIE PALMER.

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.

First of all, what is the conflict, and what is the principle for which each side is contending? If it is nothing more than appears from the recent controversy in our Melbourne newspapers, people with a sense of proportion will be inclined to cry, "A plague o' both your houses!" Does the quarrel resolve itself, as is generally supposed, into a struggle for freedom of enquiry against the forces of dogmatism and obscurantism? If so, "Fellowship" has been talking science all its life without knowing it, and actually calling it religion. But as a matter of fact, this statement of the issue will satisfy only those who are willing to oppose a highly idealised picture of science to a ludicrous caricature of religion. In controversy we may score a few cheap points in this way, but fair play requires that we should oppose either the ideal to the ideal, or the actual to the actual. Now we may, if we wish, present science in an ideal light as the embodiment of freedom and disinterestedness, and religion as a mass of superstition and intolerance. But actually, if we are to speak of things as they are in the world to-day, science is not free or disinterested, and religion is not a mass of superstition and intolerance. Of the two, indeed, science is the more enslaved, and the more superstitious and intolerant: the more enslaved, because the masters she serves—commercialism and militarism—are strong, and she has hardly as yet begun to struggle against them; whereas the master to whom religion has long been in bondage—dogmatism—is growing so impotent, that when, for example, the Vatican denounces Modernism, it is a band of loyal and devoted Catholics who, in the name of religion, protest most earnestly: and the more superstitious and intolerant in that she has hardly yet learned, with religion, to be on her guard against these human weaknesses.

There has grown up, in the last fifty or a hundred years, a peculiarly noxious kind of scientific Pharisaism, which arrogates to itself the sole possession of the virtue of honesty. But there were honest men before Professor Huxley, and there have been some precious rogues since. We have a right to say to the scientist and his supporters, "Let it appear so, make your vaunting true." Our forefathers showed their honesty, not by talking about it, but by carrying it into the works of their hands. The century of scientific progress, which Morris used to call "the great age of adulteration," may talk about honesty, but nobody marks it. The scientist, it is true, cannot be held responsible for all the knavery of our commercial world, but it must be remembered that he has been the high priest of modern civilisation. One only wishes he would not protest his honesty quite so much. And when he complacently contrasts himself with the theologian, he forgets that the theologian is also a scientist, and that in every reputable theological school in the world the principle of free enquiry and the obligation of fidelity to facts is as fully recognised as in the schools of science. It is mere ignorance to say that the work of such men as Driver or Harnack, for example, is governed by any other motive than the same love of truth which is the motive of the best scientific work in other fields. Only in Australia, where the combined

forces of sectarian and scientific intolerance keep theological studies from their rightful place in the University, does the theologian find himself seriously at a disadvantage when compared with his scientific confreres. If the scientist were as sincere as he thinks, he would welcome the establishment of a school of theology, in which the sciences of Biblical criticism and Comparative Religion, and the other branches of theology, would be as free from ecclesiastical interference as the physical sciences—an ideal long since realised in other lands.

But the real issue remains to be stated. Science claims both more and less than freedom—less than freedom while she is content to subserve commercial and military ideals, and more than freedom when she claims to be the only light-bearer to the world. It is this latter claim which some of us most heartily oppose, not in the interests of any narrow and pettifogging conception of religion, but from loyalty to what we conceive to be a more generous tradition of culture. We do not believe, in a word, that the progress of science can greatly enrich human life, and we have the experience of a century of scientific development to prove how capable it is of impoverishing life. For a hundred years and more, scientific civilisation has been spreading over the whole world, and wherever it has gone it has carried a blight; natural beauty and the beauty created by the hands of men are alike withered by its breath, and every day brings us nearer to the despondent vision of Morris, of "the world reduced to a cinder-heap, with a counting-house on the top, and Podsnap's drawing-room in the offing." Nor can we be compensated for this wrong by receiving from science a few mechanical toys, useless at the best, and at worst deadly and hateful. Scientific civilisation seems to mean the steady encroachment of mechanism upon personality. Some of its worst crimes may indeed be as alien to the true spirit of science as the crimes of the churches to the true spirit of religion. But, before science can win our confidence or our esteem, she must openly repudiate the masters who are now using her for every anti-human purpose, and she must show that she is capable of helping in the gigantic task of arresting the dehumanisation of mankind, for which she must bear the chief share of responsibility. Science, free and in her right mind, may have great things in store for us; but as yet she has not given us reason to believe it. The voices that cried in the wilderness of nineteenth century commercial materialism, calling to repentance and preaching the true gospel of the human spirit, were not the men of science, but those who, like Blake and Wordsworth, like Carlyle, Arnold and Morris, opposed at every point the claims of science. The teaching of these and such men I have elsewhere called the Catholic tradition; it is a tradition of values in which the things of the spirit occupy the first place, and all other things are referred to them as to a standard. It is because we whole-heartedly believe in this Catholic tradition that, in spite of the shortcomings of religion and the promises of science, we are impelled to cleave to the one and oppose the other.

F. SINCLAIRE.

SCIENCE AND PROGRESS.

(From Edward Carpenter's Essay in "England's Ideal.")

Do not be misled so as to suppose that science and the intellect are or can be the sources of social progress or change. It is the moral births and outgrowths that originate; science and the intellect only give form to these. It is a common notion, and one apparently gaining ground,* that science may, as it were, take society by the hand, and become its high priest and guide to a glorious kingdom. And this to a certain extent is true. Science may become high priest, but the result of its priestly offices will entirely depend on what kind of deity it represents—what kind of god society worships. Science will doubtless become its guide, but whither it leads society will entirely depend on whither society desires to be led. If society worships a god of selfish curiosity, the holy rites and priesthood of science will consist in vivisection and the torture of the loving animals; if society believes above all things in material results, science will before long provide these things—it will surround men with machinery, and machine-made products; it will whirl them about ("behind steam-kettles," as Mr. Ruskin says) from one end of the world to the other; it will lap them in every luxury and debility, and give them fifty thousand toys to play with, where before they had only one—but through all the whistling of the kettles and the rattling of the toys it will not make the still small voice of God sound nearer. If society, in short, worships the Devil, science will lead it to the Devil; and if society worships God, science will open up and clear away much that encumbered the path to God. (And here I use these terms, as lawyers say, "without prejudice.") No mere scientific adjustments will bring about the millennium. Granted that the problem is Happiness, there must be certain moral elements in the mass of mankind before they will even desire that kind of happiness which is attainable, let alone their capacity of reading it. When these moral elements are present, the intellectual or scientific solution of the problem will be soon found; without them, there will not really be any serious attempt to find it. That is—as I said at the head of this paragraph—science and the intellect are not, and never can be, the sources of social progress and change. It is the moral births and outgrowths that originate; the intellect stands in a secondary place as the tool and instrument of the moral faculty.

* Written in 1885.