

cal note. For, after all, the greatest quality of the true biographer is his self-effacement. He is not the frame which enhances the picture, but merely the easel which holds it up to view that all may see and judge.

## Correspondence.

### PERSONALITY IN POLITICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your article of July 22 upon personality strikes at the root of most of our political difficulties. In a great democracy, by the terms of the case, there must be some force which shall induce a majority to work together, and that in spite of a multitude of incessant, disintegrating forces always at work to split it up. No conceivable measure or set of measures will do this. The mass of units, in smaller or larger groups, will always want different things and want them in different ways. Nothing will reach the desired end except individuality so striking as to command the reason of some, the imagination of more, and the senses of all.

Perhaps the most concrete and visible instance in history is that of France from 1789 to 1800, but it is only one of many. But startling as it may seem, it is hardly rash to say that the condition of the national and legislative assemblies up to 1797 was scarcely worse than that of our Congress to-day. Of course, there is no such ignorant and suffering population, but in the framework of government there is not very much to choose. And if we consider that it is repeated in every State and substantially in every city in the country, it is evident that explosive material is not wanting. We have had one warning which might seem to be severe enough. Those who followed the years 1850 to 1860 will remember that the scenes in Congress and the agitation through the country were much the same in kind—though, of course, not in degree—as they are as to the tariff to-day; and that up to the firing upon Fort Sumter neither side had hardly more suspicion of an impending war than they have now. If we consider, again, the growing strife between capital and labor, and the condition of our banking and currency systems as manifested in the last two years, it points to an imperative necessity for some kind of governmental reform.

It is another curious analogy that the French resorted to the same kind of remedy as we are doing. The executive directory and the consulate were merely forms of government by commission. They failed, as this must fail, from the want of personality. In our great crises we have had two men, Washington and Lincoln, to be set off against Napoleon and Bismarck in Europe. The country is visibly ready and eager for another man. How can we insure that he will be of the same kind? Certainly not by the multiplication of battleships or the spectacle of colonial dominion, by leaving an increase of the standing army at the discretion of the President, or enrolling the State militias under the Federal control, to be called out at his discretion. It was his early victories in Italy which gave

Napoleon his imperial crown. The destruction of civil liberty almost always finds its beginning in foreign war.

The true defence against abuse of personal executive power is personal executive responsibility. The framers of our Constitution wisely saw and provided for the necessity of the former. They did not see—having little or none of the light which we have—that its control must rest with public opinion, and so they gave that control to the representative body, which experience, then already foreshadowed and since made abundantly clear, shows was certain to be abused by that body. The conflict of the future is not to be as to details either of legislation or administration, but as to the relation of the two branches. President Taft said the other day, in an interview with a committee, that he must view the tariff question from his position as representative of the whole nation and not from that of any Senator or Representative. That is the secret of the whole matter. But it cannot be done in such conferences or even at dinners. It must be done in the open arena of Congress by his secretary of the treasury, speaking on behalf of and under the instruction of the one *personal* chief of the whole nation. If, no matter what may be the result of this session, he will open the next with a demand to that effect, he will have placed his foot on the first rung of the ladder leading to the temple of fame—and peace—and to the third niche, which is awaiting him—or somebody—by the side of his illustrious predecessors.

G. BRADFORD.

Boston, July 27.

### EVOLUTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Notwithstanding the centennial celebration for Darwin, there seem to have arisen various defections from his system, of late years. First, the secession of Huxley, who renounced his former strong faith, before his death, as set forth in his "Romanes Lecture," and in "Ethics and Evolution." Now Darwin's own son, Francis, has renounced the main posit of his father's theory, Natural Selection; and there have been various criticisms, showing a trend of doubt and questionings.

It is a curious thing that Darwin's own doubts and misgivings, as expressed at the close of the first editions of his "Origin of Species," have been ignored and concealed. There he sums up his latest readings, with a strain of doubt and uncertainty. He says that sometimes the evidence *against* his theory seems so overwhelming that he is tempted to throw up the whole thing. He then gives some of these objections. He says, first, that the geologic record is wholly against it; also the fact of the sterility of hybrids; also the missing link, and the simultaneous appearance of new species in various remote parts of the world. He notes the unanimous rejection of the idea by all the scientists of the day. He might have added a fact stated by a noted Scotch scientist, viz.: that, although the evolution theory necessitated that each species should reach its highest and most perfect condition at its end, so that a higher species might be evolved from it, exactly the contrary was the fact. Every species distinctly degen-

erated towards its end; lower, deformed, and imperfect forms increased, and it ended in imperfection instead of rising into a superior species. This noted fact would be enough to disprove it.

Yet it seems to have taken possession of the whole world. One of its latest developments is noteworthy. Bernard Shaw makes a new statement of evolution, which is very significant of its trend. He states the original force behind the universe to be bodiless and impotent, without executive power of its own; after innumerable tentatives, experiments and mistakes, this force has succeeded in changing matter into the amoeba, the amoeba into something more complex, until finally there has been a man evolved, with hands and a brain to accomplish the work of the will. Man is not the ultimate aim of this Life. It will go still further, and produce something still more complex than man—the super-man; then the Angel, then the Archangel, and last of all, an omnipotent and omniscient God! This is the climax of the evolution theory.

Of course, Bernard Shaw is not a great, or an authoritative, man. But straws show which way the wind blows; and it is a fact that no consistent evolutionist can escape his conclusion. The fundamental principle of evolution is that *every* higher is evolved out of a lower, and this necessitates the belief that God is evolved out of the highest creature, the Creator out of His creation, the First Cause out of the last effect. Now this is not rationalism, but irrationalism—insanity; and yet it is the logical and rational end and conclusion of the evolution theory. It is a complete inversion of the self-evident law of cause and effect; of the axiom that a cause must be higher than, and prior to, its effect. It is a complete inversion of the fundamental principles of philosophy, and can result only in falsehood, instead of truth.

A SUBSCRIBER.

Cambridge, Mass., July 27.

### THE EARLY COLOGNE PICTURES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In reference to the article "Art Experts on the Defensive" (*Nation*, July 8), allow me to state that, being rather familiar with the pictures of the early Cologne school, I can only consider as wanton extravagance the suspicion thrown upon them by Dr. Poppelreuter and his followers. The style and technique of these paintings, in Cologne, Darmstadt, Nuremberg, and elsewhere, are closely connected (1) with those of French paintings of the fourteenth century, dating from the reigns of Charles V and Charles VI, an admirable example of which has been recently purchased for the Louvre; (2) with the style of the Parisian miniatures of *ca.* 1400, so well known, thanks to the Belles Heures of Chantilly. Now, in the early part of the nineteenth century, when it is asserted that the forger or forgers exercised their craft, nobody knew or cared about early French pictures or early French miniatures. Moreover, as Dr. Bode has remarked, the museum at Cologne possesses only too many samples of the odious German romantic painting from about 1830; not one of those pictures offers the slightest analogy to the so-called forgeries.

The whole case rests on a *πρώτον ψεύδος*, viz., the assumption that the repainting of the fourteenth century Clarenaltar, in Cologne is the work of a nineteenth century restorer, whereas it is evident that the painting in question was repainted about 1425, precisely by a painter of the school to which belongs the charming Virgin with the Flower, now held up to be a forgery. I have seen that picture repeatedly and found it wonderfully preserved; Dr. Bode has just been to see it and declares that he discovered no repainting in it (*Der Cicerone*, Leipzig, 1909, p. 437).

SALOMON REINACH.

Paris, July 17.

#### A BOTANICAL MARVEL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: An interesting natural history entirely made up of misstatements and conscienceless exaggerations might easily be compiled from the writings of the great romancers, from Herodotus down to Tarrarin of Tarascon. Such a book should be arranged according to countries and epochs.

In such a work, one chapter would very naturally deal with America; one section of that chapter with America in the eighteenth century. Chateaubriand has the place of honor there—with all those descriptions of North America, in which he has mixed pell-mell tropical and Arctic specimens. The Mississippi River was, at the time of his travels, a most surprising estuary. To look at it to-day, who would guess that it once reeked with "islands of floating pistia and water roses," on which embarked as passengers "green serpents, blue herons, red flamingoes, and young crocodiles"? At the Indian feasts where Chateaubriand smoked the pipe of peace, tobacco's poetic substitute was "the fragrant leaves of the mountain laurel." What though the mountain laurel is odorless and poisonous—what though flamingoes blush not where Chateaubriand placed them, or where Campbell strewed them with a generous hand, in "Gertrude of Wyoming"? It would be tiresome if our writers all knew as much of natural history as they do of rhetoric. We think none the less of Thackeray because George Warrington, in "The Virginians," describes maple sugar-making in the fall of the year.

Chateaubriand and Campbell and Thackeray were none of them avowed scientists, like the Philadelphia Friend, John Bartram. In his youth, the Quaker botanist wrote to his brother a letter that has, I think, never been reproduced. I find it in the Dreer Collection at the Pennsylvania Historical Society, in Philadelphia. The letter is undated; it is addressed to the writer's brother William, who was then "keeping store" in the South; the botanist wrote, presumably, from his farm near Philadelphia:

Dear Billy

I was lately told by a man that rides express, that he saw in NoCarolina not far from Cape Fear, a strange plant about as big as a daisy & much like it in flower. I think he called it ye wonderfull flower whose properties was such that if they looked earnestly at it ye petals of ye flower would close up he said ye moors, near Brunswick knoved it well: if it lieth in thy way to speak with Morris More ask him about it if it be true it will be a fine curiosity & furnish matter for Philosophical contemplation.

It is my opinion that this letter of John Bartram's deserves a place beside the anecdote of the cow and the bear, attributed by the Swedish traveller, Peter Kalm, to the same excellent scientist.

W. B. BLAKE.

West Chester, Pa., July 28.

#### UNCUT LEAVES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I should like to take the hand of your correspondent "S." in the *Nation* of July 22. So often have I had the same feeling of indignation, uttered in almost the same language, in view of the "filthiness" of home-cut books and the "exasperation" at having to "fumble" through such leaves. The time wasted in the cutting is bad enough, but is nothing to the precious moments spent in attempts, repeatedly foiled, to separate the fuzzy, ragged edges, not to speak of the dust which will gather in these nesting places.

I have heard that the leaves are left uncut in the interest of rich buyers, who wish to rebind their copies; but the practice is not confined to books in paper or board covers, but is extended to works in what to most of us seems meant to be, at all events must be, permanent binding. But in any case why should the time, convenience, and pleasure of the army of "poor but respectable" readers—noble army of martyrs!—be sacrificed to the whims and notions of the wealthy few?

I have sometimes felt like registering a solemn vow never to buy another book with leaves uncut or—almost equally important—not trimmed flat and smooth.

H. D. CATLIN.

Northumberland, Pa., July 22.

#### ON TEACHING MORALS IN COLLEGE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: That the moral condition of our colleges is better than it has been for a hundred years; that the evils of which just complaint may be made are partly infiltrations which no modern college can entirely prevent, and partly incidents of the enlarged and specialized curriculum which makes the teaching of a subject, rather than the care of students, the duty of the professors; that most college evils can be materially reduced by the simple expedient of raising scholastic standards, and that, for the rest, some scheme must be found for looking after the personality of the student as well as subjects of study—these are the main points in a recent lecture of mine to which you have made editorial reference. Perhaps your readers will be interested to have this correct statement.

GEORGE A. COE.

Evanston, Ill., July 24.

[Our comment, in the *Nation* of July 15 was based on this quotation from Professor Coe's lecture as printed in the *New York Tribune* of July 13.]

The college is teaching subjects and not educating men. Each professor is answerable for sound teaching of some subject; but nobody holds himself responsible for the moral and religious training of the students. Nobody's rank, salary, or pro-

motion depends on the moral output of the college or the university.

—ED. THE NATION.]

#### SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In a letter to the *Nation*, July 22, Dr. Rolfe raises the question of possible schools for English girls in Shakespeare's time. He should take into consideration the nunneries abroad. A charming sketch of the feelings aroused in a Portuguese community by the arrival of a fair English exile on her way to the convent in Lisbon will be found in Francisco Rodrigues Lobo's "Corte na Aldea," Lisboa, 1619. The author says distinctly (*Obras de Francisco Rodrigues Lobo*, t. 1. p. 113):

A famosa cidade Lisboa, onde muitas Religiozas do illustre sangue de Bretanha vivem santamente em clauzura. (The famous city of Lisbon, where many nuns of illustrious blood of England live holily in seclusion.)

JOSEPH DE PEROTT.

Worcester, Mass., July 23.

#### THE PROSECUTION OF ANIMALS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In the recent discussion of the legal prosecution and execution of animals in the *Nation*, it seems to me strange that not one of your correspondents mentions "The Criminal Prosecution and Capital Punishment of Animals," by E. P. Evans, published in 1906, by Heinemann, in London, and imported by E. P. Dutton in New York. So far as I know, this is the most, if not the only complete work on the subject in the English language. It gives full accounts of these trials, criticises the conceptions of criminality underlying them, and contains in the appendix extracts from the records of such prosecutions preserved in different archives, and a list of 180 criminal processes of this kind during a period of nearly eight centuries.

G.

Munich, Germany, July 10.

#### QUI MORIUNTUR IN DOMINO.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In the *Nation* of July 22 (p. 74, col. 3), a reviewer records that the authors of "Piccadilly to Pall Mall" attribute to George IV the old jest, *Beati sunt illi qui moriuntur in Domino*. It is cruel to rob Sherry's "fat friend" of even a trifle like this, but the pun is commonly told of Rabelais on his death bed; and no doubt the Goliardi laughed over it long before his time. W. R. T.

Magnolia, Mass., July 27.

#### Notes.

In the autumn we shall have from Houghton Mifflin Company the first two volumes of "Emerson's Journals," edited by Edward W. Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes. These volumes cover the years from 1820 to 1829, and give the record of his first marriage, his doubts as a pastor, and his first sojourn at Concord. Besides much musing on his own inner state, the diary mentions such notable persons as Dr. Channing, Everett, Webster, Carlyle, Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and Hawthorne.