

DESERET EVENING NEWS.

Friday, January 5, 1890.

The following philosophical introduction has been written by Brother P. A. Droubay, a well educated Frenchman, and translated by Brother Louis A. Bertrand. The former intends to introduce to our Elders the objections of the French philosophy in a few short articles.

PINE KANYON, TOOELE VALLEY, Jan. 6th, 1890.

A FEW WORDS ON THE PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM.

Exposed by Mr. C. Fauvety, in La Solidarite, Journal of Principles, Paris 1886-1888.

Before discussing upon Mr. Fauvety's system, I will say a few words on Philosophy in general.

Philosophy (which is not to be confused with the philosophical system) is a science as old as the world. It may be called the mother of all sciences, because they are bound with Philosophy by their principles, by their method and their final aim. Philosophy is the science of principles—it analyzes, discusses, and co-ordinates them; and axioms are borrowed by all sciences. It may be considered as a stem of which other sciences are the branches. But then, it will be said, what is the cause of the diversity of the philosophical systems? Philosophy, not only considers principles, but embraces everything, and is only bounded by reason. It especially searches facts and truths of a moral order and scrutinizes questions concerning the origin and destiny of man. And having dissected the human reality, it is bold enough to study God's existence which it pretends to explain by the means of reason.

Now, it happens that pure reason can not err, it is true, but our reasoning faculty is very limited. It is easy enough in physical and mathematical sciences to rise slowly from a known truth to an unknown one, because our mistakes are reformed and our arguments corrected by experiments, in proportion as we advance. But a philosopher is delivered to his own strength, and as the human brain is always defective in some place, it naturally follows that a philosopher is frequently liable to present us, majestically, and with much sincerity, dreams of his imagination, as being very logical deductions of the principle upon which is founded his whole system—a lucky man, still, when his principle is not itself the mere product of a sickly brain.

But, then, making Philosophy accountable for the errors of its adepts, must we forsake it and say with a celebrated priest of the Roman Church: "Remember, my friend, that Philosophy is a monster of hell, worshipped by man." It would be a guilty rashness, for we know what is lacking in the so-called philosophical system. We can progress in searching the truth, the just and the right, with a certainty of reasoning equal to that which guides the mathematician in the solution of his problems. God has spoken to us and is still speaking to us every day by the mouth of His prophets and apostles. He has revealed to us the principles of eternal truth; and that is not a vain affirmation, for His spirit bears testimony within us that we are in the possession of truth. Endowed with that certitude, we can fearlessly abandon ourselves to that study, with the feeling of Paul when saying: "Search all things, hold fast that which is good." When we meet with a pretended truth, we compare it with the principles of our faith, and we soon discover its real value. In exploring that labyrinth, we will take good care not to let slip the leading thread.

When Philosophy was at first cultivated in Greece, its votaries were popularly called "wise men." Philosophy was therefore considered by the Greeks as being wisdom itself and science par excellence. But it was soon discovered that man is very far from possessing a true wisdom and an absolute science. Pythagoras was the first who assumed the more modest title of philosopher or friend of wisdom, philosopher.

At that time, philosophers were almost exclusively engaged in speculation on the physical world. The thoughts of man, before reflecting upon himself, tend outwardly—the natural wonders subdue at first his contemplation.

Two centuries after appeared Socrates who, to speak like Cicero, "caused Philosophy to descend from heaven to earth," and took as his motto these words, inscribed on the frontispiece of the temple of Delphos: "know thyself," *provi teauton*. Plato, his disciple, and the philosophers who came after him, were faithful to the thought contained in that precept. When Philosophy, a long time confounded with theology, recovered its independence during the seventeenth century, it proclaimed again by the mouth of Descartes that the study of the human mind was the basis of Philosophy. Such is the meaning of this principle set by Descartes in these words, resuming his method: "I think—therefore I am," *Cogito, ergo sum*.

After Descartes all philosophers started from his famous principle, but every one came to a different conclusion. Descartes explained the formation of the worlds, in filling the immensity of space by crooked atoms which cleave one to another. Leibnitz invented universal harmony, Epinoas founded modern pantheism, and many others proclaimed new systems and solutions, until at last to complete the scientific series, there emerged from the fogs of Germany the solemn and illustrious Kant, who, between two puffs of a smoking pipe, declared that heaven was empty, that nothingness alone exists, and went back to his cloud.

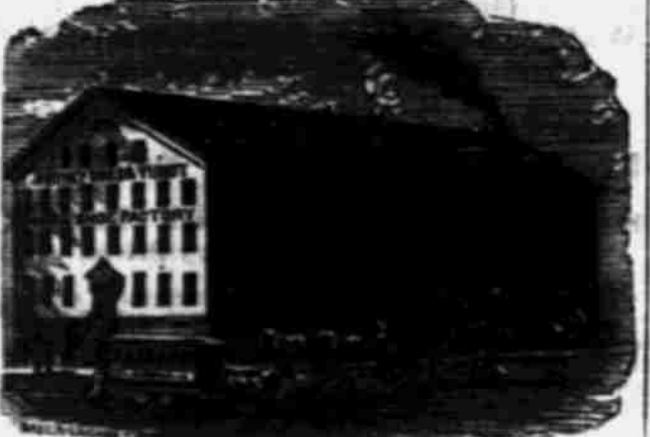
Atheism revealed itself openly in the middle of the eighteenth century. Lord Bolingbroke, in England; Voltaire, Diderot, Samettrie, in France, and Frederick II, King of Prussia, in Teutonia, (Germany), were its chief representatives. And as it is more convenient to deny than to reason even falsely, philosophers were followed by the vulgar, and God was denied through hate against the priests. The slaughters of the French Republic and the hecatombs of the first empire coated that abolition. The priests regained their influence in 1815, and until lately it was fashionable to be a religious man; the imputation of being an Atheist was repulsive as an insult by every individual courting the esteem of his fellow-men. But since 1860 Atheism has again pulled off the mask, and in spite of the rigid laws by which the press is ruled in France, it

numbers several organs. The majority of the French newspapers are Atheistical, and if a few of them accept still the idea of God, it is only a comforting hypothesis.

Meanwhile, Mr. Chas. Fauvety, a leading free-mason, a highly intelligent mind, endowed with an uncommonly independent character, resolved to oppose Atheism and attempted to establish principles by means of which mankind can search and find truth. He undertook to found the religion of the future. His work is extremely remarkable. Among hypotheses more or less specious, which are considered by him as certitudes, are found some sketches which we know are true. In short, he is a philosopher whose thoughts come nearest to our faith. That is the reason why we present him to the readers of the News, thinking it is good and expedient that our Elders should make themselves familiar with objections which will be laid before them, as I most earnestly desire, the doors of France should be some day opened to the preaching of the Gospel.

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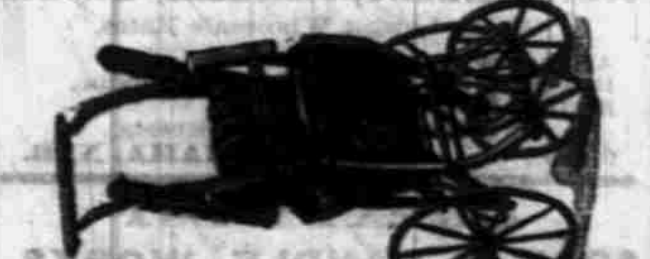
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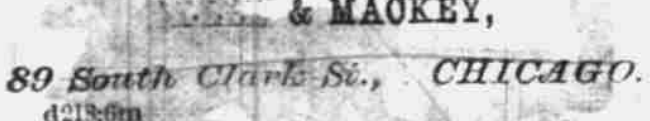
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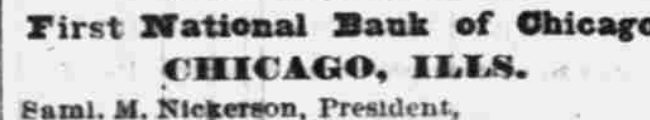
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