

## THE STRONGEST TRIPLE ALLIANCE

### SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY, AND RELIGION

In the course of an address delivered recently before the Canadian Club at Toronto, the Rev. Bernard Vaughan, S.J., spoke in part as follows:—

A scientist of some repute in a day gone by asked the question, 'Whence come we? Whither go we?' and he went on to say: 'The question dies away without an answer, without even an echo on the boundless shore of the unknown.' Very humbly, I submit, that one reason why we met with no answer to his question is that he did not put it in the proper quarter. Science as such does not deal with our whence and our whither, but with phenomena, and with facts generalised into laws. Within that area lies its mission, and not beyond that frontier. To investigate the causes and the sources of knowledge is the province, not of science, but of philosophy. It is the business of the philosopher to take up the last link in the chain of phenomena dropped by the scientist, to argue thence to the existence of a First Cause. If besides being a scientist and a philosopher the inquirer is also a follower of Revelation, he not only looks back to his origin, but dips into the future to find out his destiny; and he proclaims to all who come to listen, in the words of Christ, 'I know whence I came and whither I go.'

#### Science, Philosophy, and Religion.

There is, as you see, a strongly formed Triple Alliance between Science, Philosophy, and Revelation. Each of its three schools contribute its share of information to man's stock-in-trade of truth. What has science to tell us? She says that this puny, petty islet, set in the vast archipelago, on whose surface man finds his temporary dwelling place, was once a ball of fire, thrown off from a ball still bigger, which gradually, as it rotated on its axis, and swept around the sun, began to cool, till there was spun and woven its present 'coat of many colors.'

When Science wanted to know who it was that first of all started the big ball spinning, who was the Prime Mover of the first thing moved, she appealed to the Philosopher, who with Newton and Siemens with Stewart and Tate, with Faraday, Clark, Maxwell, Dawson, made answer, with the great Kelvin: 'There are overwhelming proofs of intelligence and benevolent design around us, showing us, through nature, the influence of a free will, and teaching us that all living things depend upon an everlasting Creator and Ruler.' What Philosophy proclaimed, Religion confirmed.

Standing between Science and Philosophy, inked hand in hand, the Christian exclaimed: 'In the be-

ginning God created heaven and earth.' To which Science and Philosophy answered, 'So be it. Amen.'

#### Initial Life.

There is another bit of useful information tossed out to us by the hand of Science. Science tells us that in the days gone by there was a time when such was the high temperature of the earth that not even the simplest form of life could for a moment exist upon its bosom. Then was the earth a pathless, arid, barren land? When, then, did life first appear? About initial life Science can tell us no more than she can about the 'primitive nebula,' and that is nothing at all. She must knock at the door of Philosophy to learn the source of things, and the spring of life. What saith the Philosopher? He says, with Turner, in his inaugural address at the British Association, 'We know not as regards time when the fiat went forth: "Let there be life," and there was life. The only thing we know about initial life is what Pasteur, Lister, and Koch knew about it—that as there is no such thing as life at all, but as the offsprings of previously existing life, we must bow to the philosophy which comes to our rescue, and argues that there must be some self-existing Being, Who, stooping down to our planet, brooding over the mineral world, breathed into its face the Breath of Life, till at length our little earth began to vibrate to the pulsations of a life all its own.' What Philosophy put before us as the result of her investigations, religion again confirmed by the words of the creed: 'God breathed into the clay the breath of life, and man became a living soul.'

As Science has shown us the beginning of our little round earth, so does it point to us an end to the energies of our system. As to whether our planet will be burnt up before it is burnt out, Science cannot say. All that she knows is that within a measurable distance of time the temperature of the earth will fall so low that, tideless and inert, it will then no longer tolerate on its surface the race which for a moment has disturbed its solitude.

The long and endless procession has already begun. What I want to know is this: What is it that, with the things of time and sense, we bury? Is it man's soul and body, or his body only? Science can only answer this question by saying: 'Neither my scalpel, nor my microscope, nor my test tube has yet discovered a human soul.'

#### Science and the Soul.

About the soul Science knows only what I know about the ultimate component parts of the matter—absolutely nothing at all. Science, stretching forth her two hands to Philosophy, the philosopher breathes

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