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THE
CAUSE OF HUMANITY,

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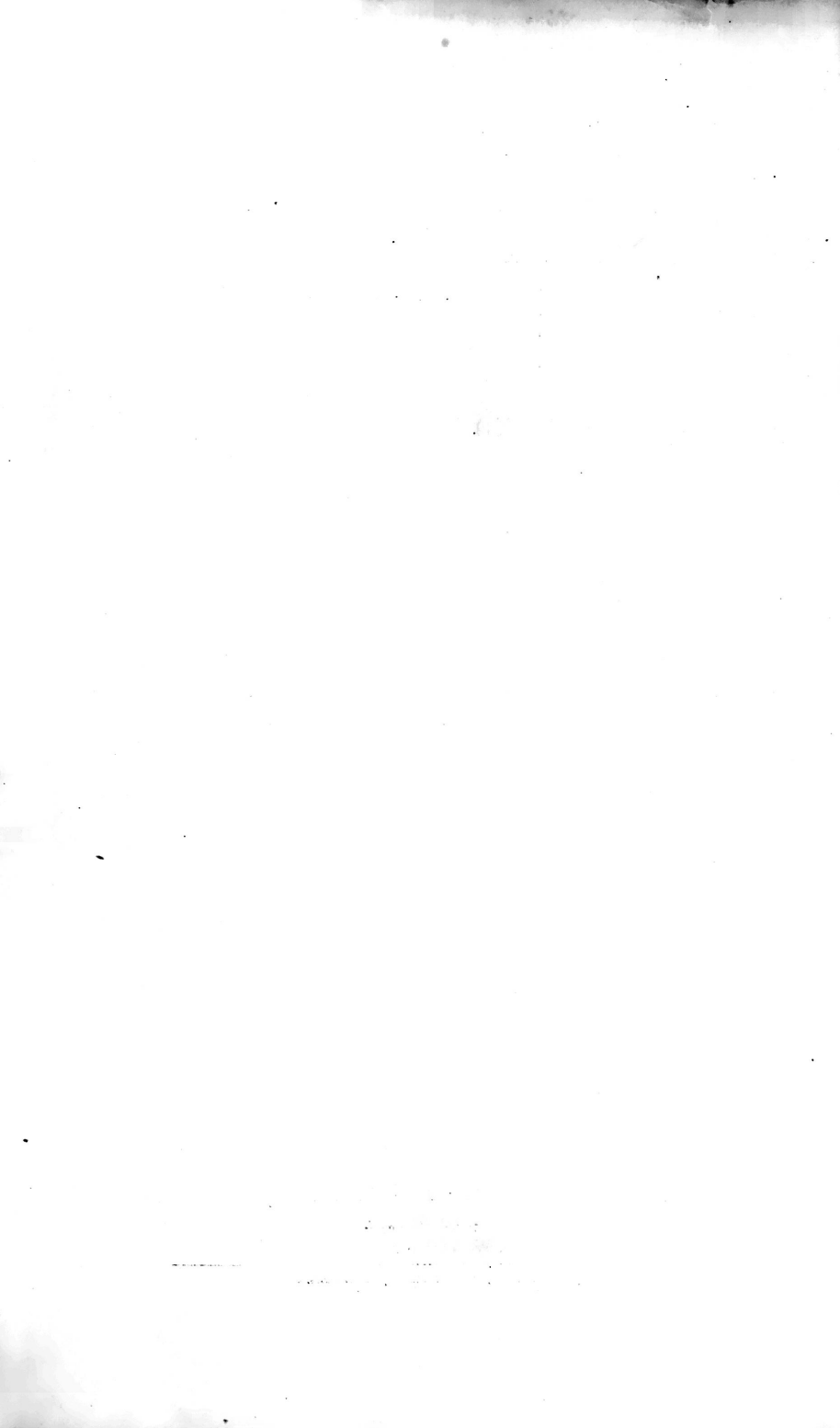
THE WANING AND THE RISING FAITH.

AN ESSAY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE
POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY,
By COURTLANDT PALMER.

READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY OF HUMANITY, SUNDAY, MARCH 3D, 1878,
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PREFATORY LETTER.

T. B. WAKEMAN, Esq.,

My Dear Friend:

Many indulgent hearers who have kindly listened to the reading of this Essay have requested me to publish it. In doing so allow me to dedicate it to you; for I feel that to you, more than to any one individual, I owe not only deliverance from the superstitions of the old theology, but a firm and abiding sense of salvation in the new faith of Science.

I make, for this paper, little or no claim to originality. My object has been to present a summarized statement of my faith as it is held and expounded by the Society of Humanity. I have tried to tell "a plain, unvarnished tale," "to naught extenuate, nor set down aught in malice," and to do this in a way so simple "that he who runs may read."

As is the inevitable fate of anyone who departs from the commonly received religious belief, my opinions have been subjected to all sorts of misrepresentations. The appellations Spiritualist, Communist, and other epithets still more objectionable, have been unhesitatingly applied to me, none of which, it should be needless for me to say, serve at all to explain my position. We positivists must expect to be misunderstood in regard not only to our doctrines but also in respect to our conduct and our aim. I believe that I personally, supported as I feel myself by the nobleness of our philosophy and the rectitude of my own endeavor, am quite in-

different to those uncharitable misconstructions, nor would any motives of mere egotistical explanation ever induce me to appear in print. I mean that were it a question of myself alone, I should prefer to remain silent, to quietly live my life and be judged by the fruits thereof; but for the sake of my family and of many friends who are interested in knowing what I really think, I have been moved to write out this compendium of my views. In this attempt, wherever I have found the language of another which I thought would serve to express my meaning better than my own poor words could do, I have not hesitated to quote it. I may perhaps rather say that it has delighted me to call in the aid of such powerful auxiliaries, prominent among whom are Comte and Spencer, to say nothing of yourself. In two instances I have been unable to put these extracts in quotation marks for the reason that they have been so adapted, altered and inwrought into my text that even their own authors would hardly recognize their offspring. One case of this kind is the description of doctrinal Christianity which I found in reading "the Pilgrim and the Shrine;" the other is my statement of Morality in which Mr. F. E. Abbott's "Fifty Affirmations" partially assisted me. I here render to these writers my acknowledgment.

That the few readers I may chance to have may not labor under any misunderstanding as to my meaning of the terms "Positivism" and "The Religion of Humanity," I wish here to state distinctly that I agree with you in the propriety of dissociating them in due measure from the system of Comte. I gladly accord to that most noble and most able man the first place in this connection, but, as you so well said in your last address before the Free Religious Association: "we agree with the rest of the world in thinking that the true philosophy and religion of our race is not, and cannot be, the pen-

“dant of any personality, however great ; but that the
“personality must be regarded as a pendant or incident
“of the religion.” Thus not only Comte but Spencer,
not only Decartes but Plato, not only Jesus, but Con-
fucius, Buddha and Mahomet ; in truth all great think-
ers, scientists and prophets, ancient and modern, are
gladly adopted as our guides. Paul may plant and Ap-
polos water ; it is Humanity alone that giveth the in-
crease.

Although my Essay has extended itself far beyond
the limits of an evening lecture, I have still thought it
best to have it in its original form of an address before
an audience.

Trusting that my feeble effort may be instrumental in
helping some few strugglers who are toiling to work
their way towards the light of truth, and that thus they
may be saved some of the mental agony I underwent in
my transition from the Religion of Christ to the Relig-
ion of Humanity, I remain,

Sincerely Your Friend,
COURTLANDT PALMER.

“Where thou findest a lie that is oppressing thee, extinguish it. Lies exist there only to be extinguished; they wait and cry earnestly for extinction. Think well, meanwhile, in what spirit thou wilt do it: not with hatred, with headlong selfish violence; but in clearness of heart, with holy zeal, gently, almost with pity.”

—*Thomas Carlyle.*

“To destroy, you must replace,”

“*Ou ne détruit que ce qu'on remplace*”—*Comte.*

“Unceasingly strive

From the half life to wean ourselves;

And in the whole, the good, the beautiful,

Resolutely to live.”—*Goethe.*

Faire le bien, Connaitre le vrai.

To do the good, know the true.—*Motto of Diderst.*

“The world is my country; to do good is my religion.”—*Thomas Paine.*

Those who can read the signs of the times, read in them that the kingdom of man is at hand.—*Professor Clifford.*

THE
CAUSE OF HUMANITY.

Ladies and Gentlemen :

Did I need any apology for presenting this essay to the attention of my audience, I should find it in the following words which I adapt from Herbert Spencer, where he says : “ whoever hesitates to utter that which “ he thinks to be the highest truth, lest it should be too “ much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by “ looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. “ Let him duly realize the fact that opinion constitutes “ the general power which works our social changes, and “ he will perceive that he may properly give full utter- “ ance to his innermost conviction, leaving it to produce “ what effect it may. It is not for nothing that he has “ in him these sympathies with some principles and re- “ pugnance to others. He with all his capacities and “ aspirations and beliefs, is not an accident but a pro- “ duct of the time. He must remember that while he is “ a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future ; “ and that his thoughts are as children born to him, “ which he may not carelessly let die. Not as adven- “ turous therefore will the wise man regard the faith “ which is in him. The highest truth he sees he will “ fearlessly utter ; knowing that, let what may come of

“it, he is thus playing his right part in the world—
 “knowing that if he can effect the change he aims at,
 “well: if not—well also; though not so well.”

This eloquent language is a sufficient justification for anyone to speak his thought when he feels that his thought is worth the speaking. Christ of old was called the Way, the Truth and the Life. I feel that to us of the modern era a new way, a truer truth, and a larger life is opened. Old things are passing away and all things are becoming new. Our times are pealing forth the trumpet tones of mighty change. Vast questions are pending in politics, art, and industry. The new wine can no longer be kept in the old bottles. Every breeze that sweeps the ocean sings a new deliverance for man, or wafts as from an Aeolian harp the pleasing notes of advancing science.

The press is filled with the unrest of disturbed convictions. Every week and month journal and magazine deal trenchant blows against the strongholds of theology, or build up brick by brick the beauteous temple of Humanity. Phoenix-like from the ashes of the old faith we behold arising the world-wide pinions of the new.

The pulpit itself is wavering. With each passing fortnight comes the report that this clergyman is leading a reformed movement in his church, or that that one withdraws entirely from his flock. Of the broad church of England, under the leadership of Dean Stanley, it may not, perhaps, be speaking too strongly to say that they are casting out devils in the name of the Religion of Humanity. Repeating the words of the great Nazarene we can say that he that is not against us is for us, and he that gathereth not with us scattereth abroad. A general view of the situation cannot fail to impress us with the conviction that the creeds of Christendom are becoming hard of assimilation even for those trained to their digestion. Church is contending against church;

sect against sect is waging deadly warfare: and although the cathedral of theology still points its spire to the sky, although the dim religious light of ages steals through Gothic windows painted with the rarest art, bathing in its softened rays pillar, aisle and dome; although priests kneel in spotless surplice, and worshippers bow with adoring knee, there still is wanting one great presence, *The once true God is no longer there!* The edifice so fair in form is weak at the foundation. Its worn-out beams are sinking under the dry-rot of doubts, which the church can no longer meet nor overcome.

Most of us have heard that noted lecturer, Col. Robert G. Ingersoll, who is carrying throughout this land his onslaught against superstition. He is not a professed believer in the Religion of Humanity, but still, as a grand pioneer, he is one of the van-guard of the army of progress whose office it is to destroy and clear away in order that riper constructives may come in and possess the land that he has conquered. From the lips of this valiant champion I heard on one occasion the following remark; he said: "I occupy this platform by reason of the infidelity of *the churches*. And so it was, for no further back than ten years ago he would have been persecuted, or perhaps, even stoned for the expression of such radical utterances.

All these and many other signs show beyond peradventure that our age is the age of a great transition, the greatest as yet witnessed in the history of our race. The handwriting is plainly seen upon the wall. The fiat has gone forth. With trembling knees the Belshazzar of superstition beholds the "Mene, mene, tekel, uphar-sin," which forewarns him that the power of ignorance is doomed, and that emancipation is dawning for mankind; while, on the other hand, the pilgrim, toiling up the steep and narrow way of progress, beholds the salvation of the race in the universal reign of law.

For evolution rules the world of man as surely as gravitation dominates the world of matter. Under the resistless sway of law the stars revolve in their determined course, and man is hurried on to progress. The mighty car of change sweeps on, an engine of destruction to those who would resist it, but to those who accept its protection, it becomes at once a palladium of safety, and a vehicle that bears them to a higher life.

Still, advance comes only at the price of effort and conflict. It will not do to rest supinely on our backs and lay the pleasing unction to our souls that the *spontaneous* movement of the race will attain the end desired. As Comte says: "In order to complete the laws, there is need of our wills." Evolution therefore is not to be taken as a moral sedative, or excuse for idleness, but rather as an incitement to action and enthusiasm. It is we who are the factors of the problem. On us depends the coming era. It is for us, therefore, not only to receive the rich legacies of the past, but to transmit them improved and brightened to the future. To effect this, the soldiers of Humanity must not fear to buckle on their armor and defend their convictions to the uttermost. The smallness of their numbers is no real cause of fear: one man in the right is a majority against a million, and, as conservative liberals, they can cherish the assured hope that in the end their opinions must survive, not only because they are the *fittest*, but because they are the *best*.

The parties to this conflict are and can be only two. On the one side, the myriad hosts of supernaturalism launch their thunders from behind "the baseless fabrics of their visions," while, on the other side, the little army of science stand entrenched within the impenetrable breastworks of our solid earth. Against this inexpugnable rampart fall alike harmless the anathema of pope, and the frenzied rage of ignorance; while every shot

sent forth from the camp of true knowledge, pierces the frail defences of theology, scattering terror through its midst.

And so of necessity must it be; for it is the war of new weapons against old weapons, of the Sharpe rifle against the bow of the savage, of new intellectual resources against old intellectual resources.

I earnestly hope in criticising Christianity that I may not seem to do so in the spirit of blind hatred. I well remember it as the earnest faith of my own childhood taught me at my mother's knee, a mother to whom it was the comfort and stay of life, as it still is to millions like her. And even now I recognize and freely allow that the Religion of Jesus, on its *heart* or *human* side, has taught mankind the noblest lessons of love and duty. On these grounds, I shake hands with the theologians, and am glad to call them brethren, but when they turn to the *head* or *doctrinal* side of their creed and attempt to teach us the misleading and immoral tenets of the Fall of Man, Vicarious Atonement, Election and Hell, against these pious lies (to be more fully considered hereafter) I maintain that any honest thinking man should enter his earnest protest; and I feel that such an one might well be pardoned if in his wrath against these dwarfing dogmas we found him uttering as his own that famous malediction of Voltaire when, a century ago he flung in the teeth of the priesthood and of all Europe those memorable words "Ecrasez l' infame," (crush the infamous thing), for that great hero felt, as all should feel, that on the denial of these dismal falsehoods hangs the welfare of mankind.

The difference at bottom between the two parties is a difference of method. Both the Religion of Christ and the Religion of Humanity uphold beneficence virtue, love, self-sacrifice, sympathy, and every other noble attainment. But one employs theological or

supernatural means and methods, while the other resorts only to scientific and human means or methods, the deep signification of which is that Christianity depends on imaginative and fictitious expedients which can only serve to defeat its own most cherished purposes, while Positivism takes no steps except those which in the light of science facilitate its high endeavors, and establish truth and virtue.

I have said that the parties to this conflict are and can be only two ; viz., the theologians and the philosophers of science. Many clergymen, to be sure, as previously remarked, show progressive tendencies, and some even desire to be ranked among the liberals. It may be that such men, placed as they are midway in this great transition, are performing a most effective service. They administer milk to their religious babes, and help to guide their feeble steps by the leading strings of modern thought ; but theologians they are and theologians they remain. Like men riding backward in a railroad car, either their gaze is turned towards heaven, or, if they cast their eyes to earth, 'tis but to see the landscape they have *passed*. The great *onward* destiny of man they dimly see and only half appreciate. These are the men who preach the reconciliation of science and religion, unknowing that science and religion need no reconciliation, that they are in their essential nature *one*. Not therefore till in place of the words " Religion *and* science," they can speak the words, " The Religion *of* Science," can such men be entitled to a place in the liberal ranks. We welcome all signs of advance, and therefore we bless the priest who extols Science to his congregation, not, however, because he really adheres to the new ideal, but because his teachings, like the boomerang, return to destroy the false parts of his creed.

Such preachers having committed themselves to ra-

tional Science are obliged to maintain for the sake of consistency that their religion also is rational. Unfortunate dilemma!! Much to be pitied men, while with doubting hands they offer their Evidences of Christianity and claim that there can be such a thing as a *Natural* Theology, or a *Science* of Theology—*Natural Supernaturalism*; a science or knowing of the *Un-knowable*! Why, for the sake of their own side and their own consistency, can they not drop at once and forever all appeal to reason and support themselves on what ordinary mortals, from their standpoint, would deem all sufficient, viz., an infallible God, who in an infallible bible, tells the infallible truth. To the weakness of the Positivistic mind it does really seem as if the Christian's appeal to reason means the surrender of his doughtiest stronghold. Where the need thereof? Is not the word of God sufficient of itself? — No! No! No! Let me conjure both Christian and Liberal thinkers that they deceive not themselves. Between science and doctrinal theology there can be no truce. As men of large charity and students of the philosophy of history, we may recognize whatever services the various creeds have in past times rendered to humanity; still, we cannot fail to perceive that, as the case stands to-day, they are both striving for the same places, and are contrary the one to the other; and those, therefore, who endeavor to float the banner of evolution in the name of God are only acting at once in opposition to their own belief and ours. Infallible revelations can never for long adapt themselves to changing environments, and therefore it seems to me that for such Christians there is only one of two consistent courses, viz., either to content themselves with their own iron-bound revelation, and to bow before their chosen God, with whom is neither variableness nor shadow of turning; or else, to renounce their idolatrous

adherence to a bible, which, by its assumption of completeness leaves no place for the idea of progress.

I have alluded to the unrestful religious feeling that broods over our century. I have also described the contending parties of advance and retrogression. I now approach my main topic.

THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY.

What is it?

Before describing what it is, it will not, perhaps, be amiss to describe what it is not; since a negative definition will render the affirmative one clearer.

Our cause, then, is not the cause of doctrinal theology, which represents a tyrant God, who created his children, placed them in an Eden of forbidden delights, and then required of them an obedience which by the *deification* of Christ (who *alone* was able to fulfil the law) could not be rendered by any earthly MAN *however* perfect, and when they yielded a little to the first temptation in the garden, this heavenly ruler condemned them and their unborn offspring to unspeakable tortures forevermore; all of which is simply saying that the cause of Humanity is not the cause of a God who made men finite and imperfect, and then condemned them for not being infinite and perfect, and who would only be propitiated towards them by the blood and agony of the only innocent one who had *never* offended Him, and that one his only-begotten son. No human father requires a compensation or sacrifice before he can pardon a repentant child, so I ask the Christians, Is man more tender than their God, and is the thing made an unfaithful index to the character of its maker? If their God be so infinitely pure as to detest sin, how came he to admit its defilement into his work? If so infinitely just how came he to make men (the work of his own hands) responsible for the flaws in their con-

struction? If so infinitely merciful and loving, why so averse to pardon his erring children? If so infinitely powerful why allow an evil demon to devastate the fair domain of his creation? Why! such doctrine DEPOSES their God from his high place, and makes their Devil triumphant to all eternity! Evangelical Christianity simply means Devil worship!!

“You preach Him to me to be just,
 And this is His realm you say,
 While the good are dying of hunger,
 And the bad gorge every day.
 You say that He loveth mercy,
 And the famine is not yet gone,
 That He hateth the shedder of blood,
 And He slayeth us every one.”

To sum up in a word, the theologic conception of God is to the human mind and heart an inexplicable bundle of riddles and immoralities. Such, it is needless to say is not the cause of Humanity. What, then, is it?

In the place of these stultifying contradictions I affirm that

THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY IS THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

And Pilate said, What is Truth? and his question has been echoed and re-echoed by the ages. How simple at last is the answer! Truth is human knowledge, that which man does or can *know*. But, here comes in the real enquiry, *What can man know? What are the limits of human knowledge?* Can we, as the theologians claim, grasp such a conception as that of the infinite? Can the mind, in other words, force itself outside of its conditions, and soar in the thin ether of the unconditioned?

“Can the finite the infinite search?”

“Did the blind discover the stars?”

No! no! let us away with such vain imaginings, which modern philosophy declares to be utterly unthinkable; for its teaching tells us that to think at all, we must have a *thing* to think of, and that *that thing* can only be known by its likeness or unlikeness to *another* thing. In other words, a thing to be *known* must be *defined*, and to be defined it must be *compared*. By this test, the infinite becomes simply the unknowable. No one can even attempt to realize the infinite (the illimitable) except by defining it, and the moment he does that he immediately imposes limits upon it, and makes it the finite and no longer the infinite. He limits or attempts to limit the illimitable.

In like manner, all enquiries into first and final causes are foreign to science, and perfectly fruitless. How, for instance, can the mind rest in the conception of an uncaused first cause? Why not just as well an uncaused world as an uncaused God?

The human soul, likewise, as an immaterial entity, separate from and independent of the body, is, in the same manner, swept away by the besom of this law of thought. I say nothing of the probable denial which anatomy and physiology present to this conception, but I ask as before, What is the soul or what is it not, what like or what unlike? And echo answers, what?

Thus we find that the theological definitions of God, and also of the human soul, are utterly misleading. All these conceptions are undefinable, and unverifiable. For the real purposes of life, such words must either have attached to them some true and scientific meaning, or else we must affirm that what they attempt to represent are mere non-existences.

The principle that has thus been stated in these condensed terms is the famous doctrine of the Relativity of Human Knowledge, which simply means, as before shown, that our minds, by their very constitution, are

forced to consider things in their likeness or unlikeness to each other, *i. e.*, in their *relations*. This law is the basis of all human truth. It is as much a condition of thought, as breathing is a condition of life; and it forms the great wall of partition between the true and the imagined, between the knowable and the unknowable, between *theology* and *science*. It says to the mind that thus far it may go but no further, and that here must its proud waves be stayed. It tells us that while we may cling to the *relative* (that is, to the known and the knowable) beyond as ever stretches the *irrelative* (the infinite, the illimitable) there to remain forever a terra incognita, a No-mans land.

We show by this law that the Cause of Humanity is that of Truth. "But," I hear the theologian cry, "you take away my God, you take away my soul!! What, what do you leave me?" "Take away your God" I answer, "take away your soul! No! no! What we banish are but the *specters* of the mind! We only take away your GHOSTS! We lift from the ages the incubus of a mighty night-mare."

And what do we leave you?

Here comes in the important question the Christians have a perfect right to ask. What are we positivists to provide as a substitute for the "Waning Faith?" To this I reply as follows:

Firstly: We give you if nothing else

EMANCIPATION.

We award you deliverance from the debasing superstitions of a vain imagination, we free you from the worst of all hells, the hell of doubt. We liberate you from that worst of all responsibilities, the responsibility of a soul to save or lose. We bid you stand forth, like the slave freed from his fetters, in all the conscious dignity of manhood.

But more, much more than this we give you, for
 Secondly: The cause of Humanity is the cause not
 only of Emancipation, but also of

FRUITFUL TRUTH, AS EXPRESSED IN SCIENCE.

I have spoken a few pages back of the doctrine of the relativity of human knowledge as the cause of truth: so indeed it is, for it is the invaluable doctrine which points out clearly to us the inevitable boundaries between the knowable and the unknowable, but by itself alone it is totally insufficient, and *science, fruitful science* becomes the real creed of the new faith. Demonstration not Revelation is our watchword. As some one has beautifully said, "Our belief is one with the falling rain and the growing corn."

I do not propose, Ingersoll-like, to merely preach in place of the dying faith the gospel of the railroad, telegraph and postoffice. We positivists are no worshippers of a bald materialism, though we are free to say that even this view is not undeserving of attention, for science since the sixteenth century has transformed the features of the globe, and re-created the substantial well-being of the race. Comparing our new era with the middle age we find, for example, that a real medical art has supplanted shrine cure, that comparative health and comfort bloom where pestilence then trampled millions into noisome graves; we find good roads and lands redeemed, where formerly the wayfarer struggled through pitfalls or fell a victim to miasmatic poison. And thus we might go on reciting by the hour these material benefactions of science, for their name is Legion; but it is aside from our object. We wish here only to recall those larger generalizations which form the great intellectual treasures of the race,—the *philosophy* of science, from which fall the *material* discoveries and

arts, as do ripening fruits from the tree that bears them.

I would first allude to the great law of The Correlation of Force and Matter. This is an affirmative truth astonishing in its reach and results. It proves to us that matter is indestructible, and that force is ever persistent, that all change expresses itself in these two terms, and that all phenomena are but re-distributions of these factors. In the light of this law life itself is seen as "bottled sunshine," and the very words I am now using had their source in the charges of light and heat of our great luminary.

We discover in this law of correlation the final unity of objective science; for by it the organic and inorganic world, mind and matter, are brought into a knowable relation as parts of this wondrous cosmical order.

This fundamental truth can only be consistently held by the new faith, for by it all *duality* of conception, such as God as opposed to Man, Heaven as contrasted with Earth, a spiritual life in contradistinction to a worldly life, must be forever discarded, and, in their place, we obtain the grand monistic conception of the unity of force and matter; wherein all things, organic and inorganic, appear but as, "parts of one stupendous whole."

This new conception as opposed to the old is well presented to the mind in the symbol of a circle as contrasted with a straight line. The old idea was the straight line with God at one end, man and the world at the other; but the circle, without beginning or end, can alone picture the grandeur of the everlasting flow of phenomena as now we know them.

Turn we now for another illustration of the same general topic to the teachings of Astronomy and Geology. The old faith presents such astonishing cosmical revela-

tions as the following: "Again the devil taketh Jesus "up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him " *all the kingdoms of the world*, and the glory of them." Matt. iv—8.

"And it came to pass while he blessed them he was "parted from them and carried *up* into heaven." Luke xxiv—51.

These two texts, though doubtless possessing allegorical value, display complete unacquaintance with the facts of the rotundity of the earth and its revolution on its axis. No miracle could make us believe that Jesus saw the antipodes, and in the continual motion of the earth there can be no such conception as *up* to heaven since what is up one hour is down another.

Thus these two texts form excellent illustrations of the old geological and astronomical notions. The earth, under this, (at the time, natural) illusion, was believed to be a flat, extended, stationary plane, all the kingdoms of which could be seen from a high elevation. Heaven was just a little way above it, at most not more than a mile or so, and its floor was the crystalline dome of the sky. Here was distinctly located the realm of the blessed. Here the eternal harpers discoursed their ecstatic strains. Here the angels, for occupation, bore onwards during the night not only the moon whereby to illumine the earth, but also other "lesser lights," like Jupiter, Neptune and Sirius. A somewhat larger lamp they kindly held aloft producing daylight.

The celestial architect, inhabiting this supernal region, conceived the idea some six thousand years ago of making an earth. He completed the task in six days, and then feeling tired rested on the seventh.

Silly as this primitive cosmogeny now appears, the old faith, in reality, is nothing without it, for on it depended the *localization* of heaven and hell, the one

placed above, the other below the earth ; but how pitiful, how sadly childish it appears in view of the *real* revelations of science, which prove that this earth is not the recent creation of a divine mechanic, but a planet which for inconceivable time has revolved around its central sun. Vast transformations have occurred upon its surface. Continents have risen and fallen. Great systems of life have followed one upon another, marking their birthdays not by years but by centuries.

And this little earth, so hoary with age, so venerable with change, is itself but a tiny speck amid the star-peopled fields of space. From the great nebula of Orion it would be indiscernible even with the aid of the most powerful telescope. Could we in imagination take the wings of the morning and fly to the outermost parts of our astronomical system, still beyond us would stretch space and stars, space and stars, till the sense is dazed and the mind benumbed in the contemplation.—The telescope has pierced the infinite depths, revealing orbs whose lightning-speeding rays consume millenia in reaching us, but the telescope reveals—no heaven—There is a curious little book called Erehwon, the letters of which being re-transposed, read “Nowhere.” Science has transformed Heaven into Erehwon. God, if he exists, is a homeless wanderer in the Infinite.

But I fancy I hear the old question of Napoleon, “Whence came all these stars?” I could reply by giving you the nebular-hypothesis or the aggregation theory, and so present a proximate explanation, but I am content to answer in all humility “I know not.” Nor do we *need* to know. Any fact of science traced to its ultimatum, brings us face to face with facts which are impenetrable to any human capacity. We have, however, no warrant to invoke the *pseudo* mystery theologians call God to solve the *real* mystery that surround us. We, as positivists, are content to take our mysteries

at first hand, and do not presume to measure the infinite by the little foot-rule of human experience.

But if Astronomy has deprived the theologian of his heaven, it has certainly shown him what the position of his earth is in the universe. If rightly interpreted it tells him that on this contracted isle in the ocean of the infinite is to be wrought out *his* destiny and that of the race of which he is a member. It tells him that the celestial spheres have departed, that the *old* false world is gone, but that his *true* home is here on earth, and that he must now turn, not to the angelic hosts, but to his fellow-man for aid and comfort.

Since this is so ; since, in other words, we must now look to Humanity instead of God, it becomes of paramount importance to know the laws not only of the inorganic, but also of the organic world. We therefore shut the leaves of the old fable, and open the new book of Genesis, which reveals the law of evolution, as exemplified in the studies of Biology and Sociology ; the former being the science of plant and animal life ; the latter, the science of society.

Geologists are well agreed that there was a time when no life existed on this planet. We also know that all living substances are composed of protoplasmic cells. Life must, therefore, have first appeared in the form of this colloid substance, which has been analyzed and found to consist of carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen, a little sulphur and phosphorus. Such is the physical basis of life, and, under the law of correlation, the alternative seems to be inevitably thrust upon us that from the combination of these elements resulted that condition of matter, whose organic action we call life, the definition of life being the interplay between an organism and its environment, and thought the mirror that reflects them.

Protoplasm is therefore the bridge between the organic and the inorganic worlds. The peculiarity of this substance is its wonderful quality of increment and growth. By means of this peculiarity, and by adaptation and re-adaptation to its environment, by the survival of the the fittest in the struggle for existence, by the transmission through inheritance of acquired superiorities, came that vast development of animal life, recorded in the unalterable history of the rocks, and kept concealed in those rough pages till the wand of science, with its "open sesame," revealed these miracles of nature.

Well, this process of advancing life went on till the higher animals were developed, and with them man. If anyone still entertains a doubt of the descent of man from some form of the anthropoid ape, let him visit some museum of natural history and study the appearance, manners and formation of the Gibbon and Chimpanzee. One look will be worth a hundred arguments, and the distant relationship will appear too plain to be honestly disowned. To-day even there are savages existing far nearer the condition of the highest ape than they are to civilized man.

"Shocking" cries our objector, and we also seem to hear him say, "I do not wish to believe it even if it is true;" to which we rejoin that we *rejoice* in it, because it makes our life at one with the great life of this globe. It protects our being by placing it in the lap of law. It shows to us our destiny. It tells us whence we came and whither we are going. Better the developing ape than the degraded angel. The ape *progressive* opens boundless vistas for the Future of the Race; the angel *fallen* tolls the knell of human hope,

These primeval ancestors of anthropoid origin were the completest possible contradiction to those Paradi-
saical creatures into whom the Almighty is fabled to

have breathed the breath of life, creating them, so says the legend, in his own image. They were, as a matter of fact and science, but a grade above the beasts, and it was only when they first began to *associate* for offence, defence, or other purpose, that they laid the foundation of Society and Manhood, for, "man is not man, but in Society Man means Society."

Co-evally with that association doubtless came the first dull glimmerings of language, the *sine qua non* to social advancement. The savage learned also to make a fire; another great step in human progress. Tribal union came. The untutored intellect began to ask itself the great questions of the whence, the where, and the whither. It looked around on nature. It saw the grasses grow, the leaves waving in the breeze, the brooklets dancing in the sunshine, and the stars pursuing their silent courses. All nature seemed in *motion*." "Whence these motions? asked the savage. Must not "these objects move just as *I* move? My *will* directs "*my* motion. *Wills*, therefore, must also direct theirs." Thus came the first great stage of religion—Fetichism, in which all nature seemed alive, in which all things that moved, whether animate or inanimate, were interpreted as being actuated by wills.

By this incipient philosophy, rude and primitive as it now appears, the human mind was saved from chaos. In the absence of science no other theory was possible. All nature was alive, actually alive. To the fetichist there were literally books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and God in everything. He was the most complete of theologians the world has ever, or ever will behold, for he always lived in the midst of a constant communion with his surrounding deities.

But the savage had other experiences. He saw visions and dreamt dreams. In the watches of the night appeared to him his friend or enemy, nay even

his own self. These apparitions to him were realities. To each man, therefore, the savage reasoned, belonged a second self, a veritable *alter ego*, which was a spirit or ghost, the belief in which was confirmed by such strange phenomena as the breath appearing and fading away, or the shadow following in such silent mystery.

Herein we discover the historical origin of the human soul, considered as an entity. As an illusion it arose and as such is fast fading away.

Nor is this all. If these strange appearances could live separate from the body during life, why not after death? So a place had to be prepared for departed spirits, located sometimes on a mountain, sometimes in a cave; sometimes above, sometimes below the earth. Thus, also, do we find the historical foundations of heaven and hell, a doctrine natural to and consistent with that old *savage* theory of things, but an utter anomaly in the state of our present knowledge.

Still, social advance went on. The original nomadic life became changed to that of agriculture and the care of flocks. Men found a settled abode in the great river valleys, like the Tigris and Euphrates. It was the beginning of home life.

There was now more time for contemplation. The care of harvests and cattle led the people to watch the skies. The lesser fetiches began to fade in interest before the sun and stars, and astrolatry set in. The great Gods were thus seen as further off, and the mind became prepared to separate the wills, deities and spirits from the objects they inhabited. Then came the next great religious stage Polytheism. For men had begun to notice uniformities in nature. The gods of each tree, for example, were condensed into the God of the Forest. The great divisions of the universe, Earth, Hades (or Hell) and Heaven were assigned to their respective rulers.

But still along the ages the process continued of the weeding out of the deities, for completer observations of nature and larger scientific conceptions were forcing the minds of men towards a larger unity, (especially under the influence of the great amalgamation of the Roman Empire,) and Monotheism was the result.

Idol worship was the first stage, Fetichism. Idol worship was the second stage, Polytheism. And idol worship *is* the third stage (their direct successor) Monotheism. What matters it whether the idol be one carved by the hand or created by the mind? Has not Comte well described the God of Christianity by applying to it the term "La Grand Fetiche?"

But observe the process. With the advance of real knowledge, the Gods of false knowledge have been exterminated one by one, or relegated to a greater distance; and thus through the ages has the great war gone on between science and theology. Every advance meant fewer gods, or the same god attenuated or driven further off; and the course of human history shows that this earth can never stand redeemed till God and Satan, angels and demons, ghosts and spirits, are forever driven and consigned to their appropriate limbo of fiction and mythology.

But *pari passu* with this destructivetheological *dissolution* was ever occurring a constructive scientific *evolution*. We have said that men became men by virtue of their primal association. These associations at first were small, consisting, probably, of the family. The family grew to the tribe, the tribe increased to the city, or combined with other tribes to form the nation; until now in these latter days, as Tennyson says, "The Individual withers, but the Race is more and more," and we have dawning upon us, at last, the grandest of all the revelations of science the great conception of the Immortal Individual, Humanity as an Organism. This

Humanity, as defined by my friend, Mr. T. B. Wakeman, the author of that admirable little work called "An Epitome of the Positive Religion and Philosophy," is to be regarded as the "whole of human beings past, present and future," or again, as "the voluntary convergence of all the sentient beings on our planet, the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the world." "This," he says, "has been especially manifest since the French Revolution in the increase of diplomatic, scientific, commercial and social intercourse, all of which has strengthened the conviction that all are but parts of one great earthly family, whose interests are in a thousand ways indissolubly interwoven. Both the French and American revolutions, in the appreciation they displayed of the brotherhood and the rights of man, were a grand admonition that the word Humanity had come to stand for the deepest sentiment and the highest interest of Mankind, whereby each finds that he has a place, a right and a duty as part of the grand Organic Social Being of our planet."

Under my fifth head, wherein I shall endeavor to show that our cause is the Cause of Religion, I shall adduce further evidence to prove that Humanity is a Being or Organism; but fearing that the impression which my scientific outline has thus far left upon the minds of my hearers, in spite of my previous protest, is that of the identity of Positivism with Materialism, I wish at once to correct any such misunderstanding in case it exists. Beginning with Chaos I have described the occurrence of Phenomena under the laws of correlation and evolution, and have stated that those phenomena culminated in man himself. We have been considering these things *objectively*, just as if we were disinterested observers poised somewhere in space and watching how matters took place on earth. In this ob-

jective view Positivism *is*, we are ready to confess, materialistic. But the great point to notice is that we are *not* such disinterested observers in space. We are ourselves part and parcel of the Cosmos. Its laws are only laws as they appear so to *our minds*. "The everlasting laws are parts of ourselves." In this therefore which is the subjective view, the *idea* or *idealism* is the uppermost consideration. The two conceptions, put together, form the counterpart one of the other. If on the *objective* side we seem purely materialistic, on the *subjective* side we seem purely idealistic, and the one view is as scientific as the other. If the out-and-out materialist states that we cannot know mind except in terms of matter we shall not contradict him, but we shall put in our rejoinder to the effect, neither can matter be known except in terms of mind, that, in fact, the final synthesis of science must be a subjective one or one based on the consciousness of impressions made on the mind by its environment. The environment may be called *material*, the effect of it is *ideal*. The mind (subjective) is the reflector of the world (objective). They are but two aspects of the same shield. In their ensemble they constitute, in truth, the grand reconciliation of materialism with spiritualism, using the latter term not in the sense of Ghostism, but in its proper human meaning.

But the individual, in this subjective or human view, is totally inexplicable except when considered in his relation to the race. The theologian right here with justice urges his intuitional philosophy against the materialist, asking him whence come all these aspirations and longings, these fine imaginations, this soaring of the soul for something higher and better, unless from the divine intentions implanted from the source of all perfections, God. Before this question pure materialism has to stand abashed. Holiness of life and striv-

ings after righteousness could not be entirely interpreted by the attempt of physiology to resolve them into so much expenditure of nervous and vital force. To account for these phenomena scientifically a missing link had to be found, which is the link that Positivism presents to view, viz., the race idea, or Humanity. Says Comte "*Entre nous et le monde il faut l'Humanite.*" (Between us and the world there is, and there is need of Humanity). Only in the continuity and solidarity, (that is, by investigation of the past and present,) of this greater organism can we know ourselves as individuals at all, but now we are sure that law, science, intellect, morality, all we have and are, are the accomplishments of the generations dead and gone transmitted to us through heredity. Thus everything is accounted for, even the tenderest pleadings of the heart, the lover's sigh, or the child's sweet glance of confidence.

Distasteful as I know these discriminations between the objective and the subjective to be, I yet linger for a few moments upon them to consider the much vexed question of the freedom of the will, for I feel that in the distinction between the objective and subjective lies the only approach to a solution of this puzzle. As has before been intimated, the subjective synthesis is nothing more nor less than the classified impressions of the world around us. Having received and thus arranged these impressions, the mind naturally asks itself, "What are you going to do about it? Are you going to rest quiet and take no action in the premises, or will you attempt to modify these phenomena and turn them to the well being of man?" To put the question differently, Have we freedom of the will? Are we the creatures of a blind fatality or can we regulate circumstance, and become to ourselves a practical providence? To the question then, Have we freedom of the will, I an-

swer no and yes. In the objective sense, no ; in the subjective sense, yes. Objectively we see that all things are under the sway of immutable law from the movement of the planets to the finest action of the brain and the strongest decisions of our nature. This is the position of the materialistic fatalist, and as far as he goes he is right and consistent. Kismet is its watchword. It is the philosophy of *laissez aller* and of consequent indifferentism. It bids its disciples to quietly sail along with the sluggish stream of time, picking up on their way whatever driftwood they can find of pleasure or of gain. In its morality it is profoundly selfish. It seeks only for number one. But, turning to the subjective aspect of this hard problem, a new light bursts upon it. While we must acknowledge that under the sway of objective law our wills simply follow the lines of least resistance, and are consequently nothing but a force the resultant of other forces ; still it is at once apparent that this line of least resistance is resultant from influences far beyond the mental power of man to calculate, and hence the will of man is, for all practical purposes, left perfectly free. I mean that the resolutions a man is each moment taking are undoubtedly because of a countless number of influences, astronomical, metereological, biological, sociological and moral, which in their ensemble no earthly power can either control or stop to calculate. But his will, the resultant of all these influences, any man is most distinctly conscious of, and can with reason proceed to act upon it as an original and basic force, and as if it were *not* the consequent of other forces at all. This position may be, perhaps, dimly illustrated by the attitude of children in a household. In many respects such children feel themselves perfectly free in their wills. They laugh and play, rise and sleep, pretty much to please themselves, totally thoughtless that their parents have

woven around them a net-work of physical and moral bands that bind them with most powerful hold. The children feel that they are free, and act so. The parents know that they are not. Just so it is, only in a much greater degree, that the minds and wills of adults are free. The inextricable combinations of the external and internal worlds are incalculable, and thus leave man an independent agent. This is shown by our everyday attitude towards our environment. The astronomical world around us is unmodifiable. No effort of the will can change the course of the stars, but as we approach the regions of physics and chemistry we find that we can effect vast transformations in nature to the use of man, and coming to the social and moral life of man himself, here, of all regions, are the places where he can change and alter the most, and in these fields it is that the hope of human redemption lies as they are most of all under intelligent direction and control. If this explanation is not entirely satisfactory to all, I can maintain at any rate that it is a vastly better one than theology could ever offer in consideration of the old difficulty that always existed under the attempt to reconcile man's free agency with the predestinations of an all-wise and overruling God. There was here, in fact, no reconciliation possible. But it certainly strikes me that in the objective and subjective aspects of the antagonism between fate and free-will we have a relative, if not an absolute explanation, which is sufficient for all the real purposes of life.

As long as science, thus transmitted through race inheritance, was confined to the inorganic world, a cold and selfish, one-sided and exclusive materialism was the result, but now that she has extended her sway over the organic departments, we find ourselves so linked by law to our fellows, that only by unselfishness can we fulfil the laws.

I wish, at this point, to offer a suggestion concerning the question of theology and science, which, at the first blush, may seem to contradict my previous statements. I have maintained that between these two ideas or methods there is an irrepressible conflict. And this is strictly true. Yet it is not only fair, but it will throw much light on the topic to remember that until real demonstrated science came in, the theological interpretation of the Universe was regarded as the Scientific one. It was the ignorant man's science. Science (from *scio*-ire) is what we know. The savage *knew* that a nightly vision was a reality, for he saw it with his very eyes. He *knew* that the earth was flat and stationery. He *knew* that the sun moved around it, and not it around the sun. The astrologer believed religiously in his horoscope; the alchemist in his alembic. The search of Ponce de Leon for the fountain of youth was just as much a scientific expedition to him as a few years ago was that of her Majesty's ship "Challenger" in its deep sea soundings. Only little by little has real science displaced false science. The process has involved, through many centuries, the conflict between these two interpretations of the universe, the one pseudo-scientific, the other really scientific. Any one who has read Dr. John W. Draper's History of the Conflict between Science and Religion has seen, as in a grand epic, the portrayal of what I allude to. The God idea and the man idea have ever been contending because they are both endeavors to construe the universe and the destiny of Humanity with reference thereto.* The one has had its basis on the conception of the will of a God or Gods, the other on the conception of Law. Both methods have been upheld as scientific, but in every case demonstration has held its own against revelation. In Astron-

* They both attempt to tell man what he is, where he is, whence he is, and whither he is tending.

omy, Physics and Chemistry no appeal to deity is now even thought of to explain their phenomena. In these departments the would-be science of divine interpretation has completely yielded to the proven science of rational interpretation. In individual and social life recourse is still had to the old methods to explain man in his relations to the world and to his fellows, but the application of the laws of Biology and Sociology must as inevitably remove the resort to a celestial governance, as has been the case in the other regions of demonstrated fact. "When I was a child, I thought as a child, I felt as a child, I spoke as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things." This text clearly illustrates the manner in which we emerge from our worn out opinions. We lay them aside as we do a shabby garment, or as a Crustacean does the shell he has outgrown.

The same text also shows how in most cases those in a lower stage of civilization should be treated, as against the educated classes; but one ground is tenable, and that is the utter unfitness of Christian doctrine to guide the thought of the future, but concerning those in lower stages of culture, we should, in the light of evolution, apply to such only a relative remedy. In the case of the African tribes, for instance, their adoption of Moham-medanism would be a long step in advance, and probably the best one, as well as the only one practicable. And with regard to our own ignorant masses under the rule of the Romish Church, any sudden extrication from their priestly censorship would undoubtedly prove an evil. Religiously speaking, they are children, and as such they must be treated. It is to be hoped that the Catholic priesthood may become sufficiently enlarged to apply to their charges a Kindergarten method in religion which will, without violence, acquaint the masses piecemeal with the new truth. Unless some such plan of

gradual amelioration can be effected, another (and happily the last) great conflict between theology and science is inevitable. The thinking, reading world will range itself on one side, ignorance and Pharisaism on the other, and sad will be the clash.

In this connection the following words of John Morley, taken from the *Contemporary Review*, may not seem out of place: addressing the clergy, he says: "The growth of bright ideals and a nobler purpose will go on, leaving ever and ever further behind them your dwarfed finality and leaden, moveless stereotype. We shall pass you on your flank; your fiercest darts will only spend themselves upon air. We will not attack you as Voltaire did; we will not exterminate you; we shall explain you. History will place each dogma in its class, above or below a hundred competing dogmas, exactly as the naturalist classifies his species. From being a conviction, it will sink to a curiosity; from being the guide to millions of human lives it will dwindle down to a chapter in a book. As history explains your dogma, so science will dry it up; the conception of law will silently make the conception of the daily miracle of your altars seem impossible; the mental climate will gradually deprive your symbols of their nourishment, and men will leave your system, not because they have confuted it, but because, like witchcraft or astrology, it has ceased to interest them."

I conclude the present head of my discourse by saying that the above, in brief, are the lessons of science which show to man his place in nature. As the result and outcome of all these forces (organic and inorganic) stands the civilization of to-day. That civilization can only be expressed in the term Humanity, and in that Humanity we all live and move and have our being. Just as the individual organism is made up of living cells, which

only exist as they are related to and connected with the body, so is each one of us in our dependence on Humanity. Outside of *it*, man has neither meaning nor existence. Humanity is our Providence. Its toils and agonies have been the stepping stones to bear us to a higher life; its beneficent protection holds us in the hollow of its hand.

Having thus far endeavored to show that science answers (as far as they are answerable) the great questions of the *whence*, the *where* and the *whither*, our subject leads us to another grand point, in which the new religion of Truth brings to us the idea of the Beautiful. So I affirm,

THIRDLY—THAT THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY IS THE CAUSE OF ART.

Much as I have dwelt on science, art is as truly and fundamentally an inspiration of the new faith: art, not in its narrow meaning, but art in its larger sense, in the sense implied in Goethe's splendid aphorism, where he says, "We know no world except in relation to man; we wish no *art* except as an expression of that relation." Rising at once above the domain of the mechanical arts, art, in its highest sense, becomes the idealization, the apotheosis of the real. Its aim is to ennoble and beautify humanity. Art is Beauty. Its masterpieces in poetry, sculpture, painting, music and architecture, have always been the accompaniments of great concrete civilizations. This explains why art has been called the handmaid of religion, since no civilization of any moment has existed in the world unless based upon and accompanied by a controlling faith. Art accomplished marvels under Polytheistic and Christian theology, not

because of the divinity of those religions, but because they both possessed a strong human side, and this side it is that art has given us in its delineations. If chained completely to the trammels of superstition, she would starve for want of sustenance, for she must find her nourishment in the actual.

It is science that lays the deeply dug foundations, and there she is content to leave them buried; but on these solid blocks of truth art will rear her dwellings and her temples for the future of men. All the skill of architecture, all the resources of sculpture, all the devices of painting, she will apply to their adornment. Fairer women and braver men will dwell and worship therein, and will echo their sense of the sublime and beautiful through the harmony of music and the synthetic march of poetry.

Art is the child of nature; yes,
 Her darling child, in whom we trace
 The features of the mother's face,
 Her aspect and her attitude,
 All her majestic loveliness
 Chastened and softened and subdued
 Into a more attractive grace,
 And with a *human* sense imbued,—
 He is the greatest artist then,
 Whether of pencil or of pen,
 Who follows nature,—Never man,
 As artist or as artizan,
 Pursuing his own fantasies,
 Can touch the human heart, or please,
 Or satisfy our noble needs,
 As he who sets his willing feet
 In nature's footprints, light and fleet,
 And follows fearless where she leads.

Art's greatest effort under the old faith has been to idealize this world in order to enable us to realize another. The new faith cherishes the ideal at least in equal degree; all that is lovely and of good report, all that is beautiful, all that is grand, all that is true and estimable in the world of nature or the world of man, will be the office of art to symbolize; and then the heaven which men have so vainly sought in another sphere will be realized on earth. Quoting Goethe's words, in their largest sense, may we not almost say with him?

“ Who science has and art
Has also religion.
Who neither of them has
Let him have religion.”

I would gladly dwell longer on this most attractive phase of positivism, but the limitations of space, already too much transgressed, compel me to desist.

Having shown thus far that our synthesis embraces the regions of science and art, I am next led to demonstrate that the cause of Humanity is now prepared to cope with Christianity in its last stronghold, and that hence

FOURTHLY.—OUR CAUSE IS THE CAUSE OF MORALITY.

We claim that Humanity is the sole basis of morals. Therefore, in discussing this portion of our subject we must, at the outset, distinguish between the human and divine morality; or the morality of Naturalism and the morality of Supernaturalism. The former may be called the ethics of one world at a time, the latter the ethics of two worlds at a time.

Some skilled equestrians in the hippodrome are able to ride two steeds simultaneously. Even they, however, find it a tiresome and risky operation. But for the multitude such a feat is an impossibility; yet this is the attempt which for ages civilization has been trying to accomplish, and many have been the falls and great the disaster which has resulted.

When I speak of Supernaturalism in this essay, I limit myself to Christian Supernaturalism, and here, as before, I draw the line between the head side and the heart side of the religion of Jesus. On the heart side (within the brotherhood of the Christian confession) noble traditions of sympathy, charity and self-sacrifice have become the inheritance of the race. Contracted within the limits of the Roman Catholic civilization this heart side has given us much that is human and humane. But when we turn to the head side (the doctrinal side) of Christianity, how sadly the picture changes! We there have the vengeful God, who created man in his own image by making him totally depraved, and who still further showed the cruelty and despotic favoritism of his nature by slaying his own son to the end that certain stray sinners might inherit life eternal. Heaven and hell were presented to lure the selfish and intimidate the weak, and a priesthood was established as the ministers plenipotentiary of their Celestial Tyrant. These same points have been before dwelt upon, but we now restate them to show their bearing upon morality. Would you know the meaning of these Christian dogmas? I will tell you. They mean the organized despair of man. They mean the slave cringing before a power he cannot control. They mean the perpetuation of ignorance and fear. They mean the denial of our own manhood, the shirking of our own responsibility through the wretched doctrine of the atonement, the cowardly and degrading assumption of another's merits to stand in

place of our own. They mean a personal salvation gained at the price of almost universal damnation. They mean a human fellowship confined to the narrow range of the Christian confession, excluding all others. And, worst of all, they mean the denial of human freedom, the subjection of the race to an absolute foreign despot, who has vested his unalterable authority in Priest, King or Bible.

Such is the picture of Christian morality, a picture of stagnation and misery set against the dark background, and within the sombre frame-work of the middle ages.

But in the sixteenth century two twin giants leapt forth, full-armed, like Minerva from the head of Jove, whose double office it was to reverse this dreary picture. Their names were Protestantism and Science. Protestantism, with its dogma of the right of private judgment, shouted revolt against authority, the destruction of idol-worship, the overthrow of all false Gods; while Science prophesied the establishment of a higher truth, the construction of a new ideal, the conformity of the soul of man, not to the laws of God, but to the laws of nature.

Both of these twin Saviours appealed to humanity in the name of liberty. The former demanded, and is still demanding, liberty from the trammels of the old; the latter, liberty to lay down the strong foundation of the new. They both tell us that the law of freedom means freedom to obey law.

For three centuries have these great forces been working in society, and under their holy influence what a vast change do we see in the civilization of the nineteenth century, so falsely called a Christian civilization! How differently we can now describe the morality of the representative man of the modern epoch! No longer bowed with face in the dust, prostrate at the feet of Jesus, we see him standing erect in

the nobility of his own manhood. Instead of Faith in Christ, we see him living by his Faith in Human Nature. The brotherhood of the Christian Confession has given way to the Republic of the World, the Commonwealth of Man. In place of self-suppression we have self-development. Doubt is no longer sin, nor disbelief damnation. Organized Faith in man has become the substitute for the organized Despair of man.

All this has been accomplished for human morality in the sacred names of Science and of Liberty. Reverence for freedom has increased as reverence for authority has decreased, and even Christianity (which I have thus strongly assailed) has so expanded under the freedom wrested from itself, that it has proved fruitful of many blessings. I wish to give it all the credit possible, but after every allowance it is evident that much, very much, remains to be done. Under the doctrine of election, for example, theology created an elect in heaven, which has been aptly imitated by an overbearing aristocracy on earth. In directing contrite submission to the will of God, by saying that the powers that be are ordained of God, that the poor you have always with you, &c. it has in past times justified masters in grinding down their slaves, feudal lords in trampling on their vassals, and to-day sanctions capital in its oppression of labor. If Christianity does go down into the pit to help the poor, it first is determined to keep them there; witness how it advocates the present false competitive method of trade, that Darwinism in business, wherein every man's hand is against every other man's, and must of necessity be while the system lasts. The priest is the natural ally of the capitalist. They both represent one-sided, selfish power.

I here wish to answer an anticipated objection, which is that I am fighting against the windmills, that I have been setting up straw figures merely

to knock them down, or, in other words, that these dogmas which I have been reprobating have become, in the light of the nineteenth century, practically obsolete. To which I would reply, that this is not true. There is not a single orthodox sect in Christendom in whose printed articles of faith these incubi will not be found, and I venture the assertion that week by week thousands of ingenuous children in our Sunday-schools are having their consciences warped, and their little minds polluted with the debasing teaching that they are (in the words of Brown's old Catechism) "Enemies of God, children of Satan and heirs of hell."

They are taught on *Sunday*, under the holy sanction of the church, that the world was created in six days; on *Monday* they learn in their day-school that its construction consumed millenia of time. The childish mind sees there is a lie somewhere, and most unhappily, as my witty friend James Parton once said, the young hopeful's natural inference is, "Go it while you're young." The conflict of secular and religious teaching deprives him of his standard of morality.

And even in the more liberal churches, those which have reached out beyond the pale of orthodoxy, I maintain that the same flavor pervades their tenets. Remoulding an old rhyme, I would say :

" You may break, you may shiver the jar, if you will,
" The stench of the garbage will cling round it still."

For, as long as these doctrines exist (even in their most attenuated form), they tend on the side of that spirit which makes for ignorance, hatred and slavery, and which sets itself at variance with freedom, science and humanity. These liberal churches are a strange anomaly. Christianity, to be Christianity at all, it seems to me, must, by the force of its own logic, hold to the doc-

trines we have been considering, or else become no longer Christianity. For the dogmas of the Fall, Atonement and Salvation, form one consistent whole; the abstraction of any one of them being the removal of a link that breaks the whole chain. Unless men were fallen, what the need of a Saviour, unless doomed to hell, what the use of atonement; if possessed of merits of their own, what the need of another's merits? Consideration will thus show that all these conceptions must be construed together. Still, only in direct proportion as Christians cut loose from such belief do they work out from the genius of the twelfth into the genius of the nineteenth century, and from the narrow morality of superstition into the large morality of science and freedom. The retention even of an iota of Christian doctrine is so much premium on selfishness and wrong. Yet it may be there is one class of Christians (if Christians they can be called) whom hitherto I have not described in this essay, and to whom I have not done justice. They are a set of men who are symbolizing away their old faith. To them no longer is God a person, but the name signifies the great unknowable, unnameable power underlying the cosmos. Christ is to such the type of self-sacrifice, the highest embodiment of manhood, the symbol of reconciliation; and the chief idea they attach to immortality is the glory of the conscious performance of well-doing throughout eternity. Canon Farrar is perhaps an example of such believers. He denies entirely the orthodox interpretation of the atonement. With regard to such Christians, it might not be improper to again quote their own Scripture by saying, "He that is not against us is for us."

The truth, however, about such seems to be that they are simply stopping in a half-way house. Their First of May, their moving day, must soon come. Between Roman Catholicism and the Religion of Humanity there

is no fixed resting place. The men I am now describing necessarily cling to their old notion of Duality. This *must* unfix their foundation. It bases their hopes wrongly, and to that extent debases them. I know a gentleman who once bought a beautiful place on the sea-shore. He found it so thickly surrounded with evergreens—the type of immortality—that the beautiful view of the ocean was quite excluded. With his ax he struck them down right and left. The evergreens were gone, but the loveliest panorama was opened, having the grand old ocean for its background, with men and women rambling by the roadside, and children playing in the fields. And thus will it ever prove. This life will become more and more just as the other life becomes less and less, and not till our hopes are no longer fixed on an objective personal immortality; not till this and other false aspirations are removed, can Humanity reach to the full attainment of its high capability. The heaven men would gain must be sought for here.

Did this last most advanced type of Christians but know it, there is only one step from their belief to Positivism. Perhaps no better definition of the latter on its religious side could be found than to call it thus, viz, developed Christianity, minus its theology. In this view all superstition would be discarded. The term Force would take the place of God, and the noble ideal of Humanity would supplant, without displacing, that of the Christ.

And we who embrace these modern views know whereof we speak. Having tasted of this new tree of life, we have found the fruition of our religious hopes. To use an expression of Frederic Harrison's, "we find ourselves again in the old lines of religious rest." Each one, be he high or low, rich or poor, again finds himself of use in the world. He sees again the purpose and the joy of life.

" Poor indeed thou must be, if around thee
 " Thou no ray of light and joy canst throw ;
 " If no silken cord of love hath bound thee
 " To some little world through weal or woe.
 " If no dear eyes thy fond love can brighten,
 " No fond voices answer to thine own ;
 " If no brother's sorrow thou cans't lighten
 " By tender sympathy and gentle tone.
 " Not by deeds that win the crowd's applause ;
 " Not by works that give the world renown ;
 " Not by martyrdom or vaunted crosses
 " Canst thou win and wear the immortal crown.
 " Daily struggling, though unloved and lonely,
 " Every day a rich reward will give ;
 " Thou wilt find by hearty striving only
 " And truly loving thou canst truly live."

Returning from this side path into which I have been led for the purpose of describing the Christians of the most liberal type, I return to the high-road of my subject, and proceed to say that in spite of every allowance to be made for the generally received opinions, too much of the middle-age spirit still remains.

Protestanism was an advance upon Romanism in the line of freedom, as Unitarianism is upon Protestantism, but, after all, it is undeniable that the Christian Church, as such, both in its constitution and history, has been the sworn foe of science and of liberty. I say both in her constitution and history. In her constitution, because a perfect revelation from a perfect God admits of no improvement, needs no science; obedience to the divine will allows of no liberty. In her history, as witness Copernicus, Galileo, Giordan Bruno, the Inquisition, St. Bartholomew, to say nothing of the Puritan's persecution of witchcraft, and numberless other instances of religious cruelty.

To state the matter in one single phrase, doctrinal Christianity means absolute despotism. It represents the rule of an overbearing God, and is the very anti-type of Republicanism. Heaven has certainly never been represented as a democracy. In that summer-land nothing prevails but meekness and obedience in the presence of a potentate. A government of the angels, for the angels, by the angels, with a new president re-elected every four years, would certainly be an anomaly. This unavoidable antagonism between the ideal heavenly life and the ideal earthly life leads us to say further that the fundamental difficulty with Christians, in these transition times, is that, consciously or unconsciously, they are sailing under two flags. Each individual believer represents in his own nature a conflict of authority, the conflict between despotism and republicanism. In his spiritual and religious nature his life is passed in a dream of Oriental Tyranny; in his earthly life, he is a member of our glorious commonwealth.

History helps us to an explanation of this, since it shows to us that of old the idea of government, both human and divine, was based on theology. Christians have outgrown the one conception and not the other. Theological government remains in the church, but has passed away in the state. Government to our forefathers was deemed a royal appanage, founded on the divine right of kings; while government now is regarded as the prerogative of the people only, growing out of their natural right of self-rule.

The American Declaration of Independence humanized or socialized politics. What we now want is a Declaration of Independence which will humanize religion. The one equally with the other must be secular and republican. Real religion can no more exist under the rule of God than popular government can under the sway of a Cæsar. Political liberty we have already ob-

tained. The next great issue, underlying and including all others, is the attainment of religious liberty, which, in the high sense that I refer to, means, and can only mean, that this toiling, groaning, suffering race of men and women must summon God before the bar of human justice, there to have him tried for the deeds done in the spirit during the long six thousand years of his misrule, and when found guilty to depose him from his high estate and in his stead enthrone Humanity, whose sceptre he has so long usurped.

The abolition of the divine right of kings is the prophecy of the abolition of the divine right of God. Delivered from the false authority of both king and God, of earthly and heavenly tyrant, society will then be free to submit itself to the only true authority, the authority of Law.

When freed from the mirage of supernaturalism true morality is seen to be purely a social growth. From the attrition through the ages of human experiences, the sense of right has been evolved, and has become ingrained into the human system as the sum and substance of social utilities. The old morality is founded on the God idea, and places its reliance on a divine providence; the new morality is based entirely on the *man* idea, and trusts implicitly in a human providence. The one is theological, the other sociological. Beginning with low conditions, the conscience has been augmented, and ever transmitted and re-transmitted, till it has come to be regarded as an instinct, an intuition, or a separate entity. That the moral sense, however, is really the result of an evolution is shown by comparing present customs with those of the savage, who, in perfect accordance with his barbarous code, kills off the aged, murders or enslaves his prisoners of war, tortures his enemy, and

feasts on human flesh. Ethically defective, as is our present age, it certainly represents a vast improvement on such practices, and we cannot fail to see on a comparison of savage with civilized times, that conscience, like the intellect, grows through the ages, and is a purely relative and human acquisition.

A not unfamiliar example might be found in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v., 38-44), wherein Christ himself becomes the unconscious witness of the evolution of morality by his contrast of the old with the new.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth :

“But I say unto you, that you resist not evil ; but
“whosoever small smite thee on the right cheek, turn to
“him the other also.

“And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take
“away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

“And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go
“with him twain.

“Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that
“would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt
“love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy.

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them
“that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and
“pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute
“you.”

But, in spite of the advance effected by Christianity, and notwithstanding its many excellent precepts, the insuperable trouble with theology still remains, viz. : that it has always placed morality upon a selfish and individual basis ; we may, perhaps, say selfish, because individual basis. Before each believer was placed Paradise and the Judgment for him or her *alone* to gain or lose. The earth was a vale of tears, the heavenly Jerusalem the all in all. As the Christian song recites it,

“I’m but a pilgrim here,
Heaven is my home;
 Earth’s but a desert drear,
Heaven is my home.”

This world and all that pertains thereto were reckoned but as dross, and the one thing needful was for each to save his own immortal soul; (“for what profiteth it a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?”) the whole scheme differing in this respect most unfavorably from the Chinese Fo worship, in the liturgy of which occurs the following remarkable expression:

“Never will I seek to receive private individual salvation, never enter final peace alone, but forever and everywhere will I live and strive for the universal redemption of every creature throughout all worlds. Until all are delivered, never will I leave the world of sin, sorrow and struggle, but will remain where I am.”

Thus, this Heaven-and-Hell, or look-out-for-number-one doctrine, inevitably resulted “in weakening the affections by unlimited desires, or in degrading the character by servile terror.” It is a selfish, unsocial individual, and hence immoral religion, a transfer of this world’s egoism into another, though imaginary sphere. Just as in the fierce competition of modern life in the terrific race for wealth we see the rule exemplified of “each for himself,” so is it in this Christian theory, the one, in fact, being the counterpart of the other. What is sought on earth is the selfish attainment of ease and power. What is sought in the after-life is practically the continued enjoyment of the same thing. While the heavenly ideal is the representative of the earthly selfishness, the earthly selfishness, in turn, is sanctioned by the heavenly ideal. To save our own souls we are obliged, on the Christian theory, to do our duty towards God, and subordinate ourselves to His

almighty will, the performance of duty and self-salvation thus becoming interchangeable terms; and morality, which can only be truly defined as unselfishness, and which should be entirely dissociated from the idea of rewards and punishments, becomes divorced from social surroundings and indissolubly connected with a selfish hope of heaven and a debasing fear of hell. Under the old dispensation the one unpardonable sin was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Under the new *régime* that one sin is egoism. No matter how reputable a man's life may seem; no matter how brilliant a woman's career may be; nay, let the highest attainment of science and culture be their object, still their life is wrongly directed unless its motives and its aims are sanctified by the heart. The intellect, at best, is fitted only for a guide. Reason must never master the affection. If it does, the life so governed must be largely a life of selfishness, and to that extent a life of wasted power; as Longfellow puts it:

“ A millstone and the human heart
 Are driven ever round;
 If they have nothing else to grind,
 They must themselves be ground.”

The subordination of egoism to altruism is thus not only the path of duty but the path of the highest happiness also. St. Paul has expressed it inimitably in that greatest chapter in the whole of religious literature, his chapter on charity in the first epistle to the Corinthians.

The standard thus held up, though the happiest, is undoubtedly the hardest to follow. To oppose the general opinions of one's age, to swim eternally against the current, is no holiday sport. It only brings its compensation in the sense of duty done and convictions adhered to. It leaves the feeling that our children will have one

stone or two less to turn in the path of their progress, and that mankind generally are at least one little whit the better for our having been here and breasted out our little struggles. For it is inevitable that those who succeed these times must face a new environment, and they are the blessed ones who thus prepare the way of Man and make his path straight. Such will be the real second coming of the Christ.

I have criticized unsparingly the creeds of Christendom, but, happily, Christians for the most part are better than their creeds; and why they are so we positivists well know, for right living and right thinking do not have their foundations in the sky, but in the here and now. It is the social influences that form the basis of all the faiths, and morality is stronger than any creed, and has outlived all religions. Theology is to Morality what the old man of the sea was to Sinbad the Sailor, merely a weight to drag him down; but, under the new conception, where society is regarded as an organism, man discovers that only in the good of all can he find his own good; he sees, under the influence of the new faith, that it is only *by* others that he can exist, and that thus the noble motto of Positivism, "Live *for* others," comes to supplant the golden rule of Confucius and the Gospels. "*Dans le bonheur d'autrui je cherche mon bonheur,*" says Corneille. "In the happiness of others my happiness I seek."

It is not meant that each one's personal identity is to be lost in this sense of universal love. On the contrary, the individual becomes more and more important and exalted. We find, for example, in regard to a complete human body that perfect organs are needful to make it so. For the wholeness and harmony of its structure, arms and legs moved by powerful muscles are required; also a heart to propel the blood, and a brain to preside over and crown the whole, to say nothing of the thous-

and and one functions by which each and all of the many organs perform their lesser parts.

And thus it is in that larger and more wonderful organism, Humanity. For the perfection of the whole, the individual organs of which it is composed must be perfect; and cleanliness, observances of hygiene, and physical and intellectual improvement become bounden duties. A quotation from Comte applies aptly here where he says:

“All human societies and individuals are regarded as the organs of this Great Being, Humanity, having their work and duties determined by their relation to it, and finding their welfare, happiness and life motive in their cheerful and faithful service.”

Positivism has been criticised as insisting so strongly on the conception of duty, as practically to deny the conception of rights. But this is not just. Rights are but the obverse estimate of duties, the opposite view of the same shield. What is A's duty to B, B has the right to demand of A. Did A and B both do their duty, no insistence on the rights of either would ever be required. Thus the doctrine of human duty will, in the end, swallow up the doctrine of human rights and man will learn that the highest, nay, the only right he needs, is the right to do his duty. In one word, to live for parents, live for children, live for country, live for mankind, or, to express it in the noble phrase before used, to “Live for others,” becomes the whole duty of man.

Space forbids mention of much of Positivistic Ethics that should not be omitted. I merely allude, for example, to its glorious motto, “*vivre au grand jour*,” “live in the light of day,” or, “live without concealment.” What a world of value it contains, admonishing us ever to act as if the eye of all mankind were upon us!

Again, in passing, it would be an absolute remissness not to recall the image under which this philosophy symbolizes the application of all our powers and the performance of all our duty to the generations past and gone, the image, namely, of a trust, by which it insists that we come into this world largely in debt, that all our capacities are the gift of Humanity, and to Humanity must be devoted; that wealth, for instance, being social in its origin, should be socialized in its use, and that its claim as a purely individual acquisition, is a crime against our fellows. This same notion of responsibility clings to any human endowment we possess, be it a genius for the highest art or but the humblest aptitude for manual service.

Under such and analagous conceptions and motives, there must arise, in time, a new order of chivalry in the world, wherein the strong on earth, as Knights of Humanity, under the impulse and inspiration of an emancipated womanhood, will go forth conquering and to conquer, devoting their powers to the rescue of the weak, the deliverance of the enthralled, and the common welfare of the whole.

Fascinating as such points are, they must be hurried by to enable us to reach and treat the last head of our discourse, and therefore I beg permission of my theological friends to leave this topic with one concluding thought. I ask them to imagine that Death, the Christian King of Terrors, has subjected Heaven to his sway, and has sent forth his devouring Plague, under whose deadly arrows have fallen prostrate not only all the Angelic hosts, but God Himself. Jehovah is dead! Heaven is no more! Our old earth, however, with all the inhabitants thereof, still moves on in its accustomed way, protected in the lap of everlasting law. God has gone, but Father and Mother still remain. Heaven is a barren waste, but our country still is left us. Must

family love die out? Must patriotism perish? Must virtue exist no longer? Shall we not rather say that since Jerusalem the Golden is abolished we will cling with increased tenderness to this our native sphere? Shall we not rather affirm that since the Almighty is no more, we will hold parents in kindlier reverence, and that since the angels above have disappeared, we will cherish with deeper affection those earthly angels who, as friends and relatives, afford the solace of our lives? No, my Christian brothers and sisters, our higher natures need not die with the decay of Supernaturalism. Instead thereof it will be found that under a system of purely secular morals, humanity, rid of its old clogs, will attain ~~the~~ heights and develop capabilities which heretofore have been but dreams.

We have thus far shown the Cause of Humanity to be the Cause of Science, Art and Morality; the good, the true, the beautiful. We are now naturally led to our last point, wherein we maintain,

FIFTHLY—THAT THE CAUSE OF HUMANITY IS THE CAUSE OF RELIGION.

We find an easy transition from the subject of Morality to the subject of Religion in Matthew Arnold's definition of the latter wherein he says: "Religion is Morality touched with Emotion." The writer of "Ecce Homo" has also beautifully called Religion the "Enthusiasm of Humanity," but the meaning of the word may, perhaps, best be seen in its derivation from the Latin words *re* and *ligo*, "to bind back" or "tie back." To quote again the words of the Epitome before referred to: "Religion is the tie by which man's feelings and thoughts within and his actions without are co-ordinated into health and harmony with each other,

“ with society and the world, with the past and the future.”

“ What is holy. That it is that
Many souls together binds,
Binds them ever so lightly,
As a rush thread the wreath.”

What is the holiest ? That which
To-day and ever on
Deeper and deeper felt, souls
More and more together binds.”—*Goethe*.

All theological definitions made earth “ the battlefield of religions.” Each one “ true” God had to be upheld and defended : as Christ said : “ I come not to bring peace but a sword.”

“ But (still quoting from the Epitome) in the newer, “ that is the human or scientific sense, the word religion “ has come to mean ‘ the convergence’ or unity of people or of peoples, that has resulted or may result from “ any common belief or sentiment, whether springing “ from a belief in a God or otherwise. In this sense, “ the unity, integration, or binding together, under the “ influence of a common conviction, is the substance of “ the meaning of which the gods are but the variable “ incidents. Thus, in the march of history, each god, in “ his turn, falls into insignificance, but the social unity “ the *collective man*, is more and more. In this view “ the lesson of history is clear, ~~the~~^{that} human progress “ must be arrested, or man must, in this newer sense, “ become more and more religious, and yet, at the same “ time, less and less theological.”

Man has always created his gods or god in his own image. They have been and are mere anthropomorphic (man-imitated) embodiments. The great spirit of the

Indians, for example, is a majestic brave, and the gods of Greek mythology were the perfect men and beautiful women of the Greek ideal. The whole history of theology has exemplified this, and nowhere has it been better expressed than in the following humorous lines from the old Greek poet Xenophanes :

If sheep and swine and lions strong,
 And all the bovine crew,
 Could paint with cunning hands and do
 What clever mortals do.
 Depend upon it every pig,
 With snout so broad and blunt,
 Would make a Jove that like himself
 Would thunder with a grunt.
 And every lion's God would roar
 And every bull's would bellow,
 And every sheep's would give a "baa"
 And each his worshipped fellow,
 Would find in the immortal form,
 And naught exist divine,
 But had the gait of lion, sheep,
 Or ox or grunting swine.

In other and more serious words, underneath all the superstitions of the creeds, men have ever been striving to attain to a more and more ennobled *human* ideal, and before that ideal they have fallen down and worshipped. Guided by this perception, as Richard Congreve says: "the Positivist reviews the different religion of man. He accepts them all as in their time, useful. But he finds in their decay a proof that they are none of them final, and that some definitive and comprehensive solution is yet required. To his view the religions disap-

“pear; *religion* remains. That which is *human* in them alone is imperishable. They have in their variety had one common aim. They have each in its measure given an account to man of his existence, his existence in relation to other men and to himself. They have aimed at the harmony of all his faculties; they have sought to unite him with a smaller or larger portion of his fellow men.

“Positivism accepts the same problem, offers to man an account of his existence, gives him an object of faith, explains the conditions under which he lives, and makes him lovingly accept them, unites him in himself by love, and binds him to his fellow men in the three-fold communion of faith, of worship, and of action.” In one word, the God whom thus far men have so ignorantly worshipped, have so longingly yearned for, and have represented to themselves under so many symbols, is the God whom we announce, Humanity, the Supreme Being on this planet, the one science-revealed God.

Here at once I perceive that I shall be asked the question, How do you know that Humanity is a being of any kind, much less a Supreme Being, and I may be reminded of the witty reply of the Oxford student who on being sent to investigate and report on the Positivist meetings in London, brought back word that he found “three persons, but no God!”

In the theological sense we certainly have no God. But have we no Supreme Being?

For my answer to this most proper enquiry, I turn to Herbert Spencer’s *Sociology* where he gives his reasons for believing Society to be an *organism*. I present a partial summary of his statement.

What is a Society? It is a mere aggregate of separate individuals, which, like an audience in a theatre, dis-

perses when the play is over, and exists no longer, or is it not rather like the bricks, beams and mortar of a house which combine together to make a result quite distinct from the parts which compose it?

The latter is the conception of Sociology; though the material simile of the building presents but a very imperfect analogy, since we cannot reason from the inorganic to the organic, from dead to living matter. A better illustration will be found in the science of Biology. How do we know for example that man himself is a being or organism? We know it, among many other reasons: 1st. because he grows; 2d. because he increases both in structure and function; 3d, because the different parts of his body are dependent upon the whole body, and the whole body upon the different parts.

In much the same way we know a society to be an organism. 1st, because it *grows*: our own U. S. with its century of increase in population is sufficient evidence of this. One hundred years ago we numbered three millions, now we count our forty five millions.

2d. Because while increasing in size society increases in *structure and function*. We find in animal evolution that at first an organism all stomach develops into a creature with lungs, heart, &c., &c., further and further differentiations causing greater and greater unlikenesses among the organs, all of which perform their multiform functions. So in the development of a society. Divisions and subdivisions occur and recur. Another glance, for example, at our own country will show us how much greater diversity of structure there is to-day in commerce, the arts, manufactures, religions, education and all the departments of life, than existed a hundred years ago; also how, the unlike portions having thus become marked off, vast divisions of labor ensue, producing unlike duties through all the mass of the community, and

making up in their entirety that complex thing we call modern civilization.

3d. Because as in the human, so in the social organism nothing is more strongly marked than the *mutuality of dependence* between the parts. The necessity of all the organs in the animal frame to form the complete being is paralleled in society by the dependence of the parts upon each other and the whole, and the whole upon the parts. For instance when society is rudimentary, every man is his own warrior, merchant and farmer, but when it becomes highly developed, the warrior class, the merchant class, the farmer class, and, in fact, all the thousands of classes become unified and interdependent till, as Carlyle says, an Indian can't quarrel with his squaw on Lake Winnepeg without causing a rise in the price of furs in London. Co-ordinately with this differentiation of the parts of society and their mutual dependence on each other we find an *integration* (or the action of the whole upon the parts) formulating itself in the shape of religion and government.

But enough of this dry reasoning to prove that society is an *organism* or *being*. Popular acceptance alone is sufficient to prove it so, as is shown by the conceptions attached to such words as home and country. The home, for example, is never thought of as a place enclosed in bare walls where parents and children meet merely to eat, and separate simply to sleep. Around the sacred name cling a thousand associations recalling tender ideas of father and mother, brother and sister. We regard it as the seat of our affections, the abode of our rest. We love to think of its honorable ancestry. We hope to establish a still nobler posterity. In this sense, is not a family, with its kindred idea of home, a being or organism ?

So with our commonly received notion of "country," which is to us a distinct conception, though by no possibility can we represent to ourselves even in imagination the vast numbers which compose it. We speak of the life of a nation as we do of the life of a person. The blood-disks in a man's arteries die, but the life of the man goes on. So, the individuals of a country disappear but the life of the nation continues. In the one case as the other we formulate to our minds the idea both of the man and the nation as an existence, entity, organism or *being*.

Speaking thus instinctively of the life and growth of a nation, in a larger, fuller sense, Humanity also may be said to have its life, not only in the present, but extending through the past and future, a life in which even the eras of national existence are but as wavelets on a shoreless sea. Pascal's seer-like instinct dimly grasped this great conception long ago when he said: "the entire succession of men through the whole course of the ages must be regarded as one man, always living and incessantly learning." "In this light," says Comte, "the human race, past, present and future, constitutes a vast and eternal social unit, whose different organs, individual and national, concur in their various modes and degrees in the evolution of Humanity."

Again says Comte, "this Humanity, this object of Positivist worship, is not like that of theological believers, an absolute, isolated, incomprehensible being, whose existence admits of no demonstration or comparison with anything real. The evidence of this Being is shrouded in no mysticism, since by means of history we know her laws. Though not claiming perfection for Humanity, she is ever growing towards it, and we know that of all organisms she is the supreme one on this planet."

But again we hear our objector entering his caveat: "A very pretty God," he exclaims, "is this Humanity of yours, a most adorable God! Nero fiddling over burning Rome and making torch-lights out of Christians, is a sweetly attractive saint; Torquemada amusing himself with the application of the thumb-screw and the rack, is a most worshipful man; Jeffreys persecuting and condemning his luckless victims, is a deeply religious spectacle, and Wm. M. Tweed will answer, I presume, as well for a deity as he will for a "boss!" Or, taking Humanity outside of its individual aspect, what a lofty contemplation do we not discover for example, in the eternal reign of desolating carnage! The path of history is red with the blood of battle-fields! And if we turn from the achievements of glorious war to the pursuits of 'piping peace,' what then do we find? The great struggle of men for the 'almighty dollar,' wherein to gain the paltry prize, human rights are trampled down, human duties disregarded, and the higher life is crushed beneath the iron heel of selfishness! Whether in war or peace, therefore, man's record is that of Cain, his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him, or, to quote the oft-repeated phrase, 'Man's inhumanity to man, makes countless thousands mourn.' Such is your God, Humanity; and if Positivism cannot present us with some better Supreme Being, my advice to it would be to go into liquidation on the God-making business, and adopt some other trade!"

The answer to our theological sceptic is two-fold.

1st. The perhaps non-logical, but always effective, "you're another" argument. For the criticism he makes

against Humanity holds with ten-fold power against his biblical deity. Unlike theology, Positivism makes no claim of omnipotence for its Supreme Being. It only says that Humanity is the highest organism known to man. But the Christian's claim for their God endows him with omniscience. *and omnipotence.*

Omniscience, omnipotence! Possessed of these great attributes it needed but a single stroke of such Almighty Power to make of Earth an Eden, and of Life a Joy; but instead thereof we find in their God the primal source of all life's evils, be they devils or mosquitoes, wars or warts, the black vomit, the itch, or any other ill that flesh is heir to. Consistent reasoning regarding this all-powerful deity leaves no alternative except the conclusion that his infliction of misery upon his children, through time and eternity, was from deep design and deliberate choice. Unattractive as is the picture our orthodox unbeliever has drawn of Humanity, it is beatific compared to that of his fiendish God. The evil in the one is relative, and the result of environment and circumstance; it is evil that can be understood and reconciled, because it can be taken as the simple *fact*. It is evil that can be patiently borne because hope is left to soften it. But the evil in the other is sin self-chosen as it is self-damning, and totally at variance with a beneficent omniscience and ~~omnipotence~~.

But 2d: The real reply to our atheistic retrograde (for he is the truest atheist who denies the highest good) is to be found in a sufficiently comprehensive definition of Humanity as the Supreme Being, and this can only be obtained by a proper discrimination between the objective and subjective view of man's Life on Earth. We have previously dwelt (page 31) on these two phases

of thought. In the light of that explanation let us now consider Humanity under this double aspect.

First, in the objective view: In this view it is undeniable that the history of mankind is a recital of a vast intermixture of the evil with the good; or, more correctly speaking, of the endeavor of Humanity to adapt herself to her environment. We see her ever baffled and thwarted, yet ever striving, and on the whole gaining ground. She might be likened to a child born amid low surroundings, subject to physical pollution from the slums wherein it dwells, and liable to moral degradation from debauched companionship,

“ An infant crying in the night,
“ An infant crying for the light,”

with all life's odds apparently against it. We see it, however advancing from childhood to youth, from youth to age, ever struggling on, sinking into pitfalls only to rise the stronger, yielding to one temptation only to present more fierce resistance to the next. Little by little it progresses from a low culture to a high one, from beasthood to manhood. Such a sight is a sublimity and such, in miniature, is the story of Humanity. Degraded in her early stages, the slave of fear, and the victim of imagination, we see her emergent in the grand march of time, ever redeeming herself and her children, ever conquering and to conquer.

And it is a matter of congratulation, in this new age, that many causes are working under the conscious use of the law of evolution towards a favorable end, causes that are grounds of improvement and of hope. As an example, nothing promises more fairly for the supremacy of the humane over the inhumane than the application

of the doctrine of heredity: and when this doctrine is scientifically availed of, it is believed that the good will more and more overcome the evil by arresting the trouble at its source, viz., by the checking of a badly-born population; by preventing from being born those who, when born, must inherit physical, mental or moral stain. This remedy working in connection with a higher religious sentiment and a better morality (especially in reference to the distribution of wealth) must have an immense effect in circumscribing pauperism and crime. The pressure of population on food will be diminished and less temptation to crime engendered. Equally also with the influence of this law of heredity on the non-creation of evilly disposed beings will it show its beneficent results in the wider production of more highly born characters. Just as by care and by the study of points and pedigrees, high breeds of animals are produced on our best stock farms, so, under a comprehension of this law in relation to man, a nobler race of beings will be "selected," to whom can rightfully be entrusted the management of this planet.

Many other combined causes are tending towards the disenfranchisement of the race, but without stopping to examine these further, I may say that the picture I have been thus seeking to paint is a general *objective* presentation of our earthly career in history which, while it concedes the evil in Humanity, shows at the same time her constant conquest and reduction of it, a view which explains our retardations through the past and our encouragement for the future. Better, a thousand times better even such a Supreme Being than the dread unapproachable God of Christianity, who exerts his omnipotence to curse men here and doom them to hell hereafter. If no choice remains but between this human conception and the theological one let us by all means adopt the human.

Second : In the *subjective view* ; turning to the subjective side, we here meet one of the foundational doctrines of Positivism, to wit, that no subjective conception can be true unless based on an objective fact. Therefore in strict science, the subjective cognition of Humanity must correspond to the objective actual Humanity. As is the real Humanity so is our conception of it. In fact, one of the strongest charges Positivism brings against theology is that it is purely subjective, having nothing outside of the human imagination to confirm it in its assumed data. We have just recognized in the objective Humanity a mingling of the good and bad, and it must here also at once be conceded that in the sternly scientific subjective view, we are obliged to recognize this great organism just as it is, full of strength yet full of weakness, replete with energy yet often tottering, losing one day yet more than gaining the next. I trust that I have shown that even this apprehension of Humanity, ever triumphing over herself, is no real bar to the inspiration of a religious enthusiasm, but this does not by any means include the whole picture ; it merely gives the view, as it were, from the base of the mountain, wherein the vision, in a small horizon, is confined to the stern outlines of subjective science in its severest aspects, wherein it merely endeavors to represent the cold and naked truth ; but as we ascend the heights, we find from our new standpoint that the landscape of existence stretches vastly wider, softly mellowed and subdued through depth of atmosphere. Thus there is a subjective view that includes something more than mere science. In fact, there may be said to be two subjective views, one the *strictly* scientific subjective, which we have just given ; the other, the *ideal* or *religio*-subjective, which now remains to be described.

This ideal conception, while ever reposing on facts for

its base, points way beyond these towards the airy realm of Fancy, wherein dwell Art and Love. The old scriptures enjoins: "be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect;" it tells us to "approve those things which are excellent, to seek those things which are above where Christ dwelleth at the right hand of God." Now this sublime perfection can only be thought of whether in a theological or strictly human faith by means of the ideal faculty in man, for man to be truly great must have a high purpose inspired by a lofty spiritual aim. He must have that which is outside of, better than and beyond himself. He must have some Arcadia towards which in hope at least he can steer his bark. The ideal alone is the source of this; the ideal alone is the constructor of Utopias. The ideal alone it is which kindles anew on the altar the fires of enthusiasm, and becomes, when personified, the true high-priestess of Religion, in whom we find the transmutation of the evil, the divination of the highest good. Anyone who has been among the mining districts has seen the long narrow troughs divided up into sections formed by small cross pieces fastened to the wooden sluice to catch the ore as it sinks in the flowing water. The pounded and broken mineral all mixed with dirt and rubbish is thrown in at the upper end of the receptacle; the heavier pieces fall in the first section clear and clean; the lighter particles in the next compartment, and so on till in the last one the finest ore dust is deposited bright and shining, while the water flows away carrying off every vestige of impurity.

In this manner it is, through the blessed aid of the imagination, that we are enabled to appreciate the ideal and to escape from even the appearance of evil in our Supreme Being, for this idealized Humanity represents only the beings in the past, present and future who *con-*

verge. None but the *good* can converge. Inhumanity has no convergence. The good only exercise upon each other and posterity the power of a moral cohesion. From such a conception all the Neros, Torquemadas, Jeffreys and Tweeds must be excluded, and in place of these *non-human* men can be counted those noble animals (more truly good than many self-styledly more exalted beings) such as the horse, without whose aid civilization could not have been, and the dog, the synonym of fidelity, who has been to man such a devoted friend and servant. Beckoned forward by this uplifting inspiration can we not be justified in dreaming that this world will become a paradise, an earthly heaven, where there will be no more war nor any distraction of contentious trade, an Eden of Peace, where the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them; where the rough shall be made smooth and the crooked straight? We must think thus or hope must bid farewell to life.

Humanity under this idealization may perhaps best be symbolized, as Comte pictured Her to himself, under the figure, namely, of the Virgin Mother and Child, adopted from the Roman Catholic Church. In the mother we have the Past; in the child and mother together, the Present; in the child alone, the Future. This group expressed Comte's highest soaring toward perfection as best embodying beauty, both in form, feature and character, and was his idealized representation of Humanity. In like manner all of us, to aid ourselves may, if we choose, adopt this or some similar dream wherewith to fill our longings.

In the light of this Examination of Humanity as the Supreme Being, we may claim, not without reason, to have found the Holy Spirit of the New Religion, and a real Trinity in Unity. The Father may be called the Great Unknowable Power or Force, underlying all things;

the Son, the Redeemer, may be thought of as this Grand Objective Human Organism, ever striving to reconcile itself unto the world, and the world unto itself; while the Holy Spirit may be pictured in the ideally subjective view we have attempted to portray, which quickens the conscience of man and says to his soul: "Peace, be still, for all things are for the best, and are working together for good! Better times are coming, hope cheers us on, and Paradise lies not in the past, but in the future!"

The voices of spirits
 Are calling from yonder,
 The voices of masters:
 Neglect not to ponder
 The Powers of the Good.

In silence eternal
 Here are a-weaving,
 Crowns that with fulness
 The strong are achieving!
 We bid thee to hope!

Goethe.

In further development of this same strain of thought are added the following eloquent words of Frederic Harrison, in eulogy of Humanity as embodied in civilization:

"Does not our imagination stir when we think of its immensity? Does not our intelligence triumph in its achievements? Do not our souls melt to remember its heroisms and its sufferings? Are we not dust in comparison with that myriad-legged world of human lives, which made us what we are? Every thinker who ever wore out his life, like Simon, on his lonely column of thought, was dreaming for us. Every prophet and king who raised up a new step in the stage of human advance raised the pyramid on which

“ we stand. Every artist who ever lifted himself into
 “ the beautiful lifted us also. Nor was ever mother who
 “ loved her child in toil, tears and pain, but was wrung
 “ for us. Each drop of sweat that ever fell from the
 “ brow of a worker has fattened the earth which we en-
 “ joy. Martyrs, heroes, poets, teachers, toilers—all con-
 “ tribute their share. The priests in the churches would
 “ rest our whole religion upon the legend of pity on
 “ Calvary. They dwarf and narrow the range of our
 “ compassion. There were Nazarenes in many ages and
 “ in many climes, and Calvaries have been the land-
 “ marks of each succeeding phase of human story.
 “ Moses, Bouddha, Confucius, St. Paul, Mahomet, the
 “ ideals and authors of every creed, have been but some
 “ of the Messiahs of the human race. The history of
 “ every religion is but an episode in the history of hu-
 “ manity. Nor has any creed its noble army of martyrs
 “ which can compare with that of man.”

Think of the vast dependence each of us has upon this organism. Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we rely on this Humanity. The fields and gardens of the world minister to every repast of which we partake.

Longfellow touches this note of human unity in his beautiful poem of “The Building of the Ship:”

“ Ah! what a wondrous thing it is,
 “ To note how many wheels of toil,
 “ One thought, one word can set in motion!
 “ There’s not a ship that sails the ocean,
 “ But every climate, every soil
 “ Must bring its tribute great or small,
 “ And help to build the wooden wall.”

And so the work goes on. For each of us the labor of the world is toiling. Trace out this idea in all its

details, and it becomes at once apparent that but for this human providence we could not live a day.

Thus, as with the Fetichist, every act of life was a religious one in the theological sense, so, with the Positivist, every act becomes a religious one in the scientific sense, and living becomes one great hymn of human worship. "From Humanity we have received all; to Her we owe all; we are Her servants and Her organs; we live by Her and so should live for Her."

Humanity has created all the Gods, so is greater than any God. She has written all the bibles, so is greater than any bible. She has founded all religions, so is greater than any religion. She has discovered all science, so is greater than any science. She is the Supreme Being on this planet.

In this new faith, head and heart are finally united, for Humanity, like all phenomena, is under the governance of law, and yet by our relation to her we are compelled towards love and duty. Thus, with us most literally, love becomes the fulfilling of the law; and thus our atonement (at-one-ment) is at least completed—for we are at one with the great external order of inorganic nature, by obedience to its laws, and we become at one with our fellow men in love, in service, and in duty. In the oneness of the cosmos we find no place for the distractions of another world. Earth and Humanity become our all in all, and "human life at last attains that state of perfect harmony, which has been so long sought for in vain, and which consists in the direction of all our faculties to one common purpose, under the supremacy of affection" (Comte). Liberty is our condition, Love is our principle, Order is our basis, Progress is our end.

Incorporated with Humanity we Positivists do not await salvation; we are saved. We do not sigh for im-

mortality ; we are immortal. True it is

“ That low in the dust our mouldering frames may lie,
But that which warmed them once can never die.”

A modern poet, still unknown to fame, strikes the same conception when he says,

Man—

Who, being dead, is buried and consumed,
By the unseemly fingers of decay,
His sad remainder setting forth a feast
For the same guests as an interred dog ;
Yet, being thus, the unrecorded brute,
Sans life his equal and, when dead, both dumb,
His voice is heard through all the rear of time,
In mighty diapason loud and long,
And magic chords of sweet entuned rnyme,
That echo and will echo to the doom.

And Victor Hugo emphasises the same sentiment most nobly in his funeral eulogy of George Sand :

“ I weep for the dead and I salute the immortal.

“ I have loved her ; I have admired her ; I have
“ venerated her ; to-day in the presence of the august
“ serenity of death, I contemplate her.

“ I felicitate her, because what she has done is great,
“ and I thank her because what she has done is good. I
“ remember that one day I wrote to her : ‘ I thank you
“ ‘ for being so great a soul.’

“ Have we lost her ? No. These lofty figures dis-
“ appear, but they do not vanish. Far from it, one can
“ almost say that they are realized. By becoming in-
“ visible under one form, they become visible under an-
“ other. A sublime transfiguration.

“ The human form is an occultation. It masks the
“ real and divine usage, which is the *idea*. George

“ Sand was an *idea*: she escaped from the flesh, and behold she is free: she is dead, and behold she is living.”

It may be said that this sort of Immortality may prove an inspiration for those raised by genius above their fellows, “ but how about the many common toilers who constitute the rank and file of life ?” For these also the same sentiment amply suffices. I cannot express this better than does the following anonymous bit of poetry I have chanced upon.

WORDS AND ACTS.

Not a mind but has its mission—
 Power of working woe or weal;
 So degraded none's condition,
 But the world his weight may feel,
 Words of kindness we have spoken,
 May, when we have passed away,
 Heal, perhaps, some spirit broken,
 Guide a brother led astray.
 Thus our very thoughts are living,
 Even when we are not here;
 Joy and consolation given
 To the friends we hold so dear.
 Not an act but is recorded,
 Not a word but has its weight;
 Every virtue is rewarded,
 Outrage punished, soon or late.
 Let no being, then, be rated
 As a thing of little worth
 Every soul that is created
 Has its part to play on earth.

In this sense it is, the sense of the Immortality of In-

fluence that we abide, the sense of the immortality of that which is best and noblest in us, quite content to leave to the Christians the selfish materialism of an after life, which, contrary to all reason and all morality, they seek to transfer to another and impossible sphere.

Are not the Christians aware that there is absolutely no demonstration of a personal existence beyond the grave; that at the best it is but a hope which no more proves their case than the desire for earthly wealth proves its possession? Do they not also know that the widest spread religion on the earth finds the acme of its longing in the very opposite of this Christian doctrine, in the Buddhist dream, viz. of Nirvana, wherein the sense of eternal rest is sighed for through the total and eternal absorption of the individual into the universal all?

Why, also, do not the theologians dwell on the pre-natal as well as the post-mortuary immortality? Certainly an undying soul lives as much before birth as after death. Yet this point is never even alluded to.

“ You say that the soul is immortal,

“ That the spirit can never die ;

“ If God was content when I was not,

“ Why not when I have passed by ?”

Still, with all said, if people insist on clinging to this last remnant of superstition, the position taken by Positivism is, that it denies nothing. It simply affirms that to the human ken all knowledge of the hereafter is impossible, and that ample inspiration, ample solace and ample hope can be found in the substitute, the wholly unselfish substitute, which it proposes.

And mark how beneficent in practical action our religion becomes. Capital and labor under this enthusiasm will each appear servitors under the impulse of a

common love, and their united action will constitute the material providence of the race. The philosopher, scientist and artist will become the priests of the new religion. Woman, the mother and queen, will be worshipped as the moral ideal. But these are all subjects for separate essays, involving as they do the organization of society under the new regime.

So I can only ask in conclusion, who is the true infidel, the Christian or the Positivist; he who believes in legend, or he who believes in law, he who enlarges art, or he who dwarfs it, he who found morality in the here or he who basis it on heaven and hell, he whose aim is a scramble for his individual salvation, or he who religiously "lives for others;" in a word, he who adores God or he who clings to Humanity? I leave to you the answer.