

THE EXAMINER:

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Crazy Chicago;

OR,

THE BACK STAIRS TO FORTUNE.

“Thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper, as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves: for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 't were all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touched
But to fine issues; nor nature never lends
The smallest scruple of her excellence,
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use.”

Measure for Measure.

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCTION.

I WILL frankly say, that my object in writing this serial is, to strike a succession of the hardest blows I can, at follies, vices, and crimes, which I find around me, in the society, religion, and types of character which are current among us.

It is now nearly twenty-eight years since I was walking home one winter's night with my father, to our log cottage on the west bank of the Fox river, some thirty-five miles from Chicago, when certain questions he put to me about my soul and my future destiny,—we were returning from a “prayer and inquiry meeting,”—led me to take the oaths, as it were, of awful fealty to God, and to set my heart upon intense seeking after the invisible path by which human feet find entrance to divine life. And for more than a quarter of a century, from extreme youth to manhood, I have not ceased to contend with myself, and with all the forces of the world besetting me, for the attainment of that ideal of a heart right with God, which was before my young imagination when I first consecrated my powers to religion.

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The lesson I have best learned is, that I am to myself, by many varieties of ignorance and short-coming, fault and transgression, the greatest hurt and hindrance; so that it were extreme stupidity and wrong in me to attempt to cudgel mankind out of my path, as if the world only stood between me and the gates of light; or to complain of my earthly condition, as if but for cloud and storm, and the incessant turning of earth into her own shadow, I could get away easily enough on the wings of my own endeavor to some place of eternal, unclouded day. Out of the depths I confess that I am of the earth, earthy, born of the dust and compact of common clay, and that for me there is no problem more immediate and urgent than that of detaining the incarnate spark in my own breast, and finding other than the meanest cradle for that of God which is born into my own life. These pages will bear constant witness, I trust, to my "personal conviction of sin," even if I should not be found spitting out in the presence of the public the husks I have been fain to eat, and should hesitate, for decency's sake, to do as the Pharisees, with their manners mended in the school of Christ, now do, raise, with smitten breast, the publican's wail, to be seen and heard of men.

And it will always appear in what I write, unless I come greatly short of my aim, that in no case do I propose that kind of judgment which denies excuse and knows no arrest of the severities of justice. I mean to comprehend, and to deal generous justice, even when I strike the hardest and crush the most unsparingly; believing that so it is with the truth, and that in the final judgment of perfect wisdom and absolute power, there is complete reconciliation of the criminal and the court, and no such thing at last as the chains and prison of un pitying penalty.

Very many good people on earth, appealing to God in heaven and to the Devil in hell, are, indeed, still digesting the sour wrath against wrong which comes of crudeness of faith and virtue, and are still muttering, boldly or slyly, the foul curses of heathenism, in creeds Catholic, Calvinist, and other, against the race of mortal men; but I no more propose to deem that sort of thing Christian, or decent, or other than spiritually unclean and detestable, than I propose to accept human sacrifice and the banquets of pious cannibalism.

The study of follies, faults, and crimes in men, is the study also of human nature, and no delineation of the former can be true, or even tolerable, to a just mind, which does not pick out the threads of the original fabric, and show the work of the Creator under all the marred

life of the creature. God forbid that I should forget, or fail to indicate, in speaking of what goes sadly wrong in the details of human life, that for every soul made in the divine image, there is adequate discipline, causing a final tendency of character, and of the whole course of being, to good, even the perfect and eternal good which is the aim of God and the end of the kingdom of heaven. In the end, therefore, whatever plainness and sharpness I may use, I hope to speak kindly of men and of women, and permit my readers to see, even on the back stairs to fortune, angels ascending and descending, under whatever disguise and humiliation of soiled humanity.

But let it be understood that I do not mean to forbear criticism and the exposure of facts, because of my personal consciousness of deficiency and fault, and my unswerving faith in good in all and divine good will to all. I shall analyze and portray life as I find it, and shall take every suitable occasion to pierce the very core of our doubtful and difficult questions, and to depict in their naked reality the characters which swarm along the new paths of our new civilization.

I have the blood of this new life in my own veins ; its great hopes throb in my heart ; I have closely observed and faithfully studied its manifold, marvellous manifestations ; and I feel wholly convinced of the immeasurable course it is to run, and of the absolute necessity of making haste to prepare the full success of that course, by culture such as never before was needed, and never yet has been produced. New elements of a new world are gathered in this great chaos which we call *THE WEST*, and the ever enduring spirit of truth, order, beneficence, which has had so varied incarnations in human history, seems destined to attempt here a new manifestation, to the interpretation of which new seers must be called. While greater masters of prophecy prepare their burden, I propose to utter my word, in a faithful picture of certain aspects of things about us, the criticism of which, and reform of which, must precede any satisfactory establishment of a culture suited to our needs, which are the needs of enterprise and liberty vastly greater and more radical than were ever before ventured on.

It must not be thought, as my title may suggest, that I am about to hold up the great city of the West to contempt. I use her name to designate a type, a new expansion of energy and freedom, fully believing that the event will show her to be one of the great centres of the modern world. Incident to the progress which she represents,

are insanities of enterprise and liberty, the aggregate of which I may justly call Crazy Chicago. And in thus naming my picture, I leave myself at liberty to introduce features brought from far, illustrations of American insanity which I have gathered in other fields, and which I am able to use to more advantage than the particular instances nearer the scene of my tale. Crazy Chicago is an American product. Some of the elements which mingle in the aggregate designated by the term, are seen to best advantage in New York or Boston, though doubtless the natural attraction of all is to the city whose name I use. Here then, in my story, let them come, and let us behold in one view the worst and the best of our new march of American energy and freedom.

CHAPTER II.

IT was impossible not to pity her. Only three days before a bride, and a widow before the sun went down on her wedding-day, she was journeying with her lover's remains to lay them where the new home for the new life had been prepared; and now an inexplicable event brought an additional and wholly unthought of shock. The baggage car, in which was contained the casket of precious clay, had taken fire, and was already enveloped in fierce, devouring flames. Nobody could tell how it had happened, but the car, with all its contents, was burning up. Had some careless person packed matches in his trunk, along with something readily combustible, and so furnished the seed of this destruction? Had a spark stolen in by an accidental crack, and fallen on stuff easy to ignite? Surmises were abundant, but even the most plausible left the origin of the fire a mystery. There were two baggage cars, and this one, entirely filled with through-baggage, express matter and mails, had not been opened since the train left P——, ten hours before. The engineer was as much at a loss as any one, as to how it had happened. He could only say that he suddenly became aware that this closed and locked car was bursting out in flames on all sides, and that to stop the train, to uncouple and drag forward the burning mass, and to himself cut loose from it, were barely possible for the tongues of flame which shot fiercely out in every direction. A sense of awe stole over every one, such as inexplicable manifestations of destroying power always excite, when it was generally known that no one could tell how the conflagration had originated.

The utmost exertions of all hands did not suffice to break open a door, or to get out even a single trunk, box, or mail-bag. Even the attempt to lift one side of the car, by means of poles and rails, and throw it over, and off the track, was of no avail. There was no alternative but to let the fire rage until the chief weight of the burning mass should be dissipated. It would not take a very long time to make that heavy load almost as light as nothing, tossing its elements back into the womb of air and chaos of dust whence they came. Half a ton of letters, the business and love of New York and New England written out by thousands of scribes, would become a few pounds of ashes and lost cloudlets of elemental matter, within a couple of hours. The huge pile of boxes and trunks, with the varied belongings of a crowd of persons, things mean and things precious, things gay and costly, and things cheap and vile; the gentleman's apparel and keepsakes; the lady's rich collection of necessities of comfort, beauty, and pride; the student's books, and love tokens, and single best suit; and similar treasures of different classes of travelers, were dissolving in that raging furnace, and their elements flying away to the treasuries of nature. The full light of noon-day softened the fire spectacle, extinguishing somewhat the white tips of the tongues of flame, but still an intensely raging fire was evidently doing its cruel work. And in the very heart of the fiery pile lay all that death had left of Marion White's husband.

Had there been no peculiar distress in the event, almost every one would have watched the progress of the flames with bitter regret for his or her own personal loss, but when it was known that those low wails of irrepressible anguish in the second car were because of a body burning up,—the last relic of one day of wedlock to a young bride,—the single thought which pressed upon all hearts, was of compassion for this unusual aggravation of a dreadful woe. Rough men as well as gentle, and women commonly thoughtless of either pleasure or pain not their own, as well as those not bereft by a false life of the power of womanly sympathy, moved about or looked sadly on, with that air of real compassion which always seems like a soft outbreak in human flesh of the divine tenderness. Not a soul there but sincerely pitied Marion White, for her great sorrow, and for this strange after-blow of suffering. No one knew her; but her name, which was distinctly marked on her traveling-bag, had been passed from one to another in the crowd, as tenderly and reverently as communion bread and wine are handed about when sacrament is

administered. It was, indeed, one of the hours when the religion of our common sympathy, and our common awe before invisible realities, held its service of communion, and swayed all hearts with its gracious power. There were bad men standing by, to whom greed was more than grace, and women looking on who had grown sadly faithless to womanhood through pride, or passion, or harshness of virtue and heathenism in religion,—whom in this moment the kingdom of heaven baptized, so that ever after they were under one memory at least of sweet human nature, touched once at least with love towards the fellow-creature and natural trust towards the Providence which is behind all our mysteries and all our woes. The lookers on had, indeed, been less than human, if the quick tenderness of sympathy had not flushed every face, and they had not thus tried dumbly to ease Marion White's load of pain. But it was only as the hour wore on, and when most of the passengers were gone to watch the last work of the fire and to prepare to throw the wreck from the track, that the terrible distress of the doubly bereaved young wife began to abate a little.

Could she but have thought, there was nothing really dreadful in this funeral pyre. But she did not think, not even as much as she had begun to do before the suddenness and strangeness of this experience came upon her.

The religion which tradition had taught her required a gloomy contemplation of death. It barely offered its "professors" a candle of hope for a passage through this valley of terrors, and neither she nor her lover had ever consented to become "professors." There fell no light, therefore, on the path of her bereavement, from any knowledge she had had of Christian faith. On the contrary, all her instruction, every thing she was accustomed to hear, and even the prayer in the dreary funeral service, had carefully excluded every ray of light, and forced her desolate heart upon either blank despair or desperate trust. The despair was too terrible for endurance, yet she could not have trusted, if it had been for herself alone. On either side of her way, as she strove to follow the departed spirit to which they said "God had joined" her, she saw the Jesus of Christian superstition,* clothed in blood and breathing fire, and the Devil of the same dreadful tale, only less horrible than the Judging Christ, while

* A recent evangelical poem, "Yesterday, To-day and Forever," which has already had a very wide circulation, describes the Lord Jesus as rising from the "Bridal Supper of the Lamb" to say, "Now is the day of vengeance in my heart," and going forth "Apparell'd in a vesture dipped in blood," while his angels cry,

"Ride on and prosper! Thy right hand alone
Shall teach thee deeds of vengeance, and Thy shafts
Shall drink the life-blood of Thy vaunting foes."

far before yawned bottomless perdition, and over all was that Infinite Horror, the presence of "an angry God." That it was a heathen mythology which had created this picture, she could not be expected to know, but she soon did know, by some better revelation than she had been taught, that the angry God, the lake of fire, the nearly infinite devil, and the Jesus of the judgment-throne, were shapes of fear known only to *pious fiction*.

The unreality of customary religion had strongly impressed her ever since she had first had its lessons pressed upon her attention. Without distinctly reflecting, she had gathered a strong impression, and in fact reached a profound conviction, that the usual administration of Christian dogma was formal only, and was wholly false to the real faith both of ministers and peoples. It was her nursery experience over again, only the tales of catechism, and creed, and church worship, while solemn and grim as grown men could make them, were *less* real than Blue Beard and Jack and the Bean Stalk,—mere mummery kept up by decent custom and vague fear,—or by the difficulty ministers found in extricating their real faith from this customary, consecrated, and *said to be* DIVINE FORM. She had so clearly felt this, without distinctly expressing it even to herself, that the general idea that *pious fiction* is as much a rule in the religion of sects and churches, as pleasant fiction is in the nursery, was perfectly familiar to her.

When, therefore, early impressions and the influences about her, conjured up the usual dreadful picture of the gods of Christian heathenism,—Jesus, Satan, and Jehovah,—it was inevitable that her brave love should recur to the thought that these shapes of terror had no sanction in any human or any Christian *truth*.

This, her own individual thought, which had had but a timid existence in her mind, would have hardly served her needs when the shadow of utter darkness fell on her life, but for the fact that love and desperation nerved her spirit, and together drove her upon the experiment of trust. And once that she dared brave the triune Horror of her early creed, the conviction grew into dauntless vigor, that the real truth would unmask and dethrone this image of complex dread. Of Devil and angry Jehovah, in fact, she at once found the fear entirely gone. The dreadful figure of the JUDGE alone remained to plague her timid trust in God. Unhesitatingly, however, using this simple liturgy of Old and New Testaments, 'The Lord is my Shepherd'—'Our Father which art in Heaven,'—she *defied*, for

her lover's sake, and trusting Love as true God and God as true Love, the Messianic Lord of Vengeance, in whom she had wholly lost the simple Christ of history.

A bitter feeling that some dreadful pretension, in parable or in false report of parable, had done a most cruel thing to human hearts, in affording a basis for the fiction of damnation, entirely separated her from the thought of the teacher whose prayer she had on her lips, and whose faith towards God her heart repeated. He was less than nothing to her; he was wholly excluded from her sight; nor can one wonder, who considers the extent to which Jesus, in the existing records of his life, apparently lent himself to the idea of a Messianic *avenging* deliverer.

"I have hated Jesus ever since I was a little girl, and first read about giving bad people to the devil to be put in hell fire," were actual words of a perfectly simple, perfectly just, and exceptionally Christian experience, on the part of one, a very simple, earnest woman, who could not be expected to discriminate the gross Judaism of some things in the teaching of Jesus from the pure Christian truth of other parts of his doctrine.

A resolute idealist, who sets out with the assumption that all the bad words in the New Testament are to be read any way but simply, in order to get a good meaning into them, may easily enough create a Jesus all transcendent goodness and greatness, and think it very strange that the millions do not see all colors white as he does, but this is no exploit for common minds. And to many, who have been diligently instructed in that orthodoxy, which says, as *Ecce Deus* expresses it,— "Christ must be more than a good man, or worse than the worst man; if he be not God, he is the Devil," — it is impossible to see the real teacher, as he speaks real truth, the attention is so taken with the figure which he makes, or is represented as making, in some scene which has no true revelation in it.

Women are commonly the sufferers who revolt finally against the Jesus of pious fiction, and utterly, though secretly, turn away from gospel and epistles, to the simple revelation which nature, and providence, and inspiration, furnish to their own hearts. The young wife of our story was such a sufferer and recusant. Instantly that her mind became composed to reflection, she found herself a Christian without Christ, an unflinching believer in precious truths of God, and eternal life, which had come to her under the Christian name, and with that divine quality of mercy which the word "Christian"

seemed to most signify in the best Christian hearts, and yet a resolute, *defiant* disbeliever in the whole form of creed and custom on which had been enthroned so long the Judging Christ. The whole matter had become divided, and a great gulf fixed between the one part and the other, all the realities of God, and mercy, and heaven on one side, and the fictions, the forms, and the black idols on the other. Defiance of the latter was part, for the moment, of the faith with which she regarded the former.

It was to this state of mind that Marion White had come, when the sudden intelligence of the burning of her husband's body threw her from all self possession, and brought back upon her, with excess of terror, the gloomiest impressions she had ever had. It seemed almost as if the offended Judge had kindled those flames, to devour the dead form, and give her a horrible symbol of the second death, to which her lover had been received in hell torment. The event was so unexpected and so inexplicable, and so harrowing at the best, even if she could have remembered that it was no more than "dust to dust," that, even with a more resolute mind, she must have been made unusually susceptible, for the time, to dark impressions and depressing thoughts, such as early religious associations had always tended to force upon her. Had her faith met at that moment with disastrous overthrow, and fear recovered possession of her trembling spirit, it would have been no more than usually happens. A plausible, tender appeal to her sense of helplessness, to her feeling of ill desert, to her natural terror in view of destruction, might have extinguished in her heart the pure aspiration of the child towards the Father in Heaven, and fastened on her some one of the forms of current Christian heathenism. No such advocate was at hand, however, and with the moving on of the train, and her final departure from the last relic of her past, Marion White struggled out of the depths with a sad strength of soul which she was destined never to lose.

CHAPTER III.

THERE were two persons in the car with Marion White, who each had an impulse to offer her assistance, of the sort which sympathy endeavors to render on such occasions. Both of them had the clerical title, and both were ministers of religion, but they were every way a singular contrast to each other; they had in fact no more in

common than the publican and the Pharisee in the temple. That one of the two whose presence might have been of real service, we will call, without his title, John Paul, a modest, earnest gentleman of nearly fifty, whose countenance told a plain story of very profound, and possibly very sad, experience. Him, however, we must defer introducing, because he was anticipated by the Rev. Athanasius Channing Blowman, a clergyman of national reputation, who was *en route* to Chicago to deliver his celebrated lecture on Napoleon Bonaparte and Modern History.

The Rev. Athanasius Channing Blowman was still a young man,—thirty-three perhaps,—but he did not lack assurance, and he felt it incumbent upon him to employ his pastoral, not to say his episcopal, authority, with the sighs and tears of Marion White. Not that he was a priest of 'The Church,' much less a bishop, for he belonged to a small denomination of heretics, and had only the standing which excessive self-assertion gives; but he made a large and loud claim as a "minister of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and he held in great esteem that prophecy, wherein the master assured the disciples, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and *greater than these shall he do.*" It was from the last clause of this text that Athanasius Channing Blowman purposed to preach in the Chicago Opera House, on the Sunday evening previous to his lecture, which would be given on Monday night.

Nature had used inexplicable freedom in mixing characters in this young apostle. There was a little of Pope Hildebrand, just enough to warrant the sublime assurance with which he had *demande*d and obtained ecclesiastical dignities, on the various boards engaged in managing the machinery of the sect. Of Tom Paine, Voltaire, and any nameless mountebank, there were about equal parts, giving a considerable dash of irreverent common sense, of egotistic wit, and of grand and lofty tumbling with figures of speech, epithets fit and unfit, and the usual weapons of sensational oratory. It was, however, in personal appearance, that Athanasius Channing Blowman believed himself indubitably in the line of prophets and apostles, and of his "Lord and Master." Probably he would never have been called a handsome man; and he certainly was not interesting in appearance; but he had quite unusual stature, an animated countenance, eyes that habitually flashed, or were meant to flash, and locks, abundant and dark, worthy of an Apollo. Two thoughts frequently came to him through the smoke of his cigar, that the figures of "the Lord Jesus,"

in pictures by very old masters, strangely resembled the person he appeared in what he called "my glorified moments," and that *Apollo* Athanasius Channing would have been a name strikingly suitable for one who had added to the substance of Greek wisdom and orthodox inspiration, the advanced views of most reputable heresy, and whose lofty aim it was to invite Moses and Elias, Catholic and Calvinist, to abide with him on his mount of transfiguration, "our elevated liberal views."

In the matter of actual religion, this *Apollo* Athanasius once naïvely confessed that it was the unknown quantity in his problem of life. At the very first of his ministry he had inclined wholly to the most "radical" paths, and he never had had, or could have, any other than "radical" private opinions. But preferment, such as it could be had in his sect, did not lie in that direction, and really the workings of his mind were not so positive as to compel him to minister one set of opinions rather than another. He went over, therefore, to the conservative side of the denominational conventicle, and shouted the shibboleths of orthodox heresy at the head of the "right wing." Here he thought it mighty clever to confute the "radicals," who said much of "intuition" and "inspiration," by confessing, as if that of course settled the matter, that *his* soul was as empty of "inspiration" as a brass horn of the Holy Ghost; and that of "intuition" *he* had never known any more than a dutch cheese; propositions which nobody felt able to dispute. The single passion of his nature seemed to be, to raise his voice loudest of all among "the chief speakers," and to persuade himself that he led the van of the Christian religion, because he was a successful sensational preacher.

In fact, however, the Christian religion, with all its sins of error and wrong upon it, would have been infinitely indebted to this fellow if he had looked up some honest employment. There undoubtedly ought to be a quasi-hell just at present, convenient to urgent mundane necessities, into which all not honest teachers of religion might be thrust, long enough to smoke out their pretension, and save their souls, as by fire, from the worst break-down of character to which man or woman can come. The emptying thereby of numerous pulpits, which it costs from \$7,000 to \$12,000 a year to keep a star performer in, would do no harm whatever to public virtue or popular interest in religion, and would rid us of a prodigious amount of humbug, besides turning over to modest and honest labor, and to good character, quite a number of persons originally capable of a

career much nobler than that of careless, reckless, sensational administration of no-truths, half-truths, and lies, in the name of religion.

It was a pet conceit of young Mr. Blowman, since he had taken charge of the "conservative liberal movement of the Christian mind," to constitute himself spokesman of the latest discovered true intent of the only original gospel of "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," and invite the warring sects of Christendom to say after him this last revised and finally genuine Christian confession of faith. It was not that he really had any particular faith to confess himself, but he imagined himself competent, as conductor of a metropolitan religious theatre, drawing crowded houses every Sunday morning and evening, to give a good guess at the average religious notions afloat in the popular mind, and had no hesitation in assuming that a compend of such notions would have prodigious popular success.

With his usual largeness and boldness of view, he purposed obtaining what he called a "Consensus," or agreed-upon statement of beliefs, endorsed by leading divines,—selected by himself from all parts of Christendom, and addressed by a circular letter under his own hand,—as an authoritative exposition of faith and practice. To his mind it was plain that large numbers of the popular clergy of various sects would welcome so good an opportunity to fall into line under one banner, and behind a leader whose star was so undeniably in the ascendant, wherever theatres and opera houses had opened their doors. The "liberal views" of his own sect rendered the bare suggestion of a "Creed" dangerous, not because there was really any indisposition to have a creed, in a small and sly way, by a sort of ecclesiastical thimble-peg, but from the average aversion of the sect to call the distinctly proclaimed confession by the usual name, the general impression seeming to be that clever sleight-of-hand infidelity to the boasted principle of liberty, would escape detection, and enable the body to save appearances.

In this peculiar exigency, our young apostle was very lucky to hit on the Latin term, *Consensus*, which at once sounds neither definite nor dangerous, and has an impressive suggestion of dignity and divinity, as much as to say, reversing a scripture word, "It seems good to US and to the Holy Ghost." This term he almost considered a *divine* suggestion, only he was not sure that the assumptions of that word "divine," such as the existence of God, inspiration, etc., were not a little doubtful, useful but misty, while of his own cleverness he

was certain beyond a doubt, and on the whole preferred to assume that, in the absence or inattention of Divine Wisdom, and "the Lord Jesus" having left the excelsior opportunities to future disciples, he had *invented* a kind of Nicholson pavement for religion, over which ark and hearse, the hope and the terror of traditional faith, might trundle, smoothly as never before, their glorious onward way.

He often said to himself, and to his numerous admiring confidants, the quasi-religious clever fellows, of both sexes, who constituted the voluntary vestry of his grand metropolitan conventicle, "The Church of Holy Enoch," that he should never forget the hour and the moment when the scheme of a "Consensus" occurred to him. It was on his first visit to Chicago, when for the first time he was driven down Wabash Avenue, by the Hon. Jupiter William. His calmness of mind had been disturbed for a moment by the contrast between his own elegant patent-leather "Oxford ties" and the "heavy kip" of the Hon. Jupiter William's unvarnished boots, resting conspicuously on the front seat of the carriage, when suddenly, as the vehicle swept round into the Avenue, and rolled with soothing smoothness along the block roadway, a kind of vision brought a recurrence of his frequent thoughts on the momentous subject of a "banner-statement of belief," and in a moment, as if a Latin Dictionary,—a sealed book to his education,—had been let down between the scraggy and smutty trees which line this "superb drive," he read this word of words for his purpose, *CONSENSUS*, and instantly imagined a grand turn-out of ecclesiastical vehicles, rolling in noiseless majesty in the wake of his suggestion, over the way his cleverness should lay down.

From that moment "Consensus" had been his banner in the sky. He had had the word illuminated, and framed in velvet and gold, to stand on his study table. And straightway he had proceeded to write out fairly his compend of all known winds of doctrine, attaching thereto his own bold, decisive, œcumenical signature, *ATHANASIUS CHANNING BLOWMAN*, preparatory to receiving the concurrent attestation of elect fathers and brethren to whom he would vouchsafe circular epistolary application. This compend, which was meant to be to the original materials of prophecy, gospels, and epistles, what an ordered and elegantly served dinner would have been to the great sheet let down, full of things clean and unclean, of Peter's vision, had been printed in gilt and colors, on a large, elegant broad-sheet, and also in a primer executed in the richest style of the designer's art.

It was the broad-sheet which had best pleased the eye and heart of

the author, because the first words and the last, the title and the signature, stood as he deemed they should, in one view, the Alpha and the Omega of this last authoritative interpretation of revelation; and then it suggested a new Luther, nailing theses of everlasting gospel on the doors of "Atheism, Free Religion, and Romanism," with "*blows* heard in heaven." "CONSENSUS" and "BLOWMAN!" Would not numberless Simeons now say, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people?"

But the broad-sheet was less convenient than a primer to hand about, and less durable in the frowsy pockets of unctious youths who besieged the pulpit steps, at close of service on Sunday nights, for more words of everlasting bunkum; and then report had it, on too good ground, alas! that the Reverend Doctor Archangelicus Sanctus Sanctorum, had made contemptuous reference to the "Consensus" as "Blowman's Handbill," and really threatened a split in the party of "us and the Holy Ghost," unless "us" used somewhat more reserve in presence of the long time "Liberal" Vicar of the "Lord Jesus."

The primer, therefore, had finally engaged the ardent dogmatic and æsthetic interest of the inventor of "Consensus," and was already privately published, while the large scheme of concurrent attestation was delayed, until due attention could be afforded it. Some experience which Mr. Blowman had had, with a richly printed and ornamented insurance tract, which his popular pen had been engaged to write, and which the enterprising managers, with plenty of other people's money to spend, had brought out regardless of expense, now came in play. Suffice it to say that heavy tinted paper, border lines which varied with each page through all the colors of the rainbow, a text printed in old English black letter, with illuminated initial letters in blue, scarlet, and gold, and an illuminated cover, done in chromolithograph, were the main features of the "Consensus" primer, the striking effects of which had moved Blowman to soliloquize, "Wonder what J. C. would say to *that*," these initials being his usual, strictly private, familiar designation of the personage professionally spoken of as "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

It was with two or three of these gay picture books in his hand that Mr. Blowman improved an opportunity to take the seat directly in front of Marion White, soon after the train had left the scene of the fire. It was not difficult for him to introduce conversation, as it certainly would have been for John Paul, or for any other person of quick sympathies.

"Permit me, dear Madame, to hand you a short statement of religious beliefs,—liberal beliefs, Madame, which may afford you some suggestions."

"Thank you; you are very kind. It is not a Tract Society—*thing*—is it?"

Great emotions are apt to induce extreme frankness, which Marion White had certainly used in intimating the disgust she felt for the "blood of Jesus" leaflets of heathenism which Tract distributors had so frequently thrust upon her. Her Quaker uncle, good Thomas White, had long ago shown her that the Tract Society had no moral character, and her own sense of religious truth had led her to consider such of its publications as had come in her way as very stupid illustrations of the sentimentalism of Christian superstition. The bare thought of one of these vulgar appeals to fear, and selfishness, and gross credulity, excited in her an intense desire to cover her grief and her faith from every eye save that of the One, who was to her the Lord our Shepherd, and the Father in heaven. However, she did not wish to be impolite, and then Mr. Blowman's primer certainly did not bear the aspect,—generally mean and smutty,—of Tract Society origin; she added therefore, with some hesitation:

"I shall be happy to look at it at some time," and handed it to her traveling companion, a brother, a youth of eighteen perhaps, who had found himself not good for much during these last hours of his sister's trouble.

Mr. Blowman responded, "You hold some form, I presume, Madame, of Christian faith, and are able to—;" exactly what, Mr. Blowman did not himself know, and the clear, frank eyes of Marion White so evidently spoke of knowledge, that he dared not make a random reference; so he stopped, quite at his ease, however, letting a manner of high self-assurance serve as a resting-place for his broken question, until he should see what particular hope it might be which kindled so pure a light in those saddened eyes.

It was painful for Marion White to speak at all just then; it was torture almost to uncover her heart; but all the more because of the pain did she reply from her deepest feeling and her most distinct thought,—

"I suppose I do not hold any form of what is called Christian faith, but I *believe* very strongly indeed."

That was a distinction quite beyond the Blowman mind, which, to use a colloquial phrase, 'took s'ock' in certain *forms* and in the

'Lord Jesus,' as the impersonation of these forms, but of faith apart from these knew no more than the unborn know of life. But it did not become the author of the "Consensus" to be puzzled, or to betray any desire for information on that to him, most remote of subjects, real faith apart from assent to forms, faith without the touch or sight of a symbol or idol. Accordingly, to set himself duly above this young woman, who evidently had something like a 'radical' conception of the nature of faith, or rather imagined herself having faith, such as 'radicalism' represented it necessary to have, Mr. Blowman, with his lofty œcumenical tone, said, —

"Ah, indeed, Free Religion?"

The hardly veiled sneer of this question did not escape the notice of Marion White. The evident skepticism of Mr. Blowman she readily discovered. It was not the first time she had taken notice that infidels and scoffers, by any real rule of genuine faith, are to be found often enough under clerical profession of the popular creed. Indeed, it had seemed the nearly universal rule, with the class of ministers she had known, to contemptuously call in question the natural and genuine experience of spiritual things which people commonly had, in order to thrust upon everybody the orthodox traditional preconceptions, and compel human hearts to come unto the Father by the orthodox way. To her simple honesty, her fervent moral integrity, and her always quick and direct faith in the divine love and care, this clerical trick had come to seem as barefaced and unworthy as any other form of false and faithless behavior. Mr. Blowman, therefore, who apparently meant to intimate that her faith was a delusion, she looked on with sad wonder, quite unable to comprehend that any man, seeing her sorrow, and hearing her confession of strong trust, should think it fit, or other than false and wicked, to carelessly mock at her confidence, and by implication warn her of the folly of trust such as hers. Exactly what the terms Mr. Blowman had used, might mean, Marion White did not know, but she saw at once what they might in *truth* mean, and she understood clearly that Mr. Blowman intended to express decided disapproval of the confession she had made. Her first impulse was to say no more, but her eyes involuntarily turned directly to her questioner, with the frank, quiet honesty in them which moved her to speak at all, and once that her attention was taken by Mr. Blowman's clerical cut and countenance, and she saw the unreality, the pretension, the ecclesiastical frivolity even, of the man, a wholesome force of truth seized her, and

she answered, with gentle firmness, and just enough brokenness of feeling to make every tone of her voice pathetic, —

“I do not know what *you*, Sir, may mean by free religion, and therefore, cannot answer your question. But I confess that I do feel entirely free to accept religion as my own experience has taught it to me, and do believe that this freedom is justified by all really religious truth. Your pamphlet has a very pretty cover, Sir, and your views are doubtless very good if you believe them, but a Father in heaven must have better ways of coming to our souls than by ministers and tracts, or books and histories. I have not seen or heard anything, since my trouble came, which did me any good, except the kind faces of people, and their *loving* words. All the religion which has come to me has come of itself, in my heart, with my feelings which only *God* knows; and that has kept coming almost all the time, so that I feel almost as if I were God's only child, and could not trust him enough. I hope you do not consider such feeling wrong, because it seems to me that ministers ought not to kill such religion, merely because it is free and separate from their views. If God gives religion to his children, so that it is a new life in their souls, like an angel child born into a mother's arms, it cannot be right for anybody to meddle with it or injure it. I think I could not believe in anything which would take away any of my faith in God's being near to me himself, and taking care of me himself.”

There was a pleading earnestness in Marion White's concluding words, which might have led an observer to suspect that she looked on Mr. Blowman as no better than one of the servants of Herod, who were sent to slay the infant Jesus, and that she was half afraid he wished to murder the divine hope which was born in her heart, and to which she clung with more than a mother's passion. So many ministers had seemed to her no better, towards the actual religious experiences of people, than Herod's purpose about Jesus, that unconsciously this fear did lend a tone to her manner. The Jesus of the churches had become, so long since, a jealous king, to whom knees must bend and heads bow, and his ministers had lent themselves so completely to the Jesuit office of making his kingship the chief interest, and had so unscrupulously used cruel violence against all religion, springing up in human hearts, which turned to God directly, without regard to the king-mediator's claim, as sole keeper of access to God, that Marion White, with her unusual possession of natural and genuine direct faith in God, could not but feel distinct and strong

aversion, in the presence of any interference with her religious experience.

For once in his life Mr. Blowman was nonplussed. He had thought himself an Apollo of ministers to young women; indeed he had, as near as his dry, wooden nature could, indulged in the spiritual concupiscence which so commonly befools the Protestant confessional; he believed few females could remain unmoved to tender devotion under the flash of his eye, and the shake of his locks; to the best of his belief, — and he kept a list, — not less than seventy young women, of tolerable charms, worshipped through him, and closely associated the bliss of heaven with his handsome person; while of unattractive feminine devotees, who had languished under his flashing eye, he imagined there must already be several meeting houses full in various parts of the country, and that his retinue of houris, in the “fields of living green” revealed in the hymn book, would perhaps astonish even the angels, and go far to entitle him to high rank in the kingdom of “the Lord Jesus;” but here was an instance quite contrary to his philosophy and practice of apostleship, a young and sweet woman, in special need of consolation, who evidently saw neither charm nor help, either in the Lord Jesus or in him, and who amazed him still further by the clearness and earnestness of her direct, free confidence in God! He did not feel quite easy as he turned away, keeping the seat in front of Marion White, but quite unable to carry on the interview, and gazing fixedly out of the window to console his wounded vanity with a pretence of important occupation for his mind. The thought really plagued him, as the train sped over the prairie. ‘What if one might believe really in God, as he believed in himself, and feel the nearness of Infinite Spirit, as he felt the visible and tangible fact of his own person! *If* that were so, what might not a man become as a minister, not of historical recollections, but of actual divine inspiration!’ The grandeur of the idea teased him, but not into faith, and he gradually composed himself to abide in the old assumptions, and to go on in the old way.

CHARLES DICKENS AND HIS CHRISTIAN CRITICS.

THE theological heathenism which still sticks to Christianity, has few consistent, outspoken representatives. Total depravity, wrath of God, blood atonement, and damnation, are rarely taught in the orthodox pulpit, and still less rarely applied. It is commonly felt to be brutal and infamous to rigidly apply them, and worse than useless to honestly teach them. People do not want to hear of these dogmas, and they are outraged by any direct application of them. To stand over a human creature, in the presence of the loving and the weeping, and argue of depravity, wrath, atoning blood, and damnation, with intent to intimate that a soul has gone to hell, is commonly felt to show a kind of cannibal appetite.

Undoubtedly "Calvary," as theologically understood, means human sacrifice, or worse than that, and damnation certainly means that, but average decent people want to forget it, even if they are not ready to put it out of their creed. They feel the horrible heathenism of it, although they have not yet definitely rejected it, and they no more wish to recall the "blood of Jesus," and all it has implied, than they wish to attempt appeasing God by drawing a butcher knife through the throat of the eldest son. The sacrifice of Isaac, so often said to be typical of Calvary, they do not more truly leave behind, than they do the sacrifice of Jesus, justly assuming that the blood of Jesus has no more to do with redemption than father Abraham's knife. When, therefore, a minister of religion flourishes the old heathen knife over a dead man, and talks of hell and blood as if Moloch were his god, and he wanted to cut somebody's heart out for a sacrifice, the orthodox world is not less shocked than the heretic and secular world.

The Tremont Temple Baptist pulpit of Boston, is occupied by a clergyman,—Fulton by name,—whose theology is that of Abraham's knife, and of what he calls the "reeking cross." He reads human history, he tells us, "in the light of burning Sodom and in the presence of a reeking cross," and advises us that "the mighty tidal wave of Almighty wrath approaches," and that all of us who are not "clothed in the blood of Christ" will go to "hell, the prison-house of the damned." It would seem that this Fulton must burn brim-

stone, and keep a puddle of blood on his study table, and must, on special occasions, visit slaughter-houses and hangings, to derive inspiration and imagery for his gospel of Golgotha and Gehenna. He has the fierce, "reeking" godliness of unadulterated heathenism, and teaches that God *hates us like hell*, and only restrains his vengeance a moment, to speedily roll in horrible destruction over us, and be a hell of torment to us forever. The impatience of God to drink our blood, is the striking feature of his theism; the necessity to us of being all over blood,—dipped in the blood of Jesus,—if God is to be kind to us, is the chief word of his gospel; and the certainty that, if we reject this vile gospel of blood, God will damn — *damn* — DAMN us, is his one prophetic utterance.

We are not surprised, therefore, to find that his humanity is on a par with that of the pious cannibalism which enjoins the sacrificial eating of aged relatives, or that of the Mormon Danite doctrine of murder as a means of grace, killing people to save their souls. He takes a great, and loving, and beloved soul, such as he confesses Charles Dickens to have been, and "eats him raw," to use a Greek metaphor,—damns him to hell, to use his own choice vocabulary,—as a matter of mercy and truth to us who, vainly and villainously, as he deems it, trust that God will be kind to our great brother, and will lead him in the way of eternal life. Merely for appearance's sake, he professes not to pronounce "an opinion as to the home of his soul," but he does this nevertheless, and in terms which add blasphemy to brutality. He "leaves him with God," and expounds "God" as meaning "hell." And this disgusting Calcraft of preachers, with his blood-reeking gospel of pious ferocity, asks us to hear him as a minister of Christian grace and truth! It is much as if the slaughter-house offal should be brought us in place of butcher's meat; Mr. Fulton keeps the refuse of Christianity without its truth.

The truth of Christianity teaches us to implicitly trust the paternal sovereignty of God, and to hope the best, and believe the best, and have full assurance of the best, in any and every instance of the offspring of God, simply on the ground that God's care is perfectly adequate to secure the best. The theological heathenism, which has so long made part of Christianity, and which undoubtedly is suggested, if not found, in Jesus and Paul, as part of the heathen tradition which helped give an envelop, husk, or shell, to Christian truth, denies the fact of this care of God, chiefly on these grounds, as now explained, that God cannot consistently be a kind father to

unworthy children, and that, even if he could be, the nature of the freedom he ought to give his children forbids it. That is to say, if God should effectually influence us, here or hereafter, to be good, and thereby make us holy and blessed, he would violate our creature freedom, and if he should concern himself to do this while we were disobedient, he would fail to show due respect for good character, which can be fitly shown only by penalty, and that *not* helpful and redemptive!

It is disgraceful, but it is true, that so-called theologians, supposed to have had at least a common education, and entrusted with the instruction of the community, unite in forbidding God Almighty to train up his children in the way in which they should go, and, with one accord, doubt whether the creatures would walk in that way, even if the Creator were permitted to use all the powers of divine paternal discipline. They assert the inconsistency of moral discipline with human freedom! To persuade, even with the utmost care and wisdom of God, is to violate the will! A human father may do this, yea, *must* do this; but God must *not* do it! The human father is derelict in duty if he do not aim to break the disobedient will, and bring to repentance and perfect obedience; but it is God's duty to *avoid* doing this!

Is it possible to conceive a more absurd doctrine? Here are the moral offspring of Deity, made susceptible to moral influence, capable of due development only under moral influence, and to be brought under human good influence as much as possible, and yet we are asked to believe that God must not use good influence, or at least must avoid using this effectively, because he would thereby make his children holy and happy forever, *at the dreadful cost of violated free will!* That will do to tell in Tremont Temple. Christian common sense knows better.

The other point of the popular dogma about God, is no less absurd, and, besides, it is wicked, if any dogma whatever can be said to be wicked. This forbids God to make men good, lest thereby he should not seem to love goodness and hate sin. It forbids God to be kind and helpful, in divine moral and spiritual ways, lest by so doing he get the reputation in the universe of a bad moral character. The mere suspicion that the Father-Creator will deal so wisely with his creature children as to redeem them finally every one, excites an orthodox theologian as a red rag is said to do a wild bull. Universal redemption, by the perfect fatherhood of God, is the abomination of

desolation set up in the holy place of orthodoxy, because, if it is a fact, then orthodoxy is heathen folly.

Dr. J. P. Thompson, of the Broadway Tabernacle Congregational church, New York, wrote a book a few years since to prove the necessary damning effect of the love of God, on the ground that true love must respect right, and that right forbids God to be a Father to sinners. According to the orthodox idea, God must stand off from the sinner and deal out every possible hurt and pain, by way of proper penalty. That is the word, "*penalty*." Dr. Thompson called his book "Love and Penalty." A more exact title would have been "Damning Love."

By "penalty" the orthodox dogmatist means punishment which will hurt and will not help. This damning penalty, — hurting the sinner and taking care *not* to help him, or in any way do him any good, — this infernal, hellish, damnable infliction of unmitigated evil, — is said by orthodoxy to be the only means by which God can show proper regard for goodness and suitable dislike of sin. Orthodoxy is fiercely anxious to have God show that he *hates sin*. Prophecy to it of God's showing that he *loves goodness* by making every soul good, and it will retort that such a God is good for nothing, a mere sentimental driveller, a goody Being, whose "throne" is not worth an hour's purchase. *Hatred* of sin, "burning to the lowest hell," is the orthodox characteristic of Deity.

Now of this conception of divine law, pure Christian truth knows nothing whatever. The justice of God is paternal and effective. Its embodiment is perfect fatherhood. Such a thing as penalty intended to do evil only, is unknown to Deity. Nothing more would be needed to make God devilish than the adoption of such penalty. Divine penalty is intended to do good only, and would not be divine if it were not redemptive. All the judgment of God looks to reform, and all divine execution of law causes repentance and obedience. It is simply by want of faith in God, that the question is, or can be, raised, whether a soul will fail of holiness and blessedness. Orthodoxy assumes that God has no more wisdom than our human law embodies, and that our miserable failure to deal with offenders is an example of justice which Deity cannot surpass. It stubbornly, blindly, wickedly almost, refuses to see that fatherhood is the better type, and that the justice of God must appear, not in harsh, ineffective judgship, but in effective, paternal discipline.

The "Our Father," then, is the true Christian word; the Judge of the parable is a suggestion from heathenism. Away, therefore, with the abominable doubt whether a great soul is on the way to heaven. Away with the brutal and blasphemous suggestion that Charles Dickens, "in the hands of God," is in hell.

Mr. Beecher said of Dickens, —

"I think that his death produces more the feeling of personal loss than any since the death of Walter Scott. His books are books of the household — broad, tender, genial, humane. No man in our day has so won his way to the hearts of the people; he took hold of the great middle class of feeling in human nature, Whether he was a Christian or not, in our acceptance of the term, God knows. . . One class of men we feel to be Christians — they are producers of spiritual influences; another class produce malign influences. . . I recollect hearing my father say of Bishop Heber, after having read his life, that he doubted whether he was a Christian; he thought he was a moral man and had 'nateral virtuous.' I think none of us now would share his doubts. . . All that Dickens wrote tended to brace up manhood; the generic influences of his writings were to make men stronger, and to make the household purer, and sweeter, and tenderer. . . I consider him as the benefactor of his race. Providence did not call him to the spiritual element; but it gave him no mean task, and equipped him with no mean skill for his work. . . About the question of his spiritual work we cannot decide. But we cannot help being grateful to God that he raised such a man up to do a great work; and he did his work well. . . I thank God for the life and works of Charles Dickens."

This was said in reply to the following remark, made by a Mr. Bell, at one of Mr. Beecher's Friday Evening Lectures, —

"There are very few men whose works have a more beneficial influence in our homes, or of whom we have thought with more kindly interest. We have all loved the man; but, when I ask myself whether or not Charles Dickens was a Christian, I can't help feeling sorry that such a man has passed away and left us in doubt about his future."

It was this doubt, whether Dickens would be found to have gone to hell or to heaven, to which Mr. Beecher attempted to reply; and his reply, after a sufficient summary of Mr. Dickens' good and great work in the world, was "God knows — we cannot decide." That is to say, a good and great work in the world, is not evidence of hopeful Christian character, and does not warrant faith that the doer of that work will not be damned.

Assuming no more than Mr. Bell and Mr. Beecher admit, in regard to the good work of Dickens, we may say that he *did* the Sermon on

the Mount as thoroughly and largely as any man of his generation, and that no man living when he did, was more bound to his fellows by simple and true love than he was. Even the Tremont Temple cannibal had to say, "all men loved him; he loved all men." Yet Mr. Beecher professes not to know whether we may believe that this great and good man, who was so bound to his fellows by the covenant of love, a universally beloved benefactor of his race, has escaped hell, and may be expected ultimately to reach heaven! The Brooklyn prophet thanks God for the life and works of Charles Dickens, and yet pretends to be "in doubt about his future." He does not even demand that his dead brother's great and good life be considered enough to give him a *start* towards heaven, just enough at least so that one can feel *sure* that he has *escaped hell!* He concedes that, for all we know or may believe, Dickens is damned!

Mr. Beecher knows better than this. He has a faith which is utterly misrepresented by the doubt he here confesses. Why did not the occasion bring out his real faith, and manifest his Christian common sense? Because he is, to use plain terms, a TIME-SERVER. He is afraid of the orthodox public, who buy *Plymouth Pulpit* and *The Christian Union*, and are expected to buy the "Life of Christ" which he is writing. If ever hesitation, timidity, faithlessness, ought to be lashed without mercy, it is when a minister of faith, such as Mr. Beecher is, offers a stone for bread, a doubt in place of truth, in answering, in any instance, the question under which so many hearts are pressed down to the ground and crushed almost out of life, whether a good life, without special faith in the atonement, is ground for sure hope that God will be kind. If Mr. Beecher did not trust, and could honestly say so, the case would be wholly altered. He had the trust, but gave instead a doubt. He answered the most serious and widely applicable question which could have been put to him, by an evasion, the effect of which was a falsehood. He makes us ask the question, whether to be a Christian, in his "acceptation of the term," includes honesty and courage. And knowing that it does, we wonder how much he lacks of being *half* as good a Christian as Charles Dickens was.

There is a much braver man in the pulpit of Park Street Church, Boston. He is less endowed with inspiration than Mr. Beecher, but what he sees, and all that he believes, he dares to preach. We refer to Mr. Murray. He said of Dickens, —

"That the man loved his fellow-men, I know; that he loved his God, I hope, and have faith to believe. In thought I stand uncovered beside the tomb in which his body sleeps, in silent sadness, that so sweet and gentle a spirit is taken from the earth. In reverent gratitude I thank the Lord that he did bless mankind with the birth of such a mind. I thank him as for a blessing vouchsafed to me personally. I feel that I am a better man than I should have been had no Charles Dickens lived. . . Farewell, gentle spirit! Thou wast not perfect until now! Thou didst have thy passions, and thy share of human errors; but death has freed thee. Thou art no longer trammelled. Thou art delivered out of bondage, and thy freed spirit walks in glory."

It was in reply to this that Mr. 'Believe-or-be-Damned' Fulton said,—

"It is a more than mistake for any man who takes Christ's gospel for authority to intimate that death frees a man from human errors, delivers him from the bondage of sin, or permits him to walk the realms of light. . . He [Dickens] stands naked before God. . . With what is he clothed upon? Nothing wrought by himself will answer. The blood of Christ alone cleanseth from all sin. . . Does love won from men insure eternal life? The question confronts us. Is it or is it not a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God? . . . Never, since I received my commission to preach, have I seen such universal desire to push by the peril, and ignore the teachings, of the gospel. Jesus says, 'Whosoever believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved. Whosoever believeth not shall be damned' . . . Now is the time to bring the truth home. *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

If a recent criminal, with the double infamy on his soul of marital brutality and cowardly assassination, had been sentenced to be hanged, and had summoned to his side, as a sympathizer on the woman-and-marriage question, our Gehenna apostle of Tremont Temple, and we had seen the Baptist minister on the scaffold, with an execrable wretch in his hands, we should have beheld the former unhesitatingly offering salvation to the latter, and confidently urging it upon him, on the single condition of penitent faith in the atoning blood of Jesus, if, indeed, the two were not already fellow-communicants. But when Charles Dickens dies without a moment's warning, and falls instantly into the hands of God, and is found not clothed in the blood of Jesus, and a minister who preaches a gospel which pushes by 'Believe or be damned,' far enough to give the Almighty a decent moral character, and to anticipate from the fatherhood of God respectable care of human creatures, intimates that the hands of God mean kindness, help, deliverance, redemption, and that a good

and great soul gone to God has emerged from the valley and shadow of mortal limitation, and failure and trouble, and has entered upon a path which will grow brighter and brighter until it reach the perfect light of heaven, then, behold! we hear that "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!" The Baptist minister would assume to administer redemption, and to send a murderer direct to heaven, but not all the powers of the world to come, not even God himself, may meet the soul of Charles Dickens and guide it to the realms of light.

We beg some one to explain to Mr. Fulton that the world to come has at least as ample an equipment for ministering to souls as this world, and that it is highly probable, considering that God, the holy angels, and the blessed saints, are neither fiends, fools, nor Fultons, that our departed who arrive in that world, as babes born into a new life, will be received with due care, and aided to find in the new sphere the blessed way of eternal life. It seems to be according to the gospel in Tremont Temple, that God's hands in the world to come, are much as the hands of what are known as "baby-farmers" are in this world, and that most of us, as soon as God gets hold of us, may expect to be spiritually put out of the way, murdered, and thrown, not to the dogs, but worse, to the devils.

The tribute of Dr. Bellows to the genius and character of Charles Dickens, was at once remarkably appreciative and strikingly significant. The gist of it was in these words:

"Rarely have the genius and gifts of the individual soul been so emphasized as in the world-wide interest and sorrow felt in the extinction of that shining lamp suddenly dashed from the altar of literature—Charles Dickens. The burning coal at which a million hearts ignited their dull fancies is quenched. He that wrote more and better than any novelist of his time, who had the dangerous field of the comic for his peculiar sphere, yet never penned a line that dying he could wish to blot, can add nothing to the inexhaustible store of his creations. . . . His aim was always pure and generous and high; to exalt integrity and truth, to abase falsehood, cruelty and hypocrisy; and to do it by stealing upon universal sympathies, and leaguering all the fun-loving and pathetic sensibilities of the soul in the service of a common humanity. He enlisted ordinary universal man in his cause. Whom profound moralists, Christian preachers could not reach, he touched and ruled. His spiritual knife was so sharp and so sheathed that its edge was neither seen nor felt while it did its surgical work. He wrought, doubtless, many a substantial conversion from the purposes of crime, or folly, or cruelty, by a dose of laughter, whose tears are oftener more purifying than those of sorrow. He made hypocrisy, selfishness, and

sentimentality, absurd and contemptible, when it would have been of no avail simply to prove them sinful and wrong. But, after all, what I envy him most for is . . . the immeasurable sum of great, unadulterated pleasure he has given the world; the countless hours of amused and absorbed gratification he has brought into all sorts of homes in both hemispheres. Ah! what a godlike thing it is to shed so much self-forgetfulness and balm into the sore and tired heart of humanity! . . . As a vindicator of the intrinsic worth of all human souls, Dickens, not a professed moralist, has excelled all the professed moralists and preachers and teachers of his day. If he was not a Christian, he was a glorious instrument of God's providence, and may shame, at the great account, many whose Christianity is unquestioned, but whose usefulness and worth are taken on trust. Let us be cautious how we raise questions about the Christianity of men like Washington, Lincoln, or even Charles Dickens; lest the profane should say, 'What is the use of a Christianity which such men could live without?' The sword of bigotry has two edges, and often cuts off the bigot's own head when aimed at the victim of his self-righteousness. We can well leave such men to Christ's own judgment seat, while we try to emulate their usefulness and bounty of life and character."

With these words before us, we are reminded of the evident fact, that NATURE, in the large, divine sense, the Substance and Soul of all this universe of men and things, has very diverse modes of manifestation. In other words, God speaks to us through varied special organs of his presence, a Socrates, a Paul, a Spinoza, a Wesley, a Parker, and the numerous other lights, greater and lesser, of our race. It is made quite plain by the statement above given, that Charles Dickens was, in a peculiar way, a remarkable servant of Infinite Grace. In him dwelt a power to give innocent and wholesome pleasure which may well lead us to own that he was a true apostle. Honestly toiling, as he did, to unseal the fountain of our purer and happier sensibilities, and achieving his task, at once with unexampled fidelity and unexampled success, he is as much entitled to Christian gratitude and reverence as any master or prophet of all the ages.

Undoubtedly we had this treasure in an earthen vessel, the excellency of the power being of God, as it has always been, and always must be, but none the less is it evident that the God of all consolation had shined marvellously into that simple, kindly, capacious heart, with the true and blessed illumination of eternal wisdom, love, and faith. There is more pure and undefiled religion in the writings of Charles Dickens than in all that has been said by orthodox theological speculation since Paul began confusedly to inquire into the ways

of God with man. These inspired pages, from the hand of a "god-like" genius, which glow with the pure light of a tender humanity, and from which has been reflected so immeasurable a sum of unadulterated pleasure, so vast and varied a consolation of human souls, just as truly betoken the presence of God with man, and the love of God freely shed abroad in the world, as do gospels and epistles, prophecies and psalms, or anything whatever which has been called revelation. The author was no better, perhaps, than Matthew the publican, or Paul the preaching tent-maker, or Jesus the Nazarene carpenter and Galilean enthusiast, but then God made him, and made him with what *he* deemed sufficient pains, and he came into his generation, and passed through it, as honest a lover of his fellow-men, as simple and true and glorious a man, as ever human heart warmed to, or eye of heaven looked upon with pleasure; and when his winning, heart-lightening, soul-cheering words ran like a river of heaven through the common life of his fellow-men, his work was no mere human meddling and making, but one of the eminent manifestations of the divine mind.

If theological scoffers say nay to this, and angrily accuse us of depreciating an old story of God with us some two thousand years ago, we beg to say with emphasis that we know of nothing more senseless and hurtful than the rank atheism which forever assumes the absence of divine inspiration in the great and good of our own, or indeed of any age, and that we should as soon think of maintaining that Charles Dickens was an automaton, as that he spoke, in his many brave and blessed words, without a flood-tide of motion in his soul from the Holy Ghost.

Dr. Bellows acknowledges that Dickens touched and ruled those whom Christian preachers and moralists could not reach; that he, as a vindicator of the intrinsic worth of all human souls, excelled all the professed moralists and preachers and teachers of his day; and that he was a glorious instrument of God's providence, and may shame many whose Christianity is unquestioned. He deems it well to be cautious about questioning the position of Dickens before God, and advises, in case he is to be condemned and cast out, that unquestioned Christians keep quiet about it, until Christ's judgment seat shall be set, and the matter can be attended to without danger of profane interference. Such at least seems to be the implication of Dr. Bellow's statement. He does not venture to say that Dickens was a Christian, and is sure to reach heaven. He implies that he was not

a Christian, as he understands Christianity. He doubtless knew that Mr. Dickens no more sympathized with dogmatic Christianity than he did with dogmatic Mahometanism, and that it would be as dishonest, as it was useless, to pretend that any other than natural religion had any place in his life or played any part in his writings. But he cannot avoid recognizing that such as he was, in his beneficent genius and his providential mission, he stood above the usual Christian level, and did a better than common Christian work. Thereby Dr. Bellows shows conclusively how inadequate is his separation between false and true in his appreciation of Christianity, and how much he needs to revise his interpretation, in the light of such grace and truth as he confesses to finding outside what he deems the Christian confession. The superstition which made Jesus a Lord Messiah, and erected for him a Messianic judgment seat, is found wanting in presence of an example of inspiration such as Charles Dickens was.

It is in the Christianity of pure and simple faith in God our Father in heaven, and of love towards the fellow-man, that a life such as the beloved story-teller lived, finds its full explanation and its due recognition. There was no sham in that life; can as much be said of any life which still enshrines the dead superstition that Jesus was, or at least was meant to represent, God? There was no snuffle in the simple, genuine religious experience of that man; can as much be said of any intelligent man who still pretends to append 'for Christ's sake' to his prayers? And when the marvellous play of Dickens' peculiar faculties began, and the creations of his observation and imagination filled the stage, we saw no false light, no beggarly display of ecclesiastical old clothes, not a half page, not a line, devoted to popular superstition, but an honest human spectacle, under the ample natural light of infinite heaven. There was honest humanity in Charles Dickens, in degree and quality unknown to the professional confessors of religion, and very much truer to the Christian ideal than anything these official and officious Christians can show.

THE WOMAN AND THE TRIAL.

WHEN individual histories lead up to some Golgotha, where "striving against sin" ends in some dreadful death and terrible crushing of living hearts, and the conspicuous awful tragedy challenges universal attention, an observer endued by his knowledge and his faith with the power of prophetic anticipation, cannot fail to look for some large and worthy significance of the scene, although, in general, intelligence and virtue may barely keep timid watch afar off, and the great world may sweep by in an undisturbed torrent of condemnation and contempt. In such a spirit do we believe that a prophet to-day would interpret the spectacle recently made by an assassination, a marriage, a murder-trial, and the passing of one crushed woman across the stage of public observation.

It was the foul assassination of as true, pure, and gallant a man as honor ever crowned. It was as just and holy a marriage as religion and law ever celebrated. It was as wicked a mockery in court as has been perpetrated since Pilate sat, Peter evaded and equivocated, and the mad rabble of Jerusalem yelled for the delivery of Barabbas and the shedding of innocent blood. And the woman, who was condemned when an assassin went out free, passed from the stage as true to holy truth, as pure of stain or sin, and as sure to draw all pure hearts to see the crime against her and to seek its remedy, as was ever holy martyr in the furnace of dreadful trial. There is one sufficient use of such scenes, to point great lessons of difficult revolution, and compel adequate attention to wrong which lies embedded in some one of the sacred traditions of mankind.

The first lie, to the races which inherit the ancient Hebrew traditions, was that which charged upon woman the fault of human fall from grace and truth. The deepest wrong of Hebrew barbarism, was the law of fierce masculine assertion of prerogative, according to which the wife was made "one flesh" with her husband, and put under his absolute power, to be in subjection to him for things carnal and earthly, as he to God for things moral and heavenly. The religious instinct never erred more seriously and needlessly than in imagining for a divine hero a birth outside of wedlock, nor ever guided belief

more completely astray than when it brought a god-man upon earth by a way remote from the common path of ordinary human entrance to life. Christian record and tradition, in asserting, as the great law of marriage, "they twain shall be one flesh," and doing little more than to sanction and cover up the fleshly instincts of the ruder and ruling sex, has remained at the level of barbarism only less than in the perpetuation and consecration of heathen notions of God, of human nature, and of the destiny of souls.

To a faithful thinker, who joins to thought deep and disciplined emotions, such as make that rarest of gifts and most perfect of attainments for a man, a complete pure heart, it cannot but be plain that marriage ought not to mean power, possession, or even opportunity and liberty, on the part of the man, but consideration, care, protection, the greatest, and tenderest and bravest possible. The vocation of the wife to maternity is so significant, so wonderfully sacred, and her part in the sacraments of a united life has so much of utter surrender in it, so much pain and sorrow too, and so beautiful a charm and blessing with it, that only as blind animals, hurried into heedless liberty, with no just reflection and no proper consideration, do men assert power, instead of affording protection.

Unhappily very many enter upon wedlock with no proper knowledge of the wrong and the right of the relation. Love before marriage is forced to be considerate, and naturally takes a noble tone. Love after marriage is supposed to be quite another thing, as regards a chief feature of the union, and too commonly sinks at once to a level which is far more of the flesh than of ideal truth.

Possibly one party consents as much as the other, and neither may be conscious, as the tone of mutual relations ceases to be divine, what it is which is at fault. The man perhaps contents himself with such gratification as his lower nature finds, and lets the hope of sacrament go as a dream of his days of inexperience. In some of these instances, possibly, — perhaps in many of them, — the woman also accepts the low view, though we would fain believe that in most cases of the class in point, the wife barely submits to the situation, even if she do not revolt against it.

On the supposition that ignorance of the real laws of marriage is the main occasion of this failure of wedlock to be nobly happy, and that, while the woman is generally the greater sufferer, one party is no more to blame than the other, the case is yet terribly bad; bad for the husband, who fails of true manly love and loses the blessing of

true response to such love; worse still for the wife, whose womanhood is abased and degraded, if not outraged: and most of all bad for the children, who are not born under influences of natural holiness and genuine pure happiness, but come as incidents, if not as untoward accidents, of the united life.

The lazy acquiescence of social and religious sentiment in this state of things; the assumption that the animal aspects of human nature must present some such picture at the best; and the rigor and fury even with which formal marriage, the outward fact without the real, is insisted on as a fit cloak to these uncomely doings, ought to cover our civilization and our Christianity with overwhelming confusion and shame. The fact is that even decent society is but half civilized, and is very little Christianized, in this matter of marriage.

But the state of things just described is by no means the worst which the student of society will find. Numbers of husbands in every community stand at a much lower level than that we have been considering; the level, we blush to say, of irresponsible brutalism. The masculine instinct for exclusive possession of the object of affection is naturally very strong. It easily becomes fierce. And when the husband's interest in virtue is chiefly the result of this instinct, and he erects his jealousy into absolute law, we behold a very peculiar, and often very dreadful transformation of wedlock, under which the only sacredness recognized is that of the husband's right to possession of the woman bound to him by marriage vows. By this theory of marriage one woman is devoted to one man, made his sacred property, and placed under absolute and awful obligations to be his without reserve or remedy until death end the service. It is assumed that a man may so have one woman, if he will get her and keep her under the sanction of a marriage compact. It is even claimed that this right of the man to the woman, of the male to the female, is one of the most sacred rights of existence; so that no fouler crime can be than to interfere with the exercise of this right. A perfectly savage virtue watches against the violation of this law of the conjugal possessor's right. No regard for the woman, not even of a coarse and common sort, enters into it. She may be a crushed victim of the most brutal abuse, but the "laws of marriage" are still supposed to protect her tyrant's right to have and to hold her as his own. The worst forms of crime against woman outside of marriage, are held of no account compared with touching a woman to the injury of the man's right to her. Numberless sad and dreadful incidents of

wicked undoing of woman will pass without notice, but report one deliverance of an outraged, broken-hearted wife, out of the power of a brutal master, and the whole herd of virtuous human brutes is thrilled with righteous indignation.

It was this virtuous brutalism which lately delivered an assassin from the deserved penalty of manifold infamous crime. The hesitation of wise and just representatives of public virtue and exponents of public opinion, to lay bare the ingrained rascality of the virtue fiercely paraded on this occasion, shows how little courage for the just comprehension of the matter has been cultivated by our civilization. In the one man who had so cheerfully risked his life, and more than his life, his good name,—and had lost one if not both,—to render help to a helplessly outraged woman, there was more clear insight and spotless courage, with one dash of rashness, as the bravest spirits almost always have it, than in a regiment of those who lent the countenance of their concern for the laws of marriage to the brute and assassin over whom a court of pretended justice made villainous mockery of law.

It is possible to make excuses for the lamentable failure of well-meaning members of society to be found on the side of justice, by the side of a worse than murdered woman. It is also possible to give an explanation of the mad concourse and mad clamor of the virtuous rabble, whose fierce rage blazed so hotly around the altars of unholy brutalism, as if in real defence of some sacred right. These masters of a servitude more dreadful than any other known to human experience, with their deluded sympathizers among women, are natural enough results of the lower tendencies of human nature, or of extreme ignorance, and the prevalence of a tradition which lacks both the doctrine and the spirit of adequate justice to woman. The influence of Hebrew heathenism, coming through the channel which also brought the best lessons of religion and humanity, has made Christian society an easy refuge for the hideous wrong we are contemplating. Ample explanation of this monstrous failure of justice and departure from truth, will not be far to seek as long as accredited Christianity, in the name of a half-heathen tradition, forbids and resists free inquiry for the truth, and proceeds upon the twofold assumption that man is by nature base, and his lower instincts unclean at best, and that righteousness cannot come in men's lives and character by actual discipline and culture, but must come as a cloak of imputed merit. In like manner, excuses for timid inhuman-

ity, for total failure of comprehension, such as were pointed at by Jesus in the priest and Levite who "passed by on the other side," are close at hand. It is much easier and safer not to meddle with wounded folk, of any of the classes against whom popular prejudice is virulent. A wife left half dead, under the operation of a brutal interpretation of the laws of marriage, will get little or no sympathy from the ordinary administrators of religion and guardians of social order.

The instances of Mrs. Stowe and Mr. Beecher may be cited, particularly in view of their final judgments pronounced in *The Christian Union* of June 18. If the latter yielded to a just request and a generous sympathy, when he assisted at the death-bed marriage, he evidently came to regret afterwards that he did not pass virtuously by on the other side. In "The Meaning of the Verdict," the leading article of *The Christian Union* of June 18, he disavowed any Christianity he may have shown before, and summed up the case for brutalism. We omit names, in quoting Mr. Beecher's cold, barbarous homily, because we cannot join in any unnecessary rudeness to the persons on one side of the case, and will not pollute our pages with the names on the other side. Mr. Beecher says,—

"Whether — was worse or better than the average of his journalistic friends—whether the unhappy woman who has assumed his name is a pattern of all wifely virtues; whether — was in the habit of drinking to excess, and whether, being a drunkard, he was more or less an affliction to his wife than drunken husbands generally are to their wives, are questions which need not be agitated further. Higher and wider than all such debates about persons is the question, *What is the Meaning of the Verdict?* . . . It was as clear a case of killing with deliberate intention and with no other warrant than private vengeance, as ever was submitted to a jury. But the verdict was 'Not Guilty.' What does that verdict mean? . . . Just what was meant by that famous verdict in another case, often quoted but not found in the books, 'Served him right.' The phrase, 'Not Guilty,' in this case, means not that — did not kill —, but that he ought not to be punished for that killing. The lesson of the verdict is that any man who has as much reason as — had to believe that his wife has been seduced from her fidelity to him, has a right to do what — did. . . *The law is that an adulterer may be punished with death, at the discretion and by the hands of the injured husband.*"

We are not at a loss to characterize the assumptions and the significance of this statement. It means the sacred right of brutalism, and it assumes the indifference of all other facts in comparison with

the crime of delivering a woman from a brute. No need to ask out of what hell the woman fled, or from what fiend she was protected, or with what heroism of sanctity that protection was given, the one important fact being that a brutal man was deprived of his victim, and the one sacred law being that such interference with marital brutality may be punished by summary assassination. Mr. Beecher appears to dreadful disadvantage in this justification of horrible manifold crime. Had he been a vindicator of the New York negro riots, and appealed to law in justification of Kuklux outrage, we might have been prepared for the present lapse from manly mercy, considerate justice, large comprehension of principle, and fearless devotion to holiness and truth.*

Mrs. Stowe went to no such extreme, in the judgment which she pronounced. In fact she condemned with as little harshness, and as much womanly sympathy and Christian charity, as possible. But she condemned. In her article mentioned above, she brought in the case under cover of an elaborate exposition of Christ's treatment of a woman "convicted of adultery." From that she argued to this case "of a woman not guilty of this offence," and announced that she saw "only evidence that a much tried woman in circumstances of great hardship and perplexity has in certain respects lamentably erred in judgment." She then instantly turned away from the woman before her, to loudly profess her concurrence with "the sensitiveness of the community in regard to the enduring sacredness of the marriage bond," and her opinion that the "whole domain of marriage ought to be guarded by laws as inflexible as those of nature," and that individuals on whom "they bear severely," "must be content to suffer for the good of the whole." At most she only asked that the judges of her sister consider, that under extreme tortures "principle often may become bewildered, and even religious faith may give out," and that they temper judgment as Christ tempered the sentence of the woman "convicted of adultery."

The offensive association of her sister with the adulteress, the comprehensive approval of the concern about marriage, which lent so much support to an assassin, and even gave *eclat* to the last crime of a human brute, and the rigorous demand for inflexible protection to every species of conjugal right, suffer who may thereby, enabled Mrs.

* Mr. Parker said of Mr. Beecher, in connection with the John Brown affair, "Beecher showed that part of him which is Jesuitical,—not so small a part as I could wish it was. How ridiculous of Sharpe's-rifle Beecher to be preaching such stuff at this time; but he can't stand up straight unless he have something as big as the Plymouth Church to lean against."—*Parker's Life and Correspondence*. London Ed., Vol. II., p. 394.

Stowe to fully save her credit with the worst exponents of brutalism, and completely undo any purpose she may have had to speak a word of justice, mercy, and holiness on behalf of her sister. Using three-fourths of her two columns to come to the point that this woman to-day was not an adulteress, and almost all the rest of her article to protest her own desire that marriage should be chains and slavery to all who find it unhappy, she barely gave a few lines to a half-plea for the outraged sister on whose behalf she purported to speak.

Yet this same Mrs. Stowe lately served to two continents a nauseous tale of horrible abomination, polluting men's and women's thoughts, as far as our language is read, with needless mention of nameless crime, and has not to this day betrayed the smallest regret for her deed. Does it make so much difference on which side popular taste and prejudice are? The same Mrs. Stowe, in her "Old Town Folks," gave the pure young girl of the story to a libertine, who had long had an unwedded but devoted wife; and when this wronged woman came upon the scene, within a few hours after her betrayer's new marriage, and all the facts of her love and surrender and fidelity were before the new bride, the latter saw no wrong whatever in taking from her outcast sister her all, and felt no hesitation in consummating wedlock with a convicted villain, because,—as Mrs. Stowe makes her say,—"*I cannot help loving him*; it is my duty to; I promised, you know, before God, 'for better for worse'; and what I promised I must keep; I am his wife; there is no going back from that." The young lover of this second wife of a bigamist, took his lady's fate patiently, and at the end of four years received her, then a widow, as his bride.

Such admirable patience with bad men's triumphs, and such consent of women to outrage under decent cover of regular marriage, was the lesson with which Mrs. Stowe left us at the close of "Old Town Folks." Her woman's instincts made no plea for a creature wronged as much as woman could be wronged. Testifying that this rejected woman had shown "all the single-hearted fervor of a true wife"; that she had taken her position from "a full and conscientious belief that the choice of the individuals alone constituted a true marriage"; that her betrayer had urged this view and "assumed and acted with great success the part of the moral hero during their early attachment"; that she "fell by her higher nature," believing that "she was acting heroically and virtuously in sacrificing her whole life to her lover," and that "her connection had all the sacredness of marriage"; testifying these things, and making the new wife confess, "I

can see in all a noble woman, gone astray from noble motives; I can see that she was grand and unselfish in her love, that she was perfectly self-sacrificing"; Mrs. Stowe yet permitted no one to even suggest that this woman had the smallest right to the man whom she had so given herself to for years, and to whom she had borne what was to her at least a child of pure love. Taking care to interpose a marriage *ceremony*, that and nothing more, Mrs. Stowe showed us the libertine of her tale, in the presence of the two wives, the one bound to him by years of "single-hearted fervor of a true wife," and still loving him with "full and conscientious belief" that theirs was a "true marriage," and the other bound to him only by the ceremony of a few hours before; and made the former admit, and the other claim, that the ceremony had created a relation compared with which the relation based on actual wifehood of love and life need not be so much as considered. And the new wife gave this reason first of all for keeping the other woman's husband, "*I cannot help loving him,*" and then supported herself by: "it is my duty to; I promised, you know, before God."

We have very small respect indeed for anything Mrs. Stowe may say after *choosing* such a picture with which to conclude her tale of Old New England. And until such leaders of opinion in ethics and religion, as Henry Ward Beecher and Mrs. Stowe, learn to respect realities of truth, at least as much as they do mere forms, and are neither unable nor afraid to look at the real facts of tragic lives, and to declare for justice and holiness, at any cost whatever to decent shams, popular religion and popular ethics will be despicable. We deem it shameful in Mr. Beecher that he dared cheer the heart of a *hellion* with words of downright approval. We utterly refuse to Mrs. Stowe the privilege of making any apology for a woman whose errors of judgment do not do her a hundredth part of the discredit which the author of the Byron scandal has justly earned. The theory assumed in the closing scene of "Old Town Folks," that wifehood is nothing compared with legal marriage, that a woman may take her sister woman's actual husband, if that sister woman has had no *legal* sanction of the marriage, and *she* can get the man under legal sanction, is infinitely more immoral than any possible lack of respect for *formal* marriage. The duty of holiness and fidelity in all actual union, is the profound truth on this subject. Until Mrs. Stowe appreciates it she had as well not meddle with any important aspects of the woman question. We speak thus strongly with great regret,

because we would gladly see, and celebrate, in Mrs. Stowe, insight and courage worthy of a woman of marked ability and character. But at this juncture, we cannot forbear strong speech, remembering as we do a spotless man dead, and a spotless woman living "at the sepulchre," while Mrs. Stowe only ventures to beg the brutalism of our time to consider that these two did not commit adultery.

At present we do the persons just mentioned, one of whom is beyond reach of either praise or blame, the honor to assume as self-evident at this moment, to any decently informed person, that they stand high above any judgment which their generation may pronounce upon them, the one for heroic womanly endurance of brutalism, out of far more than just respect for the supposed "laws of marriage," and the other for heroic manly obedience to simple dictates of mercy and honor, with a most exact and noble sense of the sacredness of womanhood and of the absolute sanctity of true marriage. It may be our privilege at a future time to add some contribution to the evidence which has already forced this verdict upon the purest and most thoughtful of our contemporaries. We content ourselves now with emphasizing, as fully as we can, our declaration, that brutalism ought not to find shelter under the laws of marriage; that any decent delivery of a woman from brutalism is just and right; and that the instance now awaiting the decision of our social philosophy can not possibly be brought under any other head than that of perfectly fit, and strikingly noble, delivery of an exceptionally pure and true woman from a brute. The question how far legal and conventional supports of brutalism were rashly overleaped, in the crisis and catastrophe of this drama, need not be answered, before pronouncing the actors in the scene immaculate, and cannot be answered in any such way as to raise any just doubt of their perfect purity of purpose. Furthermore, it becomes all, who seek a wise solution of our social perplexities, and hope for more truth of character and life in the most important of human relations, to distinctly advise the undisguised exponents of virtuous brutalism—the editor of the *New York Sun*, for example; that they can only render themselves infamous by such criticisms and reports as they were guilty of during the late trial.

DR. J. F. CLARKE AGAINST THEISM.

THE American Unitarian Association has recently published a small book, from the pen of Dr. James Freeman Clarke, entitled, "Steps of Belief, or, Rational Christianity maintained against Atheism, Free Religion, and Romanism." Like the previous theological work of the same author, "Steps of Belief" is in some respects excellent, in others very unsatisfactory. We forbear criticism of many points which invite it, and merely consider Dr. Clarke's attempt to elevate his sort of Christianity at the expense of "pure Theism," which is to us true Christianity.

It would not be unfair to ask, in view of the title above quoted, whether Dr. Clarke objects to freedom or to religion itself, and if to neither, as he would doubtless reply, why to the combination? But we may take him in hand quite as well from another point of view. He identifies free religion and theism. "The second step of belief," he says, "is from theism to Christianity." The advocates of free religion, he tells us, "deny that Christianity is any advance beyond theism." And in chapter third of this portion of his book he attempts to "show wherein Christianity is an advance on pure theism." Of course we may inquire what objection he makes to theism? Or to put the matter more clearly, why does he deem faith in God through Christ better than direct faith in God? It must be because Christ is more to him as a direct object of faith, than God. But he makes Christ a mere man, at most "a perfect man." He must, therefore, in his theism, make very little of God, as a direct object of faith, if he goes upward from religion towards God directly, to religion towards God through Christ. And since his "rational Christianity" is only religion towards God through a man, it must be regarded as a species of idolatry, like the Romanist's devotion to the Virgin Mary.

To show Dr. Clarke's method of comparing theism and Christianity, we may cite the following statement:

"In all the dimensions of space [depth, height, breadth, length] we find in Christianity something in advance of theism. It is deeper in its life, higher in its aspiration, broader in its sweep, more far reaching in its perpetual advance." P. 166.

This is arbitrary assertion. What is deeper than the life of God, or higher than the thought of God, or broader than the love of God, or more far-reaching than eternal union with God?

Another specimen of Dr. Clarke's treatise will show from how low a theism he steps up to the level which he deems the highest Christian ground. Thus he says :

"Theism reasons about God ; Christianity lives from him and to him. Theism gives us speculations and probabilities ; Christianity, convictions and realities. . . Theism says light is the life of men ; Christianity declares that life is the light of men." Pp. 143, 144.

If this means anything, it is, that direct faith in God is mere doubtful talk, by which a man cannot live, while faith in God through the man, Christ, is a deep and real life for the soul. All which we set down as Dr. Clarke's opinion, and are sorry that he did not take more of a step when he undertook to rise from atheism to theism.

Another bit of Dr. Clarke's argument is as follows :

"The apostles of free religion take more pleasure in standing apart, to think ; than in coming together, to live. . . If thought could ever become a fountain of life, it would have done so in the case of Socrates. . . But, though always seeking he seldom found." Pp. 147, 148.

Doubtless Dr. Clarke tells us here what he supposes true, about the thinkers and their Greek master, and believes that he has done them justice. He seems to have known Socrates and free thought only by vague heresay, and to have spoken out of the entire honesty of entire ignorance. As, however, he is arguing down "pure theism," or pure direct faith in God, he might have remembered, without knowing anything at all about the apostles of free religion and Socrates, that the point to be made was, that simple direct faith in God makes men lonely and barren thinkers, while faith in God through the man, Christ, makes them sympathetic and fruitful believers. Will he venture to assert this ?

Dr. Clarke appears to be profoundly ignorant of the true method and matter of that pure direct faith in God, which constitutes the life and power of pure theism. He gets hold of a sentence of Rev. Samuel Johnson, or an affirmation of Rev. Mr. Abbot, and deals with it as if in it he saw the necessary measure of pure theism, and limit of free religion. He catches a mere glimpse of Socrates, and talks of the master of Plato, and the most fruitful teacher of all time, as if he would have been better for some instruction in a Sunday School. Of the range, the richness, and the living power of true thought of God, or indeed of thought at all, he seems to have no conception. With him to think means to puzzle over dark enigmas ; and to think of God

to chop logic with the scholastics. His idea of religion by direct faith in God, as in pure theism, is, that it is not religion, but a mere vain attempt at religion.

In order to do Dr. Clarke's Jesuism no injustice, we will now quote at length several of his statements :

"Christianity is an historic religion, with a Founder, a church or communion, with its sacred books, its rites and ceremonies, its faith and its morality. These doctrines, worship, books, church, and morals, all have the historic person of Jesus for their centre and source. Theism, or Free Religion, on the contrary, is a system of belief and method of life which grows up in the human mind, independently of any such historic source, proceeding only from the soul itself. P. 141. Christianity is essentially a stream of spiritual, moral, and intellectual life, proceeding from Jesus of Nazareth. He did not present it as an intellectual system, but it overflowed from his lips in his daily intercourse with men. He did not speak from his speculation, but from his knowledge. He spoke what he knew, and testified what he had seen. This living knowledge created like conviction in other minds. The truth was its own evidence. Man needs this knowledge. We need to know God, not merely to think it probable that he exists. We need to live in the light of his truth and his love. We do not get this knowledge of God by reading books of theology, but by communion with those who have it. If we have any such faith in God, how did we first obtain it. We caught it as a blessed contagion, from the eyes and lips, the words freighted with conviction, the actions inspired by its force, of those who have been themselves filled with its power. They too usually have received it from others; though afterwards it may have been fed by direct communion with God. It is a transmitted as well as an inspired life. . . The deeper, purer, loftier they [the great modern prophets] are, the more do they love to trace back the great master-impulse to Jesus of Nazareth. 'Of his fullness have we all received,' say they, 'and grace upon grace.' . . Abandon this current, . . and God becomes an opinion; duty, a social convenience; immortality, a perhaps. Pp. 145, 146. The doctrines of the incarnation and the atonement have always been the pivots of Christian theology. The incarnation means, God descending into the soul of one man to make all humanity divine, to unite earth with heaven, time with eternity, man with God. The elevation of the human race, so justly dear to the modern theist, is made possible by this great providential event in human history. By the law of mediated life, God is lifting humanity to himself, and penetrating the boundless variety of his creation with as pervasive a unity. . . Those who were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Jesus. His death and resurrection have set the seal on this great atoning work, which is as effective now to create love to God and to man as it was in the beginning. Pp. 154, 155. God comes near to the soul in Jesus Christ; through Jesus Christ our sense of sin is taken away; through Christ, mortal fears are replaced by an immortal hope. . . To adhere to Jesus as the Christ of God, is the very root of Christian experience. Pp.

156, 157. Love to Christ is the method of progress, the law of freedom, the way to knowledge, and the unchecked impulse to God. P. 166. The one great outward proof that Jesus was thus the Christ of humanity, the ordained Leader of the human race to God and to each other, is found in his resurrection. . . When Jesus appeared to die, he did not die; he remained alive. When he seemed to go down, he did not go down; he went up. When he seemed to go away, he did not go away; he remained. . . The objections to this view are chiefly *a priori* and metaphysical. Pp. 114 and 115.

Dr. Clarke appears to believe in a strict external system of tradition and belief, the only channel through which life can come from God to human souls, and that system he sums up in the "Lord Jesus Christ," whom he yet regards as a mere man,* but "a *perfect specimen of the human race.*"

Freedom dies in the presence of such a fact, if it be a fact, and religion equally sinks into nothing with no other direct object of faith than "a perfect specimen of the human race." And seeing the utter absurdity of taking the historic Jesus as this "perfect specimen," the thoughtful believer must find himself worshipping towards a very poor idol if he attempt to follow the instruction of Dr. Clarke.

This conception of a historic religion, with the historic person of Jesus for its centre and source, and distinguished from religion born in the soul under influences not external and historic, logically points to an infallible church,—to Romanism in fact. Dr. Clarke puts historical *human* transmission above providential *divine* instruction and inspiration, and, therefore, leaves little room to question that the most direct and largest historical human result of original Jesuism must be the true faith.

Moral, intellectual and spiritual life comes to us, Dr. Clarke says, from the man, Jesus, a contagion caught from his person and life by the first disciples, and historically transmitted. The comprehensive teaching of theism, that God himself, by perfectly adequate means, instructs and inspires and disciplines his moral creatures, and so directly conveys to them the gift of his own eternal life, Dr. Clarke considers a baseless theory, the delusion of certain absurd people who "stand apart to think," and who "even prefer speculation to knowledge." Instead of accepting the theistic doctrine of incarnation, the universal saving presence of God in all souls, he asserts that God descended "into the soul of one man," and that "the elevation of the human race is made possible by this great providential event."

* "We agree with the Naturalists, that Christ was a pure man, and not superhuman." P. 133.

And not only does he thus deny the universal providence and inspiration of God, and reduce the Almighty to dependence upon a Galilean youth for effective communication with and control of the human race, but he appears to adopt the wretched superstition that "the blood of Jesus" is the agency through which God must reach man.

Neither NATURE, whose suggestions are so varied, so quickening, and so universal; nor the universal PROVIDENCE of human events, which speaks so clearly, so fully, and so powerfully to the thoughtful student of human life and human history; nor the unceasing INSPIRATION which floods the understanding and heart of man, and marvellously guides the seekers of all the world into one simple faith in God, are anything to Dr. Clarke, so absorbed is he with worship through his man-image of God. Omit to look on this image, he says, and "God becomes an opinion; duty, a social convenience; immortality, a perhaps."

That it is so to him, we do not doubt. We endeavor to accept his assertion that he knows no other root of Christian experience than adherence to Jesus; that the death and resurrection of Jesus, alone or chiefly, induce him to love God and man; and that the proof to him that this is the true way, he finds in the resurrection of Jesus. Such external construction of religion, and such reference of its power to *human* facts, are doubtless undertaken by Dr. Clarke in good faith. He undoubtedly believes theological science need say no more than that Jesus went up when he went down, and that the objections to this view are chiefly *a priori* and metaphysical.

The Christianity which Dr. Clarke sets up against Theism, is not Christian, but Jesuit. Christian religion knows no other object of faith than God, the "Our Father" of the prayer of Jesus. The Jesuism which makes Jesus an object of religious faith is pseudo-Christian. That Jesuism which makes Jesus very God, has some claims to be considered religion. But that which makes him, as Dr. Clarke's does, a mere "perfect specimen of a man," is no religion at all; it is mere hero-worship. And that in fact Dr. Clarke labors to establish, the worship of Jesus as a hero. For ourselves, we decline, equally in the name of religion and of Christian teaching, to adopt the confused sentimentalism of Dr. Clarke's method, and the feeble Jesuism of his conclusions. We believe in GOD.

THE UNITARIAN SITUATION.

I.—MR. HEPWORTH RELIEVES HIMSELF.

"There are times when one must relieve himself or die," said Rev Geo. H. Hepworth, in the meeting, last May, of the American Unitarian Association. The Secretary of the Association, Rev. Charles Lowe, had presented an admirable paper, justifying the general Unitarian determination to do without a creed, and to depend on the spirit and the life as a basis of union, when Mr. Hepworth came forward, regardless of the general disapproval of his intention, to move for a committee to prepare an "as-nearly-as-may-be" representative statement of faith of the Unitarian denomination, and said, "Your frequent applause (of Mr. Lowe's address) did not daunt my determination to speak because *there are times when one must relieve himself or die.*" Of course Mr. Hepworth could not be expected to assume that the Unitarian body would prefer the other alternative; so he proceeded to relieve himself. The gist of his demand he thus expressed, —

"I want that there shall be a definite signification attached to the word 'Unitarianism.' . . . The thing it seems to me is demanded; demanded *now*, or else we, I honestly believe, as a denomination, go under. . . . The next two years will settle, I honestly believe, the fate of the Unitarian denomination. . . . I want a statement of the average views of the Unitarian denomination, . . . something with the endorsement of the Unitarian denomination upon it."

How this authoritative statement of faith should relieve Mr. Hepworth, our readers may not quite understand. It seems, however, that he expected it to be good for his back. "Give me," he said, "a single Unitarian document, that I can put my back against." How desperate he considered his need of a document to put his back against, may be judged from his concluding sentence, — "It is a small thing to ask for, yet I cannot get it, I suppose, but I want to give you notice I am not exactly down, and I am going to keep this thing going until I do get it."

Theodore Parker said of Mr. Hepworth, — "Hepworth would make a powerful preacher, if he did not drown his thought in a Dead Sea of words. What a pity! You don't want a drove of oxen to drag a cart-load of potatoes on a smooth road." This criticism was provoked by the earliest failure of Mr. Hepworth's back, when he withdrew from an engagement to speak at a meeting held in Boston to express

sympathy with the family of John Brown, because he found it would not be considered decent for him to take 'the other side.' Mr. Hepworth has needed something to put his back against ever since John A. Andrew, in that great meeting, said that he had supposed there was but one side to the question of sympathy with the family of the Harper's Ferry martyr.

It appears, from Mr. Hepworth's speeches on the subject, that he has made "a document" himself, and has found it useful in bringing inquirers into the Unitarian fold. He tells us that a similar document, endorsed by the denomination, would double the number of Unitarians in less than five years, and that without it Unitarianism will "go under" within two years.

The simple meaning of this is that Mr. Hepworth is a prodigious egotist, who is of late ambitious to appear as the maker of the denominational creed. He has no idea whatever of accepting any statement other than his own. His demand is that Unitarianism endorse *his* document. This demand he presses with stupid insolence, imagining that he will be sustained because his document is conservative. Originally belonging to the radical wing of Unitarianism, and now a self-appointed leader of the right wing, he has but one leading aim, to push himself. This aim he follows with insane disregard of all the decencies of the matter. We regret the necessity of speaking so harshly, but feel that we ought to say more rather than less of this ecclesiastical charlatan. The recent overturning of the *Liberal Christian* was his work, done in a spirit and with a purpose which ought to exclude him from the confidence of every honest and honorable member of the Unitarian body.

II.—ROBERT COLLYER'S "AMEN" TO HEPWORTH.

The concurrence of Rev. Robert Collyer with Mr. Hepworth's demand for an authoritative statement of faith, caused a great deal of surprise. Mr. Collyer said, in support of Mr. Hepworth, —

"His feeling about some statement that we could use when we stand up and preach, has been my feeling too. . . I felt like saying, Amen, to the gist of his proposition, and wanted to feel that I stood with him. . . My reason for it is exactly the same as that which he has given as his primary reason. . . Letters and requests in person come to me continually, like this, 'Cannot you give us something that bears the stamp of authority from your body?' It should be no test of fellowship to bar any man out, . . and if next year

we find that it does not express the honest religious faith of our body, it shall be altered, . . . and made to express then what new light may have come to us from above."

This was again explained by Mr. Collyer, in one of the meetings of the Western Conference in June, after some one had suggested that his creed should be stamped, as railroad tickets are, "good for this day only." Mr. Collyer then said, —

"If we can present this thing to the inquiring mind as the statement of five hundred intelligent Unitarians, it will have a good deal more weight than the statement of any single individual, that is all I ever meant."

It seems incredible that Mr. Collyer should not see that the stamp of external authority must injure rather than help the force of truth. Inquiry has developed no principle more important than this, that truth stands best on its own evidence, and always loses when made to rest on an authority outside of itself. If Mr. Collyer wants to employ, in preaching, a statement bearing the stamp of authority, he wants to use a purely and strictly orthodox method, in place of the liberal method. The latter invariably says, 'examine and judge for yourselves what is true,' and it scrupulously avoids introducing any pressure of authority. The orthodox method appeals to authority, and largely succeeds in preventing inquiry. It would be a bastard liberalism which should admit the use of this appeal to authority. Any real success in such appeal, would be an encroachment of mischief of the most serious and dangerous sort. And not merely would actual free inquiry be checked, but all freedom to inquire will be put in peril. It is a purely chimerical expectation that possessors of authority would use it for instruction of inquirers only, and not for judgment on doubt and denial. At this moment the Unitarian body, as organized in the National Conference, lends its authority to the dogma of the lordship of Jesus, as thorough a superstition and yoke of heathenism as was ever fastened upon men's minds by religion, and this creed is used as a test, a rule of judgment, and law of condemnation.

But if the idea of using authority without abusing it were not a delusion and a snare, it would be worse than useless to attempt to influence inquirers by means of an endorsed statement of faith. There may be single instances now and then of inquirers foolish enough to give weight to such a creed, but in general any such attempt to urge doctrines on the ground that they had been endorsed by "five hundred intelligent Unitarians," or by five hundred thousand even, would at

once raise suspicion and provoke contempt. The evidences for important truths, apart from ordinary human endorsement, are so significant and decisive, and the fact of ordinary human endorsement is, in itself, so insignificant and inconclusive, that a religious teacher could hardly do a worse thing than to confess that he depended at all on the fact that his sect had voted the creed he urged. The power, either for good or for evil, of such a vote, is over those who are already within the connection. In general it is a power of tyranny and outrage upon dissenting members of the fellowship. At least it is not a power of persuasion with outside inquirers.

Granting, however, that there would be no tyranny in voting a denominational creed, and that it might be possible to use such a creed with good effect, it still remains, and always must remain, that a Unitarian statement of faith is as impossible as a Unitarian Pope. The fact which causes so many questions as to the beliefs of Unitarians, — which occasions so many to ask, “What *do* Unitarians believe?” — is a fact which ought to show Mr. Collyer the utter absurdity of talking about a Unitarian statement of faith. Twenty decidedly different and distinct statements would not represent Unitarianism. Unitarianism is like our national union; it is a union of individuals, each independent and sovereign in respect to certain most important matters, while owing allegiance to the common fellowship for certain other matters. What Mr. Lowe, the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, calls “the spirit and the life,” is the basis of union in the Unitarian body. With reference to beliefs, the rule is *liberty and diversity*, “every man fully persuaded in his own mind,” “every one of us give account of himself to God,” and “every man receive his own reward according to his own labor.” The one great principle, which has given life and honor to Unitarianism, has been this recognition of the duty of individual persuasion, and the liberty of individual difference, in the matter of beliefs. And he must be exceedingly heedless of facts which are patent to every observer, who forgets that the Unitarian body now embraces a great diversity of beliefs, and can no more be represented by one statement of special beliefs than the different states of our Union could be represented by one political creed, except as to certain very general principles. *The* representative statement of Unitarianism is its immortal declaration of liberty and diversity. The demand for any other representative statement, — for any sort of statement of beliefs, — assumes that Unitarianism, founded in liberty, has been so far a comprehensive error.

It is undeniable, however, that the votes of the National Conference, affirming the "lordship of Jesus," have created an official Unitarianism, a Unitarian ecclesiasticism, *not* founded on the principle of liberty and diversity, but based, as strictly as any sect in the world, on a creed, and that creed a contemptible superstition. The lordship of Jesus, in any Unitarian sense, is nondescript. It is anything but religious and Christian. If it can be assumed that Jesus is very God, the lordship of Jesus is religious. Deny that he is God, and the assertion of his lordship drags that grand term *The Lord* from its only true Christian significance, and makes it a cover for putting into offices of Deity one who confessedly is not God. Taken alone, as the one article of a creed, and the single foundation stone of an ecclesiasticism, the lordship of Jesus, in any or all of the Unitarian senses, is the most beggarly, the narrowest, and most barren creed ever devised. The day when this creed, which has no iota of religion in it, but is purely a partisan watchword, was adopted, and the other days on which it was re-affirmed, each time against protest as distinct and vigorous as outrage ever provoked, were days of shameful treason to the genius of the Unitarian movement.

Many years since, the Rev. Dr. Eliot, of St. Louis, an excellent man in his way, but something of a pope, and an apologist for slavery during the days of Anti-Slavery excitement, *seceded* from the Western Unitarian Conference, because that body adopted some resolution of sympathy with the cause of the slave. Not only did he go out in wrath, but he never returned. This Dr. Eliot was unfortunately named on the original committee appointed to prepare a constitution for the National Unitarian Conference, and he it was who demanded the lordship-of-Jesus basis, against the judgment of the committee, and who compelled its insertion by threatening *secession!* This *playing pope* on the part of one man was the original occasion of giving to the conference a dogmatic basis.

The wrong could not have been consummated, however, had not Dr. Bellows espoused it, and carried it through in a spirit even worse than that in which it was conceived, a spirit at once of treason and of anger. Dr. Bellows had given pledges, as distinct and full as could be asked, which required him to exclude dogma from the basis of the Conference, and to respect without qualification the principle of liberty and diversity. These pledges he disregarded, as recklessly as if honor were but a name, when he consented to meet Dr. Eliot's demand, and to report a basis for the Conference, which asserted the

lordship of Jesus. And when he encountered resistance to his plan, he took a high tone, the tone of a pope, and gave way to bad temper besides, as if it were but right for him to visit the anger of an offended pope on his radical brethren. These are the simple facts in regard to the creed adopted by the National Conference. Drs. Eliot and Bellows originally forced that creed upon the Conference, in a way not one whit better than that of Pope Pius at Rome. Mr. Hepworth brings forward his creed, because he thinks *he* can play pope.

That Mr. Collyer should lend his support to so palpable an iniquity, is as sad as it is surprising, whether we consider his own good name as a teacher of religion, or the influence he can exert. It would seem as if he must have seen enough of Unitarianism to show him that wide diversities exist in it, such as will always make people ask, "What *do* Unitarians believe?" and will forever render it impossible to answer this inquiry by any *one* statement of faith. Does Mr. Collyer mean to assume that it would be either honest or honorable, or anything better than an outrage and a lie, to put forth *his* creed, or any creed which he could endorse, and say of it, "*This* is what Unitarians believe"? The answer made him in the Western Conference, by a lawyer of high character and sound judgment, "This proposition is a delusion and a humbug," deservedly rebuked his assumption that a creed could be made useful. Let him join in getting one voted, and he will find that he has put his hand to a business which can only end in mischief and shame.

III.—REV. A. D. MAYO SETTLES THE QUESTION.

Rev. A. D. Mayo sustained Mr. Hepworth's demand for a creed, in a very characteristic way. He said:

"Sooner or later we must meet the issue which brother Hepworth has presented; the whole Christian world is looking at us and expecting us to meet it. If we are found skulking, I believe the modern world will just drop us, and we shall be left a little association of independent churches to do anything we have a mind to, but the world will lose all its interest in us, and that will be the end of us"

Mr. Mayo is the most positive and most dismal of Pharisees. Why should a man skulk into a dark closet, he would say, when the universe looks for his appearing at the corner of the street? Why should he forfeit the interest of mankind by sneaking to prayer with the publican, when justification so abundant awaits broad phylacteries and

pompous self-assertion? How absurd and contemptible to content ourselves with devout doing of God's will, when the rewards of "Lord, Lord," are so much more immediate and certain! Blow no trumpet, and let the modern world just drop us? Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God, and that the end of us? Indulge the enthusiasm of humanity and the passion of free communion with God, when seventy sanhedrins of seventy sects already summon us to judgment, and the whole menagerie of inquisitors thirsts to extinguish us? Such, it would seem, is the appeal of Mr. Mayo.

This appeal Mr. Mayo took occasion to vindicate in the meeting of the Western Conference, in an elaborate address on "The Vocation of The Western Unitarian Church." The gist of that address was that Unitarianism has been governed by the rule of liberty long enough, and that it ought now to go back to the old and universal orthodox method, define and adopt an orthodoxy of its own, a fixed correct creed, and work hereafter by means of, and on the basis of, this definite and established creed, excluding further free-thinking, and attempting no further progress.

"Hitherto," he says, "we have had a creed of one article, spiritual freedom, and all our loosely-jointed organization has revolved around that. We have been rather a spiritual exploring expedition on the frontiers of the church than a well defined branch of Christendom." "Liberal Christianity remains," he tells us, "an undefined and diffused spirit of free-thinking, irresponsible as the wind, and vast as the mind of man." Unitarians, again he says, are "an extended picket-line backed by no army," in danger of being "gobbled up and left to pursue their 'scientific religious' investigation inside a spiritual Andersonville, with such comfort as may there be found," which he thinks would be "a sad coming down from our dreams of illimitable and irresponsible individuality." "The Unitarian body," Mr. Mayo declares, "must soon decide this final question: *Is it a Church and a part of Christendom, or is it a dissolving view of spiritual pioneers on the border-land of Christian civilization?* We may indulge in spiritual vagrancy till we lose the confidence of the country, and expectation no longer turns our way. Our widely-roving Unitarian enterprise in the West must consolidate into a number of Christian churches that agree substantially in their understanding of Christianity, their methods for its propagation, their relation to other Christian churches, and their relation to other communities outside of Christian belief. . . . If we decide that we are not a Christian church in this sense, then let us go home, each to his own city or hamlet, and pursue religion on his own account; for the Western people will no longer concern themselves with our existence."

The criticism here made upon the Unitarianism of Dr. Channing and Theodore Parker, that it was indefinite, vagrant, irresponsible, and outside Christian limits; the judgment pronounced upon the historic Unitarian principle of spritual freedom, that it served well enough to organize "spiritual vagrancy" and "general free-thinking" upon, and should now be displaced by the opposite principle, that of dogma and ecclesiasticism; the proposition to consolidate the Unitarian movement into a body of orthodox Unitarian churches; and the reason for doing this, to keep the confidence of the country and the interest of the Western people, and to escape "a spiritual Andersonville,"—these are points of Mr. Mayo's plea which are criticised the moment they are stated.

The two great principles of pure Christian religion, loyalty to God and love to man, are sneered at by Mr. Mayo in this fashion,— "Religion is not solely, or chiefly, an affair between one man and the Power he may choose to call his 'Maker.' . . A Christian church cannot live long on the assertion, it is good to be good; it is lovely to love." Chinese, Hebrews, Mormons, Spiritualists, and Oneida Communists, he says, do as much as that. If we do no more, the Western people will no longer concern themselves with our existence, and that will be the end of us. Could there be a more lamentable infidelity than this? If Mr. Mayo represents anybody but himself, we are sorry for the communion which includes such an element.

IV.—DR. BELLOWS PROTESTS.

It is never possible to tell on which side of the Unitarian question Dr. Bellows will be found. In the Hepworth debate last May, he came out emphatically and eloquently for liberty and diversity. He said that he would not submit his faith to "any statement which the Unitarian body, as such, is prepared to make, or can honestly make, or make without deceiving itself and without deceiving everybody else." He declared that "the Christian religion at this present time needs a body which will restrain itself, and not undertake to bind itself by a positive statement which will strangle its growth. He insisted that Unitarianism must continue to occupy a position of "absolute and perfect liberty." He besought his brethren not to let Robert Collyer's "seductive voice," "incline or seduce you into any falsification of the fundamental principle of our body." "Let every man," he said, "give the best statement he can make, and send it out on its own authority."

Now let Dr. Bellows consent to take the lordship-of-Jesus dogma out of the basis of the National Conference, and Unitarianism may again mean "absolute and perfect liberty," and he cease to be universally known as Mr. Facing-Both-Ways.

HISTORY OF THE DEVIL.

HIS RISE, GREATNESS AND DOWNFALL.

[Translated from the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.]

AMONG the fallen monarchs whom time, yet more than sudden revolutions, has slowly brought down from their thrones, few are there whose prestige has been as imposing and as abiding as that of the king of hell,—SATAN. We can safely employ the expression *fallen* in speaking of him, for those of our contemporaries who yet profess to believe in his existence and power, live just as if they did not believe in them; and when faith and life no longer impress each other, we have a right to say that the former is dead. I speak, of course, of our educated cotemporaries; the others are no longer of account in the history of the human mind. It has seemed to us, too, that it would be interesting to bring together in one view, and to describe in their logical genesis, the transformations and evolutions of belief in the devil. This is almost a biography. An occasion has been furnished us by a recent and remarkable work which we owe to a professor of theology in Vienna.* Notwithstanding some tedious passages, the book of Professor Roskoff is an encyclopædia of everything relating to the matter, and the author will not complain if we borrow freely from his rich erudition.

I.

The origin of belief in the devil is quite remote; and, like that of every belief more or less dualistic, that is to say, based on the radical opposition of two supreme principles, it must be sought in the human mind developing itself in the bosom of a Nature which is sometimes favorable, sometimes hostile, to it. There is a certain relative dualism, an antagonism of the *I* and *not-I*, which reveals itself from the time of man's birth. His first breath is painful, for it makes him cry out. It is through struggles that he learns to eat, to walk, to speak. Later, the effort indispensable to his preservation will reproduce this perpetual struggle under other forms. When the religious sentiment awakens in him and seeks first its object and support in visible nature, he finds himself before phenomena which he personifies; some of which are agreeable and loved, such as the aurora, the fruits of the earth, and the refreshing and fertilizing rain; the others terrifying and dreaded,

* "History of the Devil," by Gustave Roskoff, Professor of the Imperial Faculty of Protestant Theology in Vienna.

like the storm, the thunder, and the night. Hence good and evil deities. As a general rule and by virtue of that simple egotism which characterizes children and the childhood of peoples, the dreaded gods are more worshipped than those worthy of affection, which always do good of themselves and without being entreated. Such is at least the convergent result of the observations of all the travelers who have a near view in either hemisphere of peoples living in a savage state. It is needless to add that their divinities have no moral character properly so called. They do good or evil because their nature is thus, and for no other reason. In that, they only resemble their worshippers. Indeed, man always projects his own ideal upon the divinity which he adores, and, all things considered, it is in this very manner that he comes into possession of all which he can comprehend of divine truth. He always has the feeling that his god is perfect, and that is the essential thing; but the traits of this perfection are always more or less those of his ideal. Some one once asked of two little swine-herds in some remote province of Austria: "What would you do, if you were Napoleon?" "I," said the younger, "would put a whole pot of butter on my bread every morning." "And I," said the other, "would watch my hogs on horseback!" Thus, too, a Bushman, when invited by a missionary, who had tried to give him some notions of morality, to cite some examples showing that he knew how to distinguish good from evil, said: "Evil is other people who come and take my wives; good is me when I take theirs." The gods of savages are necessarily savage gods. They usually have hideous forms, as their worshippers think themselves bound to become hideous to go to battle, or even simply for adornment. To them, the beautiful is the odd and grotesque; the mysterious is the strange, and the strange is the frightful. To our European ancestors, the stranger was at the same time the guest and the enemy. With all due deference to poets, the religion of peoples of this class is tantamount to the adoration of genii or demons of a bad character. When we pass from savage peoples, who live only by hunting and fishing, to shepherds, and especially to agricultural peoples, this adoration of evil deities is no longer as exclusive. Yet we usually find among them the worship of dreaded gods predominant. For example, let us cite only that simple prayer of the Madecassians, who recognize, among many others, two creative divinities: Zamhor, the author of good things, and Nyang, of the bad:

"O Zamhor! we do not pray to thee. Good gods do not want prayers. But we must pray to Nyang. We must appease Nyang. Nyang, wicked and powerful spirit, do not make the thunder roll above our heads! Bid the sea keep its limits. Spare, Nyang, the ripening fruits. Wither not the rice in its flower. Let there be no births in the evil days. Thou knowest the wicked are thine already, and the number of the wicked, Nyang, is great. Then torment no more the good."

It would be easy to multiply facts attesting this characteristic of the religion of primitive peoples, that terror has more to do with their piety than veneration or love. Hence the great number of malevolent beings of the second order which all inferior religions recognize and which are found in the popular superstitions long clinging to religions of a more elevated spiritual

level. In the great mythologies, like those of India, Egypt, or Greece, the apparent dualism of nature is reflected in the distinction between the gods of order and production and those of destruction and disorder. The feeling that order always gains a decisive victory in the battles between the opposing forces of nature, inspires myths like those of Indra the conqueror of the storm-cloud, of Horus avenging his father Osiris, wickedly put to death by Typhon. In developed Brahminism, it is Siva, the god of destruction who concentrates and puts to work the disturbing elements of the universe. Siva is besides the most adored of the Hindoo gods. In Semitic polytheism, dualism becomes sexual, or rather, the sun being always the principal object of adoration, the supreme god is conceived under two forms, the one smiling, the other terrifying, Baal or Moloch.

This double character of the divinities worshipped is not less striking when one studies the most poetical and most serene of polytheisms, that of Greece. Like all the others, its roots go down into the worship of the visible world, but more than elsewhere, unless we should except Egypt, its gods join to their physical nature a corresponding moral physiognomy. They have conquered the agents of confusion which under the names of Titans, Giants, Typhons, threatened established order. They are then the invincible preservers of the regular order of things; but, as, after all, this regular order is far from always conforming itself to the physical and moral well-being of man, the result is that the Greek gods have all, in varied proportion, their amiable and their dark side. For instance, Phœbus Apollo is a god of light, a civilizer, inspirer of arts, refiner of the soil and of souls, and yet he sends the pestilence, is pitiless in his vengeance, and not very prudent in his friendships. One may say as much of his sister Diana, or rather the moon, who is personified now under the enchanting image of a beautiful and chaste maiden, now under the gloomy physiognomy of a Hecate, a Brimo, or an Empusa. The blue mists of the horizon of the sea are at first beautiful blue-birds, then daughters of the wave, admirably beautiful down to the waist, who bewitch navigators with their sweet love songs; but alas for those who allow themselves to be seduced! This physiognomy of mingled good and evil is a common trait of the Hellenic pantheon, and is continuously manifest, from the supreme pair, Jupiter and Hera (Juno) to the under-world couple, Ædoneus or Pluto and his wife the beautiful Proserpine, *the Strangler*.

Latin mythology suggests the same class of reflections, and, in what is peculiarly its own, is still more dualistic than Greek polytheism. It has its Orcus, its Strigae, its Larvae, its Lemures, etc. Slavonic mythology has its white god and its black god. Our Gallic fathers had not very attractive divinities, and the old Scandinavian-Germanic gods unite to valuable qualities defects which render intercourse with them at least difficult. Wherever in our times one has kept a belief in hob-goblins, witches, fairies, sylphs, water-nymphs, we find this same mingling of good and bad qualities. These latter relics of the great army of divinities of the former times are at the same time graceful, attractive, generous when they wish to be, but also capricious, vindictive and dangerous. It is important to regard all these facts in seeking the origin of the devil, for we shall see that he is of compos-

ite order, and that in several of his essential features he is connected with the dark elements of all religions which have preceded Christianity.

There is nevertheless one of these religions, which, in this special point of view, calls for a little more attention to its fundamental doctrines: it is the Zend-Avesta, or, to employ the usual expression, that of the Persians. It is, in fact, in this religion that the divine hierarchy and belief appear under the influence of a systematic dualism applying to the entire world, moral evil included. The gods of light and the gods of darkness share time and space. We do not speak here of Zerwan-Akerene, time without limit, who gave birth to Ahuramazda or Ormuzd, the God of good, and to his brother Ahriman, the God of evil. This is evidently a philosophical notion much more recent than that primitive point of view originating with the Zend religion, which recognizes only two powers equally eternal, continually at strife, meeting for combat on the surface of the earth as well as in the heart of men. Wherever Ormuzd plants the good, Ahriman sows the evil. The story of the moral fall of the first men, due to the perfidy of Ahriman, who took the form of a serpent, presents most striking analogies with the parallel account in Genesis. In regard to that, it has often been alleged that the Bible story of the fall was only borrowed from Persia. This opinion seems to me without good foundation, for in the Iranian myth the genius of evil is considered disguised. In the Hebrew story, on the contrary, it is plainly a serpent which speaks, acts, and brings upon all his progeny the punishment he suffers. We must then allow to this story the merit of superior antiquity, if not in its present, at least in its primitive form. The substitution of a disguised god for a reasoning and speaking animal, denotes reflection unknown to the ages of mythical formation. It was reflection, too, which, in later times, led the Jews to see their Satan under the traits of the serpent of Genesis, although the canonical text is as contrary as possible to that conception. I prefer, then, to regard the two myths, the Hebrew and the Iranian, as two variations, differing in antiquity, of one and the same primitive theme, originating perhaps when the Iranians and the Semites were living together in the shadow of Ararat.

However this may be, the fact yet remains that in the most seriously moral polytheism of the old world, one meets a religious conception which approaches very near to that which Semitic monotheism has bequeathed to us under the name of the devil or Satan. Ahriman, like Satan, has his legions of bad angels which only think of tormenting and destroying mortals. Not alone physical evils, as storms, darkness, floods, diseases and death, are attributed to them; but also evil desires and guilty acts. The good man is consequently a soldier of Ormuzd, under his orders opposing the powers of evil; the wicked is a servant of Ahriman and becomes his instrument. The Zend doctrine taught that at last Ahriman would be conquered and even transformed to good. This latter characteristic distinguishes him favorably from his Judeo-Christian brother; but one may well ask himself here how far this beautiful hope made a part of primitive religion.* Of one thing we

* There have been also theological Christians, like Origen, who believed in the final conversion of Satan.

are certain, that the connection between the Jewish Satan and the Persian Ahriman is very close, and this is only very natural when we think that of all the polytheistic peoples the Persians are the only ones with whom the Jews, emancipated by them from Chaldean servitude, kept up prolonged relations of friendship.

Nevertheless, we shall try to prove false the quite wide-spread opinion which sees in Satan only a transplanting of the Persian Ahriman into the religious soil of Semitism. True, the Jewish and the Christian devil owe much to Ahriman. From the moment when the Jewish Satan makes his acquaintance, he imitates him, he adopts his manners, his morals, his tactics, he establishes his infernal court on the same pattern; in a word, he becomes transformed to his likeness; but he was already existing, though leading an obscure and ill defined life. Let us endeavor to sum up his history in the Old Testament.

The Israelites, as we have shown in a previous article, believed for a long time, with other Semitic peoples, in the plurality of the gods; and the dualism which is found at the bottom of all polytheisms must consequently have assumed among them forms peculiar to the religions of the ethnical group of which they made a part. In proportion as the worship of Jehovah excluded all others, this dualism must change its forms. Believing still in the real existence of the neighboring divinities, such as Baal and Moloch, the fervent adorer of Jehovah must consider these gods immoral, cruel and hostile to the people of Israel, much as people looked upon demons of another age. We may go farther, and surmise some relic of a primitive dualism, or of an opposition between two gods formerly rivals, in that enigmatic being, the despair of exegetes, which, under the name of Azazel, haunts the wilderness, and to whom, on the day of expiation, the high-priest sends a goat on whose head he has put all the sins of the people. Only we must add that in historical times the meaning of this ceremony seems lost even to those who observe it, and there is in reality nothing more opposed to all dualism than the strictly Jehovist point of view. If we except the books of Job, of Zachariah, and of the Chronicles, all three being among the less ancient of the sacred collection, there is not one word said of Satan in the Old Testament, not even,— we repeat it because almost everybody is deceived thereupon, notwithstanding the evidence of the texts,— not even in the book of Genesis. Jehovah, once adored as the only real God, has and can have no competitor. He holds in his hand all the forces, all the energies of the world. Nothing happens, and nothing is done, on the earth, but he wills it; and more than one Hebrew author attributes to him directly, without the least reserve, the inspiring of the errors or faults which were to be attributed at a later period to Satan. Jehovah hardens those whom he wishes to harden; Jehovah strikes down those whom he wishes to strike down, and no one has a right to ask why; but, as he is also believed to be supremely just, it is admitted that, if he hardens the heart of the wicked, it is that they may dig their own graves, and that, if he distributes blessings and evils according to his will, it is to recompense the just and punish the unjust. The Hebrew could not always hold to this notion, too easy in theory, too

often falsified by experience; but he held to it long, as is evident from the class of ideas out of which we see Satan finally born.

Hebrew monotheism did not exclude a belief in celestial spirits, in sons of God (*bene Elohim*), in angels, which were supposed to surround the throne of the Eternal like a Heavenly army. Subject to his orders, executors of his will, they were, so to speak, the functionaries of the divine government. The administering of the punishment or favors of God devolved directly upon them. Consequently there were some whose office inspired more fear than confidence. For instance, it is a spirit sent by God which comes to punish Saul for his misdeeds, by afflicting him with dark thoughts which the harp of David alone succeeds in dissipating. It is an angel of the Eternal that appears to Baalam, with a naked sword in his hand as if to slay him, or which destroys in one night a whole Assyrian army. After a time they distinguished especially an angel which might pass for the personification of a guilty conscience, for he filled, in the celestial court, the special office of accuser of men. Doubtless sovereign justice alone, and in the plenitude of its sovereignty, made the decision, but it was after pleadings in presence of the adverse parties. Now the one whose business it was to proceed against men before the divine tribunal, was an angel whose name of *Satan* signifies an *adversary*, in the judicial as well as the proper sense of this word. Such, indeed, is the Satan of the book of Job, still a member of the celestial court, being one of the sons of God, but having as his special office the 'continual accusation of men,' and having become so suspicious by his practice as public accuser that he believes in the virtue of no one, not even in that of Job the just man, and always presupposes interested motives for the purest manifestations of human piety. We see that the character of this angel is becoming marred, and the history of Job shows that, when he wishes to accomplish the humiliation of a just man, he spares nothing. Satan appears, too, as the accuser of Israel in the vision of Zachariah: (iii. 1.) The result of this peculiar character, and the belief that angels intervene in human affairs, is that Satan had no need of Ahriman in order to be dreaded by the Israelites as the worst enemy of men. From that time, it was common to suspect his artifices in private and national misfortunes. Consequently, the fatal inspirations which previous Jehovism had attributed directly to Jehovah, were henceforth regarded as coming from Satan. We find in the history of king David a curious example of this evolution of religious belief. King David one day conceived the unlucky idea, considered impious even from the theocratic-republican point of view of the prophets of his time, of numbering the people. In regard to this, the second book of Samuel (xxiv. 1) says that God, angry against Israel, incited David to give the orders necessary for this work; on the contrary, the first of Chronicles (xxi. 1), recounting the very same story, begins it in these terms: "Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." Nothing shows better than this comparison, the change that had taken place in the interval between the preparation of the two books. Henceforth the monotheist attributes to the *Adversary* the bad thoughts and the calamities which he had formerly traced directly to God. It is even to be presumed that he

finds some religious comfort in this solution of certain difficulties which must begin to weigh upon him, for, as in proportion as the idea of God becomes higher, people can no longer be contented with the simple theories which could suffice for less reflecting ages.

So we see in the character of adversary of men, of an evil disposed being, of the angel Satan, the origin, properly so called, of the Jewish and Christian devil. We need not then rudely identify him with the more or less wicked divinities of the polytheistic religions. That he has with them affinities which become continually more close, we fully admit; but his appearance is quite distinct, and even had the Jews never been in contact with the Persians, we should have received from Jewish tradition a complete Satan. Satan, then, is not the son, nor even the brother, of Ahriman; but we may say that the time came when the resemblance was so great that it was possible to confound them. Indeed, in the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, which are distinguished from the canonical books of the same collection, by the Alexandrian and Persian elements in them, we see Satan increase in importance and prestige. The seventy, in translating his name by *diabolos*, whence comes our word *devil*, also define exactly his primitive character of accuser; but henceforth he is something quite different from that. He is an exciting agent of the first class. He is a very high personage, counted among the highest rank of angels, who, envious of a still higher position, was banished from Heaven with those other angels who were accomplices in his ambitious schemes. Now hatred of God is with him added to hatred of men. Here begins the imitation of Ahriman. Like the Persian god, Satan is at the head of an army of wicked beings, who execute his orders. We know several of them by name; among others Asmodeus, the demon of pleasure, who plays a great part in the book of Tobias, and whose Persian origin, since the learned researches of M. Michel Bréal, can no longer be doubted. In consequence of this increasing importance, and his separation from the faithful angels, Satan has his kingdom apart, and his residence in the subterranean hell. Like the Persian Ahriman, he wished to harm the work of creation and attacked men, whose innocent happiness was insupportable to him. From that time, it is represented that it was he, who, like Ahriman, addressed the first woman under the form of the serpent. Then it was he who introduced death and its horrors; consequently the adversaries that he dreads the most, are men capable by their superior sanctity of fortifying their fellow men against his insidious attacks. A host of diseases, above all those which, by their strangeness and absence of exterior symptoms, defy natural explanation, such as idiocy, epilepsy, Saint Guy's dance, dumbness, certain kinds of blindness, etc., are attributed to his agents. It is supposed that the thousands of demons who are under his orders escape continually from the vents of hell, and,—like the demons of the night in which people had always believed,—haunt from preference waste lands and deserts; but there they tire, they become thirsty, whirl giddily about without finding rest, and their great resource is to find lodgment in a human body, in order to consume its substance and be refreshed by its blood. Sometimes even, they take up their abode in many. Hence,

the demoniacs, or possessed, spoken of so many times in evangelical history. Yet Jewish mythology would not carry to the extreme this resemblance to Ahriman. Satan, for example, would never dare to attack God directly. Ordinarily even certain formulas, in which the name of the Most High occurred in the first line, sufficed to exorcise him, that is to say, to drive him away. His power is strictly confined to the circle which it pleased divine wisdom to trace for his dominion. Dualism, therefore, remains very incomplete. On the other hand, the Jewish Satan is never to be converted. A prince of incurable evil, knowing himself condemned by the divine decrees to a final and irremediable defeat, he will always persist in evil, and will serve as executioner to Supreme justice, to torment eternally those whom he has drawn into his terrible nets.

Such was the state of mind on this point in which the first preaching of the gospel found the Jewish people. The messianic ideas, too, on their side, in developing themselves, had contributed much to this enrichment of the popular belief. If the devil, in this order of ideas, did not dare to oppose God, or even his angels of high rank, he did not fear to resist openly his servants on the earth. Now the Messiah was to be especially the servant of God. He was to appear in order to establish the kingdom of God in that humanity which was almost entirely subject to the power of demons. Consequently the devil would defend his possessions against him to the last extremity, and the work of the expected Messiah might be summed up in a bodily and victorious struggle with the "prince of this world." This is a point of view that one should never forget in reading the gospels. Satan and the Messiah personified, each on his side, the power of evil and good engaging in a desperate combat at every point of collision. Never would Jesus, for example, have been able to pass for the Messiah in the eyes of his countrymen, had he not had the reputation of being stronger than the demons every time those possessed with them were brought to him.

It is a question which has greatly interested modern theologians, to know if Jesus himself shared the beliefs of his contemporaries in regard to Satan. To treat this question as we should, we should have to stop longer on other points foreign to this history. Let us simply say that nothing authorizes us to think that Jesus would, from compliance with popular superstitions, have feigned beliefs which he did not share; but let us add that the principles of his religion were not in themselves favorable to beliefs of this kind. No where does Jesus make faith in the devil a condition of entrance into the kingdom of God, and were the devil only an idea, a symbol, these conditions would remain literally the same. Purity of heart, strong desire for justice, love of God and of men, these are all demands completely independent of the question of knowing whether Satan exists or not. Hence when Jesus speaks in an abstract, general manner, without any prepossession from circumstances of place or time, he regularly eliminates the person of Satan from his field of instruction. For example, he declares that our bad thoughts come from our heart; according to the satanic theory, he should have attributed them to the devil. Sometimes it is plain that he makes use of popular beliefs as a form, an image, to which he attaches himself no positive

reality; he finds material for parables in them; he addresses as *Satan* one of his disciples who is endeavoring to persuade him to withdraw from the sufferings which await him, and who by his very affection becomes for him a momentary Tempter. One may remark the same thing in studying the theology of St. Paul, at least in his authentic epistles. St. Paul evidently believes in the devil, and yet with him moral evil is incident to the mortal nature of men, and not to the exterior and personal action of a demon. In a word, the teaching of Jesus and of Paul nowhere combats the belief in the devil, but it can do without it, and its tendency is to dispense with it. We see this tendency in our days, when so many excellent Christians have not the least anxiety about the king of hell; but it was one of those germs of which the gospel contains many, which needed a different intellectual atmosphere in order to grow. What I have related will explain why much more is said of the devil in the New Testament than in the Old. The belief in the devil and the expectation of the Messiah had grown up side by side. Yet let us remark that if the New Testament speaks very often of Satan, of his angels, of the spirits "who are in the air," and of the devil seeking whom he may devour, it is more than sober in the descriptions that it gives of them. A certain spiritual reserve hovers still over all that order of conceptions; the devils are invisible; no one attributes to them palpable body, and a crowd of superstitions which arise later, from the idea that we can see and touch them, are still unknown. Yet, at the commencement of our era, we may consider the period of the origin of our Satan as concluded. He represents the union of polytheistic dualism and that relative dualism which Jewish monotheism could rigorously support. We shall see it grow still and assume new forms; but, such as it already is, we shall not fail to recognize it. It is indeed he, the old Satan, the bugbear of our fathers, in whom is concentrated all impurity, all ugliness, all falsehood, in a word the ideal of evil.

II.

The first centuries of Christianity, very far from developing that side of the gospel by which the new doctrine tended logically to banish the devil to regions of symbol and personal uselessness, on the contrary only increased his domain, by multiplying his interventions in human life. He served as a scape-goat to the horror of the primitive Christians for the institutions of paganism. Even in the early days, Christians did not very clearly distinguish the Roman empire from the empire of Satan. This too Jewish point of view did not last, but the favorite theme of most of the apologists was to attribute to the craft and pride of the devil, everything which polytheism presented, either fine or disagreeable, bad or good. The beautiful and the good which might be found mingled there, were in their eyes nothing else than small portions of truth artfully mingled by the enemy of the human race with frightful errors, in order better to retain power over men whom the absolutely false could not have captivated so long. The Alexandrian teachers alone showed themselves more reasonable, but they took no great hold on the mass of the faithful. Then especially the idea spread abroad

that Satan was a rival really contemptible, but long powerful, of God, alone adorable. Having an eager desire for honors and dominion, he had imitated divine perfection as well as he could and had succeeded only in making an odious caricature of it, but, such as it was, that caricature had blinded the nations. Tertullian found, even on this subject, one of those characteristic words in which his mocking spirit excelled. "Satan," said he, "is God's ape," and the saying was handed down to posterity. Consequently the Græco-Roman gods were, to Christians as to Jews, demons who had usurped the divine rank. The licentiousness of pagan morals, too often consecrated by the ceremonies of traditional religion, procured for this prejudiced point of view a sort of popular justification, enhanced besides by the moral superiority which the rising church was generally able to oppose to the corruptions which surrounded it. Satan was then more than ever "the prince of this world."

Yet let us not forget one very important circumstance, that other currents, outside of the Christian church, contributed to extend everywhere a belief in evil demons. Polytheism, in its decline, obeyed its internal logic, that is to say, it became continually more dualistic. Its last forms, those for example which are distinguished by what they have borrowed from Platonism and Pythagorism, are entirely permeated with dualism, and consequently they open a large career to the imagination to create every kind of evil spirits. At that epoch, asceticism, which consists in slowly killing the body under pretext of developing the mind, was not alone in the most exalted parts of the Christian church; it was everywhere where people practiced religious morals. The dreams of which fasting is the physiological generator, gave to the imaginary beings which they evoked all the appearance of reality. Apollonius of Tyana does not drive off fewer demons than a Christian saint. As Prof. Roskoff very justly remarks, the doctrine of angels and demons, offered to polytheism, and to Jewish and Christian monotheism, a sort of neutral territory, on which they might meet to a certain extent. The religious movements known under the name of Gnostic sects, which represent a mingling of pagan, Jewish and Christian views in varied proportions, have, as a common feature, a belief in fallen spirits, tyrants of men and rivals of God. The great successes of Manicheism, that union of Persian dualism and Christianity, were due to the satisfaction which the popular faith took in everything which resembled a systematic struggle of the genius of evil with the spirit of good. The Talmud and the Cabala underwent the same influence. We need not then impute to Christianity alone the great place which Satan at that time took in the affairs of this world; it was a universal tendency of the epoch, and it would be more correct to say that Christianity suffered the influence of it, with all contemporary forms of religion.

The Jewish Messiah had become to Christianity the Saviour of guilty humanity; therefore the radical antagonism of Satan and the Messiah was reflected in the first teaching of redemption. It was represented, from the end of the second century, in a grand drama, in which Christ and the devil were the principal actors. The multitude satisfied themselves with thinking that Christ, having descended into hell, had, in virtue of the right

of the strongest, taken from Satan the souls that he was holding captive; but this coarse idea was refined upon. Irenæus taught that men, since the fall, were Satan's by right; that it would have been unjust on the part of God to take away from him violently what was his; that consequently Christ, in the character of a man perfect and independent of the devil, had offered himself to him to purchase the human race, and that the devil had accepted the bargain. Soon, however, it was perceived that the devil had made a very foolish calculation, since Christ had not remained finally in his power. Origen, whose ecclesiastical teachings we need not always take for literally exact representations of his real views, took that view which admitted without repugnance that, in the work of redemption, Christ and Satan had played their parts most artfully, the latter thinking he should keep in his power a prey which he preferred to all the human race, Christ knowing well that he would not remain in his hands. This point of view, which ended in making Satan the deceived party and Jesus the deceiving, scandalous as it appears to us, nevertheless made its way, and was long predominant in the church. We readily perceive that such a manner of looking at redemption was not likely to diminish the prestige of the devil. Nothing could increase fear of the enemy like the exaggerated descriptions given of his power and of the dangers run by those exposed to his attacks; especially when, by a singular contradiction which the old theology could never escape, the devil, declared vanquished, overthrown, reduced to powerlessness by the victorious Christ, none the less continued to exercise his infernal power over the great majority of men. The saints alone could consider themselves protected from his snares, and even they, according to the legends, which began to be circulated, how much prudence and energy had they not used to escape them! Everything felt the influence of this continual prepossession. Baptism had become an exorcism. To become a Christian, was to declare that one renounced Satan, his pomps and his works. To be driven from the church for moral unworthiness or for heterodoxy, was to be "delivered over to Satan." It was also during this period that was developed the doctrine of the fall of the lost angels. On the one hand, it was thought that demons were meant in that mythical verse in Genesis which relates that the "sons of God" married the daughters of men, whom they found beautiful; and, in this supposition, lust was considered as their own original sin and their constant prompting; on the other hand, and since this did not explain the previous presence of a bad angel in the terrestrial paradise, the fall of the rebellious spirit was carried back to the moment of creation. Augustine thought that, as an effect of the fall, their bodies previously subtle and invisible, became less ethereal. This was the beginning of the belief in visible appearances of the devil. Then came that other idea that demons, in order to satisfy their lust, take advantage of the night to beguile young men and women during their sleep. Hence the *succubi* and *incubi*, which played so great a part in the middle ages. St. Victorinus, according to the legend, was conquered by the artifice of a demon which had taken the form of a seductive young girl lost in the woods in the night. The ordinances of the councils, from the fourth century,

enjoin on bishops to watch closely those of their diocese who are addicted to the practice of magic arts, invented by the devil; there is even talk about vicious women who run about the fields in the night in the train of heathen goddesses, Diana among others. As yet, however, there was seen in these imaginary meetings nothing but dreams suggested by Satan to those who gave him a hold on them by their guilty inclinations.

But soon everything becomes real and material. There is no saint who does not see the devil appear to him at least once under human form; Saint Martin even met him so disguised as to resemble Christ. Generally, however, in his character of angel of darkness, he appears as a man entirely black, and it is under this color that he escapes from heathen temples and idols which the zeal of neophytes has overthrown. At length the idea that one can make a compact with the devil, to obtain for himself what he most desires, in exchange for his soul, takes its rise in the sixth century, with the legend of St. Theophilus. The latter, in a moment of wounded pride, gives Satan a signed abjuration; but, devoured by remorse, he persuaded the Virgin Mary to get back the fatal writing from the bad angel. This legendary story, written especially with the design of spreading the worship of Mary, was destined to have serious consequences. The devil, in fact, saw his prestige increase much more when the conversion of the invaders of the empire, and the missions sent to countries which had never made a part of it, had introduced into the bosom of the church a mass of people absolutely ignorant and still full of polytheism. The church and state, united in the time of Constantine and still more in that of Charlemagne, did what they could to refine the gross spirits under their tutorship; yet, to tell the truth, the temporal and spiritual princes ought themselves to have been less under the influence of the superstitions they wished to oppose. If some able popes could allow their policy to include a certain toleration for customs and errors which it seemed impossible to uproot, the great majority of bishops and missionaries firmly believed they were fighting the devil and his host in trying to extirpate polytheism; they instilled the same belief into their converts and in that way prolonged very much the existence of pagan divinities. The good old spirits of rural nature were especially tenacious of life. The sacred legends collect many of them, and comparative mythology recognizes a great number of ancient Celtic and German gods in the patrons venerated by our ancestors. For quite a long time, and without its being regarded as a renunciation of the Catholic faith, in England, France and Germany, offerings were presented, either from gratitude or fear, to spirits of the fields and forests; the women were especially tenacious of these old customs. As, nevertheless, the church did not cease to designate as demons and devils all superhuman beings who were not saints or angels, and as the character of the ancient gods had after all nothing angelic, a division took place. The kingdom of the saints was enriched from the good part under new names; the kingdom of the demons had the rest. The belief in the devil, which, in the first centuries, was still somewhat elevated, became decidedly coarse and stupid. It was in the beginning of the middle ages that people began to regard certain animals, such as the cat, the toad, the rat, the mouse, the

black dog, and the wolf, as serving, in preference to all others, as symbols, auxiliaries, and even as a momentary form, for the devil and his servants. It has been recently shown that ordinarily these animals were consecrated or sacrificed to the divinities whose places the demons had taken. Recollections of human sacrifices in honor of the ancient gods must be at the base of the idea that Satan and his slaves are partial to human flesh. The wehr-wolf, man-wolf, which devours children, has been successively a god, a devil, and a sorcerer going to the wizard's meeting under the form of a wolf, so as not to be recognized. We all know that there has never been a sorceress without a cat. A pest too frequent among a population destitute of all acquaintance with cleanliness, viz., vermin, was also at that time put to the account of the devil and his servants. It was also about the same time that the corporeal form of the devil became a fixed idea; it was that of the old fauns and satyrs, a horned forehead, blobber-lipped mouth, hairy skin, tail, and the cloven foot of the goat or the hoof of a horse.

We might accumulate here the half-burlesque, half-tragic details; but we prefer to note the salient points of the development of the belief. At the point we have reached, we must look at it under a new light. Among the Jews of the time directly preceding our era, Satan had become the so-called adversary of the Messiah, — among the first Christians, the direct antagonist of the Saviour of men; but in the middle ages Christ is in Heaven, very high and far away; the living, immediate organism which is to realize his kingdom on the earth, is the church. Consequently, it is henceforth the devil and the church which have to do with one another. The faith of the collier consists in believing what the church believes, and when one asks the collier what the church believes, the collier responds boldly: "What I believe." So, if one asked during that period: "What does the devil do?" one would have to respond: "What the church does not do." "And what is it that the church does not do?" "That which the devil does." This would tell the whole story. The nocturnal meetings of evil spirits, which the old councils, called to consider them, dismissed as imaginary, have become something very real. The Germanic idea of fealty, that is to say, the idea that fidelity to the sovereign is the first of virtues, as the treason of the vassal is the greatest of crimes, was introduced into the church, and contributed not a little to give to everything which approached infidelity to Christ the colors of blackest depravity. The sorcerer, however, is as faithful to his master Satan as the good Christian to his celestial sovereign, and just as every year vassals come to render homage to their lord, so the liege-men of the devil hasten to pay him a like honor, sometimes on a fixed day, sometimes by special convocation. The flights through the air of sorcerers and witches, with hair flying wildly, hastening to the nocturnal rendezvous, are a transformation of the Celtic and German myth of the *wild hunt* or the *great-hunter*; but the master who appointed this rendezvous is a sort of god, and in the great assemblies of the diabolical tribe they honor him especially by celebrating the opposite of the mass. They adore the spirit of evil by changing the ceremonies which were employed to glorify the God of good. The name itself of *sabbath* (a term applied to their nocturnal assemblies,) came

from the confusion which arose between the worship of the devil and the celebration of a non-catholic worship. The church put in absolutely the same rank the Jew, the excommunicated, the heretic, and the sorcerer. One circumstance contributed greatly to that confusion. Most of the sects which had revolted from the church, that especially which holds a grand and wonderful place in our national history, called the heresy of the Albigenses, were penetrated to a high degree with the old Gnostic and Manichean leaven. Dualism was the principle of their theology. Hence came the idea that their religious assemblies, rivals of the mass, were nothing other than the mass said in hell, and that such is the kind of worship that Satan prefers. If now we recall with what docility the state allowed itself to be persuaded by the church that its first duty was to exterminate heretics, we shall no longer find anything surprising in the rigor of the penal laws declared against the pretended sorcerers. It is important that the absorbing character of the belief in the devil during the middle ages be well understood; those who believe in Satan now-a-days would have difficulty in conceiving what a sway this belief had. It was the fixed idea of everybody, especially from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, a period which may be signalized as having marked the apogee of that superstition. A fixed idea tends, among those who are possessed with it, to bring over everything to itself. When, for example, we follow somewhat closely those of our contemporaries who are devoted to spiritism, we are astonished at the fertility of their imagination in interpreting in favor of their belief events most insignificant and themselves indifferent. A door not well closed which half opens, a fly which describes arabesques in its flight, the falling of an object badly poised, the cracking of a piece of furniture during the night, is all that is needed to send them out of sight into space. Let us generalize such a state of mind by substituting for the innocent illusion of our spiritists the continual interventions of the devil, and we shall have quite a good representation of what was passing in the middle ages. Among the numberless facts and writings which we could cite, we will mention the *Revelations*, quite forgotten now-a-days, but formerly widely known, of the abbé Richeaume or Richalmus, who flourished about the year 1270, in Franconia, and who belonged to the order of Citeaux. The abbé Richeaume attributed to himself a particular gift of discernment for perceiving and understanding the satellites of Satan, who, moreover, according to his account, always torment in preference churchmen and good Christians. What do not these imps of hell make the poor abbé endure! From the distractions he may have during mass to the nausea which too often troubles his digestion, from the false notes of the officiating precentor to the fits of coughing which interrupt his discourses, all the annoyances which happen to him are demoniac works. "For example," says he to the novice who gives him his cue, "when I sit down for spiritual reading, the devils make a desire to sleep seize me. Then it is my custom to put my hands out of my sleeves so that they may become cold; but they bite me under the clothes like a flea, and attract my hand to the place bitten, so that it becomes warm, and my reading grows careless again." They like to disfigure men. To one they give a wrinkled nose, to another hare-lips.

If they perceive that a man likes to close his lips properly, they make his lower lip hanging. "Stop," says he to his novice "look at this lip; for twenty years a little devil has kept himself there, just to make it hang." And he goes on in that strain. When the novice asks him if there are many demons who thus make war on men, abbé Richeaume replies that every one of us is surrounded by as many demons as a man plunged in the sea has drops of water around him. Happily the sign of the cross is generally sufficient to foil their malice, but not always, for they know well the human heart and know how to reach it through its weaknesses. One day when the abbé was making his monks pick up stones to build a wall, he heard a young devil, hidden under the wall, cry out very distinctly: "What distressing labor!" And he said that only to inspire in the monks a disposition to complain of the base service imposed on them. To the sign of the cross, it is often useful to add the effect of holy water and salt. Demons cannot bear salt. "When I am at the table and the devil has taken away my appetite, as soon as I have tasted a little salt, my appetite returns; a little after, it disappears again, I again take salt, and I am hungry anew." In the hundred and thirty chapters of which his *Revelations* consist, the abbé Richeaume does nothing but subject thus to his fixed idea the most trivial circumstances of domestic life, and especially of convent life; but the popularity which this book, which appeared after his death, enjoyed, proves that he simply agreed in opinion with his contemporaries. One might find innumerable parallels in the literature of the time. The Golden Legend of Jacques de Voraigne, one of the books most read in the middle ages, will give a sufficient idea of it.

This continual preoccupation with the devil, had two consequences equally logical, though of a very opposite character. It had at the same time its comical and its dark side. By seeing Satan everywhere, people at last became familiar with him, and by a sort of unconscious protest of mind against imaginary monsters created by traditional doctrine, they became emboldened to the point of being quite at ease with his horned majesty. The legends always showed him so miserably taken in by the sagacity of saints and good priests, that his reputation for astuteness slowly gave place to a quite contrary fame. They had even reached the point of believing that it was not impossible to speculate on the foolishness of the devil. For example, had he not had the simplicity to furnish to architects in trouble magnificent plans for the construction of the cathedrals of Aix-la-Chapelle and Cologne? It is true that at Aix he had demanded in recompense the soul of the first person who should enter the church, and at Cologne that of the architect himself; but he had to do with those more cunning than he. At Aix, they drove with pikes a she-wolf into the church then recently finished; at Cologne, the architect, already in possession of the promised plan, in the place of delivering to Satan a conveyance of his soul in due form, draws suddenly from beneath his gown a bone of the eleven thousand virgins and brandishes it in the face of the devil, who decamps uttering a thousand imprecations. The high part which is assigned to him in the religious theatricals of the middle ages, is well known. Redemption, in the popular mind, still passed for a

divine trick, piously played at the expense of the enemy of men. It was then natural to imagine a host of other cases where Satan was taken in his own snares. What laughs these discomfitures excited among the good people! By a thousand indications, one would be tempted to believe that he had become the character, in the mysteries, the most liked, if not the most agreeable. The others had their part entirely marked out by tradition; with him, one could anticipate something unexpected. We see him, too, represent for a long time the comic element of the religious drama. In France, where the people have always liked to subject the theatre to exact rules, there was a class of popular pieces called deviltries, coarse and often obscene masquerades in which at least four devils were to struggle together. Hence comes, it appears, the expression, "*faire le diable à quatre.*" In Germany, too, the devil becomes humorous on the stage. There is an old Saxon mystery of the passion where Satan repeats, like a mocking echo, the last words of Judas hanging himself; then, when, according to the sacred tradition, the entrails of the traitor are burst out, he gathers them in a basket, and, carrying them away, signs an article appropriate to the circumstances.

This, however, did not prevent a general distressing fear of the devil. At the theatre, during the middle ages, one was in a certain sense at church. There, nothing hindered one from deriding at pleasure the detested being whose artifices were powerless against the actors of the holy representations; but people could not pass their lives listening to mysteries, and the daily realities were not slow in restoring to him all his prestige. Naturally, the number of individuals suspected of some kind of intercourse with Satan must have been enormous. This was the first idea that came into the mind of any one who did not know how to explain the success of an adversary or the prosperous issue of an audacious enterprise. Enguerrand de Marigny, the templars, our poor Joan of Arc, and many other illustrious victims of political hatred, were convicted of sorcery. Popes themselves, such as John XXII., Gregory VII., Clement V., incurred the same suspicion. At the same time, we see appear the idea that the compacts concluded with the devil are signed with the blood of the sorcerer, in order that it may be firmly covenanted that his person, his entire life, belongs henceforth to the infernal master. At this time, also, an old Italian superstition was revived, the idea of causing the death of those one hates by mutilating or piercing little images of wax of the person designated, which had been bewitched. There were councils purposely to proceed rigorously against sorcery, which was thought to be spread in every direction. Pope John XXII., himself accused of sorcery, declares, in a bull of 1317, the bitter grief caused him by the compacts concluded with the devil by his physicians and courtiers, who draw other men into the same impious relation. From the thirteenth century, they proceeded against the crime of sorcery just as against the most heinous offences, and popular ignorance was only too well disposed to furnish food to the zeal of the inquisitors. Toulouse saw the first sorceress burned. This was Angela de Labarète, a noble lady, fifty-six years of age, who took part in that special character in the grand auto-da-fé in that city, in 1275. At

Carcassone, from 1320 to 1350, more than four hundred executions for the crime of sorcery are mentioned as having taken place. Nevertheless those bloody horrors had even in the fourteenth century a local character; but in 1484 an act of Pope Innocent VIII. extended over all Christendom this terrible procedure. Then began throughout all Catholic Europe that mournful pursuit of sorcerers which marks the paroxysm of the belief in the devil, which concentrates and condenses it for more than three centuries, and which, yielding at last under the reprobation of modern conscience, was to carry away with it the faith of which it was the issue.

III.

In the fifteenth century, a momentary relaxing of orthodox fanaticism rendered the task of inquisitors quite difficult in what concerned heresy properly so called. It seems that on the banks of the Rhine, as in France, people began to weary of the insatiable vampire which threatened everybody and cured none of the evils of the church, which had employed it as an heroic remedy. The faith in the church itself as a perfect and infallible institution, was in peril, and the inquisitors complained to the Holy See of the increasing difficulties which the local powers and the local clergy opposed to them; but those even who questioned the church and inclined to toleration of religious opinion did not mean to give free course to the wiles of the devil and his agents. Then appeared the famous bull *Summis desiderantes*, by which Innocent VIII. added to the powers of the officers of the inquisition that of prosecuting the authors of sorcery, and applying to them the rules which until then had affected only *depravatio heretica*. Long is the list of witchcrafts enumerated by the pontifical bull, from tempests and devastation of crops to fates cast upon men and women to prevent them from perpetuating the human species. Armed with this bull which fulminated against the refractory the most severe penalties, which was strengthened by other functions of the same origin and same tendency, the inquisitors Henry Institoris and Jacob Sprenger, prepared that Hammer of sorceries, — *Malleus maleficarum*, — which was a long time for all Europe the classical code of procedure to be followed against individuals suspected of sorcery. This book received the pontifical sanction, the approbation of the emperor Maximilian, and that of the theological faculty of Cologne. The reading of this dull and wearisome treatise cannot fail to cause a shudder. This prolonged study of the false held for the true, these perpetual sophisms, the pedantic simplicity with which the authors recall everything which can give a shadow of appearance of truth to their bad dreams, the cold cruelty which dictates their proceedings and their judgments, everything would fill the modern reader with repulsion, if he had not the duty of indicting at the bar of history one of the most lamentable aberrations which have falsified the conscience of humanity. We find an answer to everything in this frightful conjuring-book. We see there why the devil gives his servants the power to change themselves *reali transformatione et essentialiter* to wolves and other dreadful beasts, why it is a heresy to deny sorcery, how the *incubi* and *succubi* manage to attain their ends, *quomodo procreant*, why one has never

seen so many sorcerers as at the present time, why David drove the tormenting demon from Saul by showing him his harp, which resembled a cross, etc. If there are more sorceresses than sorcerers, it is because women believe more in the promises of Satan than men do, it is because the *fluidity* of their temperament renders them more fitted to receive revelations, it is in short that women, being weaker, readily have recourse to supernatural means to satisfy their vengeance or their sensuality. Recipes of every sort are recommended to wise persons to guard themselves from the spells that may be thrown over them. The sign of the cross, the holy water, the judicious use of salt, and of the name of the holy Trinity, constitute the principal exorcisms. The sound of church bells is also regarded as a defence of great power, and it is therefore well to have them rung during tempestuous storms, for, by driving away the demons which cannot bear this sacred sound, they prevent them from continuing their work of perturbation. This superstitious custom, which has been perpetuated to our times, clearly denotes a confounding of the demons of the church and the ancient divinities of the thunder and of tempests.

What especially commands attention, is the criminal procedure developed by the authors, and which become law everywhere. They are exactly imitated from those which the inquisition had instituted against heretics. Sorcery, arising from a compact with the devil supposing the abjuration of the baptismal vow, is a sort of apostacy, a heresy in the first degree. Denunciations without proof are admitted. . . It is even sufficient that public rumor call the attention of the judge to the matter. All who present themselves, even the infamous, even the personal enemies of the sorceress, are permitted to give evidence. The pleadings must be summary, and as much as possible relieved from useless formalities. The accused must be minutely questioned, until there are found in the details of her life something to strengthen the suspicions which press upon her. The judge is not obliged to name to her the informers against her. She can have one defender, who must know no more of the matter than she, and who must limit himself to the defence of the person incriminated, but not of her criminal acts; otherwise the defender will be in his turn suspected. The acknowledgment of the guilty person must be obtained by torture, as well as the declaration of all the circumstances relating to her heinous crime. Still one may promise her security of life, free not to keep that promise (so the text says), on condition that confession is complete and prompt. Torture is repeated every three days, and the judge is to take all suitable precautions that the effect of it may not be neutralized by some charm hidden in some secret part of the body of the accused. He must even avoid looking her in the face, for sorceresses have been seen endowed, by the devil, with a power such that the judge whose glance they were able to catch no longer felt the strength to condemn them. When at length she is well and duly convicted, she is given over to the secular arm, which is to lead her off to death without farther parley.

It is easy to see from this cursory view that the unfortunate women who fell into the clutches of this terrible tribunal, had only to abandon hope at

the door of their prison. Nothing is more afflicting than a careful review of the proceedings for sorcery. The women are always, as the inquisitors learnedly explain, in the majority. Hatreds, jealousies, desires for revenge, above all suspicions inspired by want and ignorance, could have free course, and did not allow the opportunity to escape them. Often, too, unfortunate women were victims of their own imagination, over-excited by a hysterical temperament, or by the terrors of eternal torment. Those in our times who have been able to examine closely the cases of *mania religiosa*, know with what readiness women especially believe themselves the objects of divine reprobation, and fatally given over to the power of the devil. All those unfortunates, who to-day are treated with extreme gentleness in special institutions, then were obliged to pass for possessed or sorceresses, and what is frightful is that many seriously supposed themselves to be so. Many related that they had really been to the witches' meeting, that they had there given themselves up to the most degrading debauches. How many like confessions aggravated afterwards the position of those who denied with the firmness of innocence the disgraceful acts of which they were accused! Torture was there to draw from them what they refused to tell, and thus the conviction became rooted in the spirit of judges even relatively humane and equitable, that besides crimes committed by natural means there was a whole catalogue of heinous offences so much the more dreadful as their origin was supernatural. How could one show too much rigor to such criminals?

In the single year 1485, and in the single district of Worms, eighty-five witches were committed to the flames. At Geneva, at Basle, at Hamburg, at Ratisbonne, at Vienna, and in a multitude of other cities, there were executions of the same kind. At Hamburg, among others, they burned alive a physician who had saved a woman in confinement abandoned by the midwife. In 1523, in Italy, and after a new bull against sorcery issued by pope Adrian VI. the single diocese of Coma saw more than a hundred witches burn. In Spain, it was still worse: in 1527, two little girls, from nine to eleven years old, denounced a number of witches whom they pretended to recognize by a sign in the left eye. In England and Scotland, government took part in the matter; Mary Stuart was particularly hostile to witches. In France, the parliament of Paris in 1390, had the fortunate idea of taking away that sort of business from the ecclesiastical tribunal, and under Louis XI., Charles VIII., and Louis XII., there was scarcely any condemnation under the head of sorcery; but from the time of Francis I., and especially of Henry II., the scourge re-appeared. A man of a real merit in other respects, but literally a madman on the subject of sorcerers, Jean Bodin, communicated his madness to all classes in the nation. His contemporary and disciple, Boguet, communicates in a lengthy article the fact that France is swarming with sorcerers and witches. "They multiply in the land, said he, like caterpillars in our gardens. I wish they were all put in one body to have them burned at once and by one single fire." Savoy, Flanders, the mountains of the Jura, Lorraine, Bèarn, Provence, almost all our provinces witnessed frightful hecatombs. In the seventeenth

century, the demoniac fever abated, but not without partial returns especially among convents of hysterical nuns. Everybody is acquainted with the frightful stories of the priests Ganfridy and Urbain Grandier. In Germany, above all in the southern part, the punishment of sorcerers was still more frequent. There is a certain insignificant principality in which two hundred and forty-two persons at least were burned the year 1640 to 1651. Tale to make one shudder! we find in the official accounts of these tortures, that there were children from one to six years old among the victims! In 1697, Nicolas Remy boasted having caused nine hundred persons to be burned in fifteen years. It appears even that it was to the proceedings against sorcerers that Germany owed the introduction of the torture as an ordinary judicial means of discovering the truth. Prof. Roskoff has reproduced a catalogue of the executions of sorcerers and witches in the episcopal city of Würzburg, in Bavaria, until 1629, in all thirty-one executions, without counting some others that the authors of the catalogue have not regarded as sufficiently important to be mentioned. The number of victims, at each of these executions, varies from two to seven. Many are indicated only by a nick-name: "the big hunch-back," "the Sweet-heart," "the Bridge-keeper," "the old Pork-Butcheress," etc. We find there all professions and all ranks, actors, workmen, jugglers, city and country girls, rich bourgeois, nobles, students, even magistrates, as well as quite a large number of priests. Several are simply marked, "a foreigner," "a foreign woman." Here and there the one who prepares the list adds to the name of the person condemned his age and a short notice. Thus we notice among the victims of the twentieth execution, "Babelin, the prettiest girl in Würzburg," "a student who knew how to speak every language, who was an excellent musician *vocaliter et instrumentaliter*," and "the director of the alms-house, a very learned man." We find also in this mournful catalogue the heart-rending account of children burned as sorcerers; here a little girl from nine to ten years with her little sister still younger (their mother was burned soon after), boys of from ten to twelve years, a young girl of fifteen, two alms-house children, the little son of a judge. The pen refuses to recount such monstrous excesses. Will those who wish to admit the correctness of the doctrine of the infallibility of the popes, before giving in their vote, listen, in the presence of God and history to the cries of the poor innocents cast into the fire by pontifical bulls?

The seventeenth century, nevertheless, saw the proceedings against sorcerers and especially their punishment gradually diminish. Louis XIV., in one of his better moments, mitigated greatly, in 1675, the rigors of that special legislation. Yet for that he was obliged to endure the unanimous remonstrance of the parliament of Rouen, which thought society would be ruined, if the sorcerers were only condemned to perpetual solitary confinement. The fact is that belief in sorcerers was still sufficiently general for single executions to take place from time to time, even throughout the eighteenth century. One of the last and most famous was that of the lady-superior of the cloister of Unterzell, near Würzburg, Renata Soenger, (1749.) At Landshut, in Bavaria, in 1756, a young girl of thirteen years was put to

death, having been convicted of having had impure intercourse with the devil. Seville, in 1781, Glaris, in 1783, saw the last two examples known of this fatal madness.

IV.

People have sometimes used as a weapon against Christianity, these bloody horrors, ulteriorly due, they say, to a belief which Christianity alone had instilled into persons who, without it, would never have entertained such a belief. This point of view is superficial and not supported by history. The blame lies primarily with the dualistic point of view, which is common to Christianity and has outlived it. Pagan antiquity had its necromancers, its magicians, its old stryges, *lamix et verifixe*, which were not dreaded less than our witches. We have shown that dualism is inherent in all the religions of nature; that, having attained their complete development, these religions end, as in Persia, in India, and even in the last evolutions of Graeco-Roman paganism, by an eminently dualistic conception of the forces or divinities which direct the course of things; that the Jewish Satan owes, not his personal origin but his growth and entire degradation to his contact with the Persiah Ahriman; that the Christian Satan and his demons have in turn inherited the worst characteristics and most frightful symbolical forms of the conquered divinities. In reality, the devil of the middle ages is at once pagan, Jewish and Christian. He is Christian, because his peculiar domain is moral evil, the physical ills of which he is the author arising only in consequence of his passionate desire to corrupt souls, and these giving themselves up to him only with guilty intent. He is Jewish in this sense that his power, however great it might be, could not pass the limits it pleased divine omnipotence to mark out for it. Finally, it is Pagan by everything which it preserves of ancient polytheistic beliefs. We have a right to regard the faith in demons, as it came out in the middle ages, as the retribution of paganism, or, if we please, as the unabsorbed residue of the old polytheism perpetuating itself under other forms.

That which prolonged the reign of Satan and his demons, was not alone the authority of the church, it was above all the state of mind which the labors pretending to be scientific, of all the period anterior to Bacon and Descartes, reveal, even to a period approaching ours. There was no real knowledge of nature: the idea of the inviolability of its laws was yet to appear. Alchemy, astrology and medicine regularly ministered to magic; they recognized, as much as did contemporary theology, hidden forces, talismans, the power of magic words, and impossible transmutations. Even after the renaissance what a confused mystical medley the physiological doctrines of Cardan, of Paracelsus, of Van Helmont! The general state of mind, determined in great part by the church I acknowledge, but by the church itself under the influence of the ruling ideas, must have been the true cause of that long series of follies and abominations which constitute the history of the devil in the middle ages and in modern times. It is an evidence of this that, in a time and in countries where the church was still

very powerful and very intolerant, the belief in the devil visibly drooped, declined, suffered repeated assaults, and fell slowly into ridicule, without any notable persecution having signaled this very serious change in the ideas of enlightened Europe. The old stories pretended that the most tumultuous witch-meetings vanished like smoke at sunrise; in truth, the old stories did not know how far the future would show them to be right.

The two great facts which, modifying profoundly the general state of mind, brought about this irremediable decline, were the indirect influence of the Reformation and the progress of rationalistic science. Some will perhaps be astonished that I mention the Reformation. The reformers of the sixteenth century did not at all combat faith in the devil. Luther himself held to it strongly, and so did most of his friends. Calvin was obliged by a certain dryness of mind, by his distrust of everything which gave too much play to the imagination, to remain always very sober in speaking of a subject which made the best heads delirious; but he nevertheless shared the common ideas in regard to Satan and his power, and enounced them more than once. We should speak also of an indirect influence, which was nevertheless very strong. That which, among people which adopted the Reformation, gave a first and very sensible blow to his infernal majesty, was that in virtue of the principles it proclaimed, they had no longer any fear at all of him. The idea which had so much power among protestants of the sixteenth century, of the absolute sovereignty of God, that idea which they push even to the paradox of predestination, very soon led them no longer to see in Satan anything but an instrument of the divine will, in his actions only means of which it pleased God to make use in order to realize his secret plans. In pursuance of this faith, the Christian had now only to despise the rebellious angel, wholly powerless against the elect. It is known how Luther received him when he came to make him a visit at the Wartbourg. The simplicity of worship, and the denial of the supernatural powers hitherto delegated to the clergy, also contributed much to dissipate the delusion in the minds of the simple. No more exorcisms, neither at baptism, nor in the supposed cases of demoniacal possession; no more of those scenic displays which terrified the imagination, in which the priest, brandishing the brush for sprinkling holy water, fought with the demon, who replied with frightful blasphemies. No one henceforth believes in *incubi* or *succubi*. If there is still from time to time talk of persons being possessed, prayer and moral exhortation are the only remedies practiced, and soon nothing is more rare than to hear demoniacs spoken of among these peoples. The idea that the miracles related in the Bible are the only true ones, illogical as it may be, nevertheless made people accustomed to living without daily hoping or fearing them. Now the miracles of the devil are the first to suffer from this beginning of a decline of the belief in the supernatural. Satan then becomes again purely what he was in the first century, and even less still, a tempting spirit, invisible, impalpable, whose suggestions must be repulsed, and from whom moral regeneration alone delivers, but delivers surely. They cannot even longer keep for him his old part in the drama of redemption. Everything now depends on the relation between the faithful man and his God. In

a word, without any one thinking yet of denying the existence and the power of Satan, while even making great use of his name in popular teaching and preaching, the Reformation sends him slowly back to an abstract, ideal sphere, without any very clear relation to real life. We might consider him only as a convenient personification of the power of moral evil in the world, without changing at all protestant piety. French catholicism in its finest period, that is to say in the seventeenth century, feeling much more than is generally supposed the influence of the Reformation, presents a quite similar characteristic. With what sobriety its most illustrious representatives, Bossuet, Fénelon, preachers even such as Bourdaloue, treat this part of catholic doctrine! Good taste among them took the place of rationalism, and who is astonished in reading them, that a Louis XIV., who nevertheless was not tender when a question of religion was at stake, was able to show himself skeptical on the subject of sorcery and less superstitious than the gentlemen of Rouen?

Even in the times of the greatest ignorance, there were skeptics in regard to sorcerers and witches. The Lombard law, by a remarkable exception, had interdicted prosecutions against the *masks* (thus sorcerers were called in Italy). A king of Hungary, of the eleventh century, had declared that they need not be mentioned, for the simple reason that there were none. An archbishop of Lyons, Agobard, had ranked belief in witches' meetings among the absurdities bequeathed by paganism to the ignorant. The *Hammer of Sorceresses* must certainly have had in view adversaries who denied sorcery and even the intervention of the devil in human affairs, when it demonstrated both by a grand array of scholastic arguments. At the time when condemnations for the crime of covenanting with the devil were most frequent, there was a worthy Jesuit by the name of Spée, with whom the feelings of humanity prevailed against the spirit of his order. Charged with the guidance of souls in Franconia, he had been obliged to accompany to the stake, in the space of a few years, more than two hundred alleged sorcerers. One day the archbishop of Mayence, Philip of Schœnborn, had asked him why his hair was already becoming grey, although he was scarcely thirty years old. "From grief," he replied, "because of so many sorcerers that I have been obliged to prepare for death and of whom not one was guilty." It was from him that arose a *Cautio criminalis*, printed without the author's name in 1631, which, without denying sorcery nor even the legitimacy of the legal penalties declared against it, adjures the inquisitors and magistrates to multiply precautions so as not to condemn to death so many innocent. Before him, Jean Weicar, attached to the person of William of Cleves, had written, to the same purpose, a work quite learned for the time, the fruit of distant voyages and numerous observations, in which, while fully admitting the reality of magic, he denied the so-called sorcery, and violently accused the clergy of keeping up popular superstitions by making good people believe that the evils from which they could not deliver them had their origin in sorcerers sold to the devil. There was courage in using such language in such times. To take the position of defender of sorcerers, was to expose one's self to be accused of sorcery, and it is not rare to find in these sad annals examples of

judges and priests victims of their humanity or their equity, that is to say, condemned and burned with those they had attempted to save. The French physician Gabriel Naudé, undertook, in the support of the same course of ideas, his *Apology of the Men accused of Magic* (1669); but the causes, of whose slow influence we have written, had not yet transformed minds so that they were capable of emancipating themselves from the devil. A radical demolition of the edifice was necessary on the one side, and on the other a religious justification of that destruction. There as elsewhere, progress could take place in a powerful manner only on condition of adding to arguments of a purely rational sort, the sanction of religious feeling. Otherwise general opinion divides itself into two camps which continually hold each other in check, and maintain a menacing attitude without accomplishing anything. That which had come through the church was to take its departure through the church. The honor of having inflicted a decisive blow on the diabolical superstition is due to the Holland pastor Balthazar Bakker, who entered the lists, no longer simply in the name of good sense or humanity, but as a theologian, and published his famous book entitled *The Enchanted World* (1691-1693). Four thousand copies sent forth in two months, the rapid translation of this huge work into all the languages of Europe, the ardent controversies which it aroused and which it has alone survived in the memory of posterity, all these show what an epoch this book made.

Assuredly the demonstrations of the Dutch theologian would not all have the same value in our eyes. For example, not yet daring to emancipate himself from Scripture, considered by him as an infallible authority, he twists and turns the texts to eliminate from them the doctrine of a personal devil mingling in the thoughts and actions of men. Nevertheless, he calls attention to many details not remarked before him, which prove that biblical teaching about the devil is neither fixed, nor consistent, nor in conformity to the opinions of the middle ages. He submits to merciless criticism all the arguments commonly used to support the popular prejudice in regard to facts drawn from experience. His discussion of the case of Urbain Grandier, and of the Ursulines of London, which was still fresh in every mind, must have especially struck his readers. A fact like that, which one could analyze and discuss with evidences at hand, threw a clear light on a large number of other facts older and more obscure, to which the partisans of the devil constantly appealed. For the first time, too, universal history was brought into requisition to exhibit the incontestable filiation of the polytheistic and Christian beliefs in demons. The whole spirit of the book is expressed in these aphorisms from the latter part. "There is no sorcery except where people believe in it; do not believe in it, and there will be no more." "Rid yourselves of all those superannuated and silly fables, but exercise yourselves in piety." It was a true prophecy; but it was not given to the author to see it realized. To his disrespect for Satan, he added the wrong then very serious in the eyes of Dutch orthodoxy, of being a zealous Cartesian. He was accordingly removed by a synod, and died a little after; but they could not remove his book, which made its way quite alone, and with great effect. Indeed, from that time the cause of the devil may be

considered as lost in scientific theology. The progress of the human mind in acquaintance with nature and modern philosophy did the rest.

The scientific spirit, such as it has become since Bacon and Descartes, no longer admits those hasty conclusions which so readily gained the assent of the centuries when imagination ruled, when the readiness a man exhibited in expressing an opinion upon the most obscure subjects was in direct proportion to his ignorance. The experimental method, which is the only true one, obtains as much strength for the theses it verifies, as it inspires mistrust of everything out of its field of examination. Doubtless there are necessary truths which we cannot make enter the crucible of experience; however, they atone for that inconvenience by their close connection with our nature, our life, and our conscience. If, for example, one could say that belief in the devil recommends itself by its high moral utility, that it makes those better who share it, that it elevates characters by rendering them more chaste, more courageous, more devoted, there would yet be respectable motives for trying to save it from the formidable attacks of modern reason; but quite the contrary is the case. A belief in the devil tends necessarily to blunt the feeling of individual responsibility. If I do evil, not because I am bad, but because another has forced me to it by a power superior to my own will, my culpability is certainly lessened, if not annihilated. We have just seen the deplorable superstitions, the dangerous follies, the horrible crimes of which that belief was so long the inspirer. What is evidence against sorcery, will perhaps be said, is not evidence against a personal genius of evil from whom men have to defend themselves as from an enemy continually around them to drive them to evil. Let us nevertheless reflect that sorcery is not so detached in principle from that belief whose daughter it is. The devil once admitted, the sorcerer follows quite naturally. If there really exists a personal being, in possession of superhuman powers, seeking, as is said, to ruin us morally for his private satisfaction, is it not evident that, in order better to succeed, he will try to entice weak souls by furnishing them the means of procuring for themselves what they most desire? Not without reason did the belief in the devil reach its full development in a belief in sorcerers; and the latter, having given way before experience, necessarily drew down in its ruin the belief in the devil himself. If there is truly a devil, there are sorcerers, and, since there are no sorcerers, it is clear that there is no devil; this the combined good sense of the last three centuries authorizes us to conclude, and this conclusion will forever await its refutation.

The eighteenth century made the mistake of imagining that to destroy traditional beliefs it was sufficient to throw ridicule on them. When a belief which has been ridiculed for some time has deep roots in human consciousness, it easily survives the sarcasms of which it has been the object, and the time comes when these sarcasms no longer excite a laugh, because they chill the dearest feelings of religious minds, and the good taste of the refined; but, as to the devil, the laugh of the eighteenth century has remained victorious. It is in fact because the devil is ridiculous. That being whom they pretend is so cunning, so mischievous, so learnedly ego-

tistic, and who strives eternally in the wearisome business of corrupting souls, ends by being very foolish. Looked at thus close at hand, brought down from the heights where poetry and mysticism have been able sometimes to place him, put face to face with the bare reality, Satan is just simply stupid and since people have clearly felt that it has been impossible to do him the honor of admitting his real existence. We could prolong this retrospective study of works which continued through all the eighteenth century, and are still continuing in our days, a contest henceforth useless. Since the real constitution of the universe has dissipated the illusions which served as an indispensable accompaniment to the person of the old Satan, viz.: a closed heaven, subterranean hell, and the earth between; since people have been obliged to recognize the universal presence and everywhere active life of God in all things, there is no longer, in truth, any place for him in the world. There is nothing so distressing and puerile, as the efforts of some reactionary theologians, in Germany and elsewhere, to give back a shadow of reality to the old phantom, without falling into the gross superstitions which decidedly orthodox reaction itself can no longer digest. In vain one seeks to preserve for him a place, in the least honorable, in some doctrinal treatises or pious songs. The sane portion of the clergy and people shrug their shoulders or are annoyed. Satan is still permitted to be an expression, a type, a symbol consecrated by religious language, but that is all. As to giving him any place whatever in the laws, the customs, in real life, there is no longer any question about it.

Is there, nevertheless, nothing at all to draw from this long-continued error, which holds so considerable a place in the history of religions, and even goes back to their origin? Must we avow that on this subject the human mind has nourished itself for so many centuries with the absolutely false? That cannot be. There must necessarily have been something in human nature which pleaded in its favor and maintained for so many generations a faith contrary to experience. I will not say, as do some thinkers, that it was the ease with which that doctrine of the devil permitted the problem of the origin of evil to be resolved, for it resolved nothing. It carried back to heaven the problem that was thought insoluble on earth; but what was gained thereby? That which has maintained a belief in the devil, that which, indeed, constitutes the eternal foundation of it, is rather the power of evil in us and outside of us. I admire the singular tranquility of mind with which all our French philosophers look at that question, or rather forget it, to launch out in eloquent phrases on free will. Let us then put ourselves face to face with realities. The fact is that the best among us is a hundred leagues from the ideal which he proposes to himself, that he is too weak to realize it, and that he acknowledges this when he is sincere. Another fact still is, that we are every moment determined toward evil by the social influences which surround us, and that very few have the desired energy to react victoriously against the corrupt streams which hurry them away. We need not fall into the excess of theologians who have taught the total depravity of human nature, even too, marking out for it the way of regeneration, as if miracle itself were capable of regenerating a nature

totally corrupt. Observation attests that we are selfish, but capable of loving; naturally sensual, but not less naturally drawn by the splendor of the true and the good; very imperfect, but capable of improvement. The first condition of progress is to feel what we need. To live in harmony with conscience, one must know how to triumph over the assaults which selfish pleasures of sense, which flesh and blood, the world and its allurements, gives us into the power of at every moment. That is the diabolical power from which we should emancipate ourselves. In one sense, we might say that we are all more or less possessed. Error comes in as soon as we desire to personify this power of evil. When theists say that God is personal, they do not fail to recognize what there is defective in the idea of personality borrowed from our human nature; but as it is impossible to conceive another mode of existence than personality and impersonality, as God must possess every perfection, they say, for want of something better, that he is personal because he is perfect, and that an impersonal perfection is a contradiction. Evil, on the contrary, which is the opposite of the perfect, is necessarily impersonal. It is against its pernicious seductions, against its always fatal enchantments that it is necessary to struggle in order that our true human personality, our moral personality, may disengage itself, victorious, from the vile surroundings where it must grow. It is on that condition that it attains the pure regions of liberty and of impregnable morality, where nothing which resembles Satan can longer trouble the ascent towards God. That is all that remains of the doctrine of the devil, but also all that concerns our moral health, and which we ought never to forget.

ALBERT REVILLE.

REV. MR. ABBOT AT TOLEDO.

EARLY in the summer we heard that our friend Abbot, whom we deem not less worthy of love and honor as a Christian apostle, albeit he calls himself "outside of Christianity," than any other man among living religious leaders, was likely to have a break down with his society at Toledo, though possibly he might be able to succeed with his weekly paper, *The Index*. It was also told us that originally he had crept in privily and stolen a society and a meeting-house which belonged to regular Unitarianism, and which were in honor mortgaged to the American Unitarian Association on account of money paid by it in aid of the society. Knowing that the part of this information reflecting upon Mr. Abbot must have an explanation honorable to him, we surmised that the other might also change face upon investigation, and resolved to go and see for ourselves. We went at the end of June, and spent two days in Toledo, with exceeding satisfaction.

The once Unitarian, and now Independent, society to which Mr. Abbot preaches, was never aided by the American Unitarian Association. It twice came near it, and would have put its neck under the yoke, but for a single circumstance, which was *the refusal of the society to accept aid on the conditions proposed by the American Unitarian Association*. Twice in its history this people, before ever they had heard of Mr. Abbot, had declined to accept aid as a *Unitarian society*, lest at some future day they might find their independence hampered by the implicit pledge thus given. This special providence prepared Mr. Abbot's way in Toledo. It was but one out of many which plainly enough show that the Lord is with him.

When Mr. Abbot was asked to go to Toledo to preach a few Sundays, he wrote a letter stating conditions which he thought would not be accepted, inasmuch as they included a frank avowal of his most offensive heresies. This letter was read to a number of the society together, and was then passed from hand to hand, to anybody who wished to see it. The statement that it was suppressed, and people kept in ignorance of Mr. Abbot's views, is wholly baseless. Moreover, Rev. Mr. Camp, the former pastor, meddlesomely and maliciously towards Mr. Abbot, wrote to a member of the society against him, and this immoral document circulated freely. Mr. Abbot came July 3, 1869, and preached several Sundays with more than his usual frankness and boldness. What ground he took may be seen by turning to the masterly discourses in the early numbers of *The Index*. July 11, his topic was, "What is Christianity?" July 18, "What is Free Religion?" July 25, "Christianity and Free Religion contrasted as to Corner-Stones"; August 1, "Christianity and Free Religion contrasted as to Institutions, Terms of Fellowship, Social Ideal, Moral Ideal, and Essential Spirit"; August 8, "The Practical Work of Free Religion"; and having made this full and frank disclosure of his renunciation of Christianity, as

he deemed and proposed it, for Free Religion, he announced, in view of a nearly or quite unanimous disposition to give him a call to settle, that such a step would be of no use unless the society would adopt a preamble and resolutions offered by him (see No. 7 of *The Index*), and thereby leave Unitarian Christianity for Free Religion. His reasons for insisting on this, Mr. Abbot gave in his discourse of August 15, entitled "Unitarianism *versus* Freedom." A week later, by a vote of 39 to 18, the preamble and resolutions were adopted, and "The First Unitarian Society of Toledo," by its own free act, became the "First Independent Society of Toledo," outside of Unitarian Christianity. That the 18 nays did not represent much hostility to Mr. Abbot is shown by the significant fact that the motion immediately made to give him a call passed by a vote of 60 to 2. And had there been from that moment no unscrupulous meddling, Mr. Abbot would have carried along with him all who joined in this call. It was in consequence of outside interference that a minority which had joined in the vote to accept Mr. Abbot's ministry, finally seceded from him. This interference came from the Unitarian headquarters and from Rev. Mr. Camp, and those who took part in it have no shadow of ground for their assertion that either Mr. Abbot or his adherents acted in any but the most open and honorable manner.

We preached to Mr. Abbot's congregation, saw his Sunday School, conversed with members of his society, and learned all about what has been and what is the state of things there, and can say emphatically that the local movement has been from the first and still continues to be a remarkable success. The society had just set out upon a new year, with renewed evidences of their hearty devotion to Mr. Abbot. The congregation proved to be more than double what we had been told it was, and as interesting and Christian in appearance as any we ever saw. Constant labors of charity, and benefactions widely and generously bestowed, attest the practical Christian spirit which, to an unusual extent, pervades it. If any comparison is to be drawn, we should say that the entire Unitarian body is more likely to be expunged from contemporary history than Mr. Abbot to come to a breakdown in Toledo. At the moment of this writing we learn that the publication of *The Index* is guaranteed for a second year, by the parties in Mr. Abbot's society who suggested this enterprise, and who have stood behind it thus far. The Toledo apostleship is genuine. Good men and women gather to its support, and the good Lord does not have to go out of his way to seal it with his blessing. We heartily commend it to all who value truth, of character and of teaching, and earnestly ask our more liberal contemporaries to lend their aid to the support of our noble friend. *Send him money outright*, and bid him good-speed with his work; for he is the servant of all of us, and in justice should have our sympathy and help. His attempt to "stand squarely outside of Christianity" is, in our judgment, a sort of Messianic mistake, but we no less believe in his mission and urge his support. Such truth of character we but rarely find; such pure and perfect intellectual love of truth only the noblest minds of the race are capable of; and by "outside of Christianity" he means precisely what the most enlightened Christians signify by Christianity itself. He fully accepts the universal

element of Christianity, its religion, and only rejects the special element, its Christism, and calls this rejecting Christianity, which it is not, if there is any truth in the radical method of interpretation, the very point of which is that it uncovers the living truth of any system, plants itself on that, and from that rejects whatever in the special element is not consistent with the universal. In our next issue we shall show that Mr. Abbott is purely and rigorously Christian, in the true religious sense, and all the more so for his rejection of Jesuism, and might as well announce himself outside the solar system as outside true Christianity.

It concerns Christian interests mightily to be reconciled with such burning and shining truth as every candid observer must see in Mr. Abbot. In intellectual interest he stands with the leaders of our generation, and does not suffer by comparison with such elder masters as Emerson, Spencer, and Mill. He is now but thirty-two years of age, and six years ago he had attracted the attention of the most distinguished philosophical inquirers and teachers in this country and abroad, as a philosophical writer of great originality and power. Men of nearly or quite twice his years, philosophical thinkers of repute on the other side of the Atlantic, have sent to him, a mere youth except in commanding intellectual power, for his judgment upon their merits as candidates for distinguished philosophical positions. The quality of Mr. Abbot's intellect is even more remarkable than its singular force. Such pure interest in truth, such veracity of intelligence, such sincerity of mind, have belonged only to the masters of thought and the greatest leaders of reform. And in serene, uncompromising loyalty to the moral ideal, and rigorous application of principle to the conduct of life and the practice of every virtue, Mr. Abbot belongs with the most revered and endeared of this or any other time. Were he to call himself, from speculative doubts, an atheist, he would yet be one of the noblest and most useful among masters of religion, from the fact that his moral ideal is the truest possible image of Deity. His intense devotion to the most exact conception he can form of right is the real explanation of his resolute rejection of the Christian name; an error which is truly glorified by the spirit which accompanies it.

OUR RELIGIOUS PURPOSE.

THE editor of THE EXAMINER begs his critics to state distinctly the full extent of his religious purpose, which is,—

1. To teach a CHRISTIANITY of which the creed is contained in the words 'OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN,' and is unfolded in the doctrines of GOD'S PERFECT FATHERHOOD over all souls, the real BROTHERHOOD OF ALL MEN on earth and in the world to come, our supreme duty of LOVE TO MEN and filial LOYALTY, of trust and love, TO GOD, and INSPIRATION AND PROVIDENCE the source and guarantee, author and authority, to every one of us, of knowledge, holiness and blessedness forever.

2. To explain and prove, with sound learning and sound reasoning, the fact of error mingled with truth, from the very first, in historical Christianity, and how surely, in the exercise of Christian faith and reason, to distinguish between Christian truth and Christian error.

3. To root up the theological heathenism,—total depravity, divine wrath, damnation, and blood atonement, which choke Christian truth in orthodox teaching.

4. To expel from true Christian religion every form of Jesuism, or regard for Jesus as more than a mere man, and all Bibliolatry, or regard for the Bible as more than a collection of mere human writings.

And this to the end of plainly opening to all human feet the path of direct, obedient, and happy trust in God; and in the sincere belief that the Judaic and half-heathen Christianity of the existing sects, is doomed of God to speedy extinction.

HOW WE START.

IN making our experiment with THE EXAMINER, we gratefully and devoutly acknowledge the repeated striking providences by which we have been helped and guided thus far. Our earliest definite plans for such a publication date back to a period previous to the establishment of *The Radical*. Our immediate arrangements to bring out THE EXAMINER began with the first of May last. A single difficulty has alone remained since the last week of June, the need of \$——, the sum we thought we must add to our resources before commencing. As the end of August approached, and we still lacked this, we fixed a day on which we would make one last effort to perfect our arrangements, and on that day the needed help came. The first person we met on taking the train from our residence to Chicago, a friend to whom we had some time before spoken of our plans and our need, said to us instantly, "You may draw on me after Sept. 10th, for —— dollars," just the sum we had waited for. He had previously resolved on this, and was waiting to meet us. It came just right. We had waited none too long, and we were able to make our trial with the requisite means. Now we make our appeal to other friends, who may believe our work a good one, to give us help, not only in subscriptions, but in outright contributions, every dollar of which shall be faithfully applied to *printing and distributing* THE EXAMINER, not a cent to any other use, either of the Editor or of any one else. Friends of true Christian Religion! The time is fully ripe; the hour is exceedingly opportune; our plans, long meditated and waited for, are working perfectly; and with reasonable assistance we can secure the permanence of our enterprise beyond a doubt. We are willing to fail, if so it pleases the good providence. We should but fall back to the line of hope and faith and study from which we make this forward movement, and wait for opportunity to try again.

But there need be no such temporary failure, nor will there be, if good men and good women who want to be Christian in simple and pure love to all men and perfect trust in God, will fairly do their part towards the great work for which we establish THE EXAMINER. If ever an enterprise was born in faith, this is, and if it goes down, faith will see it fall, and patiently expect its rise, or the rise in some better shape of the grand interest which it represents.

Every subscription to THE EXAMINER will be deposited with our banker as money belonging to our subscribers, and only one-twelfth taken by us each month. If we should fail, every subscriber will receive back as many twelfths of his \$4, as he fails to get numbers of our Review.

IS THERE NO OPEN VISION?

ALL experience and study teach the wise believer to be very cautious about assuming a special providence or special inspiration. Just as far as Jesus and Paul attempted to rest in special knowledge of the secrets of heaven, they went wrong. The grand failure of Jesus to discern truly God's will, was in respect of that anticipation which proceeded from his assumption that Deity had vouchsafed special attention to *him*. Paul never blundered so badly as when he most confidently claimed to be speaking by the word of the Lord. This only is legitimate, to repose absolute faith in the providence and inspiration of Infinite Mind; to work, always, at once with this faith, and with as much diligence, vigilance and earnestness as if all depended on us; to aim at success and to anticipate it, yet with a mind ready to accept failure; and ever to give thanks, as events pass, however they may turn, or whatever they may overturn, with full assurance that the Lord the Ruler doeth all things well.

It is thus that we have striven to 'wait on the Lord,' and, never suffering ourselves beforehand to say, of either deed to be done or word to be spoken, 'in this the Lord is with us beyond peradventure or mistake,' we have grown more and more, taking successes and failures together, to feel that, for the large aim and long course of our life, we can depend on the gracious presence and heavenly providence of Infinite Mind, as implicitly as ever trusting child depended on a faithful parent, or wise prophet on the perfect inspiration of the alone supreme and blessed God.

We say this with extreme hesitation, but we venture to say it, because we want the whole class of Christian heathen and infidels, who do not believe in God here and now, and who insist that all worship shall be with knees bent and heads bowed before the idol which they have found in the person of Jesus, to understand distinctly that we BELIEVE, as earnestly and implicitly as if we knew that tongue and pen were moved by the unerring inspiration of God, and that we so believe in God, perfect providence and perfect illumination, that we would no more turn from His presence, even if a pantheon of undoubted god-men invited us, than we would turn from perfect light to utter darkness.

If Samuel, David, and Isaiah, John, Jesus, and Paul, might trust in the Lord's direction, so may we, in the full proportion of our diligence, fidelity, discipline, and instruction. So at least we do trust, and there remains with us none the least shadow of doubt, that with us, too, God is, and will be, for the same purposes of manifestation which in all ages lovers of God and prophets have served, and that we no more need pin our faith to what Jesus and Paul said, than we need walk at high noon to-day by the memory or the record of yesterday's daylight.

We have lived now more than a quarter of a century by this conviction of the direct nearness of God to soul and heart and mind in us individually, and the immediate direction of *our* life, study, work, and career, by the most holy divine providence, and for fourteen of these years we have eagerly, zealously, diligently, and fearlessly studied how to be a true prophet of pure Christian truth, how most wisely to believe, and most judiciously to correct belief by thought, and learning, and the blessed rules of holy living, and we think it right now to say to those who deny living truth in the name of tradition, that we challenge their idolatry and defy their idol, in the name of the living God and the authority of divine direction, believing firmly that "The Love of the Lord passeth all things for Illumination," and that "Wisdom, in all ages entering into holy souls, maketh them friends of God, and prophets."

THE CHICAGO ADVANCE AND THE EXAMINER.

WE have always cherished with intense satisfaction the sentiment of Christian fellowship. The illusion never forsakes us that church relations *must* be at bottom fraternal, even though fallible men administer them less as brothers than as judges and executioners. The "Church of Christ in Yale College," which was our religious home during the years when our greatest aims for life were maturing, and which at last excommunicated us for believing in God,* always rises before our imagination and love as one of our shrines of delightful communion, where we may expect, sometime if not now, to be made welcome under the immortal covenants of faith, and holiness, and love. Memories of bitter injustice, of cruel contempt, of strange coldness and harshness fade away more easily than not, and we are ready to go back there as a lover goes home to the most blessed joys.

It was this intense feeling of Christian communion which led us to wish to make a personal explanation, through the *Chicago Advance*, to the denomination under whose influences we were reared, and whose dogmatic sanctities we knew that we would be regarded as outraging by the publication of *THE EXAMINER*. To expect candid and kind treatment from the editor of the *Advance*, was indeed a stretch of faith even to our disposition to expect the best everywhere, but we resolved to make the experiment and sent a communication, which we reproduce below. In this our point was to give evidence that we had obeyed a Christian motive, and had followed

*As Father, with effective sanctifying and redeeming care of all his human children.

providential guidance and inspiration, in passing from orthodoxy to radical Christianity, and it included of course a frank and definite indication of what we meant by radical Christianity. Had the *Advance* extracted the former as a matter of fraternal kindness to us, and excluded the latter as a statement of dangerous or dreadful error unfit to lay before orthodox readers, its motives would have been defensible. Instead of this it picked out and published the most offensive part of the latter, and deliberately told a befouling and wicked falsehood about the former in the following sentence. "If a Congregationalist *forsakes his faith*, we cannot appreciate the ground upon which he should occupy our crowded columns with a statement of his *progress in religious error*; whether he become a Unitarian, a *Mormon*, a Free-Religionist, or a Positive Philosopher." Our readers can judge how unscrupulous must be the anxiety about orthodoxy which led the Editor of the *Advance* to write that sentence with our statement before him, as a response to our request to be allowed to say to fathers and brethren with whom we have the most sacred associations, that we had reached our present faith by strictly obeying, as we believed, the purest motive and highest law of *our life-long Christian faith* in God Our Father! As a notice of THE EXAMINER—350 words at the head of "Editorial Miscellany"—probably nothing could have been better, because those of the readers of the *Advance* whom we care to reach understand its tricks, and are only excited to look for a fact which they see has been concealed by a fib. But we want justice and decency, as a preparation for fraternal communion, and we give notice to irreligious and unchristian editors of theological newspapers that they will find it to their interest to *tell no lies* about us.

The following is the communication referred to above, and refused publication by the *Advance*:

Editor Advance:

DEAR SIR: I send you herewith my proposal to publish THE EXAMINER as a Monthly Review of Religious and Humane Questions, and of Literature, and an organ of what I would call Radical Christianity. And I beg leave to make in your journal a brief explanation, in view of the fact that I was reared in the Congregationalism which you represent. Some twenty years ago I was admitted to the Congregational church in St. Charles, Ill., by Rev. G. S. F. Savage. Soon after I became a student in Beloit College for above two years, and went thence to Yale College, where I was graduated in 1856. I passed the next year in New York city, teaching and studying theology, and an attendant upon the ministry of Dr. Wm. Adams, of the Madison Square Presbyterian church. The two following years I was again in New Haven, studying theology. In all these places I never so much as thought of going near heretical ministry. I never once saw an heretical book, tract, or journal, nor did I ever converse with an unorthodox person, until after I had become as fully settled in unorthodox conclusions as I am now. In New York I did not know of the existence of Drs. Osgood and Bellows, and even did not hear Henry Ward Beecher. I was wholly and absolutely under orthodox influences, sincerely and earnestly continuing my confession of hope in Christ which I had first made when I was but eight years old. In commencing theological study I set to work in the most earnest manner to put in working order the orthodox reasons for faith in the Bible as the sole and absolute rule of truth and duty, and I purposed to prepare myself in the most thorough manner possible for a strictly Biblical style of preaching,

invariable support of every point by a text, and illustration drawn as much as possible from the sacred pages. I even selected a large octavo copy of the Bible for my life's use and study, to be marked and made familiar in every page, so that preaching from it I could readily put my hand upon any passage, and be always able to drive home the sure nail with the very hammer of the Lord. Such, moreover, was the deliberate ardor of my orthodoxy that I contemplated, first, taking a five years' course of varied preparation, in view of the special demands of an unsettled state of the popular mind about Christian faith and duty, and, second, devoting myself to preaching an armed and aggressive, a confident and conquering faith, from place to place, and as nearly as possible without reward. I had earlier, I may say, meant to go as a missionary to South-west Africa, and had lost this dream under the overwhelming sense of the importance of saving the faith in our own land.

My orthodoxy came to grief all at once, in the following way: I had always had an intensely real faith in God Our Father, as he was addressed in the prayer Jesus gave to his disciples. The desire to hallow that name was a passion stronger than my life, and as sober and sustained as it was strong. Filial loyalty to God, as the Heavenly Providence and Holy Spirit of our life and our eternal destiny, was the substance and soul of my inward experience, the principle on which I built all my careful devotion to Christ, the Bible, and the Christian church. This principle became the undoing of my whole structure of orthodox dogma about depravity, wrath, atonement, hell, and the divine authority and offices of Jesus and the Bible. For as soon as my observation was once arrested by the condition of that great seething and surging mass of souls which New York city presents, I believed instantly, and without hesitation or qualification, that the Heavenly Father, by the resources of Heavenly Providence and Holy Spirit, both could and would redeem all, and that every thought, no matter if found on the lips of a Jesus or a Paul, which implied *doubt or disbelief* of this, must be an error. It was no more possible for me to challenge this expansion of my faith in God than it would be for me to prefer the light of a candle to full sunrise, even though I had to see Jesus and Paul as erring men, who had held and taught Christian truth purely in many passages, and in some had set forth error, and that God had meant us to depend on his own providence and inspiration, and had not given us Jesus as more than a mere human teacher and providential leader.

In January, 1859, after studying in New Haven Dr. Taylor's systematic and masterly exposition of the grounds of orthodoxy, and otherwise investigating the foundations of religious belief, I found myself, as I believed, as secure of my new position as possible, although I did not then know that any Christian had come to any similar conclusion, and I wrote a little tract to show where I stood, the concluding sentence of which was, "Christ was a mere man, and the speculative theology which has been taught in his name, and which he partially taught himself, must pass away before the progress of that religion of good will to men and loyalty to God which he practiced."

I have found this conclusion confirmed by more than ten years of additional study, and I now purpose to ask thoughtful attention, in the pages of THE EXAMINER, to the exposition of pure Christianity, as it is taught in the prayer of Jesus, and in the most significant spiritual passages of the Bible at large, without admixture of the errors which even Jesus did not wholly exclude, and which his followers have expanded into a system which is a veritable anti-Christ. Knowing full well that ardent faith, thorough study, and earnest looking to providence and inspiration, do not in the least entitle me to exalt myself, or claim any special authority, I do yet, declare, in the very name of God Our Father, and of the *truth* as it was in Christ, that the popular faith in "Lord Jesus," "Holy Bible," total depravity, wrath of God, devil and hell, atonement, separate communion here, and separate heaven

hereafter, is of human and heathen conceit, and not of the true Christian consciousness. This ground I shall take in *THE EXAMINER*, and am ready to defend against all dispute. If the faculty of instruction in the Chicago Theological Seminary, or any one of them, will take up the discussion, I will undertake to prove, that they are teaching heathenism in presenting for Christian truth the doctrine of Jesus as God-Man, Divine Lord, Atoning Saviour, and Final Judge, with the related doctrines of the special divine character of the Bible, the total depravity of human nature, the consuming eternal wrath of God, and the separate destiny of souls, part to heaven and part to hell.

Hoping that I may be dealt with in a fair and candid spirit, I am

Yours very truly,

EDWARD C. TOWNE,
Winnetka, Ill.

August 28, 1870.

FREE RELIGION NOT ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

It has been assumed by a portion of the public of late that free religion implies disavowal of Christianity. The *Radical* and the *Index* have been taken to represent the entire breadth of this new interpretation of religion. The course of the Executive Committee of "The Free Religious Association," in adopting the *Index* as an organ of communication with the public, has given color to this assumption. Yet nothing could be farther from the truth. The movement which the application of freedom to religion has produced is *not* in general unchristian, or antichristian, or other than avowedly and resolutely Christian, both in fact and in name. We consider even Mr. Abbot, in all but the name and certain non-essential notions, one of the lights of recent Christianity, as new studies, new insight, and new providential indications have disclosed to devout and thoughtful minds the pure truth suggested and revealed in Christ's word and life. And we strenuously insist that *free RELIGION* is pure religion, as it has occupied the heart of formal Christianity, and is now emancipated from errors of form, and disclosed in its real spirit and power.

The history of the movement which is represented nominally by "The Free Religious Association," we are entitled to write if any one is. We suggested to Rev. Dr. Bartol, after Unitarianism had settled down upon a narrow Jesuism, the propriety of a conference of radicals to consider the practicability of an organization broader than the Unitarian. And when, after two such conferences, Dr. Bartol and several others decided for action without organization, we proposed to Rev. W. J. Potter and Rev. F. E. Abbot that we three unite in a pledge to secure an organization, and that we work together as a committee to form a plan. Under that pledge we together carried the movement forward until the plan devised by our little caucus was realized in "The Free Religious Association." The other organization which has been so much spoken of, and so widely reported, "The Radical Club," of Boston, first met at our suggestion and upon our individual invitation of the persons who organized it. The term "Free Religious" was originally suggested by Mr. Potter; and the courses of lectures given in

Boston were also suggested by him after he had been appointed Secretary of "The Free Religious Association." Mr. Abbot has recently taken ground for free religion "squarely outside of Christianity," and Mr. Potter has appeared to concur with him. We do not regret Mr. Potter's action; he did just right to use the *Index*, even at the cost of seeming to identify Free Religion with the position of Mr. Abbot; but we want it understood that we at least make Free Religion identical with true Christianity, and look for its confessors in every communion, from Catholic, Calvinist, etc., to the latest forms of heresy.

A CRITICISM OF OUR AIM.

ONE of our truest radicals, an admirably Christian scholar, thinker, and man, writes to us of our position as follows:—

"I do not assent to the fundamental proposition which you intend THE EXAMINER shall support, that Free Religion is Christianity stripped of unessential opinion and tradition. I don't care to keep the Christian name—would rather have it dropped, and expect it some day to be dropped. Of course I understand your meaning, that what has given to Christianity its best vitality and power is its free and universal elements, the great spiritual realities found under all forms of religion. And to this I assent. But I see no logic in calling these universal elements by the specific name 'Christian.' Why go to the progressive Jew, or the Hindu, or the Confucian, and say 'The essential, vital truth under your religious belief is to be called Christianity?' I am content to find that it is the same with the essential and permanent in the Christian religion, and will not insist that he shall call it 'Christianity,' more than I would yield to his claim that I should call my religion 'Judaism' or 'Hinduism.' Why not take at once the large term that includes them all—universal Religion?"

Our friend very seriously misapprehends our position, which is, that we, and all others, Jews, Mahometans, Hindus, and whoever has a religion which at heart is religion, should, by radical reform, strip off what is not true religion, and make, each for his own people, a true Judaism, or true Christianity, or true Hinduism, or true Mahometanism. We could easily show our friend that Jews, Arabs, Persians, Hindus, Siamese Buddhists, and other representatives of world-religions, as well as Christians, are each freeing their respective faiths of superstition, and are appealing to their fellow believers to use each their traditional religious name as properly meaning the pure truth freed from the husk of error. We, on radical Christian ground, say to each of these faiths, hold your ground and keep your name, and let us have a world fellowship of the different religions of the earth. Our idea, when we asked our friend to join us in a resolution to secure a new organization for religious ends, and the idea we supposed the Free Religious Association was to represent, was this unity of religions with liberty and diversity both of names and of special tenets. We wanted to see all classes of Christians come together, Catholic, Calvinist, etc., etc., on a platform of generous *human* recognition of one another, and with them, if occasion should

be found, men and women of other names than the Christian. We desired to see each accept the method of radical reform, each putting his truest truth in the front, and agreeing to *hold together by that*, and to hold separately other things as each felt necessary.

Our Free Religion leaves the Catholic a Catholic, and the Hindu a Hindu, and the Moslem a Moslem, and the Jew a Jew, and the Christian a Christian, each to wear his providential name, and to have his individual peculiarities of creed and worship, until we all come in the unity of the faith unto A PERFECT MAN. But our friend, if he is logically consistent, as he seems to mean to be, must ask each of these to drop their providential name and take that of Free Religionist, or universal Religionist. If, to use Mr. Abbot's language, he proposes to "stand squarely outside of Christianity," he must also stand squarely outside of the other great religions, or else go squarely into some one of them. Assuming that he has not found any of these religions "a good place to emigrate to," and that he sees the logic of his position, he really helps to set up, as far as his nominal relations are concerned, a very small new sect, in fact making Free Religion a Boston and Toledo notion, and doing this none the less although those engaged in it *feel* as broad and liberal as all out of doors. Our friend in short squares off against all the religions of the world, nominally, while we accept our Christian name and place, with all the other world-religions. He and we alike hold, and work for, the truth of pure *free* RELIGION, and sympathize with it wherever found, but he declines, or would prefer to drop out of, nominal relation to Christians, while we adhere to that relation, and do it on a principle which warrants the Jew, the Hindu, the Moslem, and other religionists of the world in keeping each to his own name and fellowship, as God has made them to dwell on all the face of the earth.

This principle is really radical and free, it makes the name a name only, and gives freedom of names and peculiarities. Our friend's principle is neither radical nor free, for it does not allow perfect liberty as to names, and it insists, not merely on the root of pure truth, but on a correct name, thus creating a kind of Free Religious orthodoxy which is all about a name. Especially if this is carried to the extreme point made by Mr. Abbot, that none are truly and honestly Christian who do not take Jesus as Messiah, it gives Free Religion an attitude not merely of strictness but of bigotry. We have a perfect right to judge for ourselves how to be honest Christians, and our friend misses the radical mark exceedingly when he makes the ado he does about other people's honesty. It is done with a nobly pure purpose, but it ought to be left undone nevertheless. We consider it *our duty* to stay under the Christian name, and make Christianity mean Free Religion.

We do in this matter as Theodore Parker did in the matter of American politics. He took his part as an American citizen, and worked to make "American" mean justice to all men. Mr. Phillips was working for the same thing, but refused all citizen relations, on the ground that "American" did not mean justice. He was for breaking up the national fellowship, while Mr. Parker was for purging it. Our friend and Mr. Abbot take just the ground about Christianity which Mr. Phillips took about the Constitution

and the Union. It turned out that Mr. Parker was the true prophet. The course of events purged the nation and left it united. Does anybody wish Mr. Phillips could have had his way, to break the country in two, one part to be free, and the other to be securely slave with no abolition fellow-citizens to molest or make them afraid? We are for purging Christianity, not seceding from it. Even excommunicated we claim and will hold our place. And it is as sure as fate that Christianity will be purged, as our nation was purged, and made to mean *free* RELIGION. The other religions also will be purged in like manner. Whether some of the great names will fall, we neither know nor care. Possibly they may. But if they do not, and probably they will not, we can still have religion free and pure in all the great divisions of the race.

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S IDEA OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE acute English critic, Matthew Arnold, who certainly deserves to rank with the most thoughtful men of the present generation, lays down the following principle of Christian confession: "The Christian Church is founded, not on a correct speculative knowledge of the ideas of Paul, but on the much surer ground, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*; and holding this to be so, we might change the current strains of theology from one end to the other, without on that account setting up any new church, or bringing in any new religion."—St. Paul and Protestantism, p. 10.

It is not meant of course by this that the text quoted originally averred the sufficiency of a simply moral basis for Christian communion, but that "Christian" now means, above all things, good, and that this emphatic meaning we are to accept as from the inspiration and providence of God, as the fundamental sense of the word. A venerable Puritan minister, in the old town of Medford, near Boston.—Dr. David Osgood,—said fifty years and more ago, to some persons who began to suspect their pastor of heresy, "If your minister is a good man let him alone." In so saying he anticipated what must become the view of all enlightened Christian minds. Goodness is the root of the matter. There is no more significant Christian word than the injunction to be perfect, and this injunction is no less significant taken by itself, apart from the appeal to the divine character. The threshold of Christian teaching is the rule of good will, the commandment to love one another. Therefore it is necessary to begin with this, and to build upon it. And, if need be, we may come back to this for determining and regulating Christian communion, and may always insist that this is sufficient for real fellowship, and that all good men are truly Christian.

This being said, however, we deem it important, because truth and fact so require, to include in complete Christian confession the faith in God, and loyalty to God, implied in the terms of the prayer "Our Father." No more signif-

icant passage could be cited from the original memorials of historical Christianity than this prayer. If Jesus had the smallest conception of his mission, he must have touched the heart of the matter in teaching his disciples to pray, and cannot have left out of that prayer the main point of religion. Happily that prayer exactly represents the ordinary frame of mind in which profoundly religious persons do actually bend in devotion. As Mr. Emerson says, speaking of Reason, the Creator, the Spirit of the Universe, "Man in all ages and countries embodies it as the Father." And it is perhaps truest to say that Christianity has no greater claim to recognition than its distinct and emphatic utterance of the words GOD OUR FATHER.

MR. ABBOT ON FOLLOWING CHRIST.

"THERE is one more way, however, to interpret the command, 'Follow Me,' namely, '*Do as the spirit of Christ would prompt you to do.*' If this means simply, let the same spirit of obedience to principle, self-sacrifice, courage, and love, which controlled Jesus, also control us, — well and good. But then I must say that this is not, in any true sense, '*following his example;*' it is following the spirit which *made* his example, — obeying the law which he also obeyed."

This illustrates strikingly a way which Mr. Abbot has of using, and insisting on, a method of interpretation which is to us neither free nor religious, but strangely secular and strict. The only true sense in religion, especially when we appreciate that religion *must* be free, of following either Jesus or the example of Jesus, is that of adopting *the ideal suggested by* his character and life, the spirit disclosed to us in his deeds and words. It is not even necessary, nor so much as permissible, to *exactly* adopt his ideal, and closely conform to his precise spirit, if we find that any part of either appears incongruous with the general purport of the same, and no longer possible to be obeyed by a soul truly obedient in general to the identical heavenly vision which caught and fixed the eye of the young Nazarene. While Mr. Abbot is insisting that the usual strict orthodox way of interpreting Jesus is the true way, great numbers of liberal orthodox believers, in and out of pulpits, books, and religious papers, are finding freedom and simple pure religion in looking to Jesus precisely as they look to teachers and masters other than him; for suggestion of how best to seek God directly without either master or mediator other than the Truth manifested to their own souls, as a true free thinker looks to Socrates, not to servilely copy him, nor to *copy* him at all, but to get inspiration for doing likewise, with such difference as a like effort will now be sure to find necessary. It is a great pity that Mr. Abbot should look at Christianity through orthodox spectacles, and insist that what he sees bears no aspect of Free Religion, when in fact the clear upshot of Christianity is Free Religion, and numberless persons in every quarter of Christendom see it to be so, and hail the discovery with infinite delight.

THE OLD CHRISTIAN TEST AND THE NEW.

"We believe it is admitted by all sects, that in the first age of the church pure living was the test, the distinguishing mark, of a Christian. It was only later, after the philosophers had been at work at the faith, that doctrines or points of belief assumed the importance they have since held. In the first century, and second century, a man proclaimed his faith in Christ by his morals, and the principal vices of paganism were of a nature to make the line between the church and the world very broad and distinct. Those vices were cruelty and licentiousness."—*The Nation*, June 16, p. 379.

The distinguishing mark of a Christian of the *first* age was that he believed Jesus to have been the Christ. Other points of belief which eminently distinguished him were, that Jesus had risen from the dead and would speedily appear as Messianic King in all the terrors and glories of supernatural power, that he would bring a material, political, moral and spiritual regeneration of the earth, that this sudden change of all things would be destruction and horror to all enemies of the kingdom and deliverance and glory to all who looked in faith for its appearing, and that in view of these things it was but prudent and decent to live moral and pious lives, trusting God in his Christ for the sake of salvation, and loving the brethren who might be brought together by this trust.

No such thing as pure living for its own sake was anywhere characteristic of the primitive Christians. A Paul, indeed, felt the power of the moral ideal, and also adored God as God, in the spirit of simple, pure religion. But even he did this only out of his occasional highest inspiration, rising far above the average level of his teaching and his practice, while his disciples were almost exclusively ruled to such decency of life as they attained, by those points of belief which we have mentioned, the doctrines of early Jesusism, which had engaged their ignorant and superstitious assent, and had wrought in them a measure of piety and brotherly love.

In very many classes, and on a very wide scale, the faith of the first age was even scandalously separate from pure religion in either heart or life. It was a mere fanaticism, a detestable superstition, the faith of those who forgot God and goodness equally in looking for a King of terrors, a Jesus more Devil than either human or divine, whose mission it would be to execute indiscriminate vengeance upon the mass of men and receive a few devotees to everlasting enjoyment. Unhappily, it was possible to cite supposed words of Jesus and undoubted sentences of Paul, in support of even this wretchedly heathen type of Christianity.

It might be said of certain pagan teachers, previous to or contemporary with primitive Christianity, that they made pure living of chief importance. But this cannot be said of Paul, nor even Jesus; not because either of them failed to see the intrinsic worth of goodness and power of godliness, but for the reason that both the master and the apostle put the groundless Messianic expectation in the foreground.

Happily Paul stands on quite other ground, on great heights of Christian inspiration and prophecy in fact, in several of the most significant passages

of his letters; and Jesus still more, led astray though he was in the presence of that Jewish world which at once promised and demanded a Messiah rather than a simple teacher of truth, must have been chiefly attracted, in his better moments of meditation and prayer, by the pure vision only of God and of good, and he certainly came in the moment of his great trial, the single purely Christian moment of his *outward* career, to give up the delusion of Messiahship, and rest all faith in the will of God.

The truth was *in* Jesus and Paul, and can be clearly seen in them, but the *characteristic* thing with them was the Jesuism which received so hard a blow in Gethsemane, and is now at last fairly dying, after a career of vast mischief through eighteen centuries. Side by side with the slow progress of truth in her narrow path, has run the comprehensive error of the Nazarene carpenter and the Cilician tent-maker, so that only now does it begin to be true that "Christian" first and chiefly means *pure in heart*.

A new Christianity, latent in that of the first age, and never lost out of the pure hearts which have kept undefiled truth under all the forms of pseudo-Christianity, is so clearly manifested within a few years, that it is now possible to speak of Christians whose sole distinguishing mark is pure living. The professors of accredited Christianity do not generally admit that this new Christianity is veritably Christian, but philosophical observers, and nearly all emancipated or rational believers, justly claim, and joyfully proclaim, this sifted and pure truth of Christ, the only Christianity worthy the name.

Of course such Christianity does not take its name from the person, pretension, or characteristic teaching of Jesus, nor from its affinity with what is called "*The Christian Religion*," but from its fulfilment of the providential ideal of the Christianity and the Christ of history, its expression of what was suggested, and was meant of God, in Jesus, and was destined to be unfolded out of the tradition propagated in his name. In this it stands towards the teaching of Jesus as that stood toward Judaism; it is a new birth, another regeneration, leaving the form of the old to more perfectly fulfil its pure truth and vital power.

SOME RECENT VIEWS OF JESUS.

M. EDOUARD REUSS, the accomplished author of "*Histoire de la Théologie Chrétienne au Siècle Apostolique*," said of Renan's "*Vie de Jésus*," that it had popularized a study hitherto confined to theologians, and made the question of who and what Jesus was one of the common topics of free discussion everywhere. He anticipated that all sorts of people would feel called to give the public the benefit of their impressions and convictions, and that thus a great movement of new inquiry would bring its powerful aid to the solution of the evangelic problem. These expectations of a thoughtful scholar, expressed in 1864, in the preface to the third edition of

the "Histoire" mentioned above, have been more than realized. And, as M. Reuss intimated, every sort of advocate has entered the field.

Last year Mr. Wendell Phillips undertook a kind of vindication of the Christ of popular tradition, the Messiah of whatever progress eighteen centuries can show. Rev. F. E. Abbot, who is now editing the *Index* at Toledo, as the organ of religion emancipated from Christian associations, has found himself impelled to disown Christian fellowship, and to rate Jesus as unworthy the name of master in any sense whatever. Mrs. Julia Ward Howe not long since lifted up her voice, to rebuke the hardy recusant of Toledo, and to certify her esthetic and pious approval of the figure presented to her imagination in connection with the name of Jesus. And about the same time Mr. D. A. Wasson, a very acute thinker, who is also not a little gifted as a poet, earnestly attempted to shelter the ideal Jesus from the rude blows of free religious discussion.

The singular defect of all the pleas just mentioned is their lack of conformity to the best results of recent sound scholarship. In Mr. Abbot's argument against respect of any sort for the authority of Jesus as a religious master, there occur citations of reported words of Jesus which ought never to be made again, and never will be made again by any both fair and well-informed critic. Mr. Abbot does not lack fairness, nor is he, for a writer who has devoted himself chiefly and with the highest success to philosophical speculation, without a highly creditable acquaintance with the results of New Testament criticism. But he does lack a portion of the knowledge which should have preceded his renunciation of Christian connection, a renunciation for which he will certainly find no enduring warrant in either the method or the tenets of a sound free thinker. There can be no question, we believe, that the candor and broad sympathy with noble effort which are conspicuous in Mr. Abbot, will bring him at length to give the young peasant rabbi of Nazareth a place among the providential masters of the human race. He speaks still of "the wonderful religious genius," "the transcendent greatness," of Jesus, terms which he may find occasion to drop as he becomes more intimately acquainted with the real man whom Pilate crucified, and whom inscrutable Providence made the standard-bearer of a great movement of mankind, but a closer knowledge of the facts of a simple and humble life, and of the incidents and accidents to which peculiar circumstances gave momentous significance, can hardly fail to convince him that, without any particular greatness of either intellect or character, the child of Joseph and Mary fairly obtained, and must always hold among men on earth, one of the greatest providential places of human history. Think what we may of the powers or the qualities, of the ideas or the purposes of Jesus, it is absurd to strike out his name everywhere, or to undertake to stand outside a definite relation to him.

The warm, and somewhat arrogant pleas of Mr. Phillips and Mrs. Howe can barely command respect with anyone accustomed to study, thoroughly

and without passion, all the historical aspects of the question who and what Jesus was. It was of course extremely easy for either the orator or the lady to take a high tone, sustained as they were in so doing by all the popular assumptions, and to rehearse the claims of Jesus, the one with fascinating eloquence, the other with half-angry dignity. But even Mr. Phillips errs egregiously if he supposes that any amount of confidence and of eloquence can make an utterance respectable, as thinkers and scholars count respect, which is made in nearly total ignorance of the facts elicited by the noble and fruitful labors of recent scholarship. The field is not one for brilliant generalization, but rather for a special knowledge to be had only upon thorough study and long meditation. No one could make general observations upon the appearances presented by Christianity now and formerly, to better popular purpose than Mr. Phillips, but unfortunately the particular demand of the discussion is for a true account of what took place before any of these now visible appearances had yet been seen, and for historical truth which must beyond a doubt offend the popular faith. Mr. Phillips, therefore, made an ill-advised and no way useful attempt to deliver a judgment where he had yet to possess himself of information. And like most persons who think they know beyond a question, because current tradition is on their side, he is probably prepared to resent the suggestion of his ignorance. He doubtless has never even heard of the books to which we should refer him as sources of knowledge. So runs the religious world, but the time of the end of this is not, we trust, far distant.

The treatment which Mr. Wasson gave to the theme "Jesus and Christianity," was that of an idealist far too little conscious of the sober facts of history. It is solely in the exercise of a generous imagination that he assures us that the Hebrew hope of a Messiah had become refined and spiritualized before Jesus came upon the scene, approaching the typical idea of history, and that this hope, thus refined, furnished the ideal elements by which the mind of Jesus was nourished, until he imagined a divine society here on earth, made so by the unqualified sway of ethical law, and was so possessed by this holy imagination as to think himself more than an individual being, and to feel in his own exalted soul, in his "world-great heart," the tides of infinite and eternal life; while around him were gathered "popular imaginations large enough" to recognize and accept "a soul so amazingly magnanimous." It would give us great pleasure to see the evidence on which Mr. Wasson pronounces Jesus "an imperial soul," and the historical ground for his assumption that the young Nazarene enthusiast expected "a reign of morals pure and simple," not the reign of an individual, nor of a nation. Still more curious are we to see in what light other than of imagination the simple folk who gathered about Jesus appear to Mr. Wasson as "large popular imaginations." Doubtless there was imagination enough in the circle of those who handed down the report of Jesus's life and teaching, but unhappily it wrought more in the way of invention than of recognition, and obscured, a great deal more than it disclosed, the truth of history.

THE FAILURE OF THE PULPIT.

THE *Independent*, discussing "the wide and ever widening breach between modern preaching and modern culture," attempts the following disposition of the question:

"A great deal of the dissatisfaction expressed by educated men with the manner and matter of modern preaching is only one form in which the revolt of the age against all theology, and indeed against all preaching whatsoever, whether good or bad, finds vent for itself. It is not the sermon, it is Christianity which is objected to. This is explicitly admitted by the writer in the *Spectator* of whom we have spoken [as having "stated the prevalent indictment of cultivated men against makers of sermons."] 'About the sermon,' he says, 'I am about to state honestly what I believe thousands of men feel secretly. I dislike good sermons just as much as bad. I do not want to be lectured, even by a great lecturer. I object to the usual basis of the very best sermon ever delivered in a Christian church.' It is only fair, then, to a great and most laborious and devoted profession, to indicate where the trouble really lies. A great many cultivated people at present do not like to hear preaching. . . chiefly, we think, because much of the cultivated mind of this age has become alienated from the old faith, and is throwing itself forth, this way and that, in an agony of bewilderment, baffled energy and discontent. . . . If every preacher of this age could preach like Paul, preaching would continue to be an impertinence and a bore to those whose minds have swung away from that system of belief which constitutes the basis of all Christian preaching, good or bad."

The truly Christian mind cannot help objecting decidedly to the assumptions of the pulpit. The perfect Christian attitude is that of filial consciousness of Our Father, and absolute, direct trust in him. The pulpit claims, not merely a hearing, to speak of God, but authority, to speak for God. It assumes to lecture the hearer, in the name of unquestionable dogma, when religion, justly interpreted, knows nothing of such dogma, and deems the assertion of dogmatic authority an outrage upon spiritual freedom. So long, therefore, as pseudo-Christianity dictates the tone of the pulpit, and the sermon assumes the right of the preacher to proclaim dogma, instead of promote free inquiry and persuade to free faith, so long must the first assumption of the pulpit be hateful to truly religious minds.

Further than this, the "system of belief" which constitutes the customary basis of preaching, has justly lost its hold upon the cultivated Christian mind of the age, to which total depravity, wrath of God, damnation, blood atonement, godhead of a young Jew, and infallibility of Hebrew and Christian books, with transmission of same by ignorant and prejudiced interpreters, are superstitions as arrant as any the world ever saw. Until, therefore, preachers shall consent to be truly Christian, to believe in God and in man with some spirit and truth, and to thoroughly discriminate the husk of Christianity from its truth, and offer truth only to truth-loving souls, the providence and inspiration of our time will more and more set aside the pulpit.

We suggest to *The Independent*, which we believe means to find and to follow the truth, a study of Christian CONCEIT and Christian SUPERSTITION, as causes of the failure of the pulpit. The public ministry of religion is certain to be welcome to the cultivated classes, and to all other classes, when it shall be made even tolerably worthy of respect. We also beg to assure our contemporary that the cultivated mind of this age, which is indeed 'alienated from the old faith,' is not in the least unhappy in its new situation. We have had the opportunities of a pronounced heretic, during ten or twelve years, to observe the real truth of this matter; we have besides gathered evidence out of recent literature in all directions; and we know that nothing could be more ridiculous than the statement that new belief is in an agony of bewilderment. Orthodox writers should reflect that they learn of the exceptions only, and are not in a position to know what new believers usually may feel.

THE NEED OF A FREE DIVINITY SCHOOL.

ONE of the first and greatest needs of religious and human progress in America is a well endowed and appointed FREE RELIGIOUS DIVINITY SCHOOL. We have canvassed the matter pretty thoroughly, during the past few years, and fully believe that this Free School of Truth must be, and that it will be. The great cause of spiritual emancipation has many liberal friends, who do not lack means to carry into effect any wise purpose which they may form. To secure this, it only needs to make evident the nature of the opportunity now open, to wealth and faith and learning and zeal, to organize thinking and believing people everywhere into free societies, under free teachers and pastors; and to show the necessity to this end, and the practicability, of a well endowed and appointed FREE RELIGIOUS DIVINITY SCHOOL. We will not at this time argue the matter. Our present purpose is only to propound it, and we propound it in fervent hope and full faith. Right here perhaps on this shore of Lake Michigan, from which we write, not remote from the great city of the West, yet among scenes of pure nature eminently suitable, we may yet see a great FREE SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, such as the world has not yet had. The sum of TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS ought to be immediately devoted to this grand purpose, and this generation ought not to pass away without increasing this endowment to ONE MILLION DOLLARS, to adequately provide for complete, free instruction in religion, in all its branches, and adequate aid of every sort to students seeking the sacred ministry of divine truth. In the whole of Christendom there is hardly one respectable theological school. The greatly dishonest purpose to conceal, to evade, and every way to maintain the creed in vogue by means which equally lack veracity and courage, ought to render them in general morally disreputable. There are few in which inadvertent falsification is not the art of arts. And to support it is the dark spirit whose foul words are "devil," "hell," "damnation," ever ready to kill off, by ban if not by burning, any teacher

or student who is led, in the sincerest and strictest development of his deepest Christian faith, to believe better of God than the current creeds allow. And these creeds are still a refuge of lies about man and about God, theological old wives' fables begotten of the darkness of heathenism, and totally unfit to convey the grace and truth of Christianity. True Christian Religion has waited long enough; let there be one housetop from which to proclaim the pure truth which Jesus whispered in the ear of Judea more than eighteen hundred years ago.

In venturing to bring to public notice a bare proposition, we yield to a sense of the extreme urgency of an interest which has no representative yet among religious organizations, or none prepared to appreciate the situation, and to take action promptly and with energy. We do not hesitate because of the possibility, or even probability, that no immediate answer will come. We more than half believe in the prophetic office, and think it in this matter at least our solemn duty to say to our generation of scattered believers in the future of free religion, A MILLION OF MONEY WANTED FOR A FREE RELIGIOUS DIVINITY SCHOOL.

DR. MCCOSH IN BOSTON.

THE *N. Y. Tribune* thinks Free Religion will probably find a defender, against a late tremendous assault of Dr. McCosh, in "that deep thinker, uncommon scholar, and courageous woman, Mrs. Howe." It is difficult to understand what the *Tribune* means by deep thought, uncommon scholarship, and courage in religion, when it finds these in the estimable woman named, three of whose striking characteristics are conservative timidity about departure from tradition as it has come to her, the dogmatism of very insufficient study, and opinion *not* obtained by profound meditation nor expressed usually with the spirit of real thought. The *Tribune* seems not aware that Mrs. Howe is more an exponent of traditional Christianity than of Free Religion, and that at least fifty persons might be named in New England more likely than she to undertake an effective defence of Free Religion, even if she chanced to be drawn into the controversy on that side.

As for Dr. McCosh, a rude schoolman who knows no better than to assault sunlight with paving-stones, and whose utmost achievement is to darken with dust air which will clear itself as soon as his back is turned, we hold him, on his own ground, greatly inferior to such ripe scholars and sound thinkers as Rev. Samuel Johnson or Rev. W. J. Potter, though doubtless in tremendous bluster he can do more in six lectures than they in six thousand. A certain massive and portentous ignorance, a hopeless failure of perception, characterize Dr. McCosh. Had he lived in America even, still more had he passed some years in Boston, and suffered himself to open his eyes occasionally, it is possible that he would know a little something about the nature and ground of Free Religion. As it is, his voice is the roar of a blind son of Anak, noticeable only as so much noise. He has no more intelligence of the spirit-

uality, pure fervor of soul, and richness of faith which are found in the Free Religious leaders, than a cannon has of the glory of sunlight under which nature renews her life. It is highly probable that whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report, will continue to be thought on, and to be most inspiringly discoursed of, among Free Religious believers in Boston, in spite of the lectures of Dr. McCosh. Grace and truth do not perish out of the hearts of men and women because of deafening noise in a Methodist meeting-house, any more than violets and roses fade and die because of a columbiad fired off at Charlestown navy yard.

VICIOUS PIETY.

“THE vices of our time—that is, of a commercial and scientific age—are fraud, chicanery, falsehood, and over-eagerness in pursuit of material enjoyment, and scepticism as to the existence of anything higher or better. . . . Great numbers of the knaves of our time are in the church, and even active in it, and call themselves ‘Christians’ as a help in their business.”—*The Nation*, June 16, p. 379.

It would be more exact to say of the pious knaves of our time, that they profess strict orthodox faith in “the blood of Jesus,” and confess a hope of redemption through “the atonement alone,” without merit of good works. And more than this, knavery finds a chance in the mind of many tempted confessors of this doctrine, to whom it seems quite easy to be rascals in trade and redeemed sinners through Christ. It is but one trick and lie at a time, and the fount of absolution is close by, always open to faith, and the more open the greater the sinner’s demerit. Life becomes a plunge into the smut of mammon by day, and a bath of absolution at night. Many practical men bear witness that a man who puts forward an “evangelical” profession, among men of the world, either as mere profession or for persuasion, is commonly either too weak to be trusted amid temptations, or is already tricky, or mean, or knavish.

SECULARISM AS RELIGION.

SECULARISM is vastly powerful [in England] among those of the working classes who do make the attempt to think on the most serious questions of life. It would appear that Secularist societies have spread a net-work of complete organization over the land, have an effective system of tract distribution, and command eloquent and persuasive lecturers, who know the working classes well, and gain the more ready access to them on the ground of this knowledge.”—*The Sunday Magazine*.

This is called “infidelity” and a “gigantic evil,” by the editor whose statement we quote. For our part we deem “those of the working classes who make the attempt to think on the most serious questions of life” more faithful to their light than any of the Christian sects. Furthermore, they are truer to the Christian foundation than these sects. They begin right,

with the religion of duty. They come nearer doing the things taught in the Sermon on the Mount than any man does who goes apart from mankind to seek his own salvation. But even if they did not, they are honest men and women, who think seriously, believe sincerely, and labor earnestly, and that, too, with the heaviest troubles of life pressing particularly upon them, and we deem it only decent to bid them good-speed, and think them well started on the right way, especially as there is a God, who made these men and women, and quite likely is looking after them at least as well as we could, and possibly has lent them his inspiration and providence even for getting up a religion whose sole deity and heaven are *the doing of duty* in common daily life. It seems to us more important that such practical religion should flourish than that the Pharisaism of sects should survive. We do not deem Secularism a perfect form of religion, but we do think it better than any form of popular Christianity. It is to us among the cheering evidences that God Almighty has a little the start of his Grace of Canterbury, and his Holiness of Rome, and the various potentates of dogma and custom, that Secularism lies like a rock under the troubled sea of English life, a "gigantic" adherence of the common people to the doctrine that it pays to do right even if death is, as the poor old Bible so often implies, a final rest.

DR. MACLEOD ON BUDDHISM.

REV. NORMAN MACLEOD, D. D., a distinguished Scotch divine whose Christianity has been for some time growing less and less dogmatic, and more and more humane, speaks as follows of Buddhism, in connection with his account of a visit to a Buddhist temple in Ceylon :

"It was interesting to see, even once, a temple with its living worshippers representing a religion which, though now extinct in India, yet still commands the faith and reverence of hundreds of millions in Ceylon, Thibet, Burmah, and China. I cannot think, from the laws of the human mind, that their *heart-belief* is that they are to be so absorbed into the divine essence, or Nirvana, as practically to destroy all individual existence. . . A religion which denied the immortality of a living God, or of living men, could not possibly live from age to age in the heart-convictions of a large portion of the human race, so opposed is such a negation to the instincts and cravings of human nature. Either human nature has no such moral instincts, or Buddhists have no such religion."

When the "New Logic," as we have been accustomed to name it, shall be written, it will fully justify Dr. Macleod's assumption that Buddhism, whatever it may say, does not, and cannot, mean anything either foolish or bad, in its great doctrine of the final relation of all being to the divine essence. We make the quotation here, however, to call attention to Dr. Macleod's way of looking at the matter. He speaks of these Buddhists as of human brothers, and interprets by sympathy and faith, instead of doubt and hatred. Instead of grasping the usual orthodox side-arm, the tomahawk, with an evident savage desire to hew in pieces before the Lord his pagan fellows, he extends

a Christian right hand of fellowship. There is, in the kindness with which he speaks, no Pharisaism as of one who wishes the Buddhists well yet expects them to be damned nevertheless, but a generous charity, and comprehension, which hopeth all things and believeth all things. This is Christian; the other method is anti-Christian, and none the less so because commonly employed by those who claim exclusive knowledge of Christian truth.

SAKYA-MUNI AND ATHEISM.

"THE atheism of Sakya-Muni has been asserted by eminent scholars, whose judgment I am not entitled to controvert, though quite unable to accept it."—*D. A. Wasson*. "The testimony of the most competent scholars certainly seems to us decisive in this case, as we have no knowledge of the original sources of information. But perhaps the fact does not harmonize with Mr. Wasson's theories, and this may be the reason for discarding it. . . . If Mr. Wasson has any better reasons (than "I want to" and "because") for setting aside the verdict of scholars in a question of scholarship, we fail to see them."—*F. E. Abbot* in reply to Mr. Wasson.

Mr. Abbot's failure herein we are sorry for. The overwhelming presumption, established by all thorough study of religions, is, that the human mind has ever sought, and never unsuccessfully, to find God. Therefore it is perfectly legitimate to suspect of insufficiency the study which reports Sakya-Muni an atheist, and to decline to accept it, even while modestly confessing not knowledge enough of the studies in question to otherwise prove Sakya-Muni a theist. Mr. Abbot entirely forgets the dignity of the discussion, as well as fails conspicuously to appreciate a significant point, when he accuses Mr. Wasson of holding a profound conviction with no better reasons than "I want to" and "because," which he (Mr. A.) quotes from a small boy of his acquaintance.

DR. STEBBINS'S DEMAND.

REV. R. P. STEBBINS, D. D., is energetically arguing for a conservative policy among Unitarians, on the ground that this is in harmony with the antecedents of the Unitarian body. He lamentably forgets, as conservative Christians of every school do, that regeneration, birth out of the old into the new, is the supreme law of genuine Christianity. There never has been, and never can be,—certainly was not in Jesus and Paul, and probably is not in Stebbins and Hepworth,—any form for religion except a human form. This human form is inevitably more or less imperfect, and also more or less stamped with peculiarities of time, place, and people, which make it good for that time, place and people, but not so good for another time and place, and other people. Hence the necessity of constant change, with effort at least for improvement. Dr. Stebbins has had occasion enough to know this. He some years since became disgusted with the failure of Unitarian parishes to appreciate the sullen roar of his heavy guns, and their decided preference

of light rifled cannon, which the old columbiad says take polish because they are made of brass. As Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, after leaving his last parish, Dr. Stebbins succeeded in nothing so well as in stirring up a general determination to get rid, at all costs, of his portentous and dismal imitation of orthodoxy, and to put in his place a man who, while no less conservative in doctrine perhaps, had the sense to see that the young and agile intelligences of the new generation cannot be expected to repeat the heavy gait and severe mien of elder Puritanism. A new time must have new methods and new men. We advise grandpa Stebbins to quit roaring and storming about it.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED.

The Contemporary Review (Strahan & Co., London and New York) is in some respects the most interesting and valuable publication of the kind accessible to English-speaking readers. It represents the liberal element in the Church of England, than which no section of existing Christian communion is more worthy of respect, whether for Christian studies or Christian graces. Dissenting of course from its continued recognition of Jesuism as essential to Christianity, we yet would be glad to see so admirable an organ of truly Christian inquiry in the hands of every clergyman in the land. We know of nothing among religious reviews equally attractive and instructive to general readers with this representative of the broader scholarship and more genial piety of the English national church. The publishers would render a great service to religion in America if they would put an American edition into our market, at a moderate price.

The August issue of the *Contemporary* contains an article by Dean Stanley on "The Athanasian Creed," some points of which we wish to lay before our readers. We premise that this famous creed is peculiar for the dogmatic harshness with which it sets forth the doctrine of the Trinity, and the rigor with which it declares the sure damnation to eternal fire of all who hesitate to fully accept that fiction of theological speculation. It, as a binding creed, is substantially held still by all orthodox belief, as it must be so long as Jesus is made a God-Man and Lord and Saviour, and so long as 'He that believeth not shall be damned' (Mark xvi. 16), is read as a text of Christian truth. Originally, to use the language of "The English Cyclopædia," this creed "was received by the free conviction of the churches that it contained a correct exposition of Christian doctrine;" the very way in which the authority of the Bible, and the divine truth of all orthodox dogmas, were originally set up among Christians. By the same general authority of the Christian church, this creed was ascribed to Athanasius, the great theologian of the fourth century, precisely as the fourth gospel was ascribed to the apostle John. Nobody ever pretended to really prove the ability of primitive

Christians to detect godhead in Jesus and divinity in gospels and epistles; that ability has been loosely assumed; and how much the assumption is worth we can judge from Dean Stanley's remarks on "The Creed of St. Athanasius." He says, —

"Its first reception and actual use in Christendom is one of the most remarkable instances of those literary mistakes (not in the first instance a deliberate forgery, in the vulgar sense of the word) which have exercised so great an influence over the history of the Church. It is to be classed in this respect with the works of Dionysius the Areopagite, which formed the basis of the popular notions of the Celestial Hierarchy; with the false Decretals of the early Popes, or early Emperors, which formed the basis of the Pontifical power. Under the shadow of a great name it crept, like those other documents, into general acceptance; and then, when that shadow was exorcised by the spell of critical inquiry, still retained the place which it had won under false pretences. Through the Middle Ages it was always quoted as his work. At the time of the Reformation, the name of the champion of Christian orthodoxy still dazzled the vision of the Reformers. In the Augsburg Confession, and in the Thirty-nine Articles, in the Belgic and in the Bohemian Confessions, in the 'Ecclesiastical Polity' of Hooker, it is unhesitatingly received as the 'Creed of St. Athanasius.' No one at that time entertained any doubt of its authorship. The very year of its composition was fixed; the very hole in the Abbey of S. Maximin, near the Black Gate at Treves, was pointed out as the spot where Athanasius had written it in the concealment of his western exile. Yet it is now known with absolute certainty not only that Athanasius never did write it, but never could have written it. The language in which it was composed was probably unknown to him. We shall see, as we proceed, that the terminology which it employs was condemned by him. It contains at least one doctrine which he would have repudiated. But . . . the treatise of the unknown author who composed this, in some respects, anti-Athanasian Creed, has been embalmed for posterity by its early ascription to the Father of orthodoxy. . . . By the magic of his name this confession, of unknown and ambiguous character, found its way into the Western Church, and has been kept alive and retained a charmed existence after its real character had been discovered. . . . The history of the reception of the Creed of St. Athanasius is like the parallel history of the reception of the Pope's Infallibility — 'gangrened with imposture; not willful imposture it may be, not conscious fraud, but still leaving it so destitute of historical foundation as to render doubly imperative the duty of testing its claims to authority by its own intrinsic merits.'"

These last strong words are fully justified by the facts. And not only are they applicable where Dean Stanley applies them, but over the whole field of ecclesiastical and theological support of accredited Christianity. That support is gangrened with imposture, not willful it may be, not conscious and deliberate fraud, but still leaving it so destitute of honest foundation in any *truth* ever taught as to render absolutely imperative the duty of testing all claims of Christianity to authority by the intrinsic merits of its teaching, as reason and faith can take cognizance of these.

AN EVANGELICAL INSTANCE.

IN the article from which we have quoted above, Dean Stanley says that "it was expected, almost wished (by certain orthodox leaders in England), that a frightful, sudden death, such as that which befel Arius in the streets of Constantinople [who was believed by one party to have been killed by God in answer to orthodox prayers], would be inflicted on an eminent scholar who had come to take his part in making better understood the Holy Scriptures, and in kneeling with his brethren around the table of their common Lord. . . Sentiments like these . . . are the natural fruits of the ancient damnatory spirit of the age whence those clauses originated. The meaning of the clauses is now reduced, by 'considerable intellectual caution' to something much more like the spirit of the Gospel. But, to anyone who accepts them in their full sense, or who is influenced by their intention, it is only natural that the persons against whom they are believed to be directed should be viewed with unspeakable horror. A man, of whom we are unhesitatingly able to say that, 'he shall, without doubt, perish everlastingly,' must be the most miserable of human beings—to be avoided, not only in sacred, but in common intercourse, as something too awful to be approached or spoken of."

DUTY WITHOUT HEAVEN.

"THE doing of duty without any hope of a future is a daring but a dreary faith," says the editor of *The Sunday Magazine*, in commenting on the Secularist confession of faith. Let each speak for himself. We can testify that there is an inexpressible, heavenly blessedness in giving up all hope of reward, future as well as present, to do present duty, and that the gloomier the outlook from the post of duty has seemed, the more would the irrepressible sense of heaven in the heart assert itself. We have frequently found in men and women this perfectly serene, joyous satisfaction in mere doing duty. It accords with all our study of the human mind, that the best attainment of man leaves him where he can find perfect delight in duty, wholly apart from a future, while our observation of human experience has repeatedly shown us that doing of duty can be profoundly joyous even where disbelief of a future exists. Those who have never tried a religion which forbids eagerness about one's own redemption, and commands the cultivation of spiritual courage to share all hope with all souls, ought to remember that their cowardice in the battle of life cannot be a measure of the courage of soldiers of humanity, who are perfectly willing to do their duty here and take the result.