

no earthly law smites him, he still is sinning against God, inflicts injury on himself. For he that breaks a law of God, whether it be a material one—in the physical globe or his own body; or a spiritual one, in his own soul, or in society, inflicts damage on his own being; while he who works righteousness by living in obedience to the law of God, is the better man for it, in himself, alike in time and eternity. If there be any reader who rejects these statements, I can only answer in the words of another, "We believe that conscience exists, just as fully as that we believe all men have bones, and as it seems to us for the same reasons. Why is that to be struck out of the list of evidence, any more than any physical testimony whatsoever? Surely a more powerful item of evidence, not only as to the personality of the First Cause, but as to the character of that personality, could hardly be conceived."(f)

- (a) History of Latin Christianity, vol. ii., p. 253. Second edition.
 (b) Church of England Prayer Book, Article 9: Confession of Faith, chap. vi. 6.
 (c) Works, vol. iii., p. 199.
 (d) R. H. Hutton.
 (e) Duration of Future Punishment, by the Rev. George Rogers, p. 4.
 (f) The *Spectator*.

Christianity Again Considered.

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 "CHRISTIANITY" is the title of a new book, by M. D. Conway, M.A., and it is issued by Trübner & Co., of London. It is a small but striking book. Indeed whatever comes from the pen of Mr. Conway is always worth perusal. He has a knack of hitting his opponents straight from the shoulder, of calling a spade a spade, of denouncing superstition in unmeasured terms. As a preacher Mr. Conway prefers an "unfettered pulpit," from which he can fearlessly expose the errors and hypocrisy of the popular creed. We wish there were more unfettered pulpits in the world, occupied by men of culture and zeal, and "no longer bribed by the social or pecuniary endowments of an established creed."

The book before us should be in the hands of every one who wishes to be acquainted with the numerous phases through which Christianity has passed, and we can confidently say that its perusal will afford both pleasure and profit. Mr. Conway considers Christianity under six aspects: its morning state, its dawn, its day, its decline, its afterglow, and its morrow, and each of these divisions receives masterly treatment.

There are several allusions to English Unitarianism, and the Unitarian Association comes in for a share of the Author's criticism. We think, however, that Mr. Conway's strictures on what he terms the "professed liberality" of the Association are somewhat strong. No Association can exist without obedience to certain laws, and the "fundamental law" which appears to be so obnoxious to Mr. Conway is not, in our opinion, such an obnoxious one as he would make it appear. Personally, we should like to see an independent Association formed, which should

include all Theists, whether Jews, Unitarians, Brahmins, or Rationalists, in fact all who worship a supreme Governor of the Universe, and wish to assist the extension of a Universal Brotherhood of Man. But reforms whether social or religious are not carried in a day, so we must be content to plod patiently along that road which leads to the goal we are all aiming at, and we doubt not it will be reached e'er many years more have been added to the world's age.

There are many paragraphs having especial reference to the Unitarian faith which we should like to quote, but our space forbids. We cannot however conclude this brief notice without giving one or two extracts. On page 89, Mr. Conway writes: "Where is the author of our time who defends the wild notion of an eternal punishment—a punishment without end, and consequently without purpose—inflicted on millions for a sin they did not commit, and who have not even determined their own existence!" On page 124 he says:—"The English Unitarians have an honorable history, and no page of it is brighter than the last; but they can retain what they have won only by following up their advance." Mr. Conway brings his book to a conclusion as follows:—"The highest religion of to-day is to look and labour for a nobler day. Nor can I think that new day so distant. For this matter the world of men means mainly all those who think. The thinkers of the world are but thinly divided by veils of language and tricks of expression; speedily will they pierce these and discover that round the world hearts beat with one moral blood, and eyes see by one and the same sunlight. And as thought moves so will the most motionless masses gravitate; and every sect in the world be subtly consumed through and through by that popular disgust of bigotry and hypocrisy, which will emanate from the fairly awakened conscience and intellect of humanity."

Andrew Aylmer: A Sketch.

CHAPTER IV.—A WORD CONCERNING WILL, AND AYLMER'S INFLUENCE.

RACHEL AYLMER, soon after Andrew left home to attend Mr. Cuthberton's class at the Institute, dressed herself for going out to pay a visit to her brother, Benjamin Harton, who lived in the village of Ronesburn. As he worked the same "place" with Andrew in the Scottingley mine, she was anxious lest the persecution towards her son had been extended to her brother as well. And then she wanted a talk with him about the whole matter. Long had she and Joshua chatted over it, but the thing had not come out any clearer to their minds. As she stood by her hearth-bound husband, to bid him good-bye for her two-hour visit, she saw the newspaper was by his side, unused, and she had to touch his shoulder ere he lifted his eyes from the fire. Responsive to her touch, he said,—

"Dinna be lang, wife, for I'm nae owre canny the night. Dis

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thoo think the laddie troubles about his loss o' wark?"

"Hinny, An'rew winna let his troubles clood his brow. Let's hope he dis'na feel them mair than he shows."

"Aye, as Ben said once, 'he taks things philosophically.'"

"About that, I dinna kna," replied Rachel, thoughtfully, "but sure, as the boy says in one o' his ain varses,

'The dew o' heaven is in his heart,'

an' he'll mak' the best o't, safe enough."

The old man was comforted, the cloud passed from his face, the newspaper was resumed, and Rachel wended her way in the direction of Ronesburn. Approaching Scottingley, which stands between the cottage and her destination, she saw a larger crowd of men than usual at the corner of the road leading towards the colliery. This would not have taken her attention, but, as she came opposite to them, one, whom she did not recognise in the twilight, left the crowd, and, as he neared her, said,

"Mrs. Aylmer, I want a word wi' ye."

"Is't Will Bardoyle? Hoo is't there's sae mony oot? Hae they shut up the public-hoose? It's nae a dog-race being made up or thoo wouldna' be in't."

"Nay, Mrs. Aylmer, we've been having a long talk about Andrew, and I want to see him for the men; but I suppose he'll not be at home for some time, as it is class night."

"He'll no be hame till late, as he's comin' roond for me frae brother's after class, but when thoo's dune here thoo canst find the way to Ben's."

In spite of her concern on Andrew's account, she could not help smiling as she said this, for there were a pair of bright eyes at Ben's which drew him there, and not against his will.

"I don't know if I dare call in to-night," said Will, in reply, "for I have been offered the situation of overman, and I want to see Andrew first. Ben has'na been out with us, or he would have known and agreed with what I propose to do, so I'll just meet Andrew, and maybe call in with him."

With a quiet "good-night" she passed on toward Ronesburn, and Will joined the men, who were still talking in clusters.

The men had talked with each other that evening of many things—of the franchise, of improvements connected with their work and their houses, and especially of the treatment Aylmer had been subjected to; and of these things Will Bardoyle's mind was full, as some time after he took the road to Cuthberton, with a view to meet Andrew. Not meeting him, however, and learning that he had taken the river-path leading to the Hall, he continued his walk along the highway, passed Mr. Pembroke's villa, and chatted with the old lodge-keeper until Andrew came out.

Will was some years older than Andrew, but Will could not have revered him more had he been as aged as he counted him worthy. Indeed, Andrew had been the making of Will, for when he was Aylmer's present age he was a rough character truly, taking