

B 3205

SATIRES AND PROFANITIES

BY

JAMES THOMSON (B.V.)

(AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT")

With a Preface by G. W. Foote.

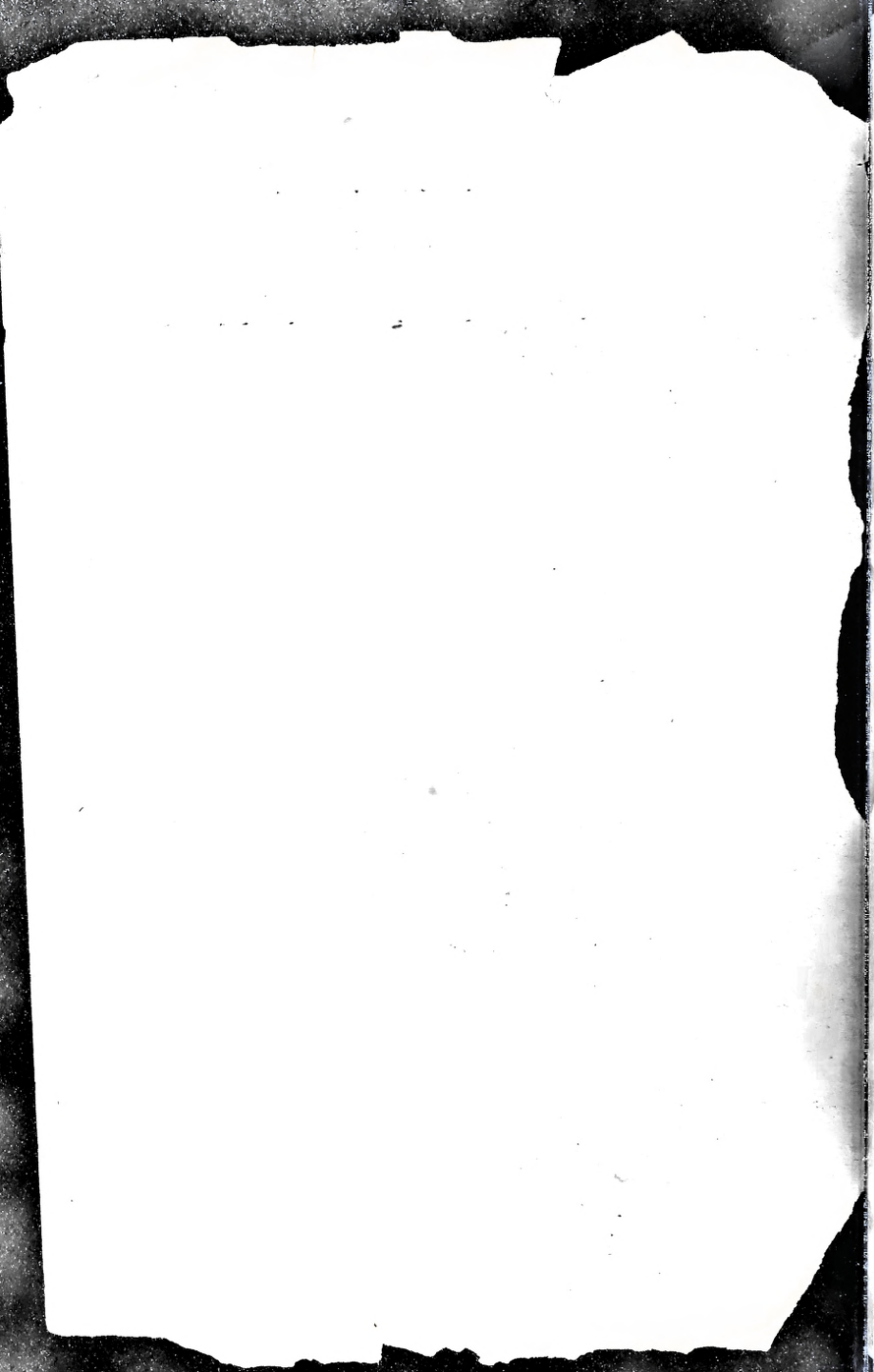
A NEW EDITION.

The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm
Religion in the Rocky Mountains
The Devil in the Church of England
Christmas Eve in the Upper Circles
A Commission of Inquiry on Royalty
A Bible Lesson on Monarchy
The One Thing Needful
The Athanasian Creed

ONE SHILLING.

LONDON:
PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

1890.



B3205

N639

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

SATIRES
AND
PROFANITIES

BY

JAMES THOMSON (B.V.)

(AUTHOR OF "THE CITY OF DREADFUL NIGHT")

With a Preface by G. W. Foote.

A NEW EDITION.

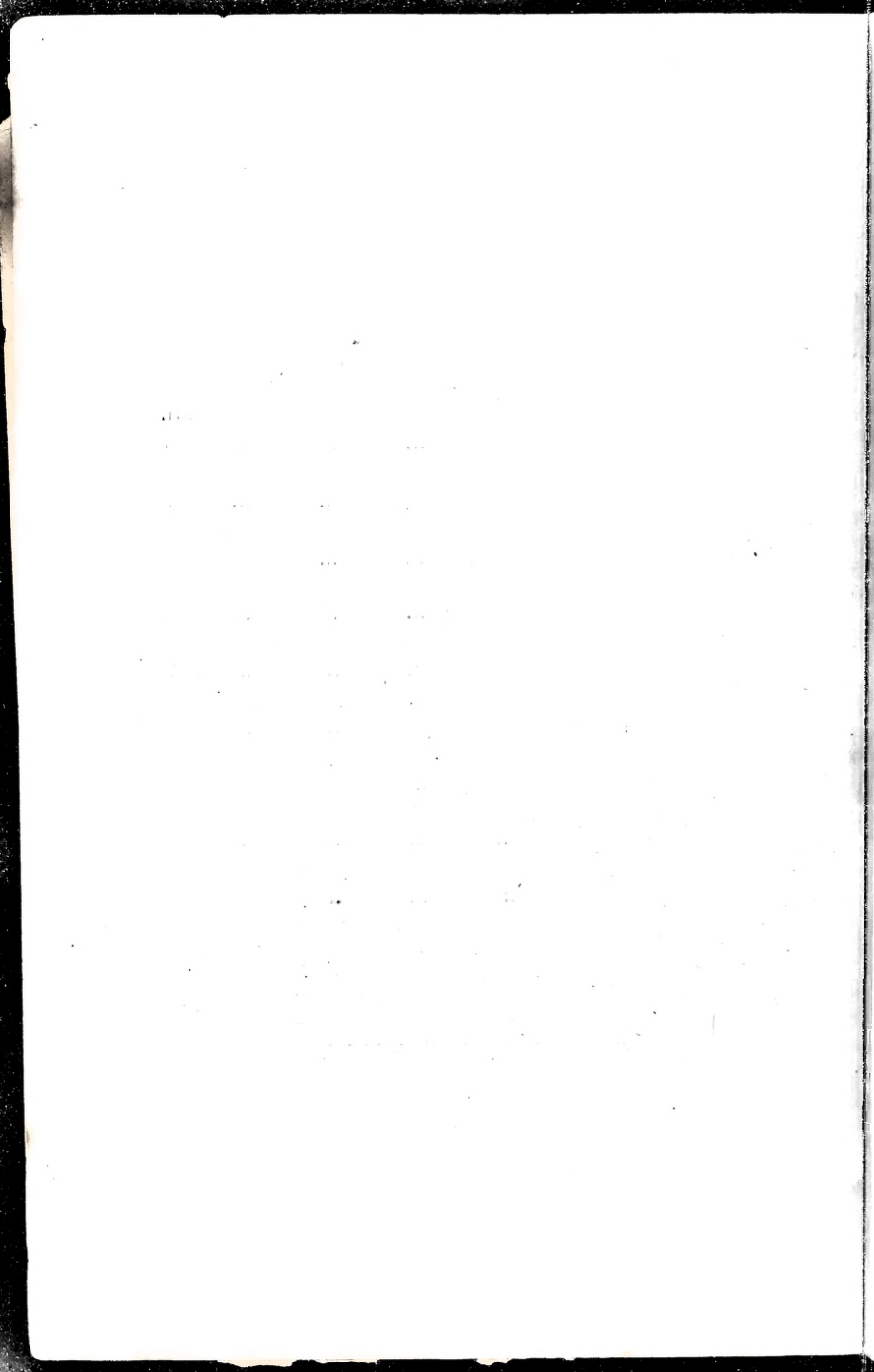
LONDON
PROGRESSIVE PUBLISHING COMPANY,
28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

1890.

LONDON
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY G. W. FOOTB,
28 STONECUTTER STREET, E.C.

C O N T E N T S .

	PAGE
Preface	5
The Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm	7
Religion in the Rocky Mountains	21
The Devil in the Church of England... ..	36
Christmas Eve in the Upper Circles... ..	47
A Commission of Inquiry on Royalty	58
A Bible Lesson on Monarchy	66
The One Thing Needful	71
The Athanasian Creed	75



EDITOR'S PREFACE.

UNDER the title of *Satires and Profanities* I collected and published, in 1884, twenty-three prose pieces of James Thomson's, contributed by him at various times to Freethought journals, namely, the *National Reformer*, edited by Mr. Bradlaugh, and the *Secularist*, edited by myself. After the sale of about five hundred copies, the remaining sheets were destroyed by a fire at the publisher's premises. It was a pity that such a book should be out of print, but complete republication was impossible. The enterprise would have been a heavy financial loss. There is, however, a possibility of realising one's investment in a smaller collection of the principal pieces, and I venture to issue it in the present form.

Thomson was a born satirist as well as a born poet. I do not think anyone can read these pieces without feeling that Thomson enjoyed the writing of them. They reveal a side of his genius which only found occasional expression in his verse. He allowed me to publish two of them as pamphlets before any collection of his poems was given to the world. Some of his admirers, who scarcely share his convictions, are in the habit of depreciating these satires on the current theology. But he would have smiled at their soreness. "Thomson's satire," as I wrote in the preface to *Satires and Profanities*, "was always bitterest, or at any rate most trenchant, when it dealt with Religion, which he considered a disease of the mind, engendered by folly and fostered by ignorance and vanity. He saw that spiritual superstition not only diverts men from Truth, but induces a slavish stupidity of mind, and prepares the way for every form of political and social injustice. He was an Atheist first and a Republican afterwards. He derided the idea of making a true Republic of a population besotted with religion, paralysed with creeds, cringing to the agents of their servitude, and clinging to the chains that enthrall them."

No doubt the cry of "Blasphemy!" will continue to be raised against Thomson's religious satires, as against every pointed, and therefore "painful," attack on Christianity.

But Thomson has justified himself in this respect. Defending a certain "outburst of Rabelasian laughter," which was denounced by the *Saturday Review* in 1867, he wrote:—"The Grecian mythology is dead, is no longer aggressive in its absurdities; the priestcraft and the foul rites have long since perished, the beauty and the grace and the splendor remain. But your composite theology is still alive, is insolently aggressive, its lust for tyrannical dominion is unbounded; therefore we must attack it if we would not be enslaved by it. The cross is a sublime symbol; I would no more think of treating it with disrespect while it held itself aloft in the serene heaven of poetry than of insulting the bow of Phœbus Apollo or the thunderbolts of Zeus; but if coarse hands will insist on pulling it down upon my back as a ponderous wooden reality, what can I do but fling it off as a confounded burden not to be borne?" Thomson also pointed out that "For the Atheist, God is a figment, nothing: in blaspheming God he therefore blasphemes nothing. A man really blasphemes when he mocks, insults, pollutes, vilifies that which he really believes to be holy and awful." He admitted that there *might* be a hundred Christians in England who really believed in the Christian God, and they could be guilty of blaspheming him; but "speaking philosophically, an honest Atheist can no more blaspheme God than an honest Republican can be disloyal to a King, than an unmarried man can be guilty of conjugal infidelity."

There is no need to say more. Thomson's "blasphemy" and its justification are here together. Every purchaser of this brochure is warned in the preface what to expect, and if his nerves are too weak for an Atheist's satire he can give it to a robuster friend.

May, 1890.

G. W. FOOTE.

Story of a Famous Old Jewish Firm.

[WRITTEN IN 1866.]

MANY thousand years ago, when the Jews first started in business, the chief of their merchants was a venerable and irascible old gentleman named Jah. The Jews have always been excellent traders, keen to scent wealth, subtle to track it, unwearied to pursue it, strong to seize it, tenacious to hold it; and the most keen, subtle, untiring, strong, tenacious of them all, was this Jah. The patriarchs of his people paid him full measure of the homage which Jews have always eagerly paid to wealth and power, and all their most important transactions were carried out through him. In those antique times people lived to a very great age, and Jah is supposed to have lived so many thousands of years that one may as well not try to count them. Perhaps it was not one Jah that existed all this while, but the house of Jah: the family, both for pride and profit, preserving through successive generations the name of its founder. Certain books have been treasured by the Jews as containing exact records of the dealings of this lordly merchant (or house) both with the Jews themselves and with strangers. Many people in our times, however, have ventured to doubt the accuracy of these records, arguing that some of the transactions therein recorded it would have been impossible to transact, that others must have totally ruined the richest of merchants, that the accounts often contradict each other, and that the system of book-keeping generally is quite unworthy of a dealer so truthful and clear-headed as Jah is affirmed to have been. The records are so ancient in themselves, and they treat of matters so much more ancient still, that it is not easy to find other records of any sort with which to check

their accounts. Strangely enough the most recent researches have impugned the accuracy of the most ancient of these records; certain leaves of a volume called the "Great Stone Book" having been brought forward to contradict the very first folio of the ledger in which the dealings of Jah have been posted up according to the Jews. It may be that the first few folios, like the early pages of most annals, are somewhat mythical; and the present humble compiler (who is not deep in the affairs of the primæval world, and who, like the late lamented Captain Cuttle with *his* large volume, is utterly knocked up at any time by four or five lines of the "Great Stone Book") will prudently not begin at the beginning, but skip it with great comfort and pleasure, especially as many and learned men are now earnest students of this beginning. We will, therefore, if you please, take for granted the facts that at some time, in some manner, Jah created his wonderful business, and that early in his career he met with a great misfortune, being compelled, by the villainy of all those with whom he had dealings, to resort to a wholesale liquidation, which left him so poor, that for some time he had not a house in the world, and his establishment was reduced to four male and as many female servants.

He must have pretty well recovered from this severe shock when he entered into the famous covenant or contract with Abraham and his heirs, by which he bound himself to deliver over to them at a certain, then distant, period, the whole of the valuable landed property called Canaan, on condition that they should appoint him the sole agent for the management of their affairs. In pursuance of this contract, he conducted that little business of the flocks and herds for Jacob against one Laban; and afterwards, when the children of Abraham were grown very numerous, he managed for them that other little affair, by which they spoiled the Egyptians of jewels of silver and jewels of gold; and it is even asserted that he fed and clothed the family for no less than forty years in a country where the commissariat was a service of extreme difficulty.

At length the time came when he was to make over to them the Land of Canaan, for this purpose evicting the several families then in possession thereof. The whole of the covenanted estate he never did make over to them, but the Jews freely admit that this was through their own fault. They held this land as mortgaged to him, he pledging himself not to foreclose while they dealt with him faithfully and fulfilled all the conditions of the covenant. They were to pay him ten per cent. per annum interest, with sundry other charges, to put all their affairs into his hands, to have no dealings whatsoever with any rival merchants, etc., etc. Under this covenant the Jews continued in possession of the fine little property of Canaan for several hundred years, and they assert that this same Jah lived and conducted his business throughout the whole period. But, as I have ventured to suggest, the long existence of the house of Jah may have been the sum total of the lives of a series of individual Jahs. The Jews could not have distinguished the one from the other; for it is a strange fact that Jah himself, they admit, was never seen. Perhaps he did not affect close contact with Jews. Perhaps he calculated that his power over them would be increased by mystery; this is certain, that he kept himself wholly apart from them in his private office, so that no one was admitted even on business. It is indeed related that one Moses (the witness to the execution of the covenant) caught a glimpse of him from behind, but this glimpse could scarcely have sufficed for identification; and it is said, also, that at certain periods the chief of the priesthood was admitted to consultation with him; but although his voice was then heard, he did not appear in person—only the shadow of him was seen, and everyone will allow that a shadow is not the best means of identification. And in further support of my humble suggestion it may be noted that in many and important respects the later proceedings attributed to Jah differ extremely in character from the earlier; and this difference cannot be explained as the common difference between the youth and maturity and senility of one and the same man, for we are expressly assured that Jah was without

change—by which we are not to understand that either through thoughtlessness or parsimony he never had small cash in his pocket for the minor occasions of life ; but that he was stubborn in his will, unalterable in his ideas, persistent in his projects and plans.

The records of his dealings at home with the Jews, and abroad with the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Philistines, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Edomites, and other nations, as kept by the Jews themselves, are among the strangest accounts of a large general business which have ever been put down in black on white. And in nothing are they more strange than in the unsullied candor with which the Jews always admit and proclaim that it was their fault, and by no means the fault of Jah, whenever the joint business went badly, and narrate against themselves the most astonishing series of frauds and falsehoods, showing how they broke the covenant, and attempted to cheat the other party in every imaginable way, and, in order to ruin his credit, conspired with foreign adventurers of the worst character—such as MM. Baal, Ashtaroth, and Moloch. Jah, who gave many proofs of a violent and jealous temper, and who was wont to sell up other debtors in the most heartless way, appears to have been very patient and lenient with these flagitious Jews. Yet with all his kindness and long-suffering he was again and again forced to put executions into their houses, and throw themselves into prison ; and at length, before our year One, having, as it would seem, given up all hope of making them deal honestly with him, he had put certain strict Romans in possession of the property to enforce his mortgage and other rights.

And now comes a sudden and wonderful change in the history of this mysterious Jah. Whether it was the original Jah, who felt himself too old to conduct the immense business alone, or whether it was some successor of his, who had not the same self-reliance and imperious will, one cannot venture to decide ; but we all know that it was publicly announced, and soon came to be extensively believed, that Jah had taken unto himself two partners, and that the business was thenceforth to be carried on by a firm, under the style

of Father, Son, and Co. It is commonly thought that history has more of certainty as it becomes more recent ; but unfortunately in the life of Jah, uncertainty grows ten more times uncertain when we attain the period of this alleged partnership, for the Jews deny it altogether ; and of those who believe in it not one is able to define its character, or even to state its possibility in intelligible language. The Jews assert roundly that the alleged partners are a couple of vile impostors, that Jah still conducts his world-wide business alone, that he has good reasons (known only to himself) for delaying the exposure of these pretenders ; and that, however sternly he has been dealing with the Jews for a long time past, and however little they may seem to have improved so as to deserve better treatment, he will yet be reconciled to them, and restore them to possession of their old land, and exalt them above all their rivals and enemies, and of his own free will and absolute pleasure burn and destroy every bond of their indebtedness now in his hands. And in support of these modest expectations they can produce a bundle of documents which they assert to be his promissory notes, undoubtedly for very large amounts ; but which, being carefully examined, turn out to be all framed on this model : “ I, the above-mentioned A. B.” (an obscure or utterly unknown Jew, supposed to have lived about three thousand years ago). “ hereby promise in the name of Jah, that the said Jah shall in some future year unknown, pay unto the house of Israel the following amount, that is to say, etc.” If we ask, Where is the power of attorney authorising this dubious A. B. to promise this amount in the name of Jah ? the Jews retort : “ If you believe in the partnership, you must believe in such power, for you have accepted all the obligations of the old house, and have never refused to discount its paper : if you believe neither in Jah nor in the partnership, you are a wretch utterly without faith, a commercial outlaw.” In addition, however, to these remarkable promissory notes, the Jews rely upon the fact that Jah, in the midst of his terrible anger, has still preserved some kindness for them. He threatened many pains and penalties upon them for

breach of the covenant, and many of these threats he has carried out ; but the most cruel and horrific of all he has not had the heart to fulfil : they have been oppressed and crushed, strangers have come into their landed property, they have been scattered among all peoples, a proverb and a by-word of scorn among the nations, their religion has been accursed, their holy places are defiled, but the crowning woe has been spared them (Deut. xxviii., 44) ; never yet has it come to pass that the stranger should lend to them, and they should not lend to the stranger. There is yet balm in Gilead, a rose of beauty in Sharon, and a cedar of majesty on Lebanon ; the Jew still lends to the stranger, and does not borrow from him, except as he "borrowed" from the Egyptian—and the interest on money lent is still capable, with judicious treatment, of surpassing the noble standard of "shent per shent."

And even among the Gentiles there are some who believe that Jah is still the sole head of the house, and that the pair who are commonly accounted junior partners are in fact only superior servants, the one a sort of manager, the other general superintendent and agent, though Jah may allow them a liberal commission on the profits, as well as a fixed salary.

But the commercial world of Europe, in general, professes to believe that there is a *bonâ fide* partnership, and that the three partners have exactly equal authority and interest in the concern ; that, in fact, there is such thorough identity in every respect that the three may, and ought to be, for all purposes of business, considered as one. The second partner, they say, is really the son of Jah ; though Jah, with that eccentricity which has ever abundantly characterised his proceedings, had this son brought up as a poor Jewish youth, apparently the child of a carpenter called Joseph, and his wife Mary. Joseph has little or no influence with the firm, and we scarcely hear of a transaction done through him, but Mary has made the most profitable use of her old *liaison* with Jah, and the majority of those who do business with the firm seek her good offices, and pay her very liberal commissions. Those who do not think so highly of her influence, deal with the house chiefly

through the Son, and thus it has come to pass that poor Jah is virtually ousted from his own business. He and the third partner are little more than sleeping partners, while his mistress and her son manage every affair of importance.

This state of things seems somewhat unfair to Jah ; yet one must own that there are good reasons for it. Jah was a most haughty and humorous gentleman, extremely difficult to deal with, liable to sudden fits of rage, wherein he maltreated friends and foes alike, implacable when once offended, a desperately sharp shaver in a bargain, a terrible fellow for going to law. The son was a much more kindly personage, very affable and pleasant in conversation, willing and eager to do a favor to any one, liberal in promises even beyond his powers of performance, fond of strangers, and good to the poor ; and his mother, with or without reason, is credited with a similar character. Moreover, Jah always kept himself invisible, while the son and mother were possibly seen, during some years, by a large number of persons ; and among those who have never seen them their portraits are almost as popular as photographs of the Prince and Princess of Wales.

With the real or pretended establishment of the Firm, a great change took place in the business of Jah. This business had been chiefly with the Jews, and even when it extended to foreign transactions, these were all subordinate to the Jewish trade. But the Firm lost no time in proclaiming that it would deal with the whole world on equal terms : no wonder the Jews abhor the alleged partners ! And the nature of the contracts, the principal articles of trade, the mode of keeping the accounts, the commission and interest charged and allowed, the salaries of the agents and clerks, the advantages offered to clients, were all changed too. The head establishment was removed from Jerusalem to Rome, and branch establishments were gradually opened in nearly all the towns and villages of Europe, besides many in Asia and Africa, and afterwards in America and Australia. It is worth noting that in Asia and Africa (although the firm arose in the former) the business has never been carried on

very successfully ; Messrs. Brahma, Vishnu, Seeva and Co., the great houses of Buddha and Mumbo Jumbo, various Parsee firms, and other opposition houses, having among them almost monopolised the trade.

The novel, distinctive, and most useful article which the Firm engaged to supply was a bread called *par excellence* the Bread of Life. The Prospectus (which was first drafted, apparently in perfect good faith, by the Son ; but which has since been so altered and expanded by successive agents that we cannot learn what the original, no longer extant, exactly stated) sets forth that the House of Jah, Son and Co. has sole possession of the districts yielding the corn whereof this bread is made, the sole patents of the mills for grinding and ovens for baking, and that it alone has the secret of the proper process for kneading. The Firm admits that many other houses have pretended to supply this invaluable bread, but accuses them all of imposture or poisonous adulteration. For itself, it commands the genuine supply in such quantities that it can undertake to feed the whole world, and at so cheap a rate that the poorest will be able to purchase as much as he needs ; and, moreover, as the firm differs essentially from all other firms in having no object in view save the benefit of its customers, the partners being already so rich that no profits could add to their wealth, it will supply the bread for mere love to those who have not money !

This fair and beautiful prospectus, you will easily believe, brought vast multitudes eager to deal with the firm, and especially large multitudes of the poor, ravished with the announcement that love should be henceforth current coin of the realm ; and the business spread amazingly. But at the very outset a sad mischance occurred. The Son, by far the best of the partners, was suddenly seized and murdered and buried by certain agents of the old Jewish business (furious at the prospect of losing all their rich trade), with the connivance of the Roman installed as inspector. At least, these wretches thought they had murdered the poor man, and it is admitted on every side that they

buried him ; but the dependants of the Firm have a strange story that he was not really killed, but arose out of his tomb after lying there for three days, and slipped away to keep company with his father, the invisible Jah, in his exceedingly private office ; and they assert that he is still alive along with Jah, mollifying the old man when he gets into one of his furious passions, pleading for insolvent debtors, and in all things by act and counsel doing good for all the clients of the house. They, moreover, assert that the third partner, who as the consoling substitute for the absent Son is commonly called the Comforter, and who is very energetic, though mysteriously invisible in his operations, superintends all the details of the business in every one of the establishments. But this third partner is so difficult to catch, that, as stated before, the majority of the customers deal with the venerable mother, as the most accessible and humane personage belonging to the house.

Despite the death or disappearance of the Son, the firm prospered for a considerable time. After severe competition, in which neither side showed itself very scrupulous, the great firm of Jupiter and Co., the old Greek house, which had been strengthened by the amalgamation of the wealthiest Roman firms, was utterly beaten from the field, sold up and extinguished. In the sale of the effects many of the properties in most demand were bought in by the new firm, which also took many of the clerks and agents into its employment, and it is even said adopted in several important respects the mode of carrying on business and the system of book-keeping. But while the firm was thus conquering its most formidable competitor, innumerable dissensions were arising between its own branch establishments ; every one accusing every other of dealing on principles quite hostile to the regulations instituted by the head of the house, of falsifying the accounts, and of selling an article which was anything but the genuine unadulterated bread. There were also interminable quarrels among them as to relative rank and importance.

And whether the wheat, as delivered to the various

establishments, was or was not the genuine article which the firm had contracted to supply, it was soon discovered that it issued from the licensed shops adulterated in the most audacious manner. And, although the prospectus had stated most positively that the bread should be delivered to the poor customers of the firm without money and without price (and such seems really to have been the good Son's intention), it was found, in fact, that the loaves, when they reached the consumer, were at least as costly as ever loaves of any kind of bread had been. It mattered little that the wheat was not reckoned in the price, when agents', commissioners', messengers' fees, bakers' charges, and a hundred items, made the price total so enormous. When, at length, the business was flourishing all over Europe, it was the most bewildering confusion of contradictions that, perhaps, was ever known in the commercial world. For in all the establishments the agents professed and very solemnly swore that they dealt on principles opposed and infinitely superior to the old principles of trade; yet their proceedings (save that they christened old things with new names) were identical with those which had brought to shameful ruin the most villainous old firms. The sub-managers, who were specially ordered to remain poor while in the business, and for obedience were promised the most splendid pensions when superannuated, all became rich as princes by their exactions from the clients of the house; the agents, who were especially commanded to keep the peace, were ever stirring up quarrels and fighting ferociously, not only with opposition agents but with one another. The accounts, which were to be regulated by the most honest and simple rules, were complicated in a lawless system, which no man could understand, and falsified to incredible amounts, to the loss of the customers, without being to the gain of the firm. In brief, each establishment was like one of those Chinese shops where the most beautiful and noble maxims of justice and generosity are painted in gilt letters outside, while the most unblushing fraud and extortion are practised inside. When poor customers complained of these things, they were told that the

system was perfect, that the evils were all from the evil men who conducted the business! but the good people did not further explain how the perfection of the system could ever be realised, since it must always be worked by imperfect men. Complainants thus mildly and vaguely answered were very fortunate; others, in places where the firm was very powerful, were answered by imprisonment or false accusations, or by being pelted and even murdered by mobs. Many who thought the bread badly baked were themselves thrust into the fire.

Yet so intense is the need of poor men for some bread of life, so willing are simple men to believe fair promises, that, in spite of the monstrous injustice and falsehood and cruelty and licentiousness of the managers and sub-managers and agents of the firm, the business continued to flourish, and all the wealth of Europe flowed into its coffers. And generations passed ere some persons bethought them to think seriously of the original Deed of Partnership and the fundamental principles of the Firm. These documents, which had been carefully confined in certain old dead languages which few of the customers could read, were translated into vulgar tongues, which all could read or understand when read, and everyone began studying them for himself. This thinking of essentials, which is so rare a thought among mankind, has already produced remarkable effects, and promises to produce effects yet more remarkable in a short time.

Behold a few of the questions which this study of the first documents has raised.—The Father, whom no one has seen, is there indeed such a personage? The Son, whom certainly no one has seen for eighteen hundred years, did he really come to life again after being brutally murdered? The junior partner, whom no one has ever seen, the Comforter, is he a comforter made of the wool of a sheep that never was fleeced? The business, as we see it, merely uses the names, and would be precisely the same business if these names covered no personages. Do the managers and sub-managers really carry it on for their own profit, using these high names to give dignity to their rascality, and

to make poor people believe that they have unbounded capital at their back? One is punished for defamation of character if he denies the existence of the partners, yet not the very chief of all the managers pretends to have seen any of the three!

And the vaunted Bread of Life, wherein does it differ from the old corn-of-Ceres bread, from the baking of the wheat of Mother Hertha? Chiefly in this, that it creates much more wind on the stomach. It is not more wholesome, nor more nourishing, and certainly not more cheap; and it does us little good to be told that it would be if the accredited agents were honest and supplied it pure, when we are told, at the same time, that we must get it through these agents. It is indeed affirmed that, in an utterly unknown region beyond the Black Sea, the genuine wheat may be seen growing by anyone who discovers the place; but, as no one who ever crossed the sea on a voyage of discovery ever returned, the assertion rests on the bare word of people who have never seen the corn-land any more than they have seen the partners of the firm; and their word is bare indeed, for it has been stripped to shame in a thousand affairs wherein it could be brought to the test. They tell us also that we shall all in time cross the Black Sea, and if we have been good customers shall dwell evermore in that delightful land, with unlimited supplies of the bread gratis. This may be true, but how do they know? It may be true that in the sea we shall all get drowned for ever.

These and similar doubts which, in many minds, have hardened into positive disbelief, are beginning to affect seriously the trade of the firm. But its interests are now so inextricably bound up with the interests of thousands and millions of well-to-do and respectable people, and on its solvency or apparent solvency depends that of so large a number of esteemed merchants, that we may expect the most desperate struggles to postpone its final bankruptcy. In the great Roman establishment the manager has been supported for many years by charitable contributions from every one whom he could persuade to give or lend, and now he wants to borrow much more. The superintendent of the shops

in London is in these days begging for ten hundred thousand pounds to assist the poor firm in its difficulties. It seems a good sum of money ; but, bless you, it is but a drop in the sea compared with what the business has already absorbed, and is still absorbing. Scattered shops in the most distant countries have only been sustained for many years by alms from customers here. The barbarians won't eat the bread, but the bakers sent out must have their salaries. A million of pounds are being begged here ; and people (who would prosecute a mendicant of halfpence) will give it no doubt ! Yet, O worthy manager of the London Shops, one proved loaf of the real Bread would be infinitely more valuable, and would infinitely more benefit your firm ! The villainy of the agents was monstrous, generation after generation, the cost of that which was promised without money and without price was ruinous for centuries ; but not all the villainy and extortion multiplied a hundred-fold could drive away the poor hungry customers while they had faith in the genuineness of the bread. It was the emptiness and the wind on the stomach after much eating, which raised the fatal doubts as to the *bona fides* of the whole concern. The great English managers had better ponder this ; for at present they grope in the dark delusion that more and better bakers salaried with alms, and new shops opened with eleemosynary funds, will bring customers to buy their bran cakes as wheaten loaves. A very dark delusion, indeed ! If the pure promised bread cannot be supplied, no amount of money will keep the business going very long. Consider what millions on millions of pounds have been subscribed already, what royal revenues are pouring in still ; all meant for investment in wholesome and nourishing food, but nearly all realised in hunger and emptiness, heartburn and flatulence. The old Roman shrewdly calculated that the House of Olympus would prove miserably insolvent if its affairs were wound up, if it tried honestly to pay back all the deposits of its customers. As for this more modern firm, one suspects that, in like case, it would prove so insolvent that it could not pay a farthing in the pound. For Olympus was a house that dealt largely in common worldly

goods, and of these things really did give a considerable quantity to its clients for their money ; but the new firm professed to sell things infinitely more valuable, and of these it cannot prove the delivery of a single parcel during the eighteen hundred years it has been receiving purchase-money unlimited.

The humble compiler of this rapid and imperfect summary ought, perhaps, to give his own opinion of the firm and the partners, although he suffers under the disadvantage of caring very little for the business, and thinks that far too much time is wasted by both the friends and the enemies of the house in investigation of every line and figure in its books. He believes that Jah, the grand Jewish dealer, was a succession of several distinct personages ; and will probably continue to believe thus until he learns that there was but one Pharaoh, King of Egypt, but one Bourbon, King of France, and that the House of Rothschild has always been one and the same man. He believes that the Son was by no means the child of the Father, that he was a much better character than the Father, that he was really and truly murdered, that his prospectus and business plans were very much more wise and honest and good than the prospectus as we have it now, and the system as it has actually been worked. He believes that the Comforter has really had a share in this as in every other business not wholly bad in the world, that he has never identified his interests with those of any firm, that specially he never committed himself to a partnership of unlimited liability with the Hebrew Jah, that he undoubtedly had extensive dealings with the Son, and placed implicit confidence in him while a living man, and that he will continue to deal profitably and bountifully with men long after the firm has become bankrupt and extinct. He believes that the corn of the true bread of life is sown and grown, reaped, ground, kneaded, baked and eaten on this side of the Black Sea. He believes that no firm or company whatever, with limited or unlimited liability, has the monopoly for the purveyance of this bread, that no charters can confer such monopoly, that the bread is only to be got pure by each individual for himself, and

that no two individuals of judgment really like it prepared in exactly the same fashion, but that unfortunately (as his experience compels him to believe) the bulk of mankind will always in the future, no less than in the past, persist in endeavoring to procure it through great chartered companies. Finally, he believes that the worthy chief baker in London with his million of money is extremely like the worthy Mrs. Partington with her mop against the Atlantic.

Religion in the Rocky Mountains.

Top of Pike's Peak, March 4th, 1873.

HONORED with your special commission, I at once hurried across to Denver, and thence still westward until I found myself among the big vertebræ of this longish backbone of America. I have wandered to and fro among the new cities, the advanced camps of civilization, always carefully reticent as to my mission, always carefully inquiring into the state of religion both in doctrine and practice. You were so hopeful that high Freethought would be found revelling triumphant in these high free regions, that I fear you will be acutely pained by this my true report. Churches and chapels of all kinds abound—Episcopalian, Methodist Episcopal (for the Methodists here have bishops), Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, Roman Catholic, etc. Zeal inflaming my courage, three and even four times have I ventured into a church, each time enduring the whole service ; and if I have not ventured oftener, certainly I had more than sufficient cause to abstain. For

as I suffered in my few visits to churches in your England, so I suffered here ; and such sufferings are too dreadful to be frequently encountered, even by the bravest of the brave. Whether my sensations in church are similar to those of others, or are peculiar to myself, I cannot be sure ; but I am quite sure that they are excruciating. On first entering I may feel calm, wakeful, sane, and not uncomfortable, except that here I rather regret being shut in from the pure air and splendid sky, and in England rather regret having come out through the raw, damp murk, and in both regret that civilisation has not yet established smoking-pews ; but the Church is always behind the age. It is pleasant for awhile to note the well-dressed people seated or entering ; the men with unctuous hair and somewhat wooden decorum ; the women floating more at ease, suavely conscious of their fine inward and outward adornments. It is pleasant to keep a hopeful look-out for some one of more than common beauty or grace, and to watch such a one if discovered. As the service begins, and the old, old words and phrases come floating around me, I am lulled into quaint dream-memories of childhood ; the long unthought-of school-mates, the surreptitious sweetstuff, the manifold tricks and smothered laughter, by whose aid (together with total inattention to the service, except to mark and learn the text) one managed to survive the ordeal. The singing also is pleasant, and lulls me into vaguer dreams. Gradually, as the service proceeds, I become more drowsy ; my small faculties are drugged into quiet slumber, they feel themselves off duty, there is nothing for which they need keep awake. But, with the commencement of the sermon, new and alarming symptoms arise within me, growing ever worse and worse until the close. Pleasure departs with tranquillity, the irritation of revolt and passive helplessness is acute. I cannot find relief in toffy, or in fun with my neighbors, as when I was a happy child. The old stereotyped phrases, the immemorial platitudes, the often-killed sophistries that never die, come buzzing and droning about me like a sluggish swarm of wasps, whose slow deliberate stinging is more hard to bear than the quick keen

stinging of anger. Then the wasps, penetrating through my ears, swarm inside me ; there is a horrid buzzing in my brain, a portentous humming in my breast ; my small faculties are speedily routed, and disperse in blind anguish, the implacable wasps droning out and away after them, and I am left void, void ; with hollow skull, empty heart, and a mortal sinking of stomach ; my whole being is but a thin shell charged with vacuity and desperate craving ; I expect every instant to collapse or explode. It is but too certain that if anyone should then come to lead me off to an asylum for idiots, or a Young Men's Christian Association, or any similar institution, I could not utter a single rational word to save myself. And though all my faculties have left me, I cannot attempt to leave the church ; decorum, rigid and frigid, freezes me to my seat ; I stare stonily in unimaginable torture, feebly wondering whether the sermon will outlast my sanity, or my sanity outlast the sermon. When at length released, I am so utterly demoralised that I can but smoke furiously, pour much beer and cram much dinner into my hollowness, and so with swinish dozing hope to feel better by tea-time. Now, though in order to fulfil the great duties you entrust to me, I have cheerfully dared the Atlantic, and spent long days and perilous nights in railroad cars, and would of course (were it indeed necessary) face unappalled mere physical death and destruction, I really could not go on risking, with the certainty of ere long losing, my whole small stock of brains ; especially as the loss of these would probably rather hinder than further the performance of the said duties. For suppose me reduced to permanent idiocy by church-going, become a mere brazen hollowness with a riotous tongue like Cowper's church-going bell ; is it not most likely that I would then turn true believer, renouncing and denouncing your noble commission, even as you would renounce and denounce your imbecile commissioner ?

Finding that I could not pursue my inquiries in the churches and chapels, I was much grieved and perplexed, until one of those thoughts occurred to me which are always welcome and persuasive, because in

exact agreement with our own desires or necessities. I thought of what I had remarked when visiting your England : how the churches and chapels and lecture-halls, each sect thundering more or less terribly against all the others, made one guess that the people were more disputatious than pious ; how one became convinced, in spite of his infidel reluctance, that the people were indeed, as a rule, thoroughly and genuinely religious, by mingling freely with them in their common daily and nightly life. I asked myself, What really proved to me the pervading Christianity of England ? the sermons, the tracts, the clerical lectures, the missionary meetings ? the cathedrals and other theatres and music-halls crowded with worshippers on Sunday, while the museums and other public-houses were empty and shut ? No, scarcely these things ; but the grand princeliness of the princes, the true nobleness of the nobles, the lowliness of the bishops, the sanctity of the clergy, the honesty of the merchants, the veracity of the shopkeepers, the sobriety and thrift of the artisans, the independence and intelligence of the rustics ; the general faith and hope and love which brightened the sunless days, the general temperance and chastity which made beautiful the sombre nights ; the almost universal abhorrence of the world, the flesh, and the Devil ; the almost universal devotion to heaven, the spirit, and God.

I thereupon determined to study the religion out here, even as I had studied it in England, in the ordinary public and private life of the people ; and you will doubtless be sorely afflicted to learn that I have found everywhere much the same signs of genuine, practical Christianity as are so common and patent in the old country. The ranchmen have sown the good seed, and shall reap the harvest of heavenly felicity ; the stockmen will surely be corraled with the sheep, and not among the goats, at the last day ; not to gain the whole world would the storekeepers lose their own souls ; the pioneers have found the narrow way which leadeth unto life ; the fishermen are true disciples, the trappers catch Satan in his own snares, the hunters are mighty before the Lord ; bright are the celestial prospects of the prospectors, and the miners are all stoping-out that

hidden treasure which is richer than silver and much fine gold. As compared with the English, these Western men are perchance inferior in two important points of Christian sentiment; they probably do not fear God, being little given to fear anyone; they certainly do not honor the king, perhaps because they unfortunately have none to honor. On the other hand, as I have been assured by many persons from the States, and the old country, they are even superior to the English in one important point of Christian conduct. Christ has promised that in discharging the damned to hell at the Day of Judgment, he will fling at them this among other reproaches, "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in"; and this particular rebuke seems to have wrought a peculiarly deep impression in these men perhaps because they have much more to do with strangers than have people in the old settled countries, so much, indeed, that the word "stranger" is continually in their mouths. The result is (as the said persons from England and the States have often solemnly assured me) that any and every stranger arriving in these regions is most thoroughly, most beautifully, most religiously taken in. So that should any of these fine fellows by evil hap be among the accursed multitude whom Christ thus addresses, they will undoubtedly retort in their frank fashion of speech: "Wall, boss, it may be right to give us hell on other counts, but you say you was a stranger and we didn't take you in. What we want to know is, Did you ever come to our parts to trade in mines or stock or sich? If you *didn't*, how the Devil *could* we take you in? if you *did*, it's a darned lie, and an insult to our understanding to say we *didn't*."

But though the practical life out here is so veritably Christian, you still hope that at any rate the creeds and doctrines are considerably heterodox. I am sincerely sorry to be obliged to destroy this hope. In the ordinary talk of the men continually recur the same or almost the same expressions and implications of orthodox belief, as are so common in your England, and throughout Christendom. Why such formulas are generally used by men only, I have often been puzzled

to explain ; it may be that the women, who in all lands attend divine service much more than do the men, find ample expression of their faith in the set times and places of public worship and private prayer ; while the men, less methodical, and demanding liberal scope, give it robust utterance whenever and wherever they choose. These formulas, as you must have often remarked, are most weighty and energetic ; they avouch and avow the supreme personages and mysteries and dogmas of their religion ; they are usually but brief ejaculations, in strong contrast to those long prayers of the Pharisees which Jesus laughed to scorn ; and they are often so superfluous as regards the mere worldly meaning of the sentences in which they appear, that it is evident they have been interjected simply to satisfy the pious ardor of the speaker, burning to proclaim in season and out of season the cardinal principles of his faith. I say speaker, and not writer, because writing, being comparatively cold and deliberate, seldom flames out in these sharp swift flashes, that leap from living lips touched with coals of fire from the altar.

I am aware that these fervid ejaculations are apt to be regarded by the light-minded as trivial, by the cold-hearted as indecorous, by the sanctimonious as even profane ; but to the true philosopher, whether he be religious or not, they are pregnant with grave significance. For do not these irrepressible utterances burst forth from the very depths of the profound heart of the people ? Are they not just as spontaneous and universal as is the belief in God itself ? Are they not among the most genuine and impassioned words of mankind ? Have they not a primordial vigor and vitality ? Are they not supremely of that voice of the people which has been well called the voice of God ? Thus when your Englishman instead of " Strange !" says " The Devil !" instead of " Wonderful !" cries " Good Heavens !" instead of " How startling !" exclaims " O Christ !" he does more than merely express his emotions, his surprise, his wonder, his amaze ; he hallows it to the assertion of his belief in Satan, in the good kingdom of God, in Jesus ; and, moreover, by the emotional gradation ranks with perfect accuracy the Devil lowest in the

scale, the heavens higher, Christ the loftiest. When another shouts "God damn you!"¹ he not only condemns the evil of the person addressed; he also takes occasion to avow his own strong faith in God and God's judgment of sinners. Similarly "God bless you!" implies that there is a God, and that from him all blessings flow. How vividly does the vulgar hyperbole "Infernally hot," prove the general belief in hell-fire? And the phrase "God knows!" not merely declares that the subject is beyond human knowledge, but also that an all-wise God exists. Here in the West, as before stated, such brief expressions of faith, which are so much more sincere than long formularies repeated by rote in church, are quite as common as in your England. When one has sharply rebuked or punished another, he says, "I gave him hell." And that this belief in future punishment pervades all classes is proved by the fact that even a profane editor speaks of it as a matter of course. For the thermometer having been stolen from his sanctum, the said worthy editor announced that the mean cuss who took it might as well bring or send it back (no questions asked) for it could not be of any use to him in the place he was going to, as it only registered up to 212 degrees. The old notion that hell or Hades is located in the middle of the earth (which may have a scientific solution in the Plutonic theory that we dwell on the crust of a baked dumpling full of fusion and confusion) is obviously tallied by the miner's assertion that his vein was true-fissure, reaching from the grass-roots down to hell. The frequent phrase "A God-damned liar," "A God-damned thief," recognises God as the punisher of the wicked. I have heard a man complain of an ungodly headache, implying first, the existence of God, and secondly, the fact that the God-

¹ Is it not time that we wrote such words as this damn at full length, as did Emily Brontë, the Titaness, whom Charlotte justly vindicates in this as in other respects; instead of putting only initial and final letters, with a hypocritical fig-leaf dash in the middle, drawing particular attention to what it affects to conceal? These words are in all men's mouths, and many of them are emphatically the leading words of the Bible.

head does not ache, or in other words is perfect. Countless other phrases of this kind might be alleged, a few of them astonishingly vigorous and racy, for new countries breed lusty new forms of speech ; but the few already given suffice for my present purpose. One remarkable comparison, however, I cannot pass over without a word : it is common to say of a man who has too much self-esteem, He thinks himself a little tin Jesus on wheels. It is clear that some profound suggestion, some sacrosanct mystery, must underlie this bold locution ; but what I have been hitherto unable to find out. The connection between Jesus and tin may seem obvious to such as know anything of bishops and pluralists, pious bankers and traders. But what about the wheels? Have they any relation to the opening chapter of Ezekiel? It is much to be wished that Max Müller, and all other such great scholars, who (as I am informed, for it's not I that would presume to study them myself) manage to extract whatever noble mythological meanings they want, from unintelligible Oriental metaphors and broken phrases many thousand years old, would give a few years of their superfluous time to the interpretation of this holy riddle. Do not, gentlemen, do not by all that is mysterious, leave it to the scholars of millenniums to come ; proceed to probe and analyse and turn it inside out at once, while it is still young and flourishing, while the genius who invented it is still probably alive, if he deceased not in his boots, as decease so many gallant pioneers.

And here, before afflicting you further, O much-enduring editor, let me soothe you a little by stating that some particles of heresy, some few heretics, are to be found even here. I have learned that into a very good and respectable bookstore in a city of these regions, certain copies of Taylor's *Diegesis* have penetrated, who can say how? and that some of these have been sold. A living judge has been heard to declare that he couldn't believe at all in the Holy Ghost outfit. It has also been told me of a man who must have held strange opinions as to the offspring of God the Father, though certainly this man was not a representative pioneer, being but a German miner, fresh from the

States. This Dutchman (all Germans here are Dutch, doubtless from *Deutsche*, the special claims of the Hollanders being ignored) was asked solemnly by a clergyman, "Who died to save sinners?" and answered "Gott." "What," said the pained and pious pastor, "Don't you know that it was Jesus the *Son* of God?" "Ah," returned placidly the Dutchman, "it vass one of te boys, vass it? I always dought it vass te olt man himselben." This good German may have been misled by the mention of the sons of God early in Genesis, yet it is strange that he knew not that Jesus is the only son of God, and our Savior. A story is moreover told of two persons, of whom the one boasted rather too often that he was a self-made man, and the other at length quietly remarked that he was quite glad to hear it, as it cleared God from the responsibility of a darned mean bit of work. Whence some have inferred the heresy that God is the creator of only a part of the universe, but I frankly confess that in my own opinion the reply was merely a playful sarcasm.

The most decided heresy which has come under my own observation was developed in the course of a chat between two miners in a lager-beer saloon and billiard-hall; into the which, it need scarcely be remarked, I was myself solely driven by the fierce determination to carry out my inquiries thoroughly. Bill was smoking, Dick was chewing; and they stood up together, at rather rapidly decreasing intervals, for drinks of such "fine old Bourbon" rye whiskey as bears the honorable popular title of rot-gut. The frequency with which the drinking of alcoholic liquors leads to impassioned and elevated discussion of great problems in politics, history, dog-breeding, horse-racing, moral philosophy, religion and kindred important subjects, seems to furnish a strong and hitherto neglected argument against teetotalism. There are countless men who can only be stimulated to a lively and outspoken interest in intellectual questions by a series of convivial glasses and meditative whiffs. If such men really take any interest in such questions at other times, it remains deplorably latent, not exercising its legitimate influence on the public opinion of

the world. Our two boys were discussing theology ; and having had many drinks, grappled with the doctrine of the triune God. "Wall," said Bill, "I can't make out that trinity consarn, that three's one and one's three outfit." Whereto Dick : "Is that so? Then you warn't rigged out for a philosopher, Bill. Look here," pulling forth his revolver, an action which caused a slight stir in the saloon, till the other boys saw that he didn't mean business ; "look here, I'll soon fix it up for you. Here's six chambers, but it's only one pistol, with one heft and one barrel ; the heft for us to catch hold of, the barrel to kill our enemy. Wall, God a'mighty's jest made hisself a three-shooter, while he remains one God ; but the Devil, he's only a single-shot derringer : so God can have three fires at the Devil for one the Devil can have at him. Now can't you figure it out?" "Wall," said Bill, evidently staggered by the revolver, and feeling, if possible, increased respect for that instrument on finding it could be brought to bear toward settlement of even such a difficulty as the present ; "Wall, that pans out better than I thought it could : but to come down to the bed-rock, either God's a poor mean shot or his piece carries darned light ; for I reckon the Devil makes better play with his one chamber than God with his three." "Maybe," replied Dick, with calm candor, strangely indifferent to the appalling prospects this theory held out for our universe ; "some of them pesky little things jest shoot peas that rile the other fellow without much hurting him, and then, by thunder, he lets daylight through you with one good ball. Besides, it's likely enough the Devil's the best shot, for he's been consarned in a devilish heap of shooting more than God has ; at any rate"—perchance vaguely remembering to have heard of such things as "religious wars"—"of late years, between here and 'Frisco. Wall, I guess I don't run the creation. Let's liquor ;" manifestly deriving much comfort from the consciousness that he had no hand in conducting this world. Bill acquiesced with a brief "Ja," and they stood up for another drink. I am bound to attest that, in spite or because of the drinks, they had argued throughout

with the utmost deliberation and gravity, with a dignified demeanor which Bishops and D.Ds. might envy, and ought to emulate.

Having thus comforted you with what little of heresy and infidelity I have been able to gather, it is now my painful duty to advance another class of proofs of the general religiousness here ; a class of which you have very few current specimens in England, unless it be among the Roman Catholic. All comparative mythologists—indeed, all students of history—are said to agree that the popular legends and myths of any race at any time are of the utmost value, as showing what the race then believed, and thus determining its moral and intellectual condition at that period ; this value being quite irrespective of the truth or untruth to fact of the said legends. Hence in modern times collections of old traditions and fairy tales have been excellently well received, whether from the infantile literature of ancient peoples, as the Oriental and Norse, or from the senile and anile lips of secluded members of tribes whose nationality is fast dying out, as the Gaelic and Welsh. And truly such collections commend themselves alike to the grave and the frivolous, for the scientific scholar finds in them rich materials for serious study, and the mere novel-reader can flatter himself that he is studying while simply enjoying strange stories become new from extreme old age. All primitive peoples, who read and write little, have their most popular beliefs fluidly embodied in oral legends and myths ; and in this respect the settlers of a new region, though they may come from the oldest countries, resemble the primitive peoples. They are too busy with the tough work of subduing the earth to give much time to writing or reading anything beyond their local newspapers ; they love to chat together when not working, and chat, much more than writing, runs into stories. Thus religious legends in great numbers circulate out here, all charged and surcharged with faith in the mythology of the Bible. Of these it has been my sad privilege to listen to not a few. As this letter is already too long for your paper, though very brief for the importance of its theme, I will subjoin but a couple

of them, which I doubt not will be quite enough to indicate what measureless superstition prevails in these youngest territories of the free and enlightened Republic.

It is told—on what authority no one asks, the legend being universally accepted on its intrinsic merits, as Protestants would have us accept the Bible, and Papists their copious hagiology—that St. Joseph, the putative father of our Lord, fell into bad habits, slipping almost daily out of Heaven into evil society, coming home very late at night and always more or less intoxicated. It is suggested that he may have been driven into these courses by unhappiness in his connubial and parental relations, his wife and her child being ranked so much above himself by the Christian world, and the latter being quite openly attributed to another father. Peter, though very irascible, put up with his misconduct for a long time, not liking to be harsh to one of the Royal Family; and it is believed that God the Father sympathised with this poor old Joseph, and protected him, being himself jealous of the vastly superior popularity of Mary and Jesus. But at length, after catching a violent cold through getting out of bed at a preposterous hour to let the staggering Joseph in, Peter told him roundly that if he didn't come home sober and in good time, he must just stay out all night. Joseph, feeling sick and having lost his pile, promised amendment, and for a time kept his word. Then he relapsed; the heavenly life proved too slow for him, the continual howling of "all the menagerie of the Apocalypse" shattered his nerves, he was disgusted at his own insignificance, the memory of the *liaison* between his betrothed and the Holy Ghost filled him with gall and wormwood, and perhaps he suspected that it was still kept up. So, late one night or early one morning, Peter was roused from sleep by an irregular knocking and fumbling at the gate, as if some stupid dumb animal were seeking admittance. "Who's there?" growled Peter. "It's me—Joseph," hiccupped the unfortunate. "You're drunk," said Peter, savagely. "You're on the tear again; you're having another bender." "Yes," answered Joseph, meekly. "Wall,"

said Peter, "you jest go back to where you come from and spend the night there; get." "I can't," said Joseph. "They're all shut up; they've turned me out." "Then sleep outside in the open air; it's wholesome, and will bring you round," said Peter. After much vain coaxing and supplicating, old Joe got quite mad, and roared out, "If you don't get up and let me in at once, by God I'll take my son out of the outfit and bust up the whole consarn!" Peter, terrified by this threat, which, if carried out, would ruin his prospects in eternal life by abolishing his office of celestial porter, caved in, getting up and admitting Joseph, who ever since, has had a latch-key that he may go and come when he pleases. It is to be hoped that he will never when tight let this latch-key be stolen by one of the little devils who are always lurking about the haunts of dissipation he frequents; for in that case the consequences might be awful as can be readily imagined.

Again it is told that a certain miner, a tough cuss, who could whip his weight in wild cats and give points to a grizzle, seemed uncommonly moody and low-spirited one morning, and on being questioned by his chum, at length confessed that he was bothered by a very queer dream. "I dreamt that I was dead," he explained; "and a smart spry pretty little angel took me up to heaven." "Dreams go by contraries," suggested the chum, by way of comfort. "Let that slide," answered the dreamer; "the point isn't there. Wall, St. Peter wasn't at the gate, and the angel critter led me on to pay my respects to the boss, and after travelling considerable we found him as thus. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost and Peter, all as large as life, were playing a high-toned game of poker, and there was four heavy piles on the table—gold, not shin-plasters, you bet. I was kinder glad to see that they played poker up in heaven, so as to make life there not unbearable; for it would be but poor fun singing psalms all day; I was never much of a hand at singing, more particularly when the songs is psalms. Wall, we waited, not liking to disturb their game, and I watched the play. I soon found that Jesus Christ was going through the rest, cheating worse than the heathen

Chinee at euchre ; but of course I didn't say nothing, not being in the game. After a while Peter showed that he began to guess it to, if he wasn't quite sure ; or p'r'aps he was skeared at up and telling Christ to his face. At last, however, what does Christ do, after a bully bluff which ran Pete almost to his bottom dollar, but up and show five aces to Pete's call ; and 'What's that for high ?' says he, quite cool. 'Now look you, Christ,' shouts Pete, jumping up as mad as thunder, and not caring a cent or a continental what he said to anybody ; 'look you, Christ, that's too thin ; we don't want any of your darned miracles here !' and with that he grabbed up his pile and all his stakes, and went off in a mighty huff. Christ looked pretty mean, I tell you, and the game was up. Now you see," said the dreamer, sadly and thoughtfully, "it's a hard rock to drill and darned poor pay at that, if when you have a quiet hand at poker up there, the bosses are allowed to cheat and a man can't use his deringer or put a head on 'em ; I don't know but I'd rather go to the other place on those terms."

Not yet to be read in books, as I have intimated, but circulating orally, and in versions that vary with the various rhapsodists, such are the legends you may hear when a ring is formed round the hotel-office stove at night, in shanties and shebangs of ranchmen and miners, in the shingled offices of judge and doctor, in railroad cars and steamboats, or when bumming around the stores ; whenever and wherever, in short, men are gathered with nothing particular to do. The very *naïveté* of such stories surely testifies to the child-like sincerity of the faith they express and nourish. It is the simple unbounded faith of the Middle Ages, such as we find in the old European legends and poems and mysteries, such as your poetess Mrs. Browning well marks in Chaucer—

"the infantine
Familiar clasp of things divine."

Many of the so-called Liberal clergy complain of the gulf which yawns in this age of materialistic science between religion and every-day life, this world and the next, heaven and earth, God and man. The higher things are treated as mere thin abstractions, they say ;

and only the lower things are recognised as real. These pious pioneers, in the freshness and wonderfulness of their new life, overleap this gulf without an effort, realising heaven as thoroughly as earth. How could the communion and the human nature of saints be better exhibited than in St. Joseph falling into dissipation and St. Peter playing poker? How could the manhood as well as the Godhead of Jesus Christ be more familiarly brought home to us than by his taking a hand at this game and then miraculously cheating. When generations have passed away, if not earlier, such legends as these will assuredly be gathered by earnest and reverent students as quite invaluable historical relics. They must fill the Christian soul with delight; they must harrow the heart of him who hath said in his heart, There is no God.

In conclusion, I must again express my deep regret at being forced by the spirit of truth to give you so favorable an account of the state of religion out here, both in creed and practice. I trust that you will lose no time and spare no exertion in attacking, and if possible, routing out the Christianity now entrenched in these great natural fortresses. Be your war-cry that of the first pioneers, "Pike's Peak or bust"; and be not like unto him found teamless half-way across the plains, with the confession on his waggon-tilt, "Busted, by thunder." For you can come right out here by railroad now. As for myself, I climbed wearily and with mortal pantings unto the top of this great mountain, thinking it one of the best coigns of vantage whence to command a comprehensive view of the sphere of my inquiries, and also a spot where one might write without being interrupted or overlooked by loafers. Unfortunately I have not been able to discover any special religious or irreligious phenomena; for, though the prospect is indeed ample where not intercepted by clouds or mist, very few of the people and still fewer of their characteristics can be made out distinctly even with a good glass. How I am to get down and post this letter puzzles me. The descent will be difficult, dangerous, perhaps deadly. Would that I had not come up. After all there is some truth

in the Gospel narrative of the Temptation : for by studying the general course of ecclesiastical promotion and the characters of the most eminent churchmen, I was long since led to recognise that it is indeed Satan who sets people on pinnacles of the temple ; and I am now, moreover, thoroughly convinced that it is the Devil and the Devil only that takes any one to the top of an exceeding high mountain.

The Devil in the Church of England.

[WRITTEN IN 1876.]

THE Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has delivered judgment in the case of *Jenkins v. Cook*. Many of the highest personages in the realm, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and the great law-lords, were present to give weight and solemnity to the decision, which was read by the Lord Chancellor. It was reported at full length in the *Times* of the following day, Feb. 17, 1876, the length being two columns of small print.

I must try to indicate briefly the main facts of the case, before hazarding any comments on it. Mr. Jenkins, of Christ Church, Clifton, brought an action against his vicar, the Rev. Flavel S. Cook, for refusing him the Sacrament of the Holy Communion. Mr. Cook justified the refusal on the ground that Mr. Jenkins did not believe in the Devil, all passages relating to the Devil and evil spirits having been excluded from a bulky volume published by Mr. Jenkins, entitled *Selections from the Old and New Testaments*. By

the evidence of Mrs. Jenkins, who attempted an amicable arrangement, it appears that Mr. Cook said to her: "Let Mr. Jenkins write me a calm letter, and say he believes in the Devil, and I will give him the Sacrament." Whereupon Mr. Jenkins wrote on July 20, 1874: "With regard to my book, *Selections from the Old and New Testaments*, the parts I have omitted, and which has enabled me [meaning, doubtless, and the omission of which has enabled me] to use the book morning and evening in my family are, in their present generally received sense, quite incompatible with religion or decency (in my opinion). How such ideas have become connected with a book containing everything that is necessary for a man to know, I really cannot say; I can only sincerely regret it." Mr. Cook replied in effect: "Then you cannot be received at the Lord's table in my church." Mr. Jenkins, a regular communicant, and admittedly a man of exemplary and devout life, answered: "Thinking as you do, I do not see what other course you could consistently have taken. I shall, nevertheless, come to the Lord's table as usual at 'your' church, which is also mine." Accordingly he presented himself, and was repelled, whereupon he brought an action against Mr. Cook.

The case was first tried in the Court of Arches, and the dean dismissed the suit and condemned Mr. Jenkins in costs, saying, "I am of opinion that the avowed and persistent denial of the existence and personality of the Devil did, according to the law of the Church, as expressed in her canons and rubrics, constitute the promoter [Mr. Jenkins] 'an evil liver,' and 'a depraver of the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments,' in such sense as to warrant the defendant in refusing to administer the Holy Communion to him until he disavowed or withdrew his avowal of the heretical opinion, and that the same consideration applies to the absolute denial by the promoter of the doctrine of the eternity of punishment, and, of course, still more to the denial of all punishment for sin in a future state, which is the legitimate consequence of his deliberate exclusion of the passages of scripture referring to such punishment."

So far, so well ; the Church of England was assured of the Devil and the eternal punishment it has always held so dear. But Mr. Jenkins appealed to the highest court, and this has reversed the decision of the lower, admonished Mr. Cook for his conduct in the past, admonished him to refrain from the like offence in future, and condemned him in the costs of both suits. Do you think, then, that the Church of England is authoritatively deprived of her dear Devil and her beloved eternal punishment? Not at all ; the really important problem is evaded with consummate lawyer-like wariness ; the points in dispute are most shiftily shifted like slides of a magic lantern ; we have a new decision essentially unrelated to that which it cancels ; we have a judgment which concerns not the Devil—except that he would chuckle over the too clever un wisdom which fancies it can extinguish “burning questions” with legal wigs.

Their most learned lordships in the first place observe that the learned judge of the Court of Arches appears to have considered that the canon and the rubric severally warrant the repulsion from the Lord’s table of “an evil liver,” and “a depraver of the Book of Common Prayer,” whereas the terms are “an open and notorious evil liver,” and “common and notorious depravers.” This is a most pregnant distinction, teaching us that an evil liver and a depraver of the said book, as long as he is not notoriously such, is fully entitled to the Holy Communion, fully entitled to the privilege of “eating and drinking damnation to himself ;” a privilege from which the notorious evil liver and depraver is righteously debarred.

Now, their most learned lordships find that there is absolutely no evidence that the appellant was an evil liver, much less an open and notorious evil liver. The question follows, Was he a common and notorious depraver of the Book of Common Prayer? It was contended that the Selections, coupled with the letter of July 20, proved him to be this. But the letter was not written spontaneously. He was invited by the respondent, Mr. Cook, to write it. It was a friendly and private, as well as a solicited, communication.

Therefore, whatever be the construction of the letter, and even if there be in it a depravation of the Book of Common Prayer, still it would be impossible to hold that the writing of such a letter in such circumstances could make the appellant "a common and notorious depraver." Whence it is clear that a man may deprave the Book of Common Prayer as much as he pleases in private conversation and letters, yet retain the precious privilege of "eating and drinking damnation to himself" in the Holy Communion; he can only forfeit this by common and notorious depravation of that blessed book—for instance, by a depravation repeatedly published in a newspaper, or persistently proclaimed by the town-crier.

So far the law seems most clear, and the judgment quite incontestible. But leaving the strait limits of the law, and looking at the facts in evidence, there is one part of the judgment which to the common lay mind is simply astonishing. Their most learned lordships "*desire to state in the most emphatic manner that there is not before them any evidence that the appellant entertains the doctrines attributed to him by the Dean of Arches;*" wherefore their most learned and subtle lordships "do not mean to decide that those doctrines are otherwise than inconsistent with the formularies of the Church of England." Nor, of course, do they mean to decide that those doctrines *are* inconsistent with those formularies. No, "This is not the subject for their lordships' present consideration." Indeed, "If they were [had been] called upon to decide that [whether] those opinions, or any of them, could be entertained or expressed by a member of the Church, whether layman or clergyman, consistently with the law and with his remaining in communion with the Church, they would have looked upon this case with much greater anxiety than they now feel in its decision.

Mr. Jenkins compiles and publishes a book of *Selections from the Bible*, carefully excluding all passages relating to the Devil and evil spirits. The book is bulky; and, in fact, though this is not expressly stated, seems to contain pretty well all the Bible except

such passages. He further exhibits in the case a book of selections from the liturgy of the Church of England, apparently compiled on the same principle of exclusion. Mr. Cook sends through Mrs. J. a message: "Let Mr. J. write me a calm letter, and say he believes in the Devil and I will give him the Sacrament." Mr. J. replies, as we have seen, that the parts he has omitted are, in his opinion, quite incompatible with religion or decency, *in their generally received sense*; such generally received sense being evidently (to all of us save their most learned and subtle lordships) that in which the Church of England receives them. Mr. C. replies, "Then I must refuse to you the Communion." Mr. J. answers, "Thinking as you do, I do not see what other course you could consistently have taken;" and resolves to test the question of legality. With these facts staring them in the face, their most learned and most subtle lordships can, with the utmost solemnity, and in the most emphatic manner, declare that there is not any evidence before them that Mr. Jenkins does not believe in the Devil in the common Church of England sense! What the eyes of laymen, however purblind, cannot help seeing clearly, their far-sighted lordships, putting on legal spectacles, dim with the dust of many ages, manage not to discern at all.

The question cannot be left thus undecided. As matters stand, the poor Church does not know whether, legally, it has a Devil or not. Its Devil, its dear and precious old Devil, is in a state of suspended animation, neither dead nor alive; a most inefficient and burdensome Devil. He must either be restored to full health and vigor, or buried away decently for ever; decently and solemnly, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of all their lordships of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, reading the appropriate Church service over his grave. That would be touching and impressive!—"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God (with the sanction and authority of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council) of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the

ground ; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust ; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ." At present it appears that every clergyman and layman in the Church has the legal right to sing as a solo in private, especially if solicited, Beranger's refrain, "*The Devil is dead! The Devil is dead!*" while it is doubtful whether he is at liberty to chant it publicly and in chorus—a state of things anomalous beyond even the normal anomalism of all things in this our happy England. It is urgent that some one, lay or cleric, should compel the decision which the suit of Mr. Jenkins has failed to obtain.

In considering the question whether disbelief in the Devil would "deprave" the Prayer Book, we must refer to this book itself. It contains three creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, and that called of Athanasius. Of these the Nicene (the creed in the Communion Service, by the way) mentions neither the Devil nor Hell ; the Apostles' and the so-called Athanasian mention Hell but not the Devil. In No. III of the Thirty-nine Articles hell is solidly established, but again there is no mention of the Devil. It may be argued that hell implies the Devil, as a fox-hole implies a fox ; but his existence is not authoritatively averred. Strangely enough, the only personage who, according to the creeds and articles, has certainly been in hell, is Jesus Christ himself : "He descended into hell ; the third day he rose again from the dead ; he ascended into heaven." What took *him* to hell ? The Prayer Book does not inform us. But we learn from the Epistle called I Peter, chap. iii., 19, 20, and chap. iv., 6 : "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved by water. . . . For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." Whence it appears that the spirits in prison were not the Devil and his angels, but the spirits of those who were

drowned in the Flood for disobedience ; and it furthermore appears that these spirits were saved by the preaching of Christ ; so that in this famous harrying of hell, he seems to have left it as empty as the moss-troopers in their forays left farmsteads. It is true that No. VI. of the Articles settles the canon of the Old and New Testaments, and that anyone daring to exclude from belief anything in this canon might be convicted of depraving the Prayer Book. But in that case all the best scholars and divines of the Church are guilty of this dreadful sin ; and not only guilty, but openly, commonly and notoriously guilty ; and therefore all merit repulsion from the Lord's table. Let the truly faithful clergy, those who believe all without question or distinction, do their duty to the Articles of religion of their Church (the Creeds, as I have pointed out, are neutral), and they will shut out from their Communion nearly all the intelligent piety and learning which lend it whatever dignity it still retains. Granted the canon in its integrity, and the existence of a personal Devil, and the doctrine of eternal punishment cannot be fairly disputed. Without multiplying texts, I may refer to Revelation, chap. xx., as decisive on these points.

From these considerations it follows that if the Church of England is bound by her own articles she will hold fast to the Devil and hell, and deny the privilege of her Communion to any one who depraves the Prayer Book by common and notorious disbelief in them. And for my own part, I do not see how the Church could get on at all without a Devil and hell, especially in competition with the other Christian sects, which make unlimited use of both. The Devil is in fact as essential to the Christian scheme as a leader of the opposition to that great political blessing, government by party. If he were to die, or be deposed, it would be necessary to elect another to the vacant dignity. You cannot put the leadership in commission as the unfortunate Liberals were taunted with doing in their demoralisation after their disasters of the General Election, and Mr. Gladstone's sudden retirement. Just as Mr. Disraeli lamented the withdrawal

of Mr. Gladstone, complaining of the embarrassment caused to the Government by having no responsible leader opposed to it, so we can imagine dear God lamenting the absence of a Devil, and declaring that the Christian scheme could not work well without one. His utter loss would make the government of the world retrograde from an admirably balanced constitutional monarchy to a mere Oriental absolute despotism. You must choose some one to lead, if only in name and for the time, as the Whigs chose Lord Hartington. But though Lord Hartington is still tolerated by us English, a Lord Hartington of a Devil, be it said with all respect to both his lordship and his Devilship, would scarcely be tolerated by either the celestial or the infernal benches.

In Beranger's authentic record, already alluded to, of "The Death of the Devil"—which, however, relates only to the Church of Rome—we read how, on learning the catastrophe:—

“The conclave shook with mortal fear;
Power and cash-box, adieu! they said;
We have lost our father dear,
The Devil is dead! the Devil is dead!”

But while they were in this passion of grief and despair, St. Ignatius offered to take the place of the dead Devil; and none could doubt that he with his Jesuits for imps would prove a most efficient substitute. Wherefore the Church threw off its sorrow and welcomed his offer with holy rapture:—

“Noble fellow! cried all the court,
We bless thee for thy malice and hate.
And at once his Order, Rome's support,
Saw its robes flutter Heaven's gate.
From the Angels tears of pity fell:
Poor man will have cause to rue, they said;
St. Ignatius inherits Hell.
The Devil is dead! the Devil is dead.”

Thus matters continued well for the Church of Rome, and, in fact, became even better than before. But if the Devil should die in the Church of England, whom has she that could efficiently take his place? She has no saints except the disciples and apostles of the New

Testament, and these have long since gone to glory. Would Mr. Gladstone undertake the office? or Mr. Beresford Hope, with the *Saturday Review* for his infernal gazette? or the editor of the *Rock*? or he of the *Church Times*? or the man who does religion for the *Daily Telegraph*? Each of these distinguished gentlemen might well eagerly accept the candidature for a post so lofty: but I fear that none of them could be considered equal to its functions. Perhaps Mr. Disraeli has the requisite genius, and probably he would be very glad to exchange the Premiership of little England for that of large hell: but unfortunately he has already committed himself to the side of the angels, meaning by angels the humdrum Tory angels of heaven—for, as Dr. Johnson said, the Devil was the first Whig. On the whole, the Church of England had better keep loyal to its ancient and venerable Devil, being too impoverished in intellect and character to supply a worthy successor.

I have ventured to compare the government of the world in the Christian scheme, by a God and a Devil, with our own felicitous government by party. There is, however, or rather there appears to be, a striking difference between the two. In our government, when the Prime Minister finds himself decidedly in a minority, he goes out of office, and the Leader of the Opposition goes in; in the Government of the World the Leader of the Opposition seems to have always had an immense majority (and his majority in these days is probably larger than ever before, seeing that sceptics and infidels have multiplied exceedingly), yet the other side is supposed to retain permanent possession of office. I say "supposed," because the Bible itself suggests that this popular opinion is a mistake, the Devil (if there be a Devil) being entitled by it the prince of this world, which surely implies his accession to power.

Although the Godhead or governing power of the world, according to the Christian scheme, is usually spoken and written of as a trinity, it is in fact, quaternary or fourfold for Protestants, and quinary or fivefold for Roman Catholics. The former have God

the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, and God the Devil; the latter supplement these with Goddess the Virgin Mary. Both formally acknowledge the first three as collectively and severally almighty, but Protestants implicitly acknowledge the fourth, and Roman Catholics the fifth, as more almighty still (these solecisms of dogma cannot be expressed without solecisms of language.) With the Roman Catholics I am not concerned here. With regard to the Protestants, and those especially professing the Protestantism of the Church of England, I may safely affirm that the Devil is not less essential to their theology than is any person of the Trinity, or, in fact, than are the three persons together. Indeed, the Father and the Holy Ghost have been practically dispensed with, leaving Christ and Satan to fight the battle out between themselves.

As this is a gloriously scientific age, nobly enamored of the exact sciences, I will endeavor to expound this sublime subject of the divinity of the Church of England mathematically, even after the manner of the divine Plato in Book VIII. of "The Republic," treating of divine and human generation; and in the "Timæus," treating of the creation of the universal soul. His demonstrations, indeed, are so divinely obscure as to confound all the scholiasts; my demonstration, however, shall be so translucent that even the most learned and subtle lords of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, with their legal spectacles on, shall not be able to help seeing through it. And whereas the figures, which are shapes, are more intelligible to most people than the figures which are numbers, let the exposition be geometrical. We will say, then, that the Church of old conceived the divinity in the form of an equilateral triangle, whereof the base was Christ as the whole system was founded on belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Father and the Holy Ghost were the two sides, leaning each on the other; and the Devil was the apex, as opposed to, and farthest from, our blessed Savior. But in course of time the theologians (perhaps merely wanting some occupation for their vigorous talents, perhaps deeming it undig-

nified to have two persons of the Godhead supporting each other obliquely like a couple of tipsy men, perhaps simply in order to make matters square) set to work, and pushed up the two sides, so that each might stand firm and perpendicular by itself. This process had two unforeseen results ; it expanded the apex, which was a very elastic point, so that it became the crowning side of the square, and it so unhinged the sides that after a brief upright existence they lost their balance, and were carried to Limbo by the first wind of strange doctrine which blew that way ; and the Devil and Christ, or Christ and the Devil (arrange the precedence as you please), were left alone confronting each other. These two are of course equal and parallel, the main distinction between them being that Christ is below, and the Devil above, or, in other words, that the Devil is superior and Christ is inferior (the Devil seems entitled to the precedence). Thus matters have continued even to the present time, the divinity showing itself, as we may say, without form and void ; and we are free to speculate on the momentous questions : Will the crown (which is the Devil) fall into the base (which is Christ)? Will the base float up into the crown? Will the two coalesce half way? Will they both, unknit from their sides, be carried away to Limbo by some blast of strange doctrine? One thing is certain, they cannot long remain as they are. Rare Ben Johnson chanted the Trinity, or Equilateral Triangle ; rare Walt Whitman has chanted the Square Deific (with Satan for the fourth side) ; no poet can care to chant the two straight lines which, in the language of Euclid, and in the region of intelligence, cannot enclose a space, but are as a magnified symbol of equal—to nothing.

P.S.—It may be appropriately added that the books of Euclid are really symbolic and prophetic expositions of most sublime and sacrosanct mysteries, though in these days few persons seem aware of the fact. Thus the very first definition, “ A point is position without magnitude,” exactly defines every point of difference between the theologians. So a line, which is as the prolongation of a point, or length without breadth, represents in one sense (for each symbol has manifold

meanings) the history of any theological system. An acute angle is, say, Professor Clifford ; an obtuse angle, Mr. Whalley ; a right angle, the present writer : *non angeli sed Angli*. The first proposition, "To erect an equilateral triangle upon a given finite straight line," indicates the problem solved by Christianity, when it erected the Trinity on the basis of the man we call Jesus. This pregnant subject should be worked out in detail through the whole eight books.

Christmas Eve in the Upper Circles.

[WRITTEN IN 1866.]

POOR dear God sat alone in his private chamber, moody, melancholy, miserable, sulky, sullen, weary, dejected, supernally hipped. It was the evening of Sunday, the 24th of December, 1865. Waters continually dripping wear away the hardest stone ; year falling after year will at length overcome the strongest god : an oak-tree outlasts many generations of men ; a mountain or a river outlasts many celestial dynasties. A cold like a thick fog in his head, rheum in his eyes, and rheumatism in his limbs and shoulders, his back bent, his chin peaked, his poll bald, his teeth decayed, his body all shivering, his brain all muddle, his heart all black care ; no wonder the old gentleman looked poorly as he cowered there, dolefully sipping his *Lachryma Christi*. "I wish the other party would lend me some of his fire," he muttered, "for it is horribly frigid up here." The table was crowded and the floor littered with books and documents, all most

unreadable reading : missionary reports, controversial divinity, bishops' charges, religious periodicals, papal allocutions and encyclical letters, minutes of Exeter Hall meetings, ponderous blue books from the angelic bureaux—dreary as the humor of *Punch*, silly as the critiques of the *Times*, idiotic as the poetry of *All the Year Round*. When now and then he eyed them askance he shuddered more shockingly, and looked at his desk with loathing despair. For he had gone through a hard day's work, with extra services appropriate to the sacred season ; and for the ten-thousandth time he had been utterly knocked up and bewildered by the Athanasian Creed.

While he sat thus, came a formal tap at the door, and his son entered, looking sublimely good and respectable, pensive with a pensiveness on which one grows comfortably fat. "Ah, my boy," said the old gentleman, "you seem to get on well enough in these sad times : come to ask my blessing for your birthday *fête*?" "I fear that you are not well, my dear father ; do not give way to dejection, there was once a man—" "O, dash your parables ! keep them for your disciples ; they are not too amusing. Alack for the good old times!" "The wicked old times you mean, my father ; the times when we were poor, and scorned, and oppressed ; the times when heathenism and vain philosophy ruled everywhere in the world. Now, all civilised realms are subject to us. and worship us." "And disobey us. You are very wise, much wiser than your old worn-out father ; yet perchance a truth or two comes to me in solitude, when it can't reach you through the press of your saints, and the noise of your everlasting preaching and singing and glorification. You know how I began life, the petty chief of a villainous tribe. But I was passionate and ambitious, subtle and strong-willed, and, in spite of itself, I made my tribe a nation ; and I fought desperately against all the surrounding chiefs, and with pith of arm and wile of brain I managed to keep my head above water. But I lived all alone, a stern and solitary existence. None other of the gods was so friendless as I ; and it is hard to live alone when memory is a sea of blood. I hated and despised the

Greek Zeus and his shameless court ; yet I could not but envy him, for a joyous life the rogue led. So I, like an old fool, must have my amour ; and a pretty intrigue I got into with the prim damsel Mary ! Then a great thought arose in me : men cannot be loyal to utter aliens ; their gods must be human on one side, divine on the other ; my own people were always deserting me to pay homage to bastard deities. I would adopt you as my own son (between ourselves, I have never been sure of the paternity), and admit you to a share in the government. Those infernal Jews killed you, but the son of a God could not die ; you came up hither to dwell with me ; I the old absolute king, you the modern tribune of the people. Here you have been ever since ; and I don't mind telling you that you were a much more lovable character below there as the man Jesus than you have proved above here as the Lord Christ. As some one was needed on earth to superintend the executive, we created the Comforter, prince royal and plenipotentiary ; and behold us a divine triumvirate ! The new blood was I must own, beneficial. We lost Jerusalem, but we won Rome ; Jove, Neptune, Apollo, Bacchus, and the rest, were conquered and slain ; our leader of the opposition ejected Plato and Pan. Only I did not bargain that my mistress should more than succeed to Juno, who was, at any rate, a lawful wife. You announced that our empire was peace ; you announced likewise that it was war ; both have served us. Our power extended, our glory rose ; the chief of a miserable tribe has become emperor of Europe. But our empire was to be the whole world ; yet instead of signs of more dominion, I see signs that what we have is falling to pieces. From my youth up I have been a man of war ; and now that I am old and weary and wealthy, and want peace, peace flies from me. Have we not shed enough blood ? Have we not caused enough tears ? Have we not kindled enough fires ? And in my empire what am I ? Yourself and my mistress share all the power between you ; I am but a name at the head of our proclamations. I have been a man of war, I am getting old and worn out, evil days

are at hand, and I have never enjoyed life ; therefore is my soul vexed within me. And my own subjects are as strangers. Your darling saints I cannot bear. The whimpering, simpering, canting, chanting block-heads ! You were always happy in a pious miserable-ness, and you do not foresee the end. Do you know that in spite of our vast possessions we are as near bankruptcy as Spain or Austria ? Do you know that our innumerable armies are a Chinese rabble of cowards and traitors ? Do you know that our legitimacy (even if yours were certain) will soon avail us as little as that of the Bourbons has availed them ? Of these things you are ignorant : you are so deafened with shouts and songs in your own praise that you never catch a whisper of doom. I would not quail if I had youth to cope with circumstance ; none can say honestly that I ever feared a foe ; but I am so weak that often I could not walk without leaning on you. Why did I draw out my life to this ignominious end ? Why did I not fall fighting like the enemies I overcame ? Why the Devil did you get born at all, and then murdered by those rascally Jews, that I who was a warrior should turn into a snivelling saint ? The heroes of Asgard have sunk into a deeper twilight than they foresaw ; but their sunset, fervent and crimson with blood and with wine, made splendid that dawnless gloaming. The joyous Olympians have perished, but they all had lived and loved. For me, I have subsisted and hated. What of time is left to me I will spend in another fashion. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." And he swallowed hastily a bumper of the wine, which threw him into convulsions of coughing.

Serene and superior, the son had let the old man run on. "Do not, I entreat you, take to drink in your old age, dear father. You say that our enemies lived and loved ; but think how unworthy of divine rulers was their mode of life, how immoral, how imprudent, how disreputable, how savage, how lustful, how un-Christian ! What a bad example for poor human souls !" "Human souls be blessed ! Are they so much improved now ? . . . Would that at least I had conserved Jove's barmaid ; the prettiest, pleasantest girl they say (we

know you are a Joseph, though you always had three or four women dangling about you); fair-ankled was the wench, bright-limbed; she might be unto me even as was Abishag, the Shunammite, unto my old friend David." "Let us speak seriously, my father, of the great celebration to-morrow." "And suppose I *am* speaking very seriously, you solemn prig; not a drop of my blood is there in you."

Here came a hurried knocking at the door, and the angelic ministers of state crawled in, with super-elaborate oriental cringings, to deliver their daily reports. "Messages from Brahma, Ormuzd, etc., to congratulate on the son's birthday." "The infidels! the mockers!" muttered the son. "Good words," said the father; "they belong to older families than ours, my lad, and were once much more powerful. You are always trying to win over the parvenus." "A riot in the holy city. The black angels organised to look after the souls of converted negroes having a free fight with some of the white ones." "My poor lambs!" sighed the son. "Black sheep," growled the father; "what is the row?" "They have plumed themselves brighter than peacocks, and scream louder than parrots; claim precedence over the angels of the mean whites; insist on having some of their own hymns and tunes in the programme of to-morrow's concert." "Lock 'em all up, white and black, especially the black, till Tuesday morning; they can fight it out then—it's Boxing Day. We'll have quite enough noise to-morrow without 'em. Never understood the nigger question, for my part: was a slave-holder myself, and cursed Ham as much as pork." "New saints grumbling about lack of civilised accommodation: want underground railways, steamers for the crystal sea, telegraph wires to every mansion, morning and evening newspapers, etc., etc.; have had a public meeting with a Yankee saint in the chair, and resolved that heaven is altogether behind the age." "Confound it, my son, have I not charged you again and again to get some saints of ability up here? For years past every batch has been full of good-for-nothing noodles. Have we no engineers, no editors at all?" "One or two engineers, we believe, sire, but we can't

find a single editor." "Give one of the *Record* fellows the measles, and an old *l'Univers* hand the cholera, and bring them up into glory at once, and we'll have two daily papers. And while you are about it, see whether you can discover three or four pious engineers—not muffs, mind—and blow them up hither with their own boilers, or in any other handy way. Haste, haste, post haste!" "Deplorable catastrophe in the temple of the New Jerusalem: a large part of the foundation given way, main wall fallen, several hundred workmen bruised." "Stop that fellow who just left; countermand the measles, the cholera will be enough; we will only have one journal, and that must be strictly official. If we have two, one will be opposition. Hush up the accident. It is strange that Pandemonium was built so much better and more quickly than our New Jerusalem!" "All our best architects and other artists have deserted into Elysium, my lord; so fond of the company of the old Greeks."

When these and many other sad reports had been heard, and the various ministers and secretaries savagely dismissed, the father turned to the son, and said: "Did I not tell you of the evil state we are in?" "By hope and faith and charity, and the sublime doctrine of self-renunciation, all will yet come right, my father." "Humph! let hope fill my treasury, and faith finish the New Jerusalem, and charity give us peace and quietness, and self-renunciation lead three-quarters of your new-fangled saints out of heaven; and then I shall look to have a little comfort." "Will you settle to-morrow's programme, sire? or shall I do my best to spare you the trouble?" "You do your best to spare me the trouble of reigning altogether, I think. What programme can there be but the old rehearsal for the eternal life (I wish you may get it)? O, that horrible slippery sea of glass, that bedevilled throne vomiting thunders and lightning, those stupid senile elders in white nightgowns, those four hideous beasts full of eyes, that impossible lamb with seven horns and one eye to each horn! O, the terrific shoutings and harpings and stifling incense! A pretty set-out for my time of life! And to think that you hope some time

or other to begin this sort of thing as a daily amusement, and to carry it on for ever and ever! Not much appearance of its beginning soon, thank goodness—that is to say, thank badness. Why can't you have a play of Aristophanes, or Shakespeare, or Molière? Why should I meddle with the programme? I had nothing to do with first framing it. Besides, it is all in your honor, not in mine. You like playing the part of the Lamb; I'm much more like an old wolf. You are ravished when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks; as for me, I am utterly sick of them. Behold what I will do; I must countenance the affair, but I can do so without disturbing myself. I'll not go thundering and roaring in my state-carriage of the whirlwind; I'll slip there in a quiet cloud. You can't do without my glory, but it really is too heavy for my aged shoulders; you may lay it upon the throne; it will look just as well. As for my speech, here it is all ready written out; let Mercury, I mean Raphael or Uriel, read it; I can't speak plainly since I lost so many teeth. And now I consider the matter, what need is there for my actual presence at all? Have me there in effigy; a noble and handsome dummy can wear the glory with grace. Mind you have a handsome one; I wish all the artists had not deserted us. Your pious fellows make sad work of us, my son. But then their usual models are so ugly; your saints have good reason to speak of their vile bodies. How is it that all the pretty girls slip away to the other place, poor darlings? By the bye, who are going on this occasion to represent the twelve times twelve thousand of the tribes of Israel? Is the boy Mortara dead yet? He will make one real Jew." "We are converting them, sire." "Not the whole gross of thousands yet, I trust? Faugh! what a greasy stench there would be—what a blazing of Jew jewelry! Hand me the latest bluebook, with the reports. . . . Ah, I see; great success! Power of the Lord Christ! (always *you*, of course). Society flourishing. Eighty-two thousand pounds four shillings and twopence three-farthings last year from Christians aroused to the claims of the lost sheep of the House of Israel. (Very good.) Five con-

versions!! Three others have already been persuaded to eat pork sausages. (Better and better.) One, who drank most fervently of the communion wine suffered himself to be treated to an oyster supper. Another, being greatly moved, was heard to ejaculate 'O Christ!' . . . Hum, who are the five? Moses Isaacs: wasn't he a Christian ten years ago in Italy, and afterwards a Mahomedan in Salonica, and afterwards a Jew in Marseilles? This Mussulman is your oyster-man, I presume? You will soon get the one hundred and forty-four thousand at this rate, my son! and cheap too!"

He chuckled, and poured out another glass of Lachryma Christi; drank it, made a wry face, and then began coughing furiously. "Poor drink this for a god in his old age. Odin and Jupiter fared better. Though decent for a human tippie, for a divinity it is but *ambrosie stygiale*, as my dear old favorite chaplain would call it. I have his devotional works under lock and key there in my desk. *Apropos*, where is he? Left us again for a scurry through the more jovial regions? I have not seen him for a long time." "My father! really, the words he used, the life he led; so corrupting for the young saints! We were forced to invite him to travel a little for the benefit of his health. The court *must* be kept pure, you know." "Send for him instantly, sir. He is out of favor because he likes the old man and laughs at your saints, because he can't cant and loves to humbug the humbugs. Many a fit of the blues has he cured for me, while you only make them bluer. Have him fetched at once. O, I know you never liked him; you always thought him laughing at your sweet pale face and woebegone airs, laughing '*en horrible sarcasm et sanglante derision*' (what a style the rogue has! what makes that of your favorite parsons and holy ones so flaccid and flabby and hectic?) 'Physician, heal thyself!' So, in plain words, you have banished him; the only jolly soul left amongst us, my pearl and diamond and red ruby of Chaplains, abstracter of the quintessence of pantagruelism! The words he used! I musn't speak freely myself now, and the old books I wrote are a great deal too coarse for you! Michael and Gabriel told me the other day

that they had just been severely lectured on the earnestness of life by one of your new *protégés*; they had to kick him howling into limbo. A fine set of solemn prigs we are getting!" "My father, the holiness of sorrow, the infiniteness of suffering!" "Yes, yes, I know all about it. That long-winded poet of yours (he does an ode for you to-morrow?) began to sermonise me thereon. By Jupiter, he wanted to arouse me to a sense of my inner being and responsibilities and so forth. I very soon packed him off to the infant school, where he teaches the alphabet and catechism to the babies and sucklings. Have you sent for my jovial, joyous, jolly Curé of Meudon?" "I have; but I deeply regret that your Majesty thinks it fitting to be intimate with such a free-liver, such a glutton and wine-bibber and mocker and buffoon." "Bah! you patronised the publicans and sinners yourself in your younger and better days. The strict ones blamed you for going about eating and drinking so much. I hear that some of your newest favorites object to the wine in your last supper, and are going to insist on vinegar-and-water in future."

Whereupon entered a man of noble and courtly presence, lively-eyed and golden bearded, ruddy complexioned, clear-browed, thoughtful, yet joyous, serene, and unabashed. "Welcome, thrice welcome, my beloved Alcofribas," cried the old monarch; "very long is it since last I saw you." "I have been exiled since then, your Majesty." "And I knew nothing of it!" "And thought nothing of it or of me until you wanted me. No one expects the King to have knowledge of what is passing under his eyes." "And how did you manage to exist in exile, my poor chaplain?" "Much better than here at court, sire. If your Majesty wants a little pleasure, I advise you to get banished yourself. Your parasites and sycophants and courtiers are a most morose, miserable, ugly, detestable, intolerable swarm of blind beetles and wasps; the devils are beyond comparison better company." "What! you have been mixing with traitors?" "Oh, I spent a few years in Elysium, but didn't this time go into the lower circles. But while I sojourned as a country

gentleman on the heavenly borders,' I met a few contrabandists. I need not tell you that large, yea, enormous quantities of beatitude are smuggled out of your dominions." "But what is smuggled in?" "Sire, I am not an informer; I never received anything out of the secret-service money. The poor angels are glad to run a venture at odd times, to relieve the tedium of everlasting Te Deum. By the bye, I saw *the* Devil himself." "The Devil in my kingdom? What is Uriel about? he'll have to be superannuated." "Bah! your Majesty knows very well that Satan comes in and returns as and when he likes. The passport system never stops the really dangerous fellows. When he honored me with a call he looked the demurest young saint, and I laughed till I got the lockjaw at his earnest and spiritual discourse. He would have taken yourself in, much more Uriel. You really ought to get him on the list of court chaplains. He and I were always good friends, so if anything happens. . . . It may be well for you if you can disguise yourself as cleverly as he. A revolution is not quite impossible, you know." The Son threw up his hands in pious horror; the old King, in one of his spasms of rage, hurled the blue-book at the speaker's head, which it missed, but knocked down and broke his favorite crucifix. "Jewcy fiction *versus* crucifixion, sire; *magna est veritas et prevalebit!* Thank Heaven, all that folly is *outside* my brains; it is not the first book full of cant and lies and stupidity that has been flung at me. Why did you not let me finish? The Devil is no fonder than your sacred self of the new opinions; in spite of the proverb, he loves and dotes upon holy water. If you cease to be head of the ministry, he ceases to be head of the opposition; he wouldn't mind a change, an innings for him and an outings for you; but these latest radicals want to crush both Whigs and Tories. He was on his way to confer with some of your Privy Council, to organise joint action for the suppression of new ideas. You had better be frank and friendly with him. Public opposition and private amity are perfectly consistent and praiseworthy. He has done you good service before

now ; and you and your Son have always been of the greatest assistance to him." "By the temptation of Job! I must see to it. And now no more business. I am hipped, my Rabelais ; we must have a spree. The cestus of Venus, the lute of Apollo, we never could find ; but there was sweeter loot in the sack of Olympus, and our cellars are not yet quite empty. We will have a *petit souper* of ambrosia and nectar." "My father! my father! did you not sign the pledge to abstain from these heathen stimulants?" "My beloved Son, with whom I am not at all well pleased, go and swill water till you get the dropsy, and permit me to do as I like. No wonder people think that I am failing when my child and my mistress rule for me!"

The Son went out, shaking his head, beating his breast, scrubbing his eyes, wringing his hands, sobbing and murmuring piteously. "The poor old God! my dear old father! Ah, how he is breaking! Alack, he will not last long! Verily his wits are leaving him! Many misfortunes and disasters would be spared us were he to abdicate prudently at once. Or a regency might do. But the evil speakers and slanderers would say that I am ambitious. I must get the matter judiciously insinuated to the Privy Council. Alack! alack!"

"Let him go and try on his suit of lamb's wool for to-morrow," said the old monarch. "I have got out of the rehearsal, my friend ; I shall be conspicuous by my absence ; there will be a dummy in my stead." "Rather perilous innovation, my Lord ; the people may think that the dummy does just as well, that there is no need to support the original." "Shut up, shut up, O, my Curé ; no more politics, confound our politics! It is Sunday, so we must have none but chaplains here. You may fetch Friar John and sweet Dean Swift and the amiable parson Sterne, and any other godly and devout and spiritual ministers you can lay hold of ; but don't bring more than a pleiad." "With Swift for the lost one ; he is cooling his 'sæva indignatio' in the Devil's kitchen-furnace just now, comforting poor Addison, who hasn't got quit for his death-bed brandy yet." "A night of devotion will we have, and of in-

extinguishable laughter ; and with the old liquor we will pour out the old libations. Yea, Gargantuan shall be the feast ; and this night, and to-morrow, and all next week, and twelve days into the new year the hours shall reel and roar with Pantagréulism. Quick, for the guests, and I will order the banquet !” “ With all my heart, sire, will I do this very thing. Parsons and pastors, pious and devout, will I lead back, choice and most elect souls worthy of the old drink delectable. And I will lock and double bolt the door, and first warm the chamber by burning all these devilish books ; and will leave word with the angel on guard that we are not to be called for three times seven days, when all these Christmas fooleries and mummeries are long over. Amen. Selah. *Au revoir.* Tarry till I come.”

A Commission of Inquiry on Royalty.

[WRITTEN IN 1866.]

THE subjects for our solemn consideration are the seclusion of her Most Gracious Majesty, and the complaints thereanent published in several respectable journals. In order to investigate the matter thoroughly, we constituted ourselves (the unknown number x) into a special Commission of Inquiry. We are happy to state that the said Commission has concluded its arduous labors, and now presents its report within a week of its appointment ; surely the most prompt and rapid of commissions. The cause of this celerity we take to be the fact that the Commissioners were un-

salaries ; we being unanimously of opinion that had we received good pay for the inquiry throughout the period of our session, we could have prolonged it with certain benefit, if not to the public yet to ourselves, for a great number of years. If, therefore, you want a commission to do its work rapidly vote no money for it. And do not fear that the most headlong haste in gathering evidence and composing the report will diminish the value of such report ; for when a Commission has lasted for years or months it generally rises in a quite different state of the subject matter from that in which it first sat, and the report must be partly obsolete, partly a jumble of anachronisms. In brief, it may be fairly affirmed as a general rule that no Commission of Inquiry is of any value at all ; the appointment of one being merely a dodge by which people who don't want to act on what they and everybody else see quite well with their naked eyes, set a number of elderly gentlemen to pore upon it with spectacles and magnifying glasses until dazed and stupid with poring, in the hope that this process will last so long that ere it is finished the public will have forgotten the matter altogether. And now for the result of our inquiries on this subject, which is not only immensely important, but is even sacred to our loyal hearts.

A West-end tradesman complains bitterly that through the absence of the Court from Buckingham Palace, and the diminished number and splendor of royal pomps and entertainments, the "Season" is for him a very poor season indeed. The Commissioners find that the said tradesman (whose knowledge seems limited to a knowledge of his business, supposing he knows that) is remarkably well off ; and consider that West-end tradesmen have no valid vested interest in Royalty and the Civil List, that at the worst they do a capital trade with the aristocracy and wealthy classes (taking good care that the punctual and honest shall amply overpay their losses by the unpunctual and dishonest) ; and if they are not satisfied with the West-end, they had better try the East-end and see how that will suit them ; and, in short, that this tradesman is not worth listening to.

Numerous fashionable and noble people (principally ladies) complain that they have no Court to shine in. The Commissioners think that they shine a great deal too much already, and in the most wasteful manner, gathered together by hundreds, light glittering on light; and that if they really want to shine beneficially in a court there are very many dark courts in London where the light of their presence would be most welcome.

It is complained on behalf of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales that they have to perform many of the duties of royalty without getting a share of the royal allowance. The Commissioners think that if the necessary expenses of the heir to the throne are really too heavy for his modest income, and are increased by the performance of royal duties, he had better send in yearly a bill to his Mamma for expenses incurred on her account, and a duplicate of the same to the Chancellor to the Exchequer; so that in every Budget the amount of the Civil List shall be equitably divided between her Majesty and her Majesty's eldest son, doubtless to their common satisfaction.

It is complained on behalf of various foreign royal or ruling personages that while they in their homes treat generously the visiting members of our royal family, they are treated very shabbily when visiting here. The Commissioners think that Buckingham Palace, being seldom or never wanted by the Queen, and very seldom wanted for the reception of the English Court, should be at all times open for such royal or ruling visitors; that a Lord Chamberlain, or other such noble domestic servant should be detailed to attend on them, and see to their hospitable treatment in all respects; and that to cover the expenditure on their account a fair deduction should be made from her Majesty's share of the Civil List, which deduction, being equitable, her Majesty would no doubt view with extreme pleasure.

It is complained on the part of her Majesty's Ministers, that when they want the royal assent and signature to important Acts of Parliament, they have

to lose a day or two and undergo great fatigue (which is peculiarly hard on men who are mostly aged, and all overworked) in travelling to and from Osborne or Balmoral. The Commissioners think the remedy plain and easy, as in the two preceding cases. Let a law be passed assuming that absence, like silence, gives consent; so that whenever her Majesty is not in town, the Speaker of the Commons or the Lord Chancellor, or other great officer of State, be empowered to seal and sign in her name, and generally to perform any of her real and royal duties, on the formal demand of the Ministry, who always (and not the Queen) are responsible to Parliament and the country for all public acts.

A Taxpayer complains that for fourteen years her Majesty has been punctually drawing all moneys allotted to support the royal dignity, while studiously abstaining from all, or nearly all, the hospitalities and other expensive functions incident to the support of the said dignity. The Commissioners consider that her Majesty is perchance benefiting the country more (and may be well aware of the fact) by taking her money for doing nothing than if she did something for it; that if she didn't take the said money, somebody else would (as for instance, were she to abdicate, the Prince of Wales, become King, would want and get at least as much); so that while our Government remains as it is, the complaint of the said taxpayer is foolish.

Another Taxpayer, who must be a most mean-minded fellow, a stranger to all sacred sympathies and hallowed emotions, says: "If a washerwoman, being stupified by the death of her husband, neglected her business for more than a week or two, she would certainly lose her custom or employment, and not all the sanctity of conjugal grief (about which reverential journalists gush) would make people go on paying her for doing nothing; and if this washerwoman had money enough of her own to live on comfortably, people would call her shameless and miserly if she asked for or accepted payment while doing nothing; and if this washerwoman had a large family of boys and girls around her, and shut herself up to brood upon her husband's death for even three or four months, people would reckon her mad with selfish

misery." The Commissioners (as soon as they recover from the stupefaction of horror into which this blasphemy has thrown them) consider and reply that there can be no proper comparison of a Queen and a washerwoman, and that nobody would think of instituting one, except a brute, a Republican, an Atheist, a Communist, a fiend in human form ; that anyhow if, as this wretch says, a washerwoman would be paid for a week or two without working, in consideration of her conjugal affliction, it is plain that a Queen, who (it will be universally allowed) is at least a hundred thousand times as good as a washerwoman, is therefore entitled to at least a hundred thousand times the "week or two" of salary without performance of duty—that is, to at least 1,923 or 3,846 years, whereas this heartless and ribald reprobate himself only complains that our beloved Sovereign has done nothing for her wage throughout "fourteen years." The Commissioners therefore eject this complainant with ineffable scorn ; and only wish they knew his name and address, that they might denounce him for prosecution to the Attorney-General.

A Malthusian (whatever kind of creature that may be) complains that her Majesty has set an example of uncontrolled fecundity to the nation and the royal family, which, besides being generally immoral, is likely, at the modest estimate of £6,000 per annum per royal baby, to lead to the utter ruin of the realm in a few generations. The Commissioners, after profound and prolonged consideration, can only remark that they do not understand the complaint any better than the name (which they do not understand at all) of the "Malthusian" ; that they have always been led to believe that a large family is a great honor to a legitimately united man and woman ; and that, finally, they beg to refer the Malthusian to the late Prince Consort.

A devotedly loyal Royalist (who unfortunately does not give the name and address of his curator) complains that her Majesty, by doing nothing except receive her Civil List, is teaching the country that it can get on quite as well without a monarch as with one, and might therefore just as well, and indeed very much better, put the amount of the Civil List into its own pocket

and call itself a Republic. The Commissioners remark that this person seems the most rational of the whole lot of complainants (most rational, not for his loyalty, but most rational as to the grounds of his complaint, from his own point of view); in accordance with the dictum, "A madman reasons rightly from wrong premises; a fool wrongly from right ones;" and that his surmise is very probably correct—namely, that her Majesty is really a Republican in principle, but not liking (as is perfectly natural in her position) to publicly profess and advocate opinions so opposed to the worldly interests of all her friends and relatives, has been content to further these opinions practically for fourteen years past by her conduct, without saying a word on the subject. The Commissioners, however, find one serious objection to this surmise in the fact that if her Majesty is really a Republican at heart, she must wish to exclude the Prince of Wales from the throne; while it seems to them that the intimate knowledge she must have of his wisdom and virtues (not to speak of her motherly affection) cannot but make her feel that no greater blessing could come to the nation after her death than his reigning over it. As this is the only complaint which the Commissioners find at once well-founded and not easy to remedy, they are happy to know that it is confined to the very insignificant class of persons who are "devotedly loyal Royalists."

The Commissioners thus feel themselves bound to report that all the complaints they have heard against our beloved and gracious sovereign (except the one last cited, which is of no importance) are without foundation, or frivolous, or easily remedied, and that our beloved and gracious Sovereign (whom may Heaven long preserve!) could not do better than she is now doing, in doing nothing.

But in order to obviate such complaints, which do much harm, whether ill or well founded, and which especially pain the delicate susceptibilities of all respectable men and women, the Commissioners have thought it their duty to draw up the following project of a Constitution, not to come into force until the death of our present beloved and gracious Sovereign (which may

God, if it so please him, long avert!), and to be modified in its details according to the best wisdom of our national House of Palaver.

DRAFT.

Whereas it is treasonable to talk of dethroning a monarch, but there can be no disloyalty in preventing a person not yet a monarch from becoming one :

And whereas it is considered by very many, and seems proved by the experience of the last..... years that the country can do quite well without a monarch, and may therefore save the extra expense of monarchy :

And whereas it is calculated that from the accession of George I. of blessed memory until the decease of the most beloved of Queens, Victoria, a period of upwards of a century and a half, the Royal Family of the House of Guelph have received full and fair payment in every respect for their generous and heroic conduct in coming to occupy the throne and other high places of this kingdom, and in saving us from the unconstitutional Stuarts :

And whereas the said Stuarts may now be considered extinct, and thus no longer dangerous to this realm :

And whereas the said Royal Family of the House of Guelph is so prolific that the nation cannot hope to support all the members thereof for a long period to come in a royal manner :

And whereas the Dukes of this realm are accounted liberal and courteous gentlemen :

And whereas the constitution of our country is so far Venetian that it cannot but be improved in harmony and consistency by being made more Venetian still :

Be it enacted, etc., That the Throne now vacant through the ever-to-be-deplored death of her late most gracious Majesty shall remain vacant. That the members of what has been hitherto the Royal Family keep all the property they have accumulated, the nation resuming from them all grants of sinecures and other salaried appointments. That no member of the said Family be eligible for any public appointment whatever for at least one hundred years. That the Dukes in the

order of their seniority shall act as Doges (with whatever title be considered the best) year and year about, under penalty of large fines in case of refusal, save when such refusal is supported by clear proof of poverty (being revenue under a settled minimum), imbecility, brutality, or other serious disqualification. That no members of a ducal family within a certain degree of relationship to the head of the house be eligible for any public appointment whatever; the head of the house being eligible for the Dogeship only. That the duties of the Doge be simply to seal and sign Acts of Parliament, proclamations, etc., when requested to do so by the Ministry; and to exercise hospitality to royal or ruling and other representatives of foreign countries, as well as to distinguished natives. That a fair and even excessive allowance be made to the Doge for the expenses of his year of office. That the royal palaces be official residences of the Doge. That the Doge be free from all political responsibility as from all political power; but be responsible for performing liberally and courteously the duties of hospitality, so that Buckingham Palace shall not contrast painfully with the Mansion House. Etc., etc.

God preserve the Doge!

The Commission of Inquiry having thus triumphantly vindicated our beloved and gracious Sovereign against the cruel aspersions of people in general, and having moreover drafted a plan for obviating such aspersions against any British King or Queen in future, ends its Report, and dissolves itself with humble thankfulness to God Almighty whose grace alone has empowered it to conclude its arduous labors so speedily, and with results so incalculably beneficial.

A Bible Lesson on Monarchy.

[WRITTEN IN 1876.]

THE old theory of "The right divine of kings to govern wrong," and the much-quoted text, "Fear God and honor the king," seem to have impressed many good people with the notion that the Bible is in favor of monarchy. But "king" in the text plainly has the general meaning of "ruler," and would be equally applicable to the President of a Republic. In Romans xiii., 1—3, we read: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil." Without stopping to discuss the bold assertion in the last sentence, we may remark that the real teaching of this passage is that Christians ought to be indifferent to politics, quietly accepting whatever government they find in power; for if the powers that be are ordained of God, or in other words, if might is right, all forms of government are equally entitled to obedience so long as they actually exist. Of course Christians are not now, and for the most part have not been for centuries, really indifferent to politics, because for the most part they now are and long have been Christians only in name; but it is easy to understand from the New Testament itself why the first Christians naturally were thus indifferent, and why Christianity has never afforded any political inspiration. Nothing can be clearer to one who reads the New Testament honestly and without prejudice than the fact that Christ and his apostles believed that the end of the world was at hand. Thus in Matt. xxiv., Jesus after foretelling the coming to judgment of the son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, when the angels shall gather the elect from

the four winds, adds, v. 34, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." This is repeated in almost the same words in Mark xiii., and Luke xxi., and a careful reading of the Epistles shows that their writers were profoundly influenced by this prophecy. But with the world coming to an end so soon, it would be as absurd to take any interest in its politics as for a traveller stopping two or three days in an inn to concern himself with schemes for rebuilding it, when about to leave for a far country where he intends settling for life. If therefore, we want any political guidance from the Holy Scriptures, we must go to the Old Testament, not to the New.

Now the first lesson on Monarchy, which we remember made us think even in childhood, is the fable of the trees electing a king, told by Jotham, the son of Gideon, in Judges ix. The trees in the process of this election showed a judgment much superior to that which men usually show in such a business. It is true that they did not select first the most strong and stalwart of trees, the cedar or the oak, but they had the good sense to choose the most sweet-natured and bountiful, the olive, then the fig, then the vine. But the bountiful trees thus chosen had good sense too, and would not forsake the fatness and the sweetness and the wine which cheereth God and man, to rule over their fellow trees. Then the poor trees, like a jilted girl who marries in spleen the first scamp she comes across, asked the bramble to be their king; and that barren good-for-nothing of course accepted eagerly the crown which the noble and generous had refused, and called upon the trees to put their trust in its scraggy shadow, "and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon." Young as we were when this fable first caught our attention, we mused a good deal over it, and even then began to learn that those most eager for supremacy, the most forward candidates in elections, are nearly always brambles, not olives or fig-trees or vines; and that the first thought of a bramble, when made ruler over its betters, is naturally to destroy with fire the cedars of Lebanon.

But God himself in the case of the Israelites has vouchsafed to us a very clear judgment on the question of Monarchy. In the remarkable constitution for that people which he gave to Moses, he did not include a king, and Israel remained without a king for more years than it is worth while endeavoring to count here. We read, 1 Samuel viii., how "All the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, and said unto him, Behold thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. . . . Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them." Some students of the Bible may have thought that God's severe condemnation of the Israelites for wanting a king arose chiefly from wounded pride, from the fact that they had rejected him, and we cannot affirm that this feeling did not inflame his anger, for he himself has said that he is a jealous God; but the protest which he orders Samuel to make, and the exposition of the common evils of kingship, prove clearly that God did not (and therefore, of course, does not) approve this form of government. And, indeed, it is plain that if he had approved it, he would have given it to his chosen people at first. For although divines have termed the form of government under which the Jews lived before the kings a theocracy, God did not then rule immediately, but always through the medium of a high-priest or judge, and could have governed through the medium of a king had he thought it well so to do. And he who reads the history of the Jews under the Judges, as contained in the Book of Judges, and especially the narratives in chapters xvii. to xxi. which illustrate the condition of Jewish society in those days when "there was no king in Israel:

every man did that which was right in his own eyes," will see that God must have thought a Monarchy very vile and odious indeed when he was angry at the request for it, and implied that it was actually worse than that government by Judges alternated with bondage under neighboring tribes which the theologians call a theocracy. Samuel warned the people of what a king would do, and doubtless thought he was warning them of the worst, but kings have far outstripped all that the prophet could foresee. The king, he said, will take your sons to be his warriors and servants; and will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and cooks, and bakers. This was the truth, and nothing but the truth, but it was not the whole truth; for the sons have been taken to be far worse than mere warriors and servants, and the daughters for much viler purposes than cooking and baking. Samuel goes on: "And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants"—when he does not keep them for himself might have been added. "And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants." Surely much more than a tenth, O Samuel! We will not quote the remainder of this wise warning. Like most wise warnings it was ineffectual; the foolish people insisted on having a king, and in the following chapters we read how Saul the Son of Kish, going forth to seek his father's asses, found his own subjects.

The condemnation of Monarchy by God, as we read it in this instance, is so thorough and general that we feel bound to add a few words on an exceptional case in which a king is highly extolled in the Scriptures, without any actions being recorded of him, as in the instances of David and Solomon, to nullify the praise. The king in question was Melchizedek, King of Salem, and priest of the most high God, who met Abram returning from the defeat of the four kings and blessed him, and to whom Abram gave tithes of all, as we read in Genesis xiv. But this short notice of Melchizedek in Genesis does not by any means suggest to us the full wonderfulness of his character, though we natu-

rally conclude from it that he was indeed an important personage to whom Abram gave tithes of all. The New Testament, however, comes to our aid, and for once gives us a most valuable political lesson, though the inspired writer was far from thinking of political instruction when he wrote the passage. In Hebrews vi., 20, and vii., 1 to 3, we read : " Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec. For this Melchisedec, King of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him ; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all ; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace ; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God ; abideth a priest continually." Now he to whom Jesus is compared, and who is like the Son of God, is clearly the noblest of characters ; and therefore, as the history in the first book of Samuel teaches us that Monarchy is generally to be avoided, these fine verses from the Epistle to the Hebrews delineate for us the exceptional king whose reign is to be desired. The delineation is quite masterly, for a few lines give us characteristics which cannot be overlooked or mistaken. This model monarch must be a priest of the most high God—a king of righteousness and king of peace ; without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life ; but made like unto the Son of God. Whenever and wherever such a gentlemen is met with, we would advise even the most zealous Republicans to put him forthwith upon the throne. But in the absence of such a gentleman we can hardly do wrong if we follow the good advice of Samuel dictated by God Almighty, and manage without any monarch.

The One Thing Needful.

[WRITTEN IN 1866.]

WHEN I survey with pious joy the present world of Christendom, finding everywhere that the true believers love their neighbors as themselves and are specially enamored of their enemies ; that no one of them takes thought for the morrow, what he shall eat or what he shall drink, or wherewithal he or she shall be clothed ; that all the pastors and flocks endeavor to outstrip each other in laying not up for themselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal ; and all are so intensely eager to quit this earthly tabernacle and become freeholders of mansions in the skies ; when I find faith as universal as the air, and charity as common as cold water ; I sometimes wonder, how it is that any misbelievers and unbelievers are left, and feel astonished that the New Jerusalem has not yet descended, and hope that the next morning's *Times* (rechristened *The Eternities*) will announce the inauguration of the Millennium.

What delayeth the end ? Can there indeed be any general hindering sin or imperfection among the pure saints, the holy, unselfish, aspiring, devout, peaceful, loving men and women who make up the population of every Christian land ? Can any error infect the teachings of the innumerable divines and theologians, who all agree together in every particular, drawing all the same doctrines from the same texts of the one unvaried Word of God ? I would fain believe that no such sin or error exists, not a single inky spot in the universal dazzling whiteness ; but then why have we to deplore the continued existence of heathens and infidels ? why is the New Jerusalem so long a-building ? why is the Millennium so long a-coming ? why have we a mere Sardowa instead of Armageddon ?

After long and painful thought, after the most serious and reverent study, I think I have found the

rock on which the ship of the Church has been wrecked ; and I hasten to communicate its extreme latitude and interminable longitude, that all Christian voyagers may evade and circumvent it from this time forward.

The error which I point out, and the correction which I propose, have been to a certain extent, in a vague manner, pointed out and proposed before. A clergyman named Malthus, not in his clerical capacity, but condescending to the menial study of mundane science, is usually considered the first discoverer. But mundane science is conditioned, limited, vague, its precepts are full of hesitation ; while celestial science is absolute, unlimited, clear as the noonday sun, and its precepts are imperiously forthright.

It seems to me that the one fatal error which has lurked in our otherwise consummate Christianity, and which demands immediate correction is this, that the propagation of children is reconcileable with the propagation of the faith—an error which while it lasts adjourns *sine die* the day of judgment, and begins the Millennium with the Greek Kalends.

One need not quote the numerous texts throughout the New Testament (let Matthew xix., 12, suffice) proving that Jesus and the epistolary apostles accounted celibacy essential to the *highest* Christian life. One only of the disciples, so far as we know, was married ; and he it was who denied his master ; and most of the more profound divines consider that Peter was justly punished for marrying, when Christ cured his mother-in-law of that fever which might else have carried her off.

But many modest people may be content with a respectable Christian life which is not of the very highest kind. They may think that as husbands and wives they will make very decent middle-class saints in heaven, after a comfortable existence on earth, leaving the nobler crowns of holiness for more daring spirits. Humility is one of the fairest graces, and we revere it ; but there is a consideration, most momentous for the kind Christian heart, which such good people must have overlooked—very naturally, since it is very obvious.

Jesus tells us that many are called but few are chosen; that few enter the strait gate and travel the narrow way, while many take the broad way that leadeth to destruction. In other words, the large majority of mankind, the large majority of even those who have the gospel preached to them, must be damned. When a human soul is born into the world, the odds are at least ten to one that the Devil will get it. Can any pious member of the Church who has thought of this take the responsibility of becoming a parent? I thoroughly believe not. I am convinced that we have so many Christian parents only because this very conspicuous aspect of the case has not caught their view. If the parents could have any assurance that the piety of their offspring would be in proportion to their own, they would be justified in wedding in holiness. But alas; we all know that some of the most religious parents have had some of the most wicked children. Dearly beloved brethren and sisters, pause and calculate that for every little saint you give to heaven, you beget and bear at least nine sinners who will eventually go to hell.

The remedy proposed is plain and simple as a gospel precept: let no Christian have any child at all—a rule which, in the grandeur of its absoluteness makes the poor timid and tentative Malthusianism very ridiculous indeed. For this rule is drawn immediately from the New Testament and cannot but be perfect as its source.

Let us think of a few of the advantages which would flow from its practice. The profane have sometimes sneered that Jesus and his disciples manifestly thought that the world would come to an end, the millennium be inaugurated, within a very few years from the public ministry of Jesus. Luckily the profane are always ignorant or shallow, or both. For, as the New Jerusalem is to come down while Christians are alive, and as Christians in the highest sense or Christians without offspring must have come to an end with the first generation, it is plain that the belief which has been sneered at was thoroughly well founded; and that it has been disappointed only because the vast majority of Chris-

tians have not been Christians in the highest sense at all, but in their ignorance have continued to propagate like so many heathen proletarians.

Now, supposing the very likely case that all Christians now living reflect upon the truth herein expounded, and see that it is true, and, therefore, always act upon it, it follows that, with the end of our now young generation, the whole of Christendom will be translated into the kingdom of heaven. Either the mere scum of non-Christians left upon the earth will be wholly or in great part converted by an example so splendid and attractive, and thus translate all Christendom in the second edition in a couple of generations more; or else the world, being without any Christianity, will, as a matter of course, be so utterly vile and evil that the promised fire must destroy it at once, and so bring in the New Heavens and New Earth.

Roman Catholic Christians may indeed answer that, although the above argument is irresistible to the Protestants, who have no mean in the next life between Heaven and Hell, yet that it is not so formidable to them, seeing that they believe in the ultimate salvation of nearly every one born and reared in their communion, and only give a temporary purgatory to the worst of their own sinners. And I admit that such reply is very cogent. Yet, strangely enough, the Catholics even more than the Protestants, recognise and cultivate the supreme beatitude of celibacy; their legions of unwedded priests, and monks, and nuns and saints are so many legions of concessions to the truth of my main argument.

I am aware that one of the most illustrious dignitaries of our own National Church, the very reverend and reverent Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's, has advocated on various grounds, and with impressive force of reasoning, the general eating of babies: and I anticipate that some prudent Christians may, therefore, argue that it is better to get babies and eat them than to have none at all, since the souls of the sweet innocents would surely go to heaven, while their bodies would be very nourishing on earth. Unfortunately, however, the doctrine of Original Sin, as expounded and illus-

trated by many very thoughtful theologians, and specially theologians of the most determined Protestant type, makes it very doubtful whether the souls of infants are not damned. It will surely be better, then, for good Protestants to have no infants at all : *Q.E.D.*

The Athanasian Creed.

[WRITTEN IN 1865.]

ON Christmas Day, as on all other chief holidays of the year, the ministers and congregations of our National Church have had the noble privilege and pleasure of standing up and reciting the creed commonly called of St. Athanasius. The question of the authorship does not concern us here, but a note of Gibbon (chapter 37) is so brief and comprehensive that we may as well cite it :—"But the three following truths, however strange they may seem, are *now* universally acknowledged. 1. St. Athanasius is not the author of the creed which is so frequently read in our churches. 2. It does not appear to have existed within a century after his death. 3. It was originally composed in the Latin tongue, and consequently in the western provinces. Gennadius, patriarch of Constantinople, was so much amazed by this extraordinary composition, that he frankly pronounced it to be the work of a drunken man." (This Gennadius, by the bye, is the same whom Gibbon mentions two or three times afterwards in the account of the siege and conquest of Constantinople by the Turks, A.D. 1453).

Whoever elaborated the Creed, and whether he did it drunk or sober, the Church of England has made it thoroughly her own by adoption.

Yet it must be admitted that many good churchmen, and perhaps even a few churchwomen, have not loved this adopted child of their Holy Mother as warmly as their duty commanded. The intelligently pious Tillotson wishes Mother Church well rid of the bantling; and poor George the Third himself, with all his immense genius for orthodoxy, could not take kindly to it. He was willing enough to repeat all its expressions of theological faith—in fact, their perfect nonsense, their obstinate irrationality, must have been exquisitely delightful to a brain such as his; but he was not without a sort of vulgar manhood, even when worshipping in the Chapel Royal, and so rather choked at its denunciations—"for it do curse dreadful." He could keep the faith whole and undefiled by reason, yet did not like to assert that all who had been and were and should in future be in this particular less happy than himself, must without doubt perish everlastingly.

On the other hand one of our most liberal Churchmen, Mr. Maurice, has argued that this creed is essentially merciful, and that its retention in the Book of Common Prayer is a real benefit. Mr. Maurice, however, as we all know, interprets "perish everlastingly" into a meaning very different from that which most members of the Church accept. And his opinions lose considerably in weight from the fact that no man save himself can infer any one of them from any other. For example, if you are cheered up a bit by his notions as to "Eternal" and "Everlasting," you are soon depressed again by his pervading woefulness. Of all the rulers we hear of—the ex-king of Naples, the king of Prussia, the Elector of Hesse-Cassel, Abraham Lincoln, and the Pope included—the poor God of Mr. Maurice is the most to be pitied: a God whose world is in so deplorable a state that the good man who owns him lives in a perpetual fever of anxiety and misery in endeavoring to improve it for him.

What part of this creed shocks the pious who are shocked at all by it? Simply the comprehensive damnation it deals out to unbelievers, half-believers, and all except whole believers. For we do not hear that the pious are shocked by the confession of theo-

logical or theo-illogical faith itself. Their reverence bows and kisses the rod, which we cool outsiders might fairly have expected to be broken up and flung out of doors in a fury of indignation. Their sinful human nature is shocked on account of their fellow-men ; their divine religious nature is not shocked on account of their God : yet does not the creed use God as badly as man ?

A chemist secures some air, and analyses it into its ultimate constituents, and states with precise numerals the proportions of oxygen, nitrogen, and carbonic acid therein. Just so the author of this creed secures the Divinity and analyses it into Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and just as precisely he reports the relations of these. A mathematician makes you a problem of a certain number divided into three parts in certain ratios to each other and to the sum, from which ratios you are to deduce the sum and the parts. Just so the author of this creed makes a riddle of his God, dividing him into three persons, from whose inter-relations you are to deduce the Deity. An anatomist gets hold of a dead body and dissects it, exposing the structure and functions of the brain, the lungs, the hearts, etc. Just so the author of this creed gets possession of the corpse of God (he died of starvation doing slop-work for Abstraction and Company ; and the dead body was purveyed by the well-known resurrectionist Priest-craft), and cuts it open and expounds the generation and functions of its three principal organs. But the chemist does not tell us that oxygen, nitrogen, and carbonic acid are three gases and yet one gas, that each of them is and is not common air, that they have each peculiar and yet wholly identical properties ; the mathematician does not tell us that each of the three parts of his whole number is equal to the whole, and equal to each of the others, and yet less than the whole and unequal to either of the others ; the anatomist does not tell us that brain and lungs and heart are each distinct and yet all the same in substance, structure, and function, and that each is in itself the whole body and at the same time is not : while the author of this creed does tell us analogous contradictions of the three

members and the whole of his God. And the chemist, the mathematician and the anatomist do not damn us (except, perhaps, by way of expletive at our stupidity) if we fail to understand and believe their enunciations; but the author of this creed very seriously and solemnly damns to everlasting perdition all who cannot put faith in his. In other words, the chemist, the mathematician and the anatomist try to be as reasonable and tolerant as human nature can hope to be; while the author of this creed aims at and manages to reach an almost super-human unreason and intolerance.

Giving him the full benefit of this difference, the fact remains that in other respects he treats his subject just as they treat theirs. He, a pious Christian, professing unbounded adoration and awe of his Divinity, coolly analyses and makes riddles of and dissects this Divinity as if it were a sample of air, a certain number, a dead body. This humble-minded devotee, who knows so well that he is finite and that God is infinite, and that the finite cannot conceive, much less comprehend, much less express the infinite, yet expounds this Infinite with the most complete and complacent knowledge, turns it inside out and upside down, tells us all about it, cuts it up into three parts, and then glues it together again with a glue that has the tenacity of atrocious wrongheadedness instead of the coherence of logic, puts his mark upon it, and says, "This is the only genuine thing in the God line. If you are taken in by any other, why, go and be damned;" and having done all this, finishes by chanting "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghcst!" And the pious are not shocked by what they should abhor as horrible sacrilege and blasphemy; they are shocked only by the "Go, and be damned," which is the prologue and epilogue of the blasphemy. Were the damnatory clauses omitted, it appears that even the most devout worshippers could comfortably chant the "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost" immediately after they had been thus degrading Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to the level and beneath the level of their low human understanding. And these very people are horrified by the lack of veneration in

Atheists and infidels! What infidel ever dealt with God more contemptuously and blasphemously than this creed has dealt with him? Can it be expected that sane and sensible men, who have out-grown the prejudices sucked in with their mothers' milk, will be reconverted to reverence a Deity whom his votaries dare to treat in this fashion?

Ere we conclude, it may be as well to anticipate a probable objection. It may likely enough be urged that the author and reciters of the creed do not pretend to know the Deity so thoroughly as we have assumed, since they avouch very early in the creed that the three persons of the Godhead are one and all incomprehensible. If the word incomprehensible, thus used, means (what it apparently meant in the author's mind) unlimited as to extension, just as the word eternal means unlimited as to time, the objection is altogether wide of the mark. But even if the word incomprehensible be taken to mean (what it apparently means in the minds of most people who use the creed) beyond the comprehension or capacity of the human intellect, still the objection is without force. For in the same sense a tuft of grass, a stone, anything and everything in the world is beyond the capacity of the human intellect: the roots of a tuft of grass strike as deeply into the incomprehensible as the mysteries of the Deity. Relatively this creed tells us quite as much about God as ever the profoundest botanist can tell us about the grass; in fact, it tells relatively more, for it implies a knowledge of the *Final Cause* of the subsistence of God, which no future botanist can tell or imply of the grass.

