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THE
RELIGIOUS **W**EAKNESS
OF
PROTESTANTISM.

BY
FRANCIS W. NEWMAN,

*Emeritus Professor of University College, London; and formerly Fellow of
Balliol College, Oxford.*



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It is proper to say that this tract appeared originally in a Review. No moderate change would suffice to make the tone natural to the author when writing in his own sole name. It has been thought better to leave the impersonal character which it bore from the first. Nevertheless, allusions to passing events which would now be misleading, are omitted or altered; one passage which was changed to please the Editor, is restored more nearly as it was at first written; and an erroneous paragraph has been corrected.

August, 1866.

F. W. N.

*THE RELIGIOUS
WEAKNESS OF PROTESTANTISM.*

IT is humiliating to every Protestant to look on the map of Europe, and see the vast surface which is covered by Catholicism, and the numerical weakness of its nobler adversary. In less than forty years from its feeble origin, Protestantism made its widest European conquests; and thenceforward began to recede, nor ever again recovered the lost ground. Through the whole of the eighteenth century Protestant doctrine might have been preached with little molestation in the greater part of Europe, yet nowhere did it extend itself. Neither in Ireland, where a victorious Government was long bent to reduce Catholicism by severe and unjust law (in which they were far less successful than Catholic kings in their bigoted violences); nor in France, where unbelief laid the national religion prostrate and stripped the Church of its revenues; nor in the dominions of the Emperor Joseph II., who resolutely put down Romish pretensions, while remaining in communion with the Church; nor even in his kingdom of

Hungary, where the two religions co-existed in much good-will; nor under the Prussian monarchy, and elsewhere in Germany; nor in Tuscany, under the enlightened Leopold II. ;—in short, nowhere at all has Protestantism, *even while she had a fair field and leave to speak truth*, been able to win anything perceptible on the field of history from her Papal antagonist. We submit, that this is a phenomenon too broad, too uniform, too decidedly marked, for any reasonable man to pass by as insignificant. And it is the more remarkable, because side by side with this religious weakness, Protestantism has more and more displayed its political and social superiority. Notoriously the Protestant cantons of Switzerland are superior in industry, neatness, and abundance to the Catholic cantons of the same land; while climate, soil, and race are the same. A similar distinction has often been observed between Catholic and Protestant farmers in Ireland. England, the largest Protestant State in Europe, has been the richest and perhaps the best ordered country, certainly that which stretches its power farthest. Nowhere else, not even in despotic countries, is the executive Government more energetic through the prompt obedience and concurrence of the citizens; nowhere else, not even in Switzerland or the United States, do the citizens exercise their right to criticize and to thwart the Government with a more loyal submission of the ruling powers; nowhere is there less desire of violent revolution than there has been for two centuries together in Protestant Great Britain (for the

ejecting of one Catholic king does not here concern our argument); nowhere is there a country, which, in proportion to its millions, is fuller of all the elements, mental and material, which kings desire and patriots extol. In Canada, where the two religions come into equal competition, the superior energy of Protestantism in everything that constitutes the grandeur of nations is manifest. Now it is a familiar fact, that such worldly superiority does in itself tend to the progress (at least to the superficial extension) of the religion in which it is found. It cannot be said that Catholics, like Turks, are so fanatically wedded to their creed as to be proof against all refutations; for it is notorious that in Catholic Spain, France, Germany, a disbelief in the national religion is very widely spread through the higher and middle ranks—a disbelief which sometimes pervades the ruling powers themselves. Yet, though they may cast off the Romish faith, they seldom or never adopt that of Protestants.

Probably all men who are thoughtful enough to abandon the Catholic Church, are also well informed enough to be aware what are the true causes of the energy, wealth, and intelligence of the Protestant nations; that it does not arise from the positive creed which they still hold, but from the private liberty which accompanies this creed or from the energetic public administration which this liberty enforces and maintains. In fact France, though nominally Catholic, vies to a great degree with England in all national developments; and the causes are

evidently either purely political, or inhere, not in religious faith, but much rather in religious scepticism. Out of that unbelief, which by the great French revolution of the last century broke down the power of the Church, has arisen much of the vigour of modern France ; no part of it can be reasonably ascribed to the positive creed. Evidently then it is to the negative side of Protestantism that Protestant nations owe their energy and freedom, so far as the cause is ecclesiastical at all. It will further be observed that Russia, having a creed which from a Protestant point of view is in its essence neither better nor worse than Romanism, and being without the individual freedom which is to us so precious, nevertheless is on the whole flourishing within and powerful without, because of the energy of its central executive ; an energy which is upheld by summary proceedings of the Royal House from within to secure an able occupant of the throne. In short, on the very surface of history is a broad fact, which is perpetually overlooked by the panegyrists of ecclesiastical Protestantism—namely, that while all Europe was still Catholic, every State was prosperous in a near proportion to its freedom, and the freest displayed exactly those points of superiority of which England or Prussia may now boast. Look to the Spain of Ferdinand and Isabella—a nation profoundly Catholic ; in fact, more Catholic then than now—for unbelief had not as yet pervaded its higher ranks, as in later days. The Parliaments of Arragon, of Castile, of Valencia were more spirited than those

of England at the same time. The municipalities were as well ordered and as independent; the local authorities as active and as responsible to the local community; the public law as efficiently sustained; the industry was as intelligent, as persevering, and as highly rewarded by wealth: or rather, in all these matters Spain then took the lead of England. Her poetry and other literature was in advance of ours; she had a celebrated school of painting, while we were strange to such art. By the patriotism, high spirit, intelligence, faithfulness, and mutual trust of Spaniards, Spain then stood at the head of all Europe, and lent to her subsequent monarchs—Charles of Ghent, and his son Philip II.—an enormous power which their despotism first lessened and soon undermined. Spain has undergone no change of religion. Evidently then, it is not Catholicism which in itself has been her bane; but the despotism which, to sustain the Catholicism, has crushed her intelligence and forbidden her activity. Nearly the same remarks may be made on Bohemia. Turning to another country, Belgium, we see a people which—although not without violence from its princes preserved to Catholicism in the struggle of the Reformation—has yet on the whole retained its local freedom with singular success under Catholic and despotic houses; and since 1830 has become a wholly independent State, with a free Royal Constitution. Thus, to speak roughly, we may say that Belgium has never lost either her freedom or her Catholicism. And she has all along been a highly industrious, energetic, prospering country—

not indeed intellectually prominent, for this has been prohibited by the ascendant ecclesiasticism—yet her general state suffices to prove that the material well-being of England does not spring from that Protestantism in which she differs from Belgium, but from that freedom which she has in common with Belgium. Thus we cannot claim that Catholics will impute any of these exterior advantages, of which we boast, to our remaining ecclesiasticism, or regard them as an honour to the positive side of our national creed.

Nay, nor can we impute to this cause any part of our mental superiority to Belgium or to Sicily; and for this plain reason, that on the one side the ecclesiastical organs have done their worst to crush our intellectual vigour; and on the other our Puritanical school has done its worst to scold it down. For every stupid and mischievous error a hard fight has been maintained by theologians, in proportion to their "orthodoxy." Take, for instance, the superstition concerning witches and possession by devils. The truth of the latter is still guaranteed in the Canons of the Church of England, which regulate the casting out of devils by license of the bishop. The reality of witchcraft was publicly maintained on Scriptural evidence alike by clergymen and by judges. Chief Baron Hale (a very religious man) not only argued for it Scripturally from the judgment-seat in 1665, but had two women hanged for witches. Education and free thought prevailed, against the positive evidence of the Bible;

in favour of which the celebrated John Wesley still struggled.

“It is true,” says he, “that the English in general, and indeed most of the men of learning in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives’ fables. I am sorry for it. . . . The giving up of witchcraft is in effect giving up the Bible. . . . I cannot give up to all the Deists in Great Britain the existence of witchcraft, till I give up the credit of all history, sacred and profane.”

His contemporary, the celebrated Dr Johnson, a High Churchman and anxiously orthodox, was a believer in the “Cock-lane ghost” of those days. Certainly no one can think that the theory of “the Bible and the Bible only,” &c., has led Protestants to resign the Witch of Endor.—Again, if there is any one national enormity which more than all others tends to repress mental energy, it is religious persecution. Of this there has been far less among the Protestant countries—to their undoubted benefit; and yet, certainly, we have not to thank Protestant theology for it. The practice of Calvin was substantially the theory of all the orthodox reformed Churches. If the hierarchy or Presbyterians of England and Scotland could have had their will, mental freedom would have been crippled in Great Britain as effectually as in France or even in Spain. The Independents won, by the sword of Cromwell, with political also a religious freedom before unheard of in these lands; yet for heretics who went beyond them, it was long before the law provided safety, much less

gave them their natural equality. In every step of progress towards freedom, it is lamentable to say that English "orthodoxy" has always been found on the side of resistance. Not only were the Test and Corporation Acts sustained by the Church influence, and were abolished in 1828 by a lay Parliament, whose Protestantism had but few positive elements of the Reformed Theology; but even much later, when the Dissenters' Chapel Act was passed—an Act which, in its practical aim, did but hinder the Unitarian revenues, chapels, and burying-grounds from being taken from the hereditary possessors (often children or grandchildren of the donors), and given up to be scrambled for by strangers, with a certainty that the whole must be swallowed up in lawyers' fees;—in that crisis, when Peel and Lyndhurst, and even Gladstone, stood up for the Unitarians, all the "orthodoxy" of England stirred itself to resist this act of equity. It is to our laity, and to that part especially which has little ostensible religious character, that every successive victory over bigoted intolerance is due. Hence it is to the negative, not to the positive side of Protestantism, that we must ascribe our mental energy and intelligence.

Undoubtedly, these negative elements have been of vast national moment, by liberating the energies of individuals; whereby knowledge has risen into science, industry into systematic art, wealth and skill have increased, labour has organized itself, and an unusually large part of the nation has employed itself on fruitful thought and invention. But in all

this there has been little or nothing of properly religious influence. The more Protestantism has been developed into its own characteristic prosperity, the more Atheistic is the aspect of public affairs. It has not known at all better than its Romish rival how to combine religious earnestness with tolerant justice, and has become just only by passing into indifference to religion. Its divines often attack Romanism by insisting on the vast spread of unbelief within the pale of that Church; while they are astonishingly blind to the very same phenomenon within all the national Protestant Churches. This is not a recent fact, as some imagine. Indeed, since the Restoration, it is difficult to name the time at which it may reasonably be thought that the existing English statesmen had any grave and practical belief in the national religion. Montesquieu, who passed for a free thinker in France, found that in England (near a century and a half ago) he had far too much religion for our great-grandfathers. Equally in the Lutheran Churches of Germany and of Sweden, also in the Calvinistic Churches of Switzerland and elsewhere, the same face of events has presented itself: the clergy tend either to lose all spiritual character, or to take refuge in Unitarianism; the laity, in proportion to their cultivation, have been prone to entire unbelief.

Under that measure of mental freedom which the great rebellion against Charles I. brought in, and by aid of the growing indifference to religion in France and elsewhere, physical science has in the last two centuries grown up. From this, more than from

anything else, has proceeded the political superiority of Europe to the Turks, the Persians, the Chinese. It has given to us safe oceanic navigation—a vast command of the useful metals and all material of war—the steam-engine and all its developments—with a miscellany ever increasing of practical applications of chemistry. Indeed, the relative strength of different nations, which is ill measured by any religious test, such as Catholicism or Protestantism, and is not accurately measured even by a political test, such as freedom or despotism, yet (numbers being equal) is well measured by the development of physical science. Russia is stronger than China, though having but a quarter of the population; yet the form of government in China is as despotic, the people is as obedient, and far more conveniently situated, on the noblest rivers, in highly advantageous concentration, with a better soil and climate, and a splendid oceanic coast. Russia has but one advantage, and that one thing is all-important: she has introduced the physical sciences of the West, and has turned to Imperial service the skill of our ablest minds. Two centuries ago, before physical science had effected anything practical, the Protestant States had no perceptible superiority over the Catholic; now, they have on the whole a superiority, but it is proportioned chiefly to the development and application of science. Perhaps then in truth it is more to the science of matter than to Protestant theology, that we ought to attribute whatever advantages we can boast in material strength.

Meanwhile, no one can overlook the portentous fact, that this physical science—to which we owe so much of what some would claim for the credit of Protestantism—is intensely repugnant and destructive to the theology of the Reformation, and constantly drives to results not only anti-Christian, but even Atheistic. Dr Pusey and Mr Sewell are forward to aver this. Mr Sewell declares his aversion to the glaring light of science, and well understands its antagonism to the belief in miracles. It is not that many scientific men will go to the full length of asserting that no *imaginable* evidence could be strong enough to prove a miracle; yet, certainly, that no *such* evidence as is pretended by divines can ever prove *such* miracles as they allege. Science teaches us to study every question *à priori*, with a view to judge how much *à posteriori* evidence will suffice for its decision. If a statement is beforehand highly probable, we need but moderate and ordinary testimony to create belief in it; if it be decidedly improbable, we want first-rate and clear testimony; if it be intensely improbable, we need testimony direct, conclusive, and unimpeachable. Let us pass from this principle to the two great miracles which lie at the foundation of orthodox Christianity; we mean, of course, the miraculous conception and the resurrection of Jesus; and let us calmly consider how they would be treated if they were now for the first time heard of, and brought to the test of ordinary scientific evidence.

It is not our fault, if the discussion of the former

topic somewhat shock religious decorum. In heathenism indecent fables are not uncommon; to have to refute such things is disagreeable. If the refutation prove disagreeable to the votary also, all unprejudiced bystanders will say that he must blame those who invented the creed, not him who refutes it; and surely the same topic applies here. We are ordered to believe that a certain person was born without a human father; and when we ask, on what proof, we have handed to us, in the first instance, the book called Matthew, in which it is alleged that Joseph, the ostensible father of Jesus, discovered his betrothed wife to have premature signs of maternity; that he was disposed to repudiate her privately, in order to save her shame; when, lo! he had a *dream*; a DREAM! informing him that there was no shame in the matter, but great glory; it was a holy miracle; the father of her child was no human being, but was the Spirit of God. Such is the account in Matthew.

We should fear to insult an English magistrate, by expecting him to believe a similar story concerning some English peasant girl, on the ground that her betrothed lover had had a *dream* to that effect, which tranquillized his mind after a painful struggle. Not only no English magistrate, no judge, no jury, would believe such a tale on such evidence; but no clergyman would believe it, no bishop, no archbishop: this we may assert with absolute freedom and certainty, however large demands of easy faith they make on others. The least that even an archbishop could require would be, some security,—or say, some plausible

pretence for believing—that it was not a common dream, but a properly miraculous vision; and that the man to whom it was vouchsafed should display some superiority of mind, which might, if not justify our trust in his power to discriminate between dreams and visions, yet palliate our credulity in so trusting him. Who then was Joseph? Why should we believe him so easily?

Who indeed was Joseph? We know nothing of him except that this story was told of him at a later time. Nay, we cannot even attain any moderately good proof that he ever had such a dream, or professed to have had it: for it is on the face of the narrative that he passed as father of Jesus, and that there was no public suspicion that that was an error, some thirty years later, at which time Joseph has vanished out of the narrative and is supposed to have been dead. We have then a second question: *Who* is it that tells us that Joseph ever narrated such a dream, ever professed painful suspicions, and received such a solution of them? The reply is: We know little or nothing about him. It is usual now to call him Matthew; and if Matthew was really the writer's name, if he even wrote within fifty years after the dream, it helps very little to prove that Joseph was his informant, or had ever heard the tale.

It has been observed (and the remark seems decisive) that no young woman of ordinary good sense or right feeling could have failed to reveal everything of this critical nature to her betrothed from the first moment. That she should allow him

to have unjust and dishonouring suspicions, and remain silent, is quite unnatural: it is conduct of which no plausible explanation can be given. And now, we are expected to believe a mighty and cardinal miracle on evidence which would not suffice in the laxest court of law to establish an ordinary fact.

If the possession of an estate depended on priority of existence, and the evidence offered were, that a man called Matthew, who died last year, had left a MS. which stated that a certain Joseph had a dream, and that in this dream an angel of the Lord told him that "James was born before Joses;" we say, no ecclesiastical tribunal in Europe would believe this very credible statement on such evidence.

There are many persons so thoughtless, or so unreasonable, as to assume that religious credulity is *safer* and more *pious* than incredulity. As if for the instruction of such, the Romanist steps in, to show them by his example to what results their easy faith leads. For centuries together Spain was eminent in the Romish world for its devotion to the Virgin, to whom the Spaniards have ascribed a prerogative which they entitle "immaculate conception."

Protestants in general, misled by the phrase, suppose it to assert the same miracle concerning the birth of Mary (whose mother is ecclesiastically known as St Ann), as Matthew and Luke assert concerning the birth of Jesus. The writer of these lines has been rebuked by two Catholics for this very error; and as they were very explicit, he supposes they were

correct. They explained, that the miracle in the case of St Ann was, *not* that the Holy Spirit acted on her womb to *supersede* a human father, but so *combined* his influence on that organ with that of the real father, as to hinder the introduction of "original sin" by the father's act! Within the last few years we have seen this doctrine raised into a dogma of the church by the Pope; and Protestants cry out, that the dogma is very disgusting, and that it has no basis of proof; for of St Ann nobody knows anything. We cannot defend the doctrine from such attacks; but we doubt whether the "orthodox" Protestant has fairly earned a right to make them. His own dogma is equally baseless, not less puerile or more edifying. If he insists that it is pious to believe rumours or speculations of this nature, in which the gossip of all heathenism abounds, he does his best to throw open the floodgates of measureless credulity and indecent fable.

A curious story, not much known, is alluded to by Dr Campbell, of Aberdeen, in the fourteenth of his celebrated "Lectures on Ecclesiastical History." So late as the pontificate of Clement XI., in the beginning of the last century, a preacher in Rome, intending to honour St Ann, applied to her the title "Grandmother of God;" which, being new, appeared highly offensive, and was suppressed by the Pope; who doubtless foresaw that, if it were permitted, we should next hear of "God's grandfather, uncle, aunt, and cousins." "The second Council of Nice, in quoting the Epistle of James, do not hesitate (says Dr C.) to

style the writer God's brother (*ἀδελφόθεον*).^{*} "The sole spring of offence is in the first step," viz., the calling the Virgin Mary "Mother of God." For, he adds, to distinguish between "the mother of the mother," and "the grandmother," is impossible. As a protestant, he of course disapproves of the received Romish phraseology; yet, clear as he generally is, he leaves us in doubt whether he disapproves of saying (p. 253) that the Virgin is "the mother of him who is God," equally with the other formula, that she is "the mother of God." He has just informed us that under Pope Hormisdas and some of his successors there was a fierce strife,* whether we ought to say, "One of the Trinity suffered in the flesh," or "One person of the Trinity suffered in the flesh." Unless such controversies are to be regarded as rightful and necessary, what are they but a *reductio ad absurdum* of Anglican orthodoxy?

We pass to the second great miracle, the Resurrection, to which the Ascension is a sort of complement. Here it is possible that men of science will admit (though we have no right to make concessions in their name), that evidence is *imaginable* adequate to prove facts of such a nature—which are not negative (as in the case of miraculous conception), but positive. Suppose a man's head were cut off, or his

* "There were four different opinions. One set approved of both expressions; a second condemned both; a third maintained the former expression to be orthodox, the latter heterodox; and a fourth affirmed the reverse. In this squabble, emperors, popes, and patriarchs engaged with great fury."—Dr Campbell.

body burned to ashes; after either of these events, duly testified, no man of science could be incredulous of the real death. Again, suppose that after such death testimony were offered that the same person was still alive. Inasmuch as only from information and experience do we hitherto disbelieve that a man once dead ever resumes animal life in the same form, it would seem that an amount of first-rate testimony is *imaginable*, which might force us to modify the universality of this doctrine: nevertheless, the evidence needs to be very cogent. We must have decisive proof of the death, and decisive proof of the renewed animal life: a failure on either side would make the whole vain. If, for instance, a person fainted and seemed to die from exhaustion or loss of blood, and, after this, came overwhelming evidence that he was still alive; it would not have the slightest tendency to prove that he was risen from the dead, but only that the death had not been real. Now the very peculiar phenomenon in the Biblical narrative of the Resurrection is, that of the two propositions, both of which are equally essential, it is hard to say which of the two is less satisfactorily sustained: so that those who find it every way impossible to believe the miracle, are at the same time left uncertain whether or not the alleged death was real. Crucifixion was notoriously the most tedious of deaths, and was for this very reason selected by the Carthaginians and Romans as a mode of long torment and ignominy. The loss of blood endured by it is so trifling, that the

victim dies only by exhaustion and thirst, or by the sufferings of muscular spasm. From the article "Cross," in the 'Penny Cyclopædia,' we extract the following :—

"As death (from crucifixion) in many cases did not ensue for a length of time, guards were placed to prevent the relatives or friends of the crucified from giving them any relief, or taking them away whilst alive, *or removing their bodies after they were dead.* Even when it (crucifixion) took place by nailing, neither the wounds themselves nor the quantity of blood lost would be sufficient in all cases to bring on speedy death. During the reign of Louis XV. several women (religious enthusiasts, called Convulsionaires) voluntarily underwent crucifixion. Dr Merand relates that he was present at the crucifixion of two females, named Sister Rachel and Sister Felicité. They were laid down, fixed by nails five inches long driven firmly through both hands and feet into the wood of which the crosses were made. The crosses were then raised to a vertical position. In this manner they remained nailed, while other ceremonies of these fanatics proceeded. Sister Rachel, who had been first crucified, was then taken down; she lost very little blood. Sister Felicité was afterwards taken from her cross. Three small basons, called *palettes*, full of blood, flowed from her hands and feet. Their wounds were then dressed, and the meeting was terminated. *Sister Felicité declared that it was the twenty-first time she had undergone crucifixion.*"

The death being ordinarily so slow, it is of great importance to know *how long* Jesus hung on the cross : and here the narrators are at variance. Mark says distinctly (xv. 25—34) that Jesus was crucified at the *third* hour, and died at the *ninth* hour. John as distinctly tells us that he was not yet crucified at the

*sixth** hour (xix. 14). "It was *about the sixth hour*, and Pilate saith unto the Jews, Behold your King. And they cried out, Away with him, crucify him. . . . Then delivered he unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. *And he bearing his cross, went forth into a place called*" &c. &c. Thus, after Pilate's command, was the further process of carrying the cross out from Pilate's judgment-seat to Golgotha; which, for anything that appears to the contrary, may have delayed the actual crucifixion for another hour. In short, accepting the narratives, there is nothing in them to show that Jesus was longer than *two*† hours actually on the cross. It is further manifest in them all, that Pilate most unwillingly consented to his execution, and was driven to it only by fear. He distinctly declares him to be innocent, and tries to save him. In Matthew he takes water, and symbolically washes his hands in

* To save the Biblical infallibility, some divines hold that John had a *different way of counting the hours* from the other Evangelists. The learned Dr Bloomfield, in his 'Commentary to the Greek Testament,' thinks such a theory too rash. He says (on Mark xv. 25), "Although such discrepancies [as this between Mark and John] are (as Fritz observes) 'rather to be patiently borne, than removed by rash measures,' yet here we are, I conceive, not reduced to any great necessity. For although the mode of reconciling the two accounts by a sort of *management* [Italics in Dr B.], however it may be approved by many commentators, is not to be commended, yet . . ." in short, it is best to believe the text in John corrupt, and to alter *sixth* to *third*. Of course this is possible; but so is the opposite; and no one can rest a miracle on a voluntary correction of a text.

† Strauss has discussed this whole subject carefully: 'Life of Jesus,' Part III. ch. iv. § 134. [First Work, 1st edition.] He thinks the additions in John to be mythical inventions; but we here decline to discuss such possibilities, and (concessively) abide by the statements as given us.

sight of the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person : see ye to it." A governor, who, after so humiliating a struggle, yields an innocent man to public death, is not unlikely to compromise with his conscience by giving secret orders to the executioners *not* to kill him, but to put him on to the cross for a short time, and give up his body, as if dead, to his friends, as soon as he appeared to faint. What might thus seem beforehand probable, is unexpectedly confirmed by John's information (xx. 32, 33) that the soldiers, knowing that the time was insufficient to kill, broke the legs of the other two who were crucified with Jesus (not a very effectual way of hastening death,* but at least a security against their resuming the trade of robbers); while they did *not* break the legs of Jesus. John adds, that they refrained *because* they saw him to be dead; which appears to be a mere surmise; the real reason may have been that they had secret orders from Pilate to spare Jesus. Curiously enough, John proceeds unawares to state what distinctly suggests, that Jesus was not dead when they began to take him down from the cross; for he adds, that a soldier "pierced his side with a spear, and forthwith came out blood and water: and he that saw it (whoever this was) bare record, and his record is true," &c. Some of the Fathers, as Strauss observes, strongly felt how opposed this is to common expe-

* Strauss observes that the breaking of legs nowhere else occurs in connexion with crucifixion among the Romans. He thinks that the fractures would be sure to mortify, and thus cause death.

rience of death. Says Origen : " In all other dead bodies the blood coagulates, and no pure water flows from them ; but the marvel of the dead body in the case of Jesus is, blood and water poured from his side even after death." So Euthymius : " For out of a dead human being, though you should stab him ten thousand times, no blood will come. This phenomenon is supernatural, and clearly proves that he who was stabbed is higher than man." We are too aware of the delicacy of such physiological questions, to speak so confidently ourselves. It suffices to say, that the flow of blood is most easily and naturally accounted for by supposing the circulation still to be active. Indeed, even swooning makes it hard to get blood out of a man. If he falls in battle from a sabre-cut and faints, the heart ceasing its normal action, the blood flows too feebly in the arteries to issue from the wound, which presently coagulates : and when death is complete, the stagnation must ordinarily be still greater. It is of course *possible*, that though crucifixion had not caused death, this spear-wound proved fatal ; but the alternative is equally *possible*—that as he was still alive, neither did this new wound kill him. The narrative decides nothing either way. We however do learn from it that Pilate desired to save him, gave him up with a bad conscience, and subjected him to the shortest time of crucifixion which would obviate quarrel with the Jewish rulers ; that Pilate's executioners favoured Jesus in comparison with the two robbers by not breaking his legs ; allowed a humane person, when

Jesus complained of the thirst accompanying that miserable torment, to moisten his lips with vinegar, which, diluted with water, was a well-known beverage of the Roman soldiers, and is a great relief to a fevered mouth; further, Pilate's officers took him down from the cross, and prepared to deliver him to his friends, while there were symptoms which strongly indicate life, and after an interval so short, that (as Mark asserts) Pilate " marvelled if he were already dead." With so very imperfect a proof of death, it is manifest that all pains in the second part of the story to prove a Resurrection are wasted; the more so, since, according to the accounts, neither was he buried in such a way as could have tended to suffocation. His body was given over to the friendly hand of Joseph of Arimathæa, who laid him "in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock;" that is to say, in a rocky vault, where a wounded man might receive surgical treatment and cordials.

The evidence offered in proof that Jesus after his burial was seen alive, has been many times ably discussed. English readers who desire to see what can be said against it, may consult Charles Hennell's 'Inquiry on the Origin of Christianity,' Strauss's 'Life of Jesus,' or W. R. Greg's 'Creed of Christendom.' From the last-named, we extract the following, p. 216:—

"A marked and most significant peculiarity in these accounts, which has not received the attention* it deserves, is,

* Hennell touches the topic in a short but decisive paragraph, p. 239, second edition.

that scarcely any of those who are said to have seen Jesus after his resurrection *recognised* him, though long and intimately acquainted with his person. . . . (Mark xvi. 12.) 'After that, he appeared *in another form* to two of them.' Now, if it really were Jesus who appeared to these various parties, would this want of recognition have been possible? If it was Jesus, he was so changed that his most intimate friends did not know him. How then can *we* know that it was himself?"

The defence put in by our divines does nothing but show the shifting and untangible nature of their argument. They say, that the risen Jesus had a glorified body which could pass through shut doors, and of course was sufficiently different from his former body to embarrass recognition. We began by avowing that human testimony was *imaginable* that might prove the restoration of a dead man to life. But we must modify the avowal, by adding, that no common testimony could ever prove the sort of resurrection here tendered to us: for if the risen body is not a body of flesh and blood, but "glorified" and ethereal, and so unlike the former body of Jesus that his friends identify him only by the symbolical action of breaking bread, as the two disciples at Emmaus (Luke xxiv.), their *testimony* is unavailing. To what do they affect to bear witness? They do not lay before us the impressions on their sight or hearing, but merely the inferences of their mind, that the person who broke bread in a certain way *must have been* Jesus, though he *looked very unlike him*. And this leads naturally to the important point, which Mr Hennell has so well made prominent:—

"It seems probable (says he, p. 204, second edition) that the

original belief among the Apostles was merely that Christ had been raised from the dead *in an invisible or spiritual manner* : for where we can arrive at Peter's own words, viz., in his 'Epistle,' he speaks of Christ as being put to death *in the flesh*, but made alive *in the spirit* (1 Pet. iii. 18)—*θανατωθεις μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεις δὲ πνεύματι*. That the last phrase signifies a mode of operation invisible to human eyes, appears from the following clause, which describes Jesus as preaching, also in the spirit (*ἐν ᾧ*), to the spirits in prison. But some of the disciples soon added to this idea of an invisible or spiritual resurrection, that Jesus had appeared to many in a bodily form. . . ."

Men who have seen and heard another man, have a certain power of identifying him when they see and hear him again; and when by eye or ear they do identify him, we call their declaration concerning it *testimony* or *witness*, and assign a certain weight to it. But if they declare that they do *not* identify him by eye or ear, but only by the inferences of their mind, it is an abuse of language to call this testimony. If the glorified spirit of a deceased friend were to appear to one of us—whether in ecstatic vision or in what seemed to be our waking senses—we could not claim that other men should accept as "testimony" our statement that it was he: for though they have experience of the trustworthiness of sense to recognize and identify ordinary bodies in their ordinary states, they know nothing of the trustworthiness of sense when it pretends to identify a form now ethereal and glorified with what was once a human body. And as it is not only in Peter's epistle and in Paul's vision (as, indeed, in Paul's *doctrine* of the "resurrection-body"), that this idea of a merely spiritual resurrection of Jesus is suggested, but the same occurs in

all the Gospels—partly in the difficulty of recognizing Jesus, partly in his vanishing out of their sight or suddenly coming through walls and doors—the whole is removed beyond the sphere of testimony, even if the declarations were consistent and distinct, and were laid before us on the authority of the original eye-witnesses.

Thus those two cardinal events which Protestantism undertakes to *prove* and recognizes as its basis,—when their alleged Scriptural evidence is examined fail of satisfying the demands of ordinary scientific reasoning; after which we need not wonder that Protestantism cannot win intelligent converts. For it does not, like Catholicism, tell people that they must not reason *at all* concerning religion. On the contrary, it excites their reasoning powers—bids them to examine—professes to give proof—lays before them the Scripture as decisive—talks high of private judgment—and yet gives no evidence which can bear the tests of ordinary historical and scientific inquiry. When hereto it adds unseemly *threats*, denouncing Divine judgment on all whose intellect rises against its imbecility, none can wonder that the freer-thinking Catholics say they may as well remain under the old Church as go into another which, while it affects to appeal to reason, is as essentially unreasonable as the old one. “My child,” said a Catholic bishop to a Protestant in his neighbourhood, “did I rightly hear that you called the sacred doctrine of Transubstantiation irrational? Oh, folly! If, in order to receive the doctrine of the Trinity, you have crucified vain

reason, what avails to build again that which you have destroyed, by setting reason to carp at another doctrine which is too hard for it?"

Besides the miracles which inhere in the person of Jesus, there are two great classes of miracles wrought by him, and by or in his disciples, which may deserve a few words here. First we have the casting-out of devils—a miracle very prevalent in the three first Gospels, though unknown to the fourth. No educated physician, Catholic or Protestant, can well listen with gravity to a truly orthodox discourse on this subject. Indeed, many well-informed divines are ashamed of it, and declare that popular ignorance *mistook* epilepsy, catalepsy, madness, and other diseases, for a possession by evil spirits. They are aware that the superstition was learned by the Jews in Babylon, and still exists in very ignorant countries; and they tell us that the Evangelists *accommodated their dialect* to that of the ignorant, but made no substantial error. Hence, according to them, as we accept the phrase, that "the sun rises," even if astronomically questionable; so must we tacitly interpret the "possession by a devil" into epilepsy, or some other disease. But such divines are rather well-informed than candid; for they cannot but be aware that it is *impossible* to get rid of the "devils" by interpretation. Divines more candid, but sometimes worse-informed, have far more cogently argued, that the discerning of Jesus, as Son of God, which is attributed to demoniacs—and still more decisively, the passing of a legion of devils from a man into a herd of swine—demonstrate the narrators

to have had a definite belief in the supernatural knowledge, power, and personality of the "devils" who dwelt in the demoniacs. Thus our Protestant theologians, episcopal critics and historians, reverend mathematicians, astronomers, geologists—men certainly who know what proof is—solemnly read out in church, for public edification, stories about devils, which it is hard to believe they do not know to be Babylonish frippery; and while thus glorifying fictitious follies, wonder that many who disdain hypocrisy rush headlong into the belief that most religious men are hypocrites.

The second class of miracles is the speaking with tongues, which so abounds in the book of the "Acts of the Apostles," and on which there is ample discussion in "Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians." We should in vain try here to abridge Mr Greg's able summary of the phenomenon, in pp. 169—178 of the "Creed of Christendom." It is clear, both from the details given by Paul, and from many other considerations, that these "tongues" were not real foreign languages, but were *gibberish*, such as used to be heard in the late Mr Edward Irving's congregation—a gibberish which Paul felt to be "most probably nonsensical, unworthy, and grotesque" (Greg.)—which he desired to repress, yet did not dare to forbid.

"We are driven to the painful but unavoidable conclusion, that those mysterious and unintelligible utterances, which the Apostles and the early Christians looked upon as the effects of the Holy Spirit, the manifestation of its presence, the signs of its operation, the especial indication and criterion of its having

fallen upon any one, were in fact simply the physiologically natural results of morbid and perilous cerebral exaltation, induced by strong religious excitement acting on uncultivated and susceptible minds; results which in all ages and nations have followed in similar circumstances and from similar stimuli; and that these signs to which Peter appealed, and to which the other brethren succumbed, as proving that God intended the Gospel to be preached to Gentiles as well as to Jews, showed only that Gentiles were susceptible to the same excitements, and manifested that susceptibility in the same manner as the Jews."—*Greg*, p. 178.

There are other doctrines, common to the creed of all the national Churches, which, though too cardinal to omit, are too vast to discuss here in detail. We allude especially to the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement. These are rejected from Christianity by the followers of Dr Priestley, who can fight powerfully against the "orthodox," when they go the full length of avowing that the Epistles of Paul were of no authority in the Church at large for two centuries, and that the fourth Gospel is full of profanities, which would have shocked the earliest Christians. But nothing can be so opposed to the creed of European Christendom as this avowal; and without disrespect to some great Unitarian writers, when we speak of Christianity or Protestantism, we do not and cannot mean *their* scheme of thought and religion. The accomplished and variously-gifted scholars who hold places as bishops or deans among us, will justify us in treating these difficult doctrines, with the resurrection and the miraculous conception, as essential to Protestant Christianity. But since they are aware that the laws of evidence are coeval

with the human mind, and that the evidence strictly and rightfully needed to establish a marvel *now* was always strictly and rightfully needed, even before men's minds had ripened to discern it; we may fairly propose to one of these learned persons, in the calm retirement of his library, to put down on paper the kind of evidence which, if tendered, would satisfy his mind that the holiest and noblest man now living is the Eternal (or *an* Eternal) Divine Being, Creator of this world and of all worlds, future Judge of mankind, who will give eternal life to some, and award condemnation to others—a Being towards whom we may exercise absolute trust and hope, and supreme adoration. If he seriously undertake the task we suggest, we should not be greatly surprised if his meditation threw unexpected light on Edward Irving's apophthegm, "Intellectual evidence is the egg of infidelity;" or if it even reconciled him to the distinguished Mr Keble's advice to his friend Arnold, as homely good sense, to "put down" his doubts concerning the Trinity "by main force," and take a curacy to get rid of them.

At the same time, nearly the same problem as the above rests on Unitarian Christians, whether their philosophy grovel or aspire; who after giving active aid to demolish the gorgeous fabric of magical ecclesiastism, now struggle to sustain its central shining minaret—the unapproachable, absolute, moral perfection of him, whom they elaborately maintain to be merely human, and limited by human conditions. But we will vary our demand. Suppose the East

and West so far to change places, that missionaries of Buddhism come to England to convert us to their religion. Let them proclaim, that Buddha—whom, by reason of his virtue, his followers unwisely have worshipped as God—was truly divine in goodness, the incarnate image of absolute divine purity: that, as such, *his Person enters into the substance and obligations of human religion*; on which account they call upon us to listen, while they preach his life, person, and pre-eminence; and, moreover, thoughtfully to study the ancient books which record his sanctity. This hypothesis is, in fact, so closely akin to the real Buddhism, that it might on any day become a case of reality. Now, we ask of Unitarian Christians on what *primâ facie* evidence should we be bound to explore the Oriental books, and listen with religious hope to the argument, that Buddha is the Head of mankind, and unique type of perfection? To reply that we have found such a Head already, and do not want another, may be practically good, but is scientifically weak; for it avails equally to *them*, and would justify them in exploding the perfect Christ, because they already believe in a perfect Buddha. Is the intrinsic unplausibility of a doctrine never a reason for exploding it, without sacrifice of valuable time and research?—or can any folly concerning an Apollo, who is physically a God and morally a libertine, be more unplausible than the Unitarian notion, that Jesus was mentally a dwarf and morally a God?

The present condition of theological “philosophy” among us (if the phrase be allowable) indicates that

the old school is dying out. From fifty to thirty years ago the doctrines of Paley (as regards Christian "Evidences") were dominant in both Universities, and were acknowledged by High and Low Church alike. At Oxford they were especially upheld by such men as Copleston, afterwards Bishop of Llandaff; Shuttleworth, afterwards Bishop of Chichester; Whately, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin; Lloyd, Regius Professor of Divinity, and a little while Bishop of Oxford; Vowler Short, now Bishop of St Asaph; Longley, now Archbishop of Canterbury; besides others who never emerged from the University. They were able men, some remarkably able; they had the field to themselves, yet they could not keep it. They sincerely believed that by invoking "historical testimony" they could recommend to the assent of every unprejudiced and intelligent mind such doctrines as we have denoted; yet, against their learning, experience, and high authority, two young men in Oxford commenced an unexpected reaction—Pusey, Professor of Hebrew, and J. H. Newman, whose sole distinction then consisted in being a Fellow of a most distinguished College; both of whom had evidently become aware that Protestantism could not possibly stand on its old basis. To prove by historical and learned evidence the postulate of the Evangelicals, that the Bible from end to end is infallible, they saw to be at once a hopeless and an absurd undertaking. To lay logic as the foundation, and make the doctrine of the Trinity the superstructure, they more than hinted, was very dangerous;

indeed, some of the "Tracts for the Times" almost avow that no Protestant can prove the doctrine even from the Scripture. Dr Newman (led on, we suppose, by polemical instincts) struck upon the method of assailing with logic all who appeal to reason (that is, common Protestants and liberals), while assuming that the true faith (his own), being founded on something higher than reason, is not bound to justify itself to reason. This gave to his school a delightful licence of attacking other people's want of logic, while reserving to itself the privilege of being illogical at pleasure. Oxford still boasted of able men, though some of those whom we have named were withdrawn. The new "Puseyism" soon reached the ears of the outer world, and interested all England. Baden Powell—and shall we say Hampden?—opposed it from within; Whately, and Arnold, and Julius Hare, and a host of Evangelicals, from without. At Cambridge, at least one man of vast and various powers, keen ambition, deep and original thought—Whewell, Master of Trinity College—would have started a rival philosophy of the Christian religion, if he had been able. In morals, Sedgwick and Whewell have repudiated Paley; but we have never understood that in regard to "Christian Evidences" they undertake to supersede him. Like the deep-souled Julius Hare, and the sprightly, eager Arnold, they proved unable to check the movement of Newman and Pusey, whose attacks on the vulgar Protestantism were very unshrinking. The Tractarians were, no doubt, in a false position. They overthrew

their allies from within, and were debarred from attacking their great enemy without ; for Romanism, precisely on their ground, claims exemption from the task of reconciling its dogmas with reason : moreover, their doctrine of "Apostolic succession" *presumes* that a Roman bishop, however wicked, has a power of bestowing the Holy Spirit. In the result, Dr Newman discovered and repented of the sin of assailing Rome. He has, nevertheless, done an effectual work in England, practically showing in what those must end who assume "High Church" axioms, and reason from them with consistent logic. Simultaneously, our knowledge of German theology has continually been on the advance. Dr Pusey indeed himself, in his ardent youth, was the first person to expound at Oxford the deep Biblical learning and warm piety of German theologians, who had in some points unhappily been carried too far, but who ought nevertheless to be esteemed and honoured, and wisely used. But he appears in a very few years to have discerned that the free study of the Bible in the nineteenth century would never end in the theology of the sixteenth, and by the discovery to have been forced into a totally new career. Meanwhile, it has become notorious that the arguments of Lardner and Paley break down on the literary and historical side, in the presence of the more accurate scholarship of the Germans, to say nothing of a higher philosophy ; so that our academicians, if they endeavour to discuss "evidences" in Protestant fashion, dread to be precipitated into German neology ; while, if they deprecate

private judgment and appeal to the Church, they are fighting the battle of Rome. In such an entanglement men of backward and stagnant minds may write and speak as if nothing new had been added to our knowledge of antiquity in the last fifty years; but leading talents will no longer give their energies to develop and maintain either theory of Anglicanism—of the Low, or of the High Church.

The school of Paley has now, for perhaps the last twenty years, its most prominent representative in Mr Henry Rogers, whose grave Edinburgh articles have been succeeded by elaborate effusions, called *coarseness* and *ribaldry* by some critics, *sacred mirth* by others. Most of our readers have probably read his conception of an Irish Adam talking brogue to the Creator against the Ten Commandments; and will add epithets at their own discretion to Mr. Rogers's name. We believe that he writes from the outside of the Established Church. Within, Oxford and Cambridge are waiting for a religious philosophy. That of Professor Jowett may be very noble and very true; but it is so different from the hereditary Protestant doctrines, that the Oxonians cannot be blamed for looking askance and timidly at it.

They are in general paralyzed, from an uneasy foreboding of the dangers contingent on a close reconsideration of first principles.

Precisely because theologians will *not* reconsider first principles, but, with infinite disputes about their superstructure, are careless about their foundation, therefore it is that science tends to become *Atheistic*,

alike in Protestant as in Catholic countries. The blame of this may be justly laid upon the doctrine which elaborately seeks for marks of God in everything unusual and exceptional, and denies His presence in all that is ordinary and established. We are aware that there are enlightened Protestant divines, who disapprove this position; eminently the Rev. Baden Powell, who, in the first of his "Three Essays on the Unity of Worlds," speaks as follows:—

"According to this mode of representation [by religious writers] 'nature' was the *rule*, 'Deity' the *exception*. The belief in nature was the doctrine of reason and knowledge; the acknowledgment of a God was only the confession of ignorance. So long as we could trace physical laws, nature was our only and legitimate guide; when we could attain nothing better, *we were to rest satisfied with a God*. Even learned writers on natural theology have thought it pious to argue in this way."—p. 162, Second Edition. [Italics as in Mr Powell.]

Mr Powell's protest is right and wise; but, with deference to him, we add, it cannot be effectual unless he pull down the whole Protestant theory, of which the avowed foundation is *the miraculous—the exceptional*. It commands us, not to look within our hearts, or into human history, for the Divine, but into one miraculous book and one miraculous history. It virtually shuts God out from inspiring us now, by the stress which it lays on the *special* inspiration once granted by Him to a few. It lays down that the Jewish history is sacred, and other histories profane; and treats even the history of the Christian Church as too secular for the pulpit, from the day that the canon of Scripture was closed.

It represents that God is certainly present wherever there is miracle, but that where miracle is not, no one can be sure of the presence of God. Nothing else is meant or can be meant by the infallible and authoritative Bible, than to desecrate, in comparison to it, all the ordinary modes of learning truth, and duty, and right. In proportion to the power and activity of this theory concerning miracles and the Bible, will be the intensity with which a man embraces the exceptionable and obscure phenomena of the world as the great manifestation of Deity. Undoubtedly Mr Powell rightly regards this to tend to Atheism, for every step onward of knowledge is then a lessening and weakening of the Theist's resources. But we submit to him that we are right in insisting, that a theory which places the strength of religion in the miraculous is naturally of Atheistic tendency. It entraps into Atheism those students of science, who, having no religious philosophy of their own, borrow its fundamental principles from the Church. In fact, those writers on "Evidences," who now seem to have the field to themselves, make no secret of their conviction that Atheism is the necessary logical result of an appeal to Science, the Universe, and Man. On the one side, we see a great ecclesiast, the Rev. Dr Irons, frankly declare that, without the authoritative and supernatural revelation by miracle, Nature preaches to us nothing concerning God. On the other, a would-be philosopher and liberal Christian, Mr Rogers, in his "Eclipse of

Faith," announces that the Atheist has the argument entirely in his own hands, as against the Deist, and that without the Bible the only God preached by Nature is an immoral or malignant Being. The learned and highly popular author of a work called "The Restoration of Belief" goes so far as to insist, that one who does not acknowledge the supernatural authority of "THE BOOK," not only ought to be an Atheist, but has no right to talk of "Conscience, Truth, Righteousness, and Sin;" and that sacrifices for Truth are in such a one "not constancy, but opinionativeness." How can Christians avoid shuddering at such avowals from their own advocates? which, if true, utterly destroy Christianity with Theism, and prepare to plunge mankind into a state of universal profligate recklessness.

That the Protestant theory has no future, is indicated by many marks. We have seen Arnold and Julius Hare (good, noble, able men, of peculiar acquirements) live and die without being able *to make themselves understood*; a pretty clear proof that the age has no susceptibility for their doctrine. The same is true of the Rev. Frederick Maurice, and of the Chevalier Bunsen. Mr Maurice is a man of acknowledged goodness and largeness of heart; as Professor or Preacher, untiring in industry; devoted to raise the working classes; so copious a writer on theology that he will probably outdo Archbishop Whately in amount; and he has evidently undertaken as the work of his life to sublimate Church orthodoxy into

a transcendental philosophy. Yet, in spite of the high commendation bestowed upon his talents and discrimination by a few, to the public at large he seems to be only subtle, flimsy, and evasive. He may be wise, but the age cannot understand him. "What does he mean?" is the cry which escapes from the perplexed novices who would fain admire him. Not dissimilar is the case with the accomplished Bunsen, who invests in gorgeous colours and vast pomp of intricate words a system of religious historicism, in which the common intellect can discover no solidity, no fixed shape, no firm and certain meaning. And as the new quasi-Coleridgian school proves feeble to us and dim, so neither does the old nursery rear any thriving plants. No young Whatelys show themselves. Nobody of high reputation now writes treatises on the Trinity. Whately did but bring on himself a strong and dangerous imputation of "Sabelianism," by the remarks in his *Logic* on the word "Person:" Hampden half ruined himself by being too learned on the same subject. Men of the Evangelical school, who have no philosophic reputation to lose, may publish sermons on the Atonement; but a systematic treatise on this involves much risk to a man of note. Schleiermacher's "Discourse on St Luke" was translated about twenty years ago (as was believed) by Dr now Bishop Thirlwall: we have never heard that it has been answered by any one. Many have claimed, that the Bishop will answer it himself, since he now disavows it. Nor does any

leading divine undertake to refute the works of Charles Hennell or W. R. Greg. When the wise men hold their peace under such attacks, it must be thought that they are but too conscious of the weakness of their own cause.

In consequence of the freedom which in Protestant countries many sects attain, we see from time to time the doctrine of personal inspiration (perhaps with some fanaticism) assert itself strongly against the ecclesiastical, which makes inspiration an exceptional thing of the past. Thus Whitfield, and thus Huntington the coalheaver, thus also Edward Irving, were distinguished. Speculators have marked out as *revivals* such periodical recurrences of a simpler and nobler theology, but have lamented that the freshness of religious enthusiasm always decays in the second generation. Some even have elicited from this a "law" of nature: that the stage of languor follows that of excitement; or that the era of commentators follows that of men of genius. The existence of this "law" may seem plausible from the side of total unbelief; but it is difficult to understand what intelligent theory of the phenomenon can rightly recommend itself to a devout Evangelical or to any earnest Protestant. The phenomenon is not confined to our sects, nor to the ignorant and excitable. Neither in Geneva, nor in Scotland, nor in England, nor in Protestant Germany, could a second and third generation sustain the religious warmth of the first; nor indeed is it denied by Romanists that

learning is the fertile mother of heresy. Assuredly, if religion be a deep and noble principle, rightful and reasonable to man, then a particular form of religion must be involved in some very essential falsehood, if its vigour and vitality are uniformly undermined by accessions to its knowledge, or by the tranquil advance of experience. A true religion can but strike its roots deeper with cultivation of mind and increase of wisdom. That must be a fundamental fanaticism which thrives only upon action and excitement, and wastes by calm examination and learning. Alike in Catholic and in Protestant countries, the world has still to wait for a religion which shall grow stronger and stronger with every development of sound scientific acquirement.

Nor perhaps is this the worst: for we must add Europe has yet to wait for a religion which shall exert any good influence over public measures. A distinguished foreigner, in his own consciousness a true Christian—whose name we could not properly here bring forward—on a recent day said, in a select circle: "I begin to doubt whether Christianity has a future in the world." "Why so?" asked one present, in surprise at such an augury from such a quarter. "Because," he replied, "neither in India, nor in America, nor anywhere at all in Europe, does any of the governments called 'Christian'—I do not say, *do* what is right, but—even affect and pretend to take the RIGHT as the law of action. Whatever it was once, Christianity is now in all the great

concerns of nations a mere ecclesiasticism, powerful for mischief, but helpless and useless for good. Therefore I begin to doubt whether it has a future ; for if it cannot become anything better than it is, it has no right to a future in God's world."