

SEARCHING

FOR TRUTH

# SEARCHING FOR TRUTH.

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*"The wayfarer,  
Perceiving the pathway to truth,  
Was struck with astonishment.  
It was thickly grown with weeds.  
'Ha,' he said,  
'I see that none has passed here  
In a long time.'  
Later he saw that each weed  
Was a singular knife.  
'Well,' he mumbled at last,  
'Doubtless there are better roads.'"*

—STEPHEN CRANE.

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Bank of Wisdom

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The purpose of the Bank of Wisdom  
is to again make the United States the  
Free Marketplace of Ideas that the  
**American Founding Fathers**  
originally meant this Nation to be.

Emmett F. Fields

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WITH no intent to destroy what may be worthy, or to unnecessarily offend, this volume is dedicated to the aggressively progressive of this world, in the hope that it may prove useful as ammunition for their combat with defiant conventionality and obstinate conservatism. Those perhaps disposed to question such encouragement of violence, must remember that Force is often the best persuader. Forts are not blown up with satchet-powder, nor bullets fashioned from chocolate creams. The barriers which restrain human liberties are only vulnerable to vigour. Each thought or word that prompts the activity which assails, may own its share in the final victory, and none should hold back contribution for fear of its proportionate insignificance. Take this offering, therefore, for what it may be worth—for its good wishes, if nothing more—and let the good fight go on!

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“**W**HOEVER hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. Let him duly realize the fact that opinion is the agency through which character adapts external arrangements to itself—that his opinion rightly forms part of this agency—is a unit of force, constituting, with other such units, the general power which works out social changes, and he will perceive that he may properly give full utterance to his innermost conviction, leaving it to produce what effect it may.”

HERBERT SPENCER.

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## PREFACE.

**T**HIS volume contains the matured reflections of one whose sole excuse for dealing with most serious problems rests upon the scarcity of printed expression on ethical questions from those whose life-work deals with Facts and Things. Men of affairs, associating with Actualities and Activities, are bound to differ on questions of Cause and Effect with those who theorize and dream. The world should not ignore additional evidence, as the effort of comparison may possibly evolve some new particle of truth.

Like many another, the writer reached the age of meditation clearly dissatisfied with all existing religious ideals. The awe of their assumed majesty was not too overpowering to deny a critical inspection, and the novice soon realized that all who built, and formed, and reared these venerated idols, were novices themselves. Met in discussion by the sneer that sarcastically advised the creation of a new belief, he thought it well, at least, to reason out his own individual requirement.

Equipment for the task was wholly negative in character. There was little inborn reverence, no pet theory to prove, no predilection to verify, no great store of past learning to unconsciously prejudice, no direct outer in-

fluence, nothing but a long heredity from restless minds and a life environment amongst constant forces of machine-like precision to shape the course of thought.

Under such circumstances, it is doubtful whether the usual visionary fancies which haunt the student, have betrayed a mind routined in vivid facts. The evening thoughts of a ruminating working-man, by any judgment, must have some interest as human testimony.

The frame-work of this treatise was formed by pure deductive logic, each conclusion depending on demonstrable methods. The evidence was collected with no preconception as to the verdict, and the resulting decision surprised the writer more than once, forcing him to abandon many plausible assertions, and giving him a confidence in the method that often corrected the celerity of his mind. All co-relative reading was purposely and positively avoided until the definite completion of the structural work. While this after-research then disclosed a similarity in certain lines, and exposed many natural errors, nothing precisely like the projected work in style, scope, conclusion or purpose was noticed during the exhaustion of the writer's facilities for education on the subject.

While the evolution of thought has constantly changed the author's point of view, and while investigation has continually aided him by instruction, the individual reasoning has not been governed by acquaintance with like brain-grist, but rather strengthened and elaborated by associate thought. The fact that many think alike is not necessarily proof of similarity in character, but

rather of similarity in logical consequences. Each one may find the same truth, note the same fact, draw the same conclusion. Those, perhaps, best fitted to enlighten the world, however, are often so deep in scientific verbiage as to merely confuse and confound the average reader.

The parental enthusiasm that wishes a prolonged existence to its mental offspring, is often trying to the public patience, which rarely forgives the affront of its impertinence, especially when no excuse of personal necessity for possible profit is present. As the author knows that he has merely voiced the general sentiments of many of his associates, he believes that he is justified in the exploitation of a definite public opinion. While not perhaps intended for the scholar, whose world is walled by rhetoric, nor the slave to philosophic precedent, it still may nourish some hungry souls who seek, unsatisfied, in present literary pastures.

Let it be definitely understood that the writer appeals to those of his own class, the great wide general public, which delves not in exhaustive argument, nor stops to scrutinize elaborate tomes of testimony. Just treatment of each division of this volume would require too much of the average reader's patience, and prevent him from following the unbroken line of reasoning to its consistent end. The aim is, therefore, to simply illustrate consecutive channels of thought with brief examples in deduction. This superficial era demands a somewhat superficial treatment.

As the author has no designs on the laurels won from popular commendation, and disclaims attempt at literary

dignity, this work is issued anonymously, and must therefore court conviction from whatever intrinsic Merit may be present, rather than rely on the doubtful prop of Personality. The curiosity which might wish to penetrate the secret of individuality may rest assured that its revelation would still seem anonymous. The antagonist who might desire a name on which to heap invective, may hush whatever taunt his outraged religious sentiments might prompt, in the reflection that the author can have little fear of those who dread the fancied thing that wins no veneration within these pages.

It has often been assumed that none should deal with questions of religion, conduct or morality, save those whose comparative perfection is admitted. As well draw knowledge of the soil from one whose hands were never calloused by the plough, or learn of engineering from him who never knew the stain of oil! The experience of Revealed Error is the greatest of instructors; and while the author finds no pride in his derelictions, he does not deny a hard-won intimacy with human failings.

## A WELL-MEANT WARNING.

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THE publication of an English book presupposes a perusal by a so-called Christian population. As this work is only intended for those of unsettled religious convictions, the true believers of any present sect or creed are hereby advised to read no further. Faith is ever deserving of respect, and the faithful are an interesting element which may well have a place preserved against intrusion. There is more profit in proselyting among the unattached and unsatisfied. The budding generation will find a wider range of choice if the ideals of the restless are definitely grouped ; and these contents may be considered as an humble attempt to sift out the logical conclusions that a vast element of our civilization already appears to recognize, and present them in a more or less unified form for legitimate utility.

CHAPTER I.

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THE EVER CONSTANT INFLUENCE.

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*“Nothing is so firmly believed as that which is least known.”*—MONTAIGNE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE EVER CONSTANT INFLUENCE.

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**U**NCHANGED by centuries of culture, the masses yet adore the mysteries of the unknown. Advancing science tears its veil to shreds, but the ardent converts tenderly cherish the tattered fragments, looking to them rather than through them, their mobile faith asserting that the rents, indeed, improve. Thus ignorance flings down the gauntlet, proud to revere the product of its facile imagination, and content with an explanation which does not explain. Satisfied in continuance of fealty to olden myth, it will not willingly admit the newer truth of aught antagonizing its fettered comprehension. Superstition and restriction thus extend the most exasperating chapter of history even to our present century. It were well that all should comprehend the force that stirs this curious swirl of impulse, to realize its power and plan its future guidance.

Every nation, race or class, through every age, in every clime, have seemingly based their code of life on something of religious purport. Man's first enduring signs of creative power were evidenced by devotional symbols, emblems and altars, the earlier of our known races having left us the most imperishable proofs. Scattered throughout the world are massive and useless reminders of energy that still perplex our engineers. Europe,

Africa and Asia have their Druid temples, pyramids and colossal idols, while this Western Hemisphere bears witness to the ceaseless toil of tens of thousands in the mighty earthworks of the Mound-Builders. Later ages have left equal monuments of labour where patient skill in detail replaces former rude strength of mass, the countless spires and domes of beautiful cathedrals and mosques indenting the firmament with a continuous record of man's strange gamble with the infinite. The best of strength, skill and art seems ever to have been reserved for offerings at the throne of deified powers. Insurance against the disfavour of the supernatural has thus created visible continuous reminders to awe the unthinking into recognition and acceptance of the same illogical obligation.

This awe of the indefinite must have sprung either from the natural primitive fear of the unexplainable, or from the possible overpowering influence of some mysteriously unseen, yet present power. While the ignorant savage apparently worships finite elements of appealing significance, his adoration rather evidences appreciation of governing law, crudely expressed, in the nearest exponent of its manifest authority. It is not remarkable that he should infer design as prompter of activity, for his awakening intellect detects the causes effective from his own intents. As the brain scope expands and the mysteries grow less, this nervous dread, or fitful faith, proportionately weakens. Mental development surely would thin the throngs that cluster round the hoary remnants of inherited religious ideals, were it not for the constant influx of newborn Wonderers, who are prompted by the nascent impulses donated by an unenlightened ancestry to accept what was acceptable.

Many fall easily into the mistake of classifying the devotional faith of the God-Worshipper with the duty-sense of the normal, rational human being. There is a clear and distinct partition line, however, plain enough to those of unbiased judgment. Belief in a higher power may lead to results quite similar to those created by acknowledgement of responsibility to one's fellows ; but it is not just to assume that all men of conscience therefore believe in Divinity ;—they have not believed in it, they do not now believe and they never will. Religion is a term that should be broadly interpreted to cover all the impulses that lead us to adopt improving and uplifting ideals, whether they be spiritual or logical.

While this ethical instinct is well nigh universal, its manifestations are so dis-similar that the tendency is hardly recognizable in many instances. The unsolved mysteries of mind and matter, while exciting general wonder, give rise to attempts at solution shunted by misinformation and misunderstanding from the path of careful reasoning. The more popular theories concerning them are unfortunately of a nature that arouses a host of miscellaneous emotions which refer all responsibility back to their irresponsible source.

All great passions are dangerous when lacking proper guidance. This false religious enthusiasm thus often leads to unwarrantable violence, and by its fervor fills the minds of men with strange imaginings. No other great emotion ever received such varied interpretation. It lulls one nation into enervating apathy, while arousing another to the fury of conquest and carnage. Steeping one age in the grossest sensualism, it restrains another to the extreme of physical repression. Its form

varies according to time, race and climate, although with supreme inconsistency assuming under some circumstances independence of either. Its methods of expression are practically countless. Every possible perversion of natural tendency has aided in its rites, the solemn, ridiculous, inane, extravagant and even obscene mingling in a heterogeneous jumble. We may note many of them around us at the present day. Indians dance before their *Great Spirit* with live rattlesnakes in their mouths, while their more advanced neighbours eat the semblance of their Lord's flesh, and drink the semblance of his blood. Certain savages devour their dead parents as a sacred tribute, and a populous and ancient race yet consigns lifeless bodies to the waiting vultures. One sect demands physical mutilation (Circumcision) in the novice, while another is content with wetting the skin (Baptism). The most ardent in all times, starve, slash, scourge, burn and even defile themselves according to their customs, thinking physical ills or degradation necessary to their devotion. The gape of the masses, however, undoubtedly serves as a spur or continued incentive for these exhibitions of martyrdom.

The later generations are disposed to smile at the olden forms, even as the earlier ages scorned those behind themselves, and even as the future will judge the present era. There has been a gradual progress up to the present time, but it were folly to suppose that we have nothing more to learn. We take pride in the fact that we no longer make human sacrifice, although it is not so far back to the time when our ancestors were burning witches. Neither do we torture heretics in this lenient age. Excommunication is still in force, but the damnation of the soul is easily borne by the wretch who would cringe at the rack. We are certainly less vigorous in

practice than those gone before. We are also accused of laxity in missionary work ; but it must be remembered that there are few heathen left with any possessions worth exchange for the benefits of salvation.

Yet we do advance. Within a few years civilized nations have denied themselves the right to own their fellow men as property. A generous element in the community also now graciously allows that infants may possibly escape eternal punishment without being spattered under the regular formulæ. Reflection will undoubtedly call to mind other instances of our nobility. Acknowledging such truth, however, shall we necessarily content ourselves with our present laurels?

The world as a whole follows a fairly uniform moral code, and accepts certain material facts as proved beyond question. The natural evolutionary process should, by this time, have resulted in some harmonious universal ideal, consistent with the cravings of our inner nature, and tending toward uplifted thought and material advancement. Reason and experience are probably equal to an attempt, at least, and unselfish minds would gladly welcome such a result. What discordant element prevents the unity that all should hope for?

The true cause for the vast diversity of sects, ever growing more technical and petty in their differentiations, lies in the slavish credulity that cringes before imposture, with a fatuous disregard of sense and reason. The popularity of fanaticism is never on the wane. Its success is usually gauged by its audacity. Centuries of domination have left lower intellect so emasculated that it must have the support of guiding strength. Virile

personality, bold assertion, or erratic theory will always gain converts when engaged in the introduction of theology. Few, however, dare aspire at aught higher than a new rendering of some standard precept. Those seeking a change of faith for mere novelty would certainly fail to become lasting converts.

The fact that in the present stage of enlightenment different bodies of humanity persist in following different creeds, shows plainly that either none is correct, or the perfect one has failed to convince the majority. If all are wrong, we must banish the past and search for new ideals.

In order to trace the causes of the present attitude of mankind towards religion, it is necessary to briefly consider the continual change of standards, and the gradual evolution toward a certain definite end. Man's earlier religious promptings invested with divinity the elements of nature. Thunder, fire, wind—all the manifestations of active force—seemed gifted with design in causing him comfort or misery; while the awful sun and changeable moon seemed to watch over his petty doings with a conscious interest. What wonder that the works of nature inspired reverence in the more primitive minds, when the most enlightened even now feel a sense of littleness when contemplating the boundless ocean, or the far reaching horizon circling from the centre of some high elevation! Logical analysis discovers that these feelings are incited by the mere impressive influence of bulk. The barnyard cock finds equal grandeur in a lofty dunghill, and the polliwog is possibly aghast at the immensity of some stagnant puddle.

Increased observation in our primitive heathen soon detected mystery in concrete objects as well as in the manifestations of the elements, and so he fashioned sticks and stones to represent the crude imagery of his imagination. In this wise developed the worship of inanimate Gods, which even to-day has its devotees. In this world of ours nearly every grade of evolution is preserved in some form, civilization being confined within certain restricted classes and localities alone. It should not be inferred that the worship of the lifeless image is necessarily evidence of a limited conception. Even with savages it is usually merely representative. Wooden images of the Virgin are still worshipped in modern cathedrals. It is not the chiseled lumber or marble, but the idea it personifies that in reality incites reverence.

Passing to a more responsive ideal, sanctity was next granted to various selected animals. The cultured Egyptians believed that cats, bulls and other quadrupeds had certain divine traits. Serpents are still sacred to many races, and some include nearly all the secondary fauna in their consideration as being the reincarnations of their departed ancestry.

Nearly every land has had its phase of phallic worship, and still preserves the concrete evidence of this infatuation in suggestive symbols. Reproduction is certainly one of the most insoluble of all mysteries, though our refined senses now shrink from the thought of religious rites in which its detail is exposed to public gaze. The imitative instinct of humanity ingrafted these ideas so deeply that they still protrude their significance in the contour of each great monument, spire, arch or dome. The lapse of time has so modified the form and elimin-

ated the detail, that the original ideals are fortunately lost sight of ; yet Pompeii had no shame, in this matter, and India still offends the modest traveler.

At another time of great historic interest, men imagined an army of Mythological Divinities, ingeniously conceived of, as dividing certain attributes and labours among Gods and Goddesses of human mould. Jupiter and his cohorts form our most familiar instance, though many nations shaped various types. This was certainly an advance toward a spiritual basis ; but, unfortunately, man's crude mentality could not then realize beyond his personal limitations. His Gods, therefore, gratified all impulses and desires in the unbridled manner which he himself would have delighted to indulge if omnipotent. A glorious revel by proxy ! It certainly served as a wonderful stimulant for art and poetry, which are better nurtured by license than repression.

Finally, dissatisfied with their grotesque imagery, our ancestral races turned to comparatively higher ideals. Having utilized every outer mystery, they logically accepted the one last resource—themselves ! While this self-recognition was not absolutely simultaneous, its expression in Buddha, Christ and Mahomet was fairly consecutive, considering the infinities of time. This Trinity has governed the major portion of religious thought for the better portion of our known history, allowing no important competition up to the present era.

It may be asked, with certain justice, whether in this brief review of religious evolution the vital predominant ideal of a hidden power has not been unfairly slighted. In explanation it may be admitted that the human mind

has usually recognized such a supposable influence as an associate, though not always gifted in its portrayal. The best that its imagination could do was to make a man-like being of this ambiguous possibility.

The last stage of conception among the more highly civilized is the connection of certain mental influences with Divinity. After having deified man in the whole, it is but natural to deify the best part of him. Science, however, having stolen the trappings that used to incite awe for material things, is rapidly demolishing the venerated attributes with which our ignorance adorns certain unconscious activity in the brain-cells. This unfathomed influence will also gradually dwindle into naught, as it is but the simple measure of the yet unknown.

History demonstrates that when a certain form of religion appears firmly rooted, its downfall may be near at hand. The reason is easily understood. Certain influential minds, by acceptance of a new idea, carry the multitude with them by a force so irresistible that the aroused ardour often causes the belated converts to outstrip their guides. After the first enthusiasm, the reflective zealots digest the facts, the mass distorting and enlarging the conclusions of the higher minds. The aggressive insistence of an idea, when fairly lodged in the narrow brain that admits but one thought at a time for lack of room, soon spreads its influence over those having no ideas at all. In the centuries through which the multiplied effects of heredity and conversion are at work, the restive minds, which delight in progress, are slowly passing through the stages of apathy, doubt, discussion and dereliction, and become at length ready to

accept or create a new theory. There is a widespread class of individuals who are weaned absolutely from the superstitions of the past. The mass of humanity has progressed more slowly, and the majority has reached no farther than the stage of apathy. One evidence of this condition is in the fact that despite the increase of wealth, population and labour-saving implements, no country has for years erected any sign of devotion to match the least of the former architectural wonders. As Heine has said, men have passed from convictions to opinions. It is hard to wring tribute from vacillating thought, yet men must find convictions for a spur to progress, and the effort of all altruistic minds should be devoted to the task of discovering an appealing ideal.

Turning to present standards for investigation, we find the world influenced in the main by three great primary creeds, each owning a departed human leader as an interpreter, whose remembered precepts guide the professed intentions, at least, of their present followers. Thus Buddha, Christ and Mohammed have started organizations absorbing countless factions, whose former vagaries are lost and forgotten. Certain of the older religions, such as Judaism, Brahmanism, Shintoism, etc., still exist as examples of faiths founded on other speculations, and the followers of Confucius attest how it is possible to accept personal guidance without ascribing a divinity to its authority. Swedenborg and Joseph Smith carry the theory of inspiration within more recent times, and various barbarians still preserve the rites of Paganism. While force of numbers may lead us to consider Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism with greater attention than any other following, some of the dying ideas deserve marked attention, when traced to their first purity, untrammelled by the sapient alteration of meddling infer-

iors. The High-Caste Brahman Priest, for instance, is a type of human development which reflects great credit on whatever source produced him. We have unfortunately grown to associate this religion with the excrescences of Suttee, infanticide and a stultifying, restricting obedience to forms and customs which seriously interfere with material progress. Should we find the ideal religion similar to any present form, it will simply evidence the imperishability of truth.

Christians, Mohammedans and Buddhists have certain characteristics in common, such as the deification of the human being; and their conceptions of morality are quite similar to each other, their antagonistic sections equally countless and confusing. In comparing Christ and Buddha the legendary traditions are so significantly similar that they throw a peculiar light on the more modern leader. That the miracles which attested the wonder of Buddha and were olden tales before Christ's birth aided the imagination of the scribes of the latter's time, is best seen in the deadly parallel of recorded events.

The main fact in all these religions is the supposed presence on earth of a God-like human being, claiming to speak with authority from on high. Should the assumption stand unquestioned, there only remains the necessity of the proper interpretation of the records containing the inspired commands. These self-appointed divinities, however, are not universally accepted, even where their advice is respected, notwithstanding the evidence of supernatural manifestations, seemingly concordant with omnipotence. In the familiar case of Christ, his whole nation refused him recognition, branding him as an im-

postor. His converts were of races that knew of him only by hearsay, from single witnesses, or enthusiasts like Paul, the greatest Christian missionary ever known, who had no basis of witnessed fact whatever. The reported miracles of Mohammed received no credence by near nations until they were forced to admit them at the point of the sword. Few outside of the Eastern world credit Buddha with miraculous powers. The impartial judge has ever discovered that supernatural exhibitions have never yet been witnessed save by enthusiastic converts. In well known instances the distortions of nature, voices from heaven and other startling local events have escaped the attention of all except the believers in them, although supposed to occur continually before great throngs. The yearly miracles of the largest Christian church are sneered at by the other sects, although they have the present evidence of countless believers, claiming miraculous manifestations and cures from some sainted relic or the like. Even the Protestants will hardly believe that Luther hit an actual devil with his ink-well. Men still live, however, who knew Joseph Smith, and believed in his power ; thousands have since been converted to Mormonism, which has made a greater relative advance among a more intelligent population than did Christianity in the same length of time during its early history. The majority who knew Smith, however, call him a charlatan in the same way that Christ was termed an impostor. Mormonism may outlast Christianity for all that we can foretell. History has seen many marvels equal to this possibility. We thus find that the miraculous side of religion is freely doubted, showing the evidence to be dubious in character. Fairness will not allow us to credit one wonder while denying another of the same class which is equally well vouched for.

The question of divinity as evidenced by the high moral or literary standard of the supposedly inspired records, is not necessarily puzzling, as it is set forth in very common wording and simple language. The biblical writings are at times wonderfully perfect in metaphor and profound in thought, but the enthusiast alone will assert that equal results have not been produced by literary efforts for which no super-human agency is claimed. No religious idea was ever clothed in language finer than that used by Edwin Arnold ; and yet it would be folly to credit him with direct divine inspiration according to the orthodox acceptation of the term, for his genius lends itself to the interpretation of Zoroaster as well as of Buddha. A certain indefinite influence enables some men to occupy a literary plane above the average ; yet they never were proven infallible. It is a long step from superior or peculiar mentality to Omnipotence.

Reverence for personal deities may possibly spring from hereditary servility, that natural fruit from centuries of personal domination. The world has cringed to physical force so long that fear becomes a ruling element of evolution. Generations of tyranny stifle independence of thought, until the mass is swayed by the mere effort of a suggesting will. The shame that yields reason to personal influence likes to shift responsibility by proclaiming this agency divine. Credulity is still a masterful power. It seems hard for immature intellect to realize that reverence for human beings is woefully misplaced. Respect and admiration may be bestowed where special merit marks superiority ; but affection and esteem are sufficient tribute to earthly clay. To yield devotion to Omnipotence is natural ; to nobility of principle, possible ; yet an undeveloped biped like man, can hardly

claim the right to excessive adulation from those of his own kind.

The prophets of the unknown ages are lost outside the limits of man's memory. The few who were fortunate enough to have lived in an age of writing may have been of superior personality, but very likely owed somewhat to opportunity. Undeveloped minds naturally revere intelligence higher than their own, though they are more often deceived by its assumption. In olden times, uncommon thought was easily heralded as inspiration. The enthusiasm of self-appreciation often produced delusion in an age when dreams were treated as divine communications. Fasting and mental worry naturally bred visions, and the brooding thought of the religiously crazed brain could easily guide the fancies of a nervous slumber. A strong individuality thus self-deceived may well make history for coming ages.

Even when these leaders denied themselves a special inspiration, they yet swayed multitudes when dealing with the same old hypnotic subject, especially when happening on one of the duller periods when men were tiring of the last religious debauch. It would seem as if the time created the man, rather than that the personality forced the event. Luther and Calvin would find faint appreciation to-day, and Joseph Smith would hardly find a notch in which to fit under ordinary circumstances. Christianity even may owe its sustained life to the receptive condition of Rome, when maddened by the senseless crimes of its temporal ruler.

The assumption of divinity naturally clothes one in the claim of absolute infallibility. Every uttered word

then seems sacred to posterity, and every involuntary movement pregnant with a purpose. No two men being identical in temperament, constitution and thought, each new Demi-God arouses antagonism by preaching a doctrine unacceptable to former sects. As long as mortal minds are trusted as unfailing interpreters of divine wisdom, so long will ideals clash, and sects continue their unprofitable bickering. Were all this fervor centred on one plain intent, this most unhappy contention would cease.

The religions that rest on the inspiration of personal factors are all open to one severe criticism. The assumption of each to be the first true exponent of the necessary elements of salvation, proves that former ages have been left without proper guidance, having necessarily drifted, helpless and abandoned, the sport of chance, and the natural prey of error. That the prophets came in the world's youth can no longer be believed, for science has shown us that the known period of history extends but through a second of eternity, and a theory of salvation that shuts out primitive inhabitants is narrow and unreasonable. Even at the present time there are millions who will never have a chance to know any of the accepted religions, and there are tens of millions who have been limited in their choice to one creed. Shall these unhappy mortals suffer by reason of circumstances beyond their possible control—for ignorance or lack of understanding of the definite acts made requisite for the soul's salvation by certain churches, the exaction of which could hardly be conceived by one not initiated in the faith?

Many honest enthusiasts claim that there can be no lasting faith that does not rest on revelation. They as-

sert that belief founded on mere theory is impossible for the masses, as they will insist on absolute proof or absolute assurance that proof has been attained. Would they contend, however, that in order to meet this demand, it were expedient to lie, and cheat with false pretense? Well-meaning men have thought so in the past, but we have outgrown Jesuitism now. We are right to consider any claim made by men of standing, and to pay a proper respect to the trust of centuries. When conflicting claims demand a choice, however, critical inquiry is indispensable.

Supposing that either Buddha, Christ or Mohammed be a true prophet, it is evidently impossible for the world to combine in one great religion, without forcing the conviction that two of the three are impostors. Knowing the stubbornness of human nature, it seems evident that it would probably be easier to compromise on some new ideal, rather than attempt such an undertaking. Mohammedans already accept Christ as a prophet, but they demand equal recognition for their own authority. Buddhists, secure in the superiority of age, would smile at an attempt to change their faith for some more modern code, based on an human interpretation as is their own. Those not satisfied with either of the three, must carefully select a more appealing basis, and hope to gain their numbers from the ranks of those not prejudiced in favor of the past.

An earnest investigation into the merits of the countless creeds offered to the religiously inclined, impresses one immediately with the fact that each of the leading divisions has an unattractive record. If they are to be known by their fruits one might reasonably decide that

neither merited serious consideration. The wide difference of opinion between the various divisions of the same heads, points to imperfect ideals. Modern history is mainly a record of war between men of similar creeds. At certain long intervals the followers of the elementary religions have massed forces against each other, but the greatest total bloodshed has resulted from hate and strife between devotees of the same faith. This clearly proves that religion has not united their interests, and that human conflict is not necessarily racial in character. The insistence of assumption has often relied on force rather than argument. It all comes back to the fact of a personal element injected where its presence is anomalous. Religious ideals are primarily affairs above the dictum of human tyranny. The sign *Hands Off* is evidence of weakness. The knee that bends under compulsion in simulated reverence, will bend again to shape a kick at its first opportunity. Discussion that ends in physical force betrays a fatal lack of self-confidence, on one side at least.

Unreasoning and unreasonable human nature when once wedded to an idea, resists the sanest arguments with exasperating obstinacy. Until the crudity of its shameless devotion to error may be realized, there is but faint hope of conversion. Everything but truth seems to appeal to immaturity, distortions being provocative of keen delight in childish intellect. Leave it then to its fit association with unfitness, to spare our effort for more receptive places. We wish converts only among those who think.

It may be safely assumed that whatever is structurally antagonistic to reason is sure to be repaired, replaced or

buried out of sight. It may take years of time, for the masses will stumble over an obstruction for ages before an Altruist arrives to remove it. The continual friction of contact may so polish off its corners that we forget the intrinsic objectionableness; yet its only possible destiny is demolition or removal, however fate may be delayed.

Religious errors are similarly prolonged by the inertia of the masses. Thought requires such painful effort that slothful beings lapse into a quiescent state after one unsettling, with a furtive dread of being again disturbed. Every error, every stupidity that combats reason, and sneers at progress, owes its existence to this same sluggishness, which is content with what is customary, no matter how inferior it may be.

Every stage of progress must be reached by ascending the usual evolutionary steps. We can always descend with a jump, but no mysterious power will enable us to climb without the customary exertion. It is useless to try to elevate the race by the wish. The question to concern us now is, whether that acephalous fraction which feels that they have outgrown the past, are not now ready to unite in acceptance of some modern ideal. The palpable wane of ancient dogma proves that many are restive under its restraints, and ready to at least consider that which appeals to reason. Wearying under rule which is insulting to intellect and antagonistic to healthy human instinct, they crave a creed uninfluenced by ignorant superstition and unauthentic tradition. Former limits have been stretched until their elasticity is strained to near the parting point.

Those who possess a reverence for mere age, will some day realize that time is a test of obstinacy rather than verity. Gilt veneer will pass for gold so long as mistaken awe prevents rude handling. Fearless test often detects corrosion inconsistent with unchanging truth. Faults unrecognized are doubly disastrous, and we profit mainly through our mistakes. If we stifle the knowledge acquired by experience, we must yield our claim to a progressive intelligence.

The last century has witnessed a definite wide-spread rebellion against former restrictions. The advance of science and the course of education lead many to doubt the supernaturalism in inherited creeds. Men are approaching a condition of mental independence where the constraints of tradition will no longer serve to repress freedom of thought. Reason demands that all which conflicts with the known principles of science shall be judged as not proven. If a part of the evidence is plainly false, discredit is thrown on the remaining portion as well.

Clear judgment must discard past influences. Few men have reached the age of deliberate thought on religious subjects, unhampered by prejudicial training. Every unbiased brain has the right of settling its own convictions. The chance of satisfying experience or revelation may be denied, so the masses must trust their reason alone, unless willing to rely upon outside evidence. Unfortunately, the futility of faith in unsubstantiated tales is wearily repeated throughout all time. Tricks of the imagination continually pervert the truth, single hallucinations affecting the belief of centuries. Since man discovered the possibility of mental invention, the

marvelous has had no limit. Fancy has ever been more entertaining than fact.

The natural religious belief of a developed being has never been deciphered, for no one grows to reflective maturity without being more or less affected by the mental limitations and suggestions of routine training. Education necessitates a knowledge of present creeds, and nearly all early influences impose certain functional beliefs. Falsities may continue for generations under such a continuous system or progression. Suspicion of the conventional must precede discovery of superiority.

It is often hard to realize that only within the latter part of our last century has it become safe to openly discuss religious matters. Investigation was craved ages ago, but violence was ever ready to frustrate it. The mere desire to change an interpretation has driven thousands to war and hundreds to the rack. Those not willing to accept the authorized creed were held in contempt and denied the most common privileges. What manner of religions are those that have been sustained by fiendish cruelty and atrocious despotism? The support of brutish minds may accidentally be enrolled for truth at times, yet such a continuous record of horror cannot escape suspicion. The bloody scimeter of the Moslem was perhaps less cruel than the torture implements of the Inquisition; and the torches that destroyed the world's great library at Alexandria are matched in insolence by the shells that scraped flesh from the yet warm bones of the unfortunate Hypatia. Learning and philosophy alike went down before the Soldier and the Monk; yet reason has outlived the animosity of the Bigot, whether garbed as Emperor, Sultan, Pope, Priest or Judge, to brand him with the pitying scorn of a rational future.

The search for truth implies the right of criticisms. Errors must be given a mark that will aid the next follower to avoid them. Ruthless exposure of defect should only seem offensive when applied to a necessary misfortune. It does no good to tell a man his wife is ugly, or his children deformed. It would be criminal, however, to withhold the information that a dead cat has been thrown into his well, simply because of the shock to his sensibilities. Truth may be restrained where gratitude is not expected in return for its proffering, unless a question of public principle may override an individual disinclination. Those most alarmed at threatened intrusion on their sanctity are very often cherishing some dubious thing, of which they are unconsciously ashamed. That which may not be questioned and openly defended would better be promptly discarded.

Truth is the result of discovery, reflection, investigation or intuition. The critic starts activity of thought by pointing out the need for change. Honest criticism is ever useful ; but the pessimistic fault-finding, which exasperates humanity, often leads us to rebel alike against a true search for error.

Referring again for the moment to the question of investigation, the best present ideal is not necessarily the most popular. Those high in favour certainly demand strict attention from the natural respect always due to prominence. Taking the great primary religious divisions, we must weigh by results and determine which is most worthy vital dissection.

If volume of population is a more impressive measure of ethical and religious standards than enlightenment,

we must turn to those venerable nations of Asia, whose masses of humanity follow their ceaseless routine uninfluenced by the thought of the rest of the world. If religion is responsible for their apathy, its ideal is a death-like somnolency not acceptable for an instant by our active cravings; and yet China is the only one of all the ancient nations to preserve its entity into the twentieth century, thus proving the existence of some sound basic principle for which Confucius may very probably be responsible. Even Buddhism, so excellent in its moral precepts, lacks the spark which spurs a race to creative effort. The enthusiasm of Mohammedanism, instead of conducting to progress, simply spends its force in lust of spoils or sensuality. The advance of Christian nations would serve as an antithesis were it not for certain exceptions of so marked a nature as to call Racial Traits to account for much of their superiority.

Numbers will not decide the question of choice for the individual, as they are fairly equalized among the principal beliefs. Intellect is no fair test, for many of the wisest deny all regular creeds. Civilization is discredited as a standard by records of a time when present religions were not known, and the culture yet superior to that of to-day in many lines. Morality will not judge for us, as it has not identified itself with one belief more than another to any degree of prominence. Fervor is no distinguishing mark, as its reign is fitful and its fancy insecure.

Respect for Age would give precedence in the claim of authenticity to the Jews, who trace their authority back to creation itself. Self-denial would strengthen the claim of consistent Mohammedanism; outward manifestations

would warrant consideration of the heathen savage ; the test of obedience would practically leave Christians at the post, as none other so flagrantly outrages its accepted standards ; Evolution might seem to favor some new philosophy or recent fad. Thus we see comparison lessens the perfection of each, mortifying the devotee's pride. All conceits must yield in time to conquering knowledge. Loyalty is praiseworthy ; but the Christian who would uplift his faith, must win his place by sturdy mental struggle, rather than by relying on the fragile prop of mere assertion. The critical, unbiased thinker judges this claimant by his tarnished record. He notes his domination of a world by power of wealth and armed force, instead of by the generous charity and all-embracing love taught by his creed. His proffered hand is nerved to clutch rather than to clasp. The continued expression of Christian energy in war, torture and persecution, while fading now into petty dispute and jealous detraction, still exposes the need for something grander and more stable. Its former sway found expression in all manner of excited excesses. Human waves of feeling are now kindled by patriotic sentiments or the devotion to something near at heart or hand. The modern churchgoer can well be judged by the scale of his financial contributions. Religion would be glad to trade its income for our liquor expenditure ; and theatres might also give it an inviting comparison. The entire yearly salary and expenses of the usual church would not build many in the congregation a satisfactory barn, pay for one foreign trip or purchase playthings for the children of one wealthy family.

In spite of these facts, however, Christianity is the Typical Religion of the strengthened races, and may not be brusquely brushed aside by bare mention of its fail-

ings. It is only just and logical for the wavering to clearly refresh their knowledge of its familiar precepts, and assure themselves that their distrust may not be due, perhaps, to the personal defects of its adherents. There must be some profit in any intelligent search, and the value of much of it all will admit. When fully reminiscent of its popular interpretation, turn in fairness to another view, of which a restricted exposure is now made. These past ideals can be subjected to so ruthless a criticism as to allow a frank and definite attempt to prove that Christianity is false in all that marks its individuality, and correct alone in that which it has adopted from the vast experience of human life—the heritage of all, the harvest of no single man, or clan, or race or age.

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So then we find that :

Religious instinct has governed the world.

Its cause is probably illustrative of the awe of ignorance.

It divides population into perplexing sections.

Investigation of all is advisable—

But—

Christianity demands first notice.

CHAPTER II.

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CHRISTIANITY ON THE DEFENSIVE.

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*“A falsehood is quite lawful when told to promote  
the cause of Christianity.”—ORIGEN.*

## CHAPTER II.

### CHRISTIANITY ON THE DEFENSIVE.

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**B**EFORE entering the lists to antagonize and possibly unsettle a wide-spread faith, it may be well to pause and reflect on the results of success, however limited. Is it wise to undermine a belief that encourages virtue, even if the origin is doubtful, and the doctrine somewhat erroneous? The shattering of an idol may grieve trusting souls, or render many irreligious in the loss of a former prop. But we must find our answer in the general experience of all progressive movements. Truth can never have a harmful finality. The real issue lies between fact and fiction. A falsehood may gain us a temporal quietude, but it leaves a wale of ruin in its track.

Even if the flaws in the Christian belief be few, what process of reasoning can condemn their exposure in the progress toward perfection? Christians know the answer. Their instinct tells them that their whole superstructure is ready to crumble at the first few well directed blows. It is not the question of a fleck on a pillar of marble, or tiny crack, for which it would be absurd to ask entire replacement; but rather that of an unwieldy, top-heavy temple built on made ground, with a faulty foundation, the good material so unevenly distributed as to neutralize its binding force. Even if the entire structure must be

leveled in order to cull the honest bulk from the unworthy, it were better in the end. In building anew, there may be less allowable material on which to levy, but size is less convincing than quality.

The bettering of an ideal may be fitly likened to the improvement of a traveled way. Traffic between distant ends follows a conventional track, even if it were originally fashioned from the conceit of a rambling cow. As time goes on, the route is worn by ruts, making it ever more difficult for wheels to turn and try new ground. Critics are finally developed by awakened perceptions, and the errors are made the basis of a definite attack. The conservative impatiently declare against the wanton exposure, claiming a time-earned affection for the inherited path, and insisting that it does no good to criticise unless a better solution of the problem be designed. The complacent blandly assert that while the errors are not denied, they are too well known to cause material loss. The critics pertinently inquire whether bog-holes and gullies are actually unobjectionable simply because the public has learned of their location. They accumulate evidence to show that the original roadway was never properly surveyed, nor leveled, nor graded, nor guttered ; that it was never intended for general traffic, nor adapted for modern vehicles. Still comes back the questioning answer : What better way ?

Some inspired enthusiast, in a brilliant fit of clairvoyance, might daze us with the suggestion to adopt a straight line as the shortest distance between two points, and lay out our boulevard with unerring aim, unmindful of hill or dale, tunnel or bridge. The fact that such a course might enslave the labour and resources of the entire population for centuries would have but little

force with a true idealist. The religions that demand entire devotion to impractical means seem fitly paralleled by such comparison. The straight road is not necessarily the shortest, especially if one must himself make the way by which to reach his desired end.

The real present religious conditions are perhaps better illustrated by the spectacle of various tribes wandering in hope of reaching a hidden city, each carrying a guide-book which is not followed in detail because of the arduous toil necessary to carry out its recommendations.

And yet if we should allow that the goal is definitely known, and the errors of the present routes fully apparent, shall we squat and wait for wings to sprout, or seize a pick and help to tear away some obstacle? What do the majority, in their similar mundane journeyings? What but delay and procrastinate, hoping for the altruist to bear the brunt of opposition, prejudice, envy and shortsighted selfishness, or trust in some shift of chance to lay the burden of expense, toil or time at another's door? Thus the throng continues, taking two steps where one should suffice, doubling the weight of every load, and constantly meeting unnecessary doomage for wear and tear.

Can they not all see that the only logical method of procedure is simply to start afresh, entirely ignoring what has been done, to plan the most feasible path, not disconcerted by temporary obstacle nor stunned by novelty of design? The new lay-out might possibly run along the old one at intervals, it might even start and finish at the same ends.

The advocates of the new enterprise must first join hands with the grumblers, and promise assistance toward perfection. They must conjointly point out the same old faults, elaborating on the comparative advantages of the proposed plan, inviting discussion in a temperate, patient way. They must expect a storm of preliminary disapproval. They will be classed with the ever-present visionaries, professional reformers, whose impossible suggestions have continually lessened men's fund of patient consideration. Those whose eyes have never lifted from the hoof-printed surface will rage of impiety and irreverence at the daring that assails the accepted. How could a road be rough that had satisfied a parent or a past philosopher? How could it be crooked if the early builder had thought it good? How could it be wrong if the majority had adopted no other route, and if God Almighty had not thought to change it by a miracle?

The less inflamed, but equally unprogressive, will mildly defend by saying that it is safe enough for the present, or good enough, considering; that vehicles have been made clumsy for its special strains, and teamsters trained in its defects. What a loss if quicker locomotion should dispense with half the need for team and driver! What a blow to those now living on the olden highway if the new should avoid them! What a misfortune for the blacksmith and wheelwright! How many unknown possibilities might be opened with no telling of the end!

And yet we do build boulevards in our progressive spasms, ruthlessly cutting through old barriers, even though we temporarily destroy and disturb. The moss-backs are outvoted, and wonder is eventually awakened in the backward glance that cannot understand why im-

provement was delayed so long. What matters it in the end that certain sturdy trees were necessarily felled, or ancient land-marks buried? Must the future population ever turn around the corners of a sentimental obstruction? Must they ever go a league to gain a mile in distance? Certainly not! And why not look at this question of religion in a similar light? Why should it alone defy the chance of change? Why must its errors be ever inviolate, and its weakness ever veiled? Only because the old intolerant spirit of Ancestor-Worship still draws us back and stifles the wish to rationalize our inherited ideals! Only because we—the culmination of all the wisdom, all the experience of the ages—dare not trust ourselves to better that which our fathers themselves have bettered! Is this a sufficiency of reasons? No! Civilization, in its valiant unrest, will shelve its unfit veneration upon seeing how it has been deceived. Shall we now stop before the turning of a page because a mortal hand prefixed the Holy sign before the title word?

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The basis of Christian teaching is a Book—One Book. From the Christian's standpoint it has a most profound significance. This single volume, to them, contains the history of Creation, the words of Divine Power, the writing of inspired Prophets, and the life and teachings of Deity re-incarnated. Such a marvel should inspire a reverence and awe above all earthly works. When we note the negligence with which it is treated by our educated class, however, a natural doubt of its divine nature logically follows its indirect judgment.

The modern cultivated mind peruses thousands of books in a lifetime, to say nothing of daily, weekly and

monthly periodicals. What per cent. of professed Christians have carefully read their Bible from start to finish, or are conversant with its general teachings? How many actually look to it for comfort and advice? How many really prefer it to other literature, and evidence their preference by attested familiarity? The question is useless. All know that the majority cannot quote beyond a dozen verses, and totally fail to comprehend the sequence of events recorded. When confronted by some unfamiliar line, antagonizing to their better sense, they usually stoutly contend that it is misapplied. Driven to a corner by proof, they seek refuge in the flimsiest excuses, seldom daring to defend the literal truth of that which they have freely adopted for guidance.

We call them Christians, yet they know not Christ! They assume to follow that which they have not deigned to comprehend. The Scriptures are indeed sacred to them—too sacred to be touched! The family Bible, secure in its armour of dust, still challenges the intelligence of the race!

The origin of this book is both interesting and instructive. Interwoven with the probable facts of the first part, which purports to be a history of the early Jewish race from the creation of the world itself, are early legends and prophetic forecasts. The precise authorship is not now definitely known, but it has been clearly proved that most of the several divisions were not written at the time of which they treat nor by eye-witnesses of the events recorded, nor in the sequence in which they are now presented. The names they bear are found to have been taken from the heroes of the tales, rather than, as

commonly believed, from the writers of the manuscripts. Certain of the prophecies are misapplied in the later text, and many utterly failed of realization. It is interesting to trace the presence of certain Babylonian legends which were evidently assimilated by the Jewish race while under captivity. None of the record is important beyond that of any other ancient people, except when the unreasoning fervor of the devotee accepts it as inspired truth. Its account of creation is unscientific and impossible, while the following happenings are in turn grotesque, fanciful and often disgusting. Certain minds, however, are limitless in their elasticity, so their anaconda capacities absorb the whole of Genesis, undaunted by its rough inaccuracies.

The criticisms which follow are by no means entirely novel. Not that they were deliberately copied—indeed, they are original in the main, if independent deductions may be thus termed. The same weaknesses have continually impressed millions of readers, and those who have written their views long ago exhausted the usual possibilities of critical language. Starting with Thomas, the original doubter, we have had countless examples of well matured suspicion from Celsus to Voltaire. In our own country there is a range of gifted thought from Thomas Paine to Andrew D. White, including the studious Draper and the brilliant Ingersoll. Our mother country owes much to Huxley and Spencer, finds a doughty feminine critic in Mrs. Humphry Ward, and a curious example of honesty in Dean Farrar. Germany adds a long list of worthy names from Goethe to Haeckel. It may truthfully be said, that so far as mental capacity is concerned, the strength is undoubtedly with the critics. Is it not curious to realize that of the sermons delivered by hundreds of thousands of Christian clergymen each

week during years of service, there are not a sufficient number of true public interest to make one volume of widely accepted literature?

Were it not necessary for the after purpose of this work, there would be faint excuse for re-dissection of the Bible. To rear anew, however, the foundation must be re-planned. Few delve in old ground without turning over that which another has spaded. Too many spend their time thus groping in the past, notwithstanding, without ever reaching the task of building on the re-formed support. Lost gems may be discovered in the sifting of old trash, yet nothing new created.

If the Bible be invincible, the necessary falsity of assailing argument will but redound to its credit. If worthy in spots, none should decry the clipping of the ragged fringe that mars the beauty and adds no utility. We may be left, however, with but few irregular patches that must be matched and fitted in a new whole. Better, perhaps, to start afresh and weave a new fabric, copying the design of the old only so far as may be found desirable.

Of the Bible's two parts, one stretches the straggling fringe of history back to the unit of eternity, the other is limited in pertinent facts to the events of a few months. The first part defines the wishes of a God, the second those of his supposed offspring. Belief in the father must logically anticipate credence in the son; and yet the modern Christian withholds his trust in much that is recorded of the parent, discourteously cynical in his attitude towards his earlier scribes, though bowed in reverence to those who later listened to the heir. Both

father and son were bent on shaping human thought ; each had an individual opinion as to its fit direction. They disagree ; and with a choice between the infinite and the immature, the latter has found first favour. Christians thus stamp as obsolete a power existing, by their own admission, since the birth of time, to credit one who lived but barely thirty years. The human race still finds it hard to learn that truth can never change. Christians could better cancel their God than limit his intelligence. Neglectful of his primitive maxims, they must be classed as supercilious and disobedient.

We learn by perusal of biblical records and contemporaneous history, that these records had their origin amongst certain wandering tribes of Semitic race, who gathered from their traditions the basis of a religious faith. They solved the problem of existence by evolving a being from imagination or inspiration, whose powers, while limitless in certain directions, were by no means universally absolute. With narrow conception they endowed their creation with a human form, and generously granted him the excuse of human passion as well ; for he proved vain, violent, changeable and jealous. In explanation of their own imperfections, they invented a curious tale of original sin, with associating evil spirits, which could relieve unkind events of divine responsibility. With a confident vanity, they next constituted themselves the chosen people, and strengthened their traditions by tales of frequent personal interviews with the most high. With an eye to their own glory, they acquired a smattering of supernatural power themselves, and even assumed to quiet the Lord's anger when fits of vengeance needed soothing treatment. It was certainly

fortunate that they could at times guide his otherwise ungovernable rage, as wholesale slaughter often trembled in the balance. Sacrifices sometimes satiated his thirst for human gore, and in return he often aided their unworthy lusts for plunder, at the expense of outside barbarians. Wrath against his own favourites was often so frightful in its violence, however, that it is questionable whether the neighbouring clans did not fare better on the whole without the special sanction of his interference.

The tale of a nation, primarily selected as the elect, and guarded by an omnipotent selector, may easily awaken interest. This chosen race, however, struggled for ages against their neighbours or conquerors, their Lord usually proving powerless to control events. Never in history were the Jews a dominant factor, even before losing divine favour. They were ever wanderers, often slaves, and are still comparative outcasts in certain unjust Christian countries.

As recorded in the Bible, the early captivity of the Jews in Egypt was broken only by flight. They wandered with the promise of an Eden for their hope, finding instead that barren land of Palestine, where their later history is concentrated. After years of divine solicitude, they were still so degenerate that the need of vigorous measures was manifest. Their prophets then held out the hope of a personal Messiah, who should place them in material possession of the world at large, subjecting other races to their domination. Thus the first testament ends, and with it the accepted religion of the race.

In the second portion of this book we read of the life of an active claimant for the position of leadership among the chosen people ; but instead of guiding their forces to victorious warfare against oppressors, he disappointed the masses by merely inculcating revolutionary, spiritual ideas. He assumed to correct their Lord on doctrinal points, and won a certain prominence by effectual mental healing. The end was most unfortunate. The ruling powers confined him, and the rabble hounded him to a shameful death. Neither the father nor the converts turned a hand to save him. After this end it is reported that he returned to life, and met his disciples anew. Then follows a brief account of the further works of a few immediate followers.

The after growth of this new religion was partly due to the zeal of the first missionaries, and partly to the barrenness of certain mental spheres. The time was peculiarly ripe for a revolution.

Having amassed strength with years, and grown worthy of respect, the new sect soon fell under the control of authoritative powers, who realized the possibilities of a faith that denied the right of resistance. Once in control, the established hierarchy started on a universal proselytism, exerting a powerful influence in every branch of human affairs. Having a monopoly well in hand, they next directed effort toward its continued maintenance.

While a few attested miracles still lent them an air of divine authority, their force was not conclusive, and it became evident that some never failing prop was neces-

sary, the sun no longer standing still by priestly request. Some clever mind suggested the idea of a divinely inspired volume, whose edicts could not be gainsaid. The church council eagerly accepted this solution of the problem, and began a keen revision of the scattered manuscripts relating to the time and sayings of Christ.

It was necessary, as a preliminary, that the Old Testament should be accepted as a fore-runner. It also became evident that the amendment must accord in general with the prophetic forecasts of the original. Ingenious manipulation and interpolation finally evolved a form of book, or rather collection of scrolls, which filled the purpose fairly well for the time. As education was restricted, the chance for criticism was limited.

The invention of printing made it necessary that the collection be made immortal by unchanging type. It was then found that with the lapse of years, and many copyings, the renderings of important passages were often conflicting and confusing. Marginal notes had drifted into the body of the text by accident, and calculated design had inserted fresh sentences to strengthen and support some favoured dogma. Modern research has unearthed ancient originals, which prove that vital changes have thus changed and corrupted the intent of the early scribes. Many manuscripts were excluded entirely by the most arbitrary decisions. Contradictions and blunders plainly evidence the stumbling handicraft of man, but human credulity, with blind infatuation, yet accepts each word as sacred, denying the possibility of

error, although their own church heads have allowed revision within the present century.

We thus seem authorized to study—

To dissect—

To reflect—

And to draw our own **conclusions.**

Let us to the task !

### CHAPTER III.

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### THE OLDER DOCTRINE.

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*“And when you can not prove that people are wrong, but only that they are absurd, the best course is to let them alone.”—HUXLEY.*

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THE greater part of the present and immediately following chapters was written in the earlier years of authorship, when the writer's judgment had more of the severity of immaturity, and when his emotions were keenly alive to the dangers of conventional error. While the same ideas and criticisms might now be phrased in more moderate terms by the conservatism bred of added years, a change would not in fitness serve the purpose of this work, for the author has designed portrayal of the evolution of religious thought in an untrammelled mind, and such progress runs from youth to age in its normal course, chancing the loss of its significance of form, in various stages, if the end were to return to re-mould the beginning. The crudities of inexperienced thought may well be removed by rational revision; but character of expression may justly change its garb, from Spring to Fall, trusting to the reader's ready sympathy of comprehension to understand the spirit of incautious enthusiasm with which a crusader engages in his earlier conflicts.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE OLDER DOCTRINE.

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**T**AKING a brief glance at the Old Testament, it will be found that the acts and commands of its Lord alone are important for the purposes of the present investigation. Volumes have been written in exhaustive criticism of its historical truth, its contradictions, exaggerations, etc. It has even been argued that a large portion was intended as romance and parable, instead of for literal acceptance. As it stands, however, certain lines convey very plain meanings. If Christians themselves act in disregard of its laws, we can assuredly be allowed the right to carefully criticise them.

While assuming to explain the mystery of creation, the fundamental problem finds no answer. Granting that a Lord might mould a universe from its component elements, how explain the existence of either the elements or the artizan? Other theology is equally silent, so no point of vantage is necessarily lost. Coming back to the evolution of this speck of a world it is declared to be the central figure of the universal system, the stars being formed to light it and the sun to give it heat. When considering the millions of planetary bodies of greater bulk, and very probably of greater evolutionary importance, it seems as reasonable to assume that all matter and force originated for the sole benefit of some tiny microbe in a turbid drop of water.

As if for the purpose of warning the reader, the very first page of the Bible contains contradictions that plainly prevent literal acceptance of the records. With the two following accounts of the creation, it is evident that choice is necessary. The fact that an oversight allowed this unpurged text to stand, may well cause us to ponder over the other conflicting elements that were possibly eliminated with better care. The attempted reconciliation of the following paragraphs has driven more than one Holy man insane, while splitting factions into never ending struggles.

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. . . And God said, Let there be light. . . And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. (And the evening and the morning were the first day.—Old version.)*

*And God said, Let there be a firmament. . . And God made the firmament. . . And God called the firmament Heaven. . . a second day. (the second day.)*

It seems that Heaven was created on the first day and then, to make sure, it was made all over again on the second.

*And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. . . And the earth brought forth grass. . . seed. . . fruit. . . a (the) third day.*

*And God said, Let there be lights. . . to divide the day from the night. . . a (the) fourth day.*

But, God made light the first day, and called it Day ! How could there have been first, second and third days if there were no changes from darkness to light to mark them ? What is a day then ?

*And God created the great sea-monsters (great whales) . . . and every winged fowl. . . a (the) fifth day.*

*And God made the beast. . . and the cattle. . . and every thing that creepeth upon the ground (earth). . .*

*And (So) God created man. . . male and female created he them. . . the sixth day.*

*And the heavens and the earth were finished. . .*

*And no plant of the field was yet in the earth. (And every plant of the field before it was in the earth.—Old version—makes no sense.)*

But the third day was especially given up to horticulture which produced grass and fruit !

*and there was not a man to till the ground. . .*

Is it then possible that the men created on the sixth day had vanished into thin air ?

*And the Lord God formed man. . .*

Well, he had a practised hand by this time.

The Lord then forbade this second attempt to eat the fruit of a certain tree, although he allowed the first individuals to eat the fruit of *every tree*. Perhaps the

fact that green fruit may have eliminated the sixth day man by cholera morbus suggested the limitation for the second. The Lord then formed *every beast of the field and every fowl of the air*, although fowls were created on the fifth day and beasts on the sixth. Perhaps they all ate the deadly apples also. The man next named the animals, which fact has been of great advantage to us. What strange mistakes we might have made had he called the elephant a camel!

*the Lord God. . . made he a woman.*

This constant harrowing of our feelings in recalling those poor unfortunates made on the sixth day and then abandoned to a remorseless fate is almost brutal.

*the man and his wife. . . were not ashamed.*

Why should they be? Does a cow blush?

The tale of Eden is most perplexing throughout. The world was apparently made with too great haste, for man sprang into life so imperfect in intention that he soon disgusted his designer. But instead of consigning him to the dirt from whence he came, this curious Lord was willing to continue his imperfections to eternity. It cannot be intelligently conceived why it was necessary to tempt this piece of imperfection with a tree of knowledge or a serpent, nor why the Lord should, under the circumstances, threaten him with death, and then mitigate the punishment, as the wise serpent prophesied. No wonder that certain races should hold snakes sacred, when through them men have attained wisdom, and

when one of their species not only proved able to defeat divine purpose, but foretold its changeability. And to wind up this vexatious legend, we have a vengeance visited on unborn generations in penalty for disobedience from creatures whose culpability was the direct result of imperfect workmanship at the hands of their creator. The spectacle of a child punishing its inanimate doll for imaginary derelictions is refreshing by comparison.

Reading further we find that the Creator must have overstepped his intention in his creature ; otherwise, it would be hard to understand why the Lord should have been jealous of quickened mentality. The following words would signify that man was not expected to soar above mere animality :

*Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. . .*

They—for we are obliged in our perplexity occasioned by the use of the word us to admit a plurality of Gods—hardly intended to recognize men as equals, or at least feared the possibility that they might attain equality. This is clearly shown in the text :

*and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever. . . \**

Later on at the building of the tower of Babel, the Lord had fresh cause for alarm, saying :—

\* It is curious to note that the Persians also had early legends of a first man named Adonih and a first woman Hevah. The serpent as a tempter is likewise an old piece of stage property.

*And this is what they begin to do: (and this they begin to do) and now nothing will be with-holden (restrained) from them, which they purpose (have imagined) to do.*

Continuing after the Eden narrative, we come to that elusive quandary as to where Cain found his wife. The bungling historian who committed this fatal error well deserves to be questioned. When we come to other puzzles, however, like those involved in the flood, bewilderment prevents minute dissection. From whence did this overwhelming body of water come, and where did it lose itself, after its purpose was fulfilled? The collection of the animals, while certainly difficult, was easy compared with the trial of living with them for months in a closed box, with one shut window in the roof. Those having spent a few minutes in a menagerie will appreciate the need for better ventilation. Science has shown us that Noah skipped the dinotherium and its associates. Perhaps the Ark was not quite large enough for these great land-whales. Still, the omission lessens confidence in his thoroughness.

This flood is the first evidence of rational supervision. It seems a pity that any human beings were saved, as a fresh start might have evolved a really satisfactory population. It was only a few years before Sodom and Gomorrah witnessed quick descent to dirtiness, and the Lord had unfortunately promised not to turn the cleansing fluid on again. The question of responsibility cannot but continually crop up, as the evil in these early natures is plainly due to incompleteness in their make-up. Once in a while, however, an exception was noticed, for father Abraham was superior enough to actually turn the Lord from his original intention.

Christianity is primarily founded on absurdity. It assumes the creation of an imperfect world by a faultless artisan, who makes his toys suffer for his mistakes. After a history of gross favouritism, he creates a part of himself, to persuade the remaining portion that its errors in human handiwork must be forgiven by reason of the suffering of the lesser fraction at the hands of the beings governed by the primal whole. Those sufficiently gifted to follow this reasoning, and believe in it, shall be rewarded at an indefinite future time, when their carnal human carcasses will have been remoulded for them from the dust of ages.

The first definite command to the race in general which the Christian gathers from these early scriptures is to be fruitful. While sexual communion will never be unpopular so long as it involves the play of certain pleasurable, natural emotions, the resulting children are by no means universally welcome. It were nauseating to discuss the multitude of ways by which nature is cheated by a supposedly respectable community; yet the actual fact of barren or scantily fertile marriages speaks more plainly than words. It is hardly a century since the great-grandmothers of the present race thought nothing of families of ten or more children, and it is absurd to suppose that evolution can have made a vital change in the human being within so short a period. Whatever the source, it is evident that if the most enlightened portion of the Christian population is really earnest in the desire to follow the first great precept, it is peculiarly unfortunate in its attempts.

The next definite edict specifies that all males shall undergo circumcision. This custom still exists as a

sacred rite among the Jews. Christ was so treated, and never was known to advise against it. Paul explained at great length that it was not necessary, but Paul was not known by Jesus, and had no proper authority by which to destroy. Can any honest Christian give any good reason why this rite has been abandoned, and the less important and wholly purposeless custom of Baptism substituted? There is no explanation, but rather the wilful refusal common to this sect since its origin.

The Lord also extends this rite to him *that is bought with thy money*, thus recognizing human slavery as in many other instances.

It may be urged by the shifty evaders that all these commands were distinctly meant for the Jewish race, and none other. Yet how can we adopt a God belonging wholly to the Jews, unless we do so wishing to get the benefit of the wisdom which was made their personal treasure while they were the favoured people? We might as well say that morality were well enough for the Germans but wholly useless for the French. It will be found that quinine is efficient with both Peruvian and European. The value of any rule is its effectiveness in universal application.

We next have some very interesting history well worth perusal. The logic of events finally produced the Commandments, which easily take rank as the most important moral rules of the Old Testament. In fact, they are all that modern Christians deign to memorize. Some of them appeal to natural instinct and expediency, and are therefore fairly well observed. Others, however, are

still ignored, being too strict for the masses. For instance, the Lord commands that we shall have no other Gods, and we see Christ placed above him. That the Lord foresaw Christianity is quite evident by the following: *If there arise in the midst of thee (among you) a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he give (giveth) thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or unto that dreamer of dreams: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.* Deut. XIII-1-4. The prophets that foretold Christ are here discredited in the strongest terms.

The Lord commands again, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*, and yet the Christian English nation was known to foreigners for years as the *God-Damns*, from its most frequent expression. Even to this day, those of limited vocabulary seem to think there is but one adjective for general application, and that this unholy oath. The habit is known in higher circles as well, although the more cultivated use the term less frequently, for the sake, perhaps, of preserving its force.

The Lord next explicitly requires that none shall labour on the Sabbath day, nor even a servant nor domestic animal. The majority gladly cease toil one day in a week, but with the usual perversity do not observe the proper one, as Saturday is the traditional Sabbath. While labour in general is suspended, the usual household tasks are insisted on by the majority of those Chris-

tians fortunate enough to command human service, and the general public also demand Sunday labour from many trades that cater to their fancied necessities. The most inconsistent disobedience, however, comes from the very heads of the religion who perform their most wearing duties on that day.

In Numbers, XV-33-36, we have an instance where some dastardly and conscienceless heathen was discovered actually gathering sticks on Sunday! He was of course promptly stoned to death by the Lord's command, even as we would be supposed to hunt down the depraved Sabbath golf-fiend! Some children of the devil still gather flowers, ride, row, read and otherwise indulge in blasphemous Sunday pleasures. With such a load of sin can we ever hope for forgiveness?

The Lord says *Thou shalt do no murder (shalt not kill.)* It would be interesting to know statistics of the grand total of deaths for which Christians have been directly responsible in their wars, massacres, persecutions, prolicides and legal death warrants. The record of no other sect would stand an instant's comparison. The creed has been written in blood on the pages of history, and each age freshens the record with a new stain.

But even war is badly managed. We no longer follow the first principles. When taking a city soldiers should *kill every male among the little ones, and every woman that has known man.* The virgins may be kept *for yourselves.* And still we sing with fervent chant,—

*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!*

Adultery is also forbidden. Broaden the term to include all unlawful sexual intercourse, and experience proves this the least revered command. Christians are smirched with the common taint. Against this evil, God, Church, Law, all seem equally powerless.

Theft is another common crime more bounded by law than religion. The general public, by its silence at least, appears to condone stealing at any time that involves ingenuity, grandeur, audacity, or governmental loss. It is interesting to note that the Lord approves of the institution of property, as theft is impossible unless individual ownership is permitted.

Covetousness is another weakness which time has not erased. Rules will hardly change human nature until education has taught the application of expediency in governing the desires of flesh and fancy. It is not enough for some self-constituted arbiter to call things wrong. We must know why before we sacrifice our whims.

Exodus details other rules than the Commandments, and definitely states the punishment which transgressors shall receive. A few of special pertinence are as follows :—

If a servant has no wish for proffered freedom, his master shall *bore his ear through with an awl*. . . Ex. XXI-6.

*He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death.* Ex. XXI-12.

This is interesting in view of the fact that but three per cent. of our murderers are executed, and a large contingent of professed Christians are outwardly in favour of abolishing capital punishment.

*And he that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.* Ex. XXI-16.

It may be remembered that in the United States there are now about eight million descendants of slaves that were stolen by Christians from their home in another continent.

*Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress (witch) to live.* Ex. XXII-18.

So the Salem witch-finders and old Cotton Mather were right after all, and their pious duty has been wrongly villified!

*He that sacrificeth unto any God, save unto the Lord only (he) shall be utterly destroyed.* Ex. XXII-20.

And yet we see devotion to Jesus, and the Holy Ghost!

*neither shalt thou favour (countenance) a poor man in his cause.* Ex. XXIII-3.

This absolutely condemns the mawkish public sentiment that makes a jury trial farcial when a rich descendant can be bled.

*The seventh year thou shalt let it (land) rest and lie fallow (still); that the poor of thy people may eat. . .*  
Ex. XXIII-11.

Even the poor seem to have overlooked this verse, for we hear no protest.

*The wages of a hired servant (him that is hired) shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.*  
Lev. XIX-13.

Brisk work for the Paymaster !

*Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with two kinds of (mingled) seed.* Lev. XIX-19.

Cross breeding then is immoral, and mixed seed an abomination ! Yet some erroneously think the farmer law-abiding and well-meaning. Out upon the wilful criminal !

*Neither shall ye use enchantments, nor practice augury (nor observe times).* Lev. XIX-26.

Few of us are aware that we could if we would !

*Ye shall not round the corners of your heads, neither shalt thou mar the corners of thy beard.* Lev. XIX-27.

Dull the razor, bend the shear! Place barber-knives in durance vile! The unkempt alone shall be undefiled! No close cropped polls, for look, again: *They shall not make baldness upon their heads.*

How could the Round-Heads, who made Cromwell rule, have read so wrongly when introducing their distinctive custom?

*Turn not unto (regard not) them that have familiar spirits. . . Lev. XIX-31.*

Spiritualism traces back then to these early times, and is recognized as a truth.

The shameful evil of physical blemish is harshly rebuked by denying such the right to enter the temple of the Lord or offer sacrifice. The letter is so strict as to include *a flat nose*. We all worship the artistic, yet we rarely stop to think how antagonistic to true religion is physical deformity. Birth or accident is no excuse. Be rare in form or hope not for divine approbation! Some gifted author will yet with pitying grace arouse our sympathy with the tragedy of some broken-nosed Pariah.

*Ye shall eat (Ye eat) neither fat nor blood. . . Lev. III-17.*

*I will (even) set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. Lev. XVII-10.*

This custom is rigidly observed by the Jews, who bleed animal flesh before it is marketed for their use. Christians not only pay no heed to these explicit instructions, but even have a certain blood pudding mentioned in their gastronomic annals.

Having already condemned blood as a nutriment, the Lord further bars specific animals like hares and swine. Certain delicious sea-food is also under the ban, for oysters, clams, mussels, lobsters, shrimps, terrapin *are in the waters* and yet have not *fins and scales*. . . Deut. XIV-9-10. Happily the *pygarg*, *cricket* and *grasshopper* are pointed out as special favours to appease our omnivorous desires.

It would indeed be interesting to note the struggle of the epicure if cruelly brought to choice between the martyrdom of his palate and the fragrance of steaming shell fish ; on one hand his reminiscent fancy picturing the ecstasy of departed moments glorified by dalliance with a succulent bivalve, attractive whether coldly raw or generously warm ; whether roasted bare or fried in batter ; whether swimming in stew or smothered in crumbs ; whether served as the *pièce de résistance* or humbly giving zest by scattered fragments to another rival ; and on the other hand the dull, dank maxim or the stale and musty ritual. And in this prosperous age are we not all epicures ? Our shore lines wave a summer mist from fragrant clam-bakes ; the lobster is a household God ! And would we trade those treasured joys for pygargs ? Perish supposition ! Let not the ignorant Jew, who in his sandy desert railed of things beyond his comprehension and dared to forge the name of Deity to his base attack, pretend to dictate to a race as

far above his wandering tribe as is the Giant Palm above the tangled thicket.

The fact that Christians have not followed Mosaic Law by no means criticises its true worth. Jews are among the longest lived of all races, and their peculiar customs are held in high regard by many Christian physicians. The soaking of new-born infants in salt, the abstinence from swine's flesh, the moderate use of alcoholic liquids and the practice of circumcision, all have their converts among Gentiles.

Those who accept the Old Testament as divine truth from a divine source, are asked to study the following paragraph with the attention that it deserves :

*Ye shall not eat of anything that dieth of itself: thou mayest (shalt) give it unto the stranger that is within (in) thy gates, that he may eat it; or thou mayest sell it unto a foreigner (an alien). . . Deut. XIV-21.*

Here is holy hospitality! The Mohammedan Arab may well furnish us a better example. The incredible meanness of such advice certainly denies its author the right to reverence.

*At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbor (that lendeth ought unto his neighbor shall release it); he shall not exact it of his neighbor and (or of) his brother; because the Lord's release hath been pro-*

*claimed ; (it is called the Lord's release). Of a foreigner thou mayest exact it. . . Deut. XV-1-3.*

And yet in Christian England men starved in jail for the debt of a few shillings, within the present century. Were they all foreigners ?

And this Lord is jealous of ambitious humanity !

*There shall not be found with thee (among you) any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, one (or) that useth divination, one that practiseth augury (or an observer of times), or an enchanter, or a sorcerer (witch), or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit (spirits), or a wizard or a necromancer. Deut. XVIII-10-12.*

This seems to cover the whole realm of cheap supernaturalism, and the strange thing is that each of these peculiar trades still flourishes at the present time. The passing through fire is even yet practised by certain savages, although science cannot explain their freedom from injury. Even at this early time the Lord did not dispute their powers, nor brand them as frauds, showing that if they were tricksters they could still deceive Omnipotence.

We see that a *stubborn and rebellious son* shall merit the punishment, *stone him with stones, that he die. . . Deut. XXI-18-21.* Would it be permissible to use an axe in case one were a poor thrower ? It might prove less painful, though a prolonged torture might have been intended by our wise father.

*A (the) woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for whosoever doeth these things is an (for all that do so are) abomination unto the Lord thy God. Deut. XXII-5.*

And yet many strong-minded females are willing to be abominable. The feminine half are also harshly limited in the eleventh verse: *Thou shalt not wear a mingled stuff (a garment of divers sorts).* . "Oh, Lord, thy penalties are more than we can bear!"

The Bible refers in the most casual way to men having several wives and numerous concubines as if that were perfectly proper. The idea seems to have been that nothing should stand in the way of an heir, even if a servant had to be called in for aid. Even the incest of Lot's daughter is not rebuked by the text, being recorded as calmly as if it were most praiseworthy and desirable.

The absolute filth and impurity of many recorded acts and desires is most appalling when considering the widespread influence of this work. Suggestion is powerful as an evil force, especially with the young; and those of prurient mind will find too wide a field in this unhappy mass of unpurged tales. Not only are the most outrageous, most forbidding and most unnatural crimes related in all their sickening detail, but the actors are often unrebuked, and usually freely forgiven. A large portion of the population would be saved from much evil by lack of conception or invention; but here is a record of all human vileness, to stimulate the policy of imitation in all the curious. Too many works are living now be-

cause their filth preserves the interest of the shameless masses. To continue the use of these unnecessary lines is to say that cleanliness is evil, even as certain nuns forsake the wash-bowl for the cross.

It is shown to be an unmarried brother's plain duty to marry a deceased brother's widow, providing she is childless. If he objects she is to *loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face*. . . Deut. XXV-9. Refined customs these! Many of the commands refer to matters too indecent for reference. One rather unnecessary text provides against too much familiarity with one's Mother-in-law. The Lord later grows ingenious in his punishments, and warns against a certain *sore boil* which he can inflict and which cannot be healed. We are also to dread the infliction of the *itch, scurvy* and *emerods* or tumours as we know them. Are present sufferers from these ills under the special displeasure of the Almighty?

Nothing has been said about the necessary sacrifices and other church observances. They are so lengthy and explicit as to need a volume by themselves to do them justice. A man's first born son must be a priest; a tenth of the income must be devoted to the Church; all manner of offerings must be made at all manner of times. Only the most perfect physically must enter the Lord's presence, and then only after observing certain purifications, etc. A hundred technical details are given, not one of which is observed by the modern Christians. Their sense triumphs over these early annoyances. The fact that nearly all religious rites pertain to sacrifices, incense, odours, etc., prove that this Lord had a most sensitive sense of smell. A Lord with a ticklish nose!

There are certain events in early Exodus of most grave importance, although many divines seem to have missed them. Along with the many miracles performed by Moses and Aaron before Pharoah, we are informed that *the sorcerers and . . . the magicians . . . did in like manner with their enchantments*. These unassisted mortals then were able to turn rods into serpents, even if Aaron's serpent did swallow them. They were able also to turn waters into blood, to cover the land with frogs, and only failed when it came to turning dust into lice, breeding flies, killing cattle, etc. It is here admitted that miracles are possible without supernatural aid. Even if it is recorded later that Christ turned water into wine, the fact loses significance when this former tale is thoroughly digested. A narrative that admits the possibility of *enchantments, sorcerers, witches, evil spirits* and the like, cannot appeal as literal truth to honest-minded men.

The beauties of religious thought are nowhere so prominent as in that truly inspired song of Solomon—that wisest of men. The broken heart, the craving soul, who fly to the Bible for relief, aid and succor, will, maychance, expand to these glowing verses—which are here somewhat condensed; and they will search, and search, and search ceaselessly for the pure, the ennobling, the uplifting. They are all taken from the new version.

*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth :*

*For thy love is better than wine. . .*

*I am black but comely. . .*

*Stay ye me with raisins (flacons, old version), comfort me with apples :*

*For I am sick of love. . .*

*And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. . .*  
*My beloved is white and ruddy. . .*  
*His locks are bushy. . .*  
*His cheeks are as a bed of spices. . .*  
*His lips are as lilies dropping liquid myrrh. . .*  
*His body is as ivory work. . .*  
*His legs are as pillars of marble. . .*  
*His mouth is most sweet. . .*

---

*How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince's  
 daughter!*  
*The joints of thy thighs are like jewels. . .*  
*Thy navel is like a round goblet. . .*  
*Thy belly is like an heap of wheat  
 Set about with lilies.*  
*Thy two breasts are like two fawns  
 That are twins of a roe.*  
*Thy neck is like the tower of ivory. . .*  
*How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights!*  
*. . .thy stature is like to a palm tree,  
 And thy breasts to clusters of grapes. . .*  
*. . .the smell of thy breath like apples. . .*  
*. . .thy mouth like the best wine. . .*  
*When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee. . .*  
*I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house,  
 Who would instruct me;*  
*. . .stir not up, nor awaken love,  
 Until it please.*

If somewhat puzzled as to whether one has not by mistake taken up some tabooed volume instead of a divine message, let the following subtle lines be deciphered to reveal the light of truth to the suffering world:

*We have a little sister,  
 And she hath no breasts :  
 What shall we do for our sister  
 In the day when she shall be spoken for ?*  
 Songs VIII-8.

What, indeed !

In truth, these quotations are far from being selected for their marked pruriency, as modesty has shunned the more suggestive paragraphs. Why this Harem debauchee should have been allowed to include his erotic wail in this supposedly sacred volume, is one of the Christian mysteries which the honest now explain by admitting it to be a simple Eastern love-song. It seems as if it would have been more rational for those who revised the book to have left it out of the modern edition. The earlier translators were so engrossed in the belief of divine significance, that they suspected hidden meanings, and attempted to solve them by placing explanatory headlines above the chapter divisions. For instance, as several have pointed out, one containing some lecherous lines is headed :

*The Church's love unto Christ—or—  
 Christ setteth forth the graces of the Church.*

It is hard to understand what Christ had to do with these writings at all, and still harder to conceive a church with a navel *like a round goblet*, or that is *black but comely*.

Solomon, like many another, could be both self-indulgent and learned. His character is deciphered

more charitably in other specimens of his literature. Those who wish for some authoritative counsel on thought and act can do no better than to turn to wisdom that has outlived ages and still seems pertinent and pungent. Avoiding those verses tinged with the superstitions of the time, we find that in the Proverbs or Solomon are certain advices of rare worth. The following \* are among the most true :

*How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity ?  
And scorers delight them in scorning,  
And fools hate knowledge ?*

---

*The lips of a strange woman drop honey. . .  
But her latter end is bitter as wormwood. . .  
Remove thy way from her. . .  
Lest thou give thine honour unto others,  
And thy years unto the cruel :  
Lest strangers be filled with thy strength. . .  
Can a man take fire in his bosom,  
And his clothes not be burned ?  
He that committeth adultery with a woman is void of un-  
derstanding. . .  
He goeth after her straightway,  
As an ox to the slaughter,  
Or as fetters to the correction of the fool ;  
Till an arrow strike through his liver. . .  
A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband :  
But she that maketh |ashamed is as rottenness in his  
bones. . .  
A gracious woman retaineth honour. . .  
As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout,  
So is a fair woman which is without discretion. . .*

\* All as given in new version but not in their usual grouping.

*The contentions of a wife are a continual dropping. . .  
Better is a dinner of herbs where love is,  
Than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.*

---

*Go to the ant thou sluggard ;  
Consider her ways and be wise :  
Which having no chief,  
Overseer or ruler,  
Provideth her meat in the summer,  
And gathereth her food in the harvest. . .  
The labour of the righteous tendeth to life. . .  
In all labour there is profit. . .  
The appetite of the labouring man laboureth for him. . .*

---

*He that correcteth a scorner getteth to himself shame. . .  
Reprove a wise man and he will love thee. . .  
When pride cometh then cometh shame. . .  
The simple believeth every word. . .  
Even a fool when he holdeth his peace is counted wise. . .  
Wisdom is too high for a fool. . .*

---

*Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man,  
Rather than a fool in his folly. . .*

---

*Treasures of wickedness profit nothing. . .  
The name of the wicked shall rot. . .  
It is as sport to a fool to do wickedness. . .  
How much better it is to get wisdom than gold!  
A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. . .  
Weary not thyself to be rich. . .*

---

*In multitude of counsellors there is safety.  
He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it :*

*But he that hateth suretiship is sure. . .*  
*A prudent man concealeth knowledge. . .*

---

*The liberal soul shall be made fat. . .*  
*He that withholdeth corn the people shall curse him. . .*  
*He that trusteth in his riches shall fail. . .*  
*The poor is hated even of his own neighbor :*  
*But the rich hath many friends. . .*  
*He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man :*  
*He that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich. . .*  
*The rich ruleth over the poor,*  
*And the borrower is servant to the lender. . .*

---

*A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast. . .*  
*A sound heart is the life of the flesh :*  
*But envy is the rottenness of the bones. . .*  
*A soft answer turneth away wrath. . .*  
*The discretion of a man maketh him slow to anger. . .*  
*It is an honour for a man to keep aloof from strife :*  
*But every fool will be quarrelling. . .*  
*Make no friendship with a man that is given to anger. .*  
*Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth . .*  
*A fool uttereth all his anger :*  
*But a wise man keepeth it and stilleth it. . .*

---

*Answer not a fool according to his folly,*  
*Lest he be wise in his own conceit. . .*  
*As an archer that woundeth all,*  
*So is he that hireth the fool, and he that hireth them that*  
*pass by.*  
*As a dog that returneth to his vomit,*  
*So is a fool that repeateth his folly.*  
*Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit ?*  
*There is more hope for a fool than of him. . .*

*The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit  
Than seven men that can render a reason. . .*

---

*Hope deferred maketh the heart sick. . .  
A merry heart is a good medicine. . .  
If thou faint in the day of adversity,  
Thy strength is small. . .  
To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet. . .*

---

*Children's children are the crown of old men. . .  
The glory of young men is their strength :  
And the beauty of old men is their hoary head. . .*

---

*A poor man is better than a liar. . .  
Most men will proclaim every one his own kindness. . .  
A lying tongue hateth those whom it has wronged ;  
And a flattering mouth worketh ruin. . .*

---

*Wine is a mocker. . .  
Be not among winebibbers. . .*

---

*Even a child maketh itself known by its doings. . .  
Train up a child in the way he should go,  
And even when he is old he will not depart from it. . .*

---

*Fret not thyself because of evil doers. . .  
The wicked flee when no man pursueth . . .*

---

*Boast not thyself of the morrow ;  
For thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.  
Let another man praise thee. and not thine own mouth. . .  
Better is open rebuke  
Than love that is hidden.  
Faithful are the wounds of a friend.*

Even Solomon with all his acknowledged foresight admitted his powers to be somewhat vulnerable. It is interesting to note the marvels which puzzled the thoughtful in that remote age.

*There be three things which are too wonderful for me,  
Yea, four which I know not :  
The way of an eagle in the air ;  
The way of a serpent upon a rock ;  
The way of a ship in the midst of the sea ;  
And the way of a man with a maid.*

We to-day stand almost equally perplexed by these same wonders. We have not yet solved the problem of flight ; the motion of the serpent, while theoretically understood, is most complex to the uninitiated ; the compass is a fact, but an unexplained fact ; and the peculiarities of amorous human nature are yet baffling.

Dissecting another of his well digested statements, we find fear well justified in the following instances :

*For three things the earth doth tremble,  
And for four which it cannot bear :  
For a servant when he is king ;  
And for a fool when he is filled with meat ;  
For an odious woman when she is married ;  
And an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.*

If we are seeking consistency in Solomon, and should he be accepted as a mouth-piece of Omnipotence, it might be well to inquire how the following extracts can be reconciled :

*They shall seek me diligently but they shall not find me.* . . Chapter I—Verse 28.

*And those that seek me diligently shall find me.*  
Chapter VIII—Verse 17.

Coming to another portion of the Bible of a different character, we find the Book of Job, which if taken literally, presents certain novel philosophic problems. First we have an Eastern Croesus who is naturally pious after the manner of the worldly fortunate. Then we have God reviewing his sons, (rather in contradiction of his only son of later date) with Satan as an unexpected visitor. He and the Lord have a kind of wager regarding the sincerity of Job's constancy, and the Lord allows Satan to have the good man's kine stolen, his servants slain, his sheep burned, his sons slaughtered, and his physical being to be afflicted with the most loathsome horrors. He must also endure the annoying criticisms of his three friends, including that most euphoniouly named individual, Bildad the Shuhite. Eliphaz, also one of the three, leaves us that most wise remark; *Should a wise man make answer with vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind?* Job could only answer from his undying faith, which caused him to most illogically cling to his old superstitions when his reason admitted that, so far as outward present evidence went, the wicked were bountifully provided for. The fact that *the worm shall feed sweetly* on them at some indefinite future time was comforting to his irritations, but hope is sometimes strained to an extreme. After the test the Lord provided Job with more wealth than he had possessed before, and he was blessed with some new children. He might possibly have some regret for his dead sons and servants, but as his relatives each brought him a piece of money and a gold ring, it

is inferred that he had no reason to be dissatisfied. The moral of the tale is plain. Disbelieve every fact and every argument, providing there is some old family tradition to antagonize them. Take each kick and cuff with resignation when solaced by the satisfaction of how much worse your friends will fare when matters are evened up at some indefinite future time by some problematical dictator.

When too cowardly to meet personal opposition by determined resistance, the faithful deemed it advisable to fly to the Lord for succour, and whine out complaint, asking for vengeance in words such as these of the 109th Psalm :

*When he is judged, let him come forth guilty ;  
 And let his prayer be turned to sin.  
 Let his days be few ;  
 And let another take his office.  
 Let his children be fatherless,  
 And his wife a widow.  
 Let his children be vagabonds and beg ;  
 And let them seek their bread out of their desolate places.  
 Let the extortioner catch all that he hath ;  
 And let strangers make spoil of his labour.  
 Let there be none to extend mercy unto him ;  
 Neither let there be any to have pity on his fatherless  
 children.  
 Let his posterity be cut off ;  
 In the generation following let their name be blotted out.  
 Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the  
 Lord ;  
 And let not the sin of his mother be blotted out.  
 Let them be before the Lord continually,  
 That he may cut off the memory of them from the earth.*

Could anything be worse than this? A holy book actually suggesting use of the Lord as a private thug to satisfy gluttonous enmity!

We can know of an historical personage only by deductions from the records of his acts and words. It is interesting to thus define the God of the Old Testament, which certainly furnished the foundation for our inherited ideal. As there portrayed, he was a male animal of vibrant passions and wide constructive ability. He created evil, he hardened hearts, he put lying spirits in the mouths of prophets, he advised gross immoralities. Referring to specific instances, we find his approval manifested in such events as the slaughter of Canaanites, the killing of Sisera, the assassination of Eglon, the mutilation of Agag, the massacre of the prophets of Baal, the hanging of Haman with his ten sons, and the decapitation of Ahab's numerous progeny. The rulers who deserved special commendation were guilty of treachery, lust and cruelty. By the confession of his own angry moods this God was a bungler, a meddler and a most unhappy counselor. And yet it is to preserve this ideal that we hand down these old traditions and spread their printed duplication over heathen lands. Have we no pride that we thus describe one supposedly greater than ourselves? Have we not even a moderate sense of humour?

But why continue the farce of taking this Old Testament seriously? Students now know that the whole incongruous collection has no consistency and very little verity. They find that its first half apparently originated with Hilkiah, a priest of Josiah, who found (?) it in the temple.\* As its revelations created a considerable com-

\*Le Brun.

motion, it is not consistent to believe that they had formerly existed in like shape, as the people could hardly have forgotten the religion of their ancestors so as not to recognize it. With the convincing proof that the books, as written to that date, are not the products of their given authors, it is necessary to find some later compiler, and why not decide upon the modest Hilkiyah for want of a better? As to the after additions, they are a mere hash of miscellaneous scrolls, with only Ezra and Nehemiah still left in undisputed title to their books.

The prophecies are mostly undecipherable or vaguely generalizing. In such a mass it is easy enough to find a few verses to fit the age of Christ, or any other age, for that matter. Some of the widely heralded guesses concerning the meaning of the prophets are so absolutely irrelevant as to excite wonder for men's credulity. Isaiah, for instance, in prophesying of the child to be born of a virgin, referred to a present fact which was fulfilled by the dilemma of a temple prophetess; and it is not creditable to the inspired seer that he knew so much about this miracle in advance. So with all the rest.

If the Bible's history be true, the time was one too brutal for our enlightenment. If its God be true, we long for other ideals. If its laws be true, then we have progressed in spite of our contempt for them. Like all ancient chronicle there is interest and instruction for those who start with a proper conception of its limitations. Without some warning, however, the faithful are apt to retire from its contact with their morality warped, their purity stained, their reason deranged.

Amongst the various anti-Christian books and pamphlets, we unfortunately find certain iconoclastic works that are distinctly unwarranted. By appealing to men's meaner instincts, they disgust rather than edify, strengthening the faith they design to demolish by the reaction from their vulgarity. Dirty individuals enjoy throwing mud, and have no respect for the Ethics of Decency. Such will gloat over the discovery of lust and mock at heroic failings. They have actually referred in print to Abraham's wife as *Old Sally*, and also called her *That pretty little seducing brunette . . . not more than sixty-five*. Even if we must agree with their main statements of fact, they appeal to no noble motive when introduced by such phrases as, *It will make you laugh, It will corner the parson*. Neither may we find profit in that Gallic production of *A Comic Life of Christ*. What right have we to chuckle over the delinquencies of these ancient people? Rather save our criticism for those of a later age who attempt to deify them.

The only logical way in which to approach a study of the Old Testament is to realize that it is simply a miscellaneous library of Hebrew literature. It is no more to be taken as wholly true, or wholly significant, than any like collection of any other age. Perhaps, after some prolonged and devastating holocaust, the regenerated inhabitants of future ages will find a few of our fragmentary works, accidentally preserved, and try to ascertain our theology from sundry chapters of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, *Decameron*, *Gulliver's Travels*, and *Fontaine's Fables*. Some ardent compiler, with a preconceived leaning to demonology, for instance, might string them together with proper interpolation, and thus found a basis for a new Creed. The acceptance to-day of the Old Testament as literal fact is not less absurd.

Those who define themselves as modern Christians will now say, "What of it? Why all this waste of effort over abandoned defences? We base our present belief on the New Testament, and you are welcome to tear the old if it amuses you. Doubt Christ's divinity if you will, but attack his morality if you dare!"

As to that, we shall see. Before thus denying so glibly, it were well to pause and reflect on the true meaning of the disavowal. The Old Testament is the early evidence of a God. Its proof is based on the existence of the universe, and its records of God-intervention. Distrust the latter, and if left to creation as the single test, we can assume it to be the handiwork of malevolent spleen in a seven-tailed devil, as well as to picture the unknown creator in any other mood or form. The Christian God found birth in the nonsense of the Old Testament. The later Man-God owed his paternity to the same source by his own claim; and yet the only proof of its existence is denied, and smiled at in superior scorn by the very ones who think themselves defenders of the son. Strip away the supernatural robe which made this Jewish imagery appeal, and what remains?—Nothing! not even a semblance of a form! Is this enough to father a child of flesh—enough to prove supreme intelligence in the belief of that child? Those who disown the petulant ogre of the Old Testament have made his son a fatherless waif, and stilled the keynote of his aim.

We may find less to criticise as we proceed, we may find more. Whatever comes shall not escape the spirit of persistent analysis, which knows no reverence not won from the regard that grows with intimacy.

CHAPTER IV.

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THE FINAL TESTS.

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*“ There is nothing more terrible than energetic ignorance.”*—GOETHE.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE FINAL TESTS.

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**A**CCCEPTANCE by ages of comparatively intelligent beings has seemed to rear a massive bulwark to front the charge of those bold enough to attack the New Testament. Yet why allow that their custom of belief is evidence of truth? Have not the masses also believed in witchcraft, sorcery, astrology, and many other foolish superstitions? Are not many of the cultivated still unwilling to sit thirteen at table, sail on a Friday, or walk under a ladder? Do they not have their fortunes told by countless silly methods, and trust whatever new quackery is advertised? Have they not been fooled so often and so continuously as to profit a thousand time-worn ways of swindling? What weight, then, does their affirmation of belief carry? Of what final importance are their assertions of faith? It is hardly advisable to retreat before a brave show of numbers without stopping to note the antiquity of its weapons and the unguarded breaches in its ranks. Considering the vulnerable points of the present problem, three questions present themselves :

*First*—Does the New Testament contain an exact record?

*Second*—Had Christ divinity or divine authority?

*Third*—Is his moral code correct?

The last inquiry is of the greatest relative import, for we need the truth no matter who its sponsor may be. Acceptance of Christ's divinity would not necessarily bar us from opposition to his precepts, for it is easier for the brain to conceive of an imperfect divinity than an imperfect truth. The Bible has admitted the errors of its own deities too often for our senses to be shocked by the preference of principle to dogma.

Taking up the first of these three questions, the investigator must know if the New Testament be entirely unsullied by break, mistake or intentional misrepresentation. It must be absolutely true or partially false, for a third alternative of entire forgery is hardly reasonable. When unknown authors leave unauthenticated records, which are preserved only in equally unauthenticated copies, there can be no test of their reliability but comparison, and no judgment not founded on probability. The wildest fancies of ancient romance are fully as confident in lettered print as plain chronicle of simple fact. The logic of investigation as applied to parallel experience is the safest guide to the establishment of a fact, for what was, is and ever shall be. Dross and scum float into view in the crucible of reason, or evaporate in visible or odourous fumes. We need not fear to lose aught of worth in their elimination.

The older book, which in itself is supposed to strengthen the claims of the new, has already passed inspection. We have studied its humanity with interest, traced its peculiarities with amusement, encountered its frank filth with embarrassment, and noted the failings of its scribes with regret. Little did they think that their queer blend of truth and romance would outlive so

many changing centuries, to still awaken more discussion than any other living book. Yet if they had told simply the simple truth, would we now know them? Is it not the naive audacity of these records of imagined occurrences that has saved them from the early death inevitably awaiting the commonplace? While this does not necessarily mean that a lie is the only imperishable thing, an untruth told in an attractive or forcible manner with apparent sincerity will certainly live, while suggestion continues as an unguarded element of human nature.

In the New Testament we have immediate proof that it denies itself accuracy, for it prints four conflicting versions of the story of Christ, leaving the perplexed reader to individually solve the problems involved. And even before beginning to analyze and dissect, he must decide from which of many varying editions to select. Bibles used by different ages, different churches and different nationalities, vary in many details; and the existence of the authorized revised version shows dissatisfaction to have insisted on change within our own times.

Many refer back to the Greek Gospels, insisting that they must be read in the original for true acquaintance with their meaning. Even here, however, we stumble on the possibility of other earlier records, from which the Greek ones were translated. If errors creep in during the different stages of transition from Greek to English, why not affirm that they could further have done so in an earlier process of the same nature? If they originally were in Hebrew, there were certainly wide opportunities for deviation, for Hebrew often had

no Greek equivalents, and no punctuation. Moreover, as no one took down Christ's sayings, verbatim, there were unequivocal chances for errors and misinterpretation in their conveyance to permanent form.

In order to prevent the wedge of doubt from entering this open crack, the older churches uphold the letter of the text as absolute verity, explaining such a wonder by the dogma of inspiration. They affirm that the Lord directly guided the scribes in order to defeat possible errors of personal remembrance, practically using them as chosen amanuenses. This would explain why Mark and Luke, who were not direct followers of Christ, could still be selected. Some even claim that inspiration extending throughout all time, prevented error in the subsequent translations. Such a theory involves an army of inspired artisans, as otherwise error certainly would be possible in every proof-reading, and in every other discriminating act connected with the book's history. When compiling the original, the Church had to select from many warring manuscripts, some of which are still preserved. Among those known to-day, by name, at least, are the Gospels of Basilides, of Thomas, of Matthias, of Bartholemew, of Appelles and of Nicodemus. Luke opens his screed by saying :

*Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning these matters. . .*

This simply proves that he came into a field already pre-empted by others, whose versions evidently were not to his entire liking, or he would not have thought it necessary to introduce a new one.

The inspiration theory is unsound from the very fact that the record is a four-fold tale, unlike in many of its

corresponding parts, in scope and in details. The Church does not say that one of the interpretations of the gospel is more inspired than another, yet why were four thought necessary? Their reiteration is not uniform in detail, and each has certain data which the other three overlooked. When there is direct variation, the evidence is not necessarily unsound, for honest witnesses will often strangely confuse their recollection. The divine aid should have easily prevented such error, however, or why was it granted? If we deny the supposition of Inspiration, we must also deny the accuracy of the memories that guided the Evangelists. If they were even so unreliable as to differ on the simple wording of the inscription on the Cross, how shall we think to shape our lives by advice which may have been twisted by treacherous communication? Here was a sentence written in a place and in a connection that should have blazed it on every interested mind; and yet as Paine and others have pointed out, of the four records no two are alike:

*This is Jesus. . . . the king of the Jews.—Matthew.*  
 . . . . . *The king of the Jews.—Mark.*  
*This is . . . . the king of the Jews.—Luke.*  
 . . . *Jesus of Nazareth the king of the Jews.—John.*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew quotes a line, *Blessed are the poor in spirit*. Luke details it as, *Blessed are ye poor*—which is quite different. This is quoted as an example of dozens of such discrepancies which might be pointed out. Such variations would be perfectly natural were we to consider the apostles as ordinary human beings; but they cause more or less criticism if viewed as the forgetfulness of divinity,

and arouse the suspicion that Christ may very possibly have expressed himself in words and conveyed meanings entirely different from those ascribed to him.

These inconsistencies of mere verbalism are trivial compared with the actual disagreement on important facts. For instance, of the only two Evangelists who endeavour to trace the genealogy of Jesus, the one given by Matthew differs materially from that of Luke. They run side by side from Abraham to Hezron, and nearly so to David, where they split, Matthew taking the line through Solomon, and Luke that through Nathan. They meet again at Joseph, but they cannot even agree on the name of Jesus' grandfather, one calling him Jacob and the other Heli.

The dogma of inspiration is therefore reduced to the supposition that the loss of the original manuscripts was intentional, the confusion pre-arranged and the contradictions approved, the Lord willing that we should have the Bible just as it is—to sharpen our intellects, no doubt! If not thus designing, the inspiration was either careless or incompetent. If a part of the gospels alone be inspired, it avails nothing, for that which should be accepted is not decipherable from that which should be rejected. How much more comprehensible it would have been if Christ had simply written what was necessary for us to know, with his own hand! Is it possible that he did not know how?

Modern Christians are naturally too sensible to attempt to sustain the inspiration theory in its detailed application. The committee on Revision of the New Testament was perfectly willing to admit that—

*Blemishes and imperfections there are in the noble Translation which we have been called upon to revise, blemishes and imperfections will assuredly be found in our Revision.*

The discrepancies noted are easily explained when we discover, upon investigation of these records, that they were not written by eye-witnesses. Comparison of portions of Matthew, Mark and Luke shows the use of identical language in relating similar things. This proves plainly that the three Evangelists copied from the same written manuscript in preparation of some, at least, of their accounts. Now if they had been present at the time, they would hardly have had to trust to such a source. Mark and Luke were not apostles at all, and no one knows whom they trusted for their information. If Matthew is supposed to be the disciple of that name, it is found that he wrote the elaborate detail of the Sermon on the Mount from hearsay, as he had not even joined the followers of Christ at the time; for Christ by his own version came *down from the mountain . . . entered into Capernaum . . . came to the other side into the country of the Gaderines . . . came into his own city . . . passing by from thence he saw a man called Matthew . . . and he arose, and followed him.* The gospel of John is discredited by being foreign in its idioms, and it bears no trace of authenticity.

It is more than probable that all the original gospels were written in Greek, and it is assumed by good authority that a gospel *According to the Egyptians* was earlier than any one of the four contained in our Bible, and very probably the one from which the first three quoted. It is hardly possible that any of the twelve

apostles were educated to write in Greek, or that they should have recorded their thoughts and experiences in another tongue than their own. It is fairly probable that some educated Pagan in Egypt arranged the first record in Greek from traditional sources, and that its text was later used as a basis for further elaboration.

Comparison of the four Gospels shows that Mark is undoubtedly the earliest and most authentic; for the Greek is vulgar, the style uncouth and no attempt toward fraudulent elaboration is discernable. The author has simply recorded what was learned by perusal of the original manuscript from which Matthew and Luke also copied; for these two latter contain nothing in common which does not also appear in Mark, together with material drawn from minor sources. Some of those who have already denied the truth of the Old Testament, and wish to trim their tree of faith still closer, stick to Mark, denying the other three. Should Christianity be defined by this strict test, it will be stripped of all its most popular attributes. By discrediting the end of the last chapter, which is only inserted in the Revised Version with a protest, we shall have no Immaculate Conception, no Sermon on the Mount and no Resurrection: The miracles are practically limited by Mark to faith-cures, and it is explained that Christ could do *no mighty work* in his own country, thus limiting the power of the accredited divinity by the credulity of the audience. There is less of the mystical in Mark than in the others, and more evidence of honest intention to merely compile without injecting a personal view.

Matthew seems to succeed Mark as to time of compilation, and he evidently had access to records or traditions

unknown to Mark. It is also evident that he possessed literary aspirations, for the Sermon on the Mount is too perfect in detail to have been simply copied from the source that furnished Luke his curtailed version. Luke also not only gives evidence of attempts at literary accomplishment, but he affects quite an artistic style, and uses a more classic Greek. He also endeavoured to supply little additions and explanations wherever needed to sustain the Church in certain of its early contentions. It is in the fourth gospel that we find the greatest liberties taken in this direction. That John the disciple had no part in its preparation seems amply proved, and the author apparently prepared it for the credence and instruction of the world at large. Christ is carefully depicted as consistently divine, with no limiting phrases to modify his claim of infinite power and knowledge.\*

The four compilers betray no evidence of having had access to each other's records, and if they had anticipated a comparison they certainly would have tried to effect an agreement on certain details. If we carefully exclude all that seems to be contradictory and to court suspicion concerning the gospels' authenticity, the remaining assertions of divinity will be found so feebly attested that it is doubtful if converts could have been kept within bounds in later ages by such a weakened tie. It is most unfortunate for the cause of truth that the earlier records are lost to us. Is it possible that the Church could have designedly destroyed them, finding

\*The above contentions are not supported herein by evidence, as that is easily obtainable elsewhere and has been collected by those better fitted by scholarship to deal with such a matter. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, a standard, unprejudiced work, is sufficiently exhaustive on these points to satisfy the average investigator of the truth of these affirmations.

too little in support of miracle and supernaturalism, and too much of crude humanity? Why did not the Lord inspire some one to preserve them? Did he, also, favor their elaboration?

The Epistles are better authenticated, yet they throw little light on Christ himself. Paul, who is most voluble, could verify nothing, for he never saw Christ save when asleep, and he gave no more evidence of selection by divine authority than any other fervent missionary.

The most suspicious passages of the Gospels are those in which the authors triumphantly point out the fulfillment of some prophecy in support of their Messiah. Strange that the other living Jews, who made a serious study of such phenomena, did not notice them!

The marked individuality of certain of the accounts proves that the writers had a very definite idea of what they thought Christ should have said. Mark is willing to believe in the traditional accounts, but Luke and John erase, inject, and twist with a very well defined intent. We know what to think of history written with a purpose!

Upon appreciating the fact that the gospels are but rewritten traditions, we can only have a faint conception as to their probable source. Eliminating all repetition and evident additions, there remains a very brief account of a wandering healer, who first impressed John the Baptist, a man of similar type, and then by assuming the empty sandals of Divinity, awed the rabble, preached

the extreme of altruism, annoyed the authorities, and perished with the full approval of the populace. There is plenty of reasonable ground for the supposition that the Christ of the Bible never existed, being rather a composite memory woven into a whole from many strands. The moment scribes attempted to collect the evidence to force a belief in the truth of his claims, the ever present incentive to enlarge and exaggerate may easily have tempted some of those known to be frankly favourable to the use of deceit in what they deemed a good cause. The chances for amendatory changes in handwritten manuscripts may be appreciated by those who have seen the havoc made with an author's sense by printers. Were these Biblical claims allowed to undergo the scrutiny and cross-examination with which the same class of testimony would be treated in a court of law, it is more than possible that the entire records might be thrown out as unverified.

Even if the earliest accounts were written by those actually in touch with the events, must we accept their version as literal truth, in view of their naturally ecstatic state of mind at the time? History repeats with tiresome reiteration countless tales that were handed down by men who may have intended to be accurate and honest, but who nevertheless lied blindly to sustain the impossible. Even Christians are cynical, when treating these less favoured scribes, denying them their own exclusive privilege. Truthful men are often subject to hallucinations, or are actually hypnotized by extraordinary environments. Simple-minded street crowds could easily be enthralled by one claiming to be that Messiah which their hopes had always gifted with supernatural powers. Add to this the unbalancing effect of his tragic end, and

we may very properly feel charitable in judging his followers' strained and visionary accounts.

Question into the intent of misrepresentation brings us to a consideration of the character of human nature, which is ever the same. The means that are justified by the end in view, are often criminal in themselves. Those who wrote and spread the gospels were animated by an intense desire to make converts. No teaching not characterized by some trait of the supernatural was at that time capable of appealing to the masses. Men fed with lies for ages demanded their accustomed diet. What wonder that these zealous workers flattered the popular error!

Those who follow the history of the Church will find this stain of deceit ever prominent in proportion to the ignorance of the times or congregations. Every saint worked miracles, yet it is amusing to note that it sometimes required centuries after their supposed transpiration for the Church to discover them. Joan of Arc was canonized only recently, although history records no more unusual and saintly character.

If we believe the Bible to be true, we must believe in all that it records of miracle and wonder. We must believe that in one year of long ago, science was baffled, nature cowed and a God for once actively interested in a way unknown to recent history, at least. We must also logically believe that this same God interfered personally with human events from the beginning of the world to the death of Christ, to then abandon us to fate, restraining the itch of desire while planning untempered vengeance for such as may grow careless in their loneliness.

We must, of course, admit that the errors of unfit evidence do not necessarily smirch the truth of things that be. Even a divinity might have had no power to guide events after passing from scenes of worldly activity. While inspiration would most naturally supplement divinity, the fact that the former is disproved by no means releases us from the toil of further analysis of the latter. In spite of the known errors of the text, we must still return to it for proof, as we have nothing else. Everything that proceeds from human brains is significant of something, so errors may still expose the truth when motives are well cleared. To judge of thoughts expressed by speech or letters, first find the motive-root, and then know the soil in which it is nourished.

CHAPTER V.

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WAS CHRIST DIVINE?

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*“That is the question.”*—SHAKSPEARE.

## CHAPTER V.

### WAS CHRIST DIVINE ?

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**W**HEN a human being assumes divinity, the skeptic is confronted by a problem not easy of solution. The Scriptures show divinity in all, as the result of their God's handiwork. Should we credit initiative to one intelligence, the term *Son of God* is more easily defined as a special, rather than a general creation. If Christ were actually conceived by a virgin, the abnormal variation in manner certainly savours of supreme volition ; and while his physical frame bore no testimony to an unusual process of creation, his mental attainments were certainly singular.

Those who dare advise Omnipotence might suggest that it would have been more convincing if Christ had been born of a flower or a cloud. The fact of a human accomplice contradicts the evidence, and renders its unqualified acceptance impossible. While the Evangelists may have been chivalrous enough to shade a woman's shame, the reason of to-day must test this relic of artless innocence with the accuracy of impartiality.

Was Christ divine ?

The Bible seems to say so, he himself admitted it, and the incarnation of divinity had been foretold. What

stronger evidence could be desired? A book, an assertion, a guess, a claim of divine impersonation—and the world rests content for centuries without further proof or sign! Are these sufficient in answer to our candid, earnest inquiry? A God whose rules are disobeyed promises to send a Messiah that shall have power beyond his own supplications. This fact is told us by professional trance-artists, whose local fame seems to have rested entirely on the visions in which they dreamed of things that could not be attested by those then living. What a reputation would be possible to the romancers of our own day, if we were to believe all they might predict for the future beyond us!

After patiently waiting for centuries, with many false alarms, a singularly talented man of humble birth and occupation lays claim to the title of Messiah. About him crowds an unstable rabble of illiterate individuals, and a few are actually converted to his assumption—though not without misgivings. Those representing law and order arrest him as a disturber of the peace, and the mob disown and voluntarily offer him for sacrifice. His death meets with no remonstrance, his followers scattering like rabbits to their holes. And there, between two public malefactors, the poor derided and abused man gives up his life in lonely grandeur, while the accredited father is supposed to watch from on high, without nerving an impulse to save the child of his own purpose!

Pause and reflect that such a tale presumes this world to be the especial favourite of the ruler of the spheres, as he thus donated his only son to the cruelty of those grovelling insects who people the insignificant speck that floats in space among the millions of worthier magnitude.

This fatuous vanity, this incomprehensible conceit, thus magnifies itself with a swelling importance that easily explains derelictions. It is slight wonder that such as believe in it rarely bore themselves with perusal of printed text. Why show concern for that which could not convince when personally rendered ? Why have too much respect for one who was powerless to stay the hands of the mighty race that governs its own destiny ? It would have its android God a thing of service alone ; like the family idol of the practical Heathen, which is beaten on the head when storms prevail.

Taking the exact record, we find on the first page of the New Testament the *Generation of Jesus Christ*, through Abraham to Joseph, although Joseph is shown to have had no part in Christ's parentage. This fact is made explicit and clear :

*Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise : When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But when he thought on these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife : for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.—Matthew I-18-21. (Revised Version.)*

Joseph was forced to be content with this explanation, but his awe was not sufficient to prevent having at least six children of his own by the same mother later, and not sufficient to prevent his making this heaven-born

son perform manual labour. There is a certain spice of human nature in this petty disloyalty, as even the belief in a fitful dream does not carry the respect of divinity that can conquer human promptings.

In view of the record, why is not Jesus known as the son of the Holy Ghost, rather than as the son of God? If God and the Holy Ghost are one, why have two symbols? The Trinity has ever been perplexing.

It is only fair to inquire whether Christians ever after have allowed the unfortunate to lay their shame at the same door-step—and yet it were a charitable thing to do. No! human sense rarely allows itself but one insult of a kind. Few now believe in ghosts, Holy or otherwise. If Joseph's doubt be an interpolation, he was possibly the actual father. If not, some family friend or other favoured lover was responsible. Celsus, and others likely to know the credited gossip of the times, inform us that Jesus was the son of a Roman soldier, Panthera (also given as Pandera or Pandora). Haeckel points out that the name, especially in the last rendering, signifies Greek origin, and the novelty of Christ's teaching clearly traces the union of Greek ideals with Hebrew traditions. The paucity of earthly experience in Christ's life shows that his thought must have been largely the result of inheritance; and it is hardly possible that the union of two Jews like Joseph and Mary would bring forth a mind with ideas so antagonistic to their training.

Referring again to the text, it is noticed that this miracle of conception bases its truth on a dream. We are asked to credit this unfortified proof, in spite of the

fact of its being probably a ruse by which a cuckold husband might naturally try to explain away his disgrace, and in spite of the fact that dreams are proverbially untrue delineators. Bar them as evidence, however, and Biblical testimony shrinks within much narrower confines. A new star is produced in further attestation, but it could hardly be considered convincing or pertinent, unless bearing its message lettered on its luminosity. As to the prophecies it has already been pointed out that those apparently relating to this virginal indiscretion were intended for another application, and guesses are naturally favoured at times by the laws of chance and circumstance. The supposed miracle would have been much better supported if, like Mohammed, as is faithfully recorded, Christ had at once proclaimed in his full placental strength :—

*There is no God but God, and I am his Prophet!*

That the whole fiction is written with a purpose is plainly evident in the twenty-second and twenty-third verses :

*Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, Behold the virgin shall be with child. . .*

When explanations are too eagerly proffered, we are prone to think that they *protest too much*. It was the fashion for Messiahs to perplex unsuspecting virgins, as we read of the same immoral events in the legends of Horus and Buddha, and John the Baptist was born in a way only a few degrees less unusual, of a woman formerly

barren who was *well stricken in years*. It was necessary for Christ to at least equal them in deviation from the ordinary course of events.

Neither was the story of the Wise Men and the Star unprecedented. It was a stale tale long before those times. As to such events as the supposed slaughter of the children of Herod, we do not find them substantiated by contemporaneous history; and the Jewish scribes of those times were very honest as a class. The fact that the Gospels do not uniformly agree on this miracle of birth and the romances connected with Christ's infancy, shows that the writers did not all know of these legends, or perhaps that all did not have the necessary temerity to try to impose such impossibilities upon the credulities.

The meeting with John the Baptist was more convincing as recorded. The voice from heaven, if credited, settles the question. Could such a staggering proof have missed fire as it did? Any listening multitude would have spread the news to the corners of the earth. If only John or Jesus heard the voice, how do we know of it? They wrote nothing, and the Evangelists were not present. Later on John *sent by his disciples, and said unto him, Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?*" Such a statement is hardly compatible with that heavenly shout that had already settled the question.

The temptation in the wilderness proves the continued existence of a devil, in the face of divine incarnation, and a most audacious one at that; for he actually had hopes of corrupting a God! It shows what he thought

of Gods in general, and who denies him cleverness? We note that Jesus was fasting. This assumes that ordinarily he did not fast. In fact his evident interest in his meals provoked continual comment. Divinities, therefore, thrive on decomposition of food, even as ourselves, and are subject to digestive irritation when deprived of sustenance.

But we must not ignore this interesting devil. We have noted his kind before, yet with all the recognition of devils in the Scriptures, they are just at present unfashionable, and even denied. Christ found them on all sides, and at one time *suffered not the devils to speak* for fear they would enlighten the community as to his personality. This aids in giving them a definite status. Of course there are those who try to prove that these inconvenient creatures, among many other notables of history, are myths, yet the same evidence that supports the existence of devils identifies Christ and God as well. Explain them away then at your peril! All or none! Can we believe in a God and not believe in the belief of that deity? How pleasant to emasculate one's religion of all that enlightenment brands with ridicule! How delightful to be arbiter of one's own will in selecting to the taste!

The Christian body is a unitary thing. It dies if dismembered, no matter whether the head is lopped off, or the limbs torn asunder. It will serve for a time, however, while mutilated and cold, if properly disguised. Garb it then in robes of state, bolster it on a gilded throne above the range of common eyesight, paint a benevolent smile on its livid mask, and then fearfully watch the shrinking form wrinkling the receding cover-

ing, warning of the exposure that can only be postponed and not continually suppressed !

The miracles of Christ begin early, and continue through his brief career in varied form. One group includes the curing of the sick and the raising of the dead, while another twists the laws of concrete matter. The phenomenon of faith-cure is so common throughout history, that its presence here is nothing extraordinary. The influence of mind over matter has often proved powerful enough to enable intense mental emotion or belief to dull pain temporarily, or even hide the symptoms of disease for a time. That the presence and will of one claiming to be the Messiah could produce these effects, is no proof of divinity ; for there are few communities, even in this skeptical age, where laying on of hands, etc., is not resorted to with more or less success. The mere touch of a relic has often produced equal miracles, bones having been used in this way for ages, (according to White) even after it was discovered that the saint to whom they belonged had chosen to inhabit the body of a goat. Well-attested records tell of wondrous cures in mediæval time, by a talisman lettered *Abracadabra*—a collection of syllables with no claim whatever to religious significance. These matters belong to the realm of psychology, and have nothing to do with religion. The raising from the dead could easily have been an exaggeration ; although it is of course possible that trance states might have deceived then, even as they do now at times.

Dealing with the more difficult evidence, it is plain that the changing of water into wine requires belief that certain physical laws, never known by careful scientists

to be disregarded, were temporarily transcended. Wine, a product containing forms of carbon in profusion, was supposed to be produced from water, or oxygen and hydrogen. Is it not simpler to think that jars partly filled with wine, yet supposed to be empty, had water poured in them without intent to deceive, and a miracle made of the matter by those hardly able to use clear judgment by reason of their indulgence in undiluted libations?

The feeding of a multitude with a few loaves and fishes signifies a mathematical delirium. The first report of this occurrence was probably that the listeners were too absorbed to need food, or it might have been told that they were filled with spiritual food. Misrepresentation of this nature is so easy, and was formerly so universal that it is certainly wiser to accept a conservative interpretation than to believe that five makes five thousand-plus. Those who wrote of this matter were themselves so doubtful of public belief that they insisted that the feat was duplicated by Christ soon afterward, no doubt for the benefit of those not in attendance at the first performance. Few miracle-workers are so obliging. Matthew gives the detail of the two feats as follows:—

*First:—Five loaves (to say nothing of the fishes).*

*Second:—Seven loaves (to say nothing of the fishes).*

*First:—Five thousand men (with women and children).*

*Second:—Four thousand men (with women and children).*

*First:—Twelve baskets left over.*

*Second:—Seven baskets left over.*

The second crowd evidently tried to test the resources of necromancy further than did the first one, for seventy-five per cent. more bread per individual was eaten, and there were twenty per cent. less leavings. It is certainly fortunate that each of the new-born loaves did not go on breeding at the same rate, and the system thus continue indefinitely ; for by this time the increase would have built a layer of risen dough around the earth several billions of miles in thickness, pushing the sun out of the centre of the solar system, and seriously inconveniencing those of us who might be trying to crawl around under the impenetrable blanket.

It is a significant fact that while all the apostles mention cases of healing, the material miracles are not sustained by continuous agreement of testimony. This would apparently indicate that events which were miraculous to some, seemed common to others. If there were an evident understanding among the four Evangelists as to a partition of the record, the explanation would be easy ; but there is no such evidence, as repetition is common enough in other matters. That each, in recognizing the need for marvels, strained his fleeting memory to add a new significance to trivial actions, or even boldly invented the desired fiction, seems more plausible.

The miracles that were not witnessed by the apostles personally should be passed over as lacking in proof. The account of the walking on the water was probably a misrepresentation derived from Christ saying that it might be done with sufficient faith. Peter, no doubt, forthwith essayed the trial, failing as recorded. In the

excitement of hauling him into the boat, it were easy to imagine divine assistance.

Christ persistently refused to give the Pharisees a *Sign*, proving that he either could not delude the skeptical or disdained to employ such methods. It is more than likely that the refusal to prove by feats was consistently maintained throughout, thereby annulling the testimony of those who recorded them. How else can we explain his statement *there shall no sign be given unto this generation?*

Were this the only case where supernatural evidence has been questioned, the arguments employed to explain it away would seem weak indeed. History, however, gives us a continuous record of miracle, even to the present day, and in every case the evidence is doubted, and in many absolute falsity is proved. E. Cobham Brewer, a well known compiler, fills a dictionary with over five-hundred pages from preserved records of churchly wonders; and he can have had access to but a small portion of the writings of centuries of monks and other scribes. At the present time no broadly educated men accept a single instance of miraculous manifestation, vouched for since the death of Christ, in spite of the weight of continued human assertion, and the recognition of the most powerful Christian Church. So elusive and timid are these abnormal occurrences that they shun crowds, ever avoiding publicity. It is always safe to doubt that which fears the light. There are plenty of possible miracles, any one of which would have sufficed for eternity. Strange that they were never employed! A mountain might have been turned over to rest forever on its apex. A river might have been

made to run uphill. A procession of inanimate objects might have followed the Christ in his wanderings. This could hardly have been impossible for one who had supposed control of all force, yet he limited his feats to an audience of enthralled personal followers alone. Miracles can be seen to-day in a darkened room for a price, yet skeptics decry them. Why trust a single moment of outrage, when mocking all other claims that violate nature?

It is noticed that Jesus often spoke in parables. What would be more likely than that some of his fables, merely used for illustration, were afterward remembered as actual happenings? The gospels were written years after the eventful time, and by men born since, notwithstanding the claimed authorship. At a time when miracles were expected of even the minor prophets, when each dream or freak of nature had supposed significance, it is not wonderful that inoculated minds bred visionary memories. These brains deduced specific intent from the simplest acts of nature. A storm, to them, was potent with divine wrath. If swine ran at the approach of Christ they were evidently possessed by devils. If a dead tree bent over his path he must have withered it. The rolling thunder was a message from God, to be translated at will by the elect. They lived in a world of imaginary confines, surrounded by incomprehensible space. Sickness was Satan's malice, and the mental derangement associated with empty bellies, was the medium for spiritual communications. Insanity, oddity or genius were all inexplicable, save by the vocabulary of supernaturalism. The wonder is that miracles were so few! Many saints of recent centuries have a much more prolific record; in fact, the Church of Rome at one time had to positively forbid their

practice, as miracles were getting too cheap and common.

Christ very possibly used hypnotic methods in curing the sick, having unconsciously discovered the power of suggestion. In such times this might have honestly deluded him with the belief of Omniscience. While this theory seems more than plausible, acceptance forces the logical sequence that he had no real supernatural power at all, did not understand his own limitations, and erroneously forced conclusions upon history that have dimmed the truth through centuries.

The life of Christ in itself accords little with the idea of divinity. For the first thirty years nothing is recorded of his personal characteristics, except the reference in one gospel alone to his talking with the elders in the Temple. So far as the evidence indicates, he lived a simple, uneventful life as a village carpenter. We therefore have the problem of a divinity that needed age for development. His thought came after years of reflection, in the ordinary human manner. He was not distinguished from other men by personal appearance and habits. He was born of woman, grew, ate, drank, slept, worked, thought, suffered and died like the majority of human creatures. In the text of his own disciples he was referred to by detractors as a *gluttonous man and a wine-bibber*. This characterization is not disputed, though it may signify nothing save astonishment that Gods should eat and drink. He countenanced the plucking of another's corn on the Sabbath, and had no compunctions in adding to the amount of wine consumed at a wedding-feast.

His miraculous powers, if granted, were of slight avail save to mystify. With the apparent faculty of healing the sick he cured only a few, in the same way that many an unpretending mortal has done, instead of relieving the whole world of disease, as a God might do. If his miracles performed with matter are authentic, they were still childish in scope, being used for no worthy purpose. A power akin to that credited with the creation of the universe was fritted away in trivial applications, if correctly reported. It availed him nothing when put to the actual test of necessity. It did not save him from the cross, and even earlier, when they took up stones to cast at him, *Jesus hid himself*. (John-VIII-59.) What evidence shall it be when he himself gave warning of false Christs who could likewise *shew great signs and wonders so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect*. Furthermore Jesus charged the disciples *that they should tell no man that he was the Christ*. Then why have they told it? Perhaps they never did, and if not, the stability of the history of his miraculous accomplishments is lost in the branding of the gospels as forgeries.

Is the time yet ripe for a revolt from the tyranny of dogma? Are science and education powerless to combat the credulity of an untaught Jewish rabble? Are we not ready to boldly deny the miracles from the mere fact of their impossibility? Every credulous age has its wonders. They exist in direct ratio to unlettered stupidity and over-mastering mentality. They never happen for the masses except when in explainable forms. No clear senses ever yet witnessed a reversal of physical law. We make continual discovery of new phenomena, yet the realm of logic is broadened rather than mystified in the process.

Christ's dying for his faith loses significance when he is conceded divinity, as the death was purely voluntary in that light. We can hardly sympathize with such a one for the mere physical pain involved, as martyrdom is nothing unusual, heretics being among its frequent victims. Millions have courted death of equal heroism and physical torment on the battlefield and elsewhere, risking without hesitation all their earthly hopes and passing through the last throes of suffering more or less bravely. Even Christ weakened a little at the end, asking *if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*. The circumstances surrounding him made death desirable. In fact, as recorded, it was a plain suicide. He was to all intents and purposes a failure, so far as could be seen. There was nothing left to tie him to earth. He had dismissed his relations with contempt, he had no wife nor child to mourn. He gladly gave up a sphere of misery to reach a realm of perfect happiness. Shall we sacrifice our reason to reward such an act? No! Death here was a relief. No doubt his constant faith hoped for some divine interposition at the last moment, some crowning blasting sign of anger at the murder, or some sweet dignity of recognition. He waited till the last, and then hope despairing, gave voice to that heart-broken cry:—

*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*

The resurrection is undoubtedly the crowning miracle of all. On this rests the truth of the earlier prophets, and the main importance of the modern Christian Creeds. While the disciples differ in their accounts of it, they are uniform enough in pointing to an unusual happening.

If Christ really appeared after the Crucifixion, is there not possibly a credible explanation ?

In the first place, there is no proof that the Crucifixion was fatal. Christ might easily have fainted under the pain. It is shown that all the bodies were removed earlier than usual, it being necessary to break the legs of the two thieves to insure their death, (see John). Christ was not so treated, but was thrust in the side with a spear instead. We know of countless cases where wounded men have survived greater injuries than are here mentioned, so that he was very possibly taken away with life still inherent, reviving sufficiently to speak later as is recorded, deceived by his uncommon experience. The fact that he ate *broiled fish* after his reappearance would certainly give suspicion a chance to make a pertinent protest, and to eye askance this worldly fondness for food that even death could not quell.

Certain facts about this Resurrection as presented awaken grave doubts in the mind. We read that when Christ's spirit left the body :

*. . . the vail of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom ; and the earth did quake ; and the rocks were rent ; and the tombs were opened ; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised ; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.*  
Matt. XXVII-51-54.

If all of this happened, it was certainly important enough to have made some impression on the Jewish wit-

nesses, and to at least merit some reference in their regular chronicles. Even in this skeptical age we would be staggered by such a culmination of uncanny events, and leave them to posterity in unfading records ; yet these stolid Hebrews never noticed them. While a storm or slight earthquake might have conveniently happened, the raised saints defy any natural explanation. Strange that they should have been recognized in their wasted forms ! How could this be if they had not lived within the memory of those yet alive ? And if they had so lived, must not the supply of saints have been unusually large in that generation ?

The Ascension presents no difficulty whatever, supposing Jesus to have outlived the Crucifixion. It simply is recorded that he was carried to heaven, which may be simple metaphor to describe the escape of the soul. If his body ascended, or went up in the air, as commonly understood, does that signify that heaven was directly perpendicular to Palestine at that exact hour of the day recorded in that precise year ? Did the removal of that weight of matter upset the balance of gravitation in the universe ? These historians had a fault common to all who tell of the impossible—they lacked the sense of detail.

The few facts mentioned in the Acts regarding Jesus are not sufficiently attested to warrant attention. If written by one Evangelist they escaped the other three. And such accounts, as they record mere missionary work, might be continued for all time without adding to our light, for the words of Jesus alone were supposed to bear the stamp of divinity.

The very novelty of Christian precepts betrays contempt for Moses and other preceding interpreters. If Christ and God were one and the same, how may we explain their clash of authority? Shall we admit that the Lord had changed, being grown repentant in old age, or deny the original sources of interpretation? If we accept God and Christ as one, we have a vacillating divinity, teaching one rule one day and another the next. In one century he burns, blasts and drowns, and in the next grants amnesty by the wholesale. He counsels retribution to one age, and forgiveness to another. He is a pitying father one minute and a revengeful despot the next. He counsels us not to resist others' evil, and then relates how he will resist our evil.

The strongest point of identity in father and son is their inconsistency. While Christ stated, *Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets*, he does destroy by substituting for the "eye for an eye" doctrine a direct antithesis. At another time he promises to lade this suffering world with more trouble; he says :

*Think not that I came to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.*—Matthew X-34-36.

If Christ were but the son, how may we explain his assumption of superiority in the matter of authority? No! he was simply a man. Only men attempt to correct divinity.

For a being who was supposed to know it all, Jesus showed a strange ignorance of things divine. He told nothing of heaven or hell save in the old metaphorical way. He gave no definite idea of God. He was silent on these points because of ignorance. No other theory is pertinent. The parable of Lazarus is interesting in this connection.

*And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things: but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.*  
—LUKE XVI-23-31.

This quotation gives the most definite information of heaven and hell to be found in the New Testament. To rest in Abraham's bosom seems to have been considered

a much envied favour, though the privilege does not seem abnormally attractive. Hell is described as torrid as former accounts evidenced, showing that Jesus was not so *advanced* as some of our modern divines. It looks as if those condemned to burn or boil could hope for no respite. The moral is evident. If the truth be proclaimed once, it must be grasped for fear it may not come again. The wail over lost opportunities is unceasing. There is no sympathy from above for those who let them pass.

When Christ assumes to interpret divinity, it is pertinent to inquire how divine communications were translated to him. How did he know the mind of his parent? Was it by guess, or rather by assuming that being a divinity himself his thought must parallel that of his master? Did he realize his divine calling when making shavings at the bench, and if so why did he not begin his preaching at an earlier age than thirty years? It would also be interesting to know upon what primarily Christ based his claim to the rank of Messiah. Are we to allow that it was intuition, and that intuition was in this one case unassailable? Asylums are filled with those who believe themselves to be something which they are not. Why should we accept his delineation of a being whom he had never seen, and of a sphere into which he had never entered? Whole communities have believed themselves informed of the date of the Judgment Day, and yet have waited in vain for the Fiery Chariot. Others have relied on their Lord in battle, only to stain the soil in weltering heaps. Faith is not truth, nor the definer of truth, but simply the sign of unreasoning desire.

To properly appreciate Christ's motives, we must consider him as acting out the part which he honestly con-

sidered entrusted to him. He therefore eliminated his native personality absolutely, and did only that which he thought should be expected of one in such position. His constant reference to the prophets signifies that he had studied the forecastings of his pattern, and while his conception of the part did not accord with the popular view, he stuck to it conscientiously.

Why not consider Christ as we should a similar personality at the present day? Viewed as the uneducated son of a poor carpenter, he becomes a marvel. His crowning prominence is exemplified by his utter unselfishness. He tried to do only good. He was sincere and earnest. He knew human nature and its failings. No wonder that he stamped his mark on history.

We who call him human pay him the highest possible tribute. We know what mental, moral and physical torture he experienced. We can admire him, respect him, pity him. To admit his logic, however, is quite another matter.

It is doubtful whether any other historical character has ever so suffered at the hands of his friends. Interwoven with the trash and deceitful interpolation, we find glimpses of a wonderful personality absorbed in an unselfish task. In spite of the evident misrepresentation, we are struck with the grandeur of character that could sacrifice all to an impracticable ideal, and a mind that could so clothe error as to insure its acceptance for generations. The Church has not only clouded his life with falsity, but has robbed him of all credit in asserting his divinity and immortalizing the mere experience of phys-

ical pain, rather than the mental agony of non-success. The masses know Christ as the one who was crucified, rather than as a self-uplifted commoner, who planned a new order of life.

It must be clearly realized that none have the right to evolve a Christ to suit themselves by pruning and clipping the being presented by the text. If we assume error where the tale interferes with our preferred ideal, we should also admit the possibility of untruth in the passages that suit us.

If we acknowledge Christ's divinity, how can we explain his failure? Why could not the Lord have gendered a son capable of carrying more influence than he seems to have wielded? His evident destiny—providing an intent is allowed—was to save the Jews. The fact that he has since converted other races is of no special significance, when considering the failure of the original purpose. These Jews still scoff at him as spurious, and we must acknowledge that they are better able to judge than those not of their race, both by heredity and training. Is it for us, whose ancestors were then living in the woods with the bears and the wolves, to tell them how to interpret their own traditions? This race lived at the time and on the spot. They heard him and they condemned him. One of the professed followers betrayed him, another denied him, and when the test of devotion came *all the disciples left him and fled*. He had to enforce his authority on their incredulous minds, and a doubter was present at the last meeting. It seems proven by the artless text that while his band revered his goodness, it humoured his harmless insanity when dwelling on the inference of

divinity. Even the power of suggestion that conquered disease was powerless to turn the simple minds that could not yield where reason was unconvinced.

The apparent inspiration of the truly wonderful sermons of Christ is simply an evidence of genius. Every century has a few bright lights, whose individuality incites wonder and admiration. Inspiration is as convenient a term as any by which to explain their superiority, and yet, were a God its source, we should expect a strict uniformity on religious grounds at least. But unfortunately, many of the greatest in genius have been fatally lacking in morals, often using their power to offend the sensitive with salaciousness. Christ himself was morally perfect, lacking the grosser tendencies of common men; in fact, it would seem as if he had no sex, a theory somewhat borne out by certain significant passages. The love which causes the male to seek the female and join in wedlock had no part in his doctrine. In the present marriage ceremonies his sanction is adduced from the fact of his presence upon one such occasion, but it would be as reasonable to infer that he solemnized harlotry from his frequent offices to repentant female sinners. Still, granting that Christ's asceticism in conduct and theory was the result of consistency with his purposes, the mere absence of defect in one set of facts by no means proves divine inspiration in others.

So far as we may know, Christ had no education, no wide experience, nothing uplifting in his surroundings, no distinction in any material calling, and no success in his immediate aim. To allow that he is capable of guiding all human effort, is to admit that the entranced soul of a village workman is surer than the truth of ages of

experiment. It is equivalent to saying that the great culminations of impulse and reason which move the human race to act in bold defiance of his doctrines are evil and untrue ; that all great human emotions, the love of the sexes, the ardour of patriotism, the honest hate of the despicable and the vile, are grievous errors. It is equivalent to saying that a great mass of our neighbours and friends who call him God and yet outrage his precepts, are insolent outlaws or careless fools. Is it not more charitable, more convincing, to think them mistaken and self-deceived ?

Even a slight investigation into the impossibilities which constitute the foundation faith of the Christian, leads one to seriously wonder that any educated mind could accept the infallibility of the Scriptures, and believe in their assertions. To ask one conversant with the laws of nature and science to credit the Immaculate Conception, the Resurrection, visible angels, swine-housed devils, voices from heaven, negative gravity, transmutation of dissimilar atoms, resuscitated life, and other reason-defying, sense-annihilating phenomena, seems a travesty of perception and an insult to intellect.

Many of those who dare defend their position, will not condescend to argue. They retire behind the veil of assumed sanctity that deems interrogation impertinent. One is more often met, however, by the apologist, who admits the doubtful features of the question, but falls back on the intangible faith that weakly asserts that some such events must have happened because unknown and unvouched for scribes left records of them and educated people still believe in them.

But what if this were true—every word and every comma of it? What if this Christ were the Son of God, and what if he could do miracles? Was the depicted father so noble that we should accept the son unquestioned? Was the son so wonderful that we must therefore let reason evaporate? What if he did say that which is recorded? Is the advice necessarily inviolate? Give the affirmer every point of vantage, and then reply in the courage of confidence that we also are children of primal forces, undying fragments of will, with hundreds of years advantage in evolution, and with individual brains to do our own thinking and our own deciding. Christ thought to change the world, but the world decided not to be changed. Which was wrong? Not the world, certainly; for that would evidence the dethronement of evolution and the falsity of progression. We are bad enough, perhaps, in the present age, yet better than in the past, and certainly more experienced.

Why waste words further? Why attempt the profitless task of proving what every able-minded, clear-thinking individual knows? Proofs of divinity need no denial, for they never existed. Shall we throw away funds of time and reason to prove to children that Bluebeard's chin was most probably of a more normal colouring, and that Munchausen was slightly given to exaggeration? Did it not afford an interesting example of suggestive influence on human understanding, it would be well that this peculiar record and autobiography be relegated to dusty shelves, as in fact it is in many cases, with other old historic curiosities. The young and the feeble-minded should certainly be warned against its wiles.

It will not go, however, without a struggle. Each tentacle must be separately severed, and release assured from even the faintest clutch of dead and dying members.

Nature, even in the limited and superficial view and understanding of her laws possessed by us, gives the lie to all that makes this book distinctive. The Universe continues in unbroken uniformity, regardless of man's puny pretensions. Let him pose as the Creator's pet so long as happenings may humour his purpose ; the turning wheel soon crushes the vain rim-clinger in the mud of disappointment.

No natural law ever deviated an iota from its original path, no grain of matter has yet changed its form without obeying the forces that governed it at its birth. Men who start in indistinguishable insignificance, and rise but to the simple height of governing their fellows, think to mould the world to suit their changing fancies. When deluded by self-importance, vision seems to take the form of fact ; yet with the death of their co-ordinated bulk, dreams vanish into the unknown, leaving but a decomposing mass of chemical elements to feed the maw of mother nature, who silently contemplates the inevitable results of her inevitable rules.

Many a fiction leaves an influence far stronger than that of living truth. Flesh and blood can usually only live for later generations in the written memories of others, and historians often take pleasure in dressing a hero to their individual tastes. It matters not, therefore, whether what is written of Christ be true, or whether he

even existed. We have a certain pictured personage known to generations as a typical character, and in analyzing the real influence of his supposed sayings, it is the written words as they appear that must be met and dealt with, not the words he might have said, and not the things that he might have done. Christianity has been built around a literary creation, the great masses having taken the simple account as unquestionable truth. It is then to that record in its literal acceptance that we must turn. The Christ as criticised is the Christ that does not hide in subtleties behind the erudition of the pedant, but rather that one who bravely trusted in the power of simple language, only lapsing into mysticism when speaking of the things that were beyond his knowledge.

CHAPTER VI.

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CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

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*“He that is not with me is against me.”*—JESUS.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHRISTIAN MORALITY.

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THE moral code of Christ contains rigid rules of action, and a definite outline of means for future salvation. He assumes this sphere to be a place of trial and preparation for another life, so vastly more important as to justify a rather contemptuous view of our present surroundings. Acknowledging all as sinful, he makes forgiveness from the Lord depend on repentance and fear. While counseling good behaviour, he holds conduct subsidiary to awe of divinity. The whole tone of his teachings is essentially spiritual, with an absolute disdain of earthly interests.

The fundamental error of this doctrine lies in the recognition of that Jewish absurdity, *The Fall of Man*, and its necessity for an *Atonement*. No careful logic can admit a present responsibility in a new-born being for the errors of an ancestor. Such evil traits as may be inherited are properly excuses rather than a birth-weight of dutiable sin. It is hard enough to find ourselves handicapped by the past, without the added accusation of intention and collusion with it. If salvation of those living demands sin-erasure for those dead, each new-born generation has an ever increasing responsibility. Christ endeavoured to suffer enough for us all, but we can fairly doubt the justice of the stern

parent that would sanction such a method. Many of us, as it is, must bear punishment in diseases of mind and body for the crimes of our progenitors, transmitted to our powerless existences. We refuse to multiply the penalty! Let Adam answer for his derelictions—we have trouble enough of our own!

We are now ready to criticise the religious counsel of Jesus with relation to its present applicability. The conditions leading up to the state of things now existent, were evolved without our participation, and if we admit the presence of an Omnipotent Ruler, we must naturally throw the responsibility on his shoulders. It is evident that conditions largely govern the tone and standard of thought, so that each age necessarily conforms more or less to the one immediately preceding it. If we have drifted away from the ideals of past centuries, it has been by a steady process of advancement, justified by evolutionary experience. When centuries of development lead men to gradually release their grasp on inherited principles, the obvious deduction is not complimentary to those principles. The fact that past ideals are not wholly relinquished, may simply prove that some are slower than others to recognize signs of progress.

All theories must finally bear the test of practical application. Specific advice must also stand trial in varying conditions. Christ spoke to men well realizing their imperfections. If his ideas were too advanced, illogical or impossible for us, the mistake was his—not ours.

There may be many roads to a single end; there also may be many purporting to lead directly that wander off

to no end at all. If we take the path advised by Christ and stick to it, no matter how devious or impenetrable it may seem, we should fairly consider ourselves in the way of Christianity. If we start for this same finality by some other route, the name does not necessarily apply. If we strive to reach some wholly different end we are certainly outside the clan.

It will be shown that the great body classed as Christian, thinks the way prescribed by Christ narrow, tortuous and brambled, so its adherents roam through smoother thoroughfares, endeavouring to parallel direction more or less. It will be shown that the name is adopted simply for their continued belief in the good intentions of that divine guide whose footsteps they decline to follow.

The religion of Jesus is properly distinguished by the novel portions. Such morality as was formerly taught by other moralists is only Christian by adoption. Those who think to be Christians simply because they are good citizens, mislead themselves. They are simply converts to the evolved propriety which has resulted from countless combinations of human experiment. Christians become rightly named only when following all of their master's commands, or at least those peculiar to his creed alone.

The definite intent of Christ's teaching is clearly read in his reported sermons and conversation. The language is plain enough for the weakest intellects. A child might easily comprehend the entire moral code, and yet to hear a convert vainly trying to wriggle from a penned-

in corner of discussion, one might easily imagine each word to be a blind metaphor, and each phrase a hopeless puzzle.

In judging of what Christ said in his assumption of authority, it will not do to hammer at a few weak words in triumph, but each definite avowal must be conscientiously examined. The quotations that follow are intended to comprise every important and distinct statement that can throw light on his plan of human reformation, leaving no chance for the defense to assert that there is intentional suppression of testimony. The reader can easily use personal judgment as to the pertinence of the annotations.

Starting with the version of Matthew, we find that the first statement made by Jesus is to the effect that by Baptism—

*. . . it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.*

An easy method, truly ! He then administers several severe rebukes to the devil, and warns him not to—

*. . . tempt the Lord thy God.*

Why this was necessary is not quite evident. Either we must assume that the devil actually exists, in spite of our jocular disregard of his presence, or it was figuratively shown that this God was actually struggling with his own vain ambitions. This may awaken our sympathy and swell our own pride by comparison, but it certainly

lowers the popular standard of divinity. He then started on his crusade, saying :

*Repent ye ; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

This was certainly a false beginning, for the kingdom of heaven is no nearer now than at that time, although it is quite evident that Christ actually thought of it as imminent.

When we come to the more comprehensive dissertations, it will be noticed that there are no long messages common to all the Gospels, but the coincident recitals are fragmentary remarks that might fairly represent the fruits of disjointed memory. When we therefore find an elaborate sermon in one record alone, we may assume that the favoured writer aspired to collaborate more or less with divinity.

Matthew's Sermon on the Mount reflects considerable credit as a literary production upon some unknown scribe. In its order of appearance it is evident that many preceding sermons were not recorded at all. Were they considered immature, or unworthy? Did they impress no one with a memory? What becomes of the theory of inspiration when we are thus cheated out of pearls of wisdom?

The beauty of certain literature often disarms criticism. Let us not thus be lulled into error by gentle cadence, flowing metaphor or smart epigram. The following world-renowned sentences are not so well established by

application as to stop our consideration of their limitations.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.*

They that mourn and the meek hardly fare so well as the poor, but it is plain that flaccid humanity will corral everything worth the having. Why it is so favoured is not quite plain to the reasoning mind. One happy buoyant nature lightens the world's care more than an whole army of limp anæmics. Aggressive manliness would hardly crave the latter for associates. The odour of sanctity is thought to rise from the spiritless in the dank gloom of their retirement, but Nature trusts light rather than shade, the virile rather than the inert. True grief deserves respectful consideration and sympathy ; yet its conqueror is nobler than its devotee.

The *Blessed* also include those that *thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted.*

We are told to let our light *shine before men, that they may see our good works*, which smacks a little of the press agent, and is most directly in conflict with later maxims.

*I came not to destroy, but to fulfill.*

Yet he did not fulfill, and did destroy.

*. . . one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law till all things be accomplished.*

This must signify preordination ; and yet what be the use of all this effort to reform, if the destiny of reforms was already established?

*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. . .*

By whom? the creator of the delinquents?

*. . . except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

What made him so sure?

*. . . everyone who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgement. . .*

As *brother* includes all humanity, by Christ's own definition, it is plain that we have no right to be angry with the murderer, the rapist or the incendiary. The old version tempered the sentence by the phrase *without a cause*, so that until within a few years, humanity outraged the real edict,—if now truly interpreted—in blissful ignorance of its crime. Honest indignation, however, is not even yet suppressed.

*. . . whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. . .*

Here is the one, and the only one warning that has received respect; for we never do say Raca. When fitly translated into the English word contemptible, we note in anguish how often we have undesignedly sinned.

*. . . whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of the hell of fire.*

What a relentless anger for trivial offence! Yet fool is still a favoured epithet. Perhaps we rely on the superior knowledge that hell is of doubtful existence. Shall we then pity the ignorance of our teacher? God! Devil! Heaven! Hell! Who gave us the right to pick and choose among these terms? Naught but our complacent conceit, the marvel of our present civilization.

*Agree with thine adversary quickly. . .*

Never contradict, in fact. Christ would have suppressed every human instinct, to cultivate a fawning, truckling servility.

*. . . everyone that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

To accommodate this class of criminals it would be necessary to materially enlarge our jails!

*. . . if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee : for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell.*

Certain of the faithful have followed this precept literally in past ages, disfiguring their faces to avoid solicitations, and even going to the extreme of castration to quell animal instincts. Must we imitate them? Why is not suicide also authorized under this clause?

Divorce is next practically forbidden, save for one cause, and re-marriage with a divorced woman debarred. How many Christian ministers have aided sin by performing such ceremonies, and how many Christian judges have erred in severing marriage bonds? Like the liberated devils, their name is legion.

*I say unto you, Swear not at all. . .*

Oaths of affirmation are thus explicitly condemned. We still cling, however, to the debasing custom that assumes that a man will lie unless he be frightened by the name of God. The formality of an oath is necessary in all filed statements or legal testimony. Quakers have enforced objection, but how many other Christians have made any effort to act by their master's word?

*I say unto you, Resist not him that is evil : but whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man would go to law with thee, and*

*take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

There is the essence of Christianity, in emphatic and conclusive words. It plainly intends to prevent all self-defence, war, strife or resistance of any nature, whether by act of physical force, legal measure or even retention of property when desired by another. There is no chance of escape, even to the most artful phrase distorter. Those who wish to be Christian, then, can either obey or fall out of line. Obedience is not impossible, for Tolstoi has adopted the plan in its full meaning, and there are many with less to give up. Why hesitate, then? Why not endorse a creed of free selection? The echoes alone answer,—why not?

It is plain enough that not only is this doctrine ignored, but violently outraged by direct and active antithesis. We fight, sue and resist, protecting our rights and property with our lives, if necessary. The truth is, we have not yet reached an evolutionary stage where service to divine masters can be expected. We are hardly freeing ourselves from the idea of obedience to human dictation, and we certainly may not serve the one till we have settled with the other.

*Love your enemies. . .*

Yes, love them ! Love them so well as to grant them a quick admission to the delights of another sphere ! Love them so well as to give them the joy of reflection

in prison cell, or the total suspension from care—at the end of a rope! If their blood is overheated, kindly come to their relief with bayonet or rifle-ball! Allow them the delight of self-sacrifice in enriching the soil with their rotten corpses! Let their widows and children know the joy of self-support! This is an example of Christian twist. Is the name so attractive that we should still desire it, after violating its every law? Some protest by saying that the Greek word *agapao* translated as *love* signified nothing but a charitable feeling. What then did the possible Hebrew word for which *agapao* was substituted mean?

*Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them. . .*

How about that light that was to *shine!*

*But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth. . .*

Comment here seems unnecessary. Its God alone could help a church that tried to rely on secret support, and he stirs not to aid. Religion is so hard pressed for funds that it appeals to ostentation in public sales of pews, open collection of contributions, and even by fairs, entertainments, suppers and other catch-penny traps. Soul-Insurance pays but a scanty premium!

*. . . when thou prayest enter into thine inner chamber. . .*

A crowded church hardly meets that definition!

*And in praying use not vain repetitions. . .*

Burn then your printed service-books, ye old established churches, and save both Lord and congregation from droning reiteration !

*Moreover when ye fast. . .*

When indeed ! Few fast now, save from acute necessity. This generation rarely permits religion to become inconvenient. The empty stomach dominates the pining soul !

*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth. . .*

Of course no Christian ever put money in a bank, or bought property as an investment ! What is civilization, if not the product of accumulation ? While there may be better aims, it is not proved that Christians have preferred them. An increase of material products enables the community to give itself advantages of every material sort, and the saving trait develops the virtues of industry, self-denial and patience. Without property we should be beasts. Prudence is the mark of enlightenment. Inconsistency seems to be the mark of Christianity.

*Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

Perhaps not, but we can make mammon serve humanity, and that is worth consideration.

*Be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink ; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.*

Just try it awhile !

*And why are ye anxious concerning raiment ?*

Why, indeed, ye feminine birds-of-paradise, who turn your church into a fashion-show !

*Be not therefore anxious for the morrow. . .*

Is it only the heathen who take out life-insurance policies, or speculate on future profits? Away with all care and worry! Reckless improvidence shall reign henceforth! Let the children starve if food has not been stored, and freeze when present fuel is gone! Who dared to prate of responsibility?

*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

Let not your thoughts aspire to change the future !

*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*

Tear off the wig and wool-sack, chop the jury-box into kindlings! Court is adjourned indefinitely !

*Give not that which is holy unto the dogs. . .*

Christ, alas, disregarded his own maxim, casting his pearls before the unappreciative, to use no harsher term.

*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?*

We, being evil, do not threaten our children with fiery torment, nor wait until their spirit is broken before granting them forgiveness. We ask for nothing better above than the consideration shown by earthly parents.

*. . . whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them. . .*

This is hardly applicable as a general rule. It would mean if you wish to have a wife taken off your hands, run off with your neighbour's; if you wish for physic, dose the apothecary. Confucius put this principle in much better form.

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

We could all say amen to this were we more certain of the genuine interpretation of his will.

From the analysis of this sermon, it would seem as if there were hardly a precept able to escape the disre-

gard of the present generation. This would indicate either a sorry set of precepts, or a sorry generation.

The discourse now becomes more rambling, largely taking the form of parable. Certain pertinent remarks are selected as the pages are turned. Of course such advice as *Come unto me*, and *In my Father's house are many mansions*, defy critical analysis.

When one of the disciples begs the time to go and bury his dead father, Christ forbids him with the words, *Follow me; and leave the dead to bury their own dead.*

What would be the result, with our present Boards of Health! Nothing could more plainly illustrate the inhumanity of counsel that would sever every human tie, when a dead parent must be neglected in the selfish haste to save the self and gain a front seat in heaven.

*I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.*

This does not hold out much inducement to be righteous.

*And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, as ye go forth out of that house or that city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.*

These are the words of the forgiving Saviour, who warned us not to be angry, nor to delight in persecu-

tion, recorded by that same scribe who took down his peaceful platitudes. Mere doubt of wandering salvationists would invite a fate beyond the punishment of the most degraded and beastly cities of olden times. And this is mercy! And this is love! It certainly is not justice.

*. . . be ye therefore wise as serpents. . .*

This could have been said only by one believing in the fable of Adam and Eve.

*. . . fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

Are we as terrified children, that we should live in continual dread? Should we spoil the existence here of which we are sure, in anxiety over a future of which we know nothing?

*. . . whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come.*

Why punish the ignorance that simply fails to realize the enormity of its conduct? Pity the poor God-damners!

*. . . every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

And yet did never one hear a Christian chatter?

*. . . whosoever hath, to him shall be given. . . but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.*

The latter part of this announcement savours somewhat of the miraculous. The poor somehow never relished this verse.

*. . . they shall gather out. . . them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. . .*

Who dare say there is no hell !

*A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country. . .*

—where they know him too well.

*. . . what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life ?*

Quite a little experience, at least.

*If ye have faith. . . nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

And yet impossibilities still prevail ; did Christ then lack faith himself ? He certainly found it impossible to convince the skeptical.

*Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

Let us then return to undeveloped ignorance !

*If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor. . .*

Why corrupt another with our cast-off riches ?

*It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

How nobly we attack a difficult task !

*. . . every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life.*

This is quite a bribe to make us contemptible ; but the wife is at least not included among the abandoned. It is merely a careless omission, however, as she also is mentioned later.

Now follows that most unsatisfactory parable concerning the labourers that worked unequal times, and yet received the same wages, on the principle that the employer has a right to be unfair if he so chooses. Every trades-union is manifestly un-Christian by this rule, when attempting to dictate to an employer, or to equalize rates.

*. . . whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant. . .*

Who wants to be first? Hands up!

*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's. . .*

This sounds well, but the following of such advice would have prevented the American Revolution, and every other rebellion against oppression.

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.*

And for what? For the privilege of inheriting sorrow, and blindly plunging into hell? Christ should first have made his Lord more attractive. Those who really believe in such a being depict a much more reasonable ideal in their hearts when they adore.

*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*

This certainly must mean neighbour of the opposite sex, if the meaning of the gospels be accepted according to modern Christian practice.

*But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! . . . son(s) of hell. . . fools and blind. . . inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. . . sons of them that*

*slew the prophets. . . Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers . . . upon you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth. . .*

This is certainly a choice vituperation. We must not call our brethren fools, but Christ does not make himself an example to assist us in fulfilling this mandate. Those to whom he spoke the words contained in the above quotation were average citizens, honest merchants, good fathers, no doubt—men trained in certain lines of thought by tradition and education. Their only crime was in their hesitation to acknowledge that a village workman had been suddenly transformed into a divinity.

*. . . thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels? How then should the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be ?*

Whenever Gods are powerless to guide destiny, and are bound by the warnings of demented prophets, how futile it is for us to use our wills or to attempt accomplishment! What is pre-ordained must come to pass. If we lapse into indifference, destiny can, notwithstanding, make us prominent in the affairs of men; or she can, however valiantly we may struggle, decree that our efforts shall count for naught, and relegate us to obscurity. What absolute nonsense!

Mark, Luke and John reiterate many of the main contentions of the text of Matthew. The few verses herein quoted are slightly different in phrase, and but little more convincing.

*The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. . .*

Why not go further and say, likewise, that God was invented for man, and not man created for the purpose of fearing his imaged being?

*. . . with what measure ye mete it shall be measured unto you. . .*

This hardly parallels the former edict to the effect that whatever we do may be forgiven. Is this not the "eye for an eye" doctrine in different words, and was it not replaced by the one proclaiming forgiveness? No wonder that some earnestly claim the whole Sermon on the Mount to be an interpolation. It meets with unnumbered contradictions by better attested records.

*All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them.*

Simply trust imagination for the fulfillment of what you will. Can imagined viands then swell the belly?

In the somewhat discredited last few verses of Mark occurs that much discussed interpolation :—

*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. (damned, in the old version.)*

Thus we see anxious mothers hurrying their newly born to church for fear that they might die before the ceremony, to save their little souls from hell. Divine mercy is not trusted to overlook neglect of a trivial form.

In this same chapter we find that those who believe shall—

*. . . cast out devils. . . speak with new tongues. . . take up serpents. . . drink any deadly thing, and it shall in no wise hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

How many priests have proven this theory by trusting themselves to take a snake in their hands? They should learn religion from the Indians. How many have dared a draught of strychnine? Do they heal the sick and cast out devils? If they do not these things, either they do not believe, or else they deny the gospels!

*He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath food, let him do likewise.*

Thus we find who fathered that modern abomination, the Tramp!

*. . . be content with your wages.*

Read this, ye great discontented working-class, struggling to better your condition and preserve the means

for self-respect and maintenance of family. Read this, and reflect that the Christianity of which you are supposed to be a part denies you the right to either ask or demand. Be thankful for the kick or cuff that emphasizes your humility, and then go down on your knees and praise this Lord for having taught you to be slaves!

*Sell that ye have, and give alms. . .*

Thus is this command repeated again and again, leaving, one would suppose, no chance to dodge or overlook it, and yet it is universally dodged and overlooked by professed Christians.

*. . . when thou makest a feast, bid the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. . .*

How they would enjoy it!

*If any man cometh unto me, and hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.*

It would seem as if this Christ were endeavouring to find just how low a man might sink to gain the promise of a future prize. Any little band of devotees who are found trying to emulate this one of their Lord's suggestions in our enlightened age, will be forced also to emulate his end, and be crucified by public indignation!

*. . . whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*

Shall we not then retain anything wherewith to cover our nakedness?

And next we come to the prodigal son, that one fitly ending his debauched career in the hog-yard, who sneaked back to curry favour with his senile father, while the decent brother very properly protested. This gives us a very fair idea of what is naturally expected of us. We cannot very well repent until we have done something worth repenting. Then we shall be made much of and bask in bliss, while those who shunned the mud slip in unnoticed to witness our glory, and reflect on the uselessness of virtue.

*. . . that which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.*

Honesty, Truth, Courage—are all of these abominations?

*But if ye believe not his (Moses') writings, how shall ye believe my words?*

The Old Testament is therefore upheld by the one who came to overturn its doctrine.

*Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you doeth the law?*

But they anticipated him who came to better the law. Why not be thankful that they had not thus been given up to error?

*He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone. . .*

This sounds fair, and yet its practical application would abolish courts, to leave us at the mercy of designing depravity.

*Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin.*

Amen !

*. . . he that delivered me unto thee hath greater sin.*

Christ thus places the responsibility of what happened on the Lord. Why not likewise lay the responsibility for all men's crimes to the same source?

We must not lose sight of one certain truth in all this consideration of Christianity. No human being can ever have unselfish affection for a thing he has never known nor seen, nor felt nor heard nor owed an obligation. Christ recognized this fact by his bribe of promised reward to incite outward show of adoration in prayers and protestations. We are to think a God can be cheated and deceived by our humble art. We are to cultivate cant, humbug, pretence. The world knows how bravely we have succeeded.

The insertion of the Epistles of that hard-headed thinker, Paul, presents certain noticeable difficulties. Shall his doctrine be taken as literally inspired, and therefore true, or shall it be read simply as so much unauthorized sermonizing? In order that his views on certain matters may be understood, a few quotations are given. It is evident that he had no sympathy with Judaic rites, and scant courtesy for feminine intelligence.

*All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient. . . Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats. . .*

*The wife hath not power over her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power over his own body, but the wife. . .*

*Yet I would that all men were even as I myself (unmarried). . .*

*I say unto the unmarried and to widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. . . (but) it is better to marry than to burn. . .*

*Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing. . .*

*I would have you to be free from cares. . . he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife. . .*

*Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifyeth. . .*

*Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a dishonour to him? . . .*

*When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child: now that I am become a man, I have put away childish things. . .*

*Let the woman keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in*

*subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home. . .*

*If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. . .*

*. . . flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. . .*

*Let each man prove his own work. . . For each man shall bear his own burden. . .*

*Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath. . .*

*. . . women (shall) adorn themselves in modest apparel . . . not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment. . .*

*I permit not a woman to teach, or to have domination over a man. . .*

How about our public school systems?—or perhaps a male child is not a man in this sense.

*Deacons. . . must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre. . .*

*Women . . . must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. . .*

*. . . refuse profane and old wives' fables. . .*

*. . . she that giveth herself to pleasure is dead while she liveth. . .*

*The labourer is worthy of his hire. . .*

*Be no longer a drinker of water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine own infirmities. . .*

*. . . the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. . .*

*The husbandman that laboureth must be the first to partake of the fruits. . .*

*Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, idle gluttons.  
This testimony is true. . .*

This last is admirable frankness.

*To the pure all things are pure. . .  
. . . it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats  
should take away sins.*

Amen !

If Paul is right, Moses is wrong. Whichever be at fault, there is an error which defies explanation from those who insist on holding the whole volume inviolate. It would be interesting to know how long Christ and Paul expected the world to last with their condemnation of marriage. They would have wished the living human world to speedily expire from lack of procreation. If fully successful, we should long ago have left this sphere to lower animals. Is our progress then a mistake? Have our efforts all been futile? Have we gone backward? If so, education has been a debaser, experience a snare. We who now live should never have been.

Even the Christian who limits his allegiance to the New Testament alone, finds himself confined within most curious and restrictive limits :

He must acknowledge the fathering god—  
He must believe in threatened vengeance—  
He must believe in the immaculate conception—

- He must believe in the activity of devils—
- He must believe in possession by evil spirits—
- He must believe in actual miracles—
- He must believe in the conventional hell—
- He must believe in bodily resurrection—
- He must be spiritless, mournful, meek, pure, peaceful—
- He must enjoy persecution—
- He must never be angry—
- He must not criticise—
- He must not use uncomplimentary epithets—
- He must not argue—
- He must conquer evil inclinations—
- He must not marry one who has been divorced—
- He must not take oath—
- He must not resist evil—
- He must give freely—
- He must lend freely—
- He must allow robbery—
- He must yield to tyranny—
- He must love his enemies—
- He must give secretly—
- He must pray secretly—
- He must vary his prayers—
- He must fast—
- He must not accumulate wealth—
- He must not worry—
- He must avoid vanities—
- He must not judge—
- He must not be worldly—
- He must not speak idly—
- He must distrust his impulses—
- He must be charitable—
- He must be content with wages—
- He must sell his possessions—
- He must break family ties.

Where, oh, where is the letter-perfect convert? Where is there one single bunch of Christians who even attempt to obey one half of the above—or one quarter—or one eighth?

Suppose there were a crowd of people born and living in a jail, men, women, children—good, bad and indifferent. Suppose their parents had been born there before them, so that they inherited the situation, vaguely realizing that they were being punished for some early sins of long forgotten ancestors. Suppose they had traditions of a time when the jail had been flooded to drown those then living, as rats in a sunken ship, and suppose they believed in evidence of certain favouritism at the hands of some outside tyrant, whom they believed to have built the jail. Might they not uneasily dread the waiting future judgment at his hands, and long for a deliverer?

And now suppose that one be born among them, claiming to have been surreptitiously fathered by the outside jailer, and to be in direct communication with him. Suppose that this interpreter should warn them of fiery torture awaiting them outside, from which none could escape except by abject fawning. Suppose he should threaten those who would dare defy the reigning power with relentless vengeance. Suppose he should ask them to repent for having been born of sinners, to love him for coming to save them, and to try for a promised reward by also loving their jailer, and repenting for having displeased him.

Suppose, also, that within their gloomy surroundings these unfortunates had grown to forget some of their

troubles by engaging in useful toil, learning the delights of social and family ties, and rigidly curbing the evil tendencies of their most perverse associates. Suppose that this new authority were to assure them that their duties were unimportant, their loves and joys a sham, and their criminal neighbours worthy to be taken in among them on equal terms. Would this not be the final test of their patience?

What wonder if some of the rougher element were to fall upon this curious reasoner and put him out to join the waiting father? What wonder, too, if the revulsion of feeling at their savagery should make the remonstrance of the better class assume the form of belief in his assertions?

And yet, what if the imaginary outside terror were a myth, and the years of dread uncalled for? What if the supposed jail were rather a natural and beautiful home, created by no malice or mistake, but simply serving its purpose by accident? What if the boundaries of reason should expand in time and the mental vision be cleared to note no sign of lurking Torturer, no Trap-door, no unmerciful Judge, no Craver of Adulation? Would not the liberated minds cry out in impatience at the previous waste of mental force, and experience a keen regret at the thought of wasted possibilities? Would they then still feel grateful to the memory of those who tried to strengthen these old superstitions, and still grant reverence to their misguided words?

No! they would surely refuse to continue homage to their false prophets. And we who reason are compelled

to take this stand with Christ. We refuse to recognize the claimed results of his misplaced energies, although we may respect their motives. We likewise refuse to thank his Unknown for the attempt to prove our home a Jail. It is only the menace of the possible Jailer that gives it any semblance to a Prison, and we decline to spoil the happiness accruing from what we have built up here by brooding over the punishment threatened for those who dare find earthly joys. We refuse to throw our all away to grovel for some dangled favour.

And we who have known the relief of freedom have no right to retain its treasures to ourselves alone. Feeling the needs of others, still darkened by the cloud of false tradition, we should aid them to dispel the gloom that bears so heavily upon their burdened lives. We run to ring alarms when noting fire, no matter whether it is property of our own or that of some one else which is in danger. We do not stop to reason upon the possible motive of the one responsible for the calamity, whether it were brought about by evil intent, carelessness or some fanatical idea that good would come of it. We simply note the present danger. Christ started a conflagration which is still smouldering. It has burned up many a hideous thing, but has also scorched many a promising structure. The smoke always thickens as the fire encounters material not highly inflammable, and while not so dangerous as the flame, is still obstructive ; and until we dampen all the little fresh fires of enthusiasm, it will continue with us. Perhaps it were wiser to withdraw outside the charred circle, letting it burn itself out for want of fresh fuel, still wetting down the edges for our future safety.

CHAPTER VII.

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THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF CHRISTIANITY.

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*"It is up with you ; all is over ; you are  
ruined."*—TERRENCE.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE IMPRACTICABILITY OF CHRISTIANITY.

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**I**T must be evident to any unprejudiced mind that whether the Bible be a reliable moral guide or not, its application in this capacity to the various classes of human beings living in the past nineteen centuries has not resulted in the respect of confidence. Its plainest texts are ruthlessly disregarded, even by those serving as expounders. The members of our clergy accompany bands of hired death-dealers, open service in governmental assemblages, marry wives unto themselves, officiate in the remarriage of those who have been divorced, accumulate property, assail other denominations, and in general live according to the demands of a refined civilization instead of wandering penniless and unshod. They rarely rebuke the individual sins of their parishioners, and make scant effort to secure converts from the untaught and unclean. They show no mad haste to save the erring, countenance open vice in their surroundings, in fact appear to tolerate what exists rather than use resolute activity of purpose to aid progression.

Their congregations also naturally conform to custom, upholding popular methods of government, acting as attorneys, judges, jailers, policemen, soldiers, hangmen, money-lenders, brokers, critics, etc., in absolute disre-

gard of the spirit as well as the letter of their religion. How many of them would give all they had in charity? How many of them would lend all their wealth without restriction? Yet why not? Have they no pride in the name they bear? Have they never learned the definition of consistency?

Many would save the sect from criticism by heralding its good works, while acknowledging the associated evil. Such should logically also allow the next inefficient musician to grate upon their nerves, since some of his notes, at least, were pure; or put up with an atrocious cook because her various gradations between the raw and overdone included a fragment of proper diet.

The term Christian has been warped into application to every person who does not outwardly deny it. Those who attend church service with even a varying regularity are thought of as ultra religious. Ministers have broadened their sphere to include dissertations on political and social questions, the present type of sermon being usually a moral lecture that might be rendered by a Buddhist priest with equal pertinence.

The shifts to which many modern religious expounders are forced would be exasperating were it not for their often pitiable lack of virility, which conduces charitable allowances. Within a few years a group of divines, representing different creeds, was asked to explain the meaning of Christ's saying that it were easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Nearly all of them recognized the fact that their wealthy supporters must be let down gently, as Christ evidently had not foreseen that his

church would have perished long ago but for the aid of those he condemned. Their sycophantic minds therefore explained in various ways ; one to the effect that Christ merely meant that it was difficult for one having his mind so absorbed by wealth as not to allow sufficient thought of heavenly things ; another ingeniously called attention to the fact that there was a gate in Jerusalem known as "The Needle's Eye", through which a camel could not pass easily with a full load, and suggested that Christ said *The* instead of *A* ; a third argued that Christ merely meant that a rich man could not take his riches to heaven with him. Some claimed that The Kingdom of God did not mean Heaven, but the clan of God-worshippers on earth. Others said that as all things were easy to God the difficulty was by no means prohibitive. In justice to the profession, however, it is necessary to add that one, and only one, was honest enough to shame the hair-splitting majority by affirming with noble simplicity that *Christ meant just what he said*. All honour to the name of Robert Collyer—a man not afraid of unpalatable truth.

One of the common excuses for disobedience, when Scriptural commands annoy, argues that men are not yet advanced sufficiently to interpret divinity with lucidity, the fallible medium of our imperfect mentality not being trusted to reason logically on these matters. Those who thus define their Lord as a puzzle-monger, ascribe a dubious purpose to his hidden intent ; for language that fails in clearness must be proof of either intentional deceit, carelessness or ignorance. It is inconceivable that an instructor should intentionally endeavour to mystify. When we trace this theory to its source, and find it fed from desires for evasion of the plain letter of law, the atmosphere clears.

Modern civilization finds it expedient to act in direct contrariness to many of Christ's explicit commands. Is it not more manly to admit the bare fact, rather than shame the natural honesty of conscience? The quibbling of uneasy minds may still self-reproach for a time, but continued false reasoning dulls the moral functions until recognition of truth becomes impossible. The rugged bluntness of plain fact soon seems repellent to those accustomed to cheat their primitive sense of honour. A certain ill-disguised public admiration for the brilliant liar stains our present century. We too frequently avoid trouble by masking troublesome things.

There have at times been gathered together certain bands of enthusiasts, who have tried to live according to Christ's literal precepts. While some of them still exist, none is making any great headway, and the majority have been led back to more practical ideals. Community of funds, barred sexual intercourse, disuse of force—all have had repeated trial, all have repeatedly failed. Many of the leaders of these bands have gone to join the forgotten, and it was with a wondering note of surprise that people read recently of an interview with Tolstoi by Andrew D. White, in which that master of literature stated that America had produced but one writer of note—Adin Ballou, the founder of one of the many defunct religious communities.

Religious training usually commences in early childhood. A man must be twenty-one years of age before he is allowed to express practically a forceful opinion regarding his political views; in religion he is domineered by a system of espionage that blunts the reasoning faculties from the start. The child learns of Adam,

Moses and Jesus in the conventional forms, from seemingly reliable sources. It may experience a doubt as it later learns how its youthful intelligence has been ruthlessly imposed upon with many nursery myths; and its primitive logic is naturally wont to class *Jonah and the Whale* with *Jack and the Bean-stalk*. Such skepticism meets with a more or less harsh reproof, if noticed, and the idea made prominent that only the vicious and depraved ever question Scriptural monstrosities. Children of unbelievers often have the same preliminary guidance, on the theory that a bugbear of some sort is necessary to enforce propriety. Those who knowingly use deceptive methods will reap a most generous harvest of lies as their pupils develop the intelligence of perception.

Conventional education is a powerful force. Routine dogma rarely finds an open questioner. Even the timid, however, can harbour a fearsome doubt, when finding the evident discordance between Christianity and worldly experience. The student learns that undoubted laws of science are in direct opposition to his Bible. He sees that these traditions are false from the simple reason that Nature's rules are invariable and are never transcended. Experience teaches him that men are fallible and their records often unreliable. So many assimilate knowledge without reflection, that the Conflict of Science and Religion is not often realized. There are times, however, when grave experience brings one face to face with the naked problem of personal belief in Spiritual things.

The courage of independent thought is very rare when hampered by fear of social ostracism or public derision. It has always been unfashionable to express individual opinions which clash with time honoured belief.

Men of undoubted sense and wide experience often shut their eyes to modern exposure, holding their earlier convictions to be unassailable. Their dignity thinks to soar above the chance of possible mistake. The defiant pride that will not learn, believes that obstinacy is a sign of strength. This type was fairly represented by Gladstone, undoubtedly a leading force in his time, who thundered of the *impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, and courted discussion with so blind a confidence and so loose a logic, as to win from his adversary this very trenchant criticism recently published among his memoirs :

*. . . it is a grave thing that the destinies of this country should at present (1886) be seriously influenced by a man, who, whatever he may be in the affairs of which I am no judge—is nothing but a copious shuffler in those which I do understand.*

It was certainly a most sorry day for bigotry when the champion of the *Gaderene Swine* crossed swords with Thomas Huxley. Quiet logic is easily competent to defeat violent assertion.

But why war against the dying? Why harp upon the frailties of Christian dogma, when even the liberal clergy deny their infallibility? Simply because the taint of error is still objectionable, even when thinned and refined to unobtrusiveness; simply because the liberated minds that dare exchange modern ideas are still a minority. There are ages in evolution between the broadened intellect of the educated and the still stunted brain-cells of the mass. The most bigoted creeds even now gain the majority of yearly converts, the great

Greek, Russian and Catholic churches showing scant sign of liberal tendency. Those opposed to mental slavery have little need to search for chances to apply their efforts.

There is little excitement in the kicking of dogs that are already dead, or in pounding an adversary when he is down. If Christians will definitely retreat from defence of their false ideals, none will care to prolong criticism.

Many claim all modern progress to be the result of Christian precepts, asserting that commerce and cooperative development were impossible without the trust that Christ taught men to feel in each other ; yet Chinese merchants are noted for their honesty, and certain commercial lines are monopolized by the very Jews that Christ came to improve. Commerce flourished long before his birth, when enlightened commonwealths were cherishing the arts and sciences. Why try to credit this man with causes which he would have despised as unworthy? What cared he for trade, or material advances? What respect had he for wealth or law? He was a pronounced Socialist, though without the same thirst for the accumulations of others which forms the distinguishing mark of many of that present fraternity.

Some are fond of the refuge provided by the excuse that the doctrine of Christ cannot fully apply until we are fit for it, and therefore perfect, as it represents the ultimatum of human progress. They might as well assert that a doctrine of starvation is proper, since the world must expire some day for lack of sustenance. To advise any plan for present use that is fit only for

theorized improbabilities, is to waste time, confuse aim and unbalance intellect. What is, is ; and what is true, is true and applicable now.

Were Christians a deliberative body that had accepted a faith from profound conviction, the outsider would have less right to interfere by his criticism. The fact is, however, that the Christian communities are largely Christian through force of circumstances. Our present generation accepts its religion as an inheritance, its devotees imbibing the dogma from birth, and being no more inclined to dispute it at the start than to question the rule of three. It is perfectly safe to assert that the majority would as easily accept any other religion under the same training, providing it were not more repugnant to the senses. Christianity has grown great by lack of antagonism. The natural objections of fault-finding beings have, luckily for it, been directed toward its obscurities rather than toward its root. Its very indefiniteness has been a protection in allowing men to use their own interpretations as a means of inspiring interest. It has been favoured by the transfer of authority within itself, by its adaptability to the ends of intrigue and domination, and by its varied text, which can be quoted to meet either side of any possible emergency. The masses have not accepted it for its worth, but rather because there was no other choice. Whole nations have had it forced down their throats at the point of the sword. The greatest empire in Europe accepted it though the whim of a Tsar, who was himself converted by the skillful depiction of an imaginary hell by a clever priest. Millions have embraced the faith in the fear of losing life, friends or social position. By dominating the common affairs of small localities, it makes an outsider a Pariah. Feminine humanity is often so intensely religious by nature that it trusts im-

plicitly without hesitating to question. Children are trained by the mothers. So the whole machine is turned by the inter-connecting cogwheels, some moving more slowly than others, but each important to the fulfillment of the ultimate purpose. Its errors of construction are known by outsiders, but they silently withhold criticism, disliking the prominence that always follows the breaking of a conventionality.

Even men of calm judgment often continue to tacitly uphold a faith that, were they to analyze it, could not appeal to them. Their busy minds retain but a hazy fraction of the Biblical teaching instilled in their youth. Arrived at maturity, they take no time in which to test themselves, their whole chance for knowledge of their creed lying in the weekly dose of expounded text, delivered by a prejudiced party from a selected passage. If the lecture is agreeable, no doubt arises; if the logic seems faulty, it is credited to the personal failure of the exponent, rather than to any possible shortcoming in the source.

Unfortunately, there are still others perfectly able to define their real conclusions, who dare attempt to cheat their friends by protestations of devotion to the Christian belief in order to insure themselves material benefits or public esteem. Thomas Paine was well aware of this cult when he wrote the following lines :

*When a man has so far corrupted and prostituted the chastity of his mind as to subscribe his professional belief to things he does not believe, he has prepared himself for the commission of every other crime.*

We are often apt to lose sight of the fact that Christianity is a modern religion. Recent excavations prove that an intelligent race of beings, having an alphabet, houses and walled cities, existed at least ten thousand years before the Christian era. It is more than probable that races of men, having sufficient intelligence to reason, lived for tens of thousands of years before them. All these multitudes died without knowing Christ, and it is problematical as to how much their souls suffered by the neglect. Even the laws of Moses and other prophets were confined to one tribe, the rest being left to work out their own salvation.

And have we profited so much by the change? Many cast longing glances back to the ancient days of Greece and Rome. Men then were probably better physically than at present, and women certainly were free from the countless ailments generated in the last few centuries. True, a large portion of the population lived in slavery; but we can hardly take much pride in a comparison that is to our advantage only since the American Civil War. These nations gradually drifted into profligate luxuriousness in the same way that every old civilization has done and probably will do, unless checked by some internal cleansing measure, such as the French Revolution. We have the same tendencies at the present day, open indulgence being restricted only by the opinion of the masses, who now are a power to be respected. The scale of excess is also less, by reason of a certain niggardliness, which denies the public a spectacle for selfish reasons. In those old times the pageant of festivities was always grand, the general spirit inspiring, even to those who could partake only by sight and hearing.

Has Christianity won itself so sacred a place that audacity shrinks from the seeming sacrilege that criticism and comparison involve? Do its devotees ennoble us by their comradeship, impress us by the saintliness of their communities?

And what is this much vaunted record of Christian progress able to put before us, to annihilate our criticism and blast our blasphemy? Has its natural evolution produced an ever truer following? If not, why not? Let the marvel stand forth and assume its pose! Rather shamefaced and uneasy, is it not?

We glance at Christian Europe, and note the anointed rulers, armed with the presumption of divine right. Do we allow that their fitness is assured save when they have usurped their place by right of individual strength rather than by heredity? Rank alone deceives no one, freed from base awe for pageantry. The public has reached the critical stage where reverence not won by independent traits is rare indeed. Bismark, who claims to have seen *three kings in a state of nakedness* assures us that royalty *did not altogether make a good show*. The prevailing kingly traits through centuries have been vanity and licentiousness; though the apparent abnormality of the latter impulse may be due to the fact that monarchs are spied upon more rigourously than common mortals. It is certain that few of royal birth would serve as proper moral examples for a Sunday school.

Other forms of government also have their faults of non-conformity to their sheltering faith. Certain com-

munities openly nurse desires for vengeance on neighbouring nations, the gratification of which would involve the sacrifice of thousands of the youth in both sections, and impoverish the tax-payers with a debt that signifies continued privation through generations. Many a government plans internal crimes that would land a simple individual attempting to emulate them in a prison cell. Taking a people as a whole, its moral state is best witnessed by its daily record in the press. Through this is evidenced the widespread delight in detail of crime, the reading of others' immoralities with eager interest, and that they who support and endorse these records are appealed to by the most glaring inducements to revel in suggested indecencies. Many advertisements from sheets of all sorts, under some veneer, are notable accessories to these immoralities. Certain patent medicines are prominent among the offenders, and their cost of space alone proves that the sales of drugs for unclean purposes and unmentionable uses are staggering in volume. Our newspapers assure us that hundreds of our politicians are corrupt, that local government is often but an organized division of spoils, and that a large proportion of the community is hopelessly debauched, or foully diseased, without counting the actual criminals exposed on the court records. And if a more or less reticent and modest press reveals to the public such a state of things, what may we expect of the unwritten horrors of life? We are posted as to the courts and the jails, but what might the hospitals, the alms houses and the lunatic asylums tell us—or the alleyways and inner rooms?

And the reason for much of this apparent saturnalia of evils, prominent, in reality, because it does disgust us, lies largely in the lack of the proper restrictions.

Christianity has fettered us with her lenient attitude, placing on us the responsibility for loss of souls who have not been given a chance to reform or repent. On the other hand, many derelictions are directly traceable to the attempted enforcement of restrictions that would line us with Christian ideals of morality, when the world is not fitted to adapt itself to certain priggish standards. Continual violation of law simply means that either the violators should be suppressed, souls or no souls, or that the laws should be reformed, unhampered by artificial sentimentality. When people choose to be moral in spots, we can legitimately question their selection, especially if they insist that we shall favour their choice and adopt the same for our own guidance.

Those who criticise by demonstrating the inexpediency of the Christian text are often met with the assertion that they have not caught the spirit of the commands, words being too deceptive for literal interpretation. *The letter killeth* is an all-embracing phrase; yet Paul must be astonished to note the breadth of its application, provided he is still able to show interest in this earthly sphere.

Painful paucity of defensive argument may disarm the charitable antagonist; yet justice must be stern and unrelenting or it is not just. To those driven to reliance on the assertions that the text is not plain, not interpretable, not decipherable, or not adaptable, we can reply, if indeed such casuistry is worth reply, in Christ's own words:—

*And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish*

*man, which built his house upon the sand. . . Matthew VII-26.*

Always positive and direct, Christ anticipated these apologists in definite terms :—

*And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? . . . Luke VI-46.*

If we are to consider ethics as a development of human reason and experience, (and why should we not?) we must logically compare those of Jesus with the views of more modern students, and note the equipment of both for the task of definition. In the case of Jesus we have a being born of simple people, reared among common surroundings, with little if any education, with no knowledge of science, with no experience of travel, with no acquaintances of note, or known ability, or learning, with no chance to know what was going on in the rest of the world, with no individual development by marriage, fatherhood, war, politics, business or social affairs. What if we should now take some Arab from the Soudan, who had never seen a newspaper, or read in any book but the Koran, and ask him to teach the world philosophy? Compare Jesus for instance with a man like Professor Haeckel, who has had nearly nineteen centuries more of evolution to his credit and a near ancestry awakened by life in one of the most turbulent periods of history; a man who has grown into a sphere of quickened intellect during years of pregnant purpose and who has had all the advantages of association with the great recent spread of intelligence; a man doubtless acquainted with all the more important facts of world

history, and in most of its sciences ; a man who has read books by the thousand, and periodicals by the tens of thousands ; a man who has met people of every class and of many races, who has travelled in other lands, and had the stimulating environment of a great university at home. If, at more than twice his age, a man like this disputes the contentions of the mystic of Judea is not the weight of attestation strongly on the side of the elder ? And if we place the untested immaturity of the one against the acknowledged eminence of the other, what then ?

Were we strangers to this earth, and on an investigating tour, we might logically think we had stumbled upon Christianity in certain peaceful spots, where strife is most infrequent and wordly affluence practically unknown. It would surprise us to find instead that Christians more often live in great armed camps, where each male drills for scientific slaughter, and where great talents are prostituted to the development of means to slay ; where those not occupied with preparation for war are engaged in bitter struggles for wealth, power or social advancement, where crime, poverty, lunacy and disease still prevail in spite of the restrictive measures ; and where conscience is so degraded that hypocrisy glares at certain vices from one eye, while winking at their open indulgence with the other. It would be seen that short-sighted expediency is apparently the only rule acceptable to modern civilization, morality having only an associate bearing on the question, and often being lost sight of entirely. We all know these facts—Christians are among the first to admit them. Can there be any harm in exposing the futility of a creed whose followers are self-proved derelicts ? Can a code be true that has never yet succeeded in its restrictions ? Little is impos-

sible, save the reconciliation of truth and falsehood. If Christianity has proved powerless with so long a trial, we may well doubt its infallibility.

Investigation of modern morality in general casts a grave doubt upon the restraining influence of Christianity. Crime gains, if judged by the proportion of arrests, in spite of restrictions and reforms. We lapse into brutalities on the slightest provocation, melting our thin varnish of civilization in the stimulus of a street fight, and losing all self-control at annoyances of petty character. Neither have we absolutely conquered envy, greed, vanity, slander and other evils not on the criminal docket. We may miss a certain recklessness in debauchery that once accompanied abandon in crime, but human occupations are less invigourating than formerly, and our blood is cooler. If our morality is independent of Christianity, so is our mental and physical development. Christ disdained thought of the bodily functions. Education and Science have waged war with Priest and Text for centuries. In fact, the tolerance of this age for its unheeded creed is simply the evidence of an amiability which likes a law admittedly too theoretical for practical adaptation. It is easier to utterly ignore commands that awaken no responsive sense of duty, than to be conscientiously bound by the simplest restraint.

Crimes of violence,—calling all bloodshed criminal, according to Christ's code—may be less in number than in former ages, simply by reason of a more certain punishment under our comparatively efficient legal guardians. The annual murder statistics, however, show a loss of life that would shame many so-called wars. The world has never seen a century that equalled the last one in loss of

life by strife. It is claimed, as an example of the slaughter in our American Civil War, that there are more graves in the single state of Virginia for men of English ancestry who yielded up their lives on the battlefield, than would be necessary for the total number who had fallen fighting for England herself in all her history since the Wars of the Roses. It is Christian ingenuity and invention that has given us the doubtful blessings of machine guns, steel bullets, torpedoes and other wholesale means of obliterating humanity. The present progress in the art points to an end involving such frightful ruin in the next great conflict as liberty loving people might contemplate with most sober apprehension.

Wealth is another factor of increasing prominence in civilization, Christian countries being especially noted for vast individual accumulations. It is doubtful if any other age ever saw so complete a prostitution to its power, and such a general striving after its possession. Even those having distinct talents in other lines than the getting of money, are apt to compromise them for the gaining of it. We do not commonly call these practices immoral, yet they are hardly in line with the spirit of the Bible.

Christ certainly preached against possession. He counselled the equal distribution of wealth and considered accumulation an unworthy effort. To consistently follow his teachings, none should acquire a personal interest in anything. Why should single individuals selfishly preempt a home, a wife, or any worldly goods? It certainly is selfish for one man to control the affections of an attractive woman for life, in view of the limited

number at hand. In like manner it is often urged that the world's surface belongs to all, and none should assume to appropriate and fence in any division of it for personal use. Without resort to argument at great length, it may be shown that the possessive instinct is one of the strongest that we have, and it is useless to try to mould over humanity without giving this fact due recognition. Men will fight to the death to retain either wife or home, and woe be to him who tries to weaken their clutch on either! Instead of discouraging possession, it should be encircled with the protection that encourages rational accumulation. Without the desire to possess, there is no incentive to progress. Indian coolies once refused to work after receiving double pay until their surplus had been spent, the idea of saving for future use being too novel for their comprehension. Any able-bodied man, aided by the inventions of the present day, can easily produce more than is necessary to keep life active, if given the chance. All surplus swells the general fund in which the whole community may share. Even when it is spent to secure pleasure, it as surely benefits by increasing the chance for others with productive energies to profit by furnishing the desired advantages. Thus civilization advances and thus only can it advance.

Familiarity with Christian text has had its test, and what have we to show as a result? What have the monasteries and nunneries done for the world? Compare the truly religious with the truly expedient nations! A modern instance of the former can be noted by tens of thousands each decade in the little Bavarian village of Oberammergau where the Passion Play still passes religious roles from father to son. These people have been steeped in Christian ideals for ages. They have imitated

the living characters who gave them birth and memorized the worded detail of that absorbing drama. Yet what has this religion done for Oberamergau, save to evolve generations of finished actors? Has this Christian influence broadened their characters to a great degree in comparison with those of other villagers? Has it filled them with the inspiration that gives the world its true development, or even idealized their occupation? No! Apart from this cultivated art of mimicry, they are only marked as a sober, law-abiding community. Their hereditary trade of wood-carving is certainly productive of nothing worthy of serious consideration. There is more true genius in the work of one cunning Japanese pagan than in a whole season's product of these stolid mountaineers. Venus and Apollo stirred more true art than centuries of more respectable divinities. If an overdose of religion cloy, we must suspect the quality as well as the quantity.

The dominant idea of Christianity is the indiscriminate love which all are to feel for each other—a love stronger than self-interest, regardless of natural attraction. This incredible and contradictory emotion must extend to personal enemies and the most repulsively disgusting of vile humanity. Force, Law, Authority—all must vanish, the gentle seductions of Brotherly Love alone being reserved to combat the insolence of crime.

No reasonable man will deny that kindness has great utility in ruling violent humanity, but emotion needs the curb of reason. A French enthusiast who proposed to stifle criminals with kisses, was very properly judged degenerate by the pessimistic Nordau. Love is a pearl not meant for swine. Many think they love when they merely slobber.

There are few of us so perfect that we have never needed charity from critical minds. The whole question resolves itself into one of self-preservation. Is it easier to reform than to repress? Will leniency serve better than severity? Experience proves that it will not. Retaliation is the only argument that certain natures can understand. We must prevent by prevention. Not that we should mete out justice in anger of outraged propriety, but rather with an impersonal precision that awes by inflexibility.

Christ's associate doctrine of indiscriminate self-sacrifice must end in impractical absurdity if carried to its logical conclusion. If each worked for others, the final result, at best, would simply equal the effect of each one working for himself. In fact it would rather be expected that one could meet his personal needs with much better economy of effort than if trusting some other to anticipate them. Sacrifices for others are often essential, but religion has not necessarily originated them all. The mother gives her strength and faces agony for her unborn child, for otherwise the race would expire. Men yield their lives to duty, the incentive being strong enough to master any personal objection. The approval of those who profit by altruism flatters the performer of good deeds to further effort. Progress demands self-sacrifice as the mass remains conservative enough to let the individual take the risk of novel chances. It lets the many brave be lost in order to attain the knowledge gained for all by the one who is finally successful. Civilization thus wades knee-deep in gore, climbing by steps made of dead bodies—not only those of the slain Patriot, the starved Explorer and the broken-hearted Reformer, but also those of the wasted Student, the crazed Inventor and the wearied Man of Affairs. This

is well as long as those left marching are aided by the sacrifice to scale the wall of ignorance. Were superior energy wasted in assuming the defensive for the protection of those injured or left behind, evolution would be retarded, incapacity prolonged and the advance guard turned back in the moment of its triumph to shield the skulkers and the stragglers. Victory demands that the wounded be left where they lie, for a time. Those whose valour is thus proved would be the last to wish to hinder their comrades' activity for their own comfort or security.

And how would this doctrine of self-abasement work if actually adopted in our humble, every-day affairs? Could we properly prolong our lives through slaughter of living things? Could we rob the calf of its nourishment, or despoil the anxious hen of her daily product? Could we harness enslaved beasts to pull us over dale and hill? Could we feast without a pang for the hungry, or sleep peacefully in a world of evil? We should give up everything that the majority cannot have, mate with neglected females, isolate ourselves in illness and abstain from chance at profitable labour while another seeks the wage.

Admitting that the object of Christianity is abandonment of earthly affairs for devotion to the spiritual welfare of our fellow men, will any careful student conscientiously affirm that there is one Christian country, state, county, city or town, where the ruling instinct is not individual worldly gain? Will any priest or parson name a single Christian congregation where the wealthy have evened their possessions with their less fortunate brethren? Will any Christian tell of any group of men

of his own class who have denied themselves the right to sit in judgment on their brethren, through the courts or other authoritative powers? There should be countless cases of such examples, providing Christianity has left other than an erasable influence. Future ages will judge us by what we did rather than by what we pretended to believe.

Those who would wish to throw responsibility on their pastors, declare the errors of their religious record are due to the incompetence of their leaders. As well hold policemen responsible for the existence of criminal tendencies. The heads of the church are mainly fit, in character at least, for the purpose of advising and guiding, as it takes an altruistic and reflective sort of man to find a life purpose in unworldly lines. The wish to uplift humanity is usually present with them, even if the means be ill-advised. Born often without the associated gifts of daring and originality, they find it necessary to plan their effort by one well-worn pattern. Admitting the worthiness of their general motives, it seems strange that all this honest effort should avail so little. Yet they do their best with what they have, and what should we expect under the circumstances? Could we make much material progress if forced to use the tools and implements of Biblical times? When some rational ideal is fairly launched, the present type of clergyman will still find his place, his quickened intellect turning from the vision of a fleeting past to face the rising sun of progress.

Unreasoning acceptance is the most baleful hindrance to reform. He who believes all that his elders teach, without the individual consent of his more modern mind,

unconsciously admits that the world is at a standstill. Every step ahead in history has been made by those who would not agree with sanctioned dogma. Galileo would not believe the world stood still, Columbus did not believe that it was flat. In spite of sainted mothers and venerable sires, we do not now favour their pet theory of predestination, nor bleed every one who falls ill. Old age dislikes innovation, and hints darkly at irreverence. It rarely credits merit to youthful products, and firmly believes in degeneration. Christ's father is nowhere mentioned as sustaining his son's new theories, and the older priests worked faithfully for his downfall. His words had effect on nations who acquired acquaintance with his doctrine unassociated with his immature personality.

If age signified experience alone, it would always prove a safe counsellor. Unfortunately age also signifies the ever enlarging association with conventions, the dying fire of individuality yielding its progressive instinct to the never weakening influence of things that are. The past can only properly advise on matters parallel to matters within its own recollection. Newton could not warn us of the telephone, nor Luther anticipate the discoveries of Darwin. All that conventional conditions bring us is the legacy of the Past, to be accepted with due gratitude and utilized with due respect. Whatever we create of novelty is our own—to be used as we best decide, to be governed by rules of our own making.

The old age of nations brings limits similar to those governing individuals. Persia, Egypt, India and China are now typical of the most unprogressive convention-

ality. Records show that Americans are the most inventive, most venturesome and most creative of present peoples. Even in this youthful country, however, there are portions comparatively old in years, where formal routine wins considerable veneration. New England may be growing more learned and more cultivated, but the virile Middle West and New South are gradually taking away those of her industries that have not already found new homes. The activity which accomplishes new ends is more likely to flourish in new lands among a population whose ancestors had the courage and spirit of adventure which led them to stray from their birth-places. Certain of the older nations have had a vigorous shaking at times which has unsettled conservatism for awhile and allowed novelty a chance. We may well pity those who have known no Revolution in their history. England had her Cromwell, Germany her Reformation, France her periodical upheavals, and every other now prominent nation some similar rebellion. All these great changes were wrought by discovery of error in existing things. In fact those who live without remonstrance are not known by History's Scribes.

Many assert that Christianity must be the true religion because of its widespread influence and large following. This argument fails in view of the similar numbers of Buddhists, Brahmins and Mohammedans, all of which are equally confident in the purity of their sources. These faiths also incite more outward devotion and sacrifice. What can Christianity show to equal the yearly Mohammedan pilgrimage to Mecca, which even the dread of cholera cannot affect, or their faithful attention to the daily call to prayers? What rite of Christians receives a respect like that of the Hindoo for

his Caste? That heathen is a model that the honest Christian might study to advantage. His humble unaggressiveness is in direct keeping with Biblical text, yet it hardly seems attractive to the more civilized races. The Japanese present another anomaly, as a race noted for the almost universal happiness of its people and its high state of development on many lines, and yet it has never acknowledged a Messiah.

The fact that a superior race has had a certain religion associated with its rise, reflects scant credit to the belief if proof exposes the disdain with which its vital precepts have been disregarded. Civilization has advanced in spite of religion, as known in its most popular forms, and all our material betterment ignores the main plea of the great Christian leader. The Church has certainly done its best to block the wheel, but rather for its own selfish ends than for consistency's sake. The trail of the tornado is not more clearly marked than the stagnant and destitute plight of our present priest-ridden countries. Paupered Italy, unhappy Spain and forgotten Portugal may clasp hands with desolate Ireland; while the Catholic half of the Western Hemisphere sluggishly awaits the regeneration which new ideals alone may effect.

We that keep in touch with modern things often fail to note the existence of mediæval surroundings. Nunneries are by no means abolished, Latin is still a church tongue, relics still cure illness. The western farmers pray for rain, and trusting Canadians are quite recently recorded as marching in a vigorous crusade on immoral caterpillars, headed by priest and choir.

It hardly seems possible that after waiting so many centuries people still have faith in their efforts to enlist divine power against Nature. If prayers can bring rain, why not pray against the shocking waste of drops that fall in the oceans? If such forces can be governed, why not ask for an earthquake that might easily save us the trouble of building Isthmian canals? And if we may even hope for the extermination of vermin through its assistance, why not thus abolish all manner of dirt, alive or dead, or anything else that offends, for that matter? Faith seems admirable in its loyalty, yet we would hardly expect to see competition favour ritual against a rat-trap for household use. The most earnest example of modern days' belief, exists in the French peasant woman who had a vision of winning the Grand Lottery Prize, and was so sure that the Lord would make good the promise that she even scorned to get a ticket.

Some claim that our ideals should purposely be placed beyond our chances of attainment, and such as these comfort themselves in their neglect of Christian precepts by the thought that Christ set the standard where none could reach it so that the climax of perfection should ever be before us. An ingenious farmer once tried to persuade a stubborn ass to action by dangling a bunch of hay by a pole extended above the animal's head in such a way that, quicken as he would, it was still in front and beyond his reach. The experiment must have failed, for we note no wide adoption of the invention. If even an ass declines to persist after the impossible, it is no wonder that men should turn from such effort. We should all like to fly, but our sleep is not troubled by restless longing after wings.

This Christian ideal is not only impossible, but it is absolutely abnormal, unnatural, strained, harsh, cold, lifeless, unattractive and undesirable. It was proved to be impossible for Christ, as even he lapsed into humanity once in a while, and could not restrain himself from impatience. Were we, however, to copy him so far as he went, we should have loveless women, ascetic men, no children at all, and an all-absorbing graveyard before the dawning of another century. Strip the race of affection, ambition, individuality and independence, and we fall into the shadow of the nunnery and the cowl. In the fresh enthusiasm of new conversion men did try to literally follow Christ. The experiment has been made—it was an absolute failure: civilization is through with it. Why keep up the shallow pretence of the name?

Many who thoroughly realize the shortcomings of Christianity hesitate to openly criticise, under the false belief that it is a fitting adjunct of the present imperfect stage of evolution, which makes it useless to attempt a radical change or improvement for years or centuries.

It is certainly true that efforts fail when made before the time is ripe for action. Hero's steam engine was but an ingenious toy for the ages before Watt's day. Gunpowder, to its Chinese inventors, meant nothing but a source of delightful noise. Many waste their mental energy in fancying that hopes may leap to a speedy realization without preparation for their fulfillment. They fain would fly before thoroughly learning how to walk. The mind that dimly notes a new ideal must clear away the intervening haze before the world may profit in the discovery.

But Christianity is not the fitting coexistent for our present accepted standard of intelligence. Its very assumption of inviolable authority folds it in the warp of time, like some ancient mummy preserved by accident for the gaze of futurity. It lives, truly—in name at least; so do other old superstitions and delusions. It is no more in keeping with modern evolution than the folklore of the Norwegian or the black art of the Middle Ages. It is merely a monument to the inattentiveness of our whirlpool of seething humanity, which has no time to remedy that in which it has lost interest.

Christianity, while starting with certain Biblical precepts, is now interpreted by the forms adopted by certain of its churches. The different creeds originally had marked lines of division, and regarded each other with suspicion or hatred. Back in the Middle Ages religious differences could be settled only by force of arms. Whole nations were at war within themselves and with each other to settle the respective merits of the Catholic and Protestant creeds. The Christians also waged war with Infidels, as they called them, uniting against the Turks, and driving the Moors out of Spain. They continually worried the non-combatants and gave the Jews no peace. Our own nation was founded partly by those religiously persecuted. The freedom of thought evolved by resentment against oppression has given rise to various sects. Each one, starting with some definite restriction, has gradually lost distinction, since the primary causes of separation have been dimmed by the lapse of time, and at the beginning of the present century there is but one that is generally considered as strictly true to its past idols.

Even within the past hundred years the community at large has been liberalized to a remarkable extent. The hideous doctrine of infant damnation is no longer generally believed. Baptism is not now absolutely necessary for salvation. Those of one creed no longer reserve for themselves the exclusive privilege of entering Heaven. Fasting and penance are rarely thought necessary. Unitarians are no longer excluded from Protestant society. Hell and the Devil do not now absorb the whole attention of our orthodox divines; in fact they were long ago frowned down by polite society, and serve only the purposes of the Negro preacher, or the Salvation Army shouter. Sermons are now mainly moral lectures, having a direct reference to present conditions rather than exemplifying some unpopular Biblical precept.

It is rare to find male church members. Men attend the exercises, but will not take the vows necessary to enfold themselves within the inner circles. In large communities, where choice is possible, the question of which church to attend is often solved by the personal popularity of the preacher, or the fashionability of the congregation rather than on sectarian lines.

The Christian faith has by no means seemed inviolate for all time. In Luther's day the scandalous licentiousness of the clergy nearly engulfed it, and Church as well, in the tide of public indignation. Again, in the French Revolution, domination by creed seemed banished from that country with domination by a King. That volatile nation, however, drifted back by sheer force of habit, even as it again set up the throne once bathed in blood by its own hands. Christianity has certainly had

some most favourable accidents. Nero was one, the wholesale conversion of Russia another, and the colonizing methods of the European nations the most widespread of all. Wealth, Power, Conquest, all the factors which Christ abhorred, were the chief aids in establishing his present standard of success. Strange that aggressive lust should force as a penalty that which is emblematical of love and submission !

As exemplified by its present trend of influence, Christianity has come to signify commonplace morality. The ideal of the Pharisees, so despised by Jesus, was no doubt equally correct, and they possessed also the negative virtue of not pretending to live up to impossibilities.

It is amusing to note how religion is twisted to meet the necessities of current events, as if truth were like plastic dough. In the days when sins of the flesh were held of the flesh alone, religion imposed a physical penance. Many holy men anticipated the chance of error by enduring the punishment in advance. Sackcloth and ashes were hardly in sufficient supply to meet the demand, while sturdy monks belaboured each other with an energy seasoned, perhaps, by a spice of retaliation. Some fanatics endured public penance of so harsh a nature as to often wither their physical members, and actual mutilation was frequently practiced. All this is in keeping with the divine law, for Christ speaks of those who have made themselves eunuchs *for the kingdom of God*, and he elsewhere advises dismemberment of bodily integrals. Christians of to-day have little enthusiasm for such forms of denial, and rather sympathize with poor Origen, the great Christian teacher of the third century, who yielded to the knife in a moment of fervor, to bitterly regret the act in his saner moments.

The right to slay and torture for the ends of Christianity has had the sanction of the church for centuries. Neither life nor property was allowed to a heretic if the benevolent spirit of conversion were aroused. The Crusader carried the Cross in one hand and clutched loot with the other, and his modern prototype still quickens at the sight of spoil.

When reading in early Christian history of how the first proselytes suffered martyrdom for their faith without resistance, or even of the succeeding period when men would fight for their religion, the contrast presented by the present time is most marked. Christians no longer cling to their faith as to life itself. They rarely have interest enough to independently study the principles involved in it, much less to attempt strict obedience to them. The reason is not difficult of discovery. Before Christ, the antagonistic dogmas of the more advanced nations were so fantastic, brutal or licentious that thinking minds gladly accepted the first pure and peaceful ideal. It came to them by word of mouth, unsullied by dogmatic technicalities. Freely interpreted it conveyed the impression of a religion of one God ; the hope of a life to come ; a forgiving Saviour, who personally suffered for humanity's sake ; and the equality of all for divine consideration. Those who realize the state of affairs at that time, can easily understand the growth of such a sect. Its true power began to wane gradually, as the Church, which assumed control of its destiny, commenced to hedge it in with superfluous padding and arbitrary definition. The printing press has been a most treacherous friend in spreading the whole of the gospel before the individual eye, enabling men to plainly note the errors that could easily be ignored by a discriminating clergy.

The disavowal of Christianity does not necessarily involve an unfavourable opinion of Christ. None may read the New Testament without being strongly impressed with the sincerity, purity and nobility of everything pertaining to his life. That his ideas may conflict with ours is no reason to lessen our admiration for his personality. He lived in a different age from ours, and had far different training and hereditary traits. The national Jewish characteristics of his hearers required certain fitting treatment, applicable to them alone. For instance, we consider covetousness a common Hebrew defect, so his advice against thought of wealth was clearly pertinent. They were also unsuccessful as a rule in martial pursuits, so that a non-resistance policy was extremely fitting. It was not possible for Christ to foresee the conditions of the present age, so that acceptance of his detailed advice denies the possibility of evolution, so far as moral development is concerned. We may well admit, however, that the art of simple oratory has not improved beyond comparison with his impressively beautiful language.

It seems surprising when considering the phenomena of a supposedly perfect faith upheld by divinity, that it has been impossible for those who have pretended to adopt it to agree on its interpretation. Why has not that same divinity attempted to clear its own murkiness? The various factions are not a modern evolution—they existed from the earlier periods. Celsus spoke of them with the sarcastic words, *They agree in one thing only, that is in name, if indeed they agree in that.* He also referred to their having altered the original form of the gospel in many ways.

The various Christian sects have ever been jealous of their assumed prerogatives. They guard the authority of interpretation as a treasured privilege, weaving a veil of mystery which they alone, by their educated priestcraft, are capable of rending. In delving for the supposititious meaning, those erudite expounders forget that Christ never chose the more enlightened classes as listeners. He spoke directly to the common people and did his own explaining. That which was simple enough for Jerusalem beggars, hardly requires the learned definition of the ministerial student as aid for present comprehension. Our understanding needs no assistance unless there are distinct errors or false interpolations in the text which need a guide trained in detection. The Church having denied such failings must expect to see its proffered assistance respectfully declined.

The fact that Christ appealed to the multitude instead of to the educated few shows that he recognized the always present fact that the great common class rules all wide movements and determines all far-reaching events, after some circumstance or condition stirs its activity. The men whom history is proud to remember have always appealed to the assistance of this important majority, whose will is law when properly united. Those who aspire to commune alone with the upper stratum of society often mistake a momentary fad or abortion of genius for evidence of higher mental creation. The sneer of dilettanteism at the plainness of rough honesty, is merely one of the privileges of minorities. The over-training which emaciates instinct, would like to substitute its artificialities for the standards of experience. The coming religion will not probably be diffused from above, for the masses would then be certainly suspicious of its truth.

The more important of the divers creeds are so familiar that it is hardly necessary to minutely dissect their labourious detail. From the standpoint of either age or influence it is evident that Catholicism demands first consideration.

This powerful sect retains more of its primitive ideals than any other, though its influence is plainly on the wane, being sustained mainly by the dense ignorance of the majority of its followers. Extremes often intermingle, so that the high breeding of many of its proselytes is not therefore denied. In fact, there is much in its associations that appeals to that grade of higher intellect that finds delight in domination. The authority granted those selected as officials is congenial to mastering wills, and their power over their people is a wonder of the age and the envy of outside rivals. Many Christians of other denominations both feel and express a greater antagonism to Catholics than for infidels. The former's success in restrictions and tithe-gathering is especially exasperating to the less fortunate. The fact that this Church is sometimes upheld when conflicting with local laws, or even higher government, arouses especial wrath; and yet were the critics equally consistent they should hold their own religion above considerations of state, as well. It is rare for any to be called on for a choice, as churches of all creeds very uniformly endorse all public movements that sway men in a body to a definite end. Thus in the South all denominations upheld slavery, quoting Bible texts quite as convincing as those found by Northern Abolitionists of the same branches. So in each war of nation or faction the clergy forget the law that said, *Thou shalt not kill*, and always find some way to lend a holiness to human disputes, even when they inevitably result in

mutual disemboweling, and other unfriendly destruction of vital and necessary elements.

The Catholic need worry little over these strange attempts to reconcile Christ and duty. His church, by its neat assumption of authority and responsibility, lightens his load. *Give me the Bible, give them the bullets*, a sturdy priest exclaimed when speeding soldiers to the front; splendid for discipline but hardly sufficient for individual reason. The old idea of making the soldier an automaton is giving way. Braddock tried it, Buller tried it. Von Moltke found it successful; but Von Moltke met a foe trained in the same line. England met a few cunning Indians in America and a few determined farmers in South Africa, and has learned what undisciplined individual resources may accomplish. One highly developed brain may be trusted better than a thousand of inferior quality for decision, if properly selected; yet that need not necessarily deny the right of those in the ranks to personally reflect on the problems which confront officer and soldier alike.

For races still in mental slavery to what is past or even present, the Catholic church undoubtedly serves a purpose. They cannot be expected to emerge readily from depths that separate them from modern thought; their only chance of reaching it is through a routine process. Catholicism, or some similar creed, is bound to be the last defence of Christianity, even as it was the first. To attempt to bring about its downfall now is futile and inexpedient. The outworks must give way first. Let the best effort be massed on the weakest barrier, and in due time the march will bring us to the last ditch. By that time the inner garrison may gradu-

ally have been exhausted, captured or won over. The Catholic by no means incites the logical indignation with which the reason judges the followers and upholders of other creeds. The importance of Biblical mandates is lost for him in the supremacy of church decree. Authority is necessary to those of undeveloped individuality, and it is doubtful whether any better guidance than that of this Church could be devised for any one belonging to this class, until he be ready to join that of individual thought. Attention has frequently been called to moral derelictions among the Catholic priests. But the fact that certain individuals among them have been and are unworthy of their charge is no fair standard by which to judge the priesthood or the Church's following. These inconsistencies have ever crept in among the heads of every religion—new or old, and they will ever continue to manifest themselves.

Churches are not to be estimated as any better or any worse than the men who compose them. The fact that the Church attempted domination in past ages is not remarkable when domination was the crime of every powerful class. The civilization, not the Church, was at fault. The Church grows liberal as education widens, grows lenient as men gain in mental breadth, and eventually must necessarily lose all its traditional errors as time weakens the force of inherited restraints.

The customary forms of service in the older churches assume a very interesting aspect in the light of modern investigation of mental suggestion. Either through design or evolution the process of instilling faith has involved all the tricks by which the human consciousness is mastered when hypnotization is practised. It

seems strange that the method by which the will and reason are designedly controlled had been applied in the attempt at conversion ages before man dreamed of the possibilities of hypnotics. To hypnotize a person his attention must be fixed and his muscles relaxed. This is attained in church by placing the preacher on a commanding elevation before the eyes of all, with his congregation resting on cushioned seats. Music and monotony are powerful aids, and these are represented by choir-service and intoning, the latter being peculiarly adapted to produce the drowsy feeling that precedes hypnotization. Custom's condemnation of any display of restlessness within the church walls is of further assistance toward inducing the requisite physical repose and relaxation. The well-worn joke of sleep in church is not merely an amusing accident, but a proof of the perfection of the environment. After all these preliminaries the preacher thunders at the helpless mass and overwhelms what individuality may remain. In certain sections, where civilized refinement is not at hand to limit the enthusiasm and fervor, many among the congregation actually break out in active symptoms of control, and wildly shout, sing, or have hysterical fits. This is called "Getting Religion" by those accustomed to the exhibition. The reason why this does not happen more frequently is because the brains of modern congregations are too active with individual thought to permit the passiveness that might betray them. They are reared in skeptical surroundings, and are too critical in spirit to fall under the sway of an unreasoning appeal.

The several Protestant religions, fitly so called as protests against Catholicism, have practically lost their distinguishing traits. The same spirit that prompted opposition at the beginning made further variation

among them inevitable. Voltaire claims that poverty was the ruling factor in separating them from the Pope; it led them to rebel against the systems of indulgences and favouritism which were open only to the wealthy. They pretend to stand by the strict letter of the Bible, and this very narrowness drove those who looked for greater freedom of thought in the first split, to again formulate new creeds, as language is capable of varying interpretation.

Protestants have ever been simpler and less objective in their worship than the more emotional Catholics, though this may be largely a matter of racial traits of their followings. They build less imposing churches, dispense with gaudy show, care less for form, and take delight in the more gruesome side of Biblical possibilities. Before the liberalizing which civilization demanded they revelled in the depiction of Hell and Satan, apparently feeling greater delight in the damnation of the Predestined than satisfaction in their own salvation. At the present time they generally avoid such topics, giving attention to the practical requirements of morality. While their members learn their creed, it is no more a part of their daily thought than are the rules of syntax taught them in their early schooling.

Certain sects form a halfway station between the religions most familiarly known as Protestant and Catholic, such as the Greek Church of Russia, the Church of England, and others of less prominence. They preserve the Catholic ceremonial and devotion to Ritual, but leave authority to their Bishops rather than trust a Pope. It is unfortunate that all of those so wedded to form cannot attend the services in the Christian churches of

Abyssinia. It is reported that they quite outshine anything evolved by the colder-blooded northern races.

Coming to the outermost limits of professed Christianity, we find Unitarianism, and kindred branches, the present refuge of those whose honesty of conscience will not allow apparent endorsement of views which antagonize reason. They think to preserve their self-respect by denial of Christ's divinity and the Inspiration of the Scriptures, relaxing after such avowal, afraid perhaps to strain their daring brains by further activity of a similar nature.

It was not to be expected that even so clear a reasoner as Channing could completely anticipate evolution of thought. While he certainly was progressive, his followers were content with the attainment of an end that was but a step in a necessarily advancing movement. They missed the greatest opportunity ever offered a modern religious sect by clinging to conventional religious forms, after having discarded most of the substance. They boldly denied the restrictions of neighbouring churches, thus making themselves distinctive in thought; and yet when free to shake off all the time-worn trappings, they lost a great share of their vantage-ground by adopting no distinguishing outward characteristics by which to awaken the curiosity that precedes interest. A stranger could hardly pick out a Unitarian church by its architecture, and even on entering would rarely find enough in service and sermon to distinguish them from many Protestant ceremonials. He may even find the rite of Christening, and in one, at least, the Church of England Ritual.

No great change ever won marked consideration without involving originality or, at least, distinct improvement in results. Unitarianism simply dropped a part of the older creed and added nothing new. It hardly keeps pace in growth with the increase of population, and its active aid for human betterment is not notably greater than that of other religious bodies. While it assumes to have wonderfully liberalized the various Protestant bodies, there is some question as to whether civilization has not accomplished this end without owing much to the arguments and efforts of the Unitarian fraternity. The professed Protestant, who really admits all that the Unitarian might urge, finds nothing sufficiently different or attractive in the church itself to arouse the desire of change. It is quite generally believed that Unitarians are often so well pleased with their selected membership as to give little aid to the outside individual in his struggle between tradition and reason.

Unitarians, satisfied with their creed as it is, have no right to feel superior to the most bigoted believer of deadly superstitions who is likewise satisfied. Contentment is one of those passive crimes that check progressive development. If we rest we rust. No one can safely affirm any question to be finally settled. Men will continue to gain fresh fruit from reason for thousands of years yet to come; and it is not certain that one single sermon or outline of philosophy now known will be considered, or even remembered, a hundred years hence. The only credit the thinker of to-day may be accorded in future reckoning will come through acknowledgment of his imperfect surroundings, and the earnestness of his attempt to improve them. The conceit that thinks to rest on the summit of possible knowledge

may find that its mountain is really nothing but a pimple.

The difference in point of view between the Catholic and Protestant faiths is strikingly shown in a recent symposium of the leading churchmen of our greatest city, on *The Face of Christ in Art*. The Catholics proclaimed that it satisfied their ideals, expressed strength and kindness, and apparently left little to desire. The Episcopalians, on the contrary, used the harshest terms, referring to the Christ portraits as *feeble, mawkish, sickly*, exciting *impatience and disgust, weak, effeminate, untrue, inadequate*, and generally unsatisfactory. Certain Presbyterian divines joined in the outcry, adding such terms as *morbidly emotional, disappointing, repulsive, loaded with traces of debility, discouraging to the spirit of worship*, etc. Unitarians also thought it lacking in strength, and added the term *unmanly*, to the list of objections. These interviews have been widely published with their authors' names appended. The Catholics, reared in devotion to imagery, believe in the ability of the artists. The more practical class of minds, awed by no Biblical connection, freely express their contempt for a disappointing portrayal of divinity, forgetting that art is nearer true inspiration than any other of men's occupations, and that their continuous association of text and conception is an evolution through hundreds of years. If these same critics could by miracle forget their religion absolutely, would not their true mental attitude use many of these same adjectives in criticising the counsel of Christ? Would a strong, healthy, manly type of man or one having the attributes the lack of which they criticise, evolve ideals of meekness and non-resistance? Even we who stand outside and owe no veneration have

not used such violent words as Mawkish, Morbid and Unmanly, in referring to the Christ of the gospels. Can it be possible that the hidden source of great artistic genius has absolutely failed in this crucial test? No! The face of Christ in art defines the man who suffered for others, and would not retaliate nor condemn—weak perhaps in its agony of despair, morbid perhaps from brooding over sin, but true to the thoughts by which we frame its realization, if truth is as instinctive as the majority of us believe.

Past forms of religion have rested their faith on the height of their ignorance. Everything that was not understood they accepted as added proof of supernaturalism. Science and education have been gradually demolishing the once stupendous mass, until those who still revere what they cannot comprehend, are left with scant dignity of bulk from which to mould their Bugaboo. The sun is now known to be nothing but blazing gas, the stars dead dirt, the lightning an electric spark, and life itself has been so minutely dissected that biologists are able to produce hybrids experimentally, and even predetermine sex. There is no physical phenomena of daily occurrence which cannot be scientifically explained by plausible theory without the need of admitting a God-agent; and who shall say that coming enlightenment will not still further lessen the proofs that hold converts to the old-time faiths? Christians themselves must admit that their creeds are continually yielding to broadening influences, so far at least as their interpretation is concerned, and that nothing new is added to replace what is lost in the process. Where then shall this pruning stop? Soon there will be nothing left to whittle!

Those who presume to settle such matters separate the world into various wide divisions, calling certain sections Christian because of their geographical boundaries, and therefore claiming the total population. Such figures are grossly erroneous. In the first place, it is hardly correct to decide the future religion of infants and children in this off hand manner. Again, it must be true that of the three-fourths of the people who could not sit in church even if they would for lack of space, there must be a large proportion who keep away because they are not in sympathy. It is also well known that a large fraction of male church-goers would jeer at the suggestion of their believing in Bible wonders. The fact that the majority of those who disbelieve are not organized into a sect of their own by no means makes it possible for one to number them with some selected group of believers who are organized. Put any fair test questions to the individuals of this country to be answered without evasion, and it will be found, if one may judge by all indications, that the majority of the grown people would refuse to accept the Bible as absolute truth, and ninety-nine in one-hundred would refuse to be bound by its literal precepts. In other countries the division is often as well marked. In Germany freethinkers are very numerous, and the Nihilists of Russia are notorious infidels. England, too, can equal the outsiders in unbelief if fairly counted. Christianity has absolutely no claim to its proud totals. Its hold over the uncivilized races included in the numbering, is often purely farcical.

Were one to be a few centuries in advance of his time, he might find the world lonely and unsympathetic. One cannot, however, thus distance humanity, there being plenty of company on any route chosen equally able to cover ground and pass milestones. The budding

of a seemingly novel theory, finds its group of ready followers who have simply awaited a spokesman. There are also many of the Unsettled and Unsatisfied who will clutch hopefully at the first proffered hand, ready to pledge undying devotion to thoughts that have never disturbed their brains before. It has thus been possible to start a recent creed on the fascinating basis that evil is impossible and therefore non-existent because God could never have allowed it! In fact, according to this belief, he tried to anticipate material ills by not creating material things! He did fabricate minds, however, and they have paradoxically imagined a state of things directly opposed to their fabricator's intentions. We therefore stub our imaginary toes against imaginary bricks, die of imaginary holes made by imaginary bullets, suffer imaginary pain in imaginary nerves, and get our real brain really excited or really stupefied by pouring a non-existing drink into a non-existing stomach. Why do not Christian Scientists stop the absurd practice of putting on their imaginary clothes? There are thousands of other illogical practices which they ought to dispense with, but as this is about the first waking act after their real mind starts its busy day, let them commence here. Of course they need not use impossible soap or invisible water.

*A good tree bringeth forth good fruit.* Barren causes universally spring from defective or ill-timed sources. Christians can always criticise another religion, yet the fact that theirs may be better by no means absolves it from judgment. While a screen is not directly responsible for what goes on behind it, the fact that it shields hypocrisy may well condemn it to disuse. The real argument against the Christian religion is the fact of its unsuitability as evidenced in its results.

Christians spend their most earnest effort in the cultivation of faith. They try to instill an unquestioning trust that shall serve for an invulnerable armour against doubt and vacillation. They artfully proclaim that faith is not spotless unless its serenity absolutely ignores conflicting experience or logical attack. In fact, the penetrability by incisive argument is held of no consequence, as if this trust were like the surface of a pool which regains its placidity no matter how violent the disturbances which may temporarily ruffle it.

When Faith has a firm foundation of fact, or appeals with the resistlessness of true accord with fundamental principles, it is well enough that those of limited cleverness should deny a plausible contortionist the right to confuse their senses. For instance, while we have faith that we exist, the arguments to the contrary are difficult to answer. When we find, however, that religious faith demands that we place implicit confidence in so weak a thing as hearsay evidence from unknown men whose rewritten records were unearthed some centuries after their death, and when we find in those records professed experiences that give the lie to all well attested history, all modern science and all of men's clearest logic—what shall we think of it and what shall we say of it?

An highly honoured Christian of unquestioned honesty and sincerity recently appealed to his church with an ardour of invective which betrayed the true standing of his own religion to all who can read and digest a plain, bare statement. The best of testimony for a case is often garnered from examination of an honest (and perhaps imprudent) witness for the opposition.

*The growth of wealth and of luxury, wicked, wasteful, and wanton, as before God I declare that luxury to be, has been matched step by step by a deepening and deadening poverty which has left whole neighborhoods of people practically without hope and without aspiration. At such a time, for the church of God to sit still and be content with theories of its duty outlawed by time and long ago demonstrated to be grotesquely inadequate to the demands of a living situation, this is to deserve the scorn of men and the curse of God! Take my word for it, men and brethren, unless you and I and all those who have any gift or stewardship of talents or means, of whatever sort, are willing to get up out of our sloth and ease and selfish dilettanteism of service, and get down among the people who are battling amid their poverty and ignorance—young girls for their chastity, young men for their better ideal of righteousness, old and young alike for one clear ray of the immortal courage and the immortal hope—then verily the church in its stately splendor, its apostolic orders, its venerable ritual, its decorous and dignified conventions, is revealed as simply a monstrous and insolent impertinence!—Bishop Potter.*

Does not this church of God . . . sit still . . . content with theories of its duty outlawed by time and long ago demonstrated to be grotesquely inadequate to the demands of a living situation? None of us outside have presumed to use more harsh denunciation than this. We have left it for one within to use such definition as *insolent impertinence*, and none will dare say that the condition under which the Church in its stately splendor can avoid such terms has been adopted. Imagine the fanatical rant that would rend the heavens with demand for obliteration if any non-Christian critic had been so unguardedly severe!—yet who dared rebuke a Bishop? It

certainly seems unfair to attack those whose hands are full in putting down rebellion within their own ranks; yet it will not do to wait, for this internecine struggle is a continued exhibition that has never known an intermission. Let those thus restless join us who keep apart, and let the fully satisfied bask by themselves in the effulgent splendour of their shining faith. Let us remember, however, that lustre is but a surface indication, not telling of the inward worth of that which proudly courts applause.

And so to sum up it seems :

That Christianity is an offspring of the Old Testament—

That it pays little heed to this Testament's laws and warnings—

That it appears to trust the inspiration of the New—

That it neglects the maxims of its adopted divinity—

That it lets history recite its utter failure—

That it is not in touch with modern civilization.

If these be facts and fair deductions, what must the verdict be? Simply this: That the Christian Religion has no present active force proportionate to its own claims or our just expectations; that it is impractical, impossible and imperfect; that it wars against human instinct, human reason and human experience. Why not then have done with it, root and branch?

Many of us individually were done with it years ago. Millions have at least recognized a secret protest in their

hearts. Former attempts at organization, however, have not attained sufficient prominence to make their presence widely felt. Some day the missing solvent will be found ; some day our scattered forces will unite for mutual assistance and endeavour. May we not possibly hasten the time by clearing the way, in theory at least, eliminating some of the present difficulties and thus rendering easier the task of those who follow ?

CHAPTER VIII.

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THE NEW SPHERE OF EFFORT.

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*“Or upward to the stars.”*—ROSTAND.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE NEW SPHERE OF EFFORT.

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**I**F Christianity be sufficiently discredited, those who are antagonistic to its precepts, should not evade the logical destiny of dissenters ; they would better unite their strength to bear their share of the burdens of humanity or rather help remove the burdensome features. They should not in isolated uselessness court the sneer which taunts them with the inutility of their assumed superiority.

Let it not be said that incredulity signifies passivity. A criticism that gloats on demolition without assuming any responsibility for those left shelterless, is shamed by even the Church, which tenders an incomplete protection. The effort of the enlightened can surely cope with that of the enslaved, if equally organized. Is it not time to consider possible association of those who sympathize with modern view and aim ?

Union does not necessarily require the frequent aggregation which is often so purposeless. The evolution of practical methods in business, politics and war, has resulted in active direction by the few, with open and equal possibilities for the attainment of executive posi-

tion by any adequate to fill it. Crowds accomplish little save bustle and confusion. True sympathy of purpose unites those whom oceans may separate. Isolated endeavour is often the most potent. It certainly is well for each thinker to aid his fellows by definite and open defence of his ideals at the proper times. While co-operation of those united in purpose is sometimes necessary to bring about a final result, the choice of means is usually a matter of individual judgment.

All who agree with the main contentions of the preceding pages should have reached the logical conclusions that might easily define a proper policy of concerted action for the establishment of a new, progressive religious ideal. If agreeing with the criticisms of Christianity herein detailed, they have unconsciously written a creed of their own. They can trust no ancient dogma out of mere reverence for the antique, and will promptly curb the ready belief that would lazily yield to unreasoning inclinations. Fearless investigation, free criticism and logical analysis must accompany each problem of decision, unhampered by misfit awe or unwise veneration.

The mistakes of former creeds guide us irresistably to acknowledgment of certain basic aims. Eliminating those of minor consideration, they can be thinned down to four simple endeavours :

We must be free in thought and will.

We must search for truth.

We must suppress conflicting evils.

We must improve ourselves and our associations.

Independence should confer the right of individual decision and action when not in conflict with either general or individual progress.

Investigation should determine the clearer way toward truth and perfection.

Suppression should invoke the right of might to purge itself and its surroundings.

Improvement should include all forms of progress, be they in the realm of mind, action, form or force.

The logical simplicity of such a creed should enlist the willing support of any well meaning human being, be he Infidel, Hindoo, Turk, Jew or Christian. Sober minded men will certainly agree that the allegiance to many diverse sects must be annulled in time, as truth admits of no such varied interpretation. A Universal Religion is impossible while any narrow limit is set, and if all would only lay aside their individual prejudices for a while and honestly open their hearts to the reception of fair argument from all sides, we might arrive sooner at finality. Appreciating the present impossibility of so ideal a harmony, it becomes necessary for those of us who have no treasured fancy to cautiously collect material for its creation.

We must first profit by the experience of those whose mistakes we have attempted to shun and be careful not to interject our personal choice without allowing its dissection. During the time of trial it is not wise for

any one to assume that he has absolutely outlined the necessities of all. Each may follow his own bent, however, if not insisting on universal compliance. The believer in divinity, for instance, should not deny the Atheist a chance to join in working toward the common goal. Those who believe in a future life may find the skeptic of equal value as a world agent. Let all those who are ready to improve join hands, no matter what their private views of non-essentials may be in the meanwhile.

Any portion of a creed that is likely to perturb an otherwise eager worker, had better never have been written. Its absence need not be noted by a believer, while its presence may appall a would-be convert. In starting with a broad horizon the many may be gathered in. Whatever is too subtle for the majority may be left to those alone who recognize it. This principle is admitted in all great organizations. For instance, there are many Christians who honestly consider it evil to eat animal food, or indulge in intoxicating liquors. Should they insist on expelling all who would not admit such limitations, they would lose their numbers in a rush that could be likened to the bursting of a dam.

And yet it must not be allowed that the few cardinal principles of Independence,

Integrity,

Impeachment and

Improvement, shall either or all be swept away. They represent hardpan, and in thus restricting the possible necessities, much that is good and consistent has been refused. We need not stop to argue with those who would actually prefer dishonesty to hon-

esty, and should not bother with the theoretical who assert belief in non-resistance and humility. The natural, healthy impulse of the free virile being, by right of strengthened will, favours principles that place him on an equality with his fellows, with the right to rise, to judge, to condemn and to know.

Greater progress is attained by slow and careful advances than by a haste that defeats itself because of false starts. Continual proselyting is necessary to the success of a movement, as death acts as a steady drain upon it. It is therefore necessary for those who wish to profit by the aid of organization to enlist the reason of neighbouring minds. Quantity, however, is less important than quality. The mere novelty of a new ideal will attract the volatile natures who flit from fad to fad, so there must be found a sufficient leaven of thoughtful minds.

There is absolutely no limit to the influence of a reasonable body of beings banded for active endeavour with the design of general and individual improvement. There is a strength of self-approval when governed by practical motives, which must be lacking when the neophyte is of necessity an apologist to his own educated mentality. A belief, founded upon what reason has deducted from experience, lacks no consistency of purpose.

Such an organization is bound to be recruited in time. The precise moment is of small importance to the future ages, but it may have a vital interest for us. The movement will start calmly and naturally, gaining strength from the justice of its cause. It will need no emotional

outbreak, no fanatical prophecy, no hero-worship, no tyranny of force. Let discussion call attention to its needs and clear the way for conquering enlightenment.

Many are so wedded to form or ceremonial that they are likely to inquire what manner of ritual shall be devised or accepted by a new religious body, to fill the supposed necessity. Let it be understood, once and for all time, that no honest basis of organized effort can consistently rely on that which of itself is a hollow sham. The absolute denial of discredited dogma should associate with a distinct disavowal of conventional trappings. Ritual implies adherence to that which is established, but the purpose of progress is to lead away from the present. Feeble intellect and slavish instinct like to imitate rather than create; but no active mind can patiently accept the monotony of repetition. Mystification and mummery shall be relegated to obscurity's trash-heap to rot, rust or crumble with all else that is unfit, unnecessary and unused. And what then are these cherished customs? Let them bear the penetrating light of analysis!

The orthodox devotees relieve their spiritual pressure by prayer. The earlier enthusiasts usually drew on their own mental energy in the process of expression, but the majority now find it less arduous to either listen to some hired exhorter, or read from printed manual another's prepared offering.

Prayers are supposed to be inspired by gratitude, and gratitude has been defined as the sense of favours to come. They are also incited by a craving for definite present assistance, and sometimes by the hope of ward-

ing off a possible, and often deserved, punishment. It seems rather presumptuous to suggest a course of action to one supposed to be all-knowing and all-wise. The comfort of throwing responsibility on another may prolong the practice, but it is a poor, incompetent being that cannot meet the simple problem of this earthly life without invoking heavenly aid. The fable of Jupiter and the Teamster shows that other minds appreciated this fact in earlier ages.

Prayer is hardly relevant unless there be the recognition of a listener that has both the power and the wish to be obliging. Those whose faith is sufficient to credit the existence of such a being would take a more respectful attitude in a receptive silence than in the chatter which attempts to instruct. Submission is in itself a recognition. Higher power would understand without explanation if high enough to be entitled to adoration and faith.

Those feeling the weight of obligation that incites a sense of reverence and real gratitude, can best repay favours by active effort for the bettering of the rest of the world. Words are but empty bubbles. The multitude think to clear their debt to the unknown by prayer, chant or song. Are they willing to receive like payment from their human debtors? Let one of the latter hopefully carol at the door of a bank and note the result!

The inner communion of self and conscience may not always find expression in language. The feeling that incites a throng to meet and shout allegiance to their God savours of the primitive fear that dared not meet the searching eye of the infinite power alone. Those who

are timid in the dark can still go to bore their Lord in flocks; yet the implied sanctity of the occasion would seem better suited to privacy, which is at least a safeguard against wandering attention. There is no patent on this process—Christ himself advised it.

The church edifice itself is a most important religious factor. In fact, its advantages as a gathering place and promoter of sociability make it most expedient. The owners of the structures, however, fail to benefit from them as they might, for they make them sacred to religious usage alone, in the majority of communities. Think of a sacred block of boxed atmosphere!

Sacred for what and by what? Will the rats and woodlice respect its shell? Will the timbers never rot and the stones never loosen? How is it possible to confer what is not theirs to give?

Away with this folly that believes there is a time and place for religious exemplification! As well choose day or hour in which to be clean or chaste! Such meetings would be well enough, but they involve too much of insincerity in the required professions. The affected solemnity of a mute assembly, so sanctimonious in expression and so humble in pose, while receiving its weekly holy drench, is not merely amusing—it is pitiable!

Any creed which must resort to theatrical effect in form or ceremonial, cheapens itself in the eyes of all who have outgrown respect for man's flimsy grandeur. Do its adherents think to deceive some chained God who

cannot peer beyond church confines? No Deity unable to penetrate their shallow artifice is worthy even their homage. Can they really think to flatter a divinity by artificial intoning, robes, candles, painted dolls, pinch-beck and veneer? How like it all is to heathen rite and barbaric symbolism!

The present religious forms of the more civilized communities simply fill a narrow weekly gap, grudgingly allowed between work and recreation. They play a very passive part where people have desires that mortgage practically all the time that necessity spares. They are therefore limited in their active interference to christening at birth, assistance at marriage, closing the grave and entreating for church attendance at least once a week.

As to the christening, it is a relic of past mummery, neither necessary nor amusing. When exercised on infants it arouses no recognition. It belongs to the past that sanctioned public washing of feet—a custom now obsolete, that had better reason for continuation as it involved some practical benefit. None should assume the right to pledge a helpless infant to that in which it has no decision. The religion which endeavours to instill a favourable prejudice before the age of reason is more artful than confident.

As to marriage, it existed before Priest or Bible. Christianity can hardly claim its conception or improvement. The God of Moses recognized Polygamy, and apparently winked at much open infidelity. Christ practically ignored the subject as of trifling import, and

Paul openly advised a single life. The Church has granted itself much extra authority by its attempt to regulate this very natural custom.

If ever a church has use, it is when death bereaves, and comfort is wanting; yet even here, in its natural field, it is of little actual assistance. The hired officiator finds no spur in the thankless task of plastering aching hearts with platitudes. He must illogically appeal for trust in the very omnipotent one who is supposed to have designed the immediate sorrow. The grief that finds its vent in sobs, proves that suspicion will not let the heart rejoice in the unselfish knowledge that the gates of future bliss have opened for the loved one. Faith yields when brought to face this test; and no wonder, for it is not faith but fear.

While our common funereal customs are not all prescribed by ritual, they are certainly not prevented by the church. Funerals are a financial blight in all religious lands. The starving Indian coolie mortgages his posterity to the Bunniah, or money-lender, to honour his dead father, while the poor Catholic of enlightened America sees his savings dwindle for the Mass, the hired carriages and the cold marble slab. The ghoulis preliminary horrors of the professional undertaker defy description, and after deadly action of the decomposing remains breeds poison germs to spread by wind and stream, the mind refuses to dwell upon the subject. Sentiment is thus vitiating our vitality and making earth more or less of a plague-spot. Many men, serene in life from goodly record, turn to gruesome murderers in their coffins. Cremation or chemical dissolution is the only hope of threatened civilization in thickly popu-

lated regions. If the Church had not made man's body sacred, we might have long since profited by this change.

As to church attendance, the present custom implies the gathering together of people for mutual admiration, the partaking of automatic ritual, a silent respect for commonly pedantic sermonizing and the solace of hired music to temper the annoyance. The poor abused spirit that is supposed to turn an attentive ear, thus not only has to bear repetition of printed service weekly and yearly for centuries, but hears it from countless points of simultaneous attack. He must be fond of the study of comparative elocution. Those hearts which need the promptings of prayer-books could copy the Chinese praying machine with advantage, or better yet pray by phonograph.

Sermonizing often represents honest, scholarly effort, yet it is a grievous waste of energy. Congregations would be far better served if ministers would trade sermons, each writing about one a year with plenty of preparation and reflection, using their extra time to some other good purpose. Poor communities could purchase the very best of printed originals and have one of their number read them aloud to the rest. Has the Church not yet learned the plain and pertinent applications of the art of printing? Each noble in former days had a jester as well as a priest, but a few cents will now supply pages of jokes to any one having the taste for them. Why not let those who choose stay at home and read their sermons also from books or other publications? More careful attention would certainly be secured by such a process. It might be better to allow the individual larger scope as an active religious exponent. His-

tory tells of countries that in times past hired outside warriors to fight for them—we know the result.

The Sabbath continues as an element of chosen routine since it furnishes an expedient rest and also change. It was originally intended that the day should be given over to elaborate observances of a more or less arduous nature, but humanity's protest against them has been of practical avail. There is still more or less of annoyance in the present requirements, but they are easily evaded by those bold enough to defy conventionality.

Religion should associate with the problems of daily life, rather than be reserved for a special time. Too many of our Seventh-Day devotees feel absolved from further consideration of their moral responsibilities during the following week.

Many are so grateful for the vacation from routine labour afforded by Sunday that they unconsciously thank their religion for its favours. Possibly we might have had a holiday every fifth day were it not for the old fable of Genesis. This nervous, over-excited age must have relaxation, and would certainly have insisted on it without religious consent.

The Puritan deduction that Religion and Enjoyment are at war with each other, still finds expression. Innocent amusement is often made impossible on this day of rest. Pleasures that involve labour from those thus cheated of their share in the holiday might reasonably be limited; but the individual should hardly allow restriction in lines that would meet approval at any other time. One twenty-four hours is no more sanctified than

another. Laws may exist, but laws may be changed. Even if approved by a majority, they are not necessarily inviolate. The majority may have ugly wives and conservative ideas as to change of underwear. They should hardly assume to bar unions of attractive pairs for that reason, or send detectives to poke into our washtubs.

The desirability of a church organization and meeting place for those of social proclivities is evident, although there is no need for copying olden forms. A church building should be constructed with a view to fitness alone, in the simple dignity of utility—no Phallic spire to symbolize an obscene origin, no Gothic gargoyles or vain attempts at architectural solemnity! The lavish waste of wealth so often found in buildings consecrated to a charity-loving Lord by a poverty-stricken community is evidence of the unholy vanity of those who thus confiscate their victim's savings. Many a poor Catholic village invests a total in its cathedral that would double the home comfort of the entire membership. While it may awaken pride for the single achievement, the grandeur that is above one's means should not allow unnecessary sacrifice.

There will be time enough for men to think of magnificence, ornament and style when necessity, comfort and cleanliness have become universally cared for. It is a most warped desire that enjoys its hour in cushioned pew gazing through stained glass or at gilded tracery, when offset by the week of cramped discomfort in a cheerless homestead.

Let the church be as convenient, as large, as well appointed as necessary. Let it furnish a means for social

gathering, for community of discussion or for rational amusement at the proper times ; but do not have it a monument of dead wealth, fit only for limited purpose and restricted possibility.

Think of what a church edifice might be : think of what it might contain. First of all a large, bright, well-ventilated hall or amphitheatre, where utility is studied above mere show or style, and where all necessary appliances are at hand for the lecturer who demonstrates by fact, as well as for the orator who convinces by logic. In the rest of the building there could be smaller meeting places, library, reading rooms and conveniences for supplying all or any of the reasonable wants of people gathered together in mutual association. Mental enlightenment should be varied by amusements and social functions, so that the structure would seem alive and serving a purpose at all times.

Such a building is practically a clubhouse for those of concordant mental proclivities. Club life is one of the evolutions of modern civilization that is spreading with increasing strength. People are drawn together by all manner of associations. What would be more natural than an organization founded on the basis of unison of religious thought, especially thought trending toward concerted action for mutual improvement? If mere agreement in choice of athletic amusement may give growth to housed organizations throughout the land, co-ordination of world-purpose in its broadest sense could certainly prove equally constructive.

The present custodians of public morals need not necessarily be found unavailable in a new arrangement of

ways and means. A working head is quite essential to any organized plan of accomplishment. The main executive may have duties more like those of a business manager than a paid example—and be quite relieved by the change. Those communities too poor in worldly goods to properly afford an efficient head would better struggle bravely on in self-reliant co-operation, rather than continue the present plan of slowly starving some unfortunate cleric. Even where mistaken self-abasement rests content without complaint, the common honesty which likes to pay in full for services rendered should prevent the sacrifice. Many an under-fed minister is expected to furnish a continuous example of high thinking and noble living for pay that would be scorned by an indifferent bricklayer. His fee for uniting man and woman for life may be less than that charged for tuning a piano or putting a washer in the kitchen pump. Were custom to allow these public servants to render a better equivalent, the error of their recompense would penetrate the general mind with greater force.

Courses of sermons are desirable only when actually of interest to those listening. Such instruction, or entertainment, should rest entirely on its merits, without the false support of those who now bore themselves in the fancied spirit of duty. Human interest can always be aroused by legitimate methods. If an appeal awakens no response, the fault is in its substance or manner of delivery. The new religion that reveres truth will despise the deceit which often seems to sanction an annoyance. Even the altruism that pretends to enjoy, in order to fool those needing a lecture, adopts a rather forced method. The pose of complacent examples incites the jeer of the scoffer oftener than the admiration of the derelict.

It is impractical to assume that unvarying method may be used for all places, times and peoples. The Church may have a social utility in some communities while others have too much of social function without it. We should be allowed perfect freedom in the expression of religious feeling, and the results are not necessarily to be noted on Sundays alone.

A present church is open to anyone who wishes to enter, thus presenting a social pathway for the pushing stranger and the ambitious female. Such laxity is by no means logical and not always wise. While one imperfect individual might be bettered by association with many of higher development, it is also true that one rotten apple will corrupt a whole bin. A well meaning religious community once deliberately assumed the reformation of a poor yet pretty fallen woman, thus saved from the further persecution of a large city. After several of the male members had eagerly endeavoured to win individual honour by active personal interest in the case, their wives sternly interfered and drove the luckless female back to her erstwhile haunts. The right of selection is a privilege authorized by Nature, and where is there a better authority? The right of expulsion is equally a necessity.

The economical value of a correct start is often incalculable. The rudimentary constitution of a new organization should be so plain and practical as to prevent future chance for misconception. While majority rule is a good basis of adjustment in such a body, it were well that authority be given by its members to selected heads, confessedly more efficient than their average.

The questions of means is next in importance to that of ways. Financial assistance becomes an acute necessity in this commercial age. Contributions to religious uses may not be forced, and a head tax could not possibly raise the necessary revenue. It might be well to allow those giving the greater sums to have a proportionate voice in the uses of the funds, to thus partially cancel the obligation.

Many a well planned scheme fails for want of proper financiering. Most of the present churches lead a hand-to-mouth existence, being reduced at times to rather questionable methods of avoiding bankruptcy. Shiftlessness is always undignified, and generally demoralizing. While no voluntary association may be guaranteed a fixed income, it is possible to lay aside a certain sum each year for an emergency fund, providing the payment to the reserve be made from the first yearly receipts rather than from a surplus, possibly left over at the end. If such a sum were rigidly kept intact as an income-yielding investment, the accumulation would in time provide the entire revenue required. The world has seen much danger in the past from wealth acquired by religious bodies, but we may have possibly gained more wisdom in the meanwhile. None should object to the amassing of sufficient competence to at least insure the self-respect of comfortable means.

And when this new church shall be organized, let its object be the gaining of new knowledge, and not the driving of rusty falsities into penetrable brains. Let free discussion clear the truth rather than allow any one chosen dictator to lay down the law. The old cocksure

assertive method must give way to the modesty that knows we learn anew each day.

But let not planned effort fade while strength is wasted in mere mental speculation. One thing accomplished is worth more than a thousand theories about the way it should be done. Consultation should result in activity. The world is slave to those who do, being led like a bull by a nose ring if pulled with unflinching persistence. The wish to elevate and educate and interest is well advised, but cultivation is purposeless if not creative of utility.

We may then fairly conclude that a new faith should be

Progressive—

Free from restraint or dogma—

Without compulsory forms—

With utilitarian ends—

With expedient constitution—

With willingness to learn.

Honest aims, unfettered by form, superstition or timidity, may even within our day start a church toward which a man may wend his way, free from the fear of that inward judge so long accustomed to call him humbug. Another century of enlightenment should eliminate that Sunday pose, that *mark my goodness* air, put on in the morning with the clean shirt and the black coat. Some day we shall be ready to let the world see us as we are—but not until we have cast aside pretence and dethroned impossible ideals. Perhaps it were well to analyze yet further in the realm of inherited thought, before being sure that all that incommodes us has been swept away.

CHAPTER IX.

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NATURAL SOURCES OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

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*“Nobody doubted the existence of the Deity till they set to work to prove it.”—COLLINS.*

## CHAPTER IX.

### NATURAL SOURCES OF THE SUPERNATURAL.

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WHEN prisoners escape from confinement, their newborn freedom is more or less bewildering from the varied opportunity offered their activities. Thus those who have left religious dogma behind them are more or less uncertain, as to just what course of thought to choose. While the old religion may be discarded, the vague hereditary suggestions common to many human minds may still remain. Finality of reasoning demands that each doubt be cleared, and that each question be answered—by rational theory at least.

The question of the existence of a higher governing power thus presents itself as the first great problem. The fact that we may have laughed at former idealization of such a possibility has little relevance to the actuality of such a being.

Those of us now living have never even pretended to see, hear, smell, taste or physically touch anything of divine semblance. Few will assume to have been otherwise aware of its presence. Those who assert belief have no proof that can be considered practical or trustworthy. In fact, it seems quite probable that the present

human mind might never have known such a conception if it had not been transmitted from the ages of primitive ignorance, that thus furnished an easy solution for the mysterious. The inertia of primal impulse sustains much of error, mentally as well as physically.

Even to-day millions of the educated believe in a God, often after denying all religious interpretation. The general principle of Deity is thus widely diffused, being too great to spurn, too aged to mock at. Its majesty of tradition shall not overwhelm the Truth-seeker, however, nor blind his vision. Human trust is often strongest when irrational.

The proof of a God is thought secure by various forms of reasoning. Conciseness demands that we deal with each in turn. They include:—

The evidence of the Bible and other historical traditions—

The evidence of the world itself, as exemplifying a governing creative power—

The apparent continued intervention of an influence that is cognizant of our motives—

The unsolved mysteries in mental phenomena that seem to indicate an extraneous force.

It is certainly fair to assume as a start, that the popular ideal of a divine being may be defined as the creator of all things, the omnipotent master of active forces, the arbiter of present and future punishment and reward and a guardian of morality whose aim is betterment and whose end is perfection; truly an interesting possibility,

yet hardly so necessary that we should invent it if non-existing, as Robespierre suggested.

The new religion will be glad to consider any view of unknown possibilities that seemingly appeals by logic and experience, even if it does not fully meet its hopes or fit its plans. It certainly cannot afford to load itself with burdens, however, merely to be in sympathy with those from whom it has designedly separated itself.

We must advance carefully, patiently, surely. One foot in the right direction is worth miles of vague wandering. After having taken the liberty of criticism, we have courted similar treatment from our heirs. Shall the future ages look back at our spiritual conceptions with the same superior smile with which we contemplate the heathen, prostrate before his wooden idol? They will, so long as we cling to visionary absurdities, and trust the superstitions of a crude and ignorant past. We have no equal excuse in inexperience, as we proclaim with pride our new found right of individual reflection. Shall we then tamely submit to that future judgment with our heads hidden, ostrich-like in the sand, well knowing the derision, pity, or even contempt with which such an attitude will be regarded; or shall we respect known truth in preference to a suspicious inheritance? Not that we must deny everything that cannot now stand rigid test. We must leave the future some scope in unravelling the mysteries of existence, and for the present simply discard the proven errors, accept the proven facts and carefully investigate the unrevealed, with no haste of judgment either in acceptance or denial.

## TRADITIONS—

As to the Bible, it has already been considered and found unreliable from start to finish. Every verse that attests the definite acts by which divinity positively asserts itself, is unauthenticated and of doubtful character. In fact, the higher criticism of broad religious minds retains nothing to convey one satisfactory proof. Educated adherents to the Christian faith do not now believe that the world was created in six days, that a flood was designedly let loose, that Lot's wife turned to a pillar of salt, or that definite spoken language came down from the clouds. Yet if they throw out such tales they are left with but a hazy conception, originating within some human mind that drew false conclusions from the natural phenomena that are now understood. As pointed out before, there is fully as much to evidence the existence of devils and evil spirits as of Gods and angels. Other early religious volumes are certainly no more credible than the Bible, so their dissection were a waste of time. Those who wrote this class of literature simply prolonged traditions originating before their day, starting they knew not when or how. Each age jeers at those who try to claim an active proof of divinity within its own time. Religious superstitions, like wine, improve with age.

And still the unshaken faith of innumerable ages in an unseen God grows strangely marvelous when considering the scarcity of acknowledged intercourse between the spheres. The countless prayers of trustful mortals are ever sterile so far as concrete fact may determinately demonstrate. The glamour of a legendary past alone suffices as proof to those who refuse to credit

present claims to miracle or divine communication. Can time alone lend plausibility to the impossible?

They who trust the superstitions of a dead remoteness, while suspicious of a living present, are fettered by an ancient tie of ancestor worship which escaped the pruning knife of progress. In times when all knowledge was acquired by personal experience, the aged sire left awe for hoary wisdom as a patrimony. At the modern rate of learning, the educated youth finds knowledge at his reach that makes the period of childhood obsolete. The world of thought and action must stagnate if the fear of discerning error in a revered past denies the right of criticism or research. When advancing something must be left behind! Progress is a purely relative term. The incomplete surroundings of our early progenitors absolve us from strict agreement with their conclusions. The backward glance, if carried far enough, may find our species dangling from the tree limbs. Not that the hangman's noose is found in every family line, but rather that most useful caudal appendage of which cruel evolution has despoiled us.

Early theology is naturally on a plane with primitive science and childish knowledge. Conceptions of destructive Gods commingle with distorted deductions from the manifestations of all natural forces. Minds of comparatively recent times, when chemistry seemed magic and disease deviltry, might seem perfectly rational in their acceptance of miracle and active Deities. Can the present plane of culture, however, continue the association of stale mysticism with fresh fact? Would we yoke primitive ignorance with enlightened intelligence?

History is nothing but repetition. Tradition is valueless if not supported by what is near at hand. The existence of a God depends either on the truth of theory or evidence. We are better equipped to reason than the earlier logicians, and their evidence defeats itself. The God that suited our ancestors died with them, so far as we may know.

### CREATION—

The universe exists. This fact has actually suggested the ingenious theory that it must have been made. If constructed, it logically required elements of construction, yet where were these obtained? The problem is not satisfactorily solved by the assumption that they were evolved from nothing by a being existing for all time.

The human mind cannot comprehend infinity, time, space or creation. Then why attempt to define them? As a basis for logic it is simply necessary to assume that what exists now has existed for all time. We can no more understand a past always than a future forever ; but we are forced to accept them as tangible, indisputable realities.

A God is either a spirit, a force, a thing of bulk or a combination of all three. The last supposition is most popular, and yet if bulk be included and signifies matter, this being must have been formed from existing things by the design or chance of forces existing previously.

The majority of minds confine their thought to a divine unit, as otherwise they would risk a conflict of

authority. Those who acknowledge the devil must either believe in a pre-existing creative power or confess that their present creator was most curiously paradoxical in making himself unnecessary trouble. There is no logical reason why there may not be millions of graduated Gods, as well as one. They who believe in but one are perhaps too lazy to complicate their conceptions.

If a divine power created the universe which is within our scope of observation, he did it by degrees and with no show of haste. The space now dotted with myriads of material specks possibly evidences the disintegration of some great primary whole. Spectral analysis proves that all the known universe is composed of similar chemical elements. As the moon is a fragment of the earth, which is in turn but an outcast of the sun, so each star and wandering body probably traces its paternity back through a constantly diminishing grouping, until the original unit is found. That primary bulk may have become absolutely disunited, or it may still exist some mammoth entity, beyond the range of vision and beyond our scale of comprehension in dimensions. Its whirling fragments owe their individuality to pure accidents of force. No plan or forethought is evident in their design or arrangement. Why may we not also be abortions of chance without significance or purport?

A God anything like us in construction must have been developed on a planet; and if affected by laws of evolution it must have had sufficient time in which to outgrow our own capacities, if now superior to us. This would mean that it had originated on some small speck of matter, cooled earlier than this world of ours. Such

a being would simply represent a higher order of animal, and would naturally prefigure swarms of them somewhere in their natural environment.

If we conceive of a God as a force, fund of emotion, or reservoir of will, we find it difficult to realize its individual purpose, or think of it as a sympathetic personality. A God without intent conveys no comprehensibility. We can hardly adore the indefinite. We appreciate the existence of heat, light, and other forms of molecular activity, but only savages give them personality. If we treat this God as soul or spirit we must consider it either as a kindling flame of soul-energy, without human character, or think of it as a power that experiences sympathetic reactions from the activities of its children. As to its influence, we may judge of its possible relation to humanity only by a study of results, and should therefore reflect on our past history as read in the deductions of scientific investigations.

Our world was originally gaseous or molten on leaving its parental mass. The difference between its present temperature and that of the sun argues a degree of heat in the latter's ancestors of so incredible a nature as to possibly mean incomprehensible diffusion. Life, as we understand it, can exist only under temperatures that permit matter to solidify, or at least to liquify. The combination which instills a directing force into inert matter must have been due to some peculiar chemical activity, generated by the simultaneous presence of the proper compounds and the proper conditions; or to some unknown association of a still undiscovered life-element with the same basic materials.

The line between the living and the dead is by no means easily drawn. Life is simply the higher state of sensation. On our planet it starts from the union of an already active and restless protozoa with an over-anxious ovum. Why necessarily assume that their union is different from the similar blend of chemical atoms which form countless other useful combinations? Carbon, for instance, forms the base of every animal and vegetable creation, and yet enters also into the combination of steel. In one form it is a diamond and in another a lump of soft coal. Combined with certain albuminoids it continues activity, if fed with air and water, giving form to the phenomena we designate as life. Why create a mystery to explain, simply because we have not yet discovered the exact formula? Even should we succeed in producing lower forms of life from test tubes, there are many who would say we were simply copying God, and by no means disproving his former handiwork.

In its primitive condition our world was so impregnated with free moving forces that chemical action was constantly taking place. The absorption of heat during each change helped in the gradual solidification of the earth's outer crust, a process which brought about a temperature that could sustain a cell of life. When or where this marvel of nature started we may not yet precisely determine, though research and reason would seem to prove that the entire animal and vegetable life on this planet might have originated from one self-propagating unit. We trace the human race back to its birthplace in Asia Minor, and Darwin discovers evidence which proves the migration of other animals from this portion of the eastern continent. As animals are sustained by plant life it must have preceded them. We

may even hazard a shrewd guess in supposing that animals are a development from the same source as plants themselves ; for certain higher botanical species can exist apart from the soil, entrap and digest insect prey, and even have nerves to contract their members at a touch. Their manner of birth, life, propagation and death, is very similar to that of creeping and crawling things. The higher forms are even superior to those of the lower animals in specific instances. The lower we trace each one of the divisions of life the more closely we find them related. The difference between the original cells is hardly distinguishable. The variety of species is due to accident, chance or selection, with continual heredity ringing the changes among the three. The theory of Darwin is becoming as sure an axiom as Newton's law of gravitation. When the village school-boy may see inactive water spawn acquire shape, color, solidity, motion, and then tail, legs and arms, until that very fair counterfeit of man, the frog, is produced, it takes little stretch of the imagination to understand how our perfected species was itself developed through ages from the original cell. The fact that a noble and ornamental tail has gradually been made useless, and therefore to disappear with the lengthening and strengthening of the legs in this marsh wonder, proves how easy it has been for our own race to lose its similarity to Simian ancestry.

One pair of unmolested animals may crowd the limits of a continent with their progeny, yet each new being has an equal reservoir of energy, generally speaking, and the population of the world increases. The life-force, then, either feeds on material sustenance in the same way that a fire kindled by one spark may consume the fuel of the world ; or it drains from some surrounding

medium of unseen energy that furnishes continued vigour from the same source which supplied the first unit.

A God of volition might purposely have kindled the flame that started the creation of breathing beings, or a God, itself a life fund, may have split off a sliver of itself for the purpose. Either of these conceptions is most moderate compared with the old-time ideal of a skillful workman fashioning worlds and things from an abundant mud-heap—or, to be even more fantastical, from nothing at all!

People talk very glibly of a Creation, not realizing that the only association which the term brings to their minds is that of a change of form. The creation of an architect, for instance, is a certain peculiar arrangement of building material according to a preconceived or gradually evolved plan. The creation of the universe, however, is popularly thought of without appreciation of the participating elements.

A world that illustrates no primitive selection, but rather the rupturing centrifugal result of blind force, evidently waited for its God to take notice until it was ready for his experiments. The belief that he then made happy combinations of its surface elements must grant that the ability to combine was there present, for we know that the same elements are parts of worlds in which he has evidently shown no interest. Like a clever chemist, he may have discovered the marvellous possibilities in elementary matter, but if we are to think that he himself created the elements, we must agree that he chose a strange way in which to let them arrange themselves for future service.

The conceit of human beings often shuns the supposition that they are simply an evolution of animal life. Mental superiority serves as their one proof of a distinct and separate origin. They certainly may not find another in the material comparison of flesh and bones.

The admitted preeminence of brain is not necessarily convincing, for we find gradations in this line between the dog and the pig. Men's recent development of imagination cannot erase the fact that they inhabited the world for ages before showing any marked mental ascendancy over their companions of other species. Stronger beasts hunted them with impunity before their accidental application of grasp found aid from club and missile. Ants lived in spacious dwellings while men slept in the crack of a rock. Bees gathered stores of future provender while whole tribes perished by famine. Birds built nests for anticipated offspring while human bipeds wondered in perplexity at the coming responsibilities of parentage. The fact that men have creative skill is not sufficient evidence of superiority in view of the spider's web, the beaver's dam, and the faithful trained service rendered by ponderous elephants or degenerate mules. Many a dog shows high reasoning capacity, and apes may imitate us with astonishing fidelity. Those who insist upon the divine mould of human form have not as yet explained the anatomical traces of our prehensile tails, nor the still stranger reminiscences of the gills in our necks. Those who deny evolution must find an answer to that searching inquiry—why did our queer and curious God put teats upon a male? The answer is evident—he did not. Even if wishing to experiment at the start, he would hardly have retained discarded trials through so many centuries. Nature has no quick authority by which to change her

methods. In some stage we were bisexual. It is figured that life has existed in this world in some form or other for about one-hundred million years. We have had plenty of time in which to undergo strange transformations in the meanwhile.

It is roughly estimated that man in his present structure has existed for about three million years. History, however, knows only ten thousand years of his organized effort, and only a portion of that time through any recorded chronicle. It therefore took probably over ninety-nine per cent. of the period of existence for preparation before men began to be appreciably distinguished from the lower animals. Where were their Gods in the meantime? Not manifesting much impatience by counting the minutes, certainly.

A proper appreciation of this tedious wait makes it difficult to understand how progress could have been so slow, even if we disallow divine assistance altogether. We take savages from their naked life in tropical jungles, and in a few years their grandchildren are studying Latin and writing compositions on Constitutional government. Look at our progress in the last hundred years! We find more of wonder at the delay than in the achievement.

The popular conception of Darwinism, and therefore of evolution, mistakenly supposes that men are claimed to have been descended from the present tribes of monkeys; and ignorance even errs so far as to infer that present animals may evolve into men. No wonder that in demolishing such absurdities scientists have been hampered in making further progress. A monkey may

develop additional reasoning capacity, but so may a hippopotamus. Man once had a tail and hairy hide, 'tis true ; perhaps he was once less intelligent than a baboon. He was a distinct type by himself, however, back to the time when an ancestor fathered his present monkey half brother. This may be true too even of the hippopotamus, if we go back far enough. In fact, all animals had common ancestry at some time. Their structure proves it, their instincts prove it, and logical deduction from the preserved evidence of former ages makes it certain. Man has simply been distinguished by the chance of brain development, while the elephant is favoured by extraordinary growth of proboscis, and the ram gladdened by excess of virility.

The human animal illustrates its superior development of brain-power by the gradually expanded thought dome. Different vertebrates are graded by their comparative brain room. A striking corollary is noticed in the gradual recession of the jaw as the frontal bone protrudes, showing that the history of mammals is marked as an evolution from the prognathous state. The ichthyosaurus could easily bite off more than he could chew, proving the incompleteness of his design. Man, having reached a stage where mechanism grinds and cuts for his service, merely needs enough dental service to lend a charm to his smile.

It is more than probable that the whole superiority in man's mental development is due to the accidental ownership of fingers. It was only when the man-animal had picked up a sharp stone that he began to carve, and as he made things he developed new capacity, felt the delights of ownership, and knew the means by which to domineer. Men gave no evidence of more

than animal intelligence before the Stone Age, and they never would have had a stone age had their limbs been tipped with hoofs.

Those who think their God has reached the apex of development in his creation, simply because our skin is fairly smooth and our visage fairly intelligent, have little power of imagination. Could we roam in other planets we might find higher beings evolved into centaurs, mermen or even serpents. The disuse of physical members certainly trends toward this last development. Those of us who may be honoured by the grant of modesty can surely realize the crudities and imperfections that prove us immature and certainly ill-balanced.

Our hasty absorption in mental fields has created desires and conditions far in advance of physical adaptability. It has taken thousands of years to even modify a cheek bone. Nature is still lagging in her provisions. She never originally intended, for instance, that child-bearing women should walk upright, to thus bring heavy strains on feeble muscles. We are still annoyed by useless generosity in appendix and spleen. Some day all organs will be adjusted to conditions and requirements, and we can hardly imagine the result. Slowly but surely the logical results of tool use will encroach upon our present functions, the decay of unused tissue being the price we shall pay for our conveniences. Future evolution will gradually despoil us of hair, teeth, toes—kill what little remains of our sense of smell, ruin our now defective eyesight, and leave us with skinny claws and protruding abdomen, the bursting skull o'er weighting all, a glabrous, edentalous terror.

And strange as it may seem, this fearsome ideal will believe itself superior to us in beauty and general attractiveness, even as we glorify pallid complexions, transparent skin, soft flesh, small feet, tiny mouth or ear, and muscleless curves. Of course our men are supposedly above consideration of such vanities, yet we still find a certain slender grace distinguished by admiration as against the more muscular clumsiness of the stronger type. Would the brown, hairy male of prehistoric time see aught to esteem in our pale, slim students or swelling gourmands? Would he envy round shoulders, hollow chests, shrunken calves or flat insteps? And his mate, with her swarthy tan, her supple flesh, her abundant energy and generous proportions—could she logically feel jealous of a frizzled coiffure, a pinched waist, a flat lined form, a deformed foot, and a general type of fairness doomed to fade before the dawn of middle age? No! Evolution of physical traits is receding with the use of artificial aids. Our strength is pawned to satisfy our mental desires. We are threatened by dyspepsia and exhaustion. Our expressions betray our worn out emotions, and our carriage is evidence of our wasting vigour. Our women are worn with cares that trace their lines where all may see. Once in a while we note a vision of female loveliness that seems ideal, yet the aid of deceptive art is usually present to betray our eyesight. The perfect female form, is found in statues of a distant age. Artists and sculptors now despair of finding a model worthy to supply the full detail of one complete figure.

Within a few years compulsory surgery will be as common as compulsory vaccination. We shall have to pass examination before a board qualified to cure defects

as far as possible. Even to-day the children of the well-to-do are carefully pruned, clipped, straightened and forced into conformity with propriety. They wear jack-screws between their teeth, iron braces on their legs, leather harness around their shoulders, side supports in their shoes, and their anatomy is well acquainted with the antiseptic knife and scissors. If one century of luxury has thus crippled its progeny, what can we reason for the future? Perhaps the truth might stun us could we foresee.

Many Christian teachers whose education has involved the necessary appreciation of scientific theories, waste much earnest effort in the hope of harmonizing present truth with past impossibility. Drummond, for instance, completely yielded to evolution, yet thought its absence of plain evidence of divinity, which created matter with such skill and foresight that it is able to reach its end without a schedule. He could as well have credited his Lord with also having designedly created the primitive atoms that should in proper time assemble in the form of a Drummond to explain this hypothesis.

Practically all of the more noted atheists of the present day have been drawn from the ranks of scientists, and especially from the biologists. Thus those who have groped nearest to the problem of life have at the same time wandered farthest from the idea of a Creator. This is certainly significant. Scientists have ever defined the proper limitations of divine power, and their work is drawing to a close as the boundaries contract to the vanishing point.

In a recent symposium of eminent men of various callings and nationalities the question of the selection of the ten most influential books of the nineteenth century was at issue. Every one of the judges chose Darwin's *Origin of Species* for one of the ten, and this was the only work so universally honoured. This is the author who gave us a comprehensive explanation of the changes in the inhabitants of the world in opposition to the theory of divine experiments. Nature still withholds many secrets to puzzle men's uneducated faculties, but we shall soon read all her riddles. It has taken millions of years to evolve the complicated system which we are endeavouring to define, with only a few centuries of genuine science by which to comprehend. Even in their present stage geology, biology and a dozen other ologies are constantly adding force to the conclusion that Gods have not been a necessary factor in the physical development of the universe, at least, and if active have followed natural lines so closely as to have escaped attention.

#### INTERVENTION.—

Many think they see a continuance of the handiwork of the unseen God in the constant development of the world and its inhabitants. If present conditions show intelligent creative power instead of the independent action of unalterable forces, past conditions are equally due to design. Go back then, and credit this faultless artisan with moulding the crude masses of repulsive bulk which floundered through a mire of rotting vegetation in the Reptilian Age. Can we ascribe intelligent conception to a maker who revelled in slime, decay and brainless monstrosity? or even passing by the countless imperfections of millions of years and arriving at the finished wonder, Man—how can we flatter his designer

when even our limited minds easily note alarming errors and long for the unattainable? It will be time enough to marvel when evolution lessens the many repulsive necessities of present existence and develops a cleaner type of animal. It will be time to see the art of a designer when the world is free from foulness, filth, disease and parasites. The universe as a slow development is curious but reasonable. As a finished masterpiece it is most crude in execution and hardly brilliant in ideal, if man be its fulfillment.

The ideal of a meddling God found its origin in the brain that thought the human form a copy of the divine. A God with arms and fingers could hardly keep his hands from contact with material things. None of us can now conceive of the presence of a material God, undetected by our normal senses. The God of bulk so often pictured, stays beyond the range of our most powerful telescopes. Those who prefer to worship a spiritual being may not explain how it can seriously interfere with matter or its changes; in fact, the God of the New Testament admittedly sent rain *on the just and the unjust*. None have the right, however, to assume that the portrayal of an unknown to their minds is true, whether they choose an omnipotent creator and arbiter or merely a sympathetic onlooker. Why not as well believe that the heathen idol-carver has genuine inspiration in his conventional depiction of a fat, squat, many-armed monstrosity?

The ancient idea of a God that could do all things was naturally associated with the idea of a being who knew all things—even the utmost detail of a never-ending future. Such a conception leaves the world

without a purpose. The end should have been created first if that were possible. What amusement or interest could result from the playing of a plot by mere puppets strung on wires, deluded with the fancied possession of will? If we are not free agents within our necessary limits the whole history of the world is a gigantic lie and fraud. Even the mortification of discovery would not be personal, but a foregone conclusion of the planner. Absurdity can suggest nothing more inane and vexatious.

This ideal of extravagant power is conceived by the sense of ownership which delights in flattering itself by laud of possessions. The men who choose a God pick one that shall reflect credit to their acumen. They grant omnipotence as if that were the only possible advance beyond their own marvellous faculties, and declare themselves heirs of the universe as God's nearest relatives. No doubt the dominating type of animalculæ in some fermenting grain of matter is equally confident. That vegetable rot is a world to them, even as our own mud-crusted globe assumes exaggerated importance to us. We may some day discover that our corner of space is but as a molecule compared to what exists beyond. Size is only relative. We have not fathomed the scale of the unknown.

Many think they trace a divine order of things since they are able to solve the apparent reason for each affliction in noting a correlative dereliction. If their child dies they admit they have neglected some fawning rite, and if they miss disease they flatter their conceit by proud proof of divine assistance. The same class will wisely explain that the Lord created one bug to prey upon another bug—although it were far simpler to

have had no bugs at all. Punishment for the pure is proof of their nobility. Crime exists to furnish a hideous example. Dirt is allowed to aid the sale of soap. We have one mouth because another would be superfluous, and two eyes because—well, because!

This style of reasoning ends in absurdity. It is equally applicable to one working in direct opposition to the ideals of the credulous. The author of this work, for instance, can claim that divine agency prompted his aged grandmother to give him the Bible that has served the purpose of the present analysis. He can claim divine approval, because no fire has scorched its pages and no accident annihilated its sponsor. There is surely no personal responsibility if we are but tools.

Many think they debase their ideal if doubting its absolute power. They explain evil and error by ascribing them to a mysterious, unknown purpose. They wish to appear content under all circumstances. It might be well for such to consider that if their conception is too broad they may be dreadfully disappointed at some future time. There is always pleasure in the discovery that anticipations are more than realized, and much mortification in being forced to lessen one's aspirations.

The belief in a divine wisdom that plans all things with a benevolent intent is naturally popular with those who are temporarily fortunate. When they find themselves victims of unnecessary grief or pain, however, they can hardly bar the inevitable doubt. One caustic philosopher has claimed that a toothache is sufficient for the time being to destroy confidence. Death usually

stirs reflection in the bereaved, few being able to meet its often heartless, wanton cruelty unmoved by suspicion of incompetence in guiding powers. All that seems accidental must be intentional if Omnipotence reigns. A responsible God must not shirk responsibility. He must bear the shame of countless crimes, the grief of millions of unnecessary afflictions, the horrors of war, famine, plague and pestilence, the mortification of fruitless effort and much disloyalty from his own creations. Does the sacrificing mother in the pangs of childbirth praise her God for the unnecessary torment? Does the victim of unavoidable accident give thanks for loss of leg, or arm or eye? Will starving millions see cleverness of anticipation in their suffering? No—the religion of foreordination is only for the fortunate who find life fairly palatable. The patrician of ancient Rome might give thanks with an honest heart. Lazarus can find comfort only in the unsubstantial hope of a dubious future.

Even in this enlightened age certain men believe or profess to believe that their Deity is actually a responsible party. The commanding general telegraphs that by the help of God he has won a victory. The admiral, with eyes gazing away from his blood-stained scuppers, acknowledges divine assistance with bared head. Why may not the successful pirate or marauder also claim such partnership? By the help of God the young and brave lie bleeding on the battlefields, their splintered bones testifying to his design, their entrails trailing in disorder at his pleasure. If their God can turn the scale of fortune, shame on his tardy inclination that prolongs the slaughter! If he can lend only a faltering, undecisive aid, deny his unreliable assistance and prove the higher power of human will!

A God that gives victory also gives defeat. He assumes full responsibility for acts of peace as well as of war. He looks on unmoved while mobs burn victims, savages torture defenceless captives, ravagers despoil virginity, and slanderers destroy reputation. Either he can guide or he cannot. If he can he certainly does not show a high order of discrimination.

An example of unconscious irony was recently noticed in the public statement of a Christian missionary who related the effects of a western cyclone in which a victim was thus treated :

*When they found the poor girl that night she was still alive, though unconscious, and died almost instantly. The awful force of the wind had torn from her person everything she had on, including two rings, except one shoe. Her hair was actually whipped to rags. She had been driven through several barbed wire fences, and every bone in her body was broken. In her arms, however, and clasped tightly to her breast, was the dead body of that little infant, (not her own). Womanlike she had seized the child when she felt the shock of the storm. . . splendid example of that altruistic instinct. . . upon which religion and society depend. . . other churches. . . united . . . in doing honor to this heroic girl.*

But where was the God that those churches pray to for succor? Was he, who is believed to note the fall of each sparrow, pleased with such cruel and unnecessary torture? Even if powerless to stay the force of storms he might at least have given a mental warning that would have led her to look out of the window and then seek refuge in the cellar. This is but one of a trillion

illustrations which might be noted. This God is not God-like! Why then continue to mis-name him?

Those who bow down before some great sorrow, saying *God wills*, are like the dogs that lick the hand that strikes them. They fear to criticise that which they cannot understand, because the very evidence of cruelty makes them fear further affliction. If they are correct in their anticipation of a future life they may find, when over the border line, that the powers controlling the controllable will have scant consideration for such as wish to unload the errors of chance or stupidity at the doors of divinity. There is little of flattery in being held responsible for all the unprofitable foolishness of humanity, to say nothing of the idiosyncrasies of the elements.

If we admit intelligent intervention by an extraneous individuality, we must acknowledge its probable supervision, and even allow that it may possibly read our thoughts. We would thus be deprived of the sense of privacy, and give up more or less of our independence.

We who have learned the delight of self-reliance, have little, if any, use for the aid of a guiding influence. We would soon grow restive under surveillance and direction. Even those who assume to actually believe in an ever present detective are not to be restrained from indulging in a vigorous mental revolt at times, and they hardly keep an ever alert ear awaiting advice from above.

The only records of God-intervention disturbing the processes of natural forces, have been proved erroneous

by the investigations of geologists. The convulsions of nature that were common in olden times were either due to easily explainable causes or left no trace to prove what occasioned them. We have killed mystery by exploration and perfection of means of communication. Education is no longer astounded by physical phenomena. So far as we may learn from unprejudiced sources, the primal laws of matter and force have been universally constant. Planets never disobey the elements that mark their courses, gravitation is never reversed, chemical action is never variable. Nature does not rupture continuity to astound her insignificant insects.

Many believing in the omnipotence of their divinity, do not permit themselves to realize this fact. They consider him capable of replacing the shattered fragments of his playthings and of thus destroying traces of event to perplex future philosophers. If the Lord has in this wise manifested his wish to avoid publicity they are strangely disloyal in forcing it upon him. The wisdom of a God would not vacillate. Power is forceful in its unchangeability. Were nature's laws to have unexpected exceptions, and her causes to be barren of accustomed effects, the uncertainty of existence at times would make reasoned effort abortive. Those who expect that the elements will be controlled for their convenience, magnify their personal importance. Those who expect a watchful coddling will hardly exert themselves to any high effort. Those who pray to save their sweat put prayer at a low value of exchange. Action is the offspring of energy; impotence is bred of indifference.

Those who believe in absolute domination by divinity must construe an evil as a punishment or a test. Justice

would therefore expect inevitable penalty for every transgression. How is it then, that the unbelievers often live happy lives, getting on very well without the shelter of a Godly cloak, and prospering in a way to excite the envy of the faithful? The dark hint that their punishment will follow in a sphere where devilish ingenuity can wreak its fiendish will unhampered is hardly logical in any reasonable system of retribution. If we cannot judge known effects by known causes, reason is worthless and experience a mockery.

Is it not more plausible to suppose that if there be powers anxious to guard us they must be definitely hampered in some way that furnishes an explanation for their powerless attitude before the constant slaughter which unvarying law necessarily involves? Why should they not come to our rescue if they but could? Protection could be granted only through such constant distortion of nature as is recorded in the Old Testament. Since we have no such interference now it certainly is fair to assume that it is no longer possible. Our anxious assistants are either unequipped with physical power, or such as they may control is plainly immaterial.

This non-intervention of the possible higher power in the domain of inert matter and inherent force leads to the definite conclusion that life must be partially, if not wholly, governed by chance, making predestination impossible. Those who cannot guide events may hardly predict. Their reckoning of future events are as liable to be made abortive by miscarriage as our own. The tempest sweeps its track unmindful of the virtue of its victim. Flames devour both young and old. Piety is by no means immune.

## MENTAL CONTROL.

If we have now reduced our conclusions concerning our probable God to a basis which denies physical interference, we are left with the possibility of mental suggestion as the only evidence on which still to accept him. Certain phenomena undoubtedly exist which serve to confirm this latter belief for those content with superficial analysis, but nothing of indisputable proof has yet been revealed to deny us the right to continue our search.

The continued existence of man has seemed to furnish a proof of extraneous influence, as the conscious logic of the average being is not sufficient to annul such risks of obliteration as are due to our quarrelsome propensities, venturesome proclivities and constantly increasing necessities. Animals are more or less secure, for they instinctively shun danger and are favoured by quick maturity. Man, on the other hand, delights to test his power in conflict, is recklessly curious, and may individually slay hundreds by carelessness or intent. His artificial conditions have decimated whole countries by plagues and infections, his religions have sacrificed millions at the altar of fanaticism, and his early years are wholly dependent on the care of others.

The natural selfish struggle would have ended the race long ago, even as it has wiped out certain branches, were it not for the development of certain peculiar sentiments in the souls of thinking beings, that lead them to have consideration for the rights of others. Certain impulses also seem to symbolize the Providential element in their care of the helpless, drunkards, idiots and children. There must be something other than blind

faith that has given confidence in altruistic effort to the world's inhabitants. We are bound to recognize this unseen factor, although it might prove easier to ignore it.

There could be no intelligent control of destinies by the governing of mental impulses until the beginning of reason in the higher animals. Instinct of course impels to certain conventional ends, but unreflective animals hardly do more for progress than the trees that follow the routine of budding. There was little medium by which an extraneous force could show an influence in awakening aspirations before the development of mental recognition.

Conscious mental action always starts from an idea suggested by environment or individual itch. It analyzes and draws its deductions from evidence, and thus arrives at conclusions. It cannot evolve an unconnected thought of itself alone. Nothing is created without materials.

How may we explain the fact that such thoughts are often unaccountably presented to us independently of the above processes? How explain the steady flow of oratory which certain men may deliver without pause for reflection? How explain the inner motives that war with desire and restrict intent? If there is under such circumstances no conscious guidance, what hidden force is responsible? There is no effect without a cause.

Those who ascribe these promptings to Gods or Spirits should not ignore the possibility that they may be due to

the influence of neighbouring human minds. That one mental action unconsciously affects another is too well known to need exhaustive proof. Simple test will show that a willed thought can be easily aroused in a receptive associate whether he be conscious of the experiment or not. The phenomenon is called telepathy, and has been subjected to much recent investigation. Like many another so-called discovery its results have been unconsciously utilized for ages. The more intricate hypnotism, also practiced under various names in all corners of the globe in all ages, proves that ideas of any kind may be introduced, the conscious mind having been made absolutely passive. Without minute discussion of these matters in this present connection, it is certainly not improbable that some of our thoughts are borrowed, and those who assume that they must necessarily be transmitted from divine sources, should be able at least to prove that their truth thus received is higher than the possible human substitute.

Impulsive thought sifts through a medium which has popularly been termed conscience when related to items of conduct and morality. It is more than possible that neither Gods nor neighbours are responsible for the majority of its activities. Those who intend to trust in part or wholly to this inner guidance should certainly determine its nature so far as possible.

Were conscience invariably to its best purpose, unchanging in direction, definite in decision and unfailing in control, we might easily credit its results to something higher than our own incompleteness. The sense of duty which it arouses, however, varies strangely with race and age, suggesting a possible plurality of mentors.

We should at least expect concordant definitions of morality and religious observances from those supposed to interest themselves in our preparation for a future sphere ; and if the instigation be universal, it should certainly incite a similarity of performance. We find, however, that while various peoples are urged by this inner influence to propitiate the supposed dwellers of the outer worlds, they adopt conflicting methods. One savage wins his God's applause by strangling the unwary, while another collects their heads. Even those in our own Bible thought to please by burning meat. Conscience approves the murder of surplus female infants in certain lands ; in others there is a similar suppression of twins, which are imagined to bring bad luck if left alive. Many venerable races justify the robbery of strangers and the economy of truth. Every civilized ideal of chastity and decency has been freely outraged by religious observances in different lands, and conscience has upheld them all. They simply illustrate the heathen cunning that would purchase security from unknown evil. Such favour has been invoked by the sacrifice of life, the sacrifice of virginity and the sacrifice of wealth. Now the sacrifice of reason is demanded, and we at last protest.

Instinctive activity is not restricted alone to religious ends. None can divide one species of impulse from another so far as knowledge of its source is concerned. There is no well defined principle of right and wrong triumphant throughout all various phases and conditions. Conscience advances with evolution and is therefore bound up in it.

Why not believe that we, the proudest pupils of progression, have born within us a power at least equal to

that which teaches the cow to nibble grass and the spider to weave its web? These animals are plainly guided by inherited memories, and would it not be reasonable to suppose that we, in our more complex development, retain a memory of moral aims, with the ability to give them expression, as well as of physical necessities? Of course there are those who still believe that a God instructs each worm to wriggle and each snake to shed its skin. If thus responsible, however, he also guides the crow into our cornfields and leads each murderous bacillus unerringly to our diseased tissues.

The kick of a cow once overturned a lamp and burned a city. Thousands were made homeless, many lost their lives and the course of future planning changed for all those within the circle of disaster. Higher power could not guide the impulse of even a single domestic animal—or at least it did not. We have learned that many diseases are spread by innocent flying things. Must we suppose that they are thus used as tools for a divine purpose?

Conscience can be nothing more nor less than the combination of impulses for which our own deductive thought may not be wholly responsible. The conscience with which we start is pure heredity, and thus largely made up of the fear of results which continuous mental speculation has dreaded since the beginning of time. It shies at novelty and is suspicious of change. It has often been proved how one may conquer his conscience, although the illustration is more often pointed out when mastery means power to degrade it.

A conscience derived from a vigorous family line is by no means to be despised so long as it be kept under

proper surveillance. The very fact that we exist is evidence that the motives of our ancestors won out in conflict with those having no present lineage. It is conscience that has held the human family together in spite of internal dissension. Its code of self-preservation, which resents encroachment upon personal rights, also respects the merits of organization by which those who regard each other's rights may spare much energy for combats with material problems.

Evolution has unfortunately spared another type, whose conscience is of a widely different character. The struggle among the strong may prove which of many fit are to survive, but those who are too cowardly to struggle will survive as well, so long as they carefully avoid annihilation. It is from this class that we get the gospel of fear—and no wonder, for it has proved their security. It seems absurd to think that they could actually deify their shame, and that the attitude of awe before an unknown is considered highly commendable, when it simply evidences traits suggestive of the slinker and the coward. We may certainly feel exasperated when such as these attempt to excuse this impulse of dread, claiming that it is called into being by the undefined influence of the terrifying majesty of a dreadful dispenser of future fates.

It is well known that the majority of punished crimes are partially due to alcoholic drink. Those accustomed to consider conscience as a voice, reaching them in the hour of temptation from a divine source, must admit that it proves unavailing in competition with a most impersonal agency, that may be made by the hands of man and bought by the barrel. If a few drinks of liquor

will control a man's moral tendencies, we have a scientific measure of the value of conscience ranging from cents to dollars. It has often been asserted that few women try to protect their virtue when in an intoxicated condition, four dollars worth of champagne conquering their lifetime training and spiritual mentor together ! They evidently need at least a four dollar God to watch over them—many have enlisted only a cheap ninety-nine cent bargain store variety.

Advice that seems to guide the moral activity is hardly super-normal, since reflection in itself is but one kind of self-communion. But when the inner promptings attempt to predict future events, the results, when confirmed by actual occurrences, are certainly more difficult of dissection.

There is one well worn word in our vocabulary which is often misinterpreted. It represents so much of the unexplained that the easily satisfied rest content with merely giving it a name. Intuition covers a multitude of seeming wonders, and applies in many curious instances. It signifies a mental message, so clear and strong as to be easily distinguished from ordinary thought. Reasoning has no relevance to its action, and coincidence is not always pertinent as explanation of its many marvels. It has been known to manifest itself by sudden warnings of coming danger, unsuspected by others, and in many ways presaging and divining what could not be fathomed by ordinary mental processes. These warnings and apparent revelations are often of so positive a nature as to compel attention, and a due regard to them has upon occasions averted catastrophe and been otherwise productive of convincing results, presenting an

apparently plausible evidence of an interested agency which premeditates action with careful discrimination. In weak and irresponsible minds this faculty seems to be quite active, as if furnished as a recompense for their lack of reasoning powers.

We find an endowment akin to intuition in our animal relatives. Their instinct often scents a coming danger by senses abnormally keen, anticipates changes in temperature and atmospheric conditions, detects weaknesses in many of man's artificial structures destined to bear their weight, and otherwise surprises us by its undefined process of deciphering results. We must simply assume that some of men's known senses are also keener than reason would lead them to suspect, and that there are even other senses unconsciously active of whose presence we hardly have an inkling. It seems well proved that objects beyond the scope of eyesight have been discerned. Clairvoyance, while by no means positively analyzed, points unerringly in this direction. Intuition has not yet definitely manifested an intelligence beyond that which might be ascribed to a far-reaching vision, aided by reasonable deductive faculties. If it tries to solve the future, it is likely to fail miserably when it does not depend on present facts or proper deduction. The world is full of financial wrecks who believed themselves possessed of intuitive knowledge of the movements of stocks or the course of a roulette ball.

Even should we allow that extraneous influence could guide us through control of our impulse, it is evident that the curious combinations that bring personal danger could only be avoided anticipatively by extraordinary and apparently unreasonable actions. Safety from an

impending but unseen disaster might logically require that one should crawl down a sewer hole or shin a tree. How many would have sufficient faith to follow either impulse on a crowded thoroughfare, before the necessity should be made manifest?

Genius is another complex phenomenon which has seemed to involve divine collaboration. Telepathy could not explain this except by the proof of equally exceptional power in the vicinity. Heredity does not always account for it, as great poets, artists and inventors have been born of parents not possessing the gifts of their progeny. Many instances are known of undeveloped youth endowed by powers not acquired through education. Prophetic preachers, finished musicians and mathematical prodigies have been brought to public notice while under five years of age. Without attempting to trace the intricate lines of unconscious mental action here, it may be pointed out that there is little in genius to show a super-mundane moral significance. Its fruits are often extremely undesirable in character, and the personality of those so extraordinarily favoured is very commonly perverted, according to the average standard of natural ethics. If geniuses be divinely inspired they ought to show more uniformity in their representations of divine things.

It is seen that the influences through all these channels of communion, whatever their source, have not wrought a change for the better in men's thoughts with phenomenal rapidity, have not brought conflicting religions to a uniform basis, have not prevented crime, war and disorder, and in fact have done nothing inconsistent with what may be attained by well developed human

brains. Since they are human in their changeability, in their conventionality and in their unreliability, why not assume them as human in every other way, only seeming mysterious to us because of our imperfect education? Only since Newton's time have we had an hypothesis to explain the force of gravitation. We need no longer give it legs or brain, yet its laws are mighty and insistent. Why not attempt the finding of a theory from which to work out a rational solution for this last of the perplexities, rather than still credit its manifestations to a never seen, never known, never authenticated conglomeration of human fancy run riot?

All the collected facts surrounding this inherited mystery point with unfaltering persistence to one inevitable conclusion—the hidden source is in ourselves, an unreasoning soul entity that kindles impulses from past and present surroundings in a way possibly similar to that in which our stomach furnishes proper gastric juices. We certainly have an inner consciousness which regulates the action of our physical organs with little aid from our associative brain, and it is not unwarrantable to assume that this dual element unconsciously guides certain divisions of brain-cells as well. In fact, it could not dictate to our physical members save through the brain, or at least without its co-operation. The researches of science have practically established a basis for this theory by clearly defining two separate systems of activity within us, which might be termed for convenience as the conscious self and the unconscious self.

Each being at birth starts in unconsciousness, fitted by instinct and heredity with a slumbering chain of reminiscence. It slowly develops into consciousness in the

same way that it later develops into puberty. Meanwhile the power of association has stirred the memory of the inner soul, which struggles for recognition and enjoys its early chance of freedom, just as individually as the body appreciates fitting temperature and palatable food. It is noticed that this associate self will grasp its chance whenever the reasoning being is at rest. Thus it exercises its ingenuity of imagination by dreaming when the conscious self is sleeping, comes actively to the front when the conscious self is hypnotized, and forcibly dominates in those of impressionable personality in which the will and reason are not developed or are not on guard. Modern writers have evolved the terms Subliminal and Subconscious as descriptive of this condition.

Hypnotism is a scientific means by which to numb the conscious self, enabling one to actually converse with another's secondary consciousness and freely discuss the problems of its associated being. Trance states illustrate the power of pre-conceived suggestion. Somnambulism is a stage in which the custom of physical rest in sleep is not so strong as the roaming proclivities of the dream-agent. Clairvoyance, Mediumship and Mind-Reading are probably illustrative of possible secondary power, not common enough as yet to be exactly defined and analyzed. It is usually found in those whose amenability to suggestive influences is strong proof of the overdevelopment of their unconscious functions. Going back to the supposition of divine evidence, there are many of these adepts who claim no supernatural power whatever, and the intimate association with the possibly divine source has certainly not always been exemplified by their uncommon nobility of character.

This unconscious self, being primarily instructed by heredity alone, will have no higher original conscience than that of its progenitors. This is plainly noticed in typical degenerates. The Australian savage continues to tear the nails from corpses in the inherited fear of vampirism, for his reasoning sense is not sufficiently advanced to prompt him to reflect on the absurdity of his habit. We ourselves show similar fetters of convention in the lines where reason has been rudely flouted.

Our conscious self knows nothing that it has not learned. It is not brilliant, for its methods are slow and painful. It is not quickly clever, for it must reflect before decision. Those devoted to its development often doubt their chances in competition with the apparently inspired example of the other type, although their patient plodding will in time defeat it if the will be strong. The reasoning being has no use for aught that may not pass inspection by his trained faculties. The soulful type accepts religious conceptions, as its governing principle of heredity naturally continues allegiance to past Gods. Its volatile enthusiasm does not disdain so delightful a chance for play of emotions, and the very obscurity of its promptings easily forces it to consider the plausible belief of an outer, sympathetic guidance.

The two types are, generally speaking, fairly exemplified in the two sexes. Men have had to bear the greater brunt of productive labour as a result of reasoned application, and are therefore more governed by logical thought than are women; the latter have certainly laboured as well, but no one will deny that their occupations have been more conservative and conventional in character. It therefore is not strange to find religions

almost wholly dependent on women's faith in highly civilized communities. Both sexes are intensely religious in pastoral lands, where toil has known no novelty for centuries. We note in European countries that the students are a noteworthy element in every revolution, although their instruction is also largely conventional in character. But the mental exercise stirs them to thought. When a man begins to think he begins to doubt; and when he begins to doubt he longs for something beyond and above his present grasp.

Those who have passed through a stage of experience cannot justly criticise others who are still fogged in its perplexities. They would better offer helpful suggestions to such of their less fortunate brethren as will listen, although their effort would be wasted upon some who prefer the mist of ignorance, and who are timorously desirous of avoiding new dangers, while we who dare venture after higher understanding run the chance of failure and mistake, having arrived at no omniscience of absolute judgment. Confidence in tested reasoning power is less liable to harmful results, however, than the eye-shut gulp at proffered dogma. In exploring strange lands the hungry may easily be poisoned by devouring unknown fruit. The cautious, who experiment with care, may soon decide as to selection, in spite of a few uncomfortable gripes. Individuals who decline to try a novelty themselves, are often willing for another to take the risk in order that they may profit by his success, although they still continue to partake of things long proved unwholesome, simply because force of habit dominates their power of reason.

Why is it that the supernatural explanation always finds first favour? Is it not because our youthful intel-

lect delights in wonders, as the children trust in fairies? Hundreds of natural phenomena once were divined by myth and legend. Hundreds of Gods and Goddesses have outlived their usefulness and been discarded. Even at this early stage of progress we have cleared the earth of most that was mysterious. Are we then to stop at the last refuge of those who clamour for respect, and admit that in this one instance science is to be found wanting and superstition victorious?

We have a wide cult of learned men and their followers who admit and proclaim their delight in stripping theology of all its encumbrances, but they cry halt at the last curtain. It is strange to see those who are brave enough to follow modern criticism and admit the applications of science, grow palsied and tongue-tied when asked by sense and experience to doubt the present definition of a deity.

It is as if the world had been taught for ages that one plus two plus three made one million, and certain bold theorists had lately gone so far as to plainly assert that one plus two equalled three. Instead of following this line of thought to the logical end that the added three made a total of six, the half-way converts are rather insisting that as the total must still be one million—since that was the belief of ages—the additional three must be equivalent to nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand, nine hundred and ninety-seven. They might solemnly avow that while the simple units one and two add into three, there is something so mysterious and traditionally divine about the number three itself that no common rule of practice may apply to it. Thus those who now admit Evolution and the painful ascent of man through

accidental circumstances and the process of adaptability and selection, still claim the overlooking guidance of a God, because they cannot bear to disassociate the hereditary ideal from their mentality. They admit the law of cause and effect and yet illogically admit that it may not always continue operative. They prefer to think that three and three will some day make a million so that their six dollars now in pocket will somehow make them millionaires and boost them miraculously to desired affluence.

It seems to have been thought necessary to manufacture a God of imagination in order to supply a popular demand, yet it is by no means certain that craving for such a God is universal. The conventional ideal of a male divinity may very naturally attract those of the feminine sex who have sought in vain for the perfect man, and those so weak that they like to lean against support and are still insistent in their adoration of towering strength. Carefully defined, the real desire for a God springs from the hope of some possible gift or favour at its hands—and logically some undeserved reward. Will men never be content with what they earn, with what they save? Do all long to be the special pets of fortune! A proper God would hardly spoil them by such unwise generosity.

We often fail to realize the broadening applications of liberty. Our forefathers made mighty struggles against the idea of King-Power, although their antagonists raved of the impiety shown by those not willing to acknowledge Divine Right by inheritance. Theorists have dolefully proclaimed the sorry ending of such conceited communities as might hope for progress out-

side the pale of veneration for individual eminence; yet singularly enough our nation prospers very well in spite of the fact that our country is governed for the benefit of its people, and has no birthrighted, church-anointed dominator to preen himself on a gilded perch and smile on their servility. Why should zest be lent to human effort by the thought of its fruitfulness for an extraneous unknown? Those who are willing to bear taxes in order to furnish castles for kings, might easily answer by their lights, but what excuse can we offer? The logic of the Republican leads but to one end. The French Revolution hoped to reach it, but grasped at it with too great haste for seasonable digestion. Those who wish a God should also wish a king, a pope, a creed and every other trapping of the superstition that entices them.

To accept any truth as final is to mistake a mean for an end. Many facts, discarded as impossible one day, become irrefutably proved before another morning. New knowledge, however, has never yet furnished new proof for the conventionally religious. While we may be well satisfied that the popular ideal of God has no basis in fact, it were folly to positively assert that there could be no being superior to man. The worms under the soil might reason that human beings are impossible. But we can be reasonably sure that any superhuman individuality has not yet deigned to interfere with our intents or purposes within the period of reliable history. Those who must have the belief that has grown into their mental fibre, are safer in thinking themselves of too little importance to warrant present intervention. They may defy us to disprove that it is effective in the same way that they might defy us to disprove that pink hyenas gambol over the mountains of Mars. We could

as easily and as absurdly set up the counter assertion that there is no Mars, no world, no people—nothing, in fact, but one diseased imagination that each may claim as his own, if he should like, to the exclusion of all else that exists. The God-believer may assert that his God may yet appear on the horizon, or that the whole planetary system is really but as a mote in his eye. Even if true, there has been nothing known as yet to prove his sympathetic notice of our speculations. The following fable may illustrate a possible comparison.

A preacher ant once held his congregation in wrapt attention with a discourse of which the following must be accepted as a more or less incomplete translation:—

*We meet again, my brethren, in this hallowed hour, made sacred by the great Man-God who dwells in the great white House-Heaven. For in six hours created he our wonderful world of garden-path, and in the seventh hour he rested beneath the tree-shade, and refreshed himself with the juice of the corn.*

*Into the vast wilderness of turf brought he the gravel for our needs, out of the mysterious emptiness of space, into the concrete essence of the being. Each tiny globule of sand from which we form our dwellings must have been made by him solely for our purposes; for see how each smooth particle is patiently rounded to serve as building material for such as we. Bow down in recognition of this boundless kindness and wisdom! Lift high your voices in praise!!*

*In earlier days there lived rebellious, uncouth ants, who showed no gratitude for divine aid, scorning the potent fact of its keen interest in our welfare. They*

*built their houses across their God's sacred footprints, they crawled in the neck of his sacred flask and floated in indecent abandon on the surface of his forbidden drink. No wonder that he cursed them in his wrath, and brought a mighty flood from watering-can to wash them and their dwellings to oblivion! But our ancestor, Antnoah, was allowed to escape by divine grace on a twig miraculously dropped in time of need. Soon after, alas! degenerate descendants fell again into disfavour, and the evil ant-hills of Sodom and Gomorrah vanished behind the impetuous hoe that laid them low.*

*Out of the mysterious height of the House-Heaven there came to us one day an ant, allowed by royal favour to ramble in its sacred precincts. He told us of the unknown world to which we might also go should we accept him as our guide and acknowledge his eminence. He taught us the truths of true decorum by which we might win favour in the sight of Man. He promised us the delights of polished floors on which to crawl and of silken trappings in which to enfold our antennæ. Truly he hath said, "In my father's Man-God's house are many ant-mansions." Come with me and eat of his sacred crumbs, and swim in his sacred soup; for the House-Heaven was made for us by him who knows each daily want; who leaveth on the ground the rotten pears which feed us, and planteth the grass in which we find our shelter. See! even now he approacheth! Down on your hind-knees, oh ants, to do him reverence! His foot he lifteth over us in sign of might and power!—*

**Crunch!!!**—the sermon was over, and a mangled smutch of ant-smear'd gravel attested the unfailing design of Providence, then, there and therefore.

The idea of a God thus seems to spring from early ignorance—

Continues through the force of Heredity—

Has given a superficial answer to the problem of Existence—

Is gradually being stripped of Authority—

Takes refuge in the darker corners of the mind—

Can hardly hope to assist future enlightenment.

## CHAPTER X.

### POSSIBILITIES OF A FUTURE EXISTENCE.

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**R**EASONERS best fitted to draw conclusions from knowledge of physical processes are certain that the earth will some day become uninhabitable. They show that nearly all the known planetary bodies are now unfit to support life, being either in a state of violent combustion or cooled below the temperature in which the circulation of blood is possible. Even if the latter condition come upon our planet only after millions of years, it proves that our effort toward the improvement of our part of the universe serves no more ultimate purpose than that of our own convenience. It shows also that unless there be some possible escape to other spheres of influence our evolution also is profitless for any extraneous purpose so far as we may know. These conclusions have seemed to be taken as adding plausibility to faith in future emigration to a place that would allow continued progress. But why should we assume to thus find evidence of plan affecting our future, when we have found none affecting our past?

Every atom of physical structure that the world has ever known is still present in solid, gaseous or liquid form. Some of these atoms go to form new bodies, animal as well as human; many enter into plant-life,

and others are buried in the dust and dirt of ages. No one has ever discovered any possible substance of mind possessing such properties as would enable it to leave this planet. On the contrary, life developed here, and its elements would naturally remain where they originated.

Those who would separate the mental and emotional part of man's nature from the domination of physical law, to allow its continued consciousness, are embarrassed by the researches of the biologist, which prove that not only are mental activities due to chemical changes, or rather dependent on chemical energy to feed them; but show also how even the lower animals and plants exhibit proofs that souls exist, throughout our living world, without a definite line of demarcation to prove that man should necessarily be selected for the favourite of destiny.

We find the keen thin blade of science constantly slicing off the sprouting fancies of prolific imagery, to leave us with the single definite fact of present existence. We find that all we positively possess is matter and activity, and that both are interchangeable under fixed laws. The death and decomposition of material bodies is an every day fact, and yet the majority of Christian churches actually profess belief in a bodily resurrection.

If they postpone the re-entrance of the spirit into human forms until some later date, how will the inevitable disputes about possession of molecules that have done service for several generations be decided? Shall preference be given according to age, strength, virtue,

character or what? Think of the scramble in a free-for-all scrimmage! One spirit emerges from the chase with a torn liver and a few eyebrows, another with a cracked patella and several yards of worm-eaten intestines, while a long-dead wraith dubiously views the can of muddy water which contains all of its primal self that seems to yet preserve originality.

Those who expect to retain their bodies, and are duly cognizant of the conventional propriety of garments, must anticipate a future that would kindly bury them to their chins in a cloud-bank, or hide them in the shadow of a friendly eclipse. The possession of actual bodies suggests the need for other material things as well. It would surely be necessary to resurrect brushes and towels. What ardent worshipper of immortal bulk ever even solved the simple problem of how finger-nails should be trimmed in the distant spheres? To bite is not polite.

It is absurd to suppose that any constant system can ever retrace its steps. Progression will never countenance a return to use of organs once discarded. Why idealize the usually unattractive human shell by insisting that it is fit for a higher plane than this? Are we so wedded to our tints and curves that we sadden at the parting? Those decrepit from age and wear, or faulty from birth or accident, will certainly beg for brighter chances.

Imagination ever claims the right to conceive of what none may disprove. Hope of a future is usually shaped by desire, so the curious wish for wings, the poor for

golden streets, the savage for hurting grounds, the sinful for forgiveness, and the more intelligent for wider brain-scope. Men have therefore simply created their heaven from an exaggerated ideal of present desire. Even so limited, there is chance for choice. The Turk, for instance, lends much sanctity to earthly sensualism by accepting his Koran, which is said to hold out to each true believer the prospect of monopolizing the attractions of several hundred houris, several thousand virgins and a superfluity of wives. In spite of all the varied pleasure thus portrayed by fancy, however, the usual believer is in no hurry to experience the delights that death promises.

The longing after a future is therefore typical of the wish for a wider variety or superlative degree of present pleasures, rather than an actual desire for mere length of years. Those with even a slight conception of time will shrink in horror at a full realization of what continually continued consciousness would mean. The sleep that gives us intermittent rest is even now our happiest possession. If the possible next existence were simply one of a few more stages the end would still draw near in time, and if the end must come where could it be more logically fitting than at the end of our present physical activity? The inquisitive mind that hopes for a future in which some of the unsolved problems of present existence may be cleared could be content with nothing less than immortality, since the day to come would always bring a new event.

Those who claim that faith in a future broadens life here, thus making effort toward perfection sensible, should consider the equally practical assertion that it is

just as commonly deadening to natural progress, in promising a future attraction that belittles present endeavour. There is plenty of chance for all our thought and all our work right here at hand, plenty to round out character, more to know than we can possibly learn, more to do than we can possibly accomplish. Even if the future were absolutely perfect in its possibilities it were better on the whole that we should not be certain of it.

Uncertainty is a great spur to present grasp of opportunity. We have the intelligence and development that is fitted to our present condition alone. If diligently striven for all that our earthly minds may properly conceive of can be had within this present life. Those finding their earth reward distasteful show that they have developed their desires better than their abilities. Those planning for a greater delight to come may lose their present chance like the dog that dropped his chunk of meat to snap at the reflection of the same piece in a stream.

Those who speak of a never dying trust in *after life*, should note the grief at funerals, the tenacity of self-preservation and the contempt with which the standard rules, by which entrance to the desirable sphere is professedly assured, are ignored, to say nothing of the races whose religion is not based on any such ideal. Certain truths are planted by the instinct of heredity, yet it has not been proved that the usual uncoached mind has ever, unaided, conceived a definite notion of immortality. There should be a few facts in the vast range of tested knowledge to give this faith support, providing it be founded on infinite truth.

But while those who are unable to detect any signs in nature of extraneous governing powers or a future resurrection can consistently conclude, if they like, that there is no life superior to this in other spheres, they should respect the popular view sufficiently to examine the evidence submitted, as they outrage no reasoning sense by the concession. They certainly cannot prove that they are absolutely correct in disbelief; and it will not do to trust alone to that which passes the inspection of the personal vision. It was many years before men discovered that the world was round. Narrow experience often finds absurdity in truth. Tangible proof is not always present or possible.

It is undoubtedly wholesome and proper that men should give sufficient consideration to that which has been accepted as plausible by many honest philosophers to satisfy the curiosity of their minds. The Bible certainly promised a continued existence beyond that of the present in some of its chapters, but the evidence submitted was of the assertive kind that carries little weight in such a serious matter. Even if there were a heaven then, it by no means follows that it still exists. Some roving comet may have swept it into chaos with a swirl of its flowing tail. In fact, the silence and apathy of the once active sphere is somewhat suggestive of its possible demolition.

In substantial facts little can be found to inculcate faith in a super-mundane sphere. So far as we may know, no dead person since Christ has returned bodily for a time long enough to satisfy the demands of scientific investigation. Materialized spirits appear only between meals in rather questionable localities. No living per-

son ever proved his temporary entrance to the other sphere, and no actual proof of its existence has ever been presented to any age.

There is no absolute proof of immortality, or even of a limited future life. Nothing in the past experience of the ordinary mortal furnishes the slightest basis for the assumption, and no living thing ever passed through a state of consciousness previous to that of the present, except hereditarily. That the idea originated among nations of educated imagination may be concluded from the fact that primitive races had no conception of it.

All of which we may be certain is that we are here. We do not know that there will be a to-morrow except as we deduct the fact from past experience. We know that transmission of life is from the living, no seed sprouting from dead vegetation. We are a scientific combination of chemical elements whose active changes manifest themselves in physical force, mental activity and soul impulse. We know that if the vital energy of the chemicals lessens, the other activities lessen in proportion, and the logical conclusion is that they also cease entirely when the fire goes out.

Every physical activity affects the mind, the soul, the consciousness. The nerves dictate to the sensibilities, and the nerves are surely governed by physical conditions. The life-blood flows to the brain as well as to the muscles. Balance a man on a tilting board, and if his thought be stimulated the head end will visibly outweigh the lower portion. The action of drugs in the stomach may incite irritability or calm. Fumes of burnt leaves can stir a dull brain to picture wondrous

visions. All the faculties of mind and body are interdependent, the branches of one parent stem. Cut the trunk and they must wither. Bleed the sap and their leaves will dry. When the root is dead nothing will ever grow from it again.

But even a possible existence independent of the body does not render the orthodox heaven acceptable to the reasoning mind, which would naturally assume the soul to enter conditions and continue its development consecutive to its period of physical environment, and the next world would be largely inhabited with babbling infants and superannuated dotards, subjects of hysteria and insanity. If actually sure that we should live forever in the state in which we passed through death, it would be best to slit out throats when in the prime of life, or when perceiving the first symptoms of mental decay. We may be sure that a world to come could not meet all our expectations, when our expectations are so different. We suffer now by chance and circumstance, and there is no guarantee that both are not elements of every phase of being. The step that would enable us to enter another existence would be but a step. We do not fall upward.

If the soul be indestructible the principle involved in its separation from that which is destructive must be general to be consistent with evolution. If life be a distinct force it supplies all forms of living matter. There is no reason why the soul of a dog or beetle may not accompany us into futurity, and the pasture weed must equally transfer its vital element to a similar locality. Nature shows no discrimination. Those who hope to be favoured by selection can find no sign of pres-

ent preference on which to base their faith. Law is universal in its application. Born from the living, our best chance of immortality lies in the open opportunity to leave a progeny in which our mental hoard may still continue fruitful. When we are worn and tired, waiting in the inutility of old age for all to end, we shall have less confidence that a new vigour may kindle afresh when deprived of the very elements that formerly kept it active.

In considering the possibility of a future life, it is unfair, and even cowardly, to pass by unheeding the direct evidence supposedly conveyed by deceased personalities. For several thousand years history has borne witness to belief in communications from the departed, and if any one fragment of the whole intermittent record be trustworthy, the question of a future seems settled beyond peradventure. While enormous in bulk, these proofs are usually meagre in detail and lose in verification. They form the basis for a definite belief, however, in which many converts have joined.

The spiritualist is a member of a body consisting of a more or less homogenous following, with organizations, divisions and periodicals. It is somewhat difficult to determine the detail of his faith with absolute fidelity, as he has so many sources of information from the distant sphere. Taking Swedenborg as a fair authority, in conjunction with other adherents of more recent times, it is found that their theory of future existence involves some of the following suppositions :

The soul on entering the spiritual world, while free from the body, still clings to many of its accustomed

mental limitations. The new sphere allows no expression by physical action, the inhabitants being wholly occupied by reflection, transference of thought, cognizance of events on earth and elsewhere, influence of those left behind, and the idealization by imagination of the most wonderful, intangible possibilities. Think of the delight of *Dreaming True* in any line desired !

A spirit is thus supposed to amuse itself at will by projecting its astral to any place to note the actual happenings of actual beings, if still interested in them, acquire new knowledge by assimilation, conjure back the past to re-experience its varied pleasures, or follow out the line of thought that best may please, constructing mental pictures of whatever material things may be necessarily associated.

It is evident that if such be the possible occupations of the future, the well stored brain would have a great advantage over a narrow bounded thought hoard. One could visualize a palace with all perfection of equipment, while another, like the lout in the story of *Dream Butter*, would find that he had only a hazy notion of how walls were supported, symmetry effected and detail evolved.

If this understanding be correct, the worthy would certainly be assured of a reward for intellectual development on earth. In fact, each of us would have fair chance of satisfaction. The weary could have rest, the companionable recognition, the restive opportunity. Even those of earthly tastes might quicken at the hope of drawing forever at an always fragrant imaginary cigar,

or draining unceasingly from the neck of an exhaustless bottle—with not even an imaginary headache the next day.

Yet if heaven be thus desirable, why wait for it? The range of its possibilities presents nothing impossible to our present sphere! We already have memories, dreams and the open realms of hypnotism and trance. Nothing that we do, say, hear or think affords us any better satisfaction than the deception that may excite our brain. In fact, all we take pleasure in is gone before our brain has actually received the impression, and is therefore reminiscent in scope. The fact that spirits cannot tell us of things unknown to present experience is fair proof of their non-existence.

The view of heaven vouchsafed by the supposed inhabitants may not appeal to the desire of the aspirants, but that is hardly reason for which to deny the authority of their informers. One would as well deny that Paris exists because the returning traveller refuses to admit its absolute perfection. The circus poster invariably promises a few too many wonders—anticipated fun rarely realizes the expectations. But we would naturally be led to look for some novelty in a phase of life that could exist only by upsetting all our fundamental theories as to the conservation of energy.

The uninitiated are chary of belief in wonders not sustained by the test of investigation. Repeated discoveries of associated fraud have rather discredited the whole movement, while the personality of its promulgators has not always carried conviction.

The agents who receive inspiration from the supermundane sphere are often disappointing in their revelations. Spiritual sermons do not stir universal plaudits, spiritual writings hardly drive human efforts from the book-shelves, and spiritually inspired musicians are not selected for earthly concerts. We should naturally expect spirits to equal our endeavours, on mental lines at least, but the results so far are unimportant. There is a class of individuals among the recently bereaved who think to find consolation and advice in messages from the departed, but their thoughts might be turned to more beneficial employment. Enlightenment from such communications was never found unquestionable and experience furnishes no precedent on which to base a rational hope that it ever will be. Beings removed by their surroundings and conditions from actual physical facts could hardly counsel wisely on worldly matters, and in spiritual affairs we should be permitted the opportunity for individual development and decision. If we may not experiment, the reason for individuality is nil and the future a tiresome blight.

Except as a possible proof of future existence, spiritual phenomena have no present worth. What matters it that the departed vaguely assure us that they are happy and watch over us? We can hardly believe without some tangible proof of their actuality or assistance. Has any dead Shakespeare continued to astonish by trenchant phrase, or any Angelo given continued aid to art or science? Has their control of force ever benefited humanity by its supposed power to make furniture unsteady? The believers admit the exasperating unreliability of communicators and they have no sure test by which to detect their truth. One investigator will produce testimony from the spirit land as to certain definite

facts which will be absolutely contradicted by other spirits. For instance, on the question of Christ's identity, one produces absolute written testimony through a trance medium from Pontius Pilate, Vespasian, Saturnius, Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny and others of less note, to the effect that Jesus never existed. The last three pronounce the references to Christ in their writings to be forged interpolations. Another spiritualist indignantly replies with statements from Pythagoras, Onesimus, Muhammad (Mohammed) and also a contradictory message from Pontius Pilate. According to the first authority the last named is made to say :

*There was a Jesus Onanias, who was tried before me for highway robbery and crucified by my soldiers; but of the now renowned Jesus I know nothing whatever.*

The other exponent avows that Pilate asserted to him :

*Nor can mortal man or spirit power know the punishment of grief of the humiliation of spirit suffered by the infamous and mortified executioner of the people's teacher and heaven's holy defender by him who in Biblical scorn bears the name of Pontius Pilate and the disdainful title of Governor of the Jews.*

These unconscious mental feats of personation by entranced beings are hardly profitable to the investigator. The medium is but a self-hypnotized tool, labouring under a false impression and must confuse his or her delusion more or less with preconceptions. Hence were the existence of spirits and their endeavours to communicate with humanity through trance mediums proved

we could hardly hope to entirely eliminate the personal element of the agency employed. We would better trust to the unconscious mental suggestions of our own brains, sifted through our analytical receptivity, than be forced to seek for psychical truth through uncanny and inconvenient channels.

Independence demands that whatever may come through telepathy must pass the cautious sentinel named reason before the mind is able to credit it. The statements of the medium must either be believed, often guiding the neophyte against his natural will, or be opposed with a certain furtive distrust of decision. It has not yet been proved that these spirits are infallible, and one can hardly find pleasure in continuing obedience to dogmatic instruction when he has arrived at the dignity of maturity.

The results of mediumistic transports can be fairly duplicated by hypnotic subjects who under proper suggestion may be induced to deliver messages from imaginary persons who never existed. But the fact that imitation is possible by no means proves that all manifestations are counterfeit. It would be as reasonable to assert that dogs were myths because an hypnotized subject can bark and growl. While the medium's art affords a form of hypnotic phenomena produced through an agency similar to that employed by the hypnotist, it does not follow that the sources of suggestion are necessarily identical. A medium might be likened to an operator in a telegraph office, whose business it is simply to transmit messages from others. In making through him an inquiry calling for an answer, several possibilities follow :

*First*.—The answer might be authentic, and yet doubted, for there would be no signature, and no personal attribute to lend distinction.

*Second*.—Another party might answer in simulation of the true person with deceitful intent.

*Third*.—The wrong party might answer by mistake without fraudulent intention.

*Fourth*.—The operator might answer personally, in the spirit of mischief or to save trouble.

*Fifth*.—The operator might be forced, or hypnotized, to answer according to the will of an interested outsider.

*Sixth*.—The operator might be ill, the apparatus out of order, or the desired party not within reach, in which case there would be no answer at all.

But the powers of the medium are by no means disapproved or discredited because they are difficult to explain or verify, and there are many temptations, especially in financial perquisites, to attract the trickster possessing no mediumistic powers whatever to the profession. Furthermore, trance states of a genuine nature are so exhausting that many able to go into them make pretense to save their strength; or they weaken their capacity and reliability by too continuous performance. A clever imitation often gives greater satisfaction than a genuine exhibition, and is an encouragement to fraud. Thus, even granting the possibility of spiritual communications, the investigator is put to exhaustive expedients in order to eliminate deceit.

To defend a supernatural explanation of the extraordinary phenomena produced by the spiritualist in preference to that afforded by telepathy, betrays an indolent ignorance of scientific facts. Doubtless, if

John Calvin were to come to life and use a telephone, while some earnest professor endeavoured to carry his bewildered faculties on a short journey through years of electric discovery, that learned divine would stoutly assert that it were easier and more rational to believe that demons spoke through the little cylinder in imitation of the human voice, rather than accept the very strained and visionary hypothesis that the slight effort of speech could be carried hundreds of miles through a solid metal by some unseen molecular activity.

The history of spiritualism is quite similar to that of the equally mysterious discoveries of hypnotism. The results from both have been known for ages in their undeveloped forms, even as the compass that preceded the dynamo. Hypnotism, as well as spiritualism, had in times past its supernatural explanation in witchcraft, possession and the like, and it is only within recent years that science has condescended to investigate the matter. Its public exponents have usually been of the same cheap class as the common professional medium, so the educated classes for some time treated its claims as preposterous. Intelligent investigators now admit the efficacy of suggestion and mental control, although there are still a few who stoutly contend that physicians and others who employ it are deceived in the results of its application as an anæsthetic, and that a subject who allows his cheeks to be sewn together or his cateleptic frame to hold a horse's weight, is simply exhibiting willed muscular control.

The idea of spirit-control in hypnotism is practically out of date, the phenomena being found to simply illustrate the receptive state of a being whose conscious self

is asleep or stilled. It is certainly logical to suppose that spiritualism will yield its mystery as easily under the same careful treatment. It is well to prepare for possible enlightenment by curbing the eager rush into delusion which seems to blind the amateur in his first association with uncommon presentations.

The fact that at present all explanations of extraordinary phenomena are meagre and unsatisfactory by no means predicates that they shall ever so remain. Forces, apparently not under the law of chemical combination, were of little practical importance to material purposes until comparatively recent times. Yet future developments in psychical lines may bring discoveries as indispensable to practical usage as the utilization of electricity in the past decade. He who speculates on future possibilities without due regard to the continuous increment of enlightenment, at once enrolls himself among the bigoted, the shallow-minded or the non-observant. Human beings may find chances opened for research and experiment which will make each man attain on earth possibilities formerly credited to spirits or even Gods.

Spiritualists as a class are bound by faith to a belief in materialization, which signifies the power of the departed to assume a visible body and visible robes, with control of physical muscles. Sometimes they remain invisible, manifesting themselves by moving concrete objects. It is still a disputed point as to whether some unnamed force may not seemingly at times defy gravitation, and the proof of materialization has never been sufficient to convert any large body of credible witnesses. There is certainly a preponderous element of open fraud, and the higher authority of the spiritualistic organiza-

tions weakens confidence by defence of the most impudent assaults on human intellect.

Investigation often leads one to the back room with the sliding panel or the false floor. Any one with true belief in the spirituality of the heavy stepping apparition could certainly have no objections to the inquiring prod of an unbeliever's hat-pin or penknife, as it would not inconvenience an ethereal being. But he who clasps the warm hand of a spirit and will not let go, is liable to a very fair imitation of a rough-and-tumble fight before all is over. Strange how spirits resent the simple tests of science!

In one of our great eastern cities is a spacious Spiritual Temple, where sermons are delivered by inspired mediums, and where actual materialization takes place on the platform before the congregation. It is not to be supposed that a church is built for deceptive jugglery, but with dim light and a few curtains there is little need for other mechanical auxiliaries, in view of the obliging credulity of those present. A sharp-featured woman, with her apparent plumpness masking yards of hidden white cotton cloth, retires behind the drawn curtains, and soon a face, unrecognizable on account of the low light, bobs at the audience from the opening. When impersonating a little child, the medium waddles on her knees with the curtains held in front to hide her breadth of beam, while the valuable exhorter explains how she would come forward if the conditions were better, even as Jesus has often come down in private seances for a chat with him, still having holes in his hands as a verification. Of course the performances may vary from this sample—in fact, they varied considerably at a time when

scoffers rushed to the front and gathered in spoils of false hair and rubber.

Slate-writing is another open avenue for fraud, especially when the slates are supposedly written on without the medium having connection with the pencil. Repeated exposure does not prevent the new crop of gullibles appearing as constantly as the similar group of farmers who buy gold bricks and counterfeit bills. The fact that there may be a little true telepathy involved, puzzled many of clear intellect before this power had received a scientific definition. The results from the general mass of evidence have been most meagre, in fact, hardly sufficient to warrant *dredging in this dirty sea*, to use the expressive words of Professor Shaler. One of the most distinguished of the modern mediums, the late W. Stainton Moses, was himself one of the severe critics. He wrote :

*All around me I see spiritualism, vague and frequently contemptible in its utterances. Its revelations and assertions are often shadowy, where they are not silly, and frequently one is shocked by that which passes current under its name.*

Those who hold up to ridicule the present imperfections of psychic adaptations need not necessarily assume superiority over others who prefer to defer judgment until further development. The savage who beats the tom-tom has no right to sneer at the æsthete who stands aloof with hands on ears. The relative musical taste is hardly settled by the triumphant claim of the performer to credit for having first discovered the primi-

tive source of harmony. All should countenance the study of important phenomena, but the conservative hesitates to applaud amateurism, or be convinced by immaturity. Humanity is hungry enough to earn its food and the means for its preparation, but is not so frenzied as to bolt down raw meat, nor so impatient as to neglect its cleansing.

While the views just expressed on the general subject of spiritualism are not unmerited, the author feels in honour bound to treat one specific instance of its evidence with more respectful consideration. He has been fortunate enough in the past few years to have had access to the celebrated Mrs. Piper, who has been under continued investigation by agents of the Society for Psychological Research for so long a time. Without referring to the voluminous testimony already published, it is enough to say that repeated personal experience has demonstrated the possibility of this utter stranger's detailed and definite knowledge of the writer's life associations, which may be explained by nothing outside of spiritualism or telepathy—and it is somewhat difficult to distinguish between the two, for spiritualism can fairly be described as the telepathy of the dead ; and the present communications of possible spirits indicate that anything known by them could be known of or imagined by a living mind. The personality supposedly in communication with the writer not only showed familiarity with the contents of the desk-locked papers, which included the manuscript of this work, but discussed them with an individual thought that proved he was not merely a reflection of the writer's mind. And the personality of the agreeable Englishman supposedly conversing through the medium, was so different in type and expression from her own individuality that it seems almost a treachery to deny the

truth of his actuality, especially when men like Dr. Hodgson, the exposé of kindred frauds, and Professor Hyslop, a noted expounder of psychology, have expressed publicly their belief in his identity. The author, however, has found much error in spirit knowledge of things to come and present facts of which the writer himself had no knowledge at the time, and he cannot believe in the truth of an assumption so often liable to a mistake. The fact that the supposed spirit talked with other sitters regarding this present work, and vouched for the verity of the statements it would contain, is certainly interesting. It must be remembered that the medium had met this Englishman before his death, and thus had a chance to unconsciously take note of his personal peculiarities. As to her knowledge of what he knew, it is undoubtedly acquired by a power which is no more wonderful than that by which the spirit could himself supposedly acquire knowledge of the writer's affairs. Those who do not accept telepathy in place of spiritualism have necessarily accepted spiritual telepathy. Why should they credit the dead with greater power than the living?

The view of heaven expressed through Mrs. Piper's trances and as known by records published or gleaned from the writer's conversations with her, presents nothing very novel, but certain details are interesting. The freed spirit is supposedly dazed, by no means grasping the full use of its new powers immediately upon leaving its earthly shell. It retains *An astral fac-simile of the material body*, so that recognition is possible. Communications with it, even through mediums, is possible only to those having made a specialty of the art, and it is not always interested enough to be obliging. There is no fatigue in its realm and therefore no sleep, no sound and therefore no language as we know it. Evil is supposed

to be impossible, yet the various inhabitants do not universally love each other, judging by their disparaging remarks. Those dying in youth are believed to attain maturity, and those passing away in old age regain mental vigour. Remorse seems to be the punishment for former errors. New interests gradually wean the spirits away from earthly matters and memory seems to fail. The stupid continue dense, and the uncultured retain vulgarity, according to their manifestations to those left behind. Dogs stay with their masters, but we do not as yet know whether fleas stay with their dogs.

As to religious matters, it is not to be assumed that spirits agree on these or any other subjects that may still continue elements of speculation. Those retaining belief in a God have no more evidence of his existence than when on earth. They grow confused and silent when trying to reply to catechism concerning it. Christ is referred to as a higher type of medium, which is an evidence of self-appreciation considering the fact that we get this knowledge through mediums. The latter believe in their power to read the future through their spiritual associates, but their success is not so uniform as to warrant much confidence in material application of their advice. Mrs. Piper is novel only in the comparative honesty of her personal intentions, and the associating interest of her learned investigators. According to the telepathic theory the results would naturally be remarkable in strict parallelism to the intelligence of the medium and the sitters. Skeptics have often complained that they obtained no satisfactory results whatever—which is quite natural under the circumstances.

Mrs. Piper is by no means the only wonder of recent times in the mediumistic line. Professor Flournoy, of

the University of Geneva, Switzerland, gives us accounts of the performances of a young woman of his town in that interesting work, *From India to the Planet Mars*, which are even more extraordinary. Mlle. Smith is reported to be a *beautiful woman . . . of an open and intelligent countenance*, who had already developed *four subconscious creations of vast extent*. In one of these she pretended to communicate with spirits who had inhabited the Martian world, and by their aid not only drew pictures of its animals, dwellings and landscape, but actually wrote in its chirography and spoke its tongue. The marvelous power that could enable her to talk and write in an unknown language, is stronger proof of spiritism than is usually presented; yet when the professor, after careful comparison finds *only an infantile travesty of French*, the verity of assumption ceases, as it is hardly possible that the people of Mars used the same number of vowels, with the C playing the same *triple part* and the S having the *same capricious character*. When it is known that the father of Mlle. Smith spoke five languages and knew several others, the explanation is not difficult to those who have studied psychical phenomena.

If the Martian language be a clever deceit, the Martian spirits lose authority as well, and the young medium's other spiritual assumptions are strongly discredited. If Mlle. Smith can give a trance phenomenon more wonderful than the ordinary representative of her kind, and yet fall plainly under suspicion, why should credence be accorded those whose only claim to respect lies in their apparently supernatural power?

Mlle. Smith pretended to speak also from Cagliostro and Marie Antoinette. She furthermore assumed to be

the reincarnation of a Hindo Princess of the fourteenth century, claiming that the Professor was the reincarnation of her husband. Such a coincidence is in itself suspicious ; but her description, language, etc., wonderfully attest the elasticity of the unconscious imagination. The Professor, in referring to them, states :—*this so varied mimicry and Oriental speech have such a stamp of originality, of ease, of naturalism, that one asks in amazement whence it comes to this little daughter of Lake Lemman, without artistic education or special knowledge of the Orient . . . a perfection of play to which the best actress, without doubt, could only attain at the price of prolonged studies or a sojourn on the banks of the Ganges.*

The curious corruption of Sanskrit used by her in this impersonation is certainly as wonderful as the imitation of foreign tongues by other mediums, and it seems necessary to assume a broad possibility of the telepathic absorption of existing knowledge to explain this and many other of her feats. When portraying Marie Antoinette she is said to assume *grace, elegance, distinctive majesty . . . truly a comedy*—and yet, after the most careful observation and investigation, the professor decides that he has *only encountered some brilliant reconstruction which the hypnoid imagination, aided by latent memory, excels in fabricating.* Why should any other explanation be necessary ?

While this medium was not of the paid professional type, she as strongly asserted her powers to be derived from spirits. Even in the Martian cycle she could not be made to admit imposture. This simply shows that the impressions of the subconsciousness are not necessarily true, and that the individual in whom they exist

is not a fit judge of these promptings. Any hypnotized person will readily believe that he is a cow or even a hitching post. It all depends on the original suggestion.

It seems wise for the present at least to assume that the subconscious personality of the medium can cleverly imitate various types. When personating one known to the sitters, telepathy may aid him, or it is easy to assert that the precise spirit wanted has not yet acquired the faculty of transmission and must find perhaps an imperfect expression through an interpreter. When assuming unassociated types the medium will call its separated entity *Chrystal*, *Dora*, or the like, refusing to give definite account of individuality, thus avoiding necessity for individual attestation. Mrs. Piper's Dr. Phinuit, however, became too valuable, and tangled himself nicely when cornered as to his past history. Mediums often impersonate some renowned man or woman of history, like Mlle. Smith's Marie Antoinette. In such a case we have no means of disproving identity unless we be better scholars of history than the medium. It is on record that when Mrs. Piper went into trances for an ordinary audience her control was common and vulgar, giving place to a literateur when the audience included college professors. How many of us, seeing our souls mirrored, or as depicted by a medium's interpretation, would recognize them?

Those who doubt the power of a medium to successfully impersonate supposititious personages fail to appreciate the capabilities of the internal mind. Novelists and artists introduce us to imaginary people, who have such distinct personalities as to live in the memories of the ages longer than actual types, while actors change

assumed characters with surprising rapidity. These things have become so common that we accept them without comment, and yet when some trance-medium sets up her little Punch and Judy show, believers flock to wonder, although they would not expect to find their own Hamlet waiting in the spirit world.

As a trance is simply a condition in which one form of dream is experienced, it might be well to consider the apparent abnormalities of ordinary sleep. Our nocturnal ramblings, as we note them, often bring us into vivid association with people we have known, who still retain their individuality of manner and speech, proving that our unconscious self has taken heed of their peculiarities and is sufficiently constructive to imagine new circumstances for them. It also creates personages which we do not remember having ever seen, and carries us through romances in which there is a vast amount of pictured detail. Those who study these phenomena personally will be astonished at the immediate enlargement and clarity of the field which attention itself enforces. Our dreams are worthy serious study before accepting a supernatural explanation of trances. If we may dream of things that never have been and never may be, should we assume that in the trance state our experiences may have a more extraordinary foundation?

The workings of the brain during a dream or trance are mainly unnoticed by the conscious self. One might dream all night and know only the few seconds of presentation while passing to the waking stage. Most trance-mediums are also unconscious of what they are undergoing. It is possible for any one of quick

mentality to personally experience the visions of a half-trance, in the same way that many can easily acquire the faculty of automatic writing. They would better not deceive themselves, however, with credence in the resulting information from either.

If we believe in spirit influence, we must believe that mortal thought is partly governed by it. If we believe in materialized force we can assume that it also may effect physical changes. If we credit spirits with the power that many turn over to their God, we have eliminated the proof of that being. Spirits who supposedly communicate with us are hardly so sure of the actuality of a higher power as many of the faithful here. The inspiration from spiritual sources professedly affecting the mental calculations, does not prevent continued variation of view on all important matters. Whatever is known by the spirits would be naturally transmitted to us, and yet the world has as many ideals of heaven as there are races, as many ideals of God as there are creeds.

Whatever be the decision that we, who make no professions, may reach, Christians should be the last to dare deny the truth of spiritualism, even in its bolder claims. The Bible teems with references to trances and spiritual communications, the whole tribe of prophets bearing witness to clairvoyance, and materialization being quite common. The Christians who do believe in actual present messages from the dead are many; but they are not properly included with the avowed spiritualists, for the regular organizations place communications of present mediums above Church, Creed or Christ. Their printed works refer in rather patronizing terms to Jesus

and the older prophets, believing themselves to have access to a store of fresh maxims. In honour to superiority, however, it is pertinent to remark that the drivelling idiocy of the usual spiritual sermon has little right of comparison with thoughts which, however mistaken in logic, were the definite elucidation of a perfectly connected ideal.

Even if we drop the rope by which we might have hoped to climb to heaven, shall we necessarily shrink from the unalterable end? The calmest men who ever died have been atheists and agnostics, coffin-terror being noticed more often among those professing absolute faith in a future. The latter, expecting their departed ones to enter a more perfect sphere than that they have abandoned, are hardly logical in donning mourning. They should, on the contrary, welcome death's glad presence. Are they afraid to let their loved ones meet the judgment of their supposedly benevolent God? Is it their selfishness alone that grieves over the personal loss? Why are they not true to accepted ideals, generously releasing their claim when Nature kindly weeds the weak from fields of bodily trial? Simply because their more practical instinct realizes that the chance for further joy or progress is irretrievably lost—simply because they do not really hope to meet the departed again.

Death by accident or disease may naturally be dreaded by those who find life of continued interest. The chance of quick curtailment simply points out the necessity for men to realize their aims as they proceed, rather than look too far forward for their rewards. Many live more in one year than others in a life-time. In fact, time has little relevance to variety of experience, or quantity of

choice experiences, which are the true measure of existence. Those who find the opportunity for material changes scarce can still vary their thoughts.

Those who are properly prepared for endless death, are also prepared as fitly for endless life by intelligent activity directed toward the best development of what they have here, while they are here. Even if another life were waiting, the surety would trend toward waste of time in anticipation or speculation. All lives should associate with the world known to them, its problems being fully broad enough to absorb their undivided attention. Whatever is to come will wait, and there need be no crowding, no impatience. The busy man does not even find time to wonder what he will be doing here five years hence.

Whoever are most anxious for a desirable future life are, in the majority of cases, least worthy to attain it. Having confessed themselves as dissatisfied with present joys, they need the stern rebuke of the inquiry why associations of their kind should be distasteful? Those who grow uneasy in an environment are more often unfit for it than superior to it. Those who do not appreciate the opportunities which come to them can find plenty of profitable experience in making them to suit. There are plenty of possibilities for interest in this world if we have the courage to grasp them, but even when we appreciate the chance we constantly postpone acceptance, waiting for a time of relaxation from pressing duties that may never come. Meanwhile, our unfed fancies grow weak and spiritless, while we sink deeper in the rut of routine, conscious of the vacancy in our souls, yet despairing of the means by which to fill it.

Death cannot cheat us of our past. Let us then have a past. Let us fill it with events designed to awaken pleasurable recollections for the old age which may await us. We practically know no present—the moment we think of as present is past before we know it. Life is all recollection or anticipation. When we plan let us enjoy in advance, with the confidence ensured by former fruitfulness of purpose. Let us think of possible attainments and then make them probable. The pleasurable life is a record of things done. It matters not so much to the individual satisfaction as to the precise nature of the accomplishment. The burglar, as well as the politician, takes pleasure in a neat job. When death first knocks let it find us too busy to take notice. At the proper time we may gracefully yield to its importunity and gratefully close our eyes for the long sleep, glad of the rest which never ends—the peace that passeth understanding.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### LOGICAL MORALITY.

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*"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where the immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring impurity much rather; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue, therefore, which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure."*—MILTON.

## CHAPTER XI.

### LOGICAL MORALITY.

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**R**ELIGIOUS forms are entitled to the credit of having, in some degree, bettered general public morals. In dismissing them we must be prepared to accept the full responsibility for guiding the ship of humanity after sending the pilot over the side. Columbus and Magellan sailed over new seas in safety, wakening the world to new realms of exploration. Old charts would ever restrict us to navigation near the coast of convention. Before starting on a new voyage of discovery, however, we must know our craft and recognize its limitations of ballast and rudder.

The fundamental principles, involved in the sphere of human activity are learned through study of human thought and impulse. Thought is practically immaterial save when linked to a will that induces it to seek expression, and morality represents its loftiest motive.

In guiding human motives it is well to thoroughly understand the nature of the impulse that arouses them. It is also well to know the previous methods of their training, to note their errors and avoid repeating them. What we term behaviour is counted, according to the results which experience records, good or bad. The

dividing line is very thin at times, with intent and consequence on opposite sides. The present standard of morals is largely due to religious decision, the responsibility for settling vexatious ethical problems having often proved too great for timid men, who therefore lean on supernatural props.

Those who believe in a communicative Lord, have naturally accepted his accredited verdict. When no inspired communicator is present, they turn to a treasured text or conscience as mediums of instruction. When forced to recognize that much unhappiness is still un-governed by their supposedly spiritual dominators, they sometimes plead the excuse of evil spirits, who conflict with God-Desire, delighting in the misleading of humanity.

The fancy of an evil power is but the relic of that primitive ignorance which treated each acute adversity as designedly malevolent. By allowing man to shift responsibility from his own mistakes and lack of foresight, it held its place for ages. Sin is usually associated with immaturity, ignorance or degeneracy. The evil on earth is too plainly of home manufacture to be credited above or below. Men err largely through curiosity or vitiated tastes. There are plenty of reasons that will explain their halting progress toward perfection without the need of dragging in this childishly imagined marplot.

The evil that man does often springs from carelessness, cowardice or conceit, he being fully aware at the time of the limits propriety has placed. Churches attempt to

advise him to avoid such error, but they have no present power by which to compel his compliance. The hope of heaven and the horror of hell are sometimes thrust before him as reward or warning, the latter, well portrayed, often proving sufficient to make even a hardened sinner shrink from the last leap. That a conviction won by fear appreciably purifies the moral fibre, however, is questionable.

All this vast human machinery could not have grown so great without a manifest need for corrective measures. Error and evil have been too continuously prominent to be treated from their present standpoint alone. Where did these false motives find a parentage? on what have they nurtured? If the devil cannot be held responsible, what other unhappy cause can be unearthed for these devious wanderings which have kept us from attaining better conditions more promptly?

Reflection easily discerns the answer. Wisdom, a necessary component of perfection, can develop only through education and experience. A primitive being has neither in appreciable quantity. Men may become wise only through ages of evolution. The broadened possibilities of higher ambitions could be aroused only after raising man's vision from the contemplation of his near desires. The development of easy means by which to meet his individual needs, enables him to exert his endeavour in lines which react in broadening and bettering his existence. It also requires a long evolution to educate the senses in the knowledge of profit by patience, or the distant cause from a present effect. The early races ate the nearest fruit when hungry, starving when nature proved penurious. It took them centuries of

centuries to learn the possibility of gleaning crops from seed of their own sowing.

Primal beings were free from immoral intent, for their brains had hardly attained the conception of design. Although their wants often led to results that were evil, according to our present standards, they were rather unmoral than immoral. In the animal stage of development they must be considered from the animal standpoint. We do not rebuke the cruelty of a lion nor the cunning of a fox. As Mallock trenchantly observes, *we cannot have a profligate Goat.*

There could be no question of infringed rights when there were no exclusive rights. With life a mere routine of animalism, the securing of what was needed for the gratification of an instinct, even life itself mattered little. We can understand these conditions by the fact that we ourselves do not consider it wrong to rob the ewe of her lamb, or the cow of her calf to satisfy our taste for tender meat, nor to show our contempt for the entire animal species by castrating millions of the higher grades in order to increase their subjugation to our will. Human beings pass beyond animal classification only when they show superiority of development, not alone in delicacy of feeling but in true worth and usefulness. Even at the present time a considerable element hardly equals the ordinary dog in faithful affection or the well trained horse in utility.

Appreciation of propriety is in itself an evolution. Artificial education alone may understand and respect artificial enactments. Many of the unenlightened obey the law in the same spirit with which a dog respects his

master's food. The animal is not immoral for wishing to chew it, since he has no logic save fear to enlighten him. Many of our criminals are not necessarily evil, but ignorant. In proportion with the development of the intellect do the moral propensities expand. The better classes deserve the stronger condemnation when they outrage propriety, for they act in the knowledge that cannot escape accountability.

Higher intelligence, however, not only brought an appreciation of morality, but also developed the very immoralities which it is destined to conquer. Immoral desires were incited by the awakening perceptions, that noted comparative excellence. When the intellect of man placed a value upon personal possessions by the making of hatchets and huts, and showed his discrimination by his choice of wife, envy stirred up hate, force planned plunder and cunning conceived of theft. Superiority in bravery, skill, strength or property bred vanity and insolence, and the moral balance was fairly even between both extremes of the social scale. When language allowed men to combine in purpose, the evils of ambition became still more apparent. Organization enabled the few to tyrannize over the many, power even centering on single heads that ruled the entire area of civilization. Starting with the chief, who dominated his petty village while its other inhabitants toiled to increase his luxury, it has been habitual ever since for those in authority to pillage the industrious. After the custom of exchanging wealth brought the capitalist into the field, another wilful force was liberated to complicate the situation. With so many fighting and stealing, lording and taxing, the struggle of the non-producer for the chance of stripping the producer has given rise to countless clashes between various classes,

the producers themselves often warring bitterly with each other to find recipients for the products of their labour. So long as the majority of men think their best chance of success lies in another's failure, morality is but a by-product. Men cannot consider matters fairly when grown in a sphere of injustice. Those who believe themselves the greatest sufferers are often tempted to destroy rather than correct, to demolish rather than reconstruct.

Much of evil consequence is due to indirect causes. Much of early warfare expressed simply the restlessness of animal spirits seeking for a vent. Strength or cunning determined ownership before men had vested rights, as there was no measure of possession other than these. Before men had discovered the virtue of a title deed, it was perfectly natural that one tribe should try to oust another from a fertile region. This habit was so firmly ingrained that it naturally continued after possession had more thoroughly mastered the logic of resistance. Much human slaughter was and is the result of well intentioned use of power by those placed in authority. Many of the greatest mistakes have been also due to misuse of the faith which leads the masses to follow some persuasive mind. The gifts of genius and personal magnetism have pandered to the lowest of human impulses and been used to excite the most pernicious desires.

Wealth, power and plausibility have therefore seemed to be the ruling factors in inciting immorality. That they are therefore things of evil is by no means proved. Men have had their skulls cleft by axes ; yet we should hardly care to blunt the blades, burn the helms and cut

trees with our teeth. Nothing is evil in itself; whether abstract or concrete it needs a motive to make it active. The human desire for wealth or power is well enough so long as their legitimate use is contemplated and so long as legitimate means to secure them are employed. We must certainly curb the desire for possession without labour, gain without risk and profit at another's expense. Such evil cravings have been nurtured by the weakness of opposition. The strong have found it easier to take than to make, the cunning discovered it easier to steal than to save. Organized energy alone has made it possible for the many weak to rule the few powerful and watch the few artful. Combination, however, can only follow in the wake of reason, and the crafty few have too often taken advantage of their less astute brothers by dividing public forces so as to waste the effort of reformation in disputes concerning the manner of its accomplishment or the choice of leader.

Self-protection is the evident force which concerns itself in upholding public morality. Each man should appreciate the necessity for a united front in dealing with an enemy too powerful for one or two or ten. The task is endless, for population is not stationary and untrained infants are born each second to swell the bulk of ignorance. All have the same necessity for routine instruction, all start with profound ignorance and keen animality. Their ever recurring primal instincts must be a constant study to find the reasons why men's system of direction is not always fruitful.

Man never acts without a motive. Its impulse may be involuntary, yet the cause is always there. It necessarily proves the existence of a desire evolved by mind,

nerve or body, either in the individual or his dominating associations. There is always a need to stimulate an effort.

Life is simply the activity of hunger and the unrest of stored force. We crave nourishment for unfed organs, unfed nerves, unfed emotions and unfed ambitions. We also desire an outlet for our stimulated energies, and gain the aid of others toward our ends by persuasion, promise or compulsion. While instinct attends to many of these matters, the will is also enlisted by direct incentive or controlling suggestion. We have as yet found no limit to desire and little to fulfillment. Single men have dominated the known world, and even believed themselves heirs to the throne of heaven. The ambition of a little Corsican lieutenant of artillery changed the face of Europe within quite recent times, using millions as tools to carve his destiny. Desire often laughs successfully at the logic of constructive reason, determination despairing not when seemingly denied the faintest hope or chance. The real strength and concentration of desire is the true measure of its probable result.

The individual is mainly open to such ideas as appeal to his hopes, his fears, his customary appetites or his capacity for enjoyment. It does no good to offer inducements that he cannot comprehend. The labourer would very properly disdain the dinner of the epicure, and the laurel wreath would arouse little enthusiasm where the dollar is preferred. The masses are unresponsive to unaccustomed ideals. The drama of the world goes on before their eyes, arousing little latent energy and inviting little novelty of reflection. Circumstances are almost useless when wasted on the inattentive. Cease-

less repetition, however, gradually dents the thickened brain covering, awakening a feeble interior response. The continued force of heredity therefore gains its little fraction year by year. Novelty of suggestion or change of surroundings must be relied on to enlarge ambitions, as one cannot wish for that which he has never seen nor heard.

Summarizing briefly from these facts, we have the following conclusions :

Acts are prompted by impulses—

Impulses spring from suggestions, fears or desires—

Suggestions and fears are derived from outside associations—

Desires are inspired by needs, actual or fancied—

Needs are discovered by perceptions—

Perceptions are aroused by conditions—

Conditions are determined by circumstances—

But :—

Circumstances will only appeal through the conditions created by them to the intelligence which has been quickened by heredity, environment, education and experience.

It is therefore plainly evident that in order to guide the acts of human beings to any desired fruition, they must be properly born, properly surrounded, properly trained and properly aroused.

## HEREDITY.

We cannot go back and reform our ancestry. We can simply try to train present and future parents in the

lines that promise best returns. Could we discriminate in the selection of those who should live and propagate, we might hasten progress ; but eternity allows us time enough in which to try the gentler methods first. Even if we cannot change the past, we can surely comprehend it ; and a study of its influences will clear the way for understanding of present instincts.

The human being, starting as a child without experience, has instinct only for a motive force. It obeys inherited traits with confidence, and might well continue at least partial trust in them. Animals, following them implicitly, avoid erroneous courses with much better average success than the experimenter man enjoys. However, if progress is desirable, to continue blindly in this rut would be unadvisable, for it would result in a routine as uniform as the lives of the cattle, and man would never learn a new delight. Could he but recognize his hereditary promptings, he might often turn them to a profitable end. While the keen analyzation of human nature disseminated in recent times by language and print aids him in understanding himself, it has not yet made clear the complexities of his personal inheritance.

Instincts are usually keener in early than later life, and as the development of the world is illustrated in each individual growth, it is natural we should find the child somewhat of a savage even as savages are but children. The normal untrained child is thoughtless, wilful and combative. It often shows cunning, cruelty and deception. There is no innate depravity necessarily present, but simply the untaught, unreasoning instinct of immaturity. By going slowly through the usual pro-

gressional stages, a better balanced being must result than if severity or over-training harshly quell the healthy outbursts in their incipient stages. The perfect little gentleman of ten, whose prim behaviour often gladdens a foolish mother's heart, is apt to grow into effeminate manhood, ill fitted to meet the roughness of competition. The blustering boy, whose ebullient spirits often make him a most vexatious charge, is more likely to acquire the rugged traits of courage and contempt for conventions which will make him a forceful agent. Rear a plant in a hothouse and it will be always delicate. In the open air it may thrive, but still requires watchful attention. A tree limb may be trained in a desired direction by careful use of repeated pressure. Too much force, however, will cramp its veins or break its fibre. It will not do to smother individuality ; children should be freed from too much association with older people, especially those of unwise proclivities. That monstrous little abortion, the knowing youth, who apes all the vices of his elders in the vain attempt at premature manhood, is simply illustrative of an undeveloped personality that is forced by lack of will and poverty of imagination to imitate the more easily acquired habits of his associates.

In spite of the constant shifting of social standards in the various phases of civilization, human nature remains very nearly unchanged. Centuries of superficial progress have but thinly veneered the natural animal, for centuries are relatively unimportant compared with the length of savage ages. The vast human memory retains a knowledge of its former customs, and will not forget until a more equal period of civilization has blotted them out. When angry, men still draw the lips back from the teeth as in those early days when foes were bitten.

They still delight in physical conflict and the slaughter of inoffensive creatures. Many bully their wives as in days when females were but slaves. Women still delight in decoration by feathers and polished stones. Mankind shall pass through a long hard struggle before these traits are eradicated, and it were well to recognize them in our speculations.

When so much of human effort is thus unconsciously guided, it is wrong to ascribe misdemeanor to vicious intent without a careful analysis. Intent signifies preconceived thought, and the labour of design. The usual criminal is not of the reflective class, but civilization is still bound to suppress his evil tendencies so far as possible. Though he cannot be held accountable for transmitted traits, it must be assumed that each is able to master them, and thus is morally responsible for submitting to unwise impulses.

## ENVIRONMENT.

As the perceptions of the growing being quicken, it begins to be affected by its surroundings, and obtains from them an ever increasing fund of experience and information. Sight, hearing and touch assist the brain to grasp the meaning of form and motion, but the association of human beings is far more important, as it excites the impulse of imitation.

The idea of patterning after an example is a certain evidence of progress, which, however, can advance only to a height already attained. The earlier races were too uniform in individuality to offer much in the way of nov-

elty, so their children, after having copied all the common acts of their childish elders, rested at the apex of popular ambition. The higher animals also can imitate certain of our physical acts, often showing primitive reasoning in the process. The enlarged scale of human aspiration owes its present condition to the few who dared defy convention or reason out a betterment. The majority of men are still bound by custom, but are ready to adopt an innovation whenever it is vouched for by certain of its accepted authorities. They are hardly cognizant of this mental slavery, treating adopted opinions as their own and gauging themselves by the standard selected. The importance of superiority in examples is therefore evident. Men of barren individuality had best choose habitations where they may be in touch, if possible, with ideals confessedly above their personal conceptions. Even those who are too strong to be affected by neighbouring depravity cannot escape the depressing vampirism of starved and stunted minds. The growth of cities is perhaps illustrative of the craving for broader surroundings. Not that the result is always happy, for while the chance for selection is certainly greater through it, the process of assimilation is severely hampered by some of the more stolid conventionalities.

The being who advances beyond the imitative stage, not willing to admit that his ideal exists in flesh and blood, becomes independent of the influences that may formerly have affected him. He attains this end quickly if reared in proper surroundings, having few steps to climb if started near the top of the ladder. When unfettered by the charms of former attractions he gains the chance of moulding a life to suit his own peculiar individuality.

In order to excite one to the highest effort he must be raised above the associations of mediocrity. Ability in any given line is invariably developed by contact with the best of past accomplishment. Artists do not expand and flourish in Iceland or Bombay, but in Paris, Munich or Rome. Engineers rise from industrial centres. To influence a being's aspirations of thought and action to worthy heights, he should be mingled with the better classes, study the greatest examples and records of human effort and be familiarized with the noblest expression of all functions appealing to his impulses.

### EDUCATION.

The more practical education is derived from the experience of environment and circumstance, but there is a certain separate element of training and study that involves acceptance of information at second-hand. In selection of such instruction it is well to use discrimination, as the world spends years of time in learning much that has no value, and hearing much that is not true. The wary read the sensations and advertisements of their daily news sheet with suspicion, hear their impassioned orators with incredulity and turn in wearied ennui from a literature crammed with sentimentalism, devoid of virility and having no regard for possibility. Knowledge, bought at the hands of others by the neophyte, is usually obtained with the understanding that while absolute truth is an essential feature of mathematics and other impersonal themes, it is not usually applied to human problems.

It seems most paradoxical that the time devoted to enlightenment should claim that callow period when the mind, as well as the body, is attaining puberty, rather

than at a graver age when the importance of instruction is realized and minds are not too much given over to boat races, ball games, flirtation and vice. A college for men of forty would be crammed to its doors if the chains of routine could be shaken off and less homage given to the God of Wealth. A man may procure learning without schooling, if really in earnest, as there are few results of human investigation and theory not outlined by books, and there is a wonderful chance for future development in the lecture field when all are brought to full realization of the continuous necessity for education.

### EXPERIENCE.

While the chance for personal participation in various associations is more or less limited, it is unquestionably possible to widen the usual allotment by taking advantage of such opportunities as are presented. An actual experience implants its moral more firmly than any lesson that may be learned in other ways. It is not, however, stupidly necessary to insist on burning the fingers to make sure that stoves are hot. Some day, it is to be hoped, a type of being will be evolved, sufficiently logical in mind to note the results of others' errors and thus profit by their failures. It is strange how curiosity seems to drag humanity into misfortune rather than delight. The gambling instincts are apparently appealed to by the joys of illicit adventures, the inevitable consequences of which some, in conceited confidence, plan to escape. But repeated humiliations will eventually convey their meaning.

It should be part of the general education to see as much as possible that is worth the seeing, and know all the various excitements and pleasurable sensations that

may enlarge the sphere of recollection. It would also be well to know a little of the life in each social grade by actual contact, in order to appreciate and understand the motives that rule our complex civilization. Man can only be in full sympathy with the world as a whole when he has seen life and death and known joy and sorrow, poverty and riches, love and hate, remorse and gratification. While he may not be anxious for disaster, it will certainly be tempered if he is prepared to recognize the valuable lesson it may teach for future application.

### PERCEPTIONS.

It does little good to waste an education on the inattentive. Experience also loses its force when not appreciated. A large share of our students glean nothing from their books that stays with them through life, being like a common type of sailor who visits and looks upon all parts of the world, but takes interest in naught save quality of grog in various ports. A superficial memory which passes muster for a hasty inspection, loses grasp of appealing facts within a period of incredible brevity. The cultivation of a wide range of interest is strongly to be urged for the development of every progressive faculty.

The lower animals hardly note more than the difference between heat and cold, dryness and dampness, hunger and satiety. The higher grades distinguish their friends from their enemies and instinctively sense the presence of danger in different degrees; but man is the only one to continuously reason possibilities from perceptions and thus form a base for future aspiration.

A scientist finds a lifetime study in a cubic inch of dirt, whilst the ordinary observer fails to note a thousand matters of interest that his lazy faculties might utilize were his detail perceptives trained by some slight exertion on his part. Houdin could with one glance at a shop window describe everything in it. Man has many faculties, yet he seems to think it necessary to develop only a few. Every sense deteriorates from lack of exercise, and he need not fear to strain them by overwork. It were better to make these servants earn their keep and not grow fat and sluggish in the long waits so unwisely granted.

### NEEDS.

Actual needs, unfortunately, are not always distinguishable on account of the domination of fancied necessities. Thus the physical system craves pure air, sunshine, quiet rest, wholesome food, loose clothing and physical exercise. Choice would seem to favour stale atmosphere, darkened rooms, late hours, villainous condiments, uncomfortable attire and enervating ease. The need of proper companionship, rational amusement, increased knowledge and invigourating ideals is rarely gratified. There must be a most inharmonious development of judgment associating with our present civilization to explain the paradoxes on every hand.

### DESIRES.

We have three varieties of craving, physical, emotional and mental. Nature found it necessary, in order to ensure the continuity of life, to first reward certain necessary acts with the gratification of exhilaration.

Physical desire is all powerful in the lower animals, and we naturally find it equally dominant in lower humanity. Its delights are not to be despised by those with other resources ; in fact, many of philosophic tendency declare that the stomach yields the only true pleasure, or claim to be happiest when asleep. Such as these could easily attain their ends by joining the multitude who flex their muscles in the open air—the hard worked labourers who possess the keenest appetite and enjoy unbroken rest. The very fact that men are not satisfied with the rewards of this condition, is sufficient proof that there are higher returns. There is no reason, however, why they may not realize the best of all the varied forms of gratification. Those of the physical plane are certainly more continuously satisfactory than the rest.

Emotional cravings are stronger in natures of the soulful type, those of a certain dominating heredity being easily influenced by associations. They have yearnings for sympathy, affection, admiration and excitement. This development is also represented in the brute creation, as many domestic animals are eager for companionship and approbation. The sentimentalists, as we might call them, certainly enjoy a wide variety of gratifications. It is curious to note the difference in degree of their demonstrativeness among the various races, showing how clearly hereditary traits preserve themselves notwithstanding changing civilization. The Latin races continue their effusiveness in strong contrast to the phlegmatic Anglo-Saxons. While it is easy to criticise an extravagance that leads bearded men to kiss each other, it is also possible to decry the impotence of those that have no thrill of human interest at all. The being who has proudly stifled feeling, has not controlled but killed. It would profit us nothing to knock

our horses in the head because of their being hard to manage. It were folly to miss the pleasure attendant on any proper emotional expression for fear of becoming engrossed in hysterical phenomena. Use, not abuse and not disuse, is the proper end to be sought.

Mental ambitions are purely the result of cultivation, representing an artificial growth of man's own raising. They include the desire for knowledge, the wish for success or the fruit of knowledge, and the hope of recognition or the proof of knowledge. No other animal than man has yet reached the ideal of an immaterial, unemotional reward. This educational development was doubtless begun in the discovery that knowledge primarily aided in the gratification of the former physical and emotional desires ; but now that we have found that the success of an ambition is of itself more pleasing than its material fruit there are no longer any limits to our aspirations.

The desire to be superior is not necessarily the base incentive of delight in another's comparative inferiority, but rather the desire to measure one's own growth. The end is often fully satisfactory when reached without public knowledge. The joy of doing is much keener than that derived through public applause, although the appreciation of equals or superiors is most satisfactory, as being sure proof that merit is attained.

It is seen that the actions of the human will or instinct often end in indirect reactions. The aims of intelligent beings are largely immaterial in their scope. A definite intent is, however, present, the motive always forecasting the anticipated realization of a definite hope.

The nature of a prize desired is strangely varied by the personal characteristics of those who desire it. One man would like to be a king in order to rule over a harem or drink his fill, while another would aspire to the throne in order to have an unqualified prerogative to experiment with political problems. One longs for a farm, another for a title, a third for a celestial harp. Some even expect pleasure while exciting envy, arousing hate or defeating a competitor. However mean a success may be when won, it is still a sign of achievement and therefore appeals to some form of human ambition.

### SUGGESTIONS.

We have been considering man as possessed of free will to act spontaneously, follow appetite or plan his course as reason may dictate. Such a being, however, is practically non-existent, for the simple reason that men have never been released from the surveillance of associative influence. The majority are governed by desires which are strictly limited in scope, and are so dominated by the suggestions of their surroundings and training that they wish for only that which their neighbours find desirable.

This influence of example has heretofore received sufficient comment. The direct personal influence of interested parties is a similar, though stronger force, and should be ever viewed with a certain amount of suspicion. No one, outside the immediate family or friendly circle, will usually waste time in suggestive endeavour without a definite purpose, and that intent is more likely to profit the solicitor than the recipient of the attention. It is ever easier to comply than to resist, and it is well to

probe and if possible analyze the motive which prompts a request.

Few favours may be granted without loss. Many human wrecks have foundered on the reef of friendly note endorsements. But those who escape solicitation may not pride themselves on cleverness ; perhaps it were fitter to credit their inconsequence or unamiability. The poor are rarely swindled, as individuals at least, the homely are rarely seduced, and the misogynist rarely betrayed. The higher a man rises the more often must his caution be on guard. Greatness incites attention, arouses envy and stimulates attack. Littleness escapes unnoticed.

A strange element of suggestive application is noted in the desire of those who have fallen to pull others down. One corrupted boy will gleefully instruct a whole youthful neighbourhood in vice, and even men of mature growth seek for companionship in their active depravities. They are more prone to smile than to grieve when their friends make mistakes. Hidden faults would often slumber indefinitely if not aroused by suggestive association. Many weaker natures would easily escape corruption if freed from their friends.

Other influences include the possible unconscious telepathic communication of neighbouring minds, and the tendencies inherited from progenitors. Man's will should certainly be powerful enough to resist any harmful suggestion and his judgment should be competent to allow acceptance only if advisable. Many of the guidings unconsciously followed arise from outer conditions detected

only by the subconsciousness of the brain. In fact, suggestion by some agency or other controls activity of every kind. Heredity is the suggestion of the past, environment that of the present and education that for the future. It is for us to decide whether to use them or be used by them.

## FEARS.

The majority of human beings limit their desires to the requirements prescribed for them by others. Their routine is outlined mainly by parent, teacher, employer, demagogue, judge, priest, married associate or meddling critic. The surrender to domination is apparent on every hand. Not only do men steer their course to escape human disapproval on matters of morality, but they also dread the mocking guardians of useless styles and antiquated customs. They hesitate to give expression to opinions save before supposed inferiors, and then they are apt to re-coin the superficial phrases taught by shifty politicians, weather-cock press or some equally unreliable associate. Afraid of the solitude of independence, they yield their individual thought to party, church, periodical, family or friends, lapsing into guidance by a name or self-constituted authority.

Civilized nations present little cause for actual fear of physical pain, outside the realm of war, accident and disease. The unruly child is the usual example of authorized chastisement, though laws of certain States allow a wife to be corrected if the stick be no larger than one's thumb. The man who submits to present bullying is hardly worth the effort of protection. Past history has been far less lenient, blows having served for ages in the weakening of character. Legal restraint now quite

thoroughly curbs the violation of personal security. We who proudly vaunt our independence can hardly realize what it meant for those born to cringe, to rebel against oppression.

Timidity of the present day is rather fostered by the fear that those who dole out gifts may frown at acts not strictly conventional. The labourer fears to lose his job, the politician his votes, the business man his trade, the physician his patients, the minister his congregation, and all are somewhat thoughtful of their social status and undesirous of publicity.

Restraint by public disapproval is eminently proper when preventing impropriety, yet it should control by reasonable methods rather than by threats. Respect should take the place of fear when rules are fit to be respected. It is not wise to let the average human being experiment too widely with unbridled impulses. Before the days of Parliaments men let their kings enjoy unqualified freedom at times, but the results were almost universally discouraging. It never was, and probably never will be, safe to let the animal man do exactly as he lists.

And yet we never should own to fear. We may have to bow to a repressive force that we may distrust or despise, we may refrain from the satisfaction of inexpedient expression; but we never must allow ourselves to suppress convictions through cowardly motives, or be inert with fear as the only motive for inaction.

Why should we be afraid when there is no need? The public is a good-natured bully that cuffs impertinence,

ridicules presumption and terrifies timidity. It never yet stood up to have a knock-down fight with a determined and sincere opponent, however, and it never yet recorded a victory over an intrepid will.

## APPLICATIONS.

Having noted the various causes that create and guide human impulses, it may be well to consider a few of the more alarming instances of uncured faults in further detail, to note, if possible, wherein the present corrective measures fail. We shall find that while we organize to protect society against certain of its most violent offences, we by no means kill the roots that continually put forth the branches which we as continually lop.

The chief of our present evils apparently result from :

- The birth of degenerates ;
- The lack of corrective anticipation ;
- The prevalence of immoral surroundings ;
- The need of engrossing occupations ;
- The unruliness of human vigour ;
- The selfishness expressed by meanness ;
- The ignorance that ends in blunders ;
- The vanity that craves applause ;
- The envy that seeks demolition ;
- The weakness that succumbs to evil.

Here is a lengthy list, and yet it were easier to add than eliminate. What have we done, and what may we do, to heal these sores on the body social ?

We print and preach in protest against the many causes that debase our human stock, force meretricious education on often unwilling pupils, have boards of

health to purify our physical environment, prevent the circulation of erotic literature and the public suggestion of evil so far as possible, penalize vagrancy, protect against violence, and then relax exhausted, to allow the future some novelty of experiment with the rest of the catalogue.

While we handle certain offenses with a rigorous hand, we plainly give too little attention to the causes that produce the evils which we punish. We try to prevent crime after it has occurred. It would seem rather drastic to take active measures toward the prevention of scions from unworthy sires, yet it certainly might be feasible to corral all the irreclaimable on some coast-guarded island, where they might suffer an unrestrained process of extermination, without submitting promising associates to the danger of contamination.

Our educational methods should more fully explain the logical utility of correct behaviour. The Church supposedly preempts this field, but its methods evidently are neither practical nor convincing. But even reason would fail with unreasoning beings, so we should plan some means to furnish for them a definite inducement to the practice of propriety. Our present arguments are mainly negative in their promises.

Religions have tried the plan of explained reward as well as the use of threat, and the results are quite instructive. Older Christianity harped more on the horrors of future punishment than on the gladness of salvation, and Christ himself hardly promised one definite future enjoyment. The evolved Church has done better, but postponed rewards are not conducive to immediate

results, unless, like those proffered by Mohammed, they hold out a very human and enticing hope. While we may frown upon this special delineation, it suggests a possible principle.

Can we not find some definite present inducement to the cultivation of morality? There is none to-day. Our best citizens have no more rights and privileges than those who barely escape the brand of criminality. Honesty and industry pay the penalty of taxes, the idle, slothful, incompetent and decadent profiting by the advantages furnished through their surplus effort. Perhaps the Church is indirectly responsible in having given us the example of leniency to the improvident and sinful.

It would seem perfectly simple to graduate favours and restrictions so that those keeping within prescribed lines or actively bettering public conditions would find a direct incentive. Give the average man a chance for profit and he will grasp the opportunity. Nations have brief fits of hysterics when some showy act forces a hero on their attention, and also pick their worthier citizens at times for public preferment if they be willing to work on stingy official salaries. The common unknown man, however, will not trust so meagre a possibility, and small wonder that he sulks at intervals and lets his grip relax.

Both the personal and impersonal elements of environment have a powerful influence upon moral nature, the former being, perhaps, the more direct.

The public is moved more easily en masse than individually, for in the former case the strength of suggest-

ive force is aided by mutual imitation which avoids personal responsibility. The average human being will act because others are active, rather than call in that unfamiliar process of individual decision. The cultivation of suitable characteristics in those destined to leadership is therefore of the greatest importance, and the economy of force in directing the effort of the whole rather than the unit, attests conformity with evolution's highest teaching.

As to impersonal influences, it is well known that climate is more or less responsible for human characteristics. The stimulation of cool temperatures moves man to his greatest efforts, while the tropics are more lenient in requirements. Energy and ability are best developed in the barren lands where man must employ continued ingenuity in order to sustain life, whilst in countries of luxuriant vegetation, where concentrated labour is not necessary to existence, industry flags and the inhabitants yield themselves to the sensuous seductions of the climate.

Attractive scenery, comfortable habitations, the influence of art and interesting novelty likewise have a share in turning minds from pessimism, rebellion and degradation. Nature, at its best, is most inspiring to the contemplative individual; yet a process of comparative association is requisite before the broader impulses may be recognized.

As to occupation, it is well proved that use alone prevents man's faculties from deteriorating, and deterioration is twin-brother to immorality. Hard labour and rational amusements fill time to advantage that might

otherwise be spent in the planning and indulgence of impropriety. Those who have grown lazy by disuse of functions easily form habits that welcome chances to profit by another's exertion. Idle hands itch to catch the fruits of others' industry, and idle minds are not apt to ponder long over the logical questions involved in deciphering correct courses of action. The forces of the naturally energetic sometimes go astray in moments of leisure, seeking employment of their surplus, and often lacking judgment in selection of a proper vent. Devotion to practical ends subdues irrational impulses. People kept busy at constructive employment will grow to dislike destruction. Let them be idle and they will make others idle as well. Habits of industry and integrity are as hard to get rid of as habits of idleness and self-indulgence. Some people crave work as others crave morphine. The excess in the first instance rarely leads to serious consequences, however, and may be tempered by judicious methods.

The delinquents who compel attention to their acts by direct violation of the individual rights of others have necessitated the development of a legal system which is sustained by organized force for the purpose of anticipating their misdeeds. But the evil that meets punishment is not always the product of intent, and much that should be punished for the motive involved is not sufficiently harmful in results to attract legal notice.

A fixed rule is necessarily unadapted for general human application. Law apparently treats all men as equal, when we know full well that they are not. The more intelligent are often annoyed and harassed by be-

littling requirements plainly devised to limit ignorance and vice alone. Petty red tape and vexatious form seem to assume that all men are designing knaves. The lower grades of intellect, on the other hand, find much of injustice in edicts which assume criminal intent in brains that know no spur save instinct. If we could only divide our punishments into penalties for loss by unintentional destruction, and privations for crimes of intent in proportion to the actual depravity in evidence, we would not see criminal carelessness escape scot free, or deprive men of years of liberty for hasty acts aroused by chanced conditions.

Arbitrary power is often made obnoxious by the aggressive spirit in which it manifests authority. We do not like a menace from our chosen servants. Shake a club at a spirited man and he grows rebellious. Threaten a cowardly one and he grows deceitful. We should not rely on measures that arouse a sense of wrong or develop a type of sneak. Force should be a last resort, used only with the firm dignity of unwilling necessity.

Law is simply a means by which to protect ; therefore it does not appeal very strongly to those having little worth protection. The unthinking type of criminal looks up to the law as an obnoxious tyrant, and its administrators as vindictive enemies. He takes pleasure in measuring his own cunning with the vigilance of his pursuer, and a spirit of adventure leads him to an expenditure of energy and inventiveness that is poorly repaid by the average result. Guide this daring into a proper channel and its owner may easily become a forceful agent in useful fields. We all have a bit of admira-

tion for the really ingenious or courageous scoundrel, and feel a certain sense of regret in noting how the law hunts down the open-handed criminal, while passing by the poorly concealed evidence of greater evil.

Independent boyishness delights in smashing codes and defying authority, because its primal impulse resists the pretence of tyranny before the reason has granted consent to the necessity of restriction. The laws which we are forced to obey were made before our day and are applied without awaiting our deliberate concurrence. Ages of unjust authority have left our heredity suspicious of direct commands, and we prepare to resist the arbitrary ruling of *Thou Shalt Not* until we discern a glimmer of reason or justice in the limitation. Fairness and truth, often require a clearer explanation than plausible frauds. We have the sense that temporarily respects superior force, but will join to crush it in time if not convinced of its fitness. Even the soldier who is trained to obey by the stern habit of routine, rebels when losing faith in his commanding officers.

The very men who dare to question law are its best supporters when the logic of its position is made plain. Such have usually the vigour to uphold as well as the temper that demands explanation. The compliant have not necessarily been educated to understand. The unquestioning acceptance of what is has never yet aided in shaping the justice of governing power by organized remonstrance. Corruption and brutality often use law as a cloak. They formerly shaped its terms to favour their vile ends, whereas they now corrupt its applications. When law serves the purposes of unworthy powers which can not be displaced by ordinary means,

revolutions are in order. Days of terror should no longer be necessary, as evolution in public sentiment should be sufficient to bring about a needed change by calmer methods.

Rules and laws are necessary for those who are dependent on the plans of others, and the few well able to shape their own courses often find them a convenience. History proves, however, that platitudes are not equal to the solution of all the varied problems which confront mankind. Those who possess the strength of mind that dares make decisions will not be hampered in the twelfth hour of need by the eleven times perfect principle. *Rules were made for little men.* Let no one outrage them, however, if he is not willing to pay the penalty of non-success. Many a general has been dubbed a hero for a victory won by flagrant disregard of orders or military tactics, spurred by the surety of a court-martial in case of defeat. Rules are as fences which keep stupid cattle safely pastured. Those who break the bounds may often meet with hardship and adversity. Some will run the risk, however, rather than be perpetually in durance. The world of men has seen too many broken bars to treat those yet respected as inviolate. Where are all the older penalties which terrified humanity?—gone with the thumb-screw and the rack. The world advances over levelled barriers. They shall all be swept away when men are perfect. But it were poor policy to raze defences while barbarians still menace.

It is of course well understood that those of suitable position and wealth are practically exempt from legal authority except when it becomes the personal selfish

interest of one or many of their own class to move against them. The bully who draws a knife is instantly clubbed, while the murderer who builds unstable tenements, puts in defective plumbing, allows erection of fire-traps, fails to replace unsafe rails or ties or bridges, pollutes a water supply, or neglects his duty in any possibly far-reaching application, usually escapes all penalty. It is unsafe to steal a peanut from a fruit-stand, yet a city treasury may be openly plundered by unprincipled politicians, in spite of the fact that the press may be shrieking *Stop Thief* at every step.

We must accept more responsibility for our kind. Policemen naturally exert their protection against the crimes of the social grade from which they are drawn. Their instruction allows interference only in case of direct, active offense. What if we should have a higher class of official, moving amongst the men whose meanness really amounts to something when let loose? He would need be of sufficient integrity to refuse attractive bribes, but perhaps such an abnormal specimen could be found by diligent search. Why should we not constitute ourselves as guardians of the laws we pretend to support, and vigourously insist on purified surroundings?

One very potent reason lies in the cowardice which dares not make enemies, and another might be discovered in an instinct of distrust which looks on the possibility of personal reaction. It is all very well for those whom we consider below us to feel the clutch of law, as we have no sympathy for violators who treat our commands with contempt. When we are asked to respect rules made by others no better than ourselves it seems quite another matter.

We therefore unconsciously adopt a graded system of legal application. It might be better to make such adoption more definite in character, as law should be either rigidly and impartially enforced or unsparingly revised. Erratic justice stirs contempt, distrust and disloyalty.

The world is ready for new definitions. Crime is now bounded by the penal code ; but our human instincts, stirred by anger at the traits which law has not attempted to suppress, claim a wider adaptation. The sneak, the cad, the prig, the egotist, the hypocrite and the slanderer are often despised with more genuine feeling than is aroused by the violence of theft or open assault. Men protect their purses and leave their good names at the mercy of the envious. The destroyers of happiness, the wreckers of friendship and the stranglers of affection sneer at their victims in defiance. The evil done within the law far out-weighs the petty records of the courts.

Other foes that break our peace likewise exist in safety, refuted by good intentions. Such include the meddlers, the effusive advisers, the inexperienced critics and the whole army of inane babblers who annoy and exasperate by imbecilities which sour the milk of human kindness. We can cope with defined crime, but seem powerless to check this drivel, dribbling from loose-mouthed nonentity.

We must some day also get rid of the little slave of the microscope—that narrowed soul which loses sight of grand results while criticising details. He will delight in finding minute stains where others admire, proclaiming that the beautiful face of an ideal is actually blotched,

gummy, dusty and overrun with parasites. He will dare to root into the motives of dead heroes ascribing design to those who obeyed naught but impulse. He will poke his nose through all the dirty linen of past ages, ready to credit any vile slander on humanity that appeases the instinctive jealousy with which he views a superior.

Those who are too ready to define another's intent unconsciously testify to their own parallel promptings. Many a thoughtless or innocent act is harshly judged by those who would have betrayed worse motives under similar circumstances. Thieves are keen to suspect thievery. Unfounded belief in the existence of immorality creates a very fair semblance of result.

Regret and remorse are the personal measures of evil. This is far from saying that an error is always proportionate to the regret it arouses, or that the world may gauge crimes from the remorse of the perpetrators. Self-condemnation is often found to be more intense for follies than absolute lapses of morality; stronger for missed opportunities than for definite errors. Is not foolishness then a species of crime, meriting as severe disapproval when its results are equally bad? The fool is surely found more troublesome, more nerve-exhausting and more often dangerous than the avowed criminal. We have weapons for the latter, but are helpless against the wilful ignorance or conceit of the former. Religions have coddled the fool too long. The new enlightenment will avoid him or insist on his instruction.

The contemptuous epithet Fool is not necessarily always to be defined as the pitiable state of imbecility.

It is more commonly illustrated in its aggravating brother, Bigotry, or its silly sister Thoughtlessness. The bigot has been the continual curse of civilization. He never changed his mind for he never would be taught. His crooked, crabbed nature has invariably turned instinctively to false ideals, and his misguided strength of purpose caused folly to flourish like a strong weed that rears its head above the useful grass. Mad-energy turned loose has fouled our history with crimes that dwarf all purposed evils. As every successful error must have had a mask for its real intent, we naturally find a greater portion of its evidence associated with Church and creed. It was the bigot's Bible that upheld his witch-finding career, his persecution of heretics and infidels and his arbitrary botch of legal edicts. His victims were actually numbered by millions, and their slaughter assumed the most cruel and repellant forms. While his thirst for blood is happily quelled, the type of insanity is not yet extinct. We have the bigot who frowns on new discoveries, who sneers at sewer gas, who grumbles at reforms, who considers sex a criminal attribute and beauty a devilish snare, who thinks recreation a folly, who knows the masses are all evilly inclined and the wealthy all debauched, who hopes that most of us will land in hell, and takes intense satisfaction in the misery of those who do not share his beliefs.

It is a close race between the self-opinionated bigot, who in his heart cares not a rap as to logic or truth so long as he has his own way, and the *Didn't know it was loaded* type of idiot who has the best of intentions but no stability of purpose or reflective thought. Solomon exhausted all the resources of condemnation for the latter class, the Proverbs dealing fully with his failings.

The fatalistic confidence that disdains the truths of former experience never allows other explanation but unlucky circumstances when unsuccessful. There is little choice between the illiberal and the irresponsible.

The presence of credulity is utterly demoralizing in its encouragement of knavish despoilation. Scores of human vultures fatten on the folly of those who trust their lying representations. Sympathy is wasted, for the victims ever aim at undeserved prosperity, wasting fortunes in impossible attempts and under incompetent administrations. The honest worker grows uneasy at the sight of easy wealth acquired by swindling methods, feeling dissatisfied with the state of things around him even if not tempted to change his methods.

Vanity is responsible for a great part of the world's evil, as well as for a large share of its creative activity. The greed for admiration is often stronger than any mere wish to satisfy a private appetite. The pomp of power has fathered great misdirection of human energy and mothered the sense of awe which keeps men enslaved in admiration for trivial superiorities.

When we refuse to wonder at extravagance and begin to deride display, many present personal offences will cease. The show will end when we stop staring. Public attention is not necessarily flattering. The anarchist is often prompted to crime by the world-wide prominence which is certain will follow his regicidal act. The fool's capers attract more attention than the student's solutions. History is mainly a record of the acts of warriors and kings; yet probably neither would be chosen for family friends. Eccentricity surely attracts

comment, but this fact would not dignify a hope for a Cyrano nose.

The individual is necessarily commonplace in all but possible ability. The wealth and power of the world cannot furnish him with another hand or a third growth of teeth. Temporary eminence brings its reaction of disappointment as well as its short flattery of voice or eye. It were better to keep one's head moderately above water continuously than bob up in indecent exposure to then sink under, never to rise again.

Those who yield to a desire for recognition abase themselves by freely exciting the criticism of the mob. They should gracefully abide by the decision rendered by their chosen judges, no matter how bitterly unjust it may sometimes seem. Those who pursue the even tenor of their way, undaunted by public howl and unmindful of public concern, may properly deny the right of intrusion. Not that one should parade his indifference. There is a distinct line between those who strive to attract attention by public disregard of conventionalities, and the more imperious who simply ignore both attention and conventionality alike.

If all the energy now devoted to advertising the possession of wealth or brains were spent instead on honest creative endeavour, prosperity would gladden the land with far greater regularity. Much useful capital is now wasted in pretentiousness. Many leave their fit occupations to join in undignified scrambles for public honours. Old men leave the helm after having barely attained efficiency, while young men attempt to learn too soon in order to appear precocious and brilliant. Few wait for

the public to award laurels—they rather try to tear them from the hands that guard. It is undoubtedly creditable to be voluntarily selected for high public service, yet how many are so favoured? Even the doughty warrior often spends more fervent effort toward securing rank by use of personal influence than he has ever exerted against a foe. Men are not usually satisfied with their abstract worthiness. They must bask in the public stare and hear the excited comment of the pavement. The incentive of glory often leads to action, but applause often satisfies to satiation, killing further utility. Condescending pity is all that is accorded to one forced to live on after some short spasm of prominence. The public has no use for the actor who ceases to perform. This earthly fame is but a flimsy bauble at the best. It is largely local and fleeting as the breeze that swells any flabby bulk to temporary proportions. It represents an ambition in which the husky pugilist or clever ball-player can easily eclipse divine, philosopher or statesman.

It seems strange in a world where all are seeking more or less for appreciation and distinction that the sure and easy means of honesty and courage are so seldom employed. A little daring leaves many an uncultured dolt figured in bronze for coming ages to reverence. A guaranteed honesty assures the proffering of the greatest positions of trust; and yet the fear, bred in men's bones in days when blood and groans accompanied free speech, still makes the spirit cringe like a cur, apprehending a menace in the hand-stroke that comes as a caress.

There is also a vanity content with its own admiration—a self-conceit so powerful as to absorb one in his

own inward contemplation, warp the judgment, disgust associates and lead to serious errors. This is doubtless worse in its effect on character than the broader type of vanity which prefers the companionship of outside adulation. A simple cure for this disease is found in the cultivation of reflective memory. Recollection of one's own mistakes should prevent assumption of supremacy over them. If one would write down his present views, plans and personal prognostications, the perusal in later years would usually give self-approbation a severe shock.

The progress of the world and its incidental elevation of character, reveals a distinct phase of enlightenment in the steady diminution of human self-glorification. Mankind has reached an age where attempts at symbolic personal grandeur provoke derision rather than awe. Many great men from Cæsar to Napoleon failed to understand this tendency. Adornment for adornment's sake may be allowed the young and fair, but distinction marked by trick of apparel or accoutrement is cheapened to the level of the finery which proclaims it. Dignity is a curious thing if depending on the precise nature of the woven fibres that enclose it. Let actors strut in velvet and ermine to remind us of times that shall awaken thankfulness for deliverance from them; but let men learn that merit bears its own stamp and can, if necessary, exist without unanimous and instant recognition.

Envy is the complement of vanity, and yet not so productive of evil, as it needs a greater proportionate amount of decision and courage to make it actively effective. Of course it may sow slander in an underhand attempt

at defamation of character, but the world, or at least that part of it which counts, is usually wise enough to discern the designs of those assailing the reputations of others. Jealousy is but the compliment paid to worth. Injustice is the characteristic of inferiority.

The whirlpool of life sometimes floats a few lightweights into temporary prominence, but those continuously on top undoubtedly owe their place to intelligent activity. Perhaps they sometimes sneer too soon at those beneath, but the injustice of their disregard is fairly matched by lack of due appreciation from below. The human mind pities the *under dog*, so natural sympathy is with the masses. It were an evil day for all if it should ever become necessary to pity the classes. The equality which many hope for is an uniformity such as that to be produced by cutting heads from off the tall. That makes the short no better off and lessens the standard of excellence.

All of the more unpleasant human traits are born in meanness—that contemptible condition of soul which cannot see beyond its own petty interests, and thinks of nothing but its own selfish aims and gratifications. This love of self expands by ambition into a desire for increased flattery, which undoubtedly explains why the majority of mean men marry.

The egotist is the common foe of all. If given freedom of power he would burn the world for a spectacle or bleed it for a bath. He crushes any possible love for the opposite sex, weans himself from friends, retires into the logical resort of cynicism and then curses the world for not adapting itself to his perverted desires.

The man who is capable of concentrating his energies on himself is unfortunately more clever than the man who cannot concentrate at all. The mean man, therefore, gets the best of many by deceiving the confidence of the less intelligent or less suspicious. Loyalty is too precious to be wasted on the unworthy.

Man should train himself to be more wisely discriminating in his reliance upon man. He should hide his disappointment when it becomes inevitable, for those who whine at ingratitude show that their favours were granted in expectation of a return and that they were therefore speculating on uncertainties—perhaps even hoping for an increment of profit. Shall the gamblers be pitied? Rather treat the world a little better than it has any right to expect and take surplus pay in pride. One should be ashamed to be overpaid, and ashamed to be cheated as well.

The ignorant and inexperienced are paralleled by the weak. Many have the logic to define improper courses without the necessary strength to resist their attractions. It often requires a high degree of watchfulness to escape the preliminary lapses which lead one toward the slavery of small vices, and the larger errors seem less forbidding when compared with their imitations. If the descent were more sudden the fall would serve as a warning for the future.

All men are so smirched by weakness that it ill becomes one to attempt a criticism from the standpoint of superiority. That one is at present preserved from folly may be due to the lack of chance or inherited inclination. Those denied the doubtful favour of inviting

opportunity may pity those who yield, if they like, but not condemn ; for by what right may their untested purity disapprove ? No one may fairly criticise another without having passed through identically similar circumstances, under precisely similar conditions. The young have no right to judge the old, the poor no right to judge the rich, the anæmic no right to judge the verile. How many men could be safely trusted with a winsome courtesan on a desert island ? How many Christian soldiers refrain from looting when the chances are propitious ?

The real test of any conventional moral influence is to be had when the associations of law and public opinion are lacking. The conduct of Christian legions in China is interesting in this respect. While each country represented there thinks to save a little special virtue for its own representatives, it is quite evident that the ten commandments were shivered to fragments. Brutal Christians bayoneted babies, lecherous Christians raped women to death and drove hordes to suicide for escape, greedy Christians plundered, and drunken Christians wantonly destroyed. We think to stand near the head of the list ourselves ; but those early pioneers who have seen the ticket-office line of men awaiting turns outside an overworked harlot's tent in one of our primitive mining towns can hardly hold our own people exempt from moral delinquencies when courts are not in session.

Those who pride themselves upon having lived unscathed are usually so because of being ignored on account of their lack of attractions. Ugliness naturally escapes solicitation. Cowards do little violence. The lack of imagination, temper or vigour hardly passes one

on to a higher plane. Even those who have turned away in disgust from the common snares that entrap humanity could possibly idealize an illicit attraction which would appeal to them. Such simply remain moral from inexperience or fastidiousness.

A very common type among both sexes has a certain code of morals for ordinary use and a very different standard for other conditions. It poses as a supporter of every rigid rule at home, relaxing when abroad. Not that it always does actual wrong, judged from broad standards, but it does wrong by its own standard, which is also the one by which it judges its neighbours. It gambles at Monte-Carlo, patronizes Bull-Fights in Spain, smokes cigarettes in Egypt, drinks absinthe in France, hears vulgarities in London, sees immoralities in Paris and possibly rents guaranteed virgins in Japan. Returning home, it sheds the mask and domino, renewing its prim propriety again to join in anthems, shriek at vice and pass resolutions for the uplifting of the lower (?) classes.

Such would defend themselves in a ruffled sense of outrage from criticism, maintaining that superior beings may escape pollution where the common herd would be stained, and asserting that at home they owe the world the benefit of their chaste example. Who asked for it? The best example possible is that of honesty. Let us admit our faults and acknowledge their grip, thus winning the sympathetic aid of others equally harassed. A little human sympathy is of more mutual benefit than the imitation purity which discourages the deceived.

The measure of civilization's progress is best shown by its interpretation of the all embracing synonym,

Honour. All beings of proper self-respect have hoped to keep their honour stainless, yet society has accepted strange deviations from a consistent ideal in different ages. We have happily outgrown the brawling times when honour signified a ridiculous and sensitive dignity. Blood-washed vanity no longer parades its nobility of character. Pride depending on trick of wrist courts the penalty of sword-slit liver or lead-pierced lung. True honour needs no physical proof. Its superiority disdains the test. The argument that depends on force betrays inherent weakness.

And yet in passing to the extreme of self-repression, we may neglect a vital principle of duty. Certain aggressive insolence hardly within the reach of the law, is best dealt with by personal strenuousness. It should not be safe to apply opprobrious epithets or defame decent women in promiscuous gatherings. It reflects no credit to men that they have allowed a term intended to be deteriorating to the one addressed, but in reality an insult to the woman who bore him, to be so prevalent.

Evil measured by result alone would lead to curious conclusions. Theft, for instance, does no immediate harm to the public, as it simply transfers ownership. Arson often removes unsightly buildings and assault objectionable individuals. If, on the other hand, they were measured entirely by criminal intent, wrongs would not always meet with justice, for protection demands restriction of certain acts, irrespective of motive.

Many hold that law has no right to interfere in questions of personal concern which should be left to personal decision. No doubt it has overstepped its bounds at

times, but it must be remembered that the masses have not been prone to study conduct in its ethical aspect, and have therefore needed more or less compulsion. We could not trust the general public to respect the sanctity of a hen-roost if penalties were outlawed, nor rely on the abstract attraction of education to result in general school-attendance if it were purely a voluntary matter. Personal liberty is but a myth. While free from much of past injustice, we are still restricted at every turn. It is the power of law that has stripped us of our savagery and licked us into decency ; yet we may properly hope to gradually eliminate the rules that evolution will render unnecessary.

As our code of morals is very artificial, it is foolish to imagine that we can classify humanity under the two distinct divisions of either good or bad. People are born susceptible and unsusceptible, of little capacity and of great capacity. The easily influenced trail after saints or sinners, the small-minded are mean in petty, sneaky ways or timourously correct, the strong may turn out bold villians or vigourous champions of public weal according to circumstances and opportunity.

The question of what is really moral, right, fit, just or expedient in any anticipated step or course of action can be settled by a simple self-catechism on the following lines :—

- Does the contemplated act promise personal benefit ?
- Will it benefit others ?
- Does it endanger the self ?
- May it harm others ?

Any act that interests and develops the self without involving another's loss or interfering with some higher or more important development is undoubtedly to be sanctioned. It may be claimed that certain acts, while suitable for some, may set a bad example for others. To this contention there is but one reply ; each man must judge for himself. We cannot afford to continue supporting spineless humanity and countenance its degrading reliance on example. We would as well eat gruel for fear the sick would crave our meat ; as well kill horses because men sometimes bet on races. Teach the world to trust by clearly following a straight, individual path. If it must have example, give it the pattern of independence !

Any act that benefits others is evidently proper, for the exercise of altruism saves the self from narrowness and expands the soul by receipt of due appreciation. Even from a purely practical standpoint it is evident that aid from the world in general is good insurance. Bread cast on the waters returns in a rather soggy condition, but may help to lure a fish if utilized with discretion.

Any act that harms the self is irrational unless the sacrifice is made to the gaining of an end that more than recompenses. It is nothing to lose a night's rest for a sick child, to cut a finger while carving a masterpiece, or even to renounce life for a principle, as it would be worth little if not ennobled by the sense of duty that demands a recognition above the narrower interests.

Any pursuit that harms another to gain a personal end, is not only immoral, but extremely unwise. Human

resentment does not forgive a recognized outrage, striking back with a violence entirely disproportionate to the amount of injury inflicted. Circumstances may prevent immediate revenge, yet it grows with time and frequently affects a coming generation. In fact, revenge is one of the most potent forces of history. Many a man of normal quietude has been so stirred at real or fancied injury as to develop will and ability for the direct purpose of retrieving his self-respect in the downfall of his opponent.

It is even possible that the whole progress of Civilization is due to the corrective policy which gives blow for blow. Oppression can be quelled only by annihilation. Kings took men's rights until men took king's heads. The arrogance of the individual invites the antagonism of the masses. It were better that one should spurn a fire, buffet a flood or charge barb-wire rather than dare the intelligent anger of outraged humanity. Deceit thinks to evade retribution, but whoever succeeded in fooling the world for all time? Cunning may postpone vengeance, but the blow will come with accumulated force when due. Delays are dangerous.

We often hear the claim that antagonism has been subdued by Christian counsel, the bumptious combativeness of earlier races having been replaced by the milder manners generated by acceptance of the *turned cheek* policy. It were better to ascribe the change to diminution of the red corpuscles in the blood. We have learned to restrain outward emotions, but hidden malice is still prevalent. Education in philosophy has doubtless made us more patient in temper, yet we hardly forgive—we simply await a favourable opportunity to return the

attack. In the logical course of human events, evil actions bring unpleasant consequences. Those who neglect to do their part toward bringing about retribution encourage further spoliation and make the task of others more arduous.

In considering the acts of man performed for the benefit of others, it must be remembered that he gains little but disappointment from a barren harvest. When he lets go of anything he either aims to get a better grip or grasp a more attractive opportunity. Of course there are those who unconsciously follow out more generous instincts, and there is nothing quite so fine in human nature as their evidence of hereditary altruism. The original motive behind the impulse, however, resulted from some former discovery that great returns are derived from labour expended for the welfare of others. It is certainly better to trace a logical reason for desirable acts than adopt them from custom or command; and a fair trial will convince the experimenter that a responsive delight from the pleasure of others is more enjoyable than the direct return from pandering to one's own limited requirements.

The instincts of a companionable being will thrive only on reciprocity. If courteous and thoughtful treatment of associates encourages no reflex spirit of similar feeling, discouragement will soon repress its energy. There is a certain selfish greediness in human beings illustrated by brutal disregard of others' rights, but we can easily cope with such a witless policy by a determined and combined antagonism. When a short-sighted individual thus arouses the world's attention, he invites an impatient slap to smear him into the semblance of a

crushed pest. Unfortunate circumstances of birth or training breed bad manners, even as rot breeds smells. It is our duty to suppress corrupting influences before their example incites wide imitation. It is so easy to be amiable and considerate that none have excuse for boorishness. The profit is sufficient to reward a little careful reflection. Many have prospered with no other capital than a generous fund of good nature. The happy results of mutual consideration are logical in their completeness. Each one of a community might own a book with no two alike. Selfishness would prevent the education or amusement that reciprocity could greatly multiply by shared perusals. Each of us has different talents, different capabilities. A proper mutuality of interests allows all to profit with no individual loss and no necessary sense of obligation.

We often confuse the idea of working with others with a sentimental motive of working for others. The fact that men will unite in concerted action is not necessarily a proof that each is trying to aid the rest, but rather that each is anxious to share in the larger product which is promised by the combination of forces. Ten men may often accomplish together one hundred times as much as could each singly. Society exists by community of action, the simple evolution of an appreciation of the laws of cause and effect. Even when men appear to act with no definite purpose, heredity is prompting them toward some line of expected profit.

In considering the various phases of altruism—self-abnegation, charity and the like, we are confronted by the definite proposition: Is the aim of helping others preferable to that of personal development by self-im-

provement? Shall the individual progress by himself or only as a part of the race as a whole?

It seems quite evident upon investigation that we need a combination of forces. Of course, preliminary enlightenment is necessary before the individual can serve as an important factor in the assistance of others. Some, with purely selfish aims, often aid the world indirectly to more purpose than many who generously strive with a less gifted energy. The greatest works of single minds must benefit the public, for they are too over-powering for the individual. Artists do not seclude their paintings nor novelists retain their manuscripts for their own personal perusal. Those wishing to devote themselves to altruism must first secure the means for sustenance, and the surplus moments may not be many.

Our entire system of municipal and general government is in itself an unconscious example of unselfish co-operation. Those having the means contribute to give to all the benefits of schools, roads, legal rights, fire-protection, etc., and often the special privileges of public libraries, hospitals and parks. We actually unite in accepting a system which leaves the levy of taxation to the discretion of a voting majority who would by themselves pay but a small fraction of its toll. The fact of moderation under such circumstances proves that we have attained a public honesty which comes very near limiting its demands to its actual necessities.

It is well for the future of civilization that the large majority of people are born with a sense of dignity that discourages the proffer of alms. Some may be tempted to profit by the unwise lavishness of unthinking

generosity, and others must regretfully accept assistance when in straits. It will be found, as a general rule, that toil for those who make no move to deserve the fruits of effort strengthens selfishness, incites false ideas of policy and encourages the vices or circumstances that make this assistance seem necessary. It is not right that we should ennoble ourselves by debasing the character of others. We shall not even arouse the impulse of gratitude in the majority of instances, for few appreciate that which comes without expenditure.

For the young, the diseased and the decrepit some one is always responsible—parent, guardian or government as a final resort. The conditions which appeal to public assistance are usually provided for by public means. If not, the private effort spent in mitigation of the necessity were better used in arousing public opinion to appreciate its obligations.

Pity for the unfortunate is a creditable human sentiment, yet emotional tendencies should ever receive analysis before expressing themselves in impulsive action. We must study the reasons for pitiable conditions and adapt our cure to them. We cannot go back and better the ancestry of the waifs of society, and the imperfection with which we are dealing must not be strengthened along its undesirable lines. Too much assistance prevents the growth of independence. A keen dread of the Poor House is a great rouser of energy. Those having time or means to devote to such problems would best spend it in securing employment for the idle and enforcing the laws of health and morality rather than in distributing cash, food or clothing to thus encourage idleness and improvidence.

Duty to the public is often thought of as a primal obligation in which consideration of self should be sunk. So much is owed tradition and association that one should certainly recognize the full amount of his indebtedness, have pride enough to take his share of public burdens and be ready and willing to aid in time of public necessity. There is a glorious meed of satisfaction to a man in doing a little more than his part and thus putting an obligation behind him. All sacrifice to public demand is not, however, typical of the spread of altruism alone. Men are eager for certain complimentary public honours with their various associated emoluments, but not quite so ready to do their duty when the tax-assessor makes his private call. Even those who fight for their Nation are too frank in their struggle for rank or search for adventure to win an undue laudation. A few enthusiasts keep the activities of unselfish suggestion current, but the critical investigator will find that pride and praise have fathered more public effort than the spirit of devotion to disinterested ends.

While universal philanthropy would undoubtedly unsettle civilization, we find limited doses agreeable at times. While motives that prompt a man to enrich others should not be questioned in a carping spirit, they may at least be dissected in the interests of philosophy, and strange causes will often be discerned for these apparently abnormal acts. The commands of religion are accountable for many of them. In olden days it was the custom to burn wealth on the altar, but it were certainly more rational to share its use and enjoyment with the needy. The reward of public acclamation is an instigator of no mean moment, as any expression of gratification is most pleasing flattery to the one inciting it. Many gifts are squeezed from the pocket by the pressure

of persistent solicitation. Many give because another sets the example. Those who obtain a surplus beyond their immediate needs must either give or destroy, as there are no banks in heaven and no good freight facilities between the spheres. The inevitable distribution may be hastened in advance of bodily dissolution, but even then the recipients may be harmed rather than helped. Those who gain an unearned increment are bound to be dissatisfied with the fruit of real effort. The expenditure of nervous force that wars with patience, waiting for inheritance from some unfeeling possessor of unexpected longevity, would seem to merit some return; but there might be even better occupations.

Giving, therefore, has its evils. Few are sufficiently educated to avoid them. If we give to the competent what is not their due we weaken their pride. If we give to the incompetent we encourage their incompetency. If we give to those who deserve we are simply just—providing it is we who are indebted to them. If we attempt to repair the injustice of others, we shield the real offender and mitigate the need for his punishment. Many reforms have been postponed because of some unwise meddler softening the asperities of a crying evil. The succor of a few of the starving, or the clothing of a few of the freezing, gives but a limited idea of conditions existing beyond the personal knowledge. Kind slave-owners made slavery possible. Whining beggars gain society's alms at street corners while unseen infants die for lack of proper food in obscure tenements.

The bulk of charitable impulses, taking form in public benefits, is noticed among the enlightened classes. Contributions to proper ends that serve no personal want

are rarely credited to the ignorant or uncultured. Only the broad-minded are interested enough in the present or future to continue experiments that involve personal expense. It is interesting to note that most of the public donations are utilized directly for the betterment of the striving rather than for the raising of the less energetic. College endowments benefit only those who have already gained considerable education ; libraries appeal only to the mentally awakened. It is unfortunate that those of liberal tendencies do not show more originality at times, for some of these public bequests might be made to teach the world something new if used in wise experiment.

Man cannot escape the inevitable results of generous acts, but he may certainly repay them in some fashion or other. The wealth that the world has accumulated from age to age should be passed on undiminished in volume. Unpayable debts are owing to inventors, authors, artists, statesmen, patriots. Simple appreciation is enough to gratify the usual benefactor, and yet we often see the envious and thoughtless deny even this small return.

The superior class of material philanthropists is curiously concealed from public view by the indirect nature of its actions. It forms that clan of prolific wealth-producers who give the chance of self-respecting independence to thousands of honest workmen. The man who aids to make more than he must destroy has added to the general fund from which all must indirectly profit. We should distinguish between the ability that creates wealth and the cunning that diverts capital from its legitimate channels. One man builds a railroad, while another, miles away, plans to juggle with its stock in

order to reap the profits of its success. Both may use equal courage and brains, but they are not twin benefactors by any means. The world owes its thanks to him who finds or makes a chance for the employment of truly creative labour. The greater his personal profit in the task, the more incentive there will be for others to emulate him.

The type of citizen whose development is most desirable is of that broadened class which treats the world at large as something in whose progress it has a vital personal interest, and whose future it is helping to shape to its best mould. There is no pleasure so lasting as that of seeing earnest effort fruitful. As the satisfaction of realization is directly proportionate to the grandeur of the aim, it is evident that those who attempt the betterment of the universe have chosen the greatest possible ambition.

We shall find it better, as a general rule, to treat our world from an abstract standpoint ; for it is then much easier to think it worth our effort. It is much harder to find an immediately worthy recipient of favour than to recognize an obligation to humanity in general. Men fly to arms to lose their lives in defence of country, when their personal habitations may be absolutely secure from molestation, and their immediate associates not worthy the sacrifice of one ounce of blood. They will pore over accounts of the public finances when not possessed of one week's advance rent. Patriotism is but one of many instances of the spreading human interest which leaps the boundaries of individual selfishness. It is well to have an ideal so large and comprehensive that one may pass by its near defects as minute blemishes.

The attainment of the highest standards of accepted morality is by no means the only desirable end of existence, or the only accomplishment worthy of praise. In fact, it may be a purely natural result of training and association rather than that of personal striving and creation. The public is wont to class as moral those who simply refrain from its selection of immoral performances. The inactive would reap the highest rewards were it not for the fact that their unobtrusive virtue sometimes fails to attract attention. However praiseworthy such propriety may be, it is doubtful whether ambition should be confined to such paucity of aims. If negative activity constitutes morality, it is plain that the moral one, while not outwardly obnoxious, may still be ignorant, unhappy, unclean, unprogressive, unappreciative, mean, stolid and stubborn. Indeed, such examples are quite common. Attention to restriction alone implies a morbid self-absorption and introspection. Continual constraint incites a diseased sensitiveness which magnifies triviality. Insane asylums are daily fed with its unfortunate victims. The inevitable reaction from excessive repression often causes violent outbreaks to astonish grieved associates. Self-restraint, while of course a possibility, leaves the generation following to reap its harvest. We are all familiar with the failings of the sons of the more ascetic clergymen. We also see parental sternness reflected by a recklessness in its offspring. Human nature demands a certain tolerance in its present stage of development and must not be pushed to extremes. Men ratify this ruling in their inner consciousness by selection of associates who are by no means perfect; and they find it a relief when some sainted prig of traditional record is proved human by discovery of honest evidence.

The real test of an individual's value in the evolution of humanity is not the rigour of his morality, but the measure of his accomplishment. What mite has he added to the general fund of knowledge, happiness or wealth? What use has he made of his talents and opportunities? What aid has he given his fellows? What is the total balance after deducting the cost of his subsistence and the evil of his destructive tendencies and ignorant mistakes? He may have been moral and yet so unobtrusive that even his force as an example was nil! He may have been moral and yet a beggar or hanger-on! The man who leaves a sturdy, intelligent progeny, a donation of fertile ideas and the actual handiwork of material accomplishment may not at all times have been strictly virtuous, especially when passing through the transitions of development. In fact, he may even at times knowingly have done wrong. Unless the results were grave indeed, cannot we still honour him and admire the result of his accomplishment? Might not we consistently respect him above the pure, negative personality? Many a creed would condemn him even had he done no evil at all, were his mind not to credit one peculiar method of salvation. They would give the most degraded and repulsive wretch a loftier estimation than this prolific man of deeds were a repentant thought to control the former's brain at the eleventh hour.

Human standards should be remodeled to better credit the results of conscious personal effort. Prestige is often granted in men's thoughts to those made socially prominent by descent, hereditary gifts or unfair partiality. The plumage of the oriole and the fur of the seal are conspicuously pleasing, but for this reason we do not prefer these animals as companions to our dog or horse.

It is unfortunately true that those who have actually done much to win approval have so neglected to develop the personal amenities as to affect fairness of judgment upon their achievements. Men of great ability and accomplishment are too often socially dull, and intelligent women too often personally unattractive.

The course of activity is not free of danger, and often risks the waste of misguided effort. Still the venturesome nature finds in its expression a spice of interest and also profit, providing it exercises judgment to avoid the most uncompromising errors. Those who are too wise to chance a bodily menace frequently freely court a moral danger, not noting its insidious, corrosive action. The consequences are inevitable, for evil cannot be handled without gloves if cleanliness is to be preserved. The effect may not be always visible, yet a rotted conscience has certain well known characteristics. He who sneers at inflexible standards of moral conduct mars his spiritual self by jumping off the cliff of integrity into the ravine of impropriety as surely as he would fracture his physical frame by madly defying the law of gravitation.

No one can ever hope to lay down fixed rules to govern all activities. Everything that is right may also be wrong in certain applications. The fact that man progresses means that he changes and conditions change with him. He has to adapt himself to new situations and should not expand into maturity hampered by tight-fitting, outgrown garments. Each one has an unique problem of his own to consider, and he shall look in vain for an example in which to place implicit confidence for his own guidance. It were better to make

mistakes of action rather than of inaction—to reflect, consider, weigh the consequences, but do something ! For even mistakes have worth as warnings and the practice of exertion trains the energies toward their best usage. All men have a surplus of force, though the comparative amount varies vastly. Absolute confinement of power is as a stopped boiler full of steam, which may explode to the great damage of the restraining influence, dynamite hardly rivaling the possible result. Provide a safety valve and the splendid expansion fizzes away in useless diffusion. Lead the steam through the iron arteries of an engine and the world grows rich with added service or production.

Many consider the force of a good example greater than that of any other active power. If the example is exalted by reason of things done, the suggestive influence of the success may have the value of spurring the ambition of the masses to a fair degree of imitation. The unbalanced elements of human nature, unfortunately, make it hardly advisable to submit a hero's nature to a rigid inspection ; over-development of one faculty or set of faculties often means weakness in others. It is usually safer, therefore, to stick to theories and ideals as guides. Self-development is an higher aim than imitation, even if it fails to reach so high a plane. When faulty masterpieces are reared on pedestals the mob will always note the blemish and forget the glory. Many a great man is remembered by some unfortunate slip of tongue or pen, rather than for his true ability. Many a hero lives in memory as a butt for ridicule on account of some injudicious act gleefully discerned by the on-lookers in waiting for some proof that heroes are of clay similar to their own.

Life, in its evolutionary aspect, gives evidence that morality is not necessarily destined to exclusive survival. There are few so morally harmless as aged spinsters; yet they will surely leave no progeny. The restless vigour of the aspiring type of man is destined to severe struggles, and often burns up his energy too quickly, neglecting to apply it to some of the common necessities of existence indispensable to the preservation and repetition of its kind. The Anglo-Saxon race is spreading over the globe, prolific and venturesome, while the quiet breeding races of India and China are kept down only by famine. Morality is hardly a dominant feature in either case. When the former stops to enjoy the fruits of its effort and the latter gain ambition, the world will see strange changes. Too much success is demoralizing, and too long a somnolence equally unpromising to those who have studied the history of nations.

The man who represents the generally accepted standard of morality seems pusillanimous, sterile and cold, in comparison with one of manly instinct. The independent individuality who obeys his inborn promptings, awakens the sympathies even by his mistakes more readily than the one who observes unquestioning the cut and dried conventions of the narrower moral precepts. He who is ready to laugh, love or fight according to the exigencies of an occasion, who is willing to help in trouble or share in joy, quickly wins friendship and loyalty, while the saintly associate whose look conveys reproof, however mild, and who stands aloof from all matters of active interest, does not incite in those with whom he comes in contact a desire to imitate, no matter how much they may respect the honesty of his motives. A keen scent for evil is a most unfortunate possession.

Its abnormal development is usually due to neglect of happier instincts or a fundamental lack of virility. They steal no nuts whose teeth are gone. The virtue of a clam arouses no applause.

In our reflective moments we must admit, whether we like to or no, that the world does not yet seem quite ready to be strictly moral as a whole. While its majority may personally take no part in questionable pursuits, they tacitly encourage them more or less for their suggestive amusements. They enjoy the reading of novels that deal with human passions and like to see all kinds of life portrayed on the mimic stage. They mingle with a curious interest among the more notorious people and are not adverse to knowing of their escapades. The reformer must store up a great fund of patience and not deplore the lack of finical nicety where common sense should not expect immediate perfection. We should have a certain tolerance in charity for undeveloped conditions or else seek a solitude where we may be freed from all that savours of impropriety by sight, smell or sound. Balloons might aid us to escape near contact, but even flight could not tear us from our memories.

We may labour strenuously to plug the leak in a dam, but if without a sufficient outlet, the water will rise to spread over the top or burst through the weakest section unless the embankment be continually heightened and thickened. Society often builds a porous wall and proudly points to its unshaken contour, while the stream silently trickles through, hidden perhaps from sight by the very sham which frowns above it.

The continuous outrage of fundamental morality by an apparently religious civilization, furnishes the most

perplexing future problem for humanity, and it seems useless to suggest, to speculate or expect anything in the nature of a change in definition. The limitations in the exercise of the oldest right of human possession seem destined to continue in spite of the constant undermining influence of wanton dereliction, as they are undoubtedly responsible for much of higher social evolution.

We have developed a time-honoured respect for virginity, true love and family environment that furnishes us much of idealism and encouragement. Those fortunate enough to know these blessings would hardly care to trade them for remote possibilities of betterment. Those unfortunately lacking must adjust themselves to circumstances and be perhaps forgiven with a broadened charity if not always successful.

One half the civilized race must now quietly await selection from the other half, often not even gratified with the chance to refuse. The selector is somewhat shadowed by the tradition that attraction in the sexes is confined by heavenly purpose to pre-assorted pairs, and therefore often trusts the supposed divinity of impulse rather than the calm logic of reason. We are continually advancing the age at which conventional marriage may be contracted. Even in the days of Aristotle thirty-five to thirty-seven was defined as the proper ripeness of years to be attained by males before considering the subject. The time demanded for a finished education and start in life postpones the period when men can honourably contract to support other men's daughters for life as they may no longer start their house-keeping in pine-bough tents. The intervening development of sense is doubtless advisable to one who must be ready to

accept grave legal, social and financial responsibilities. Undoubtedly there will be various heart-aches in the meanwhile—much to broaden human experience. But is the power of loving thus degraded? How many of either sex wed their first fancied favourite—or their second—or their third?

The usual ardent couple would scoff at the idea that their affections might ever change, but the world as a whole is wiser than its units. The haste which enters into a life-time situation without the careful consideration which befits the importance of the act very commonly ends in mistake. Immature logic depends more or less on chance for its success and might accept advice from those of older years with marked good fortune.

The hungry novice who has stirred his untested appetite by possible years of preliminary imagination finds himself like one debarred from showing favour to more than one gastronomic attraction. He may thus be metaphorically forced to decide whether to dine forever on cream-puffs, roast-beef or raw apples. He should realize that his choice is final and his regret therefore vain if the cream sours, the beef grows stale or the apples cause indigestion.

Those who thrive on the steady diet selected are often more lucky than clever. They should hardly preach to the unfortunate from the eminence of their happiness. This is the one well matured plan of life that does not permit us to use the experience of an error for future profit—in this world at least under normal circumstances.

Perhaps that is why those who believe in an eternal existence have cautiously limited their contract *till death us do part*.

Is it not somewhat curious that the law recognizes but one method of enlarging marital experience, and that one hinging on so chanced a thing as disease or accident? Second marriages prove that it is not considered fundamentally immoral for an individual of either sex to mate with more than one of the other under certain circumstances. It is actually proved that preliminary experience is not condemned, as statistics prove that widows actually win more attention from marrying men than single women of the same age.

In looking for examples of delinquency we find the greater offenders at both ends of the social scale. Constancy is the consistent virtue of the middle class—and it is the middle class that always survives. The men who won sufficient prominence to live in history were very commonly changeable in their affections; and the women whose names are left were, generally speaking, even more notoriously impartial. This should simply warn us from the too prevalent phase of hero-worship that imitates those acts alone which are easy of duplication.

Perhaps the greater source of present evil is in the narrowed view that magnifies the delight of a forbidden pleasure and longs for the presently unattainable. If we should hope to turn the thought of men from premature aspirations we must first supply a greater attraction. The development of absorbing occupations is therefore the possible hope of the dissatisfied.

In the general distribution of responsibility for disagreeable conditions, false modesty must take its full share. Men permit errors to continue simply because they dislike to meddle with them. Were there no engineers bold enough to smell sewerage we should all die of plagues. Sewage is not attractive from any standpoint, yet it would do no good for law to forbid its existence. Scientists have only recently spared time to find a means for a purification which makes it possible for the dainty to forget the necessity of assumed ignorance, and adaptation of their discoveries is hardly yet begun. The problem is to find a new utility for that which is now objectionable. We must recognize our evils first and then remove the evil from them. We shall have just as much substance left—we cannot make an actuality disappear—but we may certainly hope to change its nature if not hampered by a delicacy that demands disregard.

Any solution of a problem that relies on nothing but repression is but temporary. Self-denial and artificial restraint for the mere purpose of discipline are medieval and absurd. There are plenty of other trials of real necessity to aid us in the formation of character. To adopt restraint for its own sake would lead to imitation of the Indian fakir who twists his ankle round his neck to limit the comfort of his downsittings and his uprisings.

Yet we may properly block up one path if we at the same time point out a better. It will not do to let people ramble at will. Many if permitted to carry out their individual desires would spend their time and strength in unthinkable debauchery. A two year old child could

not safely be allowed to choose its food and explore the country, and those no better able to govern themselves must not be allowed to experiment at will with their untrained impulses.

There is always a cogent reason for each finally approved human act, and an expediency in each respected moral rule—some necessary motive force at work to kindle the sense of duty by which the strength of progress is sustained. Many have hoped to find it in the hope of a future existence in which their goodness would meet appreciation, but the possibilities of a second life are not necessarily stimulating to a present effort. Christians, for instance, often treat their heaven as a state so high as to make earthly experience hardly worth while. This peculiar interpretation of divine judgment makes it safer for them to remain inert rather than court the chance of error in activity. Their attitude is best defined by that most illogical assertion, *They also serve who only stand and wait.*

Morality is then but a system of experimental means by which to reach an ideal end. Its present factors are not all evolutionary in development, many continuing by inherited respect for past authority rather than by tested merit. The morality of the future will develop on purely logical lines, as intelligence will conquer that veneration for age and mystery which now wrestles with reason. The more we exert our brains the less we shall rely on custom, rule and habit. We shall act with a purpose and for a purpose. We may even arrive at that plane of honesty and courage which shall take pride in the admission that we are moral because we find it to our immediate or indirect advantage; that we obey the law

because we respect either its force or its justice and that we show public spirit, philanthropy or kindness because we enjoy the action or appreciate the return. We shall take an extra pride in the grade of character that finds its pleasure in enlightened utility or in such immaterial things as success, affection, gratitude and praise. Thus we shall exemplify the growth of higher aspirations and evidence the onward progress of evolution.

## CHAPTER XII.

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### INDIVIDUAL IMPROVEMENT.

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*“Everywhere the first process in progress is to take on something new, and the second process, which experience and criticism brings, is to eliminate the mistakes and preserve the good results.”—GUNTON.*

## CHAPTER XII.

### INDIVIDUAL IMPROVEMENT.

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**E**VOLUTION opens her broadest opportunities of perpetuity to those who adapt themselves to such conditions as exist, and also to those who create conditions favourable to their existence. The rabbit adjusts itself to winter's barrenness by learning to subsist on roots, the squirrel by storing nuts in anticipation. Men illustrate a higher possibility by not only eating varied things and storing for the future, but by actually aiding in producing the food itself by intelligent use of accumulated knowledge. The *Survival of the Fittest*, in its present application, signifies the continuance of those who are able to utilize their capabilities most intelligently. Culture alone is not sufficient to develop this attribute. Many of the finer races of the past were ruthlessly overwhelmed as soon as they forgot the necessity for vigour and alertness. The self-evident purpose of existence, if a purpose be admitted, is well-balanced activity of developed thought, will and physique. As man has no clear conception of present or future possibilities, he cannot determine how, when or where they may reach their ultimate expression. The vastness of space, the bewildering scope of time and the irresistible course of events may easily cause his atomic mind to wonder whether individual ambition can accomplish anything of relative import. But even if self-confidence

should be insufficient, reason persuades him to action, since it results in broadening his chances for pleasure as well as increasing his utility. And his knowledge of the law acquired through experience, tells him that even the effort which affords no immediate return is advisable ; for reflex action, however diffused and disguised, is certain to bring about a final balance.

Viewed from the evolutionary standpoint, it is somewhat difficult to determine whether race improvement is better attained by the high development of a few individuals as ideal examples, or by gradually raising the majority collectively to an ever broadening plane of enlightenment. The imitative function of humanity certainly demands some embodied exemplification to bring into practical action its best attributes. The duty of self-improvement must conflict more or less with the altruistic demand for self-immolation, but each man owes it to himself to develop his own personal abilities to their most efficient degree. He who occupies a prominent post of duty is, in a way, directly responsible for such derelictions of the people as are identical with his own public failings. It is futile for him to hypocritically hide his errors, for the masses are not easily deceived. If character and self-respect be not sufficient to enable him to meet public inspection undismayed, it were well for him to cultivate in retirement the neglected principles of conduct.

In view of the many absorbing necessities of life, it is usually impossible for men to directly devote themselves to the training of their many faculties after the period of responsibility arrives. They may, however, indirectly seek development through every occupation, if awakened

to the profit of applying thought to action. Those under age are supposedly subject to the training of others, but real growth of character comes from later experience. A bountifully creative condition demands the preliminary development of an alert physique, an ambitious will, an active imagination, an unworried conscience and opportunity for undisturbed reflection. The adult's time is then variously divided, being largely given over to the labours of necessity, the labours of selection, the occupations of necessity, the occupations of suggested intent and the occupations of choice.

### THE LABOURS OF NECESSITY.

The first great incentive in life is self-preservation. It is found necessary for the majority of men to labour in the production of either food, clothing or shelter. Mediums of exchange affording opportunity for those of other employment to trade equivalents, they may choose the channels by which to provide themselves with the means of subsistence. The preservation of those not self-supporting lays a further necessity for effort upon men with families or compassion for the unfortunate, while certain requirements of law, custom and style present demands which rank as equal incentives for endeavour. A large share of human force and time is the tax upon the privilege of living—and living in a manner acceptable to associates.

The average man, confined to definite labours, may think his sphere of activity and development exceedingly narrow. In the progress of the world, however, each honest day of productive toil adds its infinitesimal mite to the ever growing testimonial of intelligence by which

a broader knowledge is assimilated, forming a foundation for future development and unconsciously raising the agent's intellect by self-appreciation of worth. The most humble effort is dignified in the man who will take an interest in and prove his own efficiency to himself, even by a slight improvement upon the quality or increase in the quantity of a product. The disastrous and blighting effect of shirking is evidenced by worthless results.

While there are certain occupations that reflect nothing but demoralization on their agents—thieves and vagrants becoming unfitted for honest engagement—it is unfortunate that all legitimate work cannot arouse the individual zest of those employed. Of course when the incumbent is unsuited to his calling, lack of interest is inevitable, often resulting in the destruction of future utility. The lawyer is likely to become lazy through lack of clients, and perhaps drift into cheap politics; and in the promoter of swindling schemes, the unsuccessful business man is often discovered. It is most desirable for each man to find his most appropriate occupation, but it is nevertheless true that those who stick to one line, even if not thought the most fitting, profit more than others who continually change. In original choice one can make little mistake who engages in work that produces necessary or useful things, or that serves, transports or reasonably amuses the public. He may gradually discard the wasteful methods of the past, eliminate unnecessary competition, and arrive at the power to spread intelligence and truth, devising new ways and means to increase all the benefits by which humanity profits. In the simplest endeavour it is always possible to improve on the average standard and dignify results by individuality.

And in labouring for the return of mere necessities, the effort should be sufficiently productive to deserve the true reward. Let him who works for food get good food, pure food. If he need shelter let him have enough of room, light and air to go with it. No wonder many find their work distasteful when they allow themselves so little in repayment. Let the non-essentials wait, if necessary. Perfect the foundation first.

As to those of the gentler sex, in faithfully performing their primal task of keeping the race existent, their main duty is ended. The wretched poverty of certain lands unfortunately demands that their women be financially productive, even when mated to faithful working men. That curious result of a false civilization, the unmarried female, must certainly produce or live on charity. The lighter tasks should be assigned her, freed from the competition of effeminate males. Any really straining toil should be denied her, to shield from shame the men who would permit her to assume it.

### THE LABOURS OF SELECTION.

A certain minority of workers, having created a surplus of product beyond their immediate necessities, are enabled to devote their time or surplus wealth to various less material purposes. They are not so bound up in toil that they have not time in which at least to think and plan in lines chosen by their ambition. It therefore becomes necessary to definitely decide on what hope to base this surplus effort, even if it be but visionary and immaterial. The very pursuit of something beyond present grasp is of necessity developing, even while it is possible to bend the energies in hopeless ways or neglect the greater possibilities in thinking only of the lesser.

The usual gamut of a progressive existence starts in unthinking youth with the pursuit of pure enjoyment, following in after years with energies devoted in turn to acquiring learning, experience, wealth, position and recognition. The busy man finds little time for reflective definition of purpose, and if his efforts are productive it may be not always expedient to divert his attention. Design is not necessary when impulse results in correct action. Let the child, therefore, play its fill, and the young love while their emotions are fresh and keen. The hardships of existence will come to them in time, forcing thought when the inevitable responsibilities present themselves. While living in a sphere of which men are sure, it is their plain duty to experience all the profitable chances of an earthly nature, and shape their ambitions accordingly. He who disdains the gifts here proffered, displays an ingratitude which calls down the wrath of outraged Nature, and he who is able to judge himself invulnerable to the concentrated human impulses, has been slighted by the great mother in her endowment of normal qualifications.

Many plan their sphere of action with the design of attaining the best in every line that appeals to them, in the absorbing idea of getting all there is out of this world. They yearn for large incomes, large opportunities, boundless liberties. They wish to see everything that is worth seeing, experience every known sensation and possess the best of all that men think attractive. Wonderful as it may seem, they often gain their ends by virtue of the simple force of willed desire. They press forward where others fear to tread, taking chances where hope is limited and grasping opportunities that others are too slow to notice. A proper realization of ideals is all that is necessary to make such vigour worthy of

emulation. The ambition to own the finest game-rooster, however, might waste as much energy as that devoted to the struggle for the highest public honours. A nation once went mad over so trivial a thing as tulips. Collectors vary their crazes from postage-stamps to thumb-prints. The associating penalty of high attainment is the dissatisfaction with which all inferiority must ever afterward be regarded. There are plenty of prizes to keep men struggling, however, if they cultivate a wide range of interest.

A large majority confine their efforts to the acquisition of luxuries, conveniences or the wealth that can secure them, without the faintest consideration of the development of taste and judgment necessary to the appreciation of the higher scale of material gratification. The energy that centres in the struggle for a fortune usually spares but little strength to cultivate finer traits of appreciation. Croesus may have a library but no remnant of a studious inclination ; a music room, without an ear for aught better than the melody of a street piano ; and an art gallery, with no standard by which to know a masterpiece save its price. Through the mere ability to purchase, a man does not find pleasure in truffles and champagne when reared on cabbages and beer, or potatoes and water. The enriched Philistine builds a palace on a quarter-acre lot, forcing his crude conceit on the public notice in a way to make the artistic shudder in discomfort and bewail a waste that could have been made to educate a higher instinct in the neighbouring masses. The power to do and the training that knows how to do, are rarely associated in any effort outside the narrow field where the power was strengthened. Many a fruitful will finds vague dissatisfaction with the returns of ambition, simply because the struggle to achieve has drained the sap

from every other branch of being. It is not the power to gratify unstable whims that makes life seem worth the living, but rather the crowning of some steadfast hope or the satisfaction of some wholesome endeavour.

However, a factor need not be scorned because of its misuse. It is only by a surplus of wealth in certain individual hands that certain experiments are possible. It is individual control of wealth that has opened new countries and made supplies of every nature more abundant by every conceivable utility in which preliminary risk of investment is a factor. Apart from the widespread advantages which a selfish incentive may have incidentally given, there are also direct donations in endowed colleges, libraries, parks, etc., that the general public would not have paid for from its own taxation.

But there is much in materialistic progress that is immaterial to the individual's highest possibilities. The wealth of print, for instance, should have spread broadcast the better forms of education ; yet the public taste shows so little influence from this source that its patronage of libraries is largely confined to light literature. Inventions and discoveries in the use of steam and electricity enable men to travel quickly to distant lands, yet do not aid them in the solution of human problems. Science gives them ingenious toys, but some of them are tired of toys.

Creative employment, in its broad significance, is worthy of absorbing the greater part of man's activities. It is well to strive for a fortune, give form to an idea, solve a problem of invention or discover a new truth.

But all material ambitions may disappoint by some miscarriage of events or failure of those upon whom dependence is placed, and the manufacture of a surplus of material things is trivial in comparison with the building up of personal character, the strengthening of the mental or moral fibre either in self or others. Adversity is turned to profit by the mind that seeks development in experience, scorning the physical aspect of conditions while searching for the knowledge which mistakes alone may discover. The philosophic mood escapes anxiety and expands the deductive faculties. When threat of loss no longer frightens, audacity is freed to try at high rewards. It is better to meet with losses in learning how to win than never to make the venture by which to lose or win. In the struggle for favours difficult of attainment, rugged strength is developed. Men who have broken the most barren soil have often turned it into a rare paradise of productiveness. Thus in the invigouration of the inner resources, they may be made to manifest themselves in external profit if the manly traits of courage, honesty and generosity be not worth cultivation for their own yield of satisfaction to the possessor.

Many contend that the main end for earthly effort is the attainment of righteousness, the striving for aught else being mere menial toil or banal folly. They build houses of cards that fall flat at the first jar. They construct a grand chariot in which to roll into their expected future heaven, and then find the highway too rough for its use. A better duty is to clear the pathway for the future so that the whole race may continually progress. Each man should build his share of the road, rather than stumble on through the wilderness in the vain hope of reaching his destiny a little sooner than his brother.

He who numbers himself among the purely righteous, will gladly profit by another's toil, preempting the newly cleared ground and indulging in invidious comment on the workmanship, whilst those who are willing to sweat and strain in the labour miss the assistance he might offer and are annoyed by his criticism and corrupted by his useless example.

The illogical illusions of sentiment have depicted the highest human ideal as attainable by utter forgetfulness of self. Many of the older converts to this creed made such a task of this forgetfulness that their minds continually narrowed on the detection of the failings they were to avoid. Introspection was the guard placed over selfishness. Normal instincts were treated with suspicion, and pride was designedly outraged. Fanatics thus lived in horror of cleanliness, shunning the worldly vanities of the toilet. Brewer tells of those who obediently journeyed to kiss an open sore, and other reliable authorities are sufficiently explicit as to details of nunnery practice within this present century where minds of neophytes were fouled by suggestions of bestialities of which they might not otherwise have dreamed.

Those who were joyous in filth were appropriately joyous in gloom as well. Rational happiness was feared, while most uncanny satisfactions, ghoulishly evoked, fed fearful yearnings. Like buzzards they grew fond of things that human beings spurned. They did not cleanse the world as spiritual scavengers, however, but rather spread the taint of morbid influences, scattering microbes of the mind's diseases.

Men ambitious for rank, power or fame must first attain prominence or capability by the same activity of

effort which shall lead to all else that is desirable. The constructive mind worthy to receive homage can surely plan a successful campaign for prominence in the line of least resistance, but it might be better to try a line of great resistance. It certainly is essential for the individual to associate his aims with something besides his personal necessities or selfish amusements, if he is to expand to any comparatively noticeable extent. All that he may individually utilize or enjoy is too easily secured to involve the exertion of intense effort. It is only when interested in the manipulation, education, appreciation or even annihilation of great numbers of men that great powers are developed. Even those who may not aspire to the higher offices are broadened by association of their energy with things of great purpose. Thus the race gains intelligence and character through the united action manifested in war, politics and live religion. Even the conflicts termed unfortunate have use at times. Stagnant, slothful people have been strengthened and quickened by common causes, the vigour thus aroused evaporating with incredible slowness. The ambitious should take vital interest in public matters, lending energy and enthusiasm to the simpler affairs as well as the greater; for practice strengthens capacity as exercise strengthens muscles.

The ambition for affection from the opposite sex is surely important enough for consideration, especially as it is a dominating factor in a large proportion of the feminine world. The average man passes through this experience to give his more earnest endeavour to other affairs, the immediate desire of his earlier years involving more or less of mere sensualism. It certainly is creditable to prove oneself worthy of a noble woman's love and continue to draw on her affection for a lifetime as-

sociation. Such a mate, however, would of her own volition try to turn the greater energy of her husband to fields of wider realization, joining with him in the pride of success. In fact, the best utility of womanly art is in the development of characteristics which may lead to indirect assistance of the one who bears the brunt of arduous trials. She may thus strengthen effort, kindle ambition and soften disappointment by her sympathy and charm. The more attractive, the more desirable, the more feminine she may be the more her presence governs results. She has changed the destinies of nations by her smiles and rewarded man on earth with more than heaven promises.

Is there nothing in this possibility to raise her hopes above household cares or petty social activities? Can she not take vital interest, by association at least, with the more important affairs of life, rather than waste her whole effort in self-imposed duties born of belittling conventions? The present painful flight of youth and charm betrays a source of worry over misplaced ambitions. We have arrived at a period when the appearance of the fresh health and beauty of well-sexed womanhood in public places almost stop traffic. It is not strange that many of the feminine gender abandon the attempt at winning man's admiration, in view of the automatic, lifeless variety produced by our ceaseless grind of routine and custom ; but they may inspire a change by boycotting those who do not develop to their taste.

Women who have definitely lost the hope of matrimony, or having gained it aim at other conquests, often think to enter into competition in man's own fields of labour. It is doubtful as to whether such attempts are

wise or profitable. Women are not physically fitted for many of the active experiences of life, and it is only by those experiences that certain abilities can be developed. The girl at school may often outstrip the boy of equal age, for her fundamental inheritance of brain is certainly as active and her feminine nature is even more impressionable to training. As soon, however, as their comparative efforts include the reasoning of experience, male superiority becomes evident. Women may equal high material result but never the highest. It is much better for them to govern than to serve. Men are ready and anxious to do their work for certain easily granted favours, and the ends of any material attainment may be reached quite as well by proxy. There is no reason why women should not rise to any height of education desired in order to intelligently direct effort, and no reason why they should not still continue worthy work in literature, art, music, the drama and many of the lighter manual or mental occupations. They are definitely out of place, however, in war, active politics, competitive business and hard labour. If interested in any of these lines they would better find a chance to associate with some active male agent.

The attainment of happiness is a common ambition in life, and a very proper one when sought through legitimate channels. The active mind finds happiness in accomplishment, a noble generous nature in the pleasure of others. To some, however, it signifies laziness or debauchery, so the term is too misleading for general use.

To those advanced beyond the stage of childhood, the pursuit of pleasure for its immediate effect has little

charm. Developed beings insist that their enjoyment shall serve some good purpose. Apart from the pleasure of active accomplishment, such sources of amusement should be selected as may give a needed change, a profitable exercise or an actual education. For sitting out of some purely inane or farcical performance the relief afforded a tired mind is a sufficiently logical excuse. The purely physical exhilarations of active organs also are not to be despised, but awakened mentality passes from this stage to dwell longer in the realm of fancied things.

The evolution of desire is plainly from the substantial to the ethereal—from the actual to the immaterial. The savage hunts for food, and knows no greater luxury than gorging. The next step brings him to an interest in things appealing to his vision. Later he finds attraction in devices appealing to the intelligent use of brain-guided fingers, and education would carry him gradually to the plane of fascination by literature and social associations. Thus the child also starts with its craving for food, begins to notice environment, occupies itself with toys and games, begins to read and study, and finally comes in contact with the great world problems. Those of an all round development preserve an interest in all the possible stages, but those representing undevelopment lean toward early preferences. Thus the potentate of barbarous lands visits civilized countries to return with a car-load of music-boxes and mechanical toys. The affluent cow-boy actually throws his money away, not knowing what to do with it. But does the man of business who hermit-like knows nothing but his office grind, the woman with no thought above her gems and dress, or the scientist playing eternally with his telescope or spatula display a much higher order of discretion?

Those who appreciate the past pleasures of their youthful existence, will note on reflection that this period of life was sweetened principally by lack of responsibility. Will it never be possible for the world to reorganize itself on some basis that will lessen the cares of those who bear its burdens? Worry is one of our most prevalent diseases, yet much of our apprehension is unnecessary. Each parent of a cherished infant might logically tremble in anxiety for years in view of the amazing possibilities of evil that surround it ; and yet are there not equal possibilities favourable to its welfare? The fatalist has a certain advantage in his theory of life, and it were well for one to copy his serene confidence, even if not as ready to accept what circumstances bring.

He who would be happy must cultivate the art of intermittent forgetfulness. Remorse receives its vitality from memory alone. Men actively engaged in any absorbing pursuit have no time in which to brood over the past and they thus escape the corroding influence of a former unhappiness. Occupation of the mind is therefore advisable for those unfortunates who bear fresh scars. The past is ever frozen into unchangeability. Recollection of the happier moments may be retained as a restful solace for old age ; none can be robbed of joys once experienced. Bury the dead error deep, and leave the corpse at rest. The present and the future are sufficient to fill the brain of an ambitious being, and only those weak in purpose or sullen in defeat are not ambitious. With the lapse of courage all of effective worth is ended.

If pleasure is to come at times from excited emotions the feelings must be kept acute and nourished. They are easily enfeebled by inattention. The soulful pleas-

ures of love and generosity are capable of brightening many stupid years if not allowed to wither. They who are without sexual love vivify no seed, and leave the future of the world to other branches of humanity. The apparently illogical and paradoxical pleasure of generosity is worth a cautious trial by reason of the reactive happiness which the pleasures of others incite by suggestion. The world is so large and broad it gives good measure, paying back with interest whether in love or hate. To find pleasure one must make pleasure, appreciate in order to be appreciated.

Much active enjoyment is found in change or the pursuit of change. While the contentment experienced in the quiet treading of beaten paths brings its own compensations and is a crown to the closing years of life, men of superabundant vitality should hope for something more definite in character, to be attained through original ambitions, novel entertainments, new attractions. Those whose success depends upon the favour of others are compelled to enhance their offerings by spice of innovation. The novelist must vary his theme, the dealer his stock and the wife her moods. Thus is the purpose of progress worked out, developing by breadth of experience.

### THE OCCUPATIONS OF NECESSITY.

Besides the necessary labours already outlined, are the fundamental physical requirements of sleep, eating and bodily exercise, which absorb at least a full third of life. It is somewhat doubtful if one in a thousand ever gives any serious thought to the problem of perfect rest. Eating is another occupation to which the

individual accords too little attention. In fact, the whole subject of individual control of individual necessities is open to the widest chance of future enlightenment.

It behooves man to keep the physique in good repair if he is to be certain of one world's best gifts. Mind and soul become very slack if not connected with a well-pumped arterial system. Clogged digestion and torpid liver signify the twin association of clogged brain and torpid will. It is doubtful if a poet ever roused his muse to soar on high when suffering from gall-stones or jaundice. The very fact that the head, or brain, aches when physical functions are disordered proves that clear thought flows only from healthy bodies. The peasant girl laughs in the pure joy of living, while the listless grand-dame frowns from sheer ennui. The dyspeptic may turn his irritability to some purpose in goading others to activity, but no success will ever fully satisfy while nagged by pain or worn by overwork. The glow of perfect health is the result only of proper systems of living. Power cannot force it, wealth cannot buy it. Both might spare time in which to give it cultivation, but neither of these two potencies which govern men and conditions are prone to pause in their onward rush long enough to definitely realize this need.

Those who comprise what is generally termed the working class are largely free from the necessity for artificial culture of physical functions, especially if their labour be in the open air or demanding corporeal effort; but others whose toils are light, or of sedentary occupation, are often strangely deficient in the care of their physical machine. The very wealth which rewards the

higher scale of productivity often suggests the uselessness of physical effort by sparing its necessity. Luxury may not even edge its appetite. Its converts see their limbs grow puny from lack of muscle, or flabby with accumulated fat. Digestion suffers from superfluous richness in diet, and blood grows thin and vitiated from lack of stimulated vigour in ignored organs. Alcohol or other stimulants interfere with heart and brain, while overwork and worry add their abnormal drains. Civilization, by its plentitude of riches, forms a race of the hot-house type—a tender, anæmic thing demanding the utmost care. It is true that many of the grosser violators inherit a strength that enables them to defy immediate consequences, but look at their children!

It is most fortunate that schools and colleges have learned to associate athletics with mental labour. Sports are lately achieving popularity also among those formerly unaccustomed to activity save in mental exercises. The man who has already learned to find a pleasure in his business, must now learn to make a business of his pleasure, and see to it that some type of muscular exertion is involved in its fulfillment.

The real purpose of exercise is not universally understood, its legitimate aim being the stimulation of the blood's circulation, the carrying away of dead tissue and the opening of the pores and glands. Thus labour is not necessarily the equivalent of athletics, for the labourer carefully economizes his force and grows so accustomed to specific repeated muscular exercises that the system notes no extra call for energy. He fails, too, as a rule to distribute force by muscles not engaged in a paid for toil. The result is he becomes disproportioned, grows round-shouldered and narrow-chested.

Curiously enough emotion is a very potent means of exercise. Certain mental energies react on the physical system, exciting deep breathing, quick circulation, and profuse perspiration. This may possibly explain why many of our actors and actresses keep in excellent condition in spite of their late hours. Their preservation after years of public service is indeed surprising, but is evidence that even the mockery of emotion is beneficial in its results. If more enthusiasm were aroused or more vigour used in daily tasks, it might not be so necessary to bat at balls or bounce on leather triangles.

Unless man will open his pores by effort of some nature, he must certainly train his appetite to rigidly decline the stimulating viands of a generous table, and especially the intricate combinations of culinary invention which a misplaced ingenuity has invented for his undoing. He now not only dares the mixture of unwisely associated elements, but also boldly persists in swallowing things which the concerted voice of science in all lands has condemned as poisonous and destructive. Would not an arbitrary Board of Health abolish the main contents of nearly every confectionery store and every pastry shop, empty the tea-caddy, coffee-pot and spice-box, bar the use of hot bread, lard and a large proportion of the starchy foods, and destroy thousands upon thousands of tons of the rotted, the infected and the adulterated stuff that is daily sold the unsuspecting? Without questioning the propriety of pure drinks, in this connection, is it not also true that a discriminating imbibor would turn in disgust from the stock offered in the cheaper grade of saloons which the majority patronize? Those of the working class may thank their strenuous occupation for its aid in enabling their systems to work

off the deleterious effects of much from which others suffer. We grin at the Indian who drinks red ink when the government shuts off his fire-water, but hardly realize how much dyed alcohol masks in nearer places as the juice of grape or grain.

In assuming the responsibility for the welfare of a growing child, or even of a well-bred horse, would we not limit its diet within proper lines and insist on a certain amount of activity? Why is it then that we allow ourselves to deteriorate with a carelessness that seems so reprehensible in others? Is it because we realize our worthlessness and have not pride enough to stir attempt at betterment?

### THE OCCUPATIONS OF SUGGESTION.

It is somewhat doubtful as to whether the average person often voluntarily does anything not immediately suggested by his routine of labour and conventions. He more naturally does what he is in the habit of doing, what is proposed for him to do by others or what is directly urged by newspaper, associate or near circumstance. Effort in the direction of an individually reasoned purpose is certainly rare. Acts not prompted by outside agencies are largely due to the promptings of desire common to all men. The impressionable human mind is creased by certain lines of effort, and thought involuntarily chosés the pathway already made.

The average being is therefore somewhat automatic, instinctively choosing the most unresisting lines of activity. It is always easier to listen than to reason, to follow orders than to plan. Man's unconscious slavery

to surrounding thought is noted by a thousand instances of compliance. Personal association is a factor that seems to influence directly as to quality, and inversely as to distance. The present swarming of the population in congested districts is therefore harmful to those in whom a striking individuality might otherwise be developed. The plastic masses are very possibly benefited by the proximity of a standard of ideals above their own scale of uncoached ambitions. In fact, we see daily evidence of the development of progressive desires in the emigrants who are expanded into bright and useful citizens after leaving some other country's dwarfing conditions. Those born with some exceptional trait of possible value, however, may easily yield to the absorbing influence of numbers, who are apt to stifle the first crude signs of genius, although glad to admire the finished result which might be later developed. When masses congregate, their mental excrescences rub together like metal castings in a rumbler, knocking off the corners and polishing the product into uniformity. Originality receives rude treatment in such a process and is more likely to succumb than to persist in struggling. The crowding into cities may illustrate an instinctive desire for enlightenment. The older inhabitants, when wealthy enough to follow their caprices, hark back to the country or less crowded environments for the greater portion of their year, showing that they have possibly graduated from the schooling.

Men may prove more useful as tools for others when reduced to conventional patterns, but there is little attraction in such an ideal for those who wish to be a complete whole in themselves, and a whole that shall impress an individuality upon its associates. Independence rebels against uniformity. If all are to be alike one man is sufficient to

represent his kind and the rest might as well be brained. Value often depends on rarity, and more often on originality. No one would have use for a ship-load of diamonds or an army of poet-laureates. Even the leaves on a tree differ one from another, and yet there are those who would trim them to a pattern. Duplication by machinery is unconsciously narrowing the chance of variation in perception. The great commercial nations breed few artists.

Men are therefore more or less like looking-glasses which reflect their surroundings. What praise shall then be given when one presents a charming surface? It is no credit to the chameleon that its skin changes hue. The image reflected must be looked to for true worth.

When left to himself, or when in the company of others not especially inspiring, the individual usually indulges in the occupations invented to fill time without waste of thought or emotion. His false economy of force continually prescribes a never ending similarity of performance, yet paradoxically grows extravagant in use of time and means by which to feed the very habits that respect the stinginess of soul and brain. We note a race, largely denied the main essentials of a self-respecting scale of living, devoting the main part of its spare minutes and the main part of its extra capital to indulgence in artificial habits that have no economic value whatever. The world thus materially lessens its possible allowance of food, clothing, shelter or sensible amusement, to employ the nerves in noting the empty sensations of reaction from the various stimulants or narcotics that dominate its population.

One encroaches on dangerous ground when criticising the personal habits of others, for the human animal will defend the right to injure itself with amazing vigour. Certain well-meaning organizations do more harm than good in attempting to reform men by force, as dictation on any personal matter is invariably repulsive. The self-anointed instructors are usually open themselves to criticism of a somewhat similar nature, as they are rarely guiltless of all the harmful habits that may fascinate or control. Why should the drunkard submit to judgment from a slave to the corset, dragging skirt or tight shoe? Why listen to the pedant who has ruined eyesight in literary debauch, or learn of moderation from the hectic dyspeptic? No! If we are to argue against habit we must treat it in the abstract and find it pernicious, not only for immediate harm, but because it is a habit, and therefore governing by continuity of suggestion rather than by rational result. We should accustom ourselves to delight in the novelty which can enlarge our experience rather than in the repetition which mires us in stale sensations.

Alcoholic beverages, when used in too large quantity, are productive of nothing worthier than unconsciousness. Whatever mental stimulation may result is either followed by reaction or gradually falls to the normal scale of feeling, and is then marked only by its comparison with the relaxed hours of abstinence. The desire for repetition may illustrate nothing but the cravings of custom, and yet it would seem of necessity to be prompted by more fundamental causes. It certainly is convenient to have the chance to levy on one's reserves for prolonged activity or heightened enjoyment; yet it never has been proved that intoxication produces superior creative effort, and it certainly lulls ambition.

Comparison of those who indulge with the total abstainers is rather difficult when we find so many other equalizing forces at work. The conscientious Turk does not drink, and yet he makes less progress than any of his neighbouring bibulous nations. Our Prohibition States are not so superior in type of population as to attract the special attention of the investigator. It is probable that nine-tenths of the names which history remembers were those of men with drinking proclivities. We find that athletes must abstain when in training, yet even while thus confirming the wisdom of temperance, they often indulge freely at other times. Employers have a strong prejudice against applicants who drink, being naturally apprehensive of their use of liquors during business hours.

Somehow the popular idealism pictures the bibler as a stout hearty individual of merry moods and good vigour, while the typical total-abstinence fanatic arises in our minds as one of colourless vitality and sombre physiognomy. May not the good digestion of the former be very possibly due to the frequent washing given the stomach between meals by the liquid refreshment? If this were true, it would defeat the contention of many who in more temperate phase instruct us to only drink our wine or beer at meals. Of course the frequent use of water as a beverage would accomplish this desired purpose, but water does not appeal by taste to thus remind us in the busier portion of the day. Think this over.

The question for consideration in pronouncing judgment upon a habit is whether it is a source of gain or of loss. It may be better to drink wine or beer than the sewerage fluid offered as water in certain countries. But

the real reason for indulgence lies in the pleasurable liberation of chained emotions and the awakening to a defiance of care. That it succeeds in making the masses content with their lot may be one of its worst features. The mind that cannot throw aside its worries at will may often find a restful solace in the temporary drugging that thus chases care into a corner. Whether there be better methods or not, it is certain that many find this one fairly satisfactory and see no need for improvement. They find that the routine of society often brings the time of social gathering at the end of a hard day's work, when natural exhaustion demands temporary succor. The feminine portion of the community keep their spirits lively without becoming alcoholized to any noticeable extent, but their nerves are more acute and more responsive to suggestion. It seems strange that happiness may be bottled; yet chemicals are evidently stronger than will in the present stage of development. The world would certainly welcome a harmless substitute, but until it arrives no one has the right to absolutely banish this present element of happiness.

Intermittent or temperate indulgers can hardly be classed with those addicted to the habitual or continued use of liquor. It is quite evident that the desirable effects are better guaranteed if normal abstinence makes contrast definite. Even the total abstainer is usually guilty of periodical lapses from other strict ideals. He will at times sit up too late or be seduced by a second piece of pie. He might even be reckless enough to throw away a dollar or two in moments of excitement.

Moderation is absolutely demanded in view of the constantly enlarging quantity of the agent used necessary for

a uniform result. One drink of liquor will stimulate a normally temperate man, yet many reach a stage where they require a bottle a day to acquire comfort. Only a few generations ago decent men measured their wine consumption per evening by quarts rather than glasses, and public intoxication was more or less of a joke. We should by this time have arrived at the logical condition of mind that appreciates the wisdom of achieving result from the least possible expenditure of means. The pride of power to withstand effect is equalled in the soaking bum or the dead nerved roue, who strive for the rather questionable reward, of a diseased liver. Is he not more prudent who exercises his acuteness of sense in detecting the influence of a modest glass or two, than another who becomes loaded with fermenting fluid to the intense discomfort of his strained human plumbing?

The use of narcotics, while comparatively harmless, illustrates how men may voluntarily multiply the annoyances of life by cultivating desire for unnecessary adjuncts. While it is not proved that tobacco incites to crime or interferes seriously with mental action, excessive use undoubtedly affects the heart, lungs, eyesight and nerves. Its smoke also numbs the sense of taste and provokes abnormal expectoration. The race got along very well without it until within a few recent centuries, and its adoption has not notably increased mental and physical ability nor enlarged their scope. The enormous waste through accidental fires caused by carelessness in the handling of matches and glowing "butts" is an associated evil of the habit.

The use of tea, coffee, chocolate, confectionary and other mild palate-excitors, also weakens digestion and

irritates the nerves. Abnormal consumption of any one beverage or compound depletes the special fund of digestive chemicals best suited to its assimilation. If we could only return to clear water and coarse food we should know such vigour of feeling as to breed a strong contempt for the puny artificial states of exhilaration with which we now tease our senses.

The habit habit has certain peculiar attributes. Each devotee of chosen faith is uncompromisingly antagonistic to those worshipping at another shrine. Our nation spends millions for tobacco and yet tries to prevent the importation of opium. Those who smoke cigars invent uncomplimentary epithets for those who prefer cigarettes. Those who drink wine look upon beer as a vulgar beverage, while those who drink whiskey frown on absinthe. And even those well-meaning women who strive to prevent the brute man from degrading himself with liquor, are not free from the same bondage of habit when they steep themselves in tea. It is useless to abolish any single custom, for there are plenty to take the place of the one tabooed ; rather war against the whole general plan of addiction to repetition in trivial, unnecessary things. A human being who is engrossed in the continuity of any physical feeling is hardly in condition to make much mental progress.

Men are not incapable of freeing themselves from slavery to little vices. The snuff-habit, prevalent one century ago, is now practically obsolete in good society. It is possible that the pleasant pastime of tickling the nostrils simply vanished on account of the inconvenience of carrying the box. Pipes are no longer in general favour, and the bottle-nose is a thing of the past. But

at the same time much curious speculation might be hazarded concerning the next great wave of petty vice. Perhaps it may spread the use of hypodermics until each individual is provided with a dainty jeweled syringe and an ornamented vial. Perhaps it may give favour to the now condemned opium, until each train, hotel and public waiting place is provided with a dope-parlour, furnished with pillowed divans. Why not? Trolley cars are now equipped with bars in certain foreign countries; the spittoon is an American fetich, and tobacco consumers have to be provided for in every public plan or place.

Why should not they who like bodily reactions, learn of a few which result beneficially? Spread the knowledge of delight from cooling shower bath and glow of exercise! Teach the stimulation of deep breathing! Know the yearn of actual hunger! We have simply discovered the range of sensation in one little group of nerves in the throat!

Nature does not select proper habits for man, as Nature is but a servant following his willed orders. She can adjust herself to conditions, but the adjustment strengthens his chains. He little dreams of the significance of his false requirements. His increased wealth has given him many unnecessary things which he can now hardly do without. Luxury, for instance, has raised the scale of house temperature to a degree which not only increases the expense for fuel to an enormous extent, but saps his vitality by lessening the need for healthy circulation of blood.

Certain of man's mental habits are fully as marked as his physical absurdities. He has the habit of agree-

ment, the habit of continual criticism, the habit of yielding to style and fashion and many more too numerous to mention. If he must have repetition, why should he not copy from more worthy models? Why not cultivate the habit of telling the truth, for instance? One can hardly conceive of the continual novelty and amusement that might thus be ensured. Why not also acquire the habit of reflection before action, of consideration for others and of profiting by past experience? Are these not possibly preferable to lubrication of the thorax, inhalation of warm smoke or the biting of dried leaves? The minute one feels the prompting of a habit, that minute is not too soon to defy its power. The habit of not doing things might well be cultivated as an antidote. A man may easily train himself to automatically refuse outside suggestion and his desires for unfavourable indulgences will slowly starve if not allowed nutriment. He who is slave to his own fancies has found the most inflexible of masters.

### THE OCCUPATIONS OF CHOICE.

Men of reflective tendencies, who have passed through the early period of school-training usually continue their pursuit of knowledge by general reading, discussion and the experience afforded by personal investigation. It is evident that their most interesting and profitable subject for analysis is the human being itself. The present vast scope of literature deals more or less with the various vagaries of man, yet the majority of printed volumes attempt the definition of him as he might be rather than as he is. We have his living embodiment on every hand, the result of causes often but vaguely guessed, in spite of many abstruse systems of philosophy and many dreary analytical novels. As in every other attempted

solution of serious problems, the complex and improbable answer seems first to thrust itself upon the attention. But the inevitable evolution of simplicity in all things will bring the earnest thinker constantly nearer the truth.

The individual is but a conglomeration of entities which we define by conventional terms. In the first place we have the Physical being and the Mental being, the former being affected by the conditions of heat, moisture, air and nutriment which chance or design selects, while the latter is similarly sensitive to its mental environment, and the two are mutually dependent for relative efficiency. Both systems are governed by voluntary and involuntary causes, the voluntary being impelled by Will and the involuntary by outside associations, or that curious combination of instinct and conscience or secondary consciousness, which might as well be called the *Psychical Being* for want of a more comprehensive term. The often curious blend of the two agencies makes dissection difficult at times, for each directly affects action. Thus we have instinctive courage as well as reasoned contempt for petty danger, instinctive fear as well as logical caution.

While physical instincts, habits, exercise and the like have been considered in previous pages, there are plenty of physical experiments still to be considered. However, the average individual will do better to let those trained in science solve the more risky problems for him. Experience and careful observation will some day determine for humanity how man would best protect himself from contagion, and what food and activity are best adapted for his various lines of occupation, and how

to meet many other duties to the physical being, which are ignored by a false modesty which leaves the neophyte to rely on his own tedious system of self-instruction through an often painful experience. How many have accurate knowledge of the best ways in which to utilize their physical functions? Where shall they obtain it? From patent-medicine circulars? This falsely refined civilization of ours has thought it necessary to pretend that there are no physical necessities save eating and sleep. It may succeed in time in evolving a being that will adapt itself to a more intelligent code; but the effectiveness of any such present attempt is not evidenced in the results.

Intellect expands through perception and the education of training and experience. Perception is limited by environment, education by opportunity; and neither is liable to result in important development without the necessary sense of curiosity which prompts investigation.

Development is the direct result of industry and application. Those who rely on forced training through conventional methods, must not forget that the effect of one really pregnant experience leaves more impression than a dozen dips into adventure by the proxy of literature. Education is the preparation for profit by experience. Life is a game in which the studious and the venturesome compete for honours. A proper combination of the two inclinations will assuredly outstrip the attainment of either by itself. The strengthened intellect may rust of inaction, restrained by indifference, fear or false modesty. Nothing is usually accomplished until attempted. On the other hand much

vital energy wastes itself kicking against the pricks or producing empty clamour. Force is but animalism until guided by brains; and brains are but impotent pulp unless designing the use of force or strengthening the faculties which may be forceful.

Few are familiar with the workings of their own minds, or ever consciously allow them the necessary opportunity for earnest reflection. The majority of men simply drive the brain before the whip of hurry, or lose the connecting sense of mastery entirely. In this latter case prevailing opinion takes charge of the abandoned forces, limiting them to narrow grooves of routine and cramming them with undigested print through voracious reading. In the former case a scholarly intellect is used as a mere amanuensis or hired reader. The conceit of untrained will anticipates the decisions of mentality before it has a chance to arouse the inner judgment. Distracting surroundings and the near contact of other human beings also tend to prevent deep thought. Future eras may see the solitary confinement now employed for direst punishment, made use of by all thoughtful minds as the only positive method of obtaining clear thought reception. Material pursuits lose their importance to the Hindoo who retires to the seclusion of the tree-shade to ruminate in perfect satisfaction and enjoy the pleasures of philosophic contemplation. The student seeks the quiet of undisturbed solitude for his best work. Men of creative thought have rarely been surrounded by social activities during the most important period of their productivity. There is a certain indefinable, uneasy distrust of the majority vote in any thickly populated centre. Why is it that our great men in every line and calling are seldom of city birth and raising? Not necessarily because there

is absorption of mental food by association with crops and cattle, but rather because the greater loneliness has allowed a chance for that expansion of mind which may be derived only from serious, uninterrupted thought. This does not mean, however, that all men should become hermits or recluses. On the contrary, if enlisted for progress, they would better be active amongst activities for the greater part of the time. Unremitting retirement often leads to nothing but a lazy dreaminess, a void of relaxation or devotion to some unproductive occupation. There is no lout quite so stupid as a country lout.

Man has only in late centuries begun to use his mind practically, and its latent possibilities are not yet properly appreciated. He displays discretion in his understanding of the scope of his muscular system, seldom wasting his bodily components except when he permits himself to be victimized by the dry rot of inaction. He refuses to move after severe physical exhaustion is felt ; but he will tax his brain to the verge of lunacy for the simple pride of outranking a competitor. Students continually wreck their constitutions, spoil their eyesight and absolutely stunt all originality of thought in the absurd endeavour to cram their minds with knowledge mechanically acquired, to be withheld from escaping until a period of examination has passed. The world profits little by the stuffing of inelastic craniums. One retained fact that leads to new reasoning or important discovery is more fruitful than a hundred superficial memories. The college graduate, brimming with lore, enters the conflict of competition to find that the world's judgment places a very low financial value on his accomplishments. He soon sees that in the material view he is crude and callow, developed only in assimilation of

facts which may be purchased by the score at a dollar per volume. It is self-training through mastery of actual conditions that enlarges mental utility.

It is as important to govern the processes of thought as those of action. In adopting discarded lines of contemplation one is wasting good brain power as surely as a factory's stock of lumber would be wasted if devoted to the manufacture of obsolete spinning wheels, or arrows. And to think in vicious lines is to start an internal conflagration which devours all of inherited strength of will and destroys all the results of external training. There seems to be no doubt that thought causes continuous vibration of an ether which transmits impressions from one mind to another, like the rings which spread on the water from splashing stones. Selection of unfit subjects for thought not only has a marring effect upon the character of the thinker but aids in the demoralization of his neighbours.

Many mistake the mental activities aroused by the reception of an external thought wave for their individual conception. Could they definitely trace each mental impression to its source they would be amazed to find how much of suggestion and how little of originality would be discovered. Valuable chatter is stimulated by fleeting waves of extraneous ideas; but the interior being is little developed by simply voicing a second-hand opinion. Perhaps men would not lay themselves so liable to this influence, so little understood by them, were it not for an element of fear amongst them that an overdraft of their stock of individual ideas might put them into mental bankruptcy. They would as well count their steps for fear of their muscular energy being

drained away. The mind has unlimited resources, and it is not secretion or creation of thought that tires the brain in normal activity, but rather worry and anxiety or the cramming of the memory with insistent detail.

We have already found it necessary to give some consideration to the unconscious self which enters into life with its first blend of parentage, charged with the instinctive wisdom of heredity and an unchallenged emotional supremacy. Born of past memories, this purely associative faculty is openly amenable to further suggestions. It is but a table on which heredity has written, and on which self or outside influence may continue the record.

We may study this soul or conscience or subliminal self by reference to those emotional beings who seem to act solely by impulsive promptings. Hypnotic and trance or even alcoholic conditions may aid in its dissection, although the view exposed by the last named appears as through a muddy pane. Drunkenness, by quelling reason, liberates brutality in those whose normal cowardice might hide the trait ; licentiousness in others, although the chemical effect of drink is not sexually stimulating ; and in still others generosity, kindness and goodfellowship where natural reticence might hide them. A man may often be known better after he has been seen under the influence of liquor. It is by no means impossible that a drug may some day be discovered by which to unclothe the soul without associative harm.

A man may study his own conscience by that system of concentration or semi-trance with which Indian

adepts have long been familiar. By gaining control over it he finds the key to inspiration, ideality and intuitive understanding. The human race delights in the association of soul-vigour, even finding keen enjoyment in the society of those who have done nothing for development save grant their gifts of birth free sway. Like personal beauty the finer emotions may by comparison dwarf all rational claims to prominence. As it seems unfortunately impossible for labour and skill to develop them, it behoves those well-favoured to cherish such treasures, and not allow the rough contact of a material world to injure their quality. The strife for lesser things has often kept the sap from flowing to these tender branches, thus strengthening instead the part intended for service alone—the rugged, uncouth trunk.

The utter suppression of the soul, as noticed in all the automatic sexless beings who steer their colourless existences through the calm sea of devitalized emotion, arouses little wish of imitation in those still able to govern flow of blood by thought. Many have acknowledged that they would give their all to live as children again—not for the opportunities of vitulin immaturity, but rather to renew that keen sense of appreciation and delightful thrill of pleasure which might have grown and strengthened had they not in ignorant folly starved their inherited inclinations. That which has been slowly slain for years can hardly be resuscitated by the wish. The young may well take warning by the unfortunate plight of their emasculated elders.

A vain attempt is often made to define the human charm that marks a few distinctly from the masses. Often called personal magnetism, for want of a better name, it

puzzles those who frankly envy its possessors. May it not simply illustrate the retention of original gifts that have escaped the blighting scourge of an over-training whose aim is to mould all to some dead copy and destroy individual impulse? Every clip of the shears that trim bleeds a little from the expanding soul ; each pull of the restraining cord numbs a group of its nerves. And in the end the poor, pallid civilized thing, trussed like a plucked fowl, wonders at the interest excited by the glad flight of some free songster not yet snared or shot by the hunter.

It seems quite probable that the wonderful development in material lines during the present era, has drawn too heavily on the deductive faculties, thus straining the conscious brain elements so that they have stolen nourishment from the romantic, idealistic soul-self. The practical nations in their practical periods rarely breed artists, poets, musicians or other typical embodiments of emotional culture. But it is this class of beings that arouses men's finer sensibilities, giving them higher ideals and creating a responsive spirit of emulation by suggestion and association. They do not appreciate how many of their prized sources of enjoyment are purely etherial. Nearly all that appeals to pleasure through the eye or the ear is attractive only by mental suggestion, as it whets no material appetite. Nearly all amusement is directly suggestive. Existence without imagination would be strangely sodden and stupid.

The phenomena of distinct genius which often confront us, illustrate the possibilities of certain happy combinations of heredity, or possibly the intense impressionability of a more than normally acute soul.

Many have accepted this extraordinary overdevelopment of certain phases of the mind as a proof of lunacy. Galton, in showing how talent and physique are associated with parentage, in his *Hereditary Genius*, dismisses real genius with contempt, although admitting its important creations. He says :—

*If genius means a sense of inspiration or of rushes of ideas from apparently supernatural sources . . . it cannot in such cases be a healthy faculty, nor can it be desirable to perpetuate it.*

When we find how much the world owes to these *rushes of ideas*, however, and how flat and tiresome are its mere deductive productions by comparison, it seems wise to inquire whether condemnation is not a trifle hasty. Is it reasonable to assume that any function is abnormal because its imperfect use may lead to peril? It were as well to banish tools because they are not safe in the hands of children ! as well to decry education because it widens the field of the prurient !

Genius might be much more common were its tendencies not so often squelched in early life. Natural economy of force would seem to favour encouragement of a faculty which comes without effort and is so often superior in its attainment to studied effect. Artists and poets often perfect their masterpieces at a time when their contemporaries are hardly through the rudiments of their chosen professions. The creations which appeal most broadly are the result of labours by beings dominated by their own innate perceptions. Other types may prove themselves quite as useful in their own realms, but the attempt to make square pegs fit round holes is futile.

Genius is needed as well as trained ability, and it were a great mistake to develop all alike.

The soul may not only transmit distinct hereditary knowledge, but also may give out that of later assimilation if its full power be brought under mental control. Certain men have found it possible to unconsciously memorize everything encountered by their various faculties. Some of the phenomena of insanity would seem to demonstrate that each individual has a complete record of his experiences which could be drawn upon if he but knew the law by which to bring them within reach of his conscious mental activities. In full possession of this power he would know a book thoroughly in one reading, solve his mathematical problems by intuition and use a host of recollections for various purposes. The fact that this does not at present seem a common faculty of mankind is simply proof that all have not equal power of control over those elements which each must possess and of which some make use.

Normal memory is limited by conscious associations. Men recollect only through trains of connecting impressions. Could the unconscious impressions be traced in the same way the human sphere of mental activity would broaden enormously.

Those who have learned to perform any act automatically submit involuntarily to unconscious guidance. The fingers learn the position of the piano keys so that one may play in the dark, and much of routine labour is accomplished with the mind busy on other things. The typewriter does not stop to think of each letter as it is struck, the bookkeeper does not pause at each unit while

adding columns with a hasty glance. The savage who throws a stone to kill a bird on the wing does not reason that no two stones are alike in shape or weight, that he cannot estimate the precise distance intervening, that he may not calculate the speed of flight of the bird or the power of his own muscle, and that there are a million possibilities against his success. He simply trusts the impulses of his inner nature and lets fly without consulting any primal theory of dynamic power or calculation of curve. An illiterate barroom loafer, who has unconsciously assimilated the training of result from observed causes will defeat the most learned student of impacts at the purely scientific game of billiards. Thus the inner self may solve instantaneously the problems presented from its memory of experience which is its sole fundamental basis of action.

Knowledge of the rules of harmony and trial of melodious chords will enable anyone to reason out a tune ; but compared with a spontaneous conception of a genius the difference is palpable. The studied product is mechanical, while the inspired effort seems to palpitate with life. Artistic creations owe their brilliancy and vitality to something born within, and no amount of cultivation or experiment may attain similar results. And yet the land is dotted with educational institutions where knowledge is imparted by rote, with never a single definite attempt to teach a pupil how to use his inner store of reminiscent lore nor how to cultivate his receptive faculties for unconscious utility. Even judgment has been admitted as more or less dependent on these little understood powers, in its definition as a combination of reason and intuition. Yet inspiration, which recognizes results at their inception, is so little understood

that its infallible conclusions are often termed merely accidental. Certain human problems, often of the greatest importance, cause reason to despair when it has no past fact within its known experience on which to base decision. There are a few singularly gifted mortals who at such times manifest the peculiar insight necessary to select a proper course. It would not be disadvantageous to at least try to make this power more universal by a careful and analytical study of its phenomena.

The narrow commercialism which sees no material worth in art, poetry, patriotism or any other concrete manifestations of emotional traits, is hardly a capable judge of values. Even the most vulgar monied parvenue finds his wealth of little use saving to acquire the fruits of other men's subliminal products. Idealism is actually paid for at the highest market rates. The best musical performers receive as much as a year's wages of physical toil for the effort of a few minutes. A great artist can make a yard of canvas worth the value of the entire mill that wove it. While all may not hope to reach the highest embodiment of inspired skill, all should give the second-self within them a chance for occasional exercise in order to properly balance their development.

As psychical reserves have been garnered through involuntary suggestion, it is evidently by suggestion that man may hope for the benefit of its assistance. If he decides to like or dislike any habit, thing or person, the unconscious forces of his inner nature reinforce by indirect stimulation of the associated mental sensations. A keen ambition enlists all the forces of soul, mind and body to unite on a definite end with irresistible force. The unconscious self seems exhaustless in capacity, ex-

exercising its functions through sleep and wakefulness alike. Inventors thus arrive at some of their most important revelations through dreams, and artists find their inspiration pictured in visions by these inner creative faculties. When one inspires himself with the idea of purpose, he liberates a willing co-partner which searches through all its memory of heredity for knowledge that may be of service. Psychologists call this process Auto-Suggestion, and it is certainly logical to believe that a highly tensioned soul power can respond to desired intent with proportionate energy. The marvels of human accomplishment are credited both to genius and training, and the creative force of both may be multiplied by combination.

. The fact that the unconscious personality rules bodily functions is illustrated in the power of healing by mental control. A considerable element of our population acknowledge this possibility though under many false definitions, such as Faith-cure, Christian Science, Lourdes and thousands of others. There is no doubt that cures are actually effected by these followings, though their power is hardly sufficient to grow a new leg or subdue an active boil. The simple emotion of fear will check the chemistry of digestion, cause involuntary movement of the muscles and even whiten the hair. It were therefore folly to assert that a proper mental stimulant may not actively aid in the regenerative processes towards which Nature is ever ready to bend her efforts. Skepticism of itself defeats a personal application, for the soul cannot combat antagonism from its dominating mind. A doubt dampens its enthusiasm. To deny the existence of its energy, for this reason however, would be as unreasonable as to deny the power of Magnetism because its poles both attract and repel. When we find

that mere suggestion to an hypnotized subject may change the pulse, control the taste and even simulate death in catalepsy, it is useless to assert that mental effort may not affect physical functions. There is even a commercial practice of obtaining the drug pepsin by deceiving hungry swine, whose mental excitement at the sight of long delayed nourishment actually causes their stomachic glands to exude the desired substance. It took men countless centuries to learn that brains could control fingers to some creative purpose. They may now be ready to discover the influence of intelligence upon the interior anatomy as well.

As disease is largely nurtured by apprehension, any effort that imparts confidence to the patient has a vitally salubrious effect. This fact is sufficiently proved by the enormous business done through cleverly advertised patent medicines, which prepare the mind for cure by most audacious positivism. There have been many instances of the seemingly dead being buried alive, the despair of illness having so far possessed the human mind that the body's visible activity has been lost through the conviction of demise.\* The popular ideal of a future life might easily deceive one at a comparatively low ebb of vitality into thinking death had come, the fact of consciousness presenting no paradox to him who has been trained to expect continued consciousness. There is certainly enough of premature burial to need some feasible explanation. The very sadness of those who hover over the still body is perhaps sufficient to convince the dormant soul that it has really ceased to exist on the human plane. If one were made to understand that there is hope as long as consciousness continues, and supported in the expectation of recovery by willed resist-

\* See Hudson's *Law of Psychic Phenomena*.

ance of associates, the grave might possibly be cheated with greater frequency. This does not necessarily urge the mind towards acceptance of the perverted application of suggestion that corrupts the Christian Scientist or Faith devotee to the employment of illogical and impossible theories. Soldiers urged to attack by assertion that the enemy possessed nothing but blank cartridges might be enabled to win a battle, yet the satisfaction of victory might not entirely erase their resentment for the treachery that imperiled them.

As man's conscious life is but one of many individualities which have in turn been part of his heredity, it is not difficult to understand the recent phenomena of hypnotism, in which repeated experiments have revealed several hidden personalities. The attitude of the operator's belief undoubtedly suggests to these phases of the subject's self the expected assumption. All these controlled states may be defined as the practical elucidation of the variable inner consciousness, and the superiority thus often revealed in a mind simply shows how cramped it is by ordinary environment. The fact that this hidden self is often found of immoral tendencies in presumptive support of the Hyde-Jekyll supposition, is more probably evidence that many, outwardly pure, have allowed their imaginations to run riot in conceived debaucheries, inherit unfortunate memories, or have absorbed the essence of corruption in literature or drama. The soul may be demoralized by mental association quite as easily as by actual improprieties of experience.

Through the same processes by which the little shop-girl of Geneva became an oriental princess while subject to trance suggestion, may be found an open opportunity of

great amusement and profit for the future. Incompetent cooks might be deceived into the actual activities of experienced chefs, a source of great gain to the domestic economies ; or a charm lent to the ennui of prosaic life by enlarging the variety of its moods ! It might be possible to individually assume new characters as faithfully as the competent actor slips into a part, thereby lending brilliancy to experience and giving the morose and melancholy a chance for transformation into harmless citizenship in the realm of comedy.

Having noted a few of the possibilities of psychical culture, it is well to also point out the unfortunate errors which often victimize sensitive souls. The receptive faculties are open to false as well as true impressions, to outer influence as well as inner guidance. Uncurbed impressionability is swayed by every popular craze, every silly cheat and every vicious little suggestion. The ecstasy of absolute surrender not only leads to frenzy of individual excitement, but also communicates itself like wildfire to those of sympathetic tendencies. Under its influence mobs of normally sane men and even women too, have been known to drag some poor brute to the stake and gloat over his agony as fire laved his kerosened flesh. Those of other countries can hardly understand our daily lynchings, yet foreign history discloses equal curiosities. The Crusade of the Children is perhaps the chief wonder of suggestive record, the Pilgrimage of the Virgins being of a more rational character. It is well to be prepared for these possible lapses from sense and not be tricked when unwary.

Certain human customs have seemingly sanctioned the utter loosing of restraint to give the emotions unfettered

control for limited periods. Thus young lovers enter a sphere of emotional bliss where poor reason slinks shame-faced into a corner to escape some of the time-honoured superfluities. In preparing to thoroughly enjoy a play or novel one properly enters the receptive state where his chest heaves while following the hero's stirring adventures or his eyes moisten at the sad plight of the heroine. It may be well to voluntarily let down the bars at times, but it should be done with a full appreciation of the danger.

The necessity for building up a good defensive system against the suggestive influence of designing rascals or dangerous friends is not fully realized. It is hard for honesty to learn that dishonesty is widely prevalent. The worst errors of life are seldom of man's own choosing, for his inherited instinct of self-preservation is normally on the watch. His faults of action are often due instead to following the lead of some associating mind, which either hopes to profit by his failure or at least share with him in a profit of his own making. Sometimes the most dangerous associates of all are those generous but over-enthusiastic souls who wish to carry their friends with them to share in splendid discoveries of opportunity. The wisdom of a partnership wherein contribution is not directly proportionate to expected result, should always be doubted.

Many shrewd men of affairs have already discovered that it is unwise to decide any question of purchase, agreement or contract so long as an interested party is personally present. It is as if one were caught like a trout and carefully pulled and guided by an invisible line toward the view of the anxious party. This force is

unconsciously admitted by those who use personal agents to exert their persuasive powers in inducing men to buy, invest or sell on terms favourable to the solicitor. These agents are not selected principally because of their wisdom in argument, their knowledge of facts, but rather by reason of a certain strong personal magnetism which controls the will of the victim to a more or less marked degree. One might prepare the most elaborate pamphlet that could be written by the most gifted of men, and yet find its influence unimportant in results when compared with the personal effort of some insistent individual, of probably a lower type of mentality, but possessing the persistence which will not be refused.

And there is fully as much need for caution against the insidious promptings of one's own inner nature when not associated with the logic of experience. The soul is a strangely speculative entity, audacious to a degree and very superstitious. It has great faith in the kindness of chance and often modestly ascribes success to outside agencies. Its curious belief in guiding power is the fruit of centuries of false religious ideals whose practical application often results most deplorably. The most degraded gambler unconsciously credits the favouring influence of some interested divinity when he is winning and the amount of reckless investment that is guided wholly by irrational impulse or belief in luck is incredibly large. The very law of chances brings success at times ; yet the volume of gain is directly proportionate to the loss of the unlucky, plus the large percentage always taken by those who furnish the means of speculation. The reasoning self is the faithful watch-dog and should not be chained out of reach while the treasure is plundered.

Financial evolution is but brief, for wealth is not a uniform possession, nor one that has been known for many ages. The hereditary senses have therefore little on which to base intuitive decisions concerning it. The emotional instincts must be entirely disassociated from the sphere of material things, for the world groans in poverty caused by the awful waste arising from injections of personalities into questions of barter and investment. Misplaced kindness aids the incompetent to scatter and destroy what honest effort has endeavoured to save. The man who would absolutely decline to ever spend one dollar without value received, or lend it except with good security, would be a mighty help towards the world's recuperation from the effects of its evil financial habits. The very fact that the undeserving often prosper by the general laxity of generous dispositions demoralizes the logic of the novice and tempts him to select the least arduous methods by which to succeed. Sentimentalism is responsible for much that brings business disaster. What if a rotten timber should be kindly given the chance of holding up a bridge, or a faithful worn out boiler shell a renewed term or service? Would not he who might permit such usages be responsible for the result? And thus illogical encouragement of a deteriorating member of society may likewise plunge the innocent into ruin.

It is said that physical evolution is measurable by the offensiveness of its dead factors. Mental evolution is also measurable, in a degree, by the putridity of its results when of deadly intent. It is the vices of the civilized world that reach the unprintable stage. The foremost poets have written the most salacious verses, the greatest artists have produced paintings most suggestive of evil, and the cleverest minds have been guilty

of the deepest crimes. Imagination runs great danger in development and needs constant guardianship. Fortunately Nature has provided man with a reasoning associate which develops strength directly proportioned to its responsibilities. The immature animal species need not fear degeneration in the lack of conscious reason, for it has no highly aroused audacity of soul desire. Each step taken in the development of mind, soul or physique should properly involve the equal uplifting of all three.

Having analyzed the unconscious inclinations, it becomes pertinent to also study the newer growth of deliberately conceived purpose which the rational mind evolves from its reasoned desires. Strength of character is absolutely measurable by its scale of determination. An educated will masters the self first and then is ready to control its environment. While conditions of birth distribute unequal advantages, it is possible for exercise to develop this natural characteristic as surely as intelligent use may enlarge the muscles.

Will is the hall-mark of man's development and the thermometer of his evolution. Animals lack all but its fainter traces, although instinctive desires at times appear to counterfeit the imperial decisions of individuality. While strength of will is the dominant force of civilization, it is often a much misused power, active in the cause of bigotry as well as in the defense of freedom. While awakened by reason, it often is not reasonable. In fact, the very conceit of its possession sometimes urges the owner to dismiss the trainer.

Those who are simply slaves of suggestion are not conscious of this distinct, individual principle. Evolu-

tion is too slow to train the instinct against all novelties of circumstances, and reason must of necessity be exercised in its guidance. The dignity of individual domination at which self-development should aim will master the tyranny of habit, grant liberty of conscience, recognize inner forces, regulate desires, disposition, temperament and health, and keep outside suggestions distanced by the critical attitude of intelligent suspicion.

Will is naturally associated with the spirit of independence, yet the latter must not be confused with that false recklessness which follows impulse in the exhibition of personal uncontrol. Blind courage is not on a par with intelligent self-reliance. Destruction is evidence of applied power as well as construction.

The scarcity of definite intent makes the gap between the successful and the unfortunate much too broad. It allows the few to enjoy returns equal to those produced by the efforts of thousands, and helps divide the race into distinct classes. The unsuccessful, who see no physical distinction between themselves and their more favoured brothers, do not allow that this vast discrepancy in worldly attainment is just, as they cannot realize the possibilities of the secret force involved. They sometimes point to early records of scholarship in proof that the fortunate cannot be mentally superior, since they gave no evidence of it in school. It matters little, however, what the natural capacity may be, if intellect is not associated with sufficient will and assurance to profit by the chances opened before it.

An individual cannot increase his real importance nor add to his development by anything which is not the di-

rect product of his will. He is merely mechanical when utilized in unreasoning allegiance to peer, principle or party. As one of a mass of unthinking units he but contributes to the emoluments of those who have had the originality and character to act according to personal conviction regardless of precedent. He may justly be classed with the small boy who swears and smokes for fear of his companions' jeers, or the young woman who imprisons her delicate internals within a vicious corset through lack of will to resist a public demand.

Much that has won human plaudit through being attributed to individual bravery or devotion, is unworthy of it. The soldier whose charge is inspired alone by command deserves no more credit than a locomotive which responds to the mastering hand of the engineer. He who assumes his share of service to the public of which he is a part simply does his duty. He is entitled to no more praise than the man who cleans the city thoroughfare for pay. He does what is expected of him and has but the merit of usefulness—so has a swill-tub. Even the business-man, returning daily to his endless task, is exercising no individual prerogative, but is a slave to routine who dares not ask himself for a holiday. The victims of mental servitude are worse off than those of the Egyptian bondage, who simply suffered physical restraint; freedom can come to them only through developed strength of will that dares defy conventions, over-rule the tyranny of habit and master timid heredity and bigoted conscience.

The servile attitude of the masses will change to one of alert effort when it is realized that human beings are practically equal in their individual possibilities. While

one may have trained his fingers, all have fingers that could be trained. The brain, quickened to a high degree of development by heredity or environment, is not different in substance from others which might easily be capable of similar results. Whatever one man has done another may do—and do better than his predecessor. Consumptive students, spurred by fear, have not only warded off disease, but have made themselves marvels of physical power. Persistent determination enabled one, formerly a weakling, to finally lift a dead weight of over three-thousand pounds. A professional juggler by repeated endeavour gains control of every muscle and gauges its exertion to a certainty. The importance of one whose continued practice allows him to gain extra skill in hitting a rubber ball with a crooked stick is unduly magnified. The Amateur is always defeated by the Professional, and yet the balance of brain may still be on the side of inexperience, which might easily establish its superiority by like devotion of its talents to one end.

Desire for a desirable thing is sufficient warrant for the trial to attain it. Obstinate demand upon self has made orators of the normally dumb, won consideration of those disposed to scorn, gained the victory in seemingly unequal combats and stretched the limits of human endurance to an infinite degree. The great men of this world were not born with every talent, but rather with the will or key to control, which could release hidden possibilities. Let us then enlarge our ambitions, reaching out for our prize undaunted by doubt or self-depreciation.

The growth of assurance is a most interesting development. The naturally modest one logically notes inferi-

ority while accepting instruction, and the self-assertive one discovers his limitations when attempting to impart knowledge. The former gains confidence by comparison, while the latter is finally subdued by the same process. Success may bring temporary self-esteem, but the real pride of character comes from the proved ability to learn from failure. Those who treat defeat as a passing irritation will soon catch up with fortune's favourites. The great of this world are consistent products of competition.

And yet the world, perhaps, has grown a little tired of the wonder aroused by the self-made man. The masses are apt to overrate the success attained by one of their own champions. Their envy of the child with the silver spoon leads them to vaunt the skill of the one who plays in the gutter. The latter develops cunning and ability by the very contact with adversity. The child of ease has little save heredity to strengthen character, with nothing to take the place of the necessity which develops the resources—and this it may never know. Every man of superlative means owes it to the world at large to rear several children so that each may have an incentive to struggle for the duplication of the splendours which may not be divided without lessening the heirs' associative conditions. The sons of wealthy parents are so handicapped by extravagant tastes that they should properly be started with some chance to continue what have become necessities.

Many seem to feel it useless to war against hereditary impulses, believing that the better chance for development lies in cultivation of the special faculties thus made personal or abnormal, and they excuse their derelictions

by attributing them to transmitted traits. The mind in admitting this helpless subjugation, abrogates all claim to individuality. It were well for one to become acquainted with and study the errors of those gone before and thus be on guard to smother them in himself. It is not always fit that immaturity should be allowed to criticise its progenitors with impunity, but parents certainly should discourage their own recognized faults in their offspring. One must fight against any inherent weakness of character, defying the suggestive power of ancestry's failings in the same way that he must defy by his own volition the insinuating force of present external control. He should not necessarily aim to develop the self which is the result of heredity and environment, but rather one which is in conformity with his higher ideals and inclinations. If he sticks blindly to the precise groove in which fate tries to force him, he becomes a mere automatic plaything, shifted at the pleasure of a dead choice.

In order to properly develop the individuality, the personality must be free from dominating influences. The selection of schools and colleges for young men sufficiently distant from home to enable them to expand unhindered by parental restraint, is a partial recognition of this fact. The son too often grows in his father's shadow, deprived of the strengthening sunshine of independence. The stronger the parent the more repressive his influence, his greater age and experience lending additional crushing weight to the natural force of discipline. However wise and noble the bent of a directing force, it frustrates that test of inclination which encourages originality. Where veneration is missing in the heir's phrenological contour there is sometimes a chance that youthful conceit will have its run of experience by

which to profit in the ripening of character, notwithstanding parental authority. It is better to learn in the early days than be a fool at forty. In later life rebound from adverse results of experiment is doubly dangerous. A bombshell explodes with greater violence than a fire-cracker.

The will readily traces its lines of purpose in the human countenance, where the play of the emotions and desires also tells its interesting tale to keen observers. Thoughts are witnessed by mien and the expression of the eye and the facial muscles, which are traitorous in the extreme. Those who go through life with childish lack of character reflected from their visages, betray evident weakness, convincing proof of the beneficial results of the exercise of individual volition.

The will grows confident by use, strengthening by trial like a steel bar which is tempered by blows. The opposition of two strong wills makes the grandest struggle on earth. Nations have manifested their admiration of determined purpose by making persistent men, even when not enlisted for an approved cause, heroes of state-craft. Many think the exercise of unflinching insistence a type of insolence or selfishness. It was once a common custom to attempt to break the wills of children. Marriage is often falsely supposed to bar either of the contracting parties from individual decision, and there has been a curious change of mastery within this last century by which the former obedient wife is often replaced by an autocrat who might give points to Czars and Sultans. The mark of meek submission written on so many male countenances proves how an exaggerated ideal of feminine deification encourages the caprices of those not qualified to govern.

In the free exercise of the prerogative, effort is bent toward the acquisition of rational and continued enjoyment, unsafe tendencies being curbed by the knowledge that the greatest satisfaction is found in fitting oneself to win the consideration of the most desirable associates. Try as man may to find delight in selfish acquisitions the irresistible yearning for companionship, with its associated sympathy, approbation and affection, ultimately wields a stronger attraction. The desire to control events can be gratified only through the control of people. The mastery of inferiors may serve the lesser purposes, but the attainment of great ends demands the guidance of beings of high utility, to the accomplishment of which equivalent development is necessary.

He who feels that the world has treated him unjustly, not appreciating his fine points and failing to realize the delights of his companionship, suffers through mediocrity of purpose or self-absorption. The world places a value upon those who are able to serve, to charm, to amuse or to decorate. Ability, accomplishment and attractiveness are effective in personal associations when not rendered distasteful in unhappy combinations. Loveliness, charm and cleverness are difficult of cultivation, yet their antitheses may be easily subdued. Many who are sure of their own usefulness despise the necessity for making themselves agreeable, and should accept their resulting isolation with the best grace possible. None may be expected to show interest in those who have not made themselves interesting.

The storing of personal friendships for present and future solace is certainly as worthy distinct and definite effort as the doubling of dollars or collecting of curios-

ities. The few attentions that incite friendly feeling are inexpensive, the simple wish to win responsive consideration fathering the desired result. The world contributes to a man's success, education and betterment in every conceivable way as long as he does not assume the superiority that despises the steps by which it ascends, thereby offending the public nostrils. When one's opinion of himself distends to this extent it leaves no room for appreciation of others. He loves himself alone who wishes no rivals.

### TRANSMISSION OF DEVELOPED TRAITS.

That proper independence which hopes to cancel obligations must recognize that it is indebted to pater-  
nity for its existence, and can only repay in kind by procreation. The individual who seeks his own enlightenment is more or less selfish in his aim, unless heirs prolong the acquired gifts to future ages. The average parents, curiously enough, exhaust their ambition for families at an early age, not thinking of the added experience with which they might impress heredity in later years. Evolution is necessarily hampered if all births are to spring from immaturity.

One who pays his debt to Nature may reasonably figure on the possibility that millions may be born of his transmitted seed, to stamp his characteristics on coming ages. The united action of these hordes of beings may dwarf the single individual worth of any one infertile human to insignificance. Therefore the responsibility of humanity's future rests upon those who have the power to permeate posterity with the finest types.

The strange neglect of subjects of the most vital importance to the future of the race is appalling to the thinker who properly estimates the results. We realize the advantages of scientific breeding in domestic animals but govern our human pairing by sentimental or even financial considerations. We see lovable women thus satisfied with weak characterless males, and strong men snared by silliness. The hope of possible superiority in a coming race finds small application of our deductive analysis.

It may of course be argued that the ideal union is careless of present earthly considerations, pointing toward a spiritual companionship in realms beyond. We might add this to other baleful results of Christian teaching, had not Christ definitely insisted that marriage had no recognition in heaven. Even the frailer types of female will have children at times with the aid of competent surgery, and violated Nature grows restive seeing babes nursed by cows through rubber swindles. The future population must continue from the strong, the healthy and the well mated. No wonder that the period of decision lengthens while the enlightened man ponders well over the act that may link him for life with an unfit affinity. He is of course better situated than his unhappy sister who must either take what comes or run the risk of being overlooked. Her situation is not quite so desperate as that of the women in distant lands where wives are bought and sold again at will, or even lent in hospitality to guests; but they are hardly in the final stage of freedom to which humanity will some day aspire.

The wonders of man's scheme of transmission are seldom realized. He has two parents by necessity, four

grand-parents by custom and an ever increasing relationship as he traces it towards its sources that would include all the inhabitants of the middle ages for ancestors, were he not to allow for double relationships. His widely divergent inheritance must cover every possible trait of character, and probably every known disease. Each one now living has an unbroken chain of descent that links him to every age of civilization and barbarism, extending through the various stages back to the original protoplasm. This information may be a blow to him who prates of an inherited pride of race as something distinct and separate from that of the masses, since he is not successful in attracting attention for his own virtues or visibilities. Those born with strength and talent know that the pride of proved ability is more justifiable than that credited to donated favours.

If all female children were to attain maturity and then marry, or at least assume marital responsibilities, it would still be necessary that each of them should bear at least two children in order to keep the population of the world stationary. In view of the fact that children do and will die, it becomes necessary for each woman to bear at least three; and as many abrogate altogether the blessed privilege of maternity, either through necessity or perversity, it becomes necessary for the able and willing to average four. The noted increase of population proves that productive women actually average more than four—all honour to them! Certain proud nations will one day become vassal states or absorbed parts of despised neighbouring countries, simply because their men are stingy or their women selfish.

The cardinal duty of propagating a line of healthy, virile descendants should be acknowledged by all. Those

who consider the responsibilities of household and family detrimental to their best interests and burdens to be avoided, need but to note the fact that men who occupy the most desirable positions of prominence have not hesitated to assume these responsibilities. The wits are sharpened, the scope of the mind enlarged by necessity.

When parentage is once assumed, the duty and necessity for proper care and training of the offspring at once arises. It may begin before the time of birth. The earnest wish of a pregnant woman is able not only to affect the soul of the unborn child but may forecast its physique. Unfortunately, we find the best proof of this fact in freaks, rather than in the result of studied and consistent intent.

The training of child-bearing women for the advantage of posterity will one day be considered indispensable. Under the present ungoverned chances of heredity and maternity the infant is often disastrously started in a path which it is liable to follow blindly through maturity. The lower animals do nothing but copy, the ant-hill of to-day being precisely similar to the old unvarying pattern. It should be the effort of man to free the new-born of all handicaps of heredity and selfish yielding to impulses that lay their marring impression even upon the unborn. The very fact that few parents attempt to bring up their children according to the manner of their own training proves that all are inclined to experiment more or less. Let the experimenting be for the interest of those upon whom the experiment is made, however, and not a mere study for parental convenience or amusement in associating conditions.

In the swing of human progress all may not be accorded equal opportunities for proving their worth ; they may suffer many undue hardships and profit by many undeserved rewards. But nothing can withhold from one the right to expand his mind and strengthen his will, nor the only real satisfaction afforded by life—that of knowing he has done his best with such means as the fates have provided, or which he has been able to create.

True types of rounded manliness and womanhood exist in every sphere, but he who is wholesome minded is ever likely to question his title to be classed among them. The human mind in its desire for high attainment, naturally seeks an understanding of the ends toward which to bend its efforts ; and they may surely be found among the following :—

Association of development with each detail of occupation—

Choice of fit ends for expenditure of effort—

Avoidance of unprofitable investment of time—

Attention to proper physical necessities—

Education and delineation of the mental faculties—

Control of soul-force and research through its unknown spheres—

Expansion of the will or conscious individuality—

Transmission of effective worth unto posterity.

Can it be truthfully said that there exists any organized effort that recognizes the importance of all these lines of endeavour ?

CHAPTER XIII.

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GENERAL IMPROVEMENT.

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*“The individual withers, and the world is more  
and more.”*—TENNYSON.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### GENERAL IMPROVEMENT.

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**M**EN who are easily contented with present conditions point with pride to the wondrous achievements of the Nineteenth Century, as if civilization had reached its climax and could now rest in self-contemplation and complacent satisfaction. If it has attained the apex of development, its associating religions may properly lay claim to some share in the result brought about by education and evolution, and there is no further work nor reason for new creeds. But it were well to analyze the culminations of their effort, comparing what is past, present or possible to see if the hope of the optimist is fully realized.

Attention has already been given to existing religions, and existing morality, through the study of characteristics in the individual. Treating men collectively, additional information may be discovered and additional opportunity perceived for betterment.

Civilization has not produced an environment such as the term would imply, but on the contrary is trammled by the disintegrating elements of degeneration. The struggle for existence has certainly developed a wonderful power of resistance in man to the evils of artificial

surroundings, but his strength might have been reserved for better ends than contention against unwholesome conditions. The rat thrives in the sewer, yet its existence is not an unmixed delight. The physical penalties of the discomforts with which men are surrounded are premature old age, failing eyesight, absent teeth, deafness, baldness, wrinkles, enfeebled brain and muscles, slow circulation, and an activity of internal organs made possible only by the use of stimulating drugs or corrective chemicals. Sometimes in the keen mentality of life's prime the senses also become dulled and the fingers more or less unfit for service. The instinctive promptings are more clouded than in former ages and ideals less lofty. It is difficult to equal olden sculpture, carving, painting and other earlier arts. Present standards of artistic design seem all inherited. Little more than copying and adapting is done in that great realm of Architecture. Even to-day's logic may scarcely render olden philosophy obsolete. It would be vain to assert that our late century has given birth to the world's greatest author, artist, poet, warrior or statesman ; while in the test of character shall history be asked to credit it with the noblest, the bravest or the most humane ? No ! Its sole claim for recognition from a forgetful future lies in its adaptation of reasoning power to concrete problems ; awakening to possibilities in material conceptions ; inventions, discoveries, investigations. We have known the century of applied science. The spread of education resulted from the union of the steam-engine with the printing-press and paper-mill ; experience broadened with the easy venture into foreign parts by steamboat and locomotive ; the rapid transmission of news was made possible by telegraph ; wealth, the universal civilizer, multiplied by use of labour-saving mechanism in field, forest, factory and mine ; and with all this mas-

tery of force and disintegration of substance has arisen the challenge from science to superstition, so potent and all-reaching that the race is temporarily stunned and made unable to realize its meaning.

Utilization of generated energy is still in an incipient state. It has not yet enabled man to safely navigate the air, to cross the oceans untossed, or adopt straight lines of travel on land. But all that may be accomplished in a material way simply enlarges material experience or material possibilities. It is painfully restricted in its scope, leaving much for the future to better and regulate. Men of to-day are not perceptibly enlightened above the intelligent of a few generations back in aught that really changes human character. And if the wonders of science have not impelled the individual to advance by their use, they are incomplete and immature, their full significance not being properly recognized.

The average structures that men now build for habitation are larger, better and less crowded than formerly, and also equipped with ingenious modern devices to administer to personal comfort. But these very conveniences are masks for accompanying evils. The walls that so carefully exclude the inclemency of the weather, serve as surely to confine the foul and fouling air within and conceal flues that guarantee the spread of fire if ever it gets a start. The artificial heat too often grows excessive, weakening the inmate's vitality, while the confined area cannot be kept free from the poisonous elements of carbon fuels. The illumination, unless electric, devitalizes the air by stealing its oxygen. The plumbing pipes disseminate the most deadly vapours in the majority of instances ; for hidden joints do not re-

main perfect, and ventilating devices often carry gases in a direction opposite to that intended by their purifying purposes. This peril of sewer gas, a strength-sapping pollution that exists beyond the detection of human senses and without a definite physical sign to betray its presence, is one of the greatest of modern dangers. He who introduces a perfect sewage system and enforces its universal use, will deserve more of the world than its greatest philosopher or philanthropist.

The comparatively imperishable nature of modern dwellings, while demanding respect for stability, may harm the race by secreting ever growing accumulations of adnascent dirt in cracks, chinks and hollow spaces. Microbes and germs thus multiply, and as no household is continually free from disease, the retention of these death-dealers cannot always be prevented. If our habitations could be drenched with a hose each day and burned to the ground each year, many physicians would degenerate from inanition. We are not, then, so surely advanced beyond the Indian with his tent.

Examining the habits of the owner within his castle, we find a routine of sleep, feeding and certain household duties or recreations. Sleep is no longer peaceful relaxation within the confines of thickly settled communities; here the dreamer may accustom himself to slumbering through the various noises of moving men and things, but his nerves unconsciously register each impression and drain from his general fund of reserve force. We must admit that the average man is more bountifully fed than formerly, but the diversity of his menu introduces so many chances for inefficiency in domestic capacity, that the supposed gain in nutriment may be

offset by the indigestible nature of its treatment. The liquids that accompany the meal are adulterated solutions of deleterious shrubs, fermented juices of fruit or grain, or water with its customary dilutions such as human excrements, cemetery drainings and every possible variation of live, dead or dying matter within range of the water-shed furnishing the supply. No wonder the digestive apparatus has reached a climax where men eat glass and swallow nails at public exhibitions. The aspiration to rival the ostrich may reasonably entertain a very fair hope of success.

Beyond the confines of the home similar artificial evils continue their baleful influence. In the streets of thickly populated centres we breathe air the analysis of which would blanch the cheeks ; the dust of dry filth, the vapour of moist filth, noxious gases from leaky mains or chemical decomposition, effluvia of cemeteries, the bacteria of disease. When powdered with coal soot, offended by indescribable odours and brought into contact with visible dirt of all descriptions, it seems questionable at times as to whether the conditions of compact civilization are blessings or curses.

The countless physical and mental strains to which the human system must accustom itself in the present busy life of a large metropolis are appalling when fully realized. The constant din, jar and tumult tire the senses and rack the nerves. The shock and jolt of modern travel is merely one of the many evidences of the sacrifice of comfort to the haste that rules material movements. This clatter and rush is no mere noisy nuisance, but also a warning of danger in which there is a cruel risk of torture that recalls the darkest period of the mid-

dle ages. Each compressed force, power utilizing machine or engineering creation multiplies the hazard of existence in direct proportion to the prevalence of human stupidity or carelessness. Those who suffer are not only at the mercy of their own thoughtlessness, but are also blindly dependent on the conception or control of those who form, guide and encourage these great modern utilities. Shipping facilities make it possible to feed the people of one place with the stale products of another. Cold storage, canning processes and the ripening of fruit or vegetables in transit may solve problems of economics and make congestion of population possible; yet the consumer is robbed of the vital factor of fresh maturity which true nutriment demands, and very possibly hastens the destruction of his internal organs by the chemicals with which so many of our wholesale food-products are treated. Embalmed beef helped make history; and when even the milk for children is daily poisoned by the patent preserving fluids sold to farmers, the wide extent of harmful methods to delay or disguise decay can be duly realized.

More people are unintentionally drowned, burned, poisoned, cut, torn, crushed and otherwise violently killed or wounded than in any previous age. Before the introduction of recent inventions, there were no boilers to burst, no trains to collide, no high buildings to burn or collapse, no machinery to mangle, no electricity to avoid. The continuity of flesh and tissue is daily gambled for the slim chance of living in a realm of excitement.

The heritage of enslaved force has proved too great a responsibility for the unthinking mortals of the present day, widespread destruction being the natural consequence

of the gratification of unreasoned cravings. The yet unborn are daily cheated with no excuse of proportionate profit to the extravagant controllers of destinies. Forests are indiscriminately slaughtered with resulting flood and damage, carelessness from fires depleting even more acreage than the axe. Streams are universally polluted wherever the population gathers, the inconsiderate often fouling their own supply and trusting in their physical filters for purification. The richness of the soil, instead of constantly returning by a natural chain of purpose, escapes to waste itself in dissolution in the all-absorbing sea. Even the revivifying qualities of the air are not secure; for incalescent usages rob it of its oxygen, and man's crude science poisons its thin strata by wanton use of matter. Nature's great stores of coal, oil and natural gas are soon to be exhausted, and the era of frigidity, suffocation or starvation seems unpleasantly near at hand. By proper study of the conservation of energy and due attention to economics, the present errors could easily be turned to future utility. The selfish or thoughtless, however, still waste the nine to gain a tenth, unconsciously embodying the cynical cry of those whose children perished by the guillotine—*Après Moi le Déluge!*

Waste is surely the distinguishing mark of this most profligate century, waste of resources, waste of material, waste of effort. Man slaves and toils with little economy of energy or nervous force, to see his profit leak through vents allowed by senile indifference. He notes his neighbour's folly in amusement, failing to understand that it is he who pays for it. All unnecessary expense of production is borne by the consuming class, which includes all mankind. Every neglected economy causes the careless one to profit less, thereby reducing his con-

suming power, and limiting his possibilities as a sharer of general financial burdens. If the public could only realize that wealth is owned by all and that all are affected by any loss, means would probably be devised to prevent the wasteful from throwing it away and the incompetent from its misuse. For every man who idles or destroys, some one must furnish sustenance. Shall the increase of useless members of communities be traced to generosity or inattention?

In days when wealth took form in lands and goods alone, the spendthrift or speculator had much less chance to develop his peculiar characteristics. Nine men out of ten must be provided with conveniences before they will exert their effort. Mediums of exchange which may be carried in the pocket or stored in banks avail too well the one of quick impulse and unconsidered thought.

It has been thought advisable at times to protect society from financial foolery. Attempts are frequently made to suppress the simple forms of gambling, but the most pernicious performances of swindling cheats cannot be annulled by war on cards and dice. There is less harm in permitting the winning of a modest stake or two from those who play in full knowledge of their risk, than in allowing millions of the trusting to be legally plundered by investments in promoters' fancies. Is it justice to silently encourage the millionaire to play with stocks and still deny cheap sports the chance to back their judgment on a horse-race? The principle of gain by others loss may of itself be vitally wrong; yet, taken as a pleasure, it has certain natural advantages.

Proper combinations could reduce the present cost of production by at least one quarter, the cost of transportation by one half, and the cost of distribution by three quarters. Those who buy must now pay the added cost of cumbrous method, and those who make must share the wages of their labour with each unnecessary agent.

One of the greatest drains on time and capital is curiously due to the existence of dishonesty. If absolute integrity were prevalent, a handsome dividend might accrue from the saving. Think of the countless clerks employed in keeping track of those who use the funds of others! Think of the army of swindlers who might turn to better labour! Think of the actual gain to the public if its taxes went into proper channels!

This lack of economy may be found in the mental as well as the financial sphere of action. The nations still cling to separate alphabets, word-roots and written characters. A completed collegiate education now seems to demand acquaintance with one or two of the dead languages and at least three of the living. None of their varied systems would be worthy of universal adoption in an aim at simplicity, as all are heterogeneous drainings through centuries of hapless modification. Syntax is a maze of exceptions and orthography a hopeless snare. The student must depend on that turgid slave memory, rather than refer to the respected instructor logic. He finds the evolution of absurdity at its height in that ancient land of China, where forty years of effort may hope to attain a decent mastery of alphabet and literature, which employ twenty-four thousand separate characters. The education of to-day means simply the garnering of a few general impressions

and a smattering of facts, the blossoming of a sensitive conceit and a chance of a rude awakening, when the finished product smashes into coarse public experience, which has either forgotten, cast aside or even never known its theoretic dogmas of pedagogic inception. The only salable accomplishment of classic culture is found in the ability to teach others the same inutilities. The mind is not well rounded by the process of training, and the graduated intellect is not found readily adaptable to the usual courses of this civilization for which we are responsible.

As an example of the incompleteness of educational methods it may be noted that no school or college has ever made a thorough study of the dictionary compulsory. Here is the fundamental basis of all knowledge, as all learning is expressed by language. Should our schools use the dictionary as a text book the subliminal consciousness would have the whole vast mass reserved for use as occasion might demand. No student can remember actual facts for instant use from all that years of cramming have taught; yet they are stored to be of value at some unexpected time. The present system of education insists upon retention by the memory until the test of examination has proved that recollection is controlled for hours or weeks or months. All are perfectly aware that no collegiate class could at any time pass any previous tests with several years intervening. What then is the use of memory trial? Is it not possible that the future may see students simply made to understand a fact once, even if their memories lose it before another morning? Let the great mental reservoir alone to govern itself. In the time now spent in memorizing, human knowledge would be swiftly traversed. Our present system fills the mental tank drop by drop,

stopping at intervals to make sure the contents are there, and frequently pouring them out to see if they have spoiled.

The present routine starts the youthful mind in a groove of thought, training it in the supposition that knowledge is acquired by imitative functions, rather than by individual reflection and research. The blind absorption of printed thought is but an exercise of memory. No knowledge thus acquired can either stimulate or develop one until associate reasoning applies its truths in correction of past error, or in the evolution of fresh conceptions. Preliminary training should simply fit one with the tools by which to better faulty things. Instead of being taught to marvel at the wonders of accumulated effort, the novice should be shown the open chances for further discovery, and be roused to recognize the inner impulses that war with incompleteness.

The effect of conventional education is to restrict and conform one to established standards. In fact, it aims toward automatism. Duplication is repellent to all cultivated minds. The city line of brown-stone fronts finds little praise to-day, the geometric park is happily a thing of the past and angular thoroughfares no longer fight against the varying natural contours of a suburb. Individuality is beginning to be appreciated in other things than art and literature. Why not give the scholar an equal chance? He is now urged to store stale knowledge, as a miser who fills his sock with gold, having no thought of its future utility.

Education of the past and present timidly restricts itself to doling out only information of which it is

reasonably sure, when the crying need of restive, eager intellect is for aid and training in the process of judgment on the unsolved problems of life. What school or college has tried to give rudimentary instruction as to selection of an affinity or associates, the rearing of a family, the necessities of health in habit and habitation, the refinements of taste in personal matters, the elements of business sagacity, the care and accumulation of capital, or a proper ideal or ambition? In attempting to repeatedly rear crops from barren ground, they have neglected the possibilities of new territory.

The world has united distant corners of the globe by quick communication, so that each man tries to post himself on all the daily happenings of each active sphere, requiring a preliminary education that must know something of each country's past history and literature. His spare time is thus largely spent in reading or hearing of events instead of being spurred to make them. We have reached an age where tens of thousands of people congregate to see a few boys play ball, or even grow intensely interested in the antics of two men who paw at each other with padded hands. We are learning to act by proxy in other ways besides fighting. Are we not thereby losing the power to act as well as the incentive?

The daily grind of printed matter smears the world of typed thought with weary pleonasm. The indulgent public allows the energetic word-joiner to prostitute the press with dreary repetition and unnecessary elaboration. We have to turn over paper by the ton to mass a modicum of fact or information, until the mental cognizance is dulled and appreciation made automatic and unemotional. It should be thought an economic crime to print a useless

paragraph, and thus deceive and rob its countless readers of their time. For pitching his pennies into the river a man would be arrested under the ban of lunacy ; yet ink would seem to have no rights and pure white paper no means of redress, since precedent has not respected them.

The authority granted those self-appointed arbiters to whom custom renders homage, is paralleled by the absurd veneration often given to edicts of the past that have no proper present application. Man changes with the dictates of fashion in personal habiliment and environment, but stagnates in vexatious anomalies of organized action. Were fitness and convenience the promptings of either course, he might profitably escape the annoyance of choice ; but unfortunately no purpose underlies the constant shifting of the votaries of fashion save the love of novelty, whilst organized bodies represent the opposite extreme with as little reason for their obstinate conservatism. Man individually is too weak to resist the tide of public opinion, and when banded with others, too fearful of the rupturing force of innovation.

Let the average man calmly examine his legitimate cravings and he will find many of them barred by his own slavish fawning unto Procrustean custom. He will find himself bound by rules which he has never analyzed and precedents which ought to carry no weight. Volition is sacrificed—and for what? Simply and only the dread of criticism. Has he the right to thus forswear independence, stifle originality, condemn individuality and prolong wearisome uselessness and stupid banality?

Custom is too inconsistent to be admitted as an argument in favour of the thing it seems to sanction. A form is often retained after its significance has entirely disappeared. We still put towers on churches, but no longer to glorify Phallus. The host is even now served first with wine, but not to relieve his guests from fear of poison as in former days.

Strangely enough, the very class possessing affluent means and freedom to consult its tastes, is first to overload itself with trivial duties. It harbors propriety's greatest sticklers, who with the inborn fear that discredits individuality, dread conventions after having conquered conditions.

Empty ceremonial is a sign of stagnation. The older civilization of China demands much more obedience to form than ours. Our social customs are still regulated from the primal source of behaviour which in itself is a relic of past ages. We suffer from having no more credited source of criticism. Certain other more recently civilized races compliment us by adopting certain of our ridiculous styles when their own are vastly superior. The fact that we might learn from them would quickly be scouted. Conceit often carries its own punishment.

Vanity of personal apparel is one of the most absorbing subjects of the ages. From the savage who adorns himself with feathers and beads to the queen of society who drapes her animality with fortunes, the desire to enhance beauty or attract attention by artificial and purchasable means is widely prevalent. True beauty may go unadorned, but prefers not to. It seems strange to believe that nearly half the human race, if given

superfluous means, would immediately think of its first use in new clothes, but such is apparently the humiliating truth. And the slavery to this desire is matched by the slavery to its prescribed form. It matters not how absurd and ridiculous the standard may be, all feel obliged to follow—at least this is true of all who assume to be of any social importance. The common labourer may wear what clothes he will without comment, go coatless if it be warm and abolish the collar if it irritates. The refined gentleman, however, appearing at any social function without the customary and absolutely useless bit of ribbon known as a tie, would meet profound censure and obloquy.

While men have retained the few follies of tall hats, stiff linen and tailed coats, their feminine associates have absolutely drained the dress-maker's invention dry. Not content with every possible conception of drapery, they have absolutely moulded their forms to suit the prevailing fashions, pressing their flexible flesh into prominence or seclusion as demanded. They are not above deceit in these conformities, and a dagger thrust might often draw no blood.

The utter absurdity of stylish garments is best appreciated in looking over the fashion-plates or pictured characters of a few generations—even one generation—past, which are invariably regarded with a smile of superiority. And yet clothing has deteriorated in simplicity, beauty and preservation of symmetry in the human form. The very fact that styles continually change is proof of an hysterical, impractical ideal.

It would not be strange were men to some day violently revolt against the artificial requirements which the

ingenuities of interested individuals force upon them. Even to-day they often snatch at relaxation in happy moments with the charms of Nature, safe from social ceremonies, exacting critics and petty rules that gladden machine-made imitations of humanity. They expand into a semblance of individuality only when alone with the ocean, the far-reaching landscape or the silent wood, and draw within their shells at the first appearance of the mob. There will yet appear a race which will treat the impertinent comments of associates as the present one treats curiosity that would intrude upon its bath-room.

We are not yet sufficiently individual even to refrain from sometimes lying ; and we are perfectly willing to be dishonest when the majority is with us. How much more interesting it will be when we shall feel free to say what we really think and do exactly that which pleases us when not interfering with others ! How much cleaner our consciences would become were we to wait not for example, but pay what we owe, in obligations as well as notes—even our taxes ; deny ourselves the chance to profit by aught but our own proper effort, and be ashamed to let the world be influenced to false deductions through our speech or action !

Men in organization naturally show no individuality and little novelty of conception except when yielding to some unitary element. They are still human enough to indulge individual failings, however, as corruption, waste and private plunder associate with many governmental bodies. The strength of purpose that is necessary to defy law or public disapproval, often waits for numbers that they may back each other up. Thus

gangs rob a city treasury, mobs lynch unarmed captives and majorities pass unwise measures. In the execution of public affairs by ponderous and extravagant assemblies, the private individual but dully comprehends that it is he or his heirs who pays the bills. A study of national debts is most instructive in this connection, as illustrating the accumulating obligations to be loaded on posterity. A staggering burden is constantly growing heavier, and the nation must borrow from its grandchildren to avoid the present weight. Were their funds used advisedly or to their coming advantage, comment would be unnecessary; but the fatal balance on the world's ledger can be accounted for only by needless extravagance or unfortunate warfare.

The great standing foreign armies furnish a gloomy example of unprofitable expense. They not only suck treasuries dry, but yield no creative return, even hampering the energy of others by existing as a constant menace to neighbouring capital and industry. If political reasons prevent disarmament, it is certainly possible that the tedious routine of drill might be replaced by a better use of energy. Let these millions, still under discipline and leadership as at present, give at least several hours per day to digging canals, building roads or docks or other public utilities, and use the remaining working hours for tactics. Would they not still fight as well, and even better, by the changed activity of occupation? Custom used to prevent a gentleman from labour, but now he sometimes works until restraint is necessary. Why should armies rot in the barracks in the long hours of peace, encouraging laziness, breeding petty vices and draining wealth from every home and every pocket?

And there are other wealth-draining armies who wear no uniforms and bear no guns—armies of drones, not willing to pay for what they consume so long as lenient producers are silly enough to share with them ; armies of the ignorant who know not how to place their effort ; armies of busy workers whose misguided zeal serves no economic necessity ; and worst of all armies of the unemployed who are sincerely eager to be of use. No age can claim perfection which allows such errors in undisturbed complacency.

Can the present civilization consistently content itself when it has absolutely failed to realize the simplest rules of social ethics, when the energies of men are bent upon winning from the productive labours of others, or in ruining them by unfair competition? When the very units of productive labour fight against the prosperity of their employers and when all drift with the tide of panics, helpless to rein the cycle of events, unwarned and untaught by past experience?

No! Collectively, men are crude, untutored and almost unteachable. The thought of their majorities is usually their average thought and therefore inferior to that of the highly evolved individuals. Jealousy or conceit prevents the many from listening to the one, and even the better units have not sufficient experience in dictation to plan the welfare of the many. Evolution is yet new at the task of aggregative effort.

Organization, therefore, has failed as a vehicle of success, whether social, political or ethical. Present forms of government, whether founded on despotism, monarchy or republican principles, are checkered with errors. The

despot is practically obsolete, but the constitutional monarchy is still with us. There is no doubt that good results might come from such a system if stripped of traditional foolery, with a monarch wisely chosen with respect to his proved ability. But heredity still determines this selection. We have recently seen one European throne occupied by a young girl and another by a boy of sixteen ; and even a hard headed commercial nation has pretended abject allegiance to a man of foreign blood, who while gifted with pleasing personality and many praiseworthy traits, has, so far as known to the world at large, never written, spoken or thought a single phrase that added to mental wealth or his countrymen's material advantage. He certainly led no armies to victory, planned no battles of statecraft, originated no schemes of national improvement.

But shall we of Republican lands dare criticize? Have we not elected men to high office whose only claim to preference was in the absolute nullity of individuality and negative prominence that permitted them to serve the purpose of compromise? How many of our Presidents, after stepping out of office, have shown a capacity in world affairs to make them still preeminent? Our chief advantage over monarchical countries is in the short term of office that admits of change in the official, and the reasonable understanding of the fact that he has been chosen to serve rather than born to domineer.

It is possible that the apparently creditable advance in civilization deceives by appearances. Visible failings are more or less avoided by the increasing disgust with which evolution views things which are outwardly

offensive. None should deny the saving grace of soap. But the daintiness which scorns the rough and coarse often becomes effeminate, judging by exteriors rather than by intrinsic merit. The masses are unfortunately somewhat barred from cleanly things by reason of expense. They may take comfort in the annals of most noble kings not many centuries dead, who lived more pig-like than the humblest member of a self-respecting community. A surface cleanliness may simply cover a foul interior. Dirty minds often dress their thoughts with dainty verbiage, and clean vice often escapes detection. The judgment should not be wholly guided by these somewhat immaterial associates, for it frequently seems questionable as to whether the ideals of outward refinement have not outstripped present practical requirements. It is easy to place oneself on an artificial plane so drastic in demands as to deny all possible pleasure. To a man in this state of mind, nearly all his fellow-men would be likely to seem repulsively ignorant, common and filthy. He could easily find discomfort and anguish in the thought that the vulgar have handled his food, breathed his air and offended his visual, auricular or nasal perceptions. He would better train himself to accept what must be and not notice what must necessarily offend. Much annoyance can be avoided by trained inattention, and a broad-mindedness that does not shrink from rubbing against a little of the world's dirt. It can easily be removed. Those who are ever alert to detect annoyance will find it ever at hand. Men are still animals, hide the fact as they may. The sale of cologne is not yet abrogated. The dainty, ethereal piece of femininity who goes through the episode of child-birth, must admit that evolution has not yet caught up with artificial civilization.

But notwithstanding the existence of condemnable conditions, mankind means better than results would seem to evidence. The fault is not so often with evil inclinations as with inexperience or the foolish pride which will not see things as they are—most incomplete and undesirable. Men will learn only when they admit that they may be taught. They can improve only when they become dissatisfied.

Criminals may be corralled and made to finish their short existences under durance ; but the bigot is still at large to smite with the power of prejudice, and the self-seeking yet present to combat the majority interest. The staggering blows under which civilization reels are not dealt by shallow-pated cynics, sneaking thieves or brawling thugs ; but by obstinate objectors and thoughtless radicals. The errors of energy are more potent than the lapses of laxity. It matters little what the degenerate do—they must achieve their unworthy end of extinction sooner or later ; it counts less what the pliable masses intend, as their intentions are as nothing compared with the governing will of their dominators. It matters much, however, what course is planned by those with individual power, for they decide the destiny of progress and are often tricked by false incentive into blindly battering the chariot of truth and scattering the ranks of her supporters.

There are always grumblers who insist that the world is going from bad to worse, its people hopelessly drifting into degeneracy and degradation. Every change brings its problems and trials, and true evolution often struggles along unrecognized. It is necessary to strike out boldly from the beaten track to avoid its errors, and the first to roll over the new roughness will experience much

discomfort while smoothing the way for those who are to follow.

The progress of civilization is like that of the sea making inroads on the land. Its waves advance and recede, its tides ebb and flow. There is apparently an equal reaction for every aggression ; and yet the cliff slowly crumbles or the sand-bank is gradually eaten away. Certain tidal waves at times surge tremendously higher and further than in their normal movements, doing the work of centuries in one night. While they may destroy and thus effect new inlets, the waves continue to break as before and the tides are not materially modified. In the calm which follows the storm man need not feel discouraged at the apparent purposelessness of ordinary effort.

In a life time of several centuries men might finally arrive at sufficient knowledge to deal properly with the conditions which confront them. Nearly all past learning is available, but the desire for instruction is not universal, and each individual is born with a certain amount of experimental tendency which incites him to discard that which has not been personally verified. When the world changes to illustrate saner circumstances more confidence will be placed in the beings who comprise it. We may well hope for the day when established authority may prove itself competent in the task of relieving self-instruction in the more trivial details of existence.

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This consideration of the ethics of conditions has scant relation to Christianity as promulgated from Christian pulpits, yet that new creed which seeks the advancement, improvement and broadening of humanity, cannot well

afford to overlook a single factor or element essential to its end. One reason for the lack in present religious interest is that the churches do not deal with vital problems, but rather harp on those ethereal spheres that incite the yawn of the jaded, rather than the glow of the enthusiastic. If religion may not interest itself in material matters it is a poor thin thing, adapted only for a special use, as tinsel for the Christmas tree, or firecracker for the national holiday.

It is small wonder that orthodox Christians banish the consideration of worldly affairs. The Church has had a sorry experience in its attempt to guide or decide them. That which is founded on impracticability may not govern practicability. The old-time faiths restricted learning, fought science, absorbed wealth and hated originality. Civilization, such as it is, owes advance to those alone who dared defy churchly limitations. Having failed to lead, religions now bring up the rear, protesting feebly for recognition and crying for less haste, as slipping grasp on trailing robe excites the fear of being left behind.

But will a new faith accomplish more? Yes! If its creed IS accomplishment! Honest energy of purpose, sure of the destiny of its aims, may yet cheat time and gain an evolution. Is not the duty of grasping opportunities higher than that of avoiding them? Is it not wiser to learn and know the truth from experience and experiment, rather than trust to those who used to teach of the world as an oblong flat, with pillars at the corners—like a four-post bed—to hold the canopy of heaven?

## CHAPTER XIV.

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## CONCLUSIONS.

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*"Nature is seen to do all things spontaneously of herself,  
without the meddling of the gods."*—LUCRETIVS.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CONCLUSIONS.

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**WE** have noted the errors of religions, the errors of rules, the errors of conceptions, the errors of aims, and the uncompromising mixture that naturally flows from the melting of such unsatisfactory elements in combination. The confidence of comparison fully sustains us in the thought that it is easily possible to better past results. We have made a certain definite progress in daring to dissect and criticise ; for discovery of error is the first step toward perfection. What then have we learned in the process? The gathered facts irresistibly point to but one conclusion, namely:—

**MAN IS WRONG ONLY WHEN WARRING  
WITH THE AIMS OF AGGRESSIVE EVOLU-  
TION, AND RIGHT ONLY WHEN AIDING ITS  
ADVANCE !**

The world must be trusted to know its purpose better than we, its insignificant parts. Men should no longer waste time and effort in the combat with eternal truth, or in slinking from the avenging power of outraged order. The only pre-existing purpose of the universe is

adaptability to conditions. Ignorance has erred in resting its reliance on a favouritism that could hope to defy them.

When we understand that the physical world is more or less of an accident, with no logical end save extinction, and further realize that the only possible ideal of spiritual hopes is simply the evolved strength of human desire, we see what a responsibility is placed upon us for present grasp of opportunities. We shall fare better to note the evident current of events and move with it rather than live out an aimless existence in the shallow eddies of the edge, or struggling vainly in the deeper flow protesting that we yield but to force.

We could learn new truths more promptly if not debarred from trial by the jealousy of former standards. Forbidden to approach the water, no wonder we know not how to swim. As past counsel has often produced unfit results, we must deny its constant force. We can only hope to lessen future mistakes by boldly wrenching ourselves from the clutch of past dogma, be it religious, judicial or social in character, advancing under the firm guidance of natural law.

What stops us? Dread of anarchy? Rather call those anarchists who have overthrown the government of Nature! What keeps our trend of rational instinct from living out its sway? Primitive evolution knew no harsh restrictions! Look then to the causes which associate with our civilization, and find our impediment in a condition which all must recognize namely:—

NARROW ARTIFICIALITY.

It is the unwise dictation of undeveloped minds that stops our progress. Nature, rudely pushed aside by ignorant conceit, fails to reach us with her outstretched arms. Conventionality airs its mean importance in an exhibition of petty tyranny, fearing to lose authority over growing youth and not daring to outrage precedent, in the fear that its present edict may likewise some day suffer contempt. We must calmly ignore the obstacle of its assumed authority whenever it fetters our progress, broadening our aims unmindful of threat, howl or sneer.

When we attempt to trace restrictions to their source, we naturally find religious standards serving as a primal fount. Belief in the present existence of absolute wisdom denies the chance for improvement. Man, in thinking himself created in the finest mould and directly in communion with Omniscience, has naturally taken himself too seriously, falling into grievous error through a conceit not taught that all is not yet plain. If the truth of eternal ages, past, present and to come, was definitely delineated centuries ago, we must face the setting sun and painfully retrace our steps to reach perfection.

Religions may be definitely accused as the chief factor in retarding natural development. Whether found in China, where railroads may not run over dead ancestors or annoy sleeping dragons; whether in India, where life is outlined before it knows the moment of birth; whether in the Soudan, where fierce fanatics conquer to destroy; or whether in Christian lands, where each professed ideal points toward the reward of the undeserving—their forms are ever hampering, ever meddling!

Confining our comment to the last named, it may be solemnly asserted that if Christianity be credited, solely for the sake of argument, with the extra civilization noted in Christian countries, the conceit and cant alone out of its many associating frailties are sufficient to outweigh its elements of superiority. The complacent satisfaction with which the Christian assumes to teach the outer world, betrays the shallowness of his perceptions; for missionary work is needed more where Christianity prevails than in the slumbering lands where torpid intellect conceives no reasoned crimes. Send missionaries to the lodgers of the slums, to the lynchers, to the political thieves, to the Red-Light habituées, to the thousands and thousands of disreputable and discreditable places which thrive and abound in Christian communities. They will find a plentiful occupation near at hand.

But such effort, even in these needed instances, may be of little value to the world at large. Individuals who are dragged or pushed through life not only show their worthlessness, but like dead weights hamper the progress of those who might otherwise multiply utility. A man able to go fifty miles on foot in a day might hardly go five with another on his back. The attempts of puny human effort to defeat the designs of evolution by interference with the drift of events, is ever unprofitable. While the world rolls on, the would-be adjuster of its affairs may be left behind. Thousands of human beings have not as yet passed far beyond the stone age. Unclothed, unhoused, unlearned, the centuries pass them by unnoticed. Many of our neighbours live in the middle ages, theoretically at least. All could pass through years by bounds would they but shake off their shackles.

Too much time is wasted in measuring the stride by that of the average leg. Countless exertions are made toward adding a few more unprofitable years to the lives of the degenerate or the diseased, when the same exertion might keep double the number from falling into a like condition. How many consult a physician as to the means of keeping well? The training of the brilliant is planned in like manner to that of the stupid, and a hundred are restrained that one may not molest the public welfare.

Society adopts principles that would lay a sewer to drain one cellar, when a new shingle on the roof would stop the mischief. Cruel as it may seem, it were better in the end that the feeble die, that the improvident starve, and that the foolish or criminal suffer the logical consequences of their folly and depravity. Present systems bolster up weakness instead of developing strength. A little care and pruning will make a magnificent tree out of a sound sprout; but all the anxiety and attention in the world will not give vigour to a blighted bough.

Consideration of these facts, in opposition to the theories of Jesus, finds, with proper comprehension, that Christianity is the very antithesis of evolution. It teaches a non-resistance that would kill the possibility of competitive development, a charity that would prolong incompetency, leaves no aim for ambition but negative pleasures and holds out no rewards whatever for material accomplishment. Is it not strange that this practical age, which acknowledges the propriety of all worldly ambitions, should yet be deluded by the hypnotism of the pulpit into avowals that shame consistency and undermine intelligence?

The present peril of man's situation is not properly realized. Activity plunges into error if the true path be vexatiously obstructed. Let the great laws of Nature have full sway! Let men brush the cobwebs from their brains and recognize the simple truths which shine before them! They make their duty arduous by self-infliction of the ball and chain. Grown up under Christian doctrine they have thought it necessary to pull the past along with them, and stop the turning of the spheres for rescue of one straggler.

Prevailing religions are too thoroughly saturated with the notion that mistakes are unimportant, providing the *sorry* excuse be well in hand. Regret is evidence of profit by experience, yet its depth is measured by the strength of penalty invoked. Religions have obstructed the development of character by fostering the spirit of worship and encouraging the slavishness that recognizes unlicensed authority. They have certainly endeavoured to hold up an exalted standard to which they wish men to bow, but they have nurtured a cowardice that fawns on the nearest patronage without questioning its true worth.

Let adulation be yielded only to that which is wholly admirable. It is not always possible to find a personal exponent worthy the trust of confidence, but principles may ever consistently enlist our enthusiasm. Higher types of humanity undoubtedly exist, yet we may not be sufficiently keen to pick them for our models. Many a curious chance places inferior individuals in temporary positions of prominence. Luck and favour win public fame too often to trust the merit of the honoured by their noisy encomiums. Those who, like Thackeray's snobs,

*meanly admire mean things*, invite invidious comparisons.

When some of us deride the fervent throng, which thinks a Pope's toe worthy of its labial homage, we should in fairness look within ourselves to root out equal failings. Is there not a similarity in the devotion of a faithful wife to a misfit husband, in the blind infatuation of voters, or in the belief of students in assertive literature?

Temporary reactions in all progressional movements point backward to the gulf of faded hopes and sickened aspirations ; but the evolution which has developed men from original slime can hardly have chosen this present moment or year or century in which to retrograde. It still preserves the strong and the fit to combat with the cunning and the venomous, while the cowardly, the unobtrusive and the unobjectionable avoid the dangerous prominence of activity. Nature preserves certain types in men as well as in animals. Thus some are lions, others tame rabbits, some are bulls, some are hogs, some are foxes, and a few are skunks and rattlesnakes. All of these are factors in the process of events, and by their peculiar traits will continue so as long as they do not either degenerate of themselves or do not arouse annihilation from others. Evolution will finally triumph in spite of humanity's oftentimes unintelligent propensities and weak compliance, although the errors of man have often caused it to turn back temporarily to try another path. Certain of its best fruits have been blighted in the blossoming and certain branches have been split, withered or torn assunder. Unless protected in the hour of need, it may be powerless to guard against concerted folly.

A slight scratch will hamstring a race horse, and a few results of man's abortive judgment can easily dishearten the advance of civilization for a time. The fact that present accomplishment is not superior or even equal in some respects to all that of the past, is sufficient proof that evolution has at intervals been balked. The exceptional influences which have changed the natural course of progress may be noted in history, and a proper understanding of them should be a safeguard against a repetition of avoidable mistakes.

In ancient times the very advances in civilization of certain races enabled neighbouring barbarians to successfully overpower them. Luxury and learning had a tendency to deprive men of the physical strength, training and endurance necessary for personal conflict on the battle-field. While brains were of some relative importance in early warfare, the aggressive brute force of determined ambition often banished arts to periodic seclusion. The slaughter of war impedes the march of progress by sacrificing the pick of humanity. The bulk of those thus slain are young and virile, courageous and healthy. Those left at home to father the coming generation include a certain unfair proportion of the physically unfit, the skulkers and the fearful. Armies should logically be largely recruited from the prisons and the street corners. The discipline would improve the criminals and the rigid routine be of undoubted value to the loafers. All men whose energies are not concentrated in some channel of usefulness are a drag and a hindrance to evolutionary progress, whether in the deteriorating solitude of a prison cell or rendered inactive by the clemency and productiveness of tropical climates. A righteous conflict in which the end desired is gained without too heavy penalty, often stirs latent forces of patriotism and

vigour from which confidence and daring aspire to greater aims. Competitive surroundings are absolutely necessary to growth.

The course of culture in present environment leads unmistakably to oblivion. The most enlightened and refined neglect the physical necessities in lavish devotion to mental ambitions, draining their vitality to enrich brain tissue. Physicians sorrowfully bear witness to the appalling fact that hardly one woman in one hundred of our pampered social class, is sexually healthy. Statistics prove that those who enjoy the greater benefits of education and the greater comparative scale of comfort or luxury, do not bring life into the world in sufficient quantity to replace itself. Aside from other harmful results of the concentration of learning and wealth, a scarcity of progeny deteriorates the heirs by surfeit of attention and lack of companionship. The associations of large families discourage selfishness, and an only child never can realize the necessary void in its earlier life. A union which is barren also reflects dissatisfaction and resentment at times, while those who value mental pursuits too highly to marry at all are not only liable to end in a narrowing self-absorption, but are headed toward fruitless extermination.

The chief mistake at the root of this and of many another evil as well, lies in the over-crowding of the mind in the endeavour to know all and do all within the limited scope of life. The man enfeebles his activity by mental distress and makes barren his seed. The woman has too many social duties to allow time necessary for awaiting birth and performing the offices of motherhood. The best element of humanity should not limit its capac-

ity of procreation, but leave this to be done by the worst. The preservation of the race has no meaning if it does not produce a constantly improving type.

Our artificial requirements may therefore actually subtract feminine beauty from society since it has so few chances of reproduction. In older days the valiant male selected pleasing mates to bear his heirs, but since demand now asks for more than births, the women having beauty are often enlisted for services that deny them time for maternity.

Vanity in itself mistakenly urges attractive women to shun the wearing trials of motherhood. Social demands dissuade them from domesticity. Those necessarily made to earn a living are drawn to the stage or other employments where admiration of their gifts of feature or form suffices to win a salary. In the lower scale of society, special beauty is tempted into that oldest of all professions, as Kipling has called it, and children are not wanted as an associative feature. We may well be thankful that the motherly instinct will be self-preserved by reason of its very self-sacrifice; and those who know the true worth of woman may have to console themselves with the reflection that prettiness is superficial and rarely associated with mental strength.

Thinking men have long anticipated the eventual adoption of practical measures toward practical ends, but they fear the violence of change. They would cut their dog's tail off in slices to save the creature pain. Like a timid child they stand with string on loosened tooth, not daring to pull. All continue their miserable time-service, willing to outrage any inner sense of fitness as

long as they are counselled by fear or sanctioned by custom. Even those placed by chance or merit in the position of leadership feel safer in conventional decrees, pandering to the mob's unlearned desires. What may we expect when those made masters of the situation are fearful to assert their strength, and try to shun responsibility? Many a Croesus bellows of the robbery done by all other wealthy individuals. The wholesale robber sometimes tries to appease the public by gifts to hospitals or colleges, but this compromise is no substitute for his duty to remove the conditions that make endowments and charities necessary.

If humanity is to progress, success must depend on individual worth and fulfillment of obligations between man and man. Out of the warring of great systems and principles the victor shall reap fresh knowledge from experience, impelled by the rational ambition to succeed, which is the great, ceaseless energy that feeds all primal human forces. The source of power is accessible to all, and there is no limit to the share of each save individual timidity. It is possible for the effort of one man to overthrow the will of nations when he grasps his opportunity by the throat and forces it to be his slave. What do we know of the countless millions who simply followed superior will or lived their little lives in custom's ruts? No more than of the droves of cattle that rambled over the plains, or the swarms of monkeys that chatter in the tree-tops. What matters it to posterity that nations of human beings raise food which simply lengthens their infertile lives; make clothing which disappears in shredded rags; rear edifices which time disintegrates; or make trivial displacements in the soil? All that we shall know of them in future years will simply be a record of the few

who led them to collective effort, the few who dared to make some novel thought effective, and the few who utilized an honest ability to its fullest capacity. The slave who burned the Temple of Diana at least realized that immortality is often fathered by audacity.

But greatness is only for the few who rise above the average. Those who swell that average by the law of progression must raise the standard of achievement to a point where nothing but the highest effort can gain prominence. But in concerted action even the lesser individualities may share equally in the responsibilities. The safety of a chain depends upon the integrity of each link.

Every ill-made thing must be replaced or repaired to satisfy the critical future. That which is perfect of execution alone endures. The product of lavished care is always secure of its destiny. Simple toil of brainless labour counts for little. Those whose work is not founded upon individual thought are sometimes useful, but so are horses, mules and oxen. Mechanism already replaces them by thousand-fold. The man who is nothing but a machine is treated and considered as a machine. A pity that makes him feel aggrieved is worse than wasted. He must be spurred to show he has a brain and aid be given to pull him to a higher level.

While individual development of character must be largely personal, the outward effort toward any general improvement must involve communion with one's fellow-men. Reciprocal relations widen the scope and broaden the vision. Concerted action is necessary in clearing the way of obstacles demanding more than in-

dividual strength to overcome them. The harmony of mutual consideration lessens the distance between men and their hopes. The present sluggishness of events is due mainly to the narrow path in which none may push ahead without incommoding the rest. The first effort should be toward broadening the way so that all may go forward with ease. The influence of organization is a most potent factor. Even with a narrow road the masses could march with rapidity if drilled to step in time and remain in line.

In congested centres of population, where personal association spreads the contagion of a new idea, enlightenment encounters least difficulties. The use of periodicals has also aided to unite men's thoughts; but the actual contact of the masses is the vivid force that compels attention to changes in conditions, speech and action. The innovator is either of an audacious type which dares defy tradition, or an unconscious dreamer who gleans fresh thought from inner consciousness. Those who properly adapt themselves to new conditions often profit more than those who create them. The former may have no personal ingenuity, but rather the shrewdness which utilizes ideas furnished by others to enduring ends. The work done with a tool is often better remembered than the thought that conceived the implement itself.

The diffusion that wastes effort on wide-spread ambition is often as ineffective as the concentration that warps the mind and narrows the vision. Some poets are remembered for one perfect verse, while volumes of watery gush are lost to futurity. The usefulness of the gifts of birth depends upon their discreet expression.

It is well known that men of few natural resources often outstrip the favourites of heredity, urged by the very shame of comparison to throw into their efforts the vigour of ambition. They may jostle the dreamer and conceiver of great thoughts aside in the rush for the goal. For this reason the finer type demands protection from the rougher conflicts of the material world, in order that it be enabled to put forth creative power, and be not compelled to face the hardships which others often take delight in mastering.

Encouragement of the strongest and broadest of our species and the consequent passing of those who may not assimilate with new conditions, points to certain inevitable conclusions. Not only will every dangerous beast and reptile disappear in time, but also certain undesirable human traits. Racial distinction will gradually fade as civilization spreads, though segregation may still preserve the color line. Whether the dominating type be eventually white, yellow, brown or black, it will certainly some day harmonize in unitary purpose. The interval may witness strange disorder and chaos, the present civilization being swept away like that of Babylon, Carthage, Athens or Rome. No such havoc can ever arise again without the senseless fault of social dishonesty from religious hypocrisy serving as one of the vital causes. Fairness and sincerity can always stem the tide of restless discontent, and the great crisis of the future will be revolutionary in character rather than the war of country against country or race against race. Let the masses distrust or note deceit, and in the depths of some great general penury they may arise and use the brutal force of physical power that rests in their majority, to efface the types that culminate the culture of past centuries.

Having noted the direction of the tide of evolution, it were well to swim with it, for it does not lead to treacherous whirlpools or jagged reefs. Humanity, moving as a disconcerted, seething mass, part of which is trying to force its way backward through the throng, becomes bewildered, swirling in circles, not knowing where to turn. The few individuals who strike out and proceed unhindered grow lonely, and either wait for the crowd to catch up or even turn back to join it.

This circling movement often brings the higher and lower together. It is quite evident that the two ends of the social scale are often bitten by the same vices, and they usually act together politically against the middle class. The wayward son of the plutocrat, if wandering in his affections, mates with the lowly one rather than another of medium standing. When falling from a lofty berth a man does not stop half way, but lands at the bottom.

The various references to classes, grades, masses, etc., must not be taken in their snobbish delineation. People seek their fit levels unless hampered by too strict artificiality. They are not necessarily defined by wealth or position. The mechanic is often capable of discussing vital problems while the son of a duke may be a witless imbecile. It is not necessary, however, to rest content in any scale of life, and those who do so should not deny the suitability of their surroundings.

In realizing that men are still in an early stage of civilized evolution, having been distinguishable from animals for only a very small per cent. of their whole existence, the incompleteness of their circumstances

must be recognized and they must not be blamed for errors they have not yet learned how to avoid. They can be held responsible only for refusing to take advantage of the most enlightened thought of the age. Education should be made more general and practical, and some of the dreamers awakened from their mystical fool's paradise. There are happier possibilities here than ever kindled visions for the idealist—actual probabilities if men will simply arouse and grasp them.

The world is waiting—almost despairingly, for the advent of a race that shall develop the three simple characteristics of courage, honesty and originality. They blend harmoniously, for the latter two are nurtured by the former. Let us then be courageous first, not with the mere physical animalism which courts conflict impartially from friend or foe, not with the ignorant recklessness of buoyant folly, not with the bullying assurance of superior power; but rather with that quiet mastery of self which will not cringe nor change for traditional influence nor public opinion. Let that courage breed a pride which dares to meet the world without disguise, without apology.

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Let it be plainly understood that no excuse is offered nor intended for the hardihood involved in the attempt at defining the truth. The world reveres it with but a mock solemnity, and those who guard it would hide it. We should not fear to know. If unfair, unworthy, untimely or unwarrantable in its essay to bring about a general, earnest seeking for knowledge, this work will simply sink from view, an evidence of misplaced effort.

The author seeks neither resentment nor approbation and asks no leniency of judgment. He does not expect entire agreement, even from those of similar reflections. He can only trust that if the reader would spare an equal time for contemplation of these same problems, he might be brought to somewhat similar conclusions. He is perfectly ready to accept further enlightenment by discussion and criticism, claiming no inspiration that should certify the unfailing accuracy of his single thought. In fact, he has postponed this publication year by year for the purpose of noting whether certain conclusions would seem erroneous when viewed through more experienced eyes.

It is fondly hoped that whatever train of thought the work may arouse, it will have some definite influence toward impressing the Christian reader with the necessity for either a careful self-examination of his real belief, or an earnest endeavour to adhere more faithfully to the purposes of that which he professes to believe—providing he continues to stand by his Gods. We can respect the faithful whether they crawl in the dirt or strangle their children, if in doing so they are conscientiously following their convictions; but we cannot refrain from a decent disgust at hypocrisy and time-service.

Many who may regret the plainer failings of their branch of religion will still reprove the onslaught of the critic in the claim that religion even as now known is the noblest expression of men's higher aspirations, and it were better to turn the violence of demolition or the energetic desire for correction to things of baser form and substance. Yet who would not prefer that his ideal

be bettered rather than some unimportant inferiority? The racer receives more care than a hundred cart-horses. The time spent in faceting and polishing a diamond would carve tons of granite. We criticise the speech of statesmen when we care nothing for what is said by the street orator. The same is true of all in art and literature and created effort of every kind. The sculptor with uncouth form and smeared clothing unconsciously forgets the nearer faults in chiseling beauty from his shapeless hunk of marble. And have not the forms of religion itself been profited by the criticism of the past? What else has wrought the marvelous changes which have silenced Inquisitions and imprisoned Popes? Had not each age its same defenders, its same conservatives?

Those who would indignantly deny the right of any unknown critic to attack their personal failings, will please remember that this work was not originally intended as a sermon, but rather as a study for the writer's individual education. It therefore contains the definite comments which his own peculiar failings have made pertinent as well as those which fit more general application. In fact, it is only through the personal experience of folly and mistake that the writer has made so sure of his premises in many vital discussions. It would have been worth several fortunes and many happier years if some of these simple facts could have been accepted and adopted in his earlier life. Like many another he often dared too much—defied conventionality when mistaking sense for dogma.

His primal incentive may have found its birth in the trivial rebellion of a youthful mind incited by com-

pulsory church attendance. Perhaps an unwise attempt at reading the Bible through at five years of age evoked the original antipathy to orthodoxy. It is more probable, however, that the practical experience obtained in noting the necessity for betterment in material things created that contempt for traditions which could dare apply the logic of improvement to immaterial things as well.

In theories which draw their conclusions from human experience, all practical evidence is of importance—that of the philosopher who has spent years in thought being perhaps no more final than that of the active man of business whose equal brain activity affords him equal or even broader opportunities from which to draw conclusions.

The author does not urge a quick belief in his deductions upon others who have not reached them through their own mental or human experiences. His repeated references to unconscious cerebration in various connections throughout the book are the result of the growing suspicion with which he has been forced to regard his own unreflecting thought, naturally inclining him to plead for a certain amount of digestive process in those who read and judge. It cannot be supposed that his ten years of continued application will be duplicated by all who make individual decisions in these matters. The labour of dissection may be much briefer than that of compilation. Let them not deny his conclusions without a definite reason for so doing. Let it not be because another thinks a different way, because conventionalities clamour, or because that bigoted, narrow, sentimental inner-self, which loves the foolery of distant days, rebels against the use of sense and will in gaining mastery of individual decision.

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APPENDIX.

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## APPENDIX.

**T**HE mortification of the discovery that others have anticipated nearly all of one's phrases and metaphors is lessened by new assurance of confidence in finding world-respected writers of the same opinion. It is comforting after all to realize that one is not alone—some freak of perversity—but rather a self-grounded volunteer who may have less to forget than have other aspirants for service. While we may find all material old, there is ever a chance for novelty in the manner of construction—and if the present manner attracts attention to forgotten truths it will have fulfilled a large share of its mission.

It is of course unwise to attempt the illustration of similarity by every possible quotation. The few given may be of interest to all, but they are more definitely intended for such as will not grant belief in logic of itself without the signature of standard authority.

Many of those now mentioned are possibly unknown to fame, some are even mere newspaper hacks relating daily occurrences. The general public view is perhaps thus better shown. Truth hides in strange corners.

The author does not pretend to have made a careful research for this material,—he simply culled from

ordinary sources as they came to hand. He has given the best of his time to writing rather than reading, and does not now care to postpone publication during years of possible study while the stored thought stales.

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TRUTH SEEKERS.—(See page 7.)

BISHOP POTTER :

*Never more than now does the world wait for scholars—scholars who shall be thinkers and seers, eager to find the truth, willing to own and value it when it is discovered; and then with fearless note to tell it out to mankind.*

RELIGIOUS FANATICISM OF THE PRESENT DAY. (See page 18.)

BY A TRAVELLER IN PERSIA :

*. . . their scalps cut and gashed to ribbons, their eyes blinded, beards matted, and sacrificial garments deluged with their own proper gore, hacking at themselves with swords until, weak from loss of blood, many of them fall at the road-side and are carried away . . . in many cases doubtless to die of their self-inflicted wounds. . .*

*The Persian's imagination is one of his strongest characteristics, and it has found full play in his religion. When he split with his Turkish brother over who should be successor to Mohammed, he did it with the fanatical enthusiasm with which he does everything—except tell the truth.*

Why is it that the emotionally religious nations always do avoid the exact? Is it not for a reason similar to that

explaining why a man used to unwise beverages avoids the drinking of water?

### ENTHUSIASTIC EXHORTERS. (See page 31.)

WU TING FANG :

*I have read the history of Europe during the middle ages, and the accounts there given of persecutions caused by difference in religious belief has filled me with horror. We have no such records in China. Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists have lived there peaceably side by side. It is only when indiscreet Christian missionaries go to extremes and excite the people that they ever have any trouble.*

A recently received letter from a Christian clergyman now traveling in China states that it were better for Christianity that missionaries had never been sent if the Chinese could have thus been spared the recent exemplification of Christian militarism.

### CHURCH TYRANNY. (See page 34).

SIR WALTER BESANT :

*Formerly (in the eighteenth century) a Nonconformist could not enter the House of Commons; nor could he hold any municipal office; nor could he accept a commission in the Army or in the Navy; nor could he take a degree at Oxford or Cambridge; nor could he become a barrister; nor could he be married or buried except according to the rites of the Church of England.*

No wonder that Christianity was universal under such restrictions! From another authority we find that even

in this great liberal land up to 1828, one had not only to be a Christian, but of one special creed, in order to hold any responsible governmental position. Jews were disbarred up to 1858. The Church of England collected taxes from every person, whether of its religion or not, down to 1868. Even to-day we link religion with our various public functions enough to drive Catholics to the establishment of Parochial schools to guard their children from the contamination (?) of hearing a Protestant Bible read. The clergy are called on for prayers and benedictions in public gatherings, and in halls of government, as if the American Nation had accepted Christianity as an authorized part of its constitution. The constitution however is not Christian; some of its earliest supporters were pronounced atheists.

### RELIGION'S EXPENSE. (See page 37.)

The total church property of the country is estimated at about \$700,000,000. There are about 125,000 ministers and priests who may possibly average as high as \$1,000 per year for salary. The expenses of repairs on property and other church needs might be called equal to these salaries, which would give us for both, \$250,000,000 per year. Should we figure in the economic loss of interest on the property at five per cent. we should have an addition of \$35,000,000 or \$285,000,000 in all, as the yearly expense of providing our population with a little good advice. Another authority, who undoubtedly includes missionary expense, places the total for this country at \$300,000,000 per year and for the world \$1,000,000,000.

Let us make a comparison. (Data is furnished by various printed authorities.)

Cost of war per year in the United States	\$200,000,000
(Figured proportionately from the rough total of the century's expense.)	
Cost of religion now per year	- 300,000,000
Cost of patent medicines	" - - 200,000,000
Cost of unnecessary drinks	" - - 1,200,000,000
Cost of narcotics	- - - - 250,000,000*
Cost of crime	- - - - 1,000,000,000
Cost of poor housewifery	- - 1,000,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$4,150,000,000

Of course we have not included many other of the expenses which men could easily give up. It looks as if we could surely guarantee an additional income of \$50 per year to every man, woman and child, or better, devote this enormous sum to human improvement, if we could only control our depravities and useless habits.

KISSING THE BOOK. (See page 45).

BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL :

*The two Testaments in the City of London court are kissed by 30,000 persons annually.*

This is one of the pleasant little customs introduced by belief in the divinity of a volume—and the witness is by no means given an antiseptic tooth-wash or face-rub as a preliminary.

RELIGION THAT REPELS. (See page 46.)

The author recently ran across the report of a public library situated in a more than ordinarily intelligent community. The librarian had evidently wished to note

\* Estimated.

the tendencies of his patrons and published the following table without comment. The division and classification was on his own authority, yet as he was a good churchman it can hardly be supposed that he pre-arranged the list to bring about its noted conclusion. The popularity of the various volumes and pamphlets, as evidenced by the number of times they were asked for by readers was as follows :

<i>Books on Religion</i>	-	-	-	.15	per cent.
<i>Philology</i>	-	-	-	.15	" "
<i>Philosophy</i>	-	-	-	.18	" "
<i>Useful Arts</i>	-	-	-	.94	" "
<i>Sociology</i>	-	-	-	.94	" "
<i>Fine Arts</i>	-	-	-	1.06	" "
<i>Natural Science</i>	-	-	-	1.32	" "
<i>Biography</i>	-	-	-	1.84	" "
<i>General Works</i>	-	-	-	4.24	" "
<i>Literature not Fiction</i>	-	-	-	6.09	" "
<i>History, Geography and Travel</i>				15.09	" "
<i>Fiction by Foreign Authors</i>	-			30.00	" "
<i>Fiction by American Authors</i>	-			38.00	" "
				<hr/>	
				100.00	" "

Religion therefore was of interest to one out of every six hundred and sixty-six that preferred other works. What fairer chanced straw would better tell which way the wind be blowing? The religious might claim that their devotees are not of the class who use libraries, but such includes only those who have libraries themselves, who care not for books, or who can not read them. It is certainly fair to assume that the patronage of a library comes from those of more than average culture and

curiosity. If they care nothing for religion as portrayed, it must be in the fault of the portrayal ; for interest in real religion will never fade.

EARLIER CRITICISMS. (See page 47).

JOHN WILLIAM DRAPER.

This author is one of the few having position and reputation already established, who dared assail the religion of his neighbours and friends. His *Conflict Between Religion and Science*, published in 1874, was widely read at the time, and as fully demands attention at the present day. It contains exhaustive proof of the way in which representative Christian bodies have interfered with our progress toward the goal of truth, and is a sufficient rebuke to those who assert that Civilization is a product of the Church. The following fragments give an idea of the conclusions :

*Military fervor in behalf of faith has disappeared. Its only souvenirs are the marble effigies of crusading knights, reposing in the silent crypts of churches on their tombs. . .*

*The tranquillity of society depends so much on the stability of its religious convictions, that no one can be justified in wantonly disturbing them. But faith is in its nature unchangeable, stationary ; science is in its nature progressive ; and eventually a divergence between them, impossible to conceal, must take place. . .*

*In the old legends of dualism, the evil spirit was said to have sent a serpent to ruin the paradise which the good spirit had made. These legends became known to the Jews during their Babylonian captivity. . .*

*It is enough for us ourselves to know that, though there is a Supreme Power, there is no Supreme Being. There is an invisible principle, but not a personal God. . .*

*Three are more than ten, and in proof of it I will change this stick into a serpent. . . such was the accepted logic (of the Church). . .*

*At the end of the thirteenth century a new kingdom was discovered, capable of yielding immense revenues. This was Purgatory. . .*

*In modern times the influence of the pulpit has become insignificant. The pulpit has been thoroughly supplanted by the newspaper.*

LE BRUN says :

*The history of Moses is copied from the history of Bacchus, who was called Mises by the Egyptians, instead of Moses. Bacchus was born in Egypt; so was Moses. . . Bacchus passed through the Red Sea on dry ground; so did Moses. Bacchus was a lawgiver; so was Moses. Bacchus was picked up in a box that floated on the water; so was Moses. . . Bacchus by striking a rock made wine gush forth. . . Bacchus was worshipped. . . in Egypt, Phenicia, Syria, Arabia, Asia and Greece, before Abraham's day.*

*The crucifixion of Christ is borrowed from a play of Æschylus, acted in Athens 500 years before the Christian era. The tragedy is Prometheus Bound. Prometheus united the divine and human natures in one person. . . was the friend, benefactor, creator and savior of men. . . His wrongs were incurred, and his sufferings endured, for his persecutors. . . He was silent under suffering. . . He was nailed to Mount Caucasus. . . A fisherman forsook him. . . Women only witnessed his dying agonies. . . .*

Coming to more recent days we have one of standard authority :

ANDREW DICKSON WHITE, (former president of Cor-

nell University, later minister to Russia, and now Ambassador to Germany.)

To say that quotations from this writer's work, *The Warfare of Science with Theology*, are in a way impertinent, as the whole work should be read, by no means insinuates a comparison with other authors which are quoted from. As it cannot, unfortunately, be expected that the reader will investigate the whole field, this work of White's is recommended especially as being fresh, exhaustive, and fathered by one of admitted rank and knowledge. Of course the final conclusion of the writer is but a personal opinion, as the work is in the shape of a mass of evidence, from which the reader may deduce his own verdict. The blight of Christian precepts as interpreted by the authorized heads is nowhere more impartially rendered, or more plainly exposed.

#### THE NEW YORK TIMES.

The evidence of the changing attitude of the public mind is well illustrated in the comment of a leading newspaper on the purpose of White's work. It is of a frankly critical nature exposing with ruthless iteration the continued failings of the Church, and yet a great Christian nation has never objected to the repeated public honours thrust upon its author. Neither did the great wide reading public rise in wrath and demolish the daring press that printed the following lines :

*In these volumes is told again, and perhaps more fully than ever before, that dismalest, most humiliating, and yet most instructive of all the stories which illustrate the infinite possibilities of human folly—the story of the effort, desperately consistent, and extending over almost 1,900 years, made by the church as a hierarchical body, to*

*silence, by death if gentler means failed, every man who dared to use his eyes and his reason in the search for truth. That it is a story of folly, with bloody crime a subordinate, though until lately constant incident, instead of a story in which murder and persecution play the leading roles and dull stupidity and gross ignorance the minor ones, is due only to the fact that, in all the innumerable combats against those whom the church insisted on regarding as her foes, she never won a victory, never camped at nightfall on a battlefield, and never once retreated in good order.*

A Canadian view is presented by GOLDWIN SMITH.

In his recent work, *The Riddle of Existence*, we find many of the pertinent errors of the Old Testament carefully noted. A few rambling quotations will bring a few points to light:—

*That the alleged record is of a date posterior by many centuries to the events, and therefore no record at all, plainly appears from the mention of Kings of Israel in Genesis (XXXVI-31) . . . It stamps the date of the book, like the mention of the death of Moses in Deuteronomy. . . . The words of Genesis XII-6, "the Canaanite was then in the land," show that the book was written when the Canaanite had long disappeared, and the words of Deuteronomy XXXIV-10, "there arose not a prophet in Israel since like unto Moses," imply that the book was written after the rise of a line of other prophets. . . . the extraordinary multiplication of the Hebrews, whose adult males, in spite of the destruction of their male children amount to six hundred thousand, a number which implies a total population of more than two millions; their sudden appearance as an armed host . . . their wandering*

for forty years . . . where, though the region is desert, they find food and water not only for themselves but for their innumerable flocks and herds; their construction of a sumptuous tabernacle where material or artificers for it could not have been found; the plague of fiery serpents . . . the giants of Canaan . . . the strange episode of Balaam . . . the stopping of the sun and moon . . . are all mentioned as defying analysis.

### HISTORY OF THE BIBLE. (See page 52.)

An unknown writer briefly summarizes the history of the book itself as follows :

*The list of the books of the New Testament, as we now have it, first appeared in the Canons of the Council of Laodicia, A. D. 364. They were then termed the Canonical books, because they were believed to have been collected together and admitted by St. John. The first known collection was made by Origen, A. D., 185-253, who, in his Hexapla, arranged in six columns, side by side, (1) the Hebrew Scriptures, (2) the Hebrew in Greek characters, (3) the Greek version of Aquila, (4) that of Symmachus, (5) that of Theodotion, (6) and the Septuagint; to which he subsequently added two anonymous versions, which gave to the work the name of "Biblia Octapla."*

*Of the numerous MSS. of the New Testament that have existed from the days of Origen to later times, Professor Scholz enumerates 647 as having been collated wholly or in part for the purpose of forming a correct text. Bishop Marsh estimates 350 MSS. of the Gospels, containing the historical portion.*

*All the ancient MSS. have descended to us more or less*

*impaired; many are imperfect from the injuries of time, and from neglect, while all exhibit erasures and corrections.*

*The MSS. written by the Apostles, or their amanuenses, have long been lost, nor is anything known concerning them. The earliest MSS. yet discovered cannot be traced beyond the fourth century.*

*The most ancient existing MSS. of the New Testament are known as the Alexandrian MS. and the Vatican MS. The former was sent as a present to Charles I. by Cyrillus Lucaris, Patriarch of Constantinople. He obtained it from Alexandria, but whether it was written there or at one of the monasteries on Mount Athos, which he had visited prior to going to Alexandria, and, which was a noted repository and manufactory of MSS. of the New Testament, is a point much disputed. Its antiquity is also a subject of controversy; the preponderating evidence, however, assigns it to the fourth or fifth century. The authorship has been ascribed to a noble English lady named Thecla.*

*The Vatican MS., so called from being preserved in the Vatican Library of Rome, disputes the palm of antiquity with the Alexandrian MS. It is written on vellum in capital letters. Both of these MSS. contain also the books of the Old Testament; but there are omissions in both, though the historical portions are fairly complete.*

## INTEREST IN THE BIBLE.

### MARTIN LUTHER :

*Before I translated the New Testament out of the Greek, all longed for it; when it was done, their longing lasted scarce four weeks!*

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL'S OPINION. (See pages 59-91.)

Ingersoll dismissed the Old Testament with the following contemptuous definitions :—

*Genesis* :—Untrue—copied from former mythology—no elevated thought—no great principle.

*Exodus* :—Unmerciful—written by savages—no line of value.

*Leviticus* :—No chapter worth reading—ignorant and infamous.

*Numbers* :—Nothing to help civilize the world.

*Joshua* :—Fraud—fury—hatred—revenge.

*Judges* :—War—bloodshed—horrible.

*Ruth* :—Would hardly advise our daughters to follow her example.

*Samuel* :—Incomprehensible if true.

*Kings* :—Uncivilizing.

*Chronicles* :—Same old stories.

*Ezra* :—No importance—no use—absurd.

*Nehemiah* :—Not a word worth reading.

*Esther* :—Jews allowed to murder seventy-five thousand people.

*Job* :—Alike sublime and foolish.

*Psalms* :—Good, indifferent and infamous.

*Proverbs* :—Not altruistic.

*Ecclesiastes* :—Agnostical—philosophic—poetic.

*Song of Solomon* :—A drama—a poem.

*Isaiah* :—Swollen—vague—absurd miracles.

*Jeremiah* :—Croakings—wailings—curses.

*Lamentations* :—Tears and howls.

*Ezekiel* :—No possible value.

*Daniel* :—Disordered dream.

*The rest* :—Not worth mention.

## EARLY AUTHORITIES. (See page 98.)

PROF. LEVI L. PAINE :

*Irenaeus was perhaps no worse than the rest, but he displays again and again a wonderfully childish innocence and credulity. For example, he accepts without hesitation a legendary tradition that had grown up among the Alexandrian Jews concerning the miraculous origin of the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament, to the effect that King Ptolemy separated the seventy translators from each other, and that when their translations were compared they agreed "word for word from beginning to end."*

It is perhaps well to explain that Prof. Paine is of the Bangor Theological Seminary, and therefore makes such criticisms from the standpoint of one friendly to theology.

## THE APOSTLES (See page 104.)

THEODORE PARKER :

*The first preachers of Christianity had false notions on many points; they were full of Jewish fables and technicalities; thought the world would soon end, and Jesus come back, with power and great glory. Peter would now and then lie to serve his turn; Paul was passionate, often one-sided; Barnabas and Mark could not agree. There was something of furious enthusiasm in all these come-outers. James roared like a fanatic radical at the rich man.*

Yet these were the disciples chosen by Christ, (except Paul) and these were the ones who heard the gospel at

first hand, and should therefore have understood it better than we who now read its embellished version.

### PARENTAGE OF JESUS. (See page 114.)

ERNST HAECKEL, (Professor at the University of Jena, Germany):

*The details which these apocryphal gospels give of the life of Christ, especially with regard to his birth and childhood, have just as much (or, on the whole, just as little) claim to historical validity as the four canonical gospels.*

*Now we find in one of these documents an historical statement, confirmed, moreover, in the Sepher Toldoth Jeschua, which probably furnishes the simple and natural solution of the "world-riddle" of the supernatural conception and birth of Christ. The author curtly gives us in one sentence the remarkable statement which contains this solution: "Josephus Pandera, the Roman officer of a Calabrian legion which was in Judea, seduced Miriam of Bethlehem, and was the father of Jesus." Other details given about Miriam (the Hebrew name for Mary) are far from being to the credit of the "Queen of Heaven."*

GOLDWIN SMITH deals in a convincing manner with the basis of Christianity and its theory of God. He says: *It would have been hardly possible to imagine a being who fills eternity and infinity becoming, for the redemption of one speck in the universe, an embryo in the womb of a Jewish maiden.*

### UNKNOWN AUTHORITY ON ILLEGITIMACY:

*Herndon's life of him, (Lincoln) argued that his power of analysis, his logic, his mental activity, his ambition,*

*might be traced back to the Virginia planter whose illegitimate daughter Nancy Hanks is said to have been.*

*William the Conqueror, Pizzaro, Marshal Saxe, General Burgoyne, Emile de Girardin, Alexander Hamilton, D'Alembert, Boccaccio, Erasmus, George Sand, Leonardo da Vinci, Alexandre Dumas—all these prove that the shame of the fatherless children need not last forever . . .*

Jesus has had good company in his irregularity.

DEVILS. (See page 117.)

CHARLES DARWIN :

*I am aware that the assumed instinctive belief in God has been used by many persons as an argument for His existence. But this is a rash argument, as we should thus be compelled to believe in the existence of many cruel and malignant spirits, only a little more powerful than man ; for the belief in them is far more general than in a beneficent Deity.*

MIRACLES UP TO DATE. (See page 118.)

PRESS EXTRACT :

*New York, July 26, 1901.—The closing scenes of the novena of St. Anne in the crypt of the Church of St. Jean de Baptiste in this city, were filled with deep interest and dramatic features.*

*Throughout this remarkable event in religious circles, thousands of people afflicted with every bodily ailment have visited the crypt seeking relief as the result of a touch from the relic of St. Anne.*

*Yesterday it is estimated that at least 20,000 people crowded into the crypt and reached out in long lines along*

*the neighboring street, awaiting an opportunity to reach the shrine, around which were heaped crutches and braces, the testimony of those who have found relief from their ailments.*

*The excitement and fervor increased as the time for the closing of the novena drew near. Fainting women were carried through the throng and on every side were to be noted incidents of the deepest pathos.*

And who shall say that these same emotionalists would not be searching out witches and burning them in the public squares if law had not grown sensible. We might have all the crudities of every development amongst us did we allow them.

#### A FEW MORE MIRACLES. (See page 121.)

E. COBHAM BREWER (An English Clergyman) makes the following quotations from olden records :

*St. Bernadin (1380-1444), having to pass a river in order to get to Mantua, where he was about to preach, could not induce the boatman to ferry him across, because he had no money. In this dilemma he threw his cloak on the surface of the river ; and, without so much as wetting it in the least, sailed on it across the stream.*

Now which reported this—the saint or the boatman? St. Francis did a little better, for he took six disciples with him on his cloak under similar circumstances. There was a great spirit of emulation amongst these holy men. St. Isidore let his wife try it with great success, but history does not relate whether he was fully pleased at her escape. St. Raymund sailed one hundred

and sixty miles on his cloak. The custom seems to have been so universal it was hardly worth while to build ships. Now here are two good ones :

*At Valentia a woman infirm and dumb presented herself to St. Vincent Ferrier. . . "Grant me. . . health to my infirm body, daily bread, and the use of speech." The man of God replied, "Two of these requests I will grant, but the third is not for thy soul's good." The woman said Amen, and went away as dumb as before.*

*A gentlewoman. . . being very sick, had an irresistible desire for some crab ; (nice food for the sick !) but the season of crabs was over, and there were none to be got in all Rome. In this emergency Francisca "put herself in prayer, and desired one of God." Forthwith, in the sight of the whole household, there fell from the ceiling of the room a fine fresh crab. . .*

And, most remarkable of all, it cured her trouble. What if she had asked for a whale? And so it goes for page after page. It would be curious to know whether these saints were chosen for reason of their claimed experiences, or whether such tales were written of them after their death by friends of strong imagination.

#### ANALYSIS OF JESUS. (See page 131.)

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL :

While appreciative of the man, Ingersoll by no means found Christ above all other humanity.

*Why should we place Christ at the top and summit of the human race? Was he kinder, more forgiving, more*

*self-sacrificing than Buddha? Was he wiser, did he meet death with more perfect calmness, than Socrates? Was he more patient, more charitable, than Epictetus? Was he a greater philosopher, a deeper thinker, than Epicurus? In what respect was he the superior of Zoroaster? Was he gentler than Laotse, more universal than Confucius? Were his ideas of human rights and duties superior to those of Zeno? Did he express grander truths than Cicero? Was his mind subtler than Spinoza's? Was his brain equal to Kepler's or Newton's? Was he grander in death—a sublimer martyr than Bruno? Was he in intelligence, in the force and beauty of expression, in breadth and scope of thought, in wealth of illustration, in aptness of comparison, in knowledge of the human brain and heart, of all passions, hopes and fears, the equal of Shakespeare, the greatest of the human race?*

### CHRIST A MYTH. (See page 137.)

MONCURE D. CONWAY :

*The world has been for a long time engaged in writing lives of Jesus. But when we come to examine them, one startling fact confronts us: all of these books relate to a personage concerning whom there does not exist a single scrap of contemporary information—not one. By accepted tradition, he was born in the reign of Augustus, the great literary age of the nation of which he was a subject. In the Augustan age historians flourished; poets and orators, critics and travelers abounded. Yet not one mentions even the name of Jesus Christ, much less any incident of his life. Of Jesus we have not one notice,—not the faintest, slightest sentence or word on which history can fix as certain evidence that he ever lived at all.*

It is no more than fair to state that this view is vigorously combatted by other students who quote various historians in proof of their contention.

### BETTER THAN IN THE PAST. (See page 175.)

THOMAS H. HUXLEY :

*Barefaced and brutal immorality and intemperance pervaded the land, (in the time of Priestly) from the highest to the lowest classes of society. The established church was torpid, as far as it was not a scandal . . . The law was a cesspool of iniquity and cruelty . . . commerce was hampered by idiotic impediments . . . People who travelled went about armed, by reason of the abundance of highwaymen.*

And yet this was in a time when the church governed absolutely, filling every office with one of its professed adherents. Think of the comparison with our present day, which though far from illustrating perfection, is much more honestly striving for it—and yet our present day is typical of unbelief in all that makes the church authoritative.

### CONGREGATIONS CRITICIZED. (See page 175.)

DR. PARKHURST :

*Indeed I think there are a good many people that believe that it is more important to be well up on the drunkenness of Noah, the lechery of David and the tricks of Jacob than to be au courant with the vice and chicanery that are administering our own city and commonwealth. And I know that there are some few men that sit in our church pews who are unable quite to realize that what*

*they are listening to from the pulpit is religion if it says anything about anybody that lived less than 1900 years ago, and the further beyond that, the safer and the sounder.*

We certainly find these preachers know their flocks even better than we who view them with no kindly bleared vision.

### EARLIER CIVILIZATION. (See page 184.)

EDWARD CLODD—FRANCIS GALTON.

We may well consider Ionia, when holding Christianity responsible for the wane of intellectual forces. Greece has given us every heritage of value, yet we are only just beginning to appreciate the choicest of her gifts. The educational instinct received its earliest nurture amongst these marvelous people, and with all their faults, bigotry was absent. As Clodd so truly remarks in his *Pioneers of Evolution*:

*There arose among them no Simeon Stylites to mount his profitless pillar; no filth-ingrained fakir to waste life in contemplating the tip of his nose; no schoolman to idly speculate how many angels could dance upon a needle's point; or to debate such fatuous questions as the language which the saints in heaven will speak after the Last Judgment.*

Galton in *Hereditary Genius* shows how Greece in one century produced more truly famous men than all the countries accepting Christianity in any equal division

of time. What list of present men will survive twenty-four centuries to compare with the following :

Themistocles, Miltiades, Aristeides,  
Cimon, Pericles, Thucydides.  
Socrates, Xenophon, Plato,  
Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides,  
Aristophanes, Phidias.

They include varied abilities in varied lines to prove the even development of the time ; statesmen, generals, writers, philosophers, poets, sculptors, and it is also well known that their physical excellence was supreme, and their mode of living sensible and healthful. Like all other races from time immemorial they failed when tried by the test of continued success. Adversity in proper season is often the greatest of blessings.

A well meaning writer with no sense of proportion has actually in sober earnest written the following :

*That philosophy, a product of the frivolous and disillusioned Athens of the third century B. C., taught in physics that all phenomena are explicable without the intervention of gods, by the fortuitous concurrence of material atoms . . . and in morals that man's true happiness consists in freedom from superstitious terror, in renunciation of the sterile agitations of ambition and the pursuit of wealth, and in tranquil enjoyment of the simpler and soberer forms of pleasure. Not a very noble or elevating doctrine for a poet, it would seem . . .*

But very noble and elevating for men of sense ! And he calls this philosophy *a product of the frivolous !* When has the world known a better—or a more rational ?

And here is one of the philosophers that he thus judges :

## TITUS LUCRETIVS CARUS :

*When human life to view lay foully prostrate upon earth, crushed down under the weight of religion, who showed her head from the quarters of heaven with hideous aspect lowering upon mortals, a man of Greece ventured first to lift up his mortal eyes to her face and first to withstand her to her face. Him neither story of gods nor thunderbolts nor heaven with threatening roar could quell, they only chafed the more the eager courage of his soul, filling him with desire to be the first to burst the fast bars of nature's portals.*

## GOD'S FAVOURITES. (See page 185.)

PRESS REPORT, APRIL 1901.

Telegram sent by Emperor William of Germany to the Sultan of Turkey immediately after an earthquake in Constantinople :

*It is with deep emotion that I have just learned what danger your Majesty was in at the time of the Feast of Bairam and how manifestly God has protected your Majesty's life.*

Of course God was not interested in the lives of the common people who were not so fortunate. To be logical, versatile William should have later sent the Queen of Italy a message in which he would learn with deep emotion how manifestly God had disdained to interfere to protect the life of her consort.

## CHRISTIAN CRITICISM. (See page 189.)

MARK TWAIN:

*I bring you the stately matron named Christendom, re-*

*turning bedraggled, besmirched and dishonored from pirate raids . . . with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of "boodle" and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and towel, but hide the looking-glass.—(Greeting to the Red Cross Society.)*

Be careful, Mark, your hearers are not accustomed to having you make fun of them !

WAR. (See page 191.)

We need not think that war grows kind. In a recent conflict, the published letters of actual Christian combatants tell of treatment that cannot be justified even by racial or religious antagonism. The following are verbatim :—

*We cleared the remainder with our bayonets. It was really fine fun. You should have seen what fuss the—made about being pricked. I touched one and he jumped for yards. They don't like cold steel. We showed them no mercy. . .*

*They threw down their arms and fled in confusion, only to be cut up into travelers' samples when they reached the bottom by our cavalry. . .*

*Anything to escape the stabs of those terrible lances through their backs and bowels. But not many escaped. We just gave them a good dig as they lay. Next day most of our lances were bloody. . .*

*Many flung down their arms as soon as they saw the flash of the lances, clasping their hands above their heads and begged for mercy . . . this was our revenge. . .*

*They threw up their arms and fell on their knees for mercy, but we were not told to give them any, and I can*

*assure you they got none. We went along sticking our lances through them. . .*

Somehow the tale of slicing steel causes a shiver, for most of us have known the scratches of sharp tools. When we read of exploding shells or spreading bullets we vaguely feel that they may be unpleasant—that is all. Five million lives, more or less, is the record of our nineteenth century wars—and our records are collected mainly from Christian sources. Even those who care only for sordid aspects may well feel awed at an expenditure in the same time of from twenty to thirty billions of dollars, not counting the peace expense of standing armies or the pension estimates. All this may be found necessary by civilization, but it certainly should not be necessary for Christianity. All of the really great wars of the century were between Christian nations excepting those in which Turkey has engaged.

### MEDIEVAL SURVIVALS. (See page 200.)

#### PRESS REPORT :

*Jefferson City, Mo., July 15, 1901.—Gov. Dockery, who has received many requests to issue a proclamation calling upon the people to observe a day of fasting and prayer that the drouth might be broken, to-day set apart Sunday, July 21, (fair warning to the Lord) on which "The people are requested to assemble at their usual places of worship to invoke the blessing of almighty God."*

*Little rain has fallen in the state since April 27.*

*At all the churches yesterday prayers were made for rain.*

*At the Roman Catholic churches prayers were said at each mass for rain, under an order of Archbishop Kain, of St. Louis.*

*Last night the Methodist, Baptist, Christian and Presbyterian congregations united in a union service at the Presbyterian Church and prayers for rain were offered.*

Noté the result :

*St. Louis, Mo., July 21.—On this, the day designated by Gov. Dockery for fasting and prayer to God that the present drouth might be broken in Missouri, all records for hot weather in St. Louis were broken, the Weather Bureau thermometer on the Custom House registering 109 degrees. On the street and in exposed places the mercury went many degrees higher.*

*The Governor's proclamation was very generally heeded. This is the second proclamation of the character ever made in the history of Missouri. In 1875, a time of drouth and grasshopper pest, Gov. Charles H. Hardin called upon the people of the State to pray for relief. This call was also generally observed.*

Better pray for relief from such Governors !

WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH OUR CLERGY.

(See page 203.)

Shortly after the lamented death by assassination of President McKinley, there arose one Dr. Geer at St. Paul's Church in New York city, to claim that the Lord designedly punished us for not allowing religious teaching in the public schools. He said :—

*I believe that this Nation is suffering from the wrath of the Lamb of God because a Christian people have con-*

*sented to the banishment of Jesus Christ from the daily life of its children. . . Rather than things should go on as now better divide all the school money among the various Christian denominations and among the Jews, and let them teach their various religions.*

If the Lord did it, why should his purpose be thus defined? Why not as well say that he did it to rebuke the American people for putting asses in some of their pulpits?

Here is another :

Boston, October 3, 1901. (Press Report.)

The Rev. C. W. Duane of the Paul Revere Church said at a meeting of the Twentieth Century Club of a President honoured by nine-tenths of those who voted against him :—

*Is it not remarkable that the president of the United States leaves \$250,000 when his salary for his term is not that, and he entered office with less than nothing to his name?*

Hardly remarkable in these days of Life-Insurance, but even so, was this a time to slander the dead when the bells had hardly ceased their tolling?

The writer has several good friends among the ministry, and desires their continued friendship if possible; but he cannot refrain from comment upon those who ex-

emply an unfortunately common type. It does no good to hide their failings. It were better to air them at once rather than have them putrify and accumulate offensiveness till the day of retribution.

MR. DOOLEY (F. P. DUNNE):

*I wondher why it is th' clargy is so much more excitable thin anny other people. Ye take a man with small side whiskers, a long coat an' a white choker, a man that wudden't harm a spider an' that floats like an Angel iv Peace, as Hogan says, over a mixed quartette choir, an' lave annything stirrin' happen an' he'll sind up th' premyums on fire insurance. Lave a bad man do a bad deed an' th' preachers is all f'r quartherin' ivrybody that can't recite th' thirty-nine articles on his head.*

*If somebody starts a fire, they grab up a can iv karasene an' begin f'r to burn down th' block. 'Tis a good thing preachers don't go to Congress. Whin they're ca'm, they'd wipe out all th' laws, and whin they're excited they'd wipe out all th' poppylation. They're niver two jumps fr'm th' thumbscrew. 'Tis quare th' best iv men at times shud feel like th' worst tow'rd those between.*

There is no question but that our Chicago philosopher is widely approved as a keen analyst of human tendencies. His clear vision frequently detects the truth which others have failed to define, and the man before the public waits anxiously for the words with which he enlightens his friend, Mr. Hennessy.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. (See page 203.)

“CHRISTIAN AT WORK” (Independent Religious Periodical Published in New York) 1898 :

*It is an amazing and a deplorable fact as certified to by the "Central Presbyterian" that one thousand two hundred and forty-two Southern Presbyterian churches did not report a single profession of faith during the past year. "Upon this picture of unfaithfulness," says the editor, "with its want of faith and prayer and effort, every one of us is called to gaze, until we are filled with shame and confusion of face, and with new vows bring forth works meet for repentance." Our Southern friends are not alone remiss in this respect.*

#### MODERN DISAVOWALS. (See page 203.)

On March 25th, 1900, Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, pastor of the famous Plymouth Church in Brooklyn, repudiated the Calvinistic creed to which he had once subscribed, in a sermon containing the following language:—

*Another partial and hideous view was taught and is by Jonathan Edwards and the Calvinistic theologians. They took the words of Solomon, where brain and nerve and stomach speak, saying to the glutton and the drunkard, "I will laugh at your calamity. I will mock when your fear cometh," and constructed a form of future punishment therefrom. Adam and Eve represented the race. For their sin all mankind were doomed to eternal punishment; Christ came in with a lifeboat to save a few of the lost wretches; as Edwards said, "The bigger part of men who have died heretofore have gone to hell; the whole heathen world is hopelessly doomed; against the non-elect the wrath of God is burning, the furnace hot, the flames rage and glow, and devils are waiting for their coming like lions restrained and greedy for their prey." On one page Edwards writes: "God holds the uncon-*

*verted over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or a loathsome insect over the fire," "and from time to time the generations in darkened lands, without temple, without Bible, without religious teacher, are swept into hell as the housewife lifts the lids from the glowing coals and sweeps flies into the flames." And to-day one of our greatest denominations still includes that awful statement in its confession of faith, saying that certain men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, being particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished. And every young man who enters the Presbyterian church has to solemnly swear to believe and teach this frightful view. Yet every attempt to revise and expel that statement from the creed has been successfully combated by a majority that wishes to retain the doctrine.*

The clouds certainly seem to be breaking when such words come from the pulpit.

#### A CONFESSION OF FAITH. (See page 203.)

The historic Old South Church of Boston adopted the following then popular creed in 1680, used it up to 1855, and formally rendered it null and void in 1899. It seems strange that religious precepts may become antique within so short a period :

*By the decree of God for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life and others foreordained to everlasting death.*

*These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed and*

*their number is so certain and definite that it can not be either increased or diminished.*

*Neither are any other redeemed by Christ or effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified and saved, but the elect only.*

*The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.*

What will the same church abandon in the next two hundred years? In this religious progress the old ideas are gradually being discarded without replacement. In such a narrowing process the simplicity is commendable, but it is possible that the earlier converts might wholly fail to recognize their religion minus the usual trappings. When we find amusement in that which was revered by our fathers, we must expect the same treatment from our survivors. We may think our penetration keener, yet the early settlers were a shrewd, hard headed race, forced into communion with practical events. We might not be deceived by the same error to-day, yet it were absurd to think our wisdom impregnable.

#### EFFECTS OF FANATICISM. (See page 204.)

ANDREW D. WHITE on Tolstoi :

*Then we may see a man of genius denouncing all science, and commending what he calls "faith;" urging a return to a state of nature, which is simply Rousseau modified by misreadings of the New Testament; repudiating marriage, though himself most happily married and*

*the father of sixteen children; holding that Æschylus and Dante and Shakespeare were not great in literature . . . holding that Michael Angelo and Raphael were not great in sculpture and painting. . . holding that Beethoven, Handel, Mozart and Haydn were not great in music. . .*

#### PULPIT VULNERABILITY. (See page 207.)

THOMAS HUXLEY was much annoyed at the spirit in which certain church officials received his criticisms, and therefore expressed himself as follows :

*I decline to assume that the standard of morality, in these matters, is lower among the clergy than it is among scientific men. I refuse to think that the priest who stands up before a congregation, as the minister and interpreter of the divinity, is less careful in his utterances, less ready to meet adverse comment, than the layman who comes before his audiences as the minister and interpreter of nature. Yet what would we think of the man of science who, when his ignorance or carelessness was exposed, whined about the want of delicacy of his critics, or pleaded his "work and calling" as a reason for being let alone?*

#### CATHOLICISM. (See page 208.)

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY :

*There is not, and there never was on the earth, a work of human policy so well deserving of examination as the Roman Catholic Church . . . She saw the commencements of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all . . . she may still exist in undiminished vigor*

*when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's.*

ERNST HAECKEL :

*And while the heavens resounded with the cry of the martyrs, the wealth of half the world was pouring into Rome. . . and the self-styled representatives of God on earth and their accomplices (not infrequently atheists themselves) wallowed in pleasure and vice of every description. "And all these privileges," said the frivolous syphilitic Pope, Leo X., "have been secured to us by the fable of Jesus Christ."*

We all know the depths to which Catholicism sank in a certain period of its history ; yet let us not judge too harshly. Those drunk with power are not so worthy condemnation as those who grant them the means for their debauchery.

CHURCH HYPNOTISM. (See page 211.)

DEAN SWIFT :

The writer finds to his surprise that this trenchant philosopher anticipated his theory of pulpit control nearly two hundred years ago. He says :—

*That the corruption of the senses is the generation of the spirit, because the senses in men are so many avenues to the fort of reason. . . in working up the spirit the assembly has a considerable share as well as the preacher . . . they violently strain their eyeballs inward, half closing the lids. . . enlightened saints of India see all*

*their visions by help of an acquired straining and pressure of the eyes. . . Meanwhile the preacher is also at work. He begins a loud hum. . . this is immediately returned by the audience. . . in the language of the spirit, cant and droning supply the place of sense and reason. . . frequent for a single vowel to draw sighs from a multitude ; and for a whole assembly of saints to sob to the music of one solitary liquid.*

### ARTIFICIAL ANIMALS. (See page 216.)

#### PRESS REPORT :

*The government fishery experts have already created several brand new kinds of fishes . . . The shad-bass is already an accomplished fact . . . a cross between the striped bass and the shad—two fishes that never breed together in nature . . .*

*The roe is pressed from the mother fish into a tin pan . . . and the milt from the male (obtained in like manner) is poured over the eggs.*

### CHURCH ATTENDANCE. (See page 217.)

#### PRESS REPORT (Philadelphia Record) :

*In New York city during the month of July (1901) the Protestant churches were practically deserted, the entire attendance at all of them not exceeding 5,000 on any Sunday.*

Even supposing the weather to be warm, the grant of one hour per week is not so onerous as to warrant such neglect providing there be any real true faith in the efficacy of public prayer and exhortation.

Much of the distaste for church attendance is undoubtedly due to the antagonism aroused by the personality of the preacher when he takes himself too seriously, and condescendingly enlightens his congregation with : *That easy assumption of divine authority for . . . notions, however inflamed—and logic, however loose—which is one of the very reasons why many men of affairs and keen intellect become estranged from the church.*—GUNTON.

### CHRISTIAN SCIENCE. (See page 218.)

MARY BAKER EDDY :

*The daily ablution of an infant is not more natural or necessary than to take a fresh fish out of water and cover it with dirt once a day, that it may thrive better in its natural element.*

There is a specimen of Granny logic and it hardly reflects respect on either age or womanhood. It is said that thousands of cultivated people worship at the shrine of this priestess, and have built splendid temples in her honour. And this is in New England! And this is in the twentieth century!! Of what use then is our education, and our evolution, and our sense of humour?

### THE OUTSIDERS. (See page 226.)

THOMAS HUXLEY :

*The so-called religious world is given to a strange delusion. It fondly imagines that it possesses the monopoly of serious and constant reflection upon the terrible problems of existence; and that those who cannot accept its shibboleths are either mere Gallios, caring for none of these things, or libertines desiring to escape from the restraints of morality. It does not appear to have entered the imag-*

*inations of these people that, outside their pale and firmly resolved never to enter it, there are thousands of men, certainly not their inferiors in character, capacity or knowledge of the questions at issue, who estimate those purely spiritual elements of the Christian faith . . . as highly as the Bishop does; but who will have nothing to do with the Christian Churches. . .*

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE :

*I have suggested that Mr. Huxley was not so much an agnostic as he was a dualist. He was puzzled as he stood in the presence, as it seemed to him, of the two antagonistic forces of good and evil.*

Is it not amusing as well as exasperating, to see men of comparatively no attested standing attempt to explain and apologize for those who have won the world's respect by the very depth of their brain-power?

THE MENACE OF THE GRAVEYARD. (See page 234.)

LOUIS WINDMULLER :

*North American Review for August (1898):*

*Innumerable proofs, furnished by scientific men of all ages, recently by the French doctor, Pasteur, show that earth retains, instead of destroying, the germs of disease contained in a body, and that in some degree it will vitiate its surroundings. . .*

*Since Hannibal's army was decimated by effluvia from an ancient graveyard he unwittingly demolished, history has repeated itself. The cholera in London in 1854 was ascribed to the upturning of earth where victims of a previous plague had been buried. . .*

*The French Academy of Medicine located the origin of diseases of the lungs and the throat in putrid emanations from the Parisian cemetery Père la Chaise. Of the older churchyards of Paris, once honeycombed with graves, that of the Innocents is remarkable. Established on the present site of the market called Halles Centrales, it bred pestilence for centuries without hindrance. Finally it became notorious as a nuisance, so that it had to be abolished. Innumerable skeletons were unceremoniously carted to the Catacombs on April 7, 1786. Lyon Playfair asserts that Roman fever originates not in the Pontine Marshes, but in decaying bodies of the millions buried in the Eternal City. Dr. Domingo Freire found in cemeteries of Rio de Janeiro myriads of microbes in corpses, identical with those in persons stricken with yellow fever, a year after burial. . .*

*Drainage from cemeteries in Philadelphia has polluted water of the Fairmount reservoir. The centennial dysentery of 1876 has been attributed to this cause. A continued prevalence of typhoid fever in this sparsely inhabited city must be ascribed to the same cause. . .*

*Mortality by yellow fever was twice as large in portions of New Orleans where large cemeteries are located than elsewhere. . .*

## THE LABOURER IS WORTHY OF HIS HIRE.

(See page 239.)

The year book of the American Congregational Church for 1898 shows that the average ministerial pay in the thirty churches of one state is but \$285. In the thirty-one churches of another state it averages \$363. In twenty-one other states and territories it is under \$1,000. Another authority states that in England half the bene-

lices are worth less than \$750 per year, there being three hundred worth less than \$250.

Perhaps the hire is worthy of the labourer !

TRUE PURPOSE OF RELIGION. (See page 241.)

B. FAY MILLS :

*I believe it should be the part of religion not only to discover the secret of health, but also to discover the secret of material prosperity, and to banish poverty from the world. I believe the church ought to be a leader in everything. I can see reasons why she has lagged behind in the social procession. It has been because she had a theoretical basis instead of a practical basis. . . Religion concerns the inspiration and purpose and action of a man's heart and life. When a great London preacher was rebuked for not preaching the gospel, because he had been speaking of the physical needs of the people in his own district, he said in reply that he did not see any disembodied spirits in that ward, or he would have done all he could to save them.*

After reading these courageous words one is not surprised to learn that their author has changed his early faith for one more liberal. He seems advanced sufficiently to change again when the still higher creed appears.

SPACE. (See page 251.)

QUOTED FROM AN UNKNOWN AUTHORITY :

*I do not indeed say that each and every one of the stars in the Milky Way is as large as our sun . . . At the*

*same time I should add that I do not know any grounds on which such a statement could be certainly contradicted . . . the rays from Sirius, travelling as they do, with the stupendous speed of light, namely, at the rate of 180,000 miles each second, would nevertheless require not less than nine years to traverse the distance between that star and our system . . . there is good reason for the belief that there are stars which are still visible in our great telescopes, notwithstanding that they are a thousand times farther from us than the brilliant Sirius . . . It is plain that we do not see such stars to-night as they are to-night, but as they were when our earth was 9,000 years younger . . . Indeed, the stars might have wholly ceased to exist for the past 9,000 years, and we should still find them shining in their places. . .*

#### PROCESS OF PROPAGATION. (See page 253.)

HAECKEL :

*Only one out of the millions of male ciliated cells which press around the ovum penetrates to its nucleus. The nuclei of both cells of the spermatozoon and of the ovum, drawn together by a mysterious force, which we take to be a chemical sense-activity, related to smell, approach each other and melt into one. Thus, by the sensitive perception of the sexual nuclei, following upon a kind of "erotic chemitropism," a new cell is formed, which unites in itself the inherited qualities of both parents.*

#### THE APPLICATIONS OF SCIENCE. (See page 253.)

JOHN TYNDALL :

*Trace the line of life backwards, and see it approaching more and more to what we call the purely physical condition . . .*

*If you ask me whether there exists the least evidence to prove that any form of life can be developed out of matter, without demonstrable antecedent life, my reply is that evidence considered perfectly conclusive by many has been adduced . . . the chemist now prepares from inorganic matter a vast array of substances which were some time ago regarded as the sole products of vitality. They are intimately acquainted with the structural power of matter as evidenced in the phenomena of crystallization.*

“But,” the objector will say, “You are leaving out the very phrases by which the author enlightens us as to the application of these facts!” Precisely. We may thank men of science for collecting our truths, yet hardly need accept their personal view of adaptation. The fact that fossil wings are found by no means proves that angels once visited this earth, nor the smells of sulphurous fumes afford us positive knowledge of the odour of Hell—as some now dead have claimed.

NATURAL SELECTION. (See page 254.)

CHARLES DARWIN:

*The male (spider) is generally much smaller than the female, sometimes to an extraordinary degree, and he is forced to be extremely cautious in making his advances, as the female often carries her coyness to a dangerous pitch. De Greer saw a male “that in the midst of his preparatory caresses was seized by the object of his attentions, enveloped by her in a web and then devoured” (another authority states that) the diminutive male escapes from the ferocity of the female by gliding about and playing hide and seek over her body and along her gigantic limbs: in such a pursuit it is evident that the chances of escape would be in favour of the smallest males, while the*

*larger ones would fall early victims; thus gradually a diminutive race of males would be selected, until at last they would dwindle to the smallest possible size compatible with the exercise of their generative functions,—in fact probably to the size we now see them, i. e., so small as to be a sort of parasite upon the female, and either beneath her notice, or too agile and too small for her to catch without great difficulty.*

Have we not all seen a similar state of things in human affairs, where some grasping female traps an adoring admirer and devours his property, returning few, if any, favours at all? Evolution should similarly produce a class of yearners of gradually limited means; and in fact it is well known that the women with charms for sale privately admit impecunious lovers, who are much more kindly treated than their lavish co-partners.

#### SPECIAL CREATION. (See page 255.)

HERBERT SPENCER has earnestly combatted the special-creation hypothesis, and the following are a few of his arguments :

*Why should not omnipotence have been proved by the supernatural production of plants and animals everywhere through the world from hour to hour? . . . Did the unknowable demonstrate his power to himself? . . . This assumption that each kind of organism was especially designed, carries with it the implication that the designer intended everything which results from the design . . . How happens it that in almost every species the number of individuals annually born is such that the*

*majority die by starvation or by violence before arriving at maturity? . . . there was a deliberate intention . . . to produce these results, or . . . there was an inability to prevent them . . . what shall we say on finding innumerable cases in which the suffering inflicted brings no compensating benefit? . . .*

*If a single cell, under appropriate conditions, becomes a man in the space of a few years; there can surely be no difficulty in understanding how, under appropriate conditions, a cell may, in the course of untold millions of years, give origin to the human race. . .*

*Under the immensely-varied forms of insects. . . there are primarily seventeen segments . . . What now can be the meaning of this community of structure throughout the hundred thousand kinds. . . filling the air, burrowing in the earth, swimming in the water? . . . It cannot be by chance . . . to say it is the result of design. . . is to assign an absurd motive.*

Spencer quotes from authorities to show the amazing fertility of lower animals, a fertility which is simply a result of terrific mortality :

*268 millions. . . in a month from a single Paramecium. . .*

*170 billions (from another species), in four days. . .*

*The queen ant of the African Termites lays 80,000 eggs in twenty-four hours; and the common hair worm as many as 8,000,000 in less than one day. . .*

*A million eggs are produced at once by a single codfish. . .*

*64,000,000 of ova in the mature female Ascaris Lumbricoides.*

It would seem rather difficult to suppose that each of these individual creations was superintended by conscious divinity, or that anything but the unchecked laws of cause and effect would allow such uneconomic profligacy.

It is plainly evident that chance and rule are in charge unless we admit a constant divine interposition. Spencer pertinently refers to the tape-worm and trichina as examples of the unwise supernatural (?) adjustment which keeps certain harmful species from extinction. If the Lord allowed the passing of the Irish elk, why not have thus withdrawn support from these parasites as well?

#### REASON IN ANIMALS. (See page 256.)

CHARLES DARWIN :

*I have seen, as I daresay have others, that when a small object is thrown on the ground beyond the reach of one of the elephants in the Zoological Gardens, he blows through his trunk on the ground beyond the object, so that the current reflected on all sides may drive the object within his reach. Again,—a well-known ethnologist, Mr. Westropp, informs me that he observed in Vienna a bear deliberately making with his paw a current in some water, which was close to the bars of his cage so as to draw a piece of floating bread within his reach. These actions of the elephant and bear can hardly be attributed to instincts or inherited habit, as they would be of little use to an animal in a state of nature. Now what is the difference between such actions, when performed by an uncultivated man, and by one of the higher animals?*

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK :

*The communities of ants are sometimes very large, numbering even up to 500,000 individuals; and it is a lesson to us, that no one has ever yet seen a quarrel between any two ants belonging to the same community. . . they are in hostility. . . even with those of the same species if belonging to different communities. . . after a separation of a year and nine months they recognized one another. . .*

*An unfortunate ant. . . injured her legs. . . For three months, however, she was carefully fed and tended by the other ants. . .*

*One kind of slave-making ant has become so completely dependent on their slaves, that even if provided with food they will die of hunger, unless there is a slave to put it into their mouth. . .*

And yet we prate of Civilization! Wait until we develop aristocrats like these that would starve rather than work to lift a morsel to their lips.

THE ACCIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT. (See page 258.)

CHARLES DARWIN.

While man's fingers have certainly worked out his progression we find that Darwin explains why men's fingers became so different from those of other animals. He says :—

*But the hands and arms could hardly have become perfect enough to have manufactured weapons or to have hurled stones and spears with a true aim, as long as they*

*were habitually used for locomotion and for supporting the whole weight of the body, or, as before remarked, so long as they were especially fitted for climbing trees. Such rough treatment would also have blunted the sense of touch on which their delicate use largely depends.*

It therefore is logically explained that it is to the habit of gaining an erect carriage and thus becoming a true biped, that the peculiar adaptability of the fingers is due.

#### EVOLUTION'S ANTITHESIS. (See page 259.)

HENRY DRUMMOND :

*The day the Cave-man first split the marrow bone of a bear by thrusting a stick into it, and striking it home with a stone—that day the doom of the hand was sealed.*

JOSEPH LeCONTE :

*The baleen whales have no teeth, and no use for them. . . Yet the embryo of the whale has a full set of rudimentary teeth deeply buried in the jawbone. . . If whales were made at once out of hand as we now see them, is it conceivable that these useless teeth would have been given them? . . . In some whales . . . there are also rudiments of hind-legs . . . buried beneath the skin and flesh, and therefore of course wholly useless. . .*

We are not the only ones to evolute away from our earlier conditions. Whales are similar to us in other respects as well, for it is claimed they suffer from rheumatism.

## A CHART OF EVOLUTION. (See page 257.)

DIAGRAM ADAPTED FROM MAGAZINE EXPLOITATION OF HAECKEL'S  
THEORY OF EVOLUTION.

---

100,000,000 B. C.	Life existing as Monera—	Splits into the two branches that give us animal and vegetable life.
LAMENTIAN.....	One Celled	
	Many Celled	
CAMBRIAN.....	Hollow Spheres	
	Animals with Primary Stomachs	
	Flat-worms	
	Cord-worms	
SILURIAN.....	Animals with bronchial gut	
46,400,000.....	Animals with Primary noto-chord	
DEVONIAN.....	Skull-less vertebrates	
	Round-mouthed vertebrates	
CARBON.....	Primary fish	
	Ganoid fish	
PERMIAN.....	Mud fish	
14,300,000.....	Gilled Salamanders	
TRIASSIC.....	Tailed Salamanders	
	Proreptilia	
JURASSIC.....	Mammal Reptiles	
CHALK.....	Primary Mammals	
2,800,000.....	Marsupials	
EOCENE.....	Semi Apes or Lemurs	
MIOCENE.....	Tailed Apes	
PLIOCENE.....	Narrow-nosed Apes—	Splits into African man-like Apes which end in Chimpanzee and Gorilla and—
500,000.....	Asiatic man-like Apes	
GLACIAL.....	Ape-like men—associated with the Ou- rang and Gibbon	
POST GLACIAL.....	Speaking men	
RECENT.....	Straight-haired men and wooly-haired men.	

## IDEALS OF PERSONAL BEAUTY. (See page 260.)

CHARLES DARWIN :

*In different countries the teeth are stained black, red, blue, etc., and in the Malay Archipelago it is thought shameful to have white teeth "like those of a dog." . . . the shape of the skull was formerly modified during infancy in the most extraordinary manner. . . The natives of the upper Nile knock out the four front teeth, saying that they do not wish to resemble brutes . . . with the Botocudos the hole in the lower lip is so large that a disc of wood, four inches in diameter, is placed in it . . . a Northern Indian . . . will answer, (that beauty signifies) a broad flat face, small eyes, high cheek-bones, three or four broad black lines across each cheek, a low forehead, a large broad chin, a clumsy hook nose, a tawny hide, and breasts hanging down to the belt . . . (the Chinese prefer) a broad face, high cheek-bones, very broad noses, and enormous ears. . . a (Hottentot) woman . . . was considered a beauty, and she was so immensely developed behind, that when seated on the ground she could not rise, and had to push herself along until she came to a slope. . . the Somali men are said to choose their wives by ranging them in a line, and by picking her out who projects farthest a tergo. . . .*

And how far superior are our own women of civilization with their fashions, at one time favouring the rank deceit of the bustle and with changing decision year by year as to whether breasts are to be worn high or low?

PRESENT EVIDENCE OF EVOLUTION. (See page 261.)

## HENRY DRUMMOND.

This author's chapter on "The Ascent of the Body," gives us a very comprehensive view of evolutionary processes, wrung by the reason of his mind from the clutches of his dogma. He says (condensed) :

*Each individual man has passed through stage after stage of differentiation, increase and development, until . . . adult form was attained. . . The embryo of . . . man begins life . . . in a . . . cell . . . microscopic in size . . . one tenth of a line in diameter . . . no apparent difference between this human cell and that of any other mammal . . . At an earlier stage . . . the forms of all living things, both plant and animal are one . . . immense distance . . . between early cell and the infant's formea body . . . labor and the progress of incalculable ages . . . human form . . . begins as an animal . . . in successive transformations of the human embryo there is reproduced . . . life history of the world . . . fore-shortened . . . into the space of weeks. . . In living nature there are a hundred . . . animal characteristics which . . . the biologist may discern in . . . the human embryo. . . Every creature that lives climbs up its own genealogical tree before it reaches its mature condition. . . The descent of man from the animal kingdom . . . is an unspeakable exhaltation. . .*

*Man probably passed through a stage when he more nearly resembled the ape than any known animal . . . within an hour of birth . . . child was able to hang on . . . a . . . stick . . . by its hands . . . at least ten seconds. In twelve cases . . . half a minute . . . one instance five seconds . . . by the left hand only . . .*

*attitude . . . like . . . chimpanzee . . . no . . . distress . . . evident. . .*

*Man . . . remained in the water until he evolved into something like a fish . . . slits in . . . fish's neck . . . still represented in the neck of man . . . children are known to have been born with them . . . open through and through. . .*

*Relic of the tail . . . and . . . the muscles for wagging it . . . hair on the arm, from the wrist to the elbow points one way, from the elbow to the shoulder . . . opposite way . . . (like) anthropoid apes . . . about sixth month the human foetus is often thickly covered with somewhat long dark hair. . .*

What a change since bishops mouthed at Darwin! The church when proved in error, always proclaims that they "knew it all the time." Slippery eluders cannot easily be cornered; yet some of us still remember the history of Galileo and Copernicus.

CONSCIENCE. (See page 274.)

CHARLES DARWIN:

*Dr. Landor acted as a magistrate in West Australia, and relates that a native on his farm, after losing one of his wives from disease, came and said that "he was going to a distant tribe to spear a woman, to satisfy his sense of duty to his wife. I told him that if he did so, I would send him to prison for life. He remained about the farm for some months, but got exceedingly thin, and complained that he could not rest or eat, that his wife's spirit was haunting him, because he had not taken a life for hers.*

*I was inexorable, and assured him that nothing should save him if he did."* Nevertheless the man disappeared for more than a year, and then returned in high condition; and his other wife told Dr. Landor that her husband had taken the life of a woman belonging to a distant tribe; but it was impossible to obtain legal evidence of the act.

Of what value as evidence is the approving inner sense when similar incentives justify the murder of the unoffending?

#### DOUBLE PERSONALITY. (See page 280.)

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOSS :

*Each human being is thus an individual with two distinct phases of existence, a combination of two personalities which do not shade into each other—the personality by which he is known to his associates, which takes cognizance of the outside world and consciously carries on the ordinary business of life; and a higher, more subtle personality, which science has demonstrated to be capable of acting independently of a physical environment. . .*

#### TRUTH AND EMOTION. (See page 282.)

JOHN TYNDALL :

*This world of ours has, on the whole, been an inclement region for the growth of natural truth; but it may be that the plant is all the hardier for the bendings and buffetings it has undergone. . . Feeling appeared in the world before knowledge; and thoughts, conceptions and creeds, founded on emotion, had, before the dawn of science, taken root in man.*

## PREACHER LOGIC. (See page 284.)

THOMAS HUXLEY :

*So the question of the preacher is triumphantly put: How do you know that there are not "higher" laws of nature than your chemical and physical laws, and that these higher laws may not intervene and "wreck" the latter?*

*The plain answer to this question is, Why should anybody be called upon to say how he knows that which he does not know? You are assuming that laws are agents—efficient causes of that which happens—and that one law can interfere with another. To us that assumption is as nonsensical as if you were to talk of. . . the integral calculus interfering with the rule of three.*

## THE END OF GOD'S EARTH. (See page 293.)

PHILIP GLANCEAUD (In La Nature) :

*After the earth shall have reached the phase represented to-day by Mars, what will become of it? Instead of consisting of a crust and a fluid nucleus, it will be completely solid. It will then absorb into its crevices the whole of its air and its water. This will easily occur, for experience shows that for this it will be sufficient to be only one-third as porous and only one-hundredth as full of fissures as the granites that are now traversed by millions of veins of harder rock. These fissures, which can no longer be filled with molten rock from the depths of the earth, will be occupied by water. If life has not already ceased by this time, it will then be no longer possible. And after this? Afterward, the fissures will increase as the mass contracts further, and the earth, cracked, dislocated, and finally broken in pieces, will rush through space as a shower of meteorites. The fissures observed on the moon's surface and the meteorites that fall on our*

*globe enable us to believe in such a future state for the earth. Such, briefly summed up, are the series of phases through which our globe has passed and probably will pass.*

**SUGGESTIONS FOR INVESTIGATION.** (See page 298.)

**HYSLOP :**

*The importance of anything like scientific proof of a future life, if it be possible, will hardly be questioned by any one. But the strength of materialism, which is supported by almost every fact outside of psychical research, and the insane follies of spiritualism as it has been historically known, and its conspicuous failures to make its claims good, have made it unpopular, if not intellectually dangerous, to meddle with such phenomena as we are now beginning to study. The personal interest in the subject, I have reason to know, is widely enough extended, but either the integrity of religious faith, or the fear of social and other ostracism, or both, have been sufficient to suppress all publicity of that interest, so that we have the strange spectacle of men wasting enormous resources upon expeditions in search of the north pole, or in deep-sea dredging for a new species of useless fish to gratify the propensities of evolutionists, or in scanning the heavens for a new lump of shining dirt, and not one cent for investigations into the question of human destiny that affects present institutions scarcely any less than individual progress in eternity. Why is it so noble and respectable to find whence man came, and so suspicious and dishonorable to ask and ascertain whither he goes ?*

Simply because people do not really care so very much about this after possibility. In spite of what they

say and write and pretend to believe, the grim common sense of heredity has witnessed too many forms grow livid, and wired too many skeletons, to actually credit the theory of continued existence.

DISSOLUTION. (See page 299.)

JOHN TYNDALL :

*My notion was (referring to a discussion) that equilibrium meant not peace and blessedness but death. No motive power is to be got from heat, save during its fall from a higher to a lower temperature, as no power is to be got from water save during its descent from a higher to a lower level. Thus also life consists, not in equilibrium, but in the passage toward equilibrium. In man it is the leap from the potential through the actual to repose.*

HYPNOTISM. (See page 308.)

PRESS REPORT :

*Woonsocket, R. I., May 16, 1901. During an exhibition of hypnotism. . . Thomas Bolton. . . was resting between two chairs with a 600-pound stone placed on his body, when a local blacksmith. . . attempted to break the stone with a sledge hammer.*

*After. . . had given the stone two heavy blows and succeeded in cracking it, the chair on which Bolton's head rested gave way under the weight of the stone and the subject fell to the floor, the stone crushing Mr. Bolton's head. He died shortly after. . .*

Now while hypnotism could not prevent accidental injury, it seems that it was possible for it to prevent harm under the great weight and stress to which the

subject was primarily subjected. Let the ordinary individual try the feat of sustaining his own weight alone with his head on one chair and his feet on another, and he will be willing to concede some power to an influence which can successfully stiffen the necessary muscles. Men in this cataleptic state have borne the weight of a horse and rider—and yet some still deny the curious trance power that gives these additional resistances.

### SCIENCE AND THE SPIRITS. (See page 310.)

JOHN TYNDALL:

*The spirits themselves named the time of the meeting. .*

(In discussion the medium informed him that magnets made her terribly ill and she would know when a room contained a magnet by becoming instantly affected. He therefore asked her whether he had a magnet in his possession, and after blushing and stammering she declined to answer. He had a magnet in his pocket at the time within six inches of her person.)

*I noticed that the knocks issued from a particular locality, and therefore requested the spirits to be good enough to answer from another corner of the table. They did not comply. . .*

*The superhuman power of the spirits was next dwelt upon. The strength of man, it was stated, was unavailing in opposition to theirs. . . Grasping the table firmly between my knees, I threw myself back in the chair, and waited. . . for the pull. It came. For some seconds it was pull spirit, hold muscle; the muscle, however prevailed. . .*

*Throwing one leg across the other I accidentally nipped*

a muscle, and produced thereby an involuntary vibration of the free leg. This vibration, I knew, must be communicated to the floor, and thence to the chairs of all present. I therefore intentionally promoted it. . . a gentleman beside me, whose value as a witness I was particularly desirous to test, expressed his belief that it was out of the compass of human power to produce so strange a tremor. . .

The knocks came from under the table, but no person present evinced the slightest desire to look under it. . . I crept under the table. . . the dear spirits had become dumb dogs. . . I continued under that table for at least a quarter of an hour, after which, with a feeling of despair as regards the prospects of humanity never before experienced, I regained my chair. Once there, the spirits resumed their loquacity, and dubbed me "Poet of Science" . . . Surely no baser delusion ever obtained dominance over the weak mind of man.

### THE PIPER SEANCES. (See page 312.)

N. Y. HERALD, JUNE 18, 1899:

*In the earlier years of Mrs. Piper's trances her voice was usually controlled by a personality that went under the name of "Dr. Phinuit". . . According to his own accounts. . . he was born in Marseilles about 1785. . . (but). . . his knowledge of the French language was limited to a few phrases of salutation. . . he could not understand French when it was spoken to him. . . Professor James records that he sometimes started off on long lectures. . . which were "very earnest, subtle, morally and psychologically". . . Does not this suggest the interesting query whether Dr. Phinuit had some subtle insight into or telepathic communication with the sub-conscious self of the eminent moralist and psychologist? . . .*

*In 1892 a new personality in the spirit world assumed control. . . In his lifetime he was a lawyer. . . and a literary man of some fame. . . a personal. . . friend of Dr. Hodgson himself. . .*

*. . . Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, of Philadelphia, visited her, in company with Professor James, and reports that the sittings were an absolute failure. . .*

*But no matter how you stretch the theory of telepathy to meet the case the fact remains, as Dr. Hodgson and Professor Hyslop point out, that you must assume an omniscience equal to that of the Divine Mind and imagine that all the thoughts, past and present, of all living persons are open to Mrs. Piper's inspection.*

To this last assertion we should reply, that if a charlatan like the supposed Phinuit, can have a *Divine Mind* it is not more unreasonable to suppose that Mrs. Piper should be equally equipped. If G. P. gains omniscience by breaking his neck, why not assume that he might have also gained it in life, if his brain had been properly applied? Why cannot the Divine Mind act through living personalities, as well as dead ones?

MRS. HENRY SIDGWICK, (in proceedings of the S. P. R., Part XXXVI, Vol. XV.), analyzes the Piper phenomena as follows :

*Rector (a spirit control) warns Dr. Hodgson "not to rely too much upon the statements made as tests, so-called, by your friend George. He is too far away from your earth now to be clear in regard to tests, test-conditions, etc." If the guaranteed spirits throw doubt on the trustworthiness of the guarantors, where are we ?*

ANDREW LANG (in same Volume) :

*That spirits in the next life, making use of Mrs. Piper's brains, nerves, voice, and hands, should be confused, is intelligible. But why should they be impudently mendacious, absurdly ignorant, and furtively evasive? . . .*

It may be thought that the author in his compilation has given too much attention to this single curious illustration of mediumship. Remembering, however, that this is the most definite attempt to prove immortality by scientific means by those of high standing as investigators, a pardon may possibly be granted.

"LIFE," June 29, '99 (Editorial) :

*Prof. James Hyslop of Columbia University, a reputable and erudite gentleman of excellent standing in the academic world, has announced that he is upon the point of proving scientifically to the world that death does not end all, but that the spirit survives the body. . . he has long been professionally interested in the celebrated Mrs. Piper of Cambridge. . . According to all accounts, Mrs. Piper is a very wonderful person. Faith in her honesty is unshaken after years of close observation by scientific men. . . Through her, Dr. Hyslop thinks, the continuance of life beyond the grave has been abundantly proved, and he says that when he gets his proofs in order and submits all his evidence to the public, its convincing nature will be generally admitted.*

*Let us hope that Dr. Hyslop's anticipations may be fully realized. We all value life beyond almost anything else, and the absolute certainty that there is more life coming to us after we have finished with our mortal bodies*

would, as far as it goes, be clear gain. Dr. Hyslop thinks it will be an immense gain, and holds that it will rejuvenate the moral influence of the Church, and revolutionize the ideals of religion, morality and politics. To "Life" he seems over-sanguine. . . The world is a strange world, and we who live in it are strange creatures. We live by the day—live like men in a dream. If the fact of death, a fact incessantly brought home to us, cannot make us live otherwise than we do, no certainty of existence after death will do so. . .

#### SUPERNORMALISM. (See page 319.)

Many read with a furtive wonder of the mysteries of certain abnormal mental conditions. Modern novels are laden with unscientific references to various trance-phenomena, which when scientifically explained become so simple that the thrill of awe aroused by them seems somewhat ridiculous. A trance is easily attained with a little practice and courage, it not being necessary to go through the ten years of preliminary contemplation credited to the aspiring Hindoo. While the sensation may be amply satisfying to the curiosity, the practice is hardly one to be encouraged; for the habit may cause one to unconsciously pass into the state at inconvenient times, and like somnambulism may produce unwise activities. The writer concluded to stop his personal investigations after various awakenings in unsought places, one knock on the head while thus unconsciously rambling giving a six month's jar to the incautious brain. Experience also seemed to prove that while in the sensitive state, which could thus easily acquire complete somnolence, the strength of outer suggestiveness was more prominently dominating.

It is thus with other so-called mysteries. Thought-transference and mind- or muscle-reading are parlour tricks, attainable by all. Intuitional clairvoyance can be cultivated to an interesting, though unprofitable extent. Hypnotism is better left to those experienced in the art, but its simpler tests are easily made. The amateurs in all these matters can go far enough to see how ordinary it all is, and then leave it to those competent to adapt its possibilities.

### PROGRESS AND ATHEISM. (See page 322.)

REV. CHARLES F. DOLE :

*What is progress, where righteousness, truth, love, duty are only the colors that the insects and birds take on to attract their mates, or to protect themselves from their enemies? What is progress, where the Christs simply die under torture, and where it is a question of a little time before all men will have perished likewise? What is a merely material progress, in view of the burnt suns swinging in empty and meaningless space? . . . there is no sense and no truth and nothing worth spending human courage upon, in a universe interpreted into negative or atheistic terms. It makes no sense. It is not worth living in. Its logical conclusion is suicide. You could not live in such a world if you tried. (Yet we do!)*

Some of these assertive logicians are interesting in the same way that the lamented J. Gordon Coogler was interesting as a poet-laureate. If progress be worthless because it may be profitable only to one's self and one's heirs, so is everything else. As well say that it is useless to build a house for it will not last beyond a hundred years. What nonsense! We shall not be here to care in a hundred years. As well say it is useless to eat

now for the body must die some time. And as to the criticism of Atheism, why should it utterly change the whole phase of life to believe that we may pass into another stage of being and meet some curious creations of outer circumstances? As well say that life in our country is not now worth living for those who may never be allowed to visit Europe.

### EMOTIONAL IMPULSES. (See page 332.)

HAECKEL :

*Emotion has nothing to do with the attainment of truth. That which we prize under the name of "emotion" is an elaborate activity of the brain, which consists of feelings of like and dislike, motions of assent and dissent, impulses of desire and aversion. It may be influenced by the most diverse activities of the organism, by the cravings of the senses and the muscles, the stomach, the sexual organs, etc.*

### HUMAN BREEDING. (See page 334.)

CHARLES DARWIN :

*We build asylums for the imbecile, the maimed, and the sick; we institute poor-laws; and our medical men exert their utmost skill to save the life of every one to the last moment. There is reason to believe that vaccination has preserved thousands, who from a weak constitution would formerly have succumbed to the small-pox. Thus the weak members of civilized societies propagate their kind. No one who has attended to the breeding of domestic animals will doubt that this must be highly injurious to the race of man. It is surprising how soon a want of care, or care wrongly directed, leads to the degeneration of a domestic race; but excepting in the case of man him-*

*self, hardly any one is so ignorant as to allow his worst animals to breed.*

### LAZINESS AND CRIME. (See page 351.)

WILLIAM FERRERO, in the New York Independent.

This writer shows how 5,175 of the 6,958 murderers convicted in 1890 in the United States were without trade or profession. In Massachusetts, 2,991 of 4,340 criminals had no profession. In Pennsylvania the proportion was 88 per cent.

### DEFINING ANOTHER'S INTENT. (See page 358.)

Pleasure defined by a rural light whose sermon was recorded in part quite recently by a country newspaper of excellent exactness :

*The modern dance is lasciviously immoral and responsible for the destruction of the virtue of thousands of the youth of our land. Everything connected with the waltz is calculated to arouse and influence impure thoughts and passions. (How did he know?) The dance is in a great degree responsible for the alienation of the affections of husbands and wives. What! the girl I adore by another embraced? What! the balm of her lips shall another man taste? What! touched in the twirl by another man's knee? What! pant and recline on another than me? Sir; she is yours! From the grape you have pressed the soft blue! From the rose you have shaken the tremulous dew. What you have touched you may take!*

One would imagine the learned divine's experience in the recreation must have been obtained in rather ques-

tionable places. Possibly in the brothel with Dr. Parkhurst. Or perhaps he is reminiscent of the wayward *Hoochee Couchee* which served for the chief attraction for some ten millions of average Christians in the year of our World's Fair at Chicago.

## PERSECUTIONS OF BIGOTRY. (See page 359.)

### MARTIN LUTHER :

*I should have no compassion on these witches ; I would burn all of them.*

### HAECKEL :

*It has been recently calculated that the number of men who lost their lives in the papal persecution of heretics, the Inquisition, the Christian religious wars, etc., is much more than ten millions.*

## THE ALLIES IN CHINA. (See page 366.)

EDWIN WILDMAN (late U. S. Vice-consul at Hong Kong) :

*The Japanese stood foremost in carrying out a humane policy in protecting the lives of the men, the chastity of the women, and the property of non-combatants. . . The British . . . Indian troops . . . looted systematically, but I think without violence. . . The Russian troops were mostly half civilized Cossacks . . . fighters, murderers, and plunderers by nature and profession. Their officers did not, and probably could not, control them.*

*The French were a lazy, cruel and plundering lot. . . Their actions in China disgraced the name of France.*

*The Germans were a splendid looking body of men,*

*but their campaign of vengeance is absolutely inexcusable.*

Why should Japan think of trying Christianity after such a comparison—to learn of theft, cruelty, rape and vengeance? Japan never knew Christians until this century, so their influence can hardly be held responsible for present characteristics. If a religion does not make men humane, wherein lies its utility? If we may not judge by its effects on representative bodies, what better test can be suggested?

#### AMERICANS ABROAD. (See page 367.)

CONGRESSMAN GILLETT of Massachusetts, in the Springfield Republican, 1901 :

*The class of amusements which we call Frenchy, and which Americans flock to Paris to see, seem to me artificial and made to order to meet the taste of American visitors, and it's no credit to us what they think our taste is. I was thoroughly disgusted to see not only American men, but ladies too, trying to be amused by sights which they would think both stupid and low at home. . .*

No need to comment—the truth is too well known.

#### TAX DODGING. (See page 376.)

FREDERIC W. UPHAM (of the Chicago Board of Tax-review) :

*The spectacle of a millionaire philanthropist, who gives generously to the public charities and to needy private individuals, making absurdly false statements, under oath, of his personal property holdings, is familiar to every im-*

*portant tax-levying body. . . many a wealthy man makes a sworn statement of his personal property holdings which he knows must be accepted by the entire public, as well as his personal friends and acquaintances, as deliberately false. . . In Chicago . . . not more than twenty-five per cent. of its actual taxable personal property is at present assessed, despite the fact that its provisions for levying assessment are unquestionably in advance of those of any other city in the country.*

It would therefore seem as if the average Christian paid only the debts which were enforcible or brought some noticed gratitude.

#### PRESENT IMMORALITY. (See page 385.)

HAECKEL :

*It is well known that this strenuous and carefully paraded prudery of the higher classes (especially in England) is by no means reflected in the true conditions of sexual morality in high quarters. The revelations which the Pall Mall Gazette, for instance, made on the subject twelve years ago (supposedly from 1900) vividly recall the condition of Babylon.*

#### HABITS. (See page 413.)

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOSS:

*Candy mania is widespread in America ; in fact the greatest enemy of the health of our young women is the manufacturer of fancy confectionery. The natural liking . . . develops into a craze, with the natural consequences indigestion, mental indolence, chronic gastric catarrh, and most to be deplored, a fetid breath, which renders the possessor positively odious.*

**THE LAW OF PERSONALITY.** (See page 415.)**BORIS SIDIS:**

*Intensity of personality is in inverse proportion to the number of aggregated men. . . Large massive social organisms produce, as a rule, very small persons.*

This, and many other interesting theories, are pleasingly expounded in that author's work, *The Psychology of Suggestion*, which can be strongly recommended to all of analytical tendencies.

**A NEW HABIT.** (See page 421.)**DR. THOMAS D. CROTHERS.**

In a lecture before the New York School of Clinical Medicine this physician classed cocainism as one of the three great scourges of the world, alcoholism and morphinism being the other two. Custom-house reports show an alarming increase in the importation. The vice is spreading alarmingly as the drug is growing cheaper all the time. One result is that the habit is becoming common among tramps and paupers. In various parts of the South and West it is freely bought in five-cent packages.

Its first effects in small doses are to create a feeling of elation, of greatly increased mental and physical superiority, and of freedom from care and anxiety. If a lawyer, a writer or a clergyman, he shows marvelous fluency and prolixity of speech. He has a rare fecundity of words, but they betray a tendency toward circumlocution and irrevelancy. Habitual use impairs the judgment and the sense of right and wrong. It makes men secretive, selfish and dishonest, and gives them delusions.

SOLITUDE. (See page 426.)

IMMANUEL KANT :

*All the culture and art which adorn humanity, the most refined social order, are produced by that unsociability which is compelled by its own existence to discipline itself, and so by enforced art to bring the seeds implanted by Nature into full flower.*

SUBLIMINAL CONSCIOUSNESS. (See page 433.)

F. W. H. MEYERS :

*Mr. X., absorbed in his book amongst friends who were talking, was suddenly roused to attention by catching his own name. He asked what his friends had been saying of him. No reply was made, but he was hypnotized. In the hypnotic trance he was able to repeat the whole conversation which his waking self had missed.*

In thirteen cases of arithmetical prodigies collected by Mr. Myers, two of them gave evidence of the power at three years of age, one at four, and four at six. The list includes such eminent names as Ampère and Gauss, who started known manifestations at the ages of four and three respectively. Bidder could determine mentally the logarithm of any number to seven or eight places. He could intuitively determine what factors would divide any large number, not a prime. He could not explain how he did this. Safford, a professor of astronomy, worked in his head in one minute a multiplication sum whose answer consisted of thirty-six figures, when but ten years of age.

It is hard to decide what to quote from such a wealth of data as the Society for Psychical Research has col-

lected in the last few years. In print they cover thousands of pages. Anyone who can read and then deny the fact of a hidden activity within men, must certainly be willing to as well deny the worth of carefully selected human testimony.

There seems to be good reason to believe that full grasp of unconscious powers such as are manifested by mathematical prodigies and others actuated by psychic forces would enable one to practically eliminate time as a factor in certain mental actions. The fact that the unconscious portion of the brain works more quickly than that of the normal consciousness is no more remarkable than that a short pendulum should vibrate more quickly than a long one. It is easily possible to test the fact of quick impressions by allowing a secondary period of sleep with a clock in view. One may thus discover that the experiences apparently of hours may be crowded into sixty seconds. It is such a power that aids the writer or the orator, by quick review of all that memory has stored, to present a word or phrase in time to sustain an apparently unbroken continuity of thought. If a prodigy may instantly give answer to a problem which would ordinarily require ten minutes of labourious pencilling, does not answer signify a mystery? Some function had to go over every single unitary feature of the example and then collect the necessary parts to produce the answer. To suppose anything else is to suppose that a wave of the hand would make ten thousand bricks arrange themselves as a wall with mortar in between. The cave-man would figure that it would take a thousand men a thousand years to build one of our large buildings, yet we may do it in one year with but a hundred men, because of the development of tools and knowledge. May not we

thus develop mental tools, especially since it seems well proved that such implements are even now ready for use and only awaiting our discovery?

### AUTO SUGGESTION. (See page 436.)

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOSS :

*It is a psychological fact that the subjective mind of a given individual is as amenable to suggestion by his own objective mind as by the objective mind of an outside person or a spiritual intelligence. Suggestion by an objective consciousness to its own subliminal self is known as auto-suggestion. . .*

*Auto-suggestion is the great psychological miracle, and few realize the part it plays in the drama of life. It accounts for much self-deception and self-elation; it regulates the number of births among intelligent people, and explains the increase of sterility among American women; it renders immune from disease and perpetuates diseased states; it has changed non-contagious into contagious maladies; it is lord of the realm of habit; it is the medium of utterance for hereditary tendencies; it lays bare the secret of influence, the influence of what is seen and heard, of things unsaid, of things undone; it explains the accomplishment of seemingly impossible feats; it is the channel through which genius finds expression; and it may be contended with no small show of reason that the subliminal self of a Stratford butcher's apprentice, under the spell of an objective suggestion inspired in his boyhood by the Pageants of Coventry, created the deathless plays of Shakespeare.*

The direful ravages of that modern complaint appendicitis are certainly due to some curious source other

than a purely physical cause. Here is a disease which was hardly ever heard of before physicians perfected themselves in abdominal surgery. Now there is hardly a town or even family in certain localities that have not known acute cases. Meanwhile the rest of the world goes on tranquilly without noting the warning pains, though it will undoubtedly spread as knowledge becomes diffused.

### HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION. (See page 438.)

JOHN DUNCAN QUACKENBOSS :

*A pure soul will always revolt at the intrusion of a sordid or sensual self and spontaneously repel its advances. . . . On the other hand, criminal suggestions to an evilly disposed subject would naturally lead to criminal acts. The mind affects the line of least resistance.*

### MENTAL EPIDEMICS. (See page 439.)

BORIS SIDIS :

*In 1800 a wave of religious mania passed over the country. . . . The first camp meeting was held at Cabin Creek. . . . The crying, the singing, the praying, the shouting, the falling in convulsions made of the place a pandemonium. Those who tried to escape were either compelled to return, as if drawn by some mysterious force, or were struck with convulsions on the way. . . . As many as twenty thousand people were present at one of these meetings.*

*. . . at Indian Creek. . . . The meeting was at first quiet. . . . A boy of twelve mounted a log and began to rave violently. . . . some fell to the ground. . . . Thousands were wriggling, writhing and jerking in paroxysms of religious fury. . . .*

*In many places the religious epidemic took the form of laughing, dancing, and barking or dog manias. . . moving about on all fours, growling, snapping the teeth, and barking. . .*

Now if God is evidenced by prayer, the devil is surely evidenced by degradations such as these. Explain, Oh Christians !

LYNCHING. (See page 439.)

BY A SOUTHERN MINISTER:

*He (the negro) is lynched for the very simple reason that in race he is an alien to the people who lynch him. . . And this means that the same essential spirit is dominant in Mississippi—in Mississippi of the 20th century—that was dominant in Europe in the dark ages ; that ruled in France more than 500 years ago when pious Louis cancelled a third of the claim held by Jews against French men for the benefit of his soul ; that ruled at Verdun where the Jews, mad with agony, huddled together in a tower of refuge, hurled down their children to the howling mob, hoping thus vainly to satiate their greed for Jewish blood ; essentially the same spirit that, 500 years ago, lighted a fire for every Jew in whole French provinces, and dug the trench at Chinon, and raised that pile where nearly 200 Jewish men and women were burned together ; burned because fundamentally they were not Frenchmen by religion, not Frenchmen by race !*

The trouble with the lynchers seems to be that they are also Christians who have inherited Christian principles.

NEW YORK EVENING POST, summer of 1901—relating the account of an eye-witness :

*The men didn't ask what the nigger had done—they wanted to know where the show was, and they wanted front seats. . . two years before, when I was in Texas . . . proof came. . . that a mistake had been made in the man, but rather than disappoint the crowd they burnt the wrong nigger first, and then started in to catch the right one. Now, I don't think that the kind of animals I saw ever wasted as much time in defending the honor of their families as would an ordinary alligator. And they enjoyed the fun. Yes, sir, I don't discount that word. They enjoyed it, and they let their children see it.*

#### IT MATTERS MUCH WHOSE OX IS GORED.

PRESS REPORT regarding the Rev. Johnson Hendershot of Winfield, Kansas, Feb., 1901.

It seems that an element supposedly in sympathy with the saloons had maliciously damaged the interior of this gentleman's church, so he says, in the spirit of conventional Christianity : *I say let us lynch them. If the mob will run the men down who ruined my church I will tie the noose which will swing them into eternity . . . they have insulted me openly. Now I am thirsting for revenge.*

It is a dangerous thing truly to vex a minister and destroy furniture. Yet his associates condemn the use of violence when wanton murder and rape arouse the spirit of retribution. A curiously illogical lot these parsons truly !

## SENTIMENTALISM. (See page 440.)

## ROSE RADCLIFFE.

The curious lengths to which emotionalism may carry one, is fairly well illustrated by the following quotation from a person of whom one with discriminating taste has said *It would be a source of constant joy to know (her):*

*One speaks of the magic of this pressing of the lips, and in truth it is magical because the effects are beyond explanation. There is electric fire that leaps in the sultry blood till mouth fans mouth to flame. There is the sweet and saccharine perfume that breathes from pouting petals intertwined. There is the luscious dew of fruit that not only satisfies, but titillates with sentient life. And there are the tinglings of the tell-tale nerves, and the languorous, elusive yet strenuous tenderness of the leaning lips.*

## WILLIAM JAMES :

*There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer, who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility, but never does a concrete manly deed.*

## POPULATION. (See page 453.)

## PRESS EXTRACT :

*In the year 1875, there were born in the United Kingdom (of Great Britain) 35 children for each 1000 of the people. In the year 1900, there are only 29 . . . this means a loss of 249,000 children for each year . . . it implies a much more rapid decline of the birth rate than that of France.*

NOISE. (See page 463.)

JOHN H. GIRDNER, M. D.:

*If the impressions made upon the five senses, or on any one of them are pronounced and painful, and of constant recurrence . . . they cannot fail to produce irritation and exhaustion of the brain and nerves all over the body; and in this way the general health is made to suffer.*

*The roar and din of a modern city causes almost constant irritation to the nervous system through the auditory apparatus, and this irritation in turn results in a lowering of the general health and resisting power of the individual. . .*

*The noise habit, like every other, grows by what it feeds upon, and this artificial stimulant has gained such a hold that the New Yorker requires it with his dinner . . . in these latter years no hotel or restaurant can hope for patronage which does not furnish a noisy band of music with the food it sells.*

EDUCATION. (See page 468.)

SIR WALTER BESANT:

*At present, our school boards, by means of classes in shorthand, classes in commercial law, classes in foreign languages, and in other things which do not belong to the crafts and arts, are doing their mischievous best to persuade the people that the life of a clerk, with its long hours, its drudgery, and its miserable pay, is better, more "respectable" and more dignified than the life of the engine-room and the work-shop. No greater blunder was ever made in the history of National Education.*

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*There was a man once—a satirist. In the natural course of time his friends slew him, and he died. And the people came and stood about his corpse. “He treated the whole round world as his football,” they said indignantly, “and he kicked it.” The dead man opened one eye. “But always toward the Goal,” he said.*

—MAARTEN MAARTENS.

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