

# WOMAN:

HER GLORY, HER SHAME, AND HER GOD.

BY

SALADIN,

*Author of "God and His Book," Etc.*

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Vol. I.

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"It [Christianity] elevated the woman; it shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."—THE REV. ARCH-DEACON FARRAR.

Ἐχθρος γὰρ μοι κείνος ὕμῳσ αἶδαο πύλησιν,  
'Ο χ' ἕτερον μὲν κείθει ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἀλλο δὲ βαΐει.  
—HOMER.



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## CHAPTER I.

*“It Came with a Girl, and it will Go with a Girl”—  
Fashioned out of a Bone—Women Ordained to Sub-  
ordination—Biblical Rape and Lechery—The Midian  
Maids and Mothers—The Holy Ghost on Woman—  
Paul on Marriage.*

GOD'S book, in nearly every place where it condescends to notice women, insults them; and yet women are almost the only devotees in Christendom now that stand up for God. The churches in this country, and still more emphatically so on the Continent, are attended by a sprinkling of shallow-pated men, the large majority of the congregation being women and children. When, after his defeat at Solway Moss, James V. of Scotland heard of the birth of a daughter (afterwards the hapless Mary, Queen of Scots), he remarked, mournfully, “It came with a girl, and it will go with a girl,” the “it” being the crown of the House of Stewart. The evil genius of Christianity may truthfully echo the ejaculation of King James. This Christian scheme of salvation, or rather damnation, came with a girl, and it bids fair to end with a girl. The girl Eve, the wife of Adam, ate an apple, and thereby rendered the girl Mary necessary

and Christ "the second Adam." As Diderot remarked, "God evidently thinks a great deal more of his apples than of his children."

The very first woman Jehovah "made" he insulted. He made her as the result of an after-thought, and fashioned her out of a bone. The Lord of Creation, man, was "created"—whatever that may mean; but the creating steam did not require to be turned on to produce such an unimportant item as woman. She was made out of a bit of bone, just as if she had been a knife-handle or a breeches-button. And this product of a turning-lathe in God's bone-mill was left unprotected for a very knowing serpent to do what he liked with. And then, because this ancient lady got crawled over by the serpent, just as the modern lady gets crawled over by the priest of the Lord, Jehovah drove the girl out with an angel and a flaming sword. He might have saved himself all the trouble and expense of the angel and the flaming sword if he had taken care to have driven the serpent out of the Garden before he put Eve into it. He would thereby also have been spared sending his son down from Heaven to Jerusalem to do the redemptive stick-and-nail performance. And he would have saved me the trouble of trying to credit the incredible and the penalty of being damned for my unbelief.

This girl Eve set the Christian ball a-rolling; and, ere many decades pass, another girl, say Jenny, will be found kneeling in a gospel-shop when the Eve-started Christian ball finally stops. "It came with a girl, and it will go with a girl." Of the worshippers of Jehovah it may, before long, be predicated, as was predicated of a certain town, "All the inhabitants are females, except one old tom-cat, and even it is a *she*."

Jehovah having set lightly upon woman by not fashioning her out of original matter, but, through an after-thought, from an already created bone, he continued to

depreciate and insult her. He made her Adam's helpmeet, but in the subordinate fac-totum sense. Quoth he to her, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."\* "And he shall rule over thee," quotes the Lancashire pitman, as he knocks down his wife and "rules over" her with his clogs. Jehovah considerably provides that no man shall be subjected to the discomfort of living with a wife who has become distasteful to him; he is to "send her out of his house"† into the wide world, which is usually disposed to mete out to castaway women the vials of shame and starvation. She may have lain in his bosom for years—in sorrow and travail she may have borne him children. Through the long dreary day, through the dull weary night, she may have kept vigil and watched him in sickness, as only the wife of his youth and the mother of his children could. Her cool lips may have kissed the burning brow of fever; her choking and sobbing voice may have prayed to God as only a passionate woman can; and her tearful appeal may have mingled with his cries of hectic delirium—her appeal, "O God of Jacob, spare my husband to my babes and me!"

Nevertheless, should the time arrive when the very vigil and weariness which she underwent by his bed-side when all others had forsaken him blear her eyes, waste her form, and drive the roses from her lips and cheeks, she might "find no favour in his eyes," and he would have the sanction of the very God to whom she had prayed for him to drive her away from his house, heart-broken and desolate, and to take another wife or other wives in her stead. In this matter I beg to add my most earnest protest against the conduct of Jehovah. I, the creature, impugn the creator, and accept the consequences.

\* Gen iii. 16.

† Deut. xxiv. 1.

When Jehovah took the costal bone and fashioned it into a woman, he seems to have had no idea that women would yet write books, agitate for the franchise, and take it into their heads that they had individual rights. The toy which Jehovah cobbled up out of the bone he seems to have intended as little more than a sort of carnal plaything for man, that his holocausts of slaughter might be relieved by carnivals of lust. Free indulgence in rape and lechery was what God provided for those who took up the sword and the torch and floundered over heaps of slaughtered men lying ghastly in the glare of burning cities. "When thou goest forth to war against thine enemies, and the Lord thy God hath delivered them into thine hands, and thou hast taken them captive, and seest among the captives a beautiful woman, and hast a desire unto her that thou wouldst have her.....then thou shalt bring her home to thy house.....And it shall be, if thou have no delight in her, then thou shalt let her go whither she will."\* "And they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses.....And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives and their little ones."† But this was too humane for "our father which art in heaven," so his special satrap, Moses, ordered: "Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children that have not known a man by lying with him keep alive for yourselves."‡

If this horror were not in the Bible, no one could bear to read of it. If it were in the Bible of some other religion, how the Christian would shudder at the faintest allusion to it, and pity and abhor the devotees of a book dealing with incidents so unspeakably revolting! Realise it, Christian, and tell me if God be God. To my mind,

\* Deut. xxi. 10-14.

† Num. xxxi. 7, 9.

‡ Num. xxxi. 17, 18.

woman is the light and music of the world. To me the prattle of children is holier than the thunder-song of poets, and dearer it is to me to feel their dimpled hands as they climb my knees than it would be to feel the hands of the mighty ones of the earth as they twined the laurel wreath upon my brow and raised me to a niche among the immortals.

Not so with Jehovah, the God I am commanded to worship, but will not. There before him are the women and children of Midian. The women are widows who mourn for the unreturning brave. Many of the children are too young to realise that they are homeless and fatherless. Alas, for the widows and orphans of the Midians! Their country is conquered, their mighty are laid low, and Evi and Rekem and Zur have bitten the bloody dust. Every man of their nation has stepped over the threshold of Death; their castles crash down in thunder, and the fire, leaping and roaring over their cities, reddens the heaven. Israel has prevailed. From the sword let the blood of victory be washed with the tears of mercy. No. The horrid heaps of agonised and writhing slaughter, the red and devilish carnival for all the vultures of Asia, are not enough for Jehovah. He has slain the resisting, now he will butcher the helpless. The sword, already red with the gore of the husband and father, is to be reddened deeper yet in the life-tide of his helpless wife and children. Under God and Moses, the strong man in his mail hacks and hews at the frail bodies of women, at the tender flesh of babes. The mother, as best she may, meets the inevitable; the sword is driven through her breast or her brains are scattered by the reeking axe, and the unconscious infant smiles in the face of those who lift it, that, holding it by the heels, they may dash its life out against the nearest wall to please the Lord, "for his mercy endureth forever."

But the girl children and the maidens are reserved from the charnel of death to be sacrifices in the brothel of shame! It was God, and not Mrs. Jarrat, who first provided child virgins for the lecher. And yet of this very God Mr. Stead is an ardent admirer; and, even on a public platform, prays to him into his hat. O execrable prayers and accursed cant—Jehovah was Madame Mourier and Israel was the Minotaur. Ignorance places the God of the Bible far away in the heavens. It is well. If Christendom could to-day meet its God in the street, it would give him a long term in Holloway Gaol, if not, indeed, a short term on the gallows at the Old Bailey.

Here are a few passages quoted almost at random from the works of the Holy Ghost, in so far as he refers to women. Mark the respectful and delicate terms with which he alludes to wives and mothers: "I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun."\* "Their houses shall be spoiled and their wives ravished."† "And the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished."‡ The Decalogue classes women with the "ox and the ass," with cattle and slaves and chattels. By the gallant and delicate arrangements of the Holy Ghost, it was the father's privilege to find his daughter a husband without taking her at all into confidence in the matter; and, should he stand in need of a little ready cash, the Holy Scriptures gave him permission to sell his daughter as a slave.§

Turn we to the New Testament and see whether, by the time he wrote it, the Ghost had improved, as far as gallantry and delicacy were concerned. Christ himself never married; and he expressly discouraged marriage.¶

\* 2 Samuel xii. 11. † Isaiah xiii. 16. ‡ Zech. xiv. 2.

§ See Exodus xxi. 7. ¶ See Matthew xix. 10-12.

Although he had sufficiently vituperative epithets for those who differed from him, calling them "vipers," "devils," etc., he had no harsh word for the "woman taken in adultery," for the woman of Samaria who was living with a man who was not her husband; and his own close companion, Mary Magdalene, was only a more or less reclaimed prostitute. "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" is on record as a specimen of the filial and courteous fashion in which he addressed his own mother. Paul, a little hunch-backed Æsop, who had likely been jilted by some maid of Judah, was a thorough misogynist. Paul's advice to mankind is "Don't marry if you can help it." It is only the un-governably lascivious that are to marry. "If they cannot contain, let them marry; for it is better to marry than to burn."\* Marriage, with Paul, is no holy sacrament; it is only a reluctantly-adopted safety-valve for sensuality. This is Paul's estimate of the tenderest and purest contract that Humanity knows. And the coarse-minded fanatic who writes thus brutally is the premier saint of the Christian calendar. Maidens of England, what think ye of St. Paul, who overlooks in you all the more exalted qualities of mind, all the tender graces of the heart, all the æsthetic symmetry of face and form, and regards you simply as the minister of a male carnality too strong to be bridled? Maidens of England, in the name of delicacy, in the name of decency, I protest against this insult from the pen of the Holy Ghost. Whether you thank me or not, I desire to protect you against the aspersions of your God and his saints.

\* 1 Cor. vii. 9.

## CHAPTER II.

*Paul on Wives—Peter on Wives—The Early Fathers on Woman—Rejected by the Church, Welcomed by the Tomb—Give us the Women—The Priest and Woman.*

AFTER having married a woman because, for shameful and uncontrollable reasons, you cannot help it, Paul is not silent as to the relation in which that woman is to stand to you. All the wife's individuality is to be merged in that of the husband; her position is to be one of unquestioning submission. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands."\* "As the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."† "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."‡ "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."§ This silly old fable, too paltry for a modern nursery, this childish lie about Eve and the apple, is referred to to justify woman being subjected to subordination and insult. And this from Paul, the coryphæus in all God's

\* Col. iii. 18.

‡ 1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.

† Eph. v. 24.

§ 1 Tim. ii. 11-14.

orchestra of saints ! The writer who evidently believed a baby-tale like that is magniloquently called ST. PAUL. And this person with the minimum of judgment and the maximum of credulity is virtually the founder of the Christian faith. Eighteen centuries after his death, Canterbury Cathedral still stands in a civilised (!) country on the pretence of expounding and enforcing what this person taught ! And yet, by all except a pessimistic few, the majority of the human race is accounted sane. That through all England *church* is only a synonym for *madhouse* is a great deal more certain than that God is in heaven. If women wish to know anything, they are advised by this Paul to "ask their husbands at home." Proper persons the majority of husbands are to ask any sensible question at, even when they are "at home" ! I remember once hearing of a loving little wife following the advice of this Paul. She asked her husband a question about her soul's salvation when he came "home" — "home" from the tavern. The prompt and laconic answer was : "Go to hell." Millions of husbands come 'home" from the tavern. I am compelled to differ from this Paul : I do not approve of an imbecile in petticoats asking questions at a blockhead in breeches.

"Those who marry are not guilty of sin, although they will have trouble in the flesh."\* Such a view of the functions of matrimony as this is simply degrading. It treats it as exactly equivalent to prostitution in the uses it fulfils, and as differing only in the durability of the connection. But, if the whole object of the connection is merely to gratify passion, its greater durability is but a questionable advantage. For exactly as marriage is recommended 'to avoid fornication,' so divorce might often be recommended to avoid adultery. A union of which the main purpose is to give a con-

\* 1 Cor. vii. 2, 9, 28.

venient outlet to desire had better be broken when it ceases to fulfil that office to the satisfaction of both the parties. It is strange that Paul should seem to have no conception whatever of the intellectual or moral advantages to be derived from the sympathetic companionship of one of the opposite sex. Perhaps his age presented him with scarcely any examples of marriages in which that companionship was carried into the higher fields of human thought or action.”\*

Peter, the crab-fisher, too, feels quite competent to give advice to wives. Turning from his trawl net to gospel-writing, Peter delivers himself thus : “Ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands.....For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God” (and kept their powder dry?), “adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands, even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.”† “Even as Sara obeyed Abraham” ! She obeyed him when he advised her to call herself his sister and minister to the sensuality of two kings. This Peter, who seems to have learnt his morals among the roughest scum in some sea of Galilee fishing village, advises English wives who read his epistle to-day to obey their husbands, “even as Sara obeyed Abraham.” No, Peter ; you hold the keys of heaven, and, for aught I know, the poker of hell ; but I am glad to say that there are English women in this our England to-day who would die a thousand deaths rather than do as you advise. So far have the higher and holier instincts of our Humanity triumphed over the infamy of your God and you.

Christ, Paul, and Peter, in their venom against woman, had worthy successors in the ancient Christian saints.

\* “ Analysis of Religious Belief,” by Lord Amberley, American edition, p. 630.

† 1 Peter iii. 1-6.

According to St. Bernard, "woman is the organ of the Devil."

According to St. Antony, "woman is the fountain of the arm of the Devil; her voice is the hissing of the serpent."

According to St. Bonaventure, "woman is a scorpion, ever ready to sting. She is the lance of the demon."

According to St. Cyprian, "woman is the instrument which the Devil uses to gain possession of our souls."

According to St. Jerome, "woman is the gate of the Devil, the road of iniquity, the sting of the scorpion."

According to St. John Damascene, "woman is a daughter of Falsehood, a sentinel of Hell, the enemy of Peace: through her Adam lost Paradise."

According to St. John Chrysostom, "through woman the Devil has triumphed, through her Paradise has been lost: of all wild beasts the most dangerous is woman."

According to St. Gregory the Great, "woman has the poison of an asp, the malice of a dragon."

According to Saladin, she is the nearest to an angel we are ever likely to see; but, in believing that the Bible and Christianity have been her friends, she is the nearest to a fool that it is possible for the mind of man to conceive.

But, be it noted, this perfidious Christianity cares no more for her than it cares for the dust under its feet when she is helpless and poor and can no longer aid it in its nefarious imposture. Let her flutter into the sanctuary in her furs and satins, with her gold or silver ready for the offertory, and it smiles divinely upon her and bows its respectful courtesies and dusts its velvet pews. But let her be old and poor and in rags and destitute, and she will find that the Gospel is not for her. Let her be forsaken of Man, and she will find she is also forsaken of God. While she needs no friends the church will be her friend. When she comes to need

friends the church is the very last friend on earth she may expect to have.

There, in the wintry day, she stands at the door of the house of God. She has no gold and silver now. She is old and shrivelled and hungry and in rags. Every feather in her hat is soiled and draggled, and when a woman's last vestige of pride in her dress is gone know ye that she has abandoned all hope and stepped within the iron gateway of despair. In this grand old church there are no seats for the poor. With her shrunken form, draggled rags, and almost shoeless feet, she cannot presume to pass in at the door and outrage with her presence the velvet pews and the lace and satin and jewels of the followers of him who had not where to lay his head. This is many miles away from the church where she was wont to worship, for the last lingering ember of honest pride has not even yet been extinguished, and in her poverty and humiliation she shrinks from the gaze of those who knew her in her younger and happier days. She is *a woman* : her brain was never strong enough to think into discipline the emotions of her heart. She still believes in Christ ; she still yearns and burns for spiritual consolation. It is even yet with her an exceeding joy to take part in the services of the church, to mingle her voice with the roll of the anthem and utter her feeble response to the solemn *Amen*. But the church is not for such as she. She leans against the door. She hears the preacher mouth the mockery of "Peace on earth, goodwill towards men." The choristers waft the incense of their voices to heaven, and the thunder of the organ shakes the dead in their graves. Hungry and shivering with cold, she dares to throw a glance inside upon the warmth and the grandeur and the bravery, upon the fluted column, upon the tracery of the oriel, upon the window dight with sacred story, flaming red with the cross and

agony of Christ, and from its purple throwing, as it were, great stains of blood upon the chancel floor. But this is not for her. It is for her younger and happier sisters who can pay the priest, and upon whom men involuntarily look with desire.

Only a woman. In the old days  
 Hope carolled to her the happiest lays ;  
 Somebody missed her ;  
 Somebody kissed her ;  
 Somebody crowned her with praise ;  
 Somebody faced up the battle of life  
 Strong for her sake who was mother or wife.

Numb and stricken, she turns away from the church door—a shadow across her path: it is the shadow of Death. The church opens not its door to *her*. The last reed upon which she leant is broken. Olden dreams and memories fleet across her brain. There is a churchyard far away, by the village in which she was born. In that church are the unkind living; in that churchyard are the kindly dead—the husband of her youth and her infant daughter, a sweet rosebud that blooms forever in the water of Lethe in the vase of Death. A cypress that her own hands planted keeps sentry where the loved ones lie. She will arise and go to that spot redolent of memories of the hours when love was lovely and the heart was young. Six feet under the grass *he* sleeps with a tress of her hair, by his own desire laid on his breast, under his winding sheet. Then her hair was luxuriant and brown, not straggling and grey. From the church she desires bread, and it gives her a stone. She needs help, and it freezes her with its jewels and perfumes and rustle of silk. But feelings steeped in the deep tenderness of Humanity surge up and thrust aside those of devotional Mammon. She will, footsore and weary and weak, go back to him who loved and won and to the babe who lay on her bosom ere yet it had

been shrivelled by age and tortured by grief. The church affords no refuge to the very poor. For them there is the grave, and the grave alone. It has no velvet pews ; it rustles no silks. Its pall is pity, and its mystery mercy.

On the side of Freethought we have already almost all thinking men ; but we have comparatively few women. Like the spaniel, she still fawns upon the foot that has kicked her. She still blesses the Church that has cursed her. If we can, by showing them the real state of things, woo the women to our side, there will be no god in heaven—which will be a blessing, considering the kind of god that is there at present—and there will be no devil in hell. And, *gloria in excelsis*, the last professional priest will be dead and buried ; every man will be a priest, ministering at the altar of his own heart ; every man will be a king—king over the realm of his own conscience. Given the women, we will have the children ; and, given the women and children, we would have the world. The anti-Christian evangel has won the men to its side ; but how are we to win the women ? O for the dulcet lute and the song of the siren ! O for the art to transform dialectics into music's wavelets of sweet sound ! O for the science that could merge polemics into the dance's airy grace and rhymeless poetry of motion ! O that conviction could be imparted to woman in the whisper of love ! O that recantation could be taught to her lips in kisses ! The priests of the fatal faith have stolen a march upon us ; they have won the women. Well might noble old Garibaldi exclaim : " The great object of auricular confession is by its means to obtain complete power over women, and through them to rule the world ! " And how pertinent is his further remark : " Those Jewish writings, called by the stupid and foolish sacred, declare that the first woman was tempted by a serpent. This pretty fable

would have been better turned if the *priest* had been substituted for the serpent. The priest is the veritable personification of malice and falsehood—a being made for treason and corruption. He and his caste are the plague of modern society and civilisation.”

You, O Garibaldi, only speak the bitter and terrible truth. The priest—and I care not whether he be Romish, or Anglican, or Presbyterian—is the dead fly which poisoneth the ointment, the bane and the curse of the purity of society. The peculiar intimacy which his fawning and sneaking profession gives him with women, he being only human, or a little less, affords him facilities for effecting their moral ruin. Like the mole, he works in the dark; like the snake, he bites while hidden in the grass. Now and again, through the tongue of public scandal, we hear how and who he has bitten; but, hedged round as he is by secrecy and privilege, the terrible sum of his turpitude is never known, and by the majority of fathers and husbands never suspected.

Those who have studied the subject as I have done will recognise that my words are only too terribly true. But I deem it a privilege to admit that certain of the clergy whom I have known and know are the very soul of honour, and that their hearts and lives are purified by the exercise of every social virtue; but, alas, they follow a sinister vocation: they, by the inherent grandeur of their moral nature, may keep themselves unspotted from the world; but, to others lacking their simple soul and ethical elevation of aim, there is a cess-pool of secret corruption and shame which only the fierce and awful publicity of the Great Day of Account could ever bring home to the recognition and conscience of mankind. And yet we hear that Christianity has elevated and purified woman!

### CHAPTER III.

*“Better to Marry than to Burn”—A Depopulated World—Erasing the “Image of God”—Necessity for a Perennial Crop of Fools—Woman’s True Status—The Love of Woman—An Idyllic Dream.*

LITTLE crook-backed Saul of Tarsus, who suffered from pseudo-blepsis, caught from sun-stroke, put it on record that it was “better to marry than to burn,” and the words of this shrivelled and half-emasculated fanatic were, naturally enough, caught up by the Christian Church, and used as a pretext for the perpetration of such vice and the endurance of such misery as can never be described by the pen of man or god or fiend.

“Better to marry than to burn!” Think of it, ye who are passing through, and ye who have passed through, the groves of poesy and the fields of glory that lie sleeping in the splendour of “Love’s young Dream.” This peccant and coarse apostle tells you that it is “better to marry than to burn;”<sup>\*</sup> in other words, clear from the context, that it is better not to marry at all, unless compelled to do so by the irrepressible cravings of carnal desire. Such is Paul’s elevated view of marriage; such, with him, the condition—the sole condition, take into account—that should induce the high-hearted youth to seek an indissoluble union with the maiden of his love!

And this is the word of God, for the guidance and aspiration of his children upon earth! Nay, it is the

\* 1 Cor. vii. 9.

sinister utterance of Diabolus, intended for devils and such spawn of Minotaurs and Circe as may people the realms of Perdition and Dis. Paul's idea of a wife is only that she is a monopolised harlot in perpetuity. With him, marriage is more or less of a slur, and maternity more or less of an infamy. "He that giveth her [a virgin] in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better."\*

This is precisely equal to contending that it is well this globe should be peopled, but better that it should not be peopled at all. Possess the human race with the idea that the prime virtue of woman is to remain a virgin, and, one hundred years from this moment, there would not be a human being alive upon the face of the earth. In five years there would not be the prattle of a child between Nova Zembla and Patagonia. In thirteen years there would not be a boy trundling his hoop or a girl twining garlands of the meadow flowers in all the streets and fields of the world. In fifty years there would not be a young man or a young woman on the globe. In eighty years there would be a frail old man or a still frailer old woman left straggling here and there on a continent. In a 100 years the grave would have swallowed all. The railways would be green with grass and red with rust. Paris would be silent as the Black Forest. In India the snake would leave his slime on the thrones of kings, the buffalo would rear her calf in the White House at Washington, and, at Westminster, the hare would suckle her young under the ruins of the Speaker's chair.

So much for the disparagement of maternity as compared with virginity. "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but he that is married careth for the things

\* 1 Cor. vii. 38.

that are of the world how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body in and spirit ; but she that is married careth for the things of the world how she may please her husband.”\* Paul’s idea of pleasing the Lord is clearly enough to bring the human race to an end by abstaining from propagating it. “God made man in his own image ;” but Paul’s respect for the image of God is such that he should like to erase it. The service God demands is evidently an extraordinary one. Man is admittedly his *chef d’œuvre*, the very keystone of the work of creation. Say “Ivanhoe” was the *chef d’œuvre*, the very keystone of the literary fame of Walter Scott. I am an ardent admirer of Scott ; but my admiration of him does not take the form of pleading for the extinction of “Ivanhoe,” his principal work. Paul is an admirer of God ; but his admiration takes the paradoxical direction of pleading for the extinction of man, God’s highest work, so exalted as to be made in his own divine image. When we wish to gratify any one we appreciatively praise his works. But God is the one exception ; if you wish to gratify him, you must depreciate and abuse his works, although he professes to be an omnipotent artificer. You must describe his *chef d’œuvre*, man, as a ghastly abomination, “full of wounds and bruises and putrefying sores,” an ugly blot upon the face of the earth, and fit only to make fuel for hell. On this startling theory of divine gratification, Paul was, of course, right in pleading for the extinction of mankind. He was right in insulting man by referring to marriage as merely an outlet for sensual desire, and to the continuance of the human race upon the earth as only the result of man being so sinful that he “cannot contain”

\* 1 Cor. vii. 32-4.

his lusts and must "marry."\* What an exalted reason for the perpetuity of man's existence, depending as it apparently does, not upon a sublime natural law, but upon the indulgence of a passion displeasing in the sight of God! God evidently tolerates the existence of man with reluctance, and would, by a divine extension of grace, hold him more virtuous if he would only cease to exist.

It is wrong for the woman to marry, because, in that state, she is sure to try to please her husband rather than God. But, if the woman do not marry, there will, in a short time, be no woman left to please her husband or God either. How will God do then? Has he seen so far before his nose as that it will be necessary for him to allow a woman to love her husband if the earth is to go on producing a perennial crop of fools to cry "Hosanna" to him and read his Bible and feed his sacerdotal impostors? He may, of course, for aught I know, get relays of angels to howl around the Great White Throne, as I do not know how they originate; but where is he to get his fresh supplies of "the souls of just men made perfect"? It is rather curious how his son, who was himself and yet not himself, took such trouble to redeem a worldful of irredeemable nuisances, whose prime virtue would be self-extinction.

Paul and Jesus Christ put together knew as much of the loftier mountain peaks of human life as a cat knows of Latin declensions. The former recommends continency, and the latter that men should become eunuchs "for the kingdom of heaven's sake."† If Paul had wedded Peter's wife's sister, and if Jesus had made the Magdalene or some other of the Marys his lawful wife, and dandled a young Jesus upon his knees, I should feel more inclined to receive him as my Lord and Saviour.

\* See 1 Cor. vii. 9.

† See Matt. xix. 12.

A man who does not love every woman and one supremely is not a man at all. There is a Talmudic legend that man and woman were originally one, joined together back to back, and that God took a knife and cut the dual body vertically in two. It is almost a pity he did so, for, to the present day, a human being of the masculine gender is only half a man ; and, if he has not the *nous* to join himself on to that from which the knife of Jehovah dissevered him, he goes through life a fraction (and a very vulgar one), instead of an integer. Without woman, he is a cart with only one wheel, that it takes an undue expenditure of force to drag along the road of life, with weariness and halting and difficulty. The ring that circles the globe is the marriage ring, and the oriflamme of creation is a petticoat—let Paul and Jesus say what they may. Above all mundane creatures I pity him who has never deserved and never won a woman's love ; to the soldier it is more than victory, to the poet more than fame. Above all mundane creatures I hate him who can be mean and dishonourable to a woman—who can win her affection to betray her and her love to ruin her. The only genuine religion ever Europe had was chivalry, and chivalry is dead. The only real saint ever Europe had was the knight-errant, and the knight-errant is no more.

I am heartily ashamed to read Paul's sole reason for marriage. It is an affront to every ingenuous lad ; it is an insult to every modest girl in the land. I do not contend for the general practicability of "Platonic affection"—nay, I contend that it is as proper for a girl to bear children as it is for a rose-tree to bear roses ; but I deny, even against the authority of Paul, that coition is the be-all and end-all of the union of the sexes. I contend that, on the altar of Love, there burns a Gheber fire so holy and intense that all that is of the earth earthy is eliminated. I contend, in spite of Paul, who

would make a man seek marriage for precisely the same reasons he would seek the embraces of a courtesan, that, when the impulse is lofty and the heart is young, Love is a religion, with an unknown and undefinable, but present and awful, God, before whom the trees of the forest blaze into plumes and bannerets of glory, before whom the mountain rocks move in symmetry and melody, as they did to the lyre of Amphion. The thrilling touch of the maiden's hand, the rippling gleam of the maiden's hair, thrills like a melody from the heart of heaven, burns like the radiance of an ecstatic vision. The morning rises from the sea in splendour, the day shimmers upon the plains in rapture, the evening dies away upon the mountains in glory. Pain and death are buried deep under vernal bough and blossom heavy with odour; and the plain dusty road that leads to the cottage where Miranda dwells is grander than the arching Iris where flamed the plumage of the peacocks of Juno, more triumphal than the cloud-path up which careered Elijah's horsemen and chariot of fire.

Though Jesus and Paul never loved, you have, O reader. Your once rich brown hair may now be grey with time. Her you loved may now be an elderly lady by your hearth, or only a sacred grief associated with a tombstone and tears. The babes that were your love's pledge and arles may now, as men and women, be scattered far and wide over the world, in cottage and in hall, on billow and on battlefield. But down among the shadows in the glimmering twilight of existence there is yet—

“The touch of a vanished hand,  
And the sound of a voice that is still.”

In memory of the days when he shone upon your lonely walks as a lover, the sun still shines upon you with joy and blessing, although you must shortly stare up at him blindly with the grave-earth in your eyes. And the moon,

the far and solemn moon; you remember how her silvern splendour shook upon a boy and a girl, who sat under the hawthorn tree, hand clasped in hand, breath mixing with breath, hair mingling with hair, and dreamed waking dreams that overleaped the boundaries of time and the world. The moon was holy and the night a sanctuary. The splash of the rivulet, the murmur of the leaves, played anthems upon the tense cords of your being, and the stars, the million eyes of God, looked down with a holy and exalted love upon *her* and you. Those bygone days, *on* the earth, but not *of* it, were a glimmer through the golden bars into divine Mystery, a gleam of joy from that hawthorn tree to the grave's red edge, through all the tortuous windings of life's work and woe—a hushed murmur from the ocean of the Unknown that there is that in you which the grave cannot conquer or the worm consume.

## CHAPTER IV.

*The Ban of Society upon those who Seek to Destroy its Fetiches—Truth Rather than Him of Nazareth—The Birth of the Founder of Christianity Based upon Woman's Shame—Genealogical Tables "Inspired" to Contradict Each Other—Mary had a Child when she should have had no Child alone Clear—The Hitherto Unheard of "Holy Ghost" Introduced for the Purpose of Seducing a Virgin—Jesus Recommended Eunuchism—The Coat "Without Seam"—Did Jesus Go Naked?—*  
—**עיר**.

IT is so unpopular to write aught to the detriment of Jesus Christ that heretics of even the first order have not had sufficient moral courage to disregard public bias, or perhaps not sufficient clearness of moral vision to pierce the mists of their own personal and inherited prejudices. John Stuart Mill, who was no Christian, nevertheless pronounced a tawdry eulogy on Christ as unjust as it is fatuous, and which falls to pieces at the first touch of critical examination. Ernest Renan robs Christ of his ordinary theological divinity, and then proceeds to write like a panegyrist gone mad, and to invest the prophet of Nazareth with a poetic divinity far loftier and grander than the mere ecclesiastical divinity of which he had robbed him. Next to evangelical rant I detest sceptical cant. In fact, I can stand the plain, rough carpenter of the gospels better than the mincing prig of the popular sceptic—the emasculated abstraction that is projected by kid-glove poetry, the snobberies of philosophy, and the dainty Miss-Nancyisms of rhetoric.

He who dares to aspire to destroy fetisch-worship should not shrink from the duty of bringing down his hammer upon the central fetisch. This Christ is the central fetisch of the popular faith of our times—a faith which the very school-boy of the future will regard as a degrading superstition.

I make no apology for dispensing with conventional cant and rending asunder the fetters of superstitious prejudice. To those who will listen be it mine to tell the truth, whether it please them or not. Those who like lies to be treated with respect because they are venerably old had better leave mine and go to pens that respect lies because they are venerable and have been regarded as sacred by myriads of worthy men who lived upon this globe under circumstances less auspicious than those under which we are permitted to inherit comparative light and liberty. If in regard to him of Nazareth I write what may seem irreverent and severe to him who yet liveth in the Valley of the Shadow of Mental Death, I can only answer that I love Truth more than I love Him of Nazareth ; and I love justice more than I fear the frown of the conventional superstition which flings a halo round the name of Jesus. If I write aught that is specially offensive to his memory, I will apologise by denying that he is an historical personage at all, and do my best to maintain the same against all the priests he has in Christendom who have taken his arles, and who are in receipt of the emolument which results from preaching him to the-unthinking and the ignorant. I plead I cannot insult the memory of a person who never existed. I am willing to take the responsibility of insulting a fictitious evolution of patristic fabulists, who, by their own admission, lied for "the greater glory of God."

Instead of Christianity being conducive, as is contended, to elevate the status of woman, I submit that,

from its very inception, it degrades her. The very birth of the reputed founder of Christianity is based upon his mother's shame. Who at all conversant with the olden history of the world cannot call to memory numerous women reputed to have borne children to gods? What Maya, what Rhea, or what Danæ of all the ancient myths cannot furnish proofs as inexpugnable as those produced by Mary that they indeed bore children to gods? Erring girls who had no right to be *enceinte* to mortals laid their progeny at the door-step of the immortals, till the trick got all but played out. When an unfortunate had a child and could find no *man* to be a father to it, a *god* was, of course, better than no father at all, if the community had been sufficiently steeped in ignorance and credulity to believe in procreative miracles. Before the birth of Christ the gods had had, by human mothers, such a numerous family in all ages and in all lands that the thing had got common and stale. So when Christ was born he was not affiliated upon a god at all, but, according to Celsus and the Jews, upon a Roman soldier named Panderus. This Panderus was a never-do-well out of whom the parochial authorities down in Judea could not wring half-a-crown a week. Joseph the carpenter had a shop of his own, and was altogether a more substantial sort of person; and he was good-natured enough to become the "reputed father" of Mary's child. The writers of the Gospels were specially inspired to draw up genealogical tables showing the descent of Jesus *from Joseph the Carpenter*, and not from any God or Ghost whatever. Giving Jesus a god for his father was, it would seem, quite the result of an after-thought. The genealogies through Joseph were divinely "inspired" to contradict each other, and the account of the lineage of Jesus as not through Joseph at all divinely contradicted the "inspired" genealogies that had contradicted each other!

There seems to have been some considerable trouble in regard to fixing the paternity of Jesus—not a specially creditable circumstance as far as the woman who bore him was concerned—and this is more apparent than any other fact connected with his early biography. Matthew's genealogical table is contradicted by that of Luke; but Luke need not have taken the trouble to contradict Matthew, for he contradicts himself, leaves out the names of three kings, and counts thirteen names as fourteen! The Old Testament,\* as far as its genealogical table goes, has been "inspired" to contradict both Matthew and Luke!

When was Christ invented, and when and by whom were these gospels "got up"? "No modern theologian who is also a scholar now considers any of the Four Gospels to be the work of its pretended author, or, in fact, to be by any apostle, or the colleague of an apostle."† Again I ask, When was Christ invented, and when and by whom were these gospels "got up"? Over the gulf of the centuries no answer comes back to me—no answer save reluctant but terrible admissions like the following: "That some of the Christian legends were deliberate forgeries can scarcely be questioned; the principle of pious fraud appeared to justify this mode of working on the popular mind; it was admitted and avowed. To deceive into Christianity was so valuable a service as to hallow deceit itself."‡ "The Four Gospels, in the form and under the names which they at present bear, became visible only with distinctness towards the end of the *second century* after the Christian era. Then it was that they assumed the authoritative position which they have ever since maintained, and were selected by the

\* 1 Chron. iii.

† Strauss, "The Old Faith and the New," pp. 45-6.

‡ Dean Milman, "History of Christianity," vol. iii., p. 358.

Church out of the *many other then existing narratives* as the supreme and exclusive authorities for our Lord's life."\*

From the collection of vague, undated, anonymous, and self-contradictory legends it is difficult to make out anything else so clearly as the fact that Mary had a child when chastity demanded that she should have had no child. And this child is the reputed founder of the system which claims, above all other systems, to have elevated and purified woman! Verily, in a record of fornication, the system made a most pure and appropriate beginning!

None of the olden gods who had visited maidens as white elephants or showers of gold were requisitioned for paternity in this "gospel" myth. The monkish romancer was splendidly ingenious, and, thrusting Joseph aside, he invented a brand new god, the "Holy Ghost." Up till the event of the "overshadowing" this "Holy Ghost" had never been heard of. Where he had been prior to the date when the monkish inventor called him before the curtain I cannot conjure up sufficient presumption to conjecture. He was first heard of in connection with the seduction of a virgin; and he is God with the Christians; and Christianity is the system to which, above all other systems, we owe the honour and chastity of woman! *Verbum caro facium habitans in nobis, miserere nobis!* So much for this new God and the circumstances under which he first dazzles our moral vision with his glory. How apt in his mouth would have been the precept of Manu: "Where women are honoured, there the deities are pleased; but where they are dishonoured, there all religious acts become fruitless."† But that is only a pagan precept; and the Holy

\* Froude, "Short Studies," vol. i., p. 172.

† "Anthology," p. 310.

Ghost, invented in order that he might stand as father to a, possibly invented, illegitimate child, is so ineffably pure that sin against him can never be forgiven, neither in this world nor that which is to come.

This Christ who had a new god invented for the express purpose of being father to him honoured woman and encouraged marriage by recommending eunuchism\* "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." He came to "redeem" mankind; but he, like Paul, seems to have considered extermination preferable to redemption, providing, "for the kingdom of heaven's sake," extermination could be accomplished. In this respect I am sometimes tempted to incline to his opinion. His servant Origen and numerous others took Christ at his word, and with knives made themselves eunuchs "for the kingdom of heaven's sake." Mutilated sterility and racial extermination were what Christ evidently preferred to an affectionate husband and a faithful wife and the light from the hearth of their home twinkling upon the innocent and happy faces of their children. And yet he gets the credit of having laid the foundation of all that is high and holy in our social and domestic life!

It is a twice-told tale to students of religious evolution that Christ and his more immediate followers were neither more nor less than a sort of mongrel copies of eastern monks. It is also a mere commonplace to students of religious evolution that the monks of pre-Christian faiths occasionally went stark naked. Jesus, who copied the Indian and Egyptian monks pretty closely, does not seem to have drawn the line at their occasionally appearing in a state of nudity. The word *χιτων*, which has been rendered a coat "without seam," was, indeed, a coat "without seam." It was simply a covering of cords of goat's hair, roughly plaited together,

\* *Vide* Matt. xix. 12.

and which, after monkish fashion, was worn without any other garment to change it, till it literally wore away and left the body uncovered. This χιτων, or חֵטֶם, might also have been a coat of sheepskin, covered over for defensive purposes with the shells of fish ; but Christ, being a non-militant member of the Church militant, is not likely to have been habilimented in this gorgeous array of sheepskin and oyster shells. What knowing winks the translators must have interchanged with each other when they translated χιτων a coat "without a seam!"

Since Christ wore this sort of garment, can it be wondered at if he occasionally threw it off and went naked, through mere considerations of comfort, especially since his ante-types, the Indian Gymnosophists, went naked at all times? He appears to have gone habitually barefooted, as it does not seem that Mary, before she poured the box of ointment upon his feet,\* had first to pull off his sandals ; and he may be credited with a strong belief in bare feet, as, when he sent his disciples forth, he expressly enjoined upon them not to wear shoes.† So, when, through considerations of comfort or sanctity, Christ threw off his coat "without a seam," he would be *de puris naturalibus*. He lost the seamless coat in the scuffle before his execution, and he left Joseph of Arimathea's grave linen behind him in the sepulchre ; so, in the forty days which intervened between his resurrection and ascension, possibly reverting to what was a frequent habit of his, he must have gone about stark naked. In another place I have suggested that he may have borrowed Mary Magdalene's petticoat ;‡ but it is more than probable that that modest beauty went about as naked as her Lord, and had no petticoat to lend him. It was no use trying to raise a

\* John xii. 3.

† Matthew x. 10.

‡ See "Did Jesus Christ Rise from the Dead?" p. 29.

loan off Peter and his colleagues, as they are not likely to have had "two coats apiece." That Peter did his fishing naked is clear enough, and he was not likely to be the only nude saint among the apostolic fishermen. We are assured that, on a certain occasion, he girt his *επεδυτης* (loose wrapper) about him, "*for he was naked, and did cast himself into the sea.*"\*

On the occasion of Christ's apprehension "there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his *naked* body; and the young men [the Roman soldiers?] laid hold on him; and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked."†

Why did those in pursuit lay hold on this naked young man, taking him to be a follower of Jesus, if the followers of Jesus were not wont to go about naked? I discuss not here the propriety or impropriety of going about in a state of nudity. But it will not be denied that the conventional propriety of this Christian England demands that, when we walk abroad, we should be draped. A person who should appear in a state of nudity in Ludgate Hill would very soon find himself inside the Old Bailey, even should he protest that he were Jesus Christ. The modesty of Englishwomen would be unspeakably shocked at the bare idea of a couple of 'bus drivers in the nude plying daily between the Bank and Charing Cross. But whence do they derive the notion that such an exhibition would be outrageously indecent? Jesus and his disciples, at least, occasionally went naked, so the Christian ladies' sense of decency cannot be derived from Christ and his disciples. He appeared as the complement of the Hebrew prophets; and Isaiah, for instance, doffed his only garment, the bandage of hair-cloth which he wore about his loins, and wandered about the country "*naked and barefoot three years.*"‡ And yet we are assured

\* John xxi. 7.

† Mark xiv. 51-2.

‡ See Isaiah xx. 3.

that all that is pure and modest and holy in woman is traceable to this naked Christ and the faith that bears his name!

When the Christian apologist is fairly pulverised out in the open he gathers together his scattered dust, as coolly as if nothing had happened; and, like a hunted rat, finds refuge in a hole. I know the habits of the theological creature well, and know to look for him in the kind of holes in which he takes refuge. In this instance he will fling Hebrew, Greek, and Latin across my path to blind me and arrest my pursuit. This will not arrest me for a single moment. Like a ferret, I will pursue him into the uttermost depths of his hole, and there tear him to pieces. I know his quibbles. He will deny that Christ ran naked, and, referring me to "the original tongues," whatever they are, discover, through some desperate effort of logomachical hair-splitting, that *naked* does not mean *naked*—that ער, γυμνος, and *nudus* only mean naked when, by the context, it would be *decent* to be naked. Well, Saul, when he felt "inspired" to prophesy, "stripped off his clothes" and "lay down naked all that day."\* This was not decent; so the pious quibbler would contend that it is meant that Saul still retained a portion of his clothes. Very good, pious quibbler for Christ's sake. But, unfortunately for you, the identical word, ער, which describes the state of Saul's toilet when he "prophesied," is used to denote the nakedness of Adam and Eve when they were "created."† Unless you contend that they were "created" with a quantity of clothes on their persons, you must perforce admit that ער means stark naked. O ye philologically-wriggling quibblers of the Lord, in my righteous wrath at your, for pelf, pretending to defend the indefensible you shall have no

\* 1 Sam. xix. 24.

† Gen. ii. 25, iii. 7.

quarter at my hands. Out in the open I will fling your bible-leaves about your ears in mockery, and when you betake yourselves to the pedantic jugglery by which you delude the unlettered I shall follow you into your vile holes of refuge, and your god and ten more like him will not tempt me to relax my grasp upon your throat.

## CHAPTER V.

*Jesus, the Archon of Purity—Jesus an Essene—"Devout Women"—"Ministered to him of their Substance"—Living on the Earnings of Women, and such Women!—Reading "Holy Writ" Blind—The "Small Ugly Jew"—Thekla—Tertullian's and Cyprian's Testimony as to the "Devout Women" and "Virgins"—Heathen Detestation of Christian Morals (?)—Deserting Wife and Children for God's Sake—Anthropoiesis—St. Anthony and Women—Faith and Fecundity.*

BUT against "Our blessed Lord," as the great archon of purity and chastity, I have a more serious charge to prefer than going naked necessarily involves. He and his followers were only more or less shabby copies of the monks of India and Egypt. Christ had his χιτων, or coat, which, as I have shown, was certainly "without seam;" and Peter had his επενδυτης, or dirty blanket, in imitation of the Buddhist monks, with their rough covering of plaited fibres of the leaves of the palm-tree. In the Laws of Menu\* a monk is ordered to wear an antelope's hide, or a covering made out of the bark of trees. The Hindoo monks, according to Strabo, "knew nothing of marriage nor of the procreation of children." But, in spite of this, we find that they were invariably accompanied by a number of exceedingly pious women. Christ, like the Essenes generally—for of the Essenes he was only an accentuated specimen—imitated the Buddhist monks and Egyptian therapeuts in his being followed

\* Chap. vi.

by and ministered to by a number of "devout women." He, we are assured, "went throughout every city and village preaching and showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him; and certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary, called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils; and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; and Susanna, and *many others* which ministered unto him of their substance."\* Somebody seems to have found fault with Paul for being, like his master, the central figure in a travelling harem, and he bursts forth, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a woman to serve us in the Gospel, and to remember us with her goods, as the other apostles?"†

It is clear from both Christ and St. Paul that one of the principal reasons ancient saints and gospel-grinders lugged women about with them was that these said women might *provide* for them. By this time "the Almighty" had evidently lost the art by which he trained the raven that supplied Elijah with food on the banks of the brook Cherith. The eggs of that fowl had evidently got broken before they had got hatched, and the species thereby allowed to become extinct. So, to find food for lazy saints, Jehovah could no longer employ a raven, and he substituted a woman. Christ's women "ministered to him of their substance"—that is, supported him with their means; and Paul's model woman was to render herself generally useful, "and to remember us *with her goods*."

They may have been exceedingly devout; but they must have been at the same time extremely contemptible saints who lived upon the earnings of women! I am no worshipper of the God who had a son who con-

\* Luke viii. 1-3.

† 1 Cor. ix. 5; Bourdeaux edition (1686).

descended to this degradation. Perhaps he did not live altogether on the women's *earnings*. Very likely the runaway wife of Herod's steward brought with her certain of the effects and valuables of her husband, that the "Lord of glory" might support himself by living upon stolen goods. And, as for Mary Magdalene, the very thought of *her* earnings is enough to bring a blush to the cheek of a bronze image. Better that your God, O Christians, had always got his funds out of the fish's mouth\* than that, in his harlequin efforts to "redeem" you, he should have lived upon stolen goods brought him by a runaway wife, and upon the wages of a courtesan.

And this is the Christ who gets the credit of having done so much to sweeten and purify domestic life. This is the Christ to whom we owe it that our daughters are modest and that our wives are faithful. Bring such a character before any police magistrate in London, and, besides having pronounced upon him the severest sentence that the statute would allow, he should be stigmatised by the Court as a disgrace to the human species. The passages I have referred to bear the construction I have put upon them, and no other. There obtains such a hereditary habit of reading "Holy Writ" with the eyes blinded with piety that mankind simply read out of it what they read into it. It would not answer the purpose of the interested impostors of the pulpit to *honestly* read the Bible, and thereby bring it into disrepute. And not one man in ten thousand has any brains which are distinctively his own. The little abstract thinking, the trifle of teleological speculation he requires, are given out to be done by proxy by the educated imbecile who occupies the nearest pulpit. And so the world rolls on with its endless millions of stunted lives, and till the earth is bulged out of shape with the countless myriads of the graves of fools.

\* Matt. xvii. 27.

Paul, too, in spite of Archdeacon Farrar describing him as "a small ugly Jew," was followed by a number of women, the chief of whom seems to have been Theckla, who abandoned Mamyris, to whom she had been betrothed, in order that she might tramp the country with the little hunchbacked fanatic who, during the time he did not make tents, seems to have lived upon his women and preached "Jesus Christ and him crucified." And, oh, Theckla was such a pure girl! She fasted and prayed, and had Paul-on-the-brain, in spite of the remonstrances of her own mother. And wasn't she chaste—aye, as the statue of a maiden hewn out of a block of ice! Men tempted her and tempted her and tempted her with every wile and fascination—with all the science and all the art of erotics; but all in vain. The devil, too, tried his hand at tempting Paul's sweet Theckla; but he had better have stayed in hell and attended to his business. In fact, all the ladies that followed the saints were pure. As we have seen, those who followed the Buddhist monks were so innocent that they "knew nothing of marriage, nor of the procreation of children." God bless their little hearts! The Christian saint-followers, the Magdalenes and Susannas, and the rest of them, were quite as holy and innocent. But let us hear what their friend, Tertullian,\* has to say anent these virgins. He assures us that they "still claim to be virgins, and will not confess until they are betrayed by the cries of their new-born children. Virgins of this sort readily beget and bear children, which are very much like their fathers." Usually on or before the period when her new-born child commences crying a lady gives up the title "virgin;" but ladies who followed ancient saints must be permitted to form an exception to the rule. The holy Cyprian† admits that, in his time, it

\* In his "Treatise on the Resurrection," chap. viii.

† In his "Treatise on the Dress of Virgins."

was common for saints of the opposite sex to share the same bed in a state of nudity; but, of course, they still remained as pure as the driven snow. It is no doubt to this extremely pious custom we are indebted for the absence of prostitution and divorce courts, and the chastity by word and deed which so distinguish Christian countries even at the present hour. Cyprian must surely be entirely wrong when he writes: "We have seen many most grievous falls resulting from this practice; and through these illicit and dangerous connections we have seen many virgins corrupted." Can it be wondered at that the heathen should, as vouched for by Tertullian, declare that "they had rather their wives should be strumpets than Christians."\* To become a Christian saint, it was, it would seem, not only the custom to take up with some other body's wife, but to abandon your own. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, for instance, when he fairly went in for Jesus, left his wife to starvation or prostitution, or whatever else might be in store for her. Why, as a Christian, should he not have taken this course? Had not Jesus said: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"?† For ages it was accounted a superlatively virtuous action to desert your wife and children and take to Jesus. Sulpicius Severus‡ tells us exultingly of such a case, and Cassian tells us of another.§ Where Christianity is as vehement and vulgar as it was in the days of Christ and the Fathers, even to this day, wives and children and the most sacred ties of social and domestic life count as nothing. Salvation Army captains constantly leave their

\* Cave's "Primitive Christianity," p. 120.

† Luke xiv. 26, *et al*; Matt. x. 37-39—xix. 29.

‡ Dial. i.

§ Collat. xxi., c. 9, 10.

wives and children to be taken care of by the Lord—which now means the parish—and “Hallelujah lassies” give up father and mother and chastity and everything for Jesus and a tambourine. And this Christianity is the faith to which we owe the purity and sanctity of the hearth and home !

For long—in fact, till the bonds of dogmatic Christianity were loosened, if not broken—marriage was regarded as a disgrace, and only resorted to as an inevitable evil. Paul’s “it is better to marry than to burn” was regarded as an oracular truth. Athenagoras remarks that, in his time, “each one of us has his own wife..... and whom he uses for the sole purpose of having children, and no further.”\* A truly elevated and Christian conception of the divinity of women and the sanctity of marriage ! If these Christians, following their Christ and their Paul, had only known that the component parts of this “vile body” were—*Non-Metals* : Carbon, Hydrogen, Nitrogen, Oxygen, Sulphur, Phosphorus, Chlorine, Fluorine, Silicon ; *Metals* : Sodium, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Iron, Manganese, with an occasional dash of Copper, Lead, and Lithium—they would have busied themselves upon the science and art of *Anthropoiesis*, a cobbling up of men with spirit lamps and weighing-scales and siphons and retorts, and would have exterminated women as if they had been vipers or rats. They, instead of marrying, would have burnt a human body of a certain weight—not that of a heretic, but that of a model Christian—to ashes, collected the different gases, measured them, and then analysed the ash, and started an anthropoietic factory and fabricated a race of saints out of some cart-loads of gravel and the refuse of dust-bins. Then not a single specimen of the abomination, woman, would have been found

\* Apol., s. 33.

from the rising even to the going down of the sun. Certain opinions on women which I have previously quoted from the pens of the Fathers will show with what loathing and aversion woman was held by the pillars of that Church which claims to have done so much for her elevation and happiness.

The celebrated St. Anthony was only a type of the Christian saint, and to him the very devil himself took the form of woman, "and by night would make him blush by tickling his flesh and assuming the shape and actions of a female." But of course, by his prayers and fastings and flagellations, Anthony triumphed over the world, the flesh, and the devil ; and yet, in the company of Christ's saints, "virgins" were forever and forever "falling away from grace." And, alas, they so continue to fall away. In a certain institution in London there were lately, and at the same time, no fewer than sixteen "Hallelujah lassies" who had apparently taken it into their heads that heaven had too few angels, and had tried to remedy this defect in conjunction with their male brethren with the red blouses and big drums. Whenever earth feels deeply religious it furnishes heaven with great numbers of infants out of which to make angels, and I trust heaven is truly grateful. Faith and fecundity somehow go together, even till the present hour. The mothers are, of course, all chaste, and the children have no father in particular. This is one of the mysteries of godliness. Christianity is said to have originated in a mystery of this kind ; and, up till date of going to press, it has remained in that respect true to its origin. And yet it is the faith that has done so much to purify life and to exalt and ennoble woman !

## CHAPTER VI.

*Gospel Tramps and the Συνεισακτοι—The Council of Nice and the Συνεισακτοι—Evidence of Tertullian and Origen—Why Rome Persecuted the Christians—The Αγαπη—Christian Sect Versus Christian Sect—Marcus Antoninus—"The Eating of Raw Infant"—The Church's Misfortune—Testimony of Eusebius as to the Christians Eating "Raw Infant"—"The Feasts of Thyestes and the Incests of Œdipus"—Pagan Versus Christian Women's Notions of Honour and Purity—"We Boiled my Son and did Eat Him"—Lot's Daughters—Tamar—Pelopeia—Jocasta.*

NOT only Jesus and Paul, but their immediate successors, were followed by women when they took to the business of gospel tramps. It was usual, with such as were "sent up and down to preach the Gospel, to have some grave and sober woman along with them, who might be helpful and assisting to them, and who was neither wife nor concubine, but taken in either upon the account of necessary attendance or the pretence of piety. These women, in the writings of the Church (wherein there is frequent mention of them), are called *Συνεισακτοι*, such as were *brought in*, taken into the house as domestic assistants to ecclesiastic persons. But this, proving matter of scandal and inconvenience, was not only cried out against by private Fathers, but by public Synods. The Council of Antioch, held in the reign of Aurelian the Emperor (A. D. 272), in a synodical epistle wherein they censure the doctrines and practices of Paulus

Samostatenus, condemn this among the rest, that he and his presbyters and deacons kept these *introduced women*, whereby horrible inconveniences did arise.....The same was universally forbidden by the great Council of Nice, and no man within the clergy allowed to have any woman near him, unless his mother, his sister, or his aunt, or such only of whom there could be no suspicion.\* But against the Christians were preferred charges of the most revolting *incest*; so that restricting them to the company of their mother, sister, or aunt, was not, unless they be grievously slandered, sufficient safeguard against the amours of the saints of God.

Adultery, incest, and worse were so notoriously associated with the Christian profession that the apologist, Tertullian,† admits that some heathen husbands he knew, who, though before so infinitely jealous of their wives that a mouse could not stir in the room but that it was taken to be a gallant and seducer, yet vowed that they should prefer that their wives should become public prostitutes rather than Christians. And Origen‡ admits that, even in his day, the prejudice against Christians was so strong that many would have no discourse or communication with them whatever.

The Romans were no religious bigots, but were well known to tolerate all speculative opinions whatever. Let us find out, then, why they made an exception in the case of the Christians. On pages 7 and 8 of "Min. Fælix" we find the impeachment of the new sect stated thus: "That the Christians knew one another by certain private marks and signs, and were wont to be in love with, almost before they knew, one another; that they exercised lust and filthiness under a pretence of religion,

\* Cave's "Prim. Christ.," pp. 95-6.

† "Ad. Nation.," lib. i., chap. iv., p. 43.

‡ "Contr. Cels.," lib. vi., p. 294.

promiscuously calling themselves brothers and sisters, that, by the help of so sacred a name, their common adulteries might become *incestuous* ; that, upon a solemn day, they meet together at a feast (the *Αγαπη*) with their wives, children, sisters, mothers, persons of every age and sex, where, after they have well eaten and drunken, and begun to be excited and merry, heated with excess of wine, a piece of meat is thrown to the dogs, who, being tied to the candlesticks, begin to jump and dash about till they have run away with and *extinguished the lights*, and then, nothing being left but darkness, the fit cover and shadow for indecency and villainy, they promiscuously run among one another into filthy and incestuous embraces ; and, if they be not all alike guilty of incest, it is not the fault of their will, but the good fortune of their chance, seeing what actually happens to one is, intentionally, the lot of all."

Admissions of Christian writers themselves go to confirm that such diabolical charges as the above were only too well founded. Only no Christian admits that such practices were known in his own sect, but alleges that they obtained only in sects to which he did not belong. Clemens Alexandrinus,\* for instance, charges against certain Christians, whom he is pleased to call heretics, that both men and women used to meet at supper (which they had in imitation of the true Christian *Αγαπη*, or Love-feast), where, after they had surfeited themselves with a plentiful meal, to prevent all shame, if any remained, they put out the lights and then promiscuously mixed in filthiness, one with another, or else each sorted as they pleased. And the Christian Epipanius† assures us, concerning a Christian sect, not, of course, the one to which *he* belonged, that they had their

\* "Stromat," lib. iii., p. 430.

† Pt. ii., "Hæres" 26, p. 42.

wives in common, and, if any stranger of their party came to them, both men and women had the mark and sign to know one another by stretching out their hands by way of salutation. They used to tickle each other in the palm of the hand, by which they were satisfied that the stranger was really of their gang and party.

Where docs history limn the portrait of a more just and magnanimous ruler of men than the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, whose "*just, merciful, and beneficent reign*"\* illumines one of the brightest pages of the annals of the Roman Empire? This "just, merciful, and beneficent" ruler well knew the principles and tenets of the pernicious Galilean superstition. "He laboured under no involuntary ignorance of Christians. For, besides the knowledge of them which he must have acquired under his predecessor, he had the opportunity of knowing them from various Apologies published in his own reign."† And yet "Marcus certainly deserves to be reckoned among the persecuting emperors. The governor in Gaul applied to him for directions, and he wrote back that they who confessed themselves Christians should be put to death."

Revoltng as it may be to ears polite, may I venture to remind this faith that boasts of having done so much to sanctify the home and the family that *the eating of raw infant*, cruelly murdered for the purpose of being eaten, was one of its early foibles? Does simpering Miss Nancy think of this as, with her bible in her muff, arrayed in her high-heeled boots and Sabbatical fal-de-rals, she minces along to that besteepled orgie-haunt of Ignorance nicknamed "the house of God"? Does the tender mother of to-day, with her sweetness, gentleness, and wealth of affection, dream that when she is taking

\* Adam Smith's "Moral Sent.," vol. i., p. 416.

† Milner's "Hist. of the Church," vol. i., p. 206.

her child to church she is taking it to within the now comparatively toothless fangs of a monster that powdered babies over with flour, in the dark stabbed them to death with knives amid the yells of devout throats and the thunder of holy drums, and devoured their raw, warm, and yet quivering flesh with ravenous teeth and bloody mouths? This is the sort of thing Christianity did to elevate woman and to sanctify the home! The maiden does not know it; the mother does not know it. Even the very men do not know it—at least, not one of them in ten thousand; for all that mankind know about Christianity and its career is told to mankind by an interested priesthood: not one man in ten thousand investigates for himself.

That the early Christians actually murdered infants and devoured their flesh is immeasurably better established than that such a person as Paul ever preached—than that such a person as Jesus Christ ever lived. Woe worth the day for the priesthood when classical and historical learning fell into other hands than those of the Church. Woe worth the day for priestcraft when the Church ceased to have the power to burn the heretic's pen and hand to ashes in the fires of martyrdom. Woe worth the day for sacerdotal imposture that produced a man like me, inspired with a deathless hate against falsehood and wrong, and willing to forego fortune, preferment, fame, and all that the world holds dear, to rush like a Winkelreid, single-handed, against the bristling spear-walls of a world.

Eusebius himself—but Eusebius was never intended to fall into hands like mine—bears testimony that the early Christians were, by their contemporaries, accused of feasting on the flesh of murdered infants.\* From the

\* Euseb., "Hist. Eccles.," lib. v., chap. i.

“Apologies of the Fathers”\* we learn that not only those who never had been Christians, but those who had been Christians and had become apostate, asserted that at the Christian *Agapæ*, or Love-feasts, “a new-born infant entirely covered over with flour was presented, like some mystic symbol of initiation, to the knife of the proselyte, who, unknowingly, inflicted many a secret and mortal wound on the innocent victim of his error ; that, as soon as the cruel deed was perpetrated, the sectaries drank up the blood greedily, tore asunder the quivering members, and pledged themselves to eternal secrecy by a mutual consciousness of guilt. It was as confidently affirmed that this inhuman sacrifice was succeeded by a suitable entertainment, in which intemperance served as a provocative to brutal lust, till, at the appointed moment, the lights were suddenly extinguished, shame was banished, nature was forgotten, and, *as accident might direct, the darkness of the night was polluted by the incestuous intercourse of sisters and brothers, of sons and mothers.*” Well might Justin Martyr complain that the Christians, “among all sorts of men,” were “hated and reproached.”

This outcry against the Christians seems to have been universal. The same protest against murder, incest, and unspeakable abomination rose not only from Rome, but from Lyons and Vienna. Eusebius,† quoting a letter from the Christians of Gaul, says : “Some domestics belonging to our brethren were also seized, as the governor had publicly commanded that search should be made for all. But these, at the instigation of Satan, for fear of the tortures which they saw the saints endure,

\* See Justin Martyr, “Apolog.,” i. 35, ii. 14 ; Athenag., in “Leg.,” c. xxvii. ; Tertull., in “Apolog.,” chaps. vii. viii., ix. ; “Min. Fælix,” chaps. ix., x., xxx., xxxi.

† “Hist. Eccles.,” lib. v., c. i.

and owing to the solicitations of the soldiers, charged us with *the feasts of Thyestes and the incests of Œdipus, and such crimes as are neither lawful for us to mention nor imagine.*"

Who were Thyestes and Œdipus? I shall inform the non-classical reader in order that he may fully comprehend the justice of Christianity's claim to have purified and elevated woman. Thyestes violated Ærope, the wife of his brother Atreus, and fed upon the flesh of his own children, which she had borne him in adultery. He, *incognito*, ravished his daughter Pelopeia in a grove sacred to Minerva.\* Œdipus, the other notorious personage whom the Christians were likened unto, killed his father and committed incest with his mother.† Allege, if you dare, that the crimes of Thyestes and Œdipus were common in Pagan Rome, and that Christianity, through the force of precedent, was tainted with the vices of times previous to its advent. The classical writers testify to the common abhorrence with which the outrages of Thyestes and Œdipus were regarded. It is represented that, when Thyestes feasted on the flesh of his own adulterously-begotten child, the sun diverged from his course in the heavens rather than be the witness of a scene so horrible. Moreover, when his daughter Pelopeia discovered that the man who had violated her was her father, she plunged a sword into her own bosom and expired. And, as for Œdipus, overwhelmed by the sense of his iniquity, he put out his own eyes, regarding himself as unworthy to behold the light of day; and the mother, Jocasta, when she became aware that she had had incestuous intercourse with her

\* See Ovid., "Trist.," ii., 391; Stat., "Silv.," v., i., 58; Hygin, "Fab.," 88; "Pausan.," ix. 40.

† Hygin, "Fab.," 66; Sophoc., "Œdip.," Senec., in "Œdip."

own son, committed suicide, determined not to survive the infamy which had fallen upon her.

So much for the fiery brand of reprobation stamped upon such crimes by the *profane*: now let us turn to find whether there is as stern a morality inculcated by the *sacred* classics. Thyestes ate the flesh of his own child, and pagan mythology makes the very sun in the heavens turn away in horror. But parents eating their own children are as nothing to the Lord God of the Christian religion, which has done such marvels in elevating woman and in sanctifying the home. This God exclaims: "I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat, every one, the flesh of his friend."\* No sun turning away in horror here! This petty Jehovah is angry because an ignorant and brutal Asiatic sept known as the Israelites have made him jealous by paying some attention to a rival god named Baal. How mean and paltry and flagitious is all this, when compared with the moral vengeance and tragic sublimity of the heathen legend!

Child-eating by their own parents seems to have been a favourite tableau with Jehovah, however revolting it may have been with the heathen. In the account of the Siege of Samaria "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," have written as follows: "And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king.....And the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So *we boiled my son, and did eat him*: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath

\* Jer. xix. 9.

hid her son.”\* No darkening of the heavens here, as in the pagan legend, to mark the divine horror, although two mothers are actually bargaining anent the boiling and eating of their respective male children, and although one of the said male children is actually boiled and eaten! Here no sun veiled his disc; no star paled in the firmament for shame.

We have had evidence of the horror with which pagan civilisation regarded incest. But with Jehovah, the God of the Christians (and Christianity has elevated and refined woman and sanctified the home!), incest was a mere nothing—*teste* the revolting story of Lot and his two daughters†—an episode meet for the pens of the “holy men of God,” but too disgusting for mine. Unlike the heathen women, these two worthies, the daughters of a drunken and incestuous favourite of the Lord God, did not commit suicide. There was no poison in Admah, no dagger in Zoar, no grave on the shores of Asphaltites, in which to hide their shame. Then there is the incestuous incident connected with the sheep-shearing in Timnath,‡ too prurient for any save the pen of a holy man of God. No qualms of conscience here, no retributive remorse. The hero of the infamy obtained a portion of the Promised Land for his posterity from the latitudinarian God of the Bible. No self-impelled sword cleft the bosom of this Tamar of sacred writ, as it did the nobler bosom of the Pelopeia of the heathen classics. Hardly more elevating in its moral tone is the incest episode of yet another Tamar,§ with her brother Amnon. No dagger was struck into the bosom of this daughter of God’s bloody but favourite king. The Jocasta of profane history could not survive her infamy; but the Tamar of sacred history could.

\* 2 Kings vi. 26, 28, 29.

† Gen. xxxviii. 12-23.

‡ Gen. xix. 31-36.

§ 2 Sam. xiii. 6-15.

The heathen wives and maidens preferred death to dishonour; but the women who bore and perpetuated the favoured race of the Lord God vastly preferred dishonour to death. Yet remember that, but for the religion of this "only living and true God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ," there would have been no purity in woman and no sanctity in the home! "By grace are ye saved, through faith." Here, as elsewhere, there is a good deal of faith required; and those who can obtain it in sufficient quantity may be "saved," and welcome, as far as I am concerned.

## CHAPTER VII.

*More Religious Cannibalism—Suffer Little Children to Come INTO Me—Did Malthus Read his Bible?—Mutual Conjugal Cannibalism—Did Jesus Teach Cannibalism?—Religious Child-Murder in Russia—The Heroism and Devotion of Womanhood—The Christian Priest as an Associate for Woman—Manhood and Motherhood—Heredity.*

REVOLTING as may be the tale of Scriptural cannibalism which I have told, it is not yet exhausted. Christianity, we must remember, has elevated woman and “shrouded with a halo of sacred innocence the life of a child.” And thus goeth the Christian Scriptures, written by “holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”: “The fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers.”\* A father eating his own son is a spectacle which should certainly “elevate woman,” and inspire her with a due notion of her importance by convincing her that the fruit of her body can be converted into a dinner for her lord and master. This sublime idea must be attributed to the Holy Ghost and to the “holy men of God,” not to me.

“And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.”† This is an exceedingly liberal and, being prescribed by the “holy men of God,” an exceptionally sacred diet. A son and a daughter, cooked or raw, according to your saintly

\* Ezekiel v. 10.

† Lev. xxvi. 29.

taste, can be placed on the table before you, and you can feast on either, or on a piece of both. It is possible that your Scriptural appetite may delight at one time in masticating a boy, and at another in deglutiting a girl. The Lord of Sabaoth gives you your choice. He is your shepherd, you shall not want; he shall lead you by the green pastures and by the still waters—that is, he shall humour your palate by providing you with a leg off your son or an arm off your daughter. For the faith which his son founded has elevated woman and rendered the life of childhood sacred! Reading the New Testament in the light of the Old—a task the gospel-huxterer frequently enjoins upon us—we now quite understand the expression, “Suffer little children to come *unto* me.” No doubt, correctly rendered, it should read, “Suffer little children to come *into* me.” On this point it behoves us to turn to “the original languages,” which the clergy are so apt to refer to when they desire to throw dust in the eyes of the ignorant.

“And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters.....So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children which he shall leave; so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat.....The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom and toward her son and toward her daughter.....for she shall eat them.”\*

Who can, after this, deny that the Lord will provide? Malthus was a parson, but, like most parsons, he appears

\* Deut. xxviii. 53-57.

to have been unacquainted with his Bible, with the exception of the few hackneyed texts that it is usual to spin sermons from. What saint who really searches the Scriptures should, for a single moment, trouble his head about Malthus and his theory? What saint who reads his Bible would be at the expense of purchasing the "Malthusian appliances" so industriously advertised? The Holy Ghost and "the holy men of God" have solved the population question. The more children the better. They, like chickens, can be reared at a profit. Breed as many as you can, and as the fattest and tenderest come home from school—as the plumpest girl comes rushing in with her Musical Primer, and the most toothsome boy bounds forward with his Latin Delectus, kill them and eat them.

Thus saith the Lord: "His eye shall be evil toward the wife of his bosom." At dewy eve the pair retire to their conjugal rest; but, as the wife rises in the morning, and begins to pull on her stockings, she finds that one of her legs is minus a calf. Her husband had got hungry in the night and, at the instigation of the Lord, eaten one of her legs. But a benign doctrine of compensation obtains. "Her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom." Next morning he rises, and, on putting on his collar, finds it is much too big for him. The pious fact dawns upon him that the half of his neck has been eaten away, the result of his being young and tender, and of his wife having become hungry in the night. Thus God elevates woman and sanctifies the family! Do not take the statement on my authority. Turn to the passages in the Bible to which I have referred, and verify my quotations; and, in doing so, keep in mind that this Bible is "the source of England's greatness."

Were this the time and place, I should be prepared to contend that Jesus himself was a cannibal. "Except

ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.”\* Was this meant to be understood in some vaguely figurative sense? I think I could allege stronger reasons for supposing that it was meant to be understood in a strictly literal sense. It is usual to set down everything as figurative which would outrage the modern reason or shock the nineteenth-century sensibilities. But the honest question is, Would this cannibalistic assertion attributed to Jesus outrage the reason or shock the sensibilities of the age in which it is alleged to have been uttered? The eating of human flesh and the drinking of human blood in certain religious orgies in the age of Jesus, and in ages long anterior to his, were not by any means unknown, as every student of history knows. Nay, more, his own followers, as we have seen, in one of their religious ordinances, actually ate human flesh and drank human blood till the Roman empire purged away the foul blot in the fires of persecution. The words of Jesus, to this very hour, bear the *literal*, not the figurative, construction to those who are as ignorant and barbarous as was Jesus, and the populace of Palestine, which he addressed. For instance: “We hear of horrid (Christian) sects at present in Russia practising cannibal and human sacrifices with rites almost more devilish than any recorded in history. ‘The communism of the flesh of the Lamb’ and ‘the communism of the blood of the Lamb’ really seem to have been invented by the lowest demons of the bottomless pit. The subject is too revolting to be pursued in detail; it is enough to say that an infant seven days old is bandaged over the eyes, stretched over a dish, and a silver spoon thrust into the side, so as to pierce the heart! The elect suck the child’s blood—that is, ‘the blood of the Lamb.’ The body is left to dry up in

\* John vi. 53.

another dish full of sage, then crushed into powder and eaten—that is ‘the flesh of the Lamb.’”\* It will be observed that this rite is almost an exact copy of the *Agapæ* of the early centuries of the Christian era. The remote parts of Russia to-day, when Christianity is ending, stand much on the same moral and intellectual plane that the greater part of Europe did when Christianity was beginning. The literature and science which Christianity ever did her best to crush is, at last, crushing Christianity; by them woman is becoming comparatively elevated, and Christianity takes the credit for effecting what she has done her best to prevent. By setting women to kill and eat their own children, in the Lord’s name, or otherwise, was her mode of elevating woman and sanctifying the home!

Do I refer to incidents of revolting horror which curdle the blood and inspire feelings of shuddering nausea? The incidents are not of my inventing or contriving. If I am to apologise, I must apologise for the Bible. I, only Man, must apologise for God. I, the Creature, must apologise for my Creator. I, born of a woman, must blush for the revolting brutalities of the God who claims to have made woman out of a costal bone. What am I, and what is my father’s house, that I should take it upon me to be the apologist of God? Yet I am compelled to take upon me that duty. Of God I know little, of Woman I know much. The best friends I have ever had have been women—friends the truest, the noblest, the bravest. They have been friends, not because I *had* friends, but because I *lacked* friends. They have stood by me when I was perishing and penniless; when, because my thoughts and aspirations and hopes were not those of other men, men laughed at me

\* *Harper’s Weekly*. Quoted by J. E. Remsburg in “Bible Morals,” p. 37.

and called me mad. The keen blade of the spirit had all but worn out the feeble scabbard of the body. Young girls waited by the side of what was believed to be my death-bed. Young girls purchased the few cordials that yet kept the lamp of life glimmering in the breast of an overworked and friendless youth. One girl put into my lean and wasted hand every morning a fresh white rose, and subsequently admitted that several roses which on the same stalk were only in bud would, in her opinion, be in bloom in time to cast into my grave.

As the world would see it, these girls had little in common with me. The pale cast of thought had never set its seal upon their brow. They, till the date of their vigils over me, had never burnt the midnight oil; their hands had never ached and bled in desperate grappling to unlock the door of knowledge, to hold high commune with the undying dead in all the realms of the world and in all the generations of time. But, be the superstructure what it may, the foundation upon which manhood and womanhood is built is ever the same. This noble and mighty basis of humanity it is beyond the power of the schoolmaster and the banker to radically affect. There are ineradicable traits of man which education and all it involves can neither make nor mar. And all that is lovely in woman—her unconquerable devotion, the immeasurable depths of her affection—are hers, whether she wear the cap of a maid-servant or the diadem of a queen. Show me the god that would debase her as the Jewish Jehovah does, and, for her dear sake, I will denounce that god. Show me the book that degrades her as the Bible does, and I will risk all peril and condemn that book. Show me a profession that deceives her and lies to her—for its own interests, as the Christian priesthood does—and that profession will find in me an implacable enemy.

The Christian minister, however unimpeachable his

personal character, with his degrading ideas of women caught from Christ and Paul, and with his horribly revolting and immoral doctrine of an innocent man's agony and death to "save" the guilty, is not a fit associate for a woman. Every wave of music that lifts the soul upon its crest, every breeze of poetry that wafts the emotions to purity and love, should be over her and around her by night and by day. She should be kept afar from all brutal expressions like "it is better to marry than to burn;" far from the faintest touch of such barbarous associations as the idea of women eating their own children; far from such ghastly conceptions as that of an innocent man or god agonising under a Syrian sun, with a crown of thorns on his head, nails driven through his hands, and his side gashed with a spear. Till we raise the mothers of our race out of this ogre-realm of tyrannies, barbarities, and horrors, we need not expect but that the race will be, as it is, dwarfed and stunted and distorted. We cannot gather grapes off brambles or figs off thistles. As the mothers of the world are, so shall the men of the world be. Attend, O my brothers, to the purity and elevation of the world's motherhood, and the world's manhood will look after itself. As long as we have a race of women degraded by the Bible and deluded by the priest, we shall never have a race of men rising to the legitimate standard of manhood's mental, moral, and physical grandeur. At present it takes a large fraction of the human race to be specially told off to deter the other fraction from crime. Human life, on its present plane, is a blunder and a mean one. The inscription on the tombstone of each and all of us should be, "Here lies a Mistake." When will the world begin to practically recognise that a man's education commences many years before he is born? When will Humanity, wandering blindly in the wilderness of Zin, perceive that woman, whom Christianity has degraded and degrades, must

be elevated if ever our race is to be exalted? We are careful about the breed of our horses and dogs, and even our pigeons; but, as for a human being, his sire may be anything and his dam anybody. The ancient Spartans, if they did not understand that heredity took effect at an earlier period than gestation, at least recognised that they could educate the foetus. With them, to breed a race of soldiers was the *summum bonum* of human existence, and they accordingly placed their pregnant women on the edge of the battle-field, that the rush and struggle and crash and clash and clang, the gleaming weapons and the ruddy gore, the yells of triumph and the shrieks of agony, might educate their babes as yet unborn. It is a far cry from ancient Sparta to modern England; but the unborn English babe of to-day is as susceptible to education as was the unborn Lacedæmonian of 3,000 years ago.

“One day a woman,” recently wrote a newspaper correspondent, “appealed to my friend to save her son from the punishment that was to be inflicted for a theft he had committed.

“‘He stole the goods,’ she cried, ‘but he is not guilty. It is I who am the guilty one. I should be punished, for, by a force beyond the power of any man to resist, I compelled him to steal.’

“In explanation of her assertion, she continued: ‘When the time approached for the birth of this my first boy I wished to make for him some dainty baby clothes. My husband laughed at my “nonsense.” For a time I tried to be content with the few plain things I could make from the materials at command; but the wish grew into an uncontrollable longing, accompanied by a feeling that my husband was treating me cruelly. At last a brusque refusal of money, and a stern command that I should let him hear no more about the matter, turned my feeling, for a time, into one of positive dislike

for the man who seemed to me unwarrantably harsh in his refusal. At last I began stealing small sums from my husband's pockets as he lay asleep at night. I felt that I was sinning—that I was a thief; but I could not resist the desire to provide my coming child with what I felt was no more than would be justly due to it. I simply could not overcome my feelings—mothers will understand. When my boy was a mere babe he was a thief, from impulses he was, and always will be, powerless to resist. Can you imagine what tortures I have suffered during all these years; how constantly I have watched over him to keep him from committing thefts that are no crime?

“If that boy marries, it is more than likely that the pre-natal influence that made him a thief will become a hereditary taint; that the man who refused to gratify an innocent and natural longing will have become the founder of a race of criminals, or, at least, a family morally weak, whose lives will be spent in one long despairing torment of struggle against temptation. For pre-natal influences may become, in later generations, powerful hereditary tendencies. Who can tell how much of the sin and shame and crime this world has known has been the result of uncontrolled impulses inherited from mothers whose usually yielding dispositions have been aroused to rebellion, or whose pure moral natures have been perverted at a time when the impulses of the mother are most likely to make a strong and lasting impression upon her unborn child—perhaps to bless its whole life with a sunny disposition and healthful moral nature; possibly to curse its whole earthly existence with passions it cannot resist?”

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Woman's Realm—The Child Jesus—Jesus Grieves Joseph and Mary—Jesus Insults his Mother—Jesus Sows Dissension and Hatred—The Miracle at Cana—Jesus again Insults his Mother—Jesus Insults his Mother and his Brethren—Brutality of Jesus to the 'Woman of Canaan—Vanity Sensitive, Compassion Callous—The Wrestle with Typhon—"Curse God and Die"—A Mother's Love.*

THE home is woman's realm, the family are her subjects, whom she sways with the sceptre of love ; and the ingle that flings its warmth and radiance upon the faces of her children is a holier flame than ever burned on the altar of any god that human fear and credulity have ever yet evolved. The home is woman's realm ! That being so, let us see the attitude of Jesus to the home.

At the age of twelve he eluded his parents and remained behind in the temple at Jerusalem to display his puerile impudence and air his childish vanity. He disputed with the doctors. Did he? Yes, in the sense that an impertinent Board-School brat from the Seven Dials would dispute with Professor Tyndall or with Herbert Spencer. Far from being exceedingly sagacious at twelve, Jesus was exceedingly ignorant at thirty. To the last he believed in the almost immediate end of the world, in demoniacal possession, and in all the beliefs of the illiterate vulgar of his time. The story of his disputing with the venerable scholars and thinkers of the age is a feeble burlesque. But it is with the pain he inflicted upon his parents that I have more immediately to deal.

The humble couple from Nazareth, simple village bodies, have gone up to the great city of Jerusalem, and, amid the bustle and the wonderful things to be seen, they lost sight of their eldest boy who had accompanied them. I can sympathise with their anxious search, with their earnest inquiries of each person they knew if he or she had seen aught of the missing boy. My heart over the gulf of the centuries beats throb for throb with their anxiety as their fond eyes eagerly scan in the distance every little boy of twelve or thereabouts, in the hope that he may turn out to be their own little provincial lad from Nazareth, their own first-born, their Jesus. What care the kindly couple may have taken to fit out their darling for the journey ! His worn tunic may have been carefully patched for the occasion by the hands of Mary ; and Joseph may have given him a small coin to himself that he might not be behind the other children from the same place, and might be able to purchase and bring back to Nazareth some toy from the great and wonderful city of Jerusalem.

At last they find him, and who that has ever been a parent is not touched with the simple pathos in the expression of Mary : "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us ? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing."\* And, as this poor mother shed tears of joy at having found him, he flouts her with a retort of puerile and egotistical insult. This is the Jesus who is accredited with founding the Christian faith that has done so much to elevate woman and to sanctify the home ! "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth ? I tell you, nay ; but rather division. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father ; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother."† "If any man come to me and *hate* not his

\* Luke ii. 48.

† Luke xii. 51, 53.

father and mother and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.”\* And this is the Jesus who has given us domestic peace and blessed us with woman’s love! Well might Erasmus exclaim: “*Sanguine fundata est ecclesia, sanguine crevit, sanguine succrevit, sanguine erit.*”

Jesus’s first miracle was prefaced by his insulting the mother that bore him. The introduction of a fresh supply of wine among those who had already “well drunk” is an act which only the prejudiced ingenuity of a Christian priest could reconcile with any defensible moral code. But it is not with the Bacchanalian proclivity of Jesus that I have at present to deal. When his mother drew his attention to the fact that the supply of wine had been exhausted his response to her was the ever memorable and ever execrable “Woman, what have I to do with thee?” All the ingenuity of theological casuistry has not been able to take away the sting of disrespect and insult from this notorious expression. “What have I to do with thee?”—*τι μοι και σου†*—are the words which the devils invariably address to Jesus when he interferes with them and their Kingdom of Evil; and they are the words which Jesus addresses to his mother! Had Jesus already had too much of the wine? That he was a “wine-bibber” was one of the taunts levelled at him by his opponents. How far was the taunt deserved?

On another occasion this gentle mother—possibly sinned against and sinning, but certainly one of the sweetest characters that ever legend drew—sought her son that, in her tender solicitude for his welfare, she might have an interview with him, and possibly have the opportunity of dropping him a word of kindly advice.

\* Luke xiv. 26.

† Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24, v. 7; Luke iv. 34, viii. 28.

The family were evidently anxious about the eldest boy, who had given up the steady trade of a carpenter and taken to the precarious business of an itinerant preacher. They were evidently afraid that he was "beside himself," and surely none had had better opportunities for passing judgment in that regard. And they said unto him: "Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee." And his contemptuous reply was, "Who is my mother and who is my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren."\* His answer was practically this: Who is this homely carpenter's wife that she should come and expose me by claiming me to be her son, and who are these obscure mechanics that dare to claim kindred with me, the rising demagogue, the orator upon whose lips hang the gathering multitude? And, pointing to his disciples, his special sycophants and catspaws, he petulantly exclaimed, Behold my mother and my brethren! In spite of Jesus, I maintain that neither the call of duty nor the pursuit of fame, the gaining of money nor the winning of laurels, would warrant a man being disrespectful to his mother, however homely a person that mother might be, or in repudiating his brothers and sisters, however humble might be the vocation they might follow for their daily bread. A mother's love is more than wealth, and a brother's affection more than fame. This I will maintain, although, on the point, Jesus of Nazareth is an authority which can be quoted against me.

Jesus seems to have had little respect for his own mother, or the mother of anybody else. What mother can read this episode of "the woman of Canaan" unmoved?—"Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of

\* See Matt. xii. 46-9.

Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David ; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away ; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.\*

Did any one ever witness a more brutal exhibition than this ? Behold it, Christians, and behold your God. A poor mother from Tyre has a girl who is afflicted with epileptic fits, which Jesus, in his ignorance, deemed being possessed of a devil. The woman has heard from the vulgar and credulous that this wandering Jesus can miraculously cure diseases. She implores of this Jesus to intervene and save her girl. In passionate earnestness she entreats of him, Have mercy on me, O Lord, and relieve the suffering of my child ! The tears may have wet her swarthy cheeks and dropped upon her hands, clasped and wrung in the paroxysms of passionate prayer ; her bended knees of supplication may have been white with the dust of the road upon which she knelt ; and her voice may have quivered in that choking rush of emotion which moves a whole theatre to sobs, even when there is only the trick of the actor—not the reality and passionate pathos of a mother crying, Have mercy on me ! save my child !

But how does this move Jesus ? He took no notice of her whatever ; “he answered her not a word.” You answer her not a word, Carpenter of Nazareth : is your heart made of flint, and your nerves of steel ? Did one drop of woman's milk ever moisten that cruelly silent

\* Matt. xv. 21-26.

tongue of thine? Does one drop of human blood flow in thy icy veins? Did the responsive passion of man and woman beget thee, or did some accursed chisel cut thee out of a block of iron and make thee a cold and terrible mockery of our poor race, which, with all its faults, has an arm to raise against wrong, a tear to shed over the tale of human woe, and a heart that emotion can warm?

The woman of Canaan still follows with her passionate cry, Have mercy on me! save my child! "Send her away," remonstrated the disciples, evidently so brutalised for the Kingdom of God's sake that they were deaf to the Kingdom of Man. On marched the unfeeling Jesus and his heartless disciples, leaving the woman behind; but still she cried after them, in vehement earnestness, Have mercy on me! save my child! "Send her away," sneered the heartless kerns of Galilee, who had given up all sympathies with earth in order to merit the golden streets of heaven. And to their remonstrances Jesus replied, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In other words, "What is a woman's-breaking heart to me? What is it to me that this little lass of Canaan is grievously afflicted, that her childish life is smitten and cankered and embittered, that she cannot go out with the other children to gather the meadow flowers, to play among the wild vines of Syria, and to chase the butterfly from the rose to the myrtle and from the myrtle to the lily? What is it to me that she is thrown down at any moment, that every limb is convulsed, that the whites of her sunny eyes are turned up hideously, and that the foam works from between her clenched teeth and hangs in white flecks upon her childish lips? I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. What have I to do with this woman and with this child of the uncircumcised? Am not I a narrow and remorseless bigot and fanatic, with no sym

pathy with the world, with no heart for mankind? I am a man sprung from an obscure sept, a sept without science, without art, without philosophy, and almost without a literature, with neither maritime enterprise nor military renown; and above the styptic sympathies of that miserable sept I cannot rise."

With the importunity of impassioned earnestness, the woman who will not be shaken off follows with her wild and pathetic cry, Have mercy on me! save my child! But he (Jesus) answered and said: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs." She was a mother, but not of the race to which belonged Tamar and Jezebel and Jael; so first to her terrible cry this narrow Jew was silent, and next he replies to her with scornful insult, such as no man who deserves the name of man would fling upon a woman. His vocabulary knew no more contemptuous and hateful word than "dog," in the connection in which he used it now. In his country and in his time—aye, and for ages after his time—"dog" was the *ne plus ultra* in the expression of contemptuous insult; and the person who here used it to this afflicted mother is claimed not only to have been Man, but God! He is reckoned the founder of the faith that has, above all other influences, elevated woman and developed the loveliest and holiest sensibilities of her nature. It was not till the woman humbled herself into the very dust before him, and likened herself unto a dog that would feel honoured by eating the crumbs which fell from his table that he acceded to the prayer of her supplication. It was possible to flatter his vanity, but it was not possible to evoke his compassion. He had a word of commendation for her when she put herself into the position of a cringing and kicked spaniel lying at his feet, but not till then. So much for his practical teaching in regard to the dignity of womanhood and the deference due to motherhood!

Who is he who has gone through life, who has passed through the glitter of the mansion and the darkness of the slums, and has not felt how selfish and how hollow is the heart of man? Who has not, as one cold and heavy iceberg of disappointment after another has rolled down upon the fire of his hope and the ardour of his emotion, exclaimed of love—

“The modern fair one’s jest  
On earth unknown or only found  
To warm the turtle’s nest”?

The first task that awaits the ingenuous youth is to wrestle with Typhon, to struggle till the best blood of his life is poured out upon the arena and its place supplied in his veins with ice from the bitter waters of Marah. Sisters become estranged, brothers wax hostile, the grass of the cemetery waves over the noble and valiant, and when we grasp the fruit which seemed to us to hang from the trees of the Hesperides it becomes only dust and ashes and apples of Gomorrah. The maiden we loved! Her mother thinks of the lightness of our extrinsic purse, and overlooks the weight of our intrinsic manhood. The maiden herself vows eternal fidelity. We walk unexpectedly into the ball-room; we see her jewelled slippers tread in tune to what is to us a waltz of agony, for the wine-red hair of our Phyllis streams down upon the shoulder of another Corydon. Their lips almost meet. Her breast heaves, her breath is warm upon his cheek, the same eyes that conjured us by their resistless spell have rendered him a helpless victim under the wand of the enchantress; and *to him also* she is breathing the vow of eternal love. Our impulse is to follow the advice given to Job, “Curse God and die.” High is the arch, dim gleam the stars upon the black river below. A leap, a splash, a gurgle, and the mysterious unknown of the Eternal will close over the known pain and madness of Time.

But no ; when life is about to end it bounds back at one leap to the point where it began. The vapours of the night form themselves into the face of our MOTHER. Arms thin as mist, but strong as steel, grasp us upon the bridge and hold us. There is no Death for us to-night. To-morrow we take our place again in the struggling files of life, bearing part in the never ending fight, with its beginning involved in the Unknown and its wherefore lost in Mystery. Selfish man and false woman have damned us ; but a woman, our *mother*—it may be from a far distant land, it may be from the tomb—has redeemed us.

Motherhood is the one fixed star of devotion and love round which all the red and baleful planets of the world wander. When the sunlight kisses the sails and the zephyr blows over the wave the odour of roses, she is *forgotten*. But when it is dark and the sails are seen only fitfully amid the red forks of the lightning—when the storm is angry and behind every billow gapes the grave, she is *remembered*. With what pathos of repetition and repetition we have heard that the soldier on the battlefield, when he receives the mortal wound, throws up his arms, murmurs the words, "*My mother,*" and, dying on his manhood's grave, is in spirit away by his childhood's cradle. It is not those who have merely *existed*, but those who have really *lived*, who know the awful stops and chords and diapason of the choruses in the world's Greek tragedy. I who write have lived a life that can never be written, and, in the dark, played in the Theatre of Pain ; and, like the preacher of old, I would say, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit"—all except *a mother's love*.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Brides with a Leaning Towards Polyandria—Mohammedan, Roman, and Greek Solitude in Regard to the Purity of the Bride—The Christian Contrast—Why the Poor do not Divorce—Justice Maule and the Bigamist—Hypocrisy—Heredity.*

CHRISTIANITY has elevated woman, and is the only religion which is the custodian of her purity. This mendacious platitude is whined from every Christian pulpit; but, like most of the utterances of the pulpit, it relies for its acceptance upon the ignorance and credulity of the congregation. Is it not notorious that, especially among the humbler classes, it is not uncommon for brides to be the mothers of several children to several fathers before they go to the altar to have the ceremony of Christian marriage gone through in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are not considered above giving their approval to an unsanctified marriage like this, binding for life a male dupe to a woman who has evinced a decided leaning towards polyandria. Would the Christian priest and his self-righteous congregation be scandalised to learn that the despised Mohammedan, the infidel Turk, who is not prone to hypocritically whine about his creed having elevated woman, would shudder at the bare idea of God being invoked to bless a marriage with a woman whose every child is a living testimony that she is a harlot? With the Mohammedans, it is absolutely indispensable that the virginity of the bride be

established, and it is an ordinary stipulation in the marriage contract that, if the bride be not found a maid, the marriage shall be held as null and void. So stringently does the bridegroom insist upon the chastity of his bride that, in the event of the evidence of that chastity being destroyed by an accident, as say the fall from a camel, the father of the girl makes a careful record of the fact, which record he places before her bridegroom on the occasion of the marriage. In ancient Rome, as soon as the keys were handed over to the bride, in token that she was mistress of her new home, the bridegroom and she touched fire and water, in testimony of their mutual chastity and purity. Let the majority of Christian couples at the altar touch fire and water with the same significance, and, if they could be personified to register their reprobation of guilt, would not the water hiss with rage and the fire burn to the bone those who impiously appealed to it to attest their innocence? The Greek bride washing her feet in water from the fountain Callirrhoe was in token of the purity which the spirit of the times demanded of the woman who would enter upon the sacred obligation of linking her life with that of a man for weal or woe.

But Christianity has no touching of fire and water, no washing of innocent feet in the lymph of Callirrhoe by the blushing girl, standing on the threshold between maiden and wife. It is notorious that the most abandoned of our upper-class women who figure in the Divorce Court are able to excite such a morbidly prurient interest in their conjugal infidelity and suggestive voluptuousness that they have actually advantageous offers of marriage before they leave the court, and while a pious but nasty public is eagerly, through the daily newspapers, pursuing their tract of perfidy and lechery. And this is in holy England, with her gigantic and expensive ecclesiastical machinery; England, where Christianity has

elevated woman ; England, pious possessor of an open Bible, the source of her greatness ? Does hell contain a specially hot furnace with “ *For the arch hypocrites of mankind !* ” written over its portal in characters of flame ? If so, the majority of the damned in that furnace will yell out their agonies in the English tongue.

But, in this Christian England, the poor do not divorce their wives, for the sufficient reason they cannot stand the expense of doing so. It requires a considerable amount of filthy lucre to shake you clear of a person guilty of filthy conduct. Is the poor man's wife an adulteress ? Well, he has just to grin and bear, and occasionally relieve his feelings by breaking her ribs. I have been in the homes of the poor in Glasgow and in some of the greater towns of Yorkshire and Lancashire, and have witnessed conjugal misery and devilry that no one who has not gone down into the darkest bye-ways of human life could for a moment credit. I have seen Christian homes that, should the arch-fiend visit, he could pick up some new ideas which would enable him to augment the wickedness and the misery of hell. And these new ideas Satan would obtain from woman in this Christian England, where Christianity has done so much to elevate and refine her. But, ultimately, the shame and the suffering pass away, and subside into moral apathy and stupor. What cannot be cured must be endured ; and the man and woman who suffered so intensely in the protest in favour of propriety and decency, at length callously submit to stoop and allow the waves of the most unthinkable depravity to pass over them without they, on their part, making even a show of resistance. The way that Christianity has elevated hundreds of thousands of women in our large manufacturing and trading towns is enough to make the angels weep till their wings are bedewed with tears, and to make the demons rejoice and rattle an *encore* with the

chains of the damned. If details are wanted on a subject so terrible, they must be furnished by other pen than mine.

In this Christian England the rich have divorce, and, occasionally, taint and poison the moral atmosphere with a public exposure of the repulsive facts that may have cost them months or even years of misery. But, for the poor, there is no divorce—blessed be ye poor!—they have to live and wallow and seethe and rot in their misery. It is easier for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than for a poor man to enter the Divorce Court. Previous to the Act of 1857 a certain moneyless man was convicted of bigamy, and the following conversation is reported to have taken place. Whether it actually took place or not, it furnishes a graphic illustration of the facility with which the poor even yet can avail themselves of the privilege of divorce:—

Clerk of Assize: What have you to say why judgment should not be passed on you according to law?

Prisoner: Well, my lord, my wife took up with a hawker, and ran away five years ago, and I've never seen her since, and I married this other woman last winter.

Mr. Justice Maule: I will tell you what you ought to have done; and, if you say you did not know, I must tell you the law conclusively presumes that you did. You ought to have instructed your attorney to bring an action against the hawker for criminal conversation with your wife. That would have cost you about £100. When you had recovered substantial damages against the hawker, you would have instructed your proctor to sue in the Ecclesiastical Courts for a divorce *à mensa atque thoro*. That would have cost you £200 or £300 more. When you had obtained a divorce *à mensa atque thoro* you would have had to appear by counsel before the House of Lords for a divorce *à vinculo matrimonii*.

The Bill might have been opposed in all its stages in both Houses of Parliament ; and, altogether, you would have had to spend about £1,000 or £1,200. You will probably tell me that you never had a thousand farthings of your own in the world ; but, prisoner, that makes no difference. Sitting here as a British judge, it is my duty to tell you that this is not a country in which there is one law for the rich and another for the poor.

Hypocrisy has been defined as the tax which vice pays to virtue. England's debt of hypocrisy is even heavier than her National Debt, and heaven knows that is heavy enough. More primitive and simple nations have not pretended, and do not pretend, to be better than they are. In their sociology, when it was in error, they have gone on single-minded and simple-hearted to perdition. Take it for granted that they have fallen into the hands of avenging deities. Any god who has a spark of godhood in his soul will bring down his thongs of iron with more mercy upon the back of the simple sinner than upon that of the loathsome hypocrite. The ancient Persian and Babylonian women lived in harems ; but, with them, it was customary for every woman, at least once in her life, to prostitute herself to a strange man in the temple of the goddess of love. In Syria, among other countries of Western Asia, young girls, preparatory to marriage, served several years in the temple of the love goddess, and delivered themselves up to the embraces of the visitors to the temple. I am a man who have studied men and women as earnestly as I have studied books, and I fearlessly appeal to any man who knows the world to support my statement when I deliberately state that, in the customs to which I have referred, neither Babylon nor Syria could carry away the palm from Christian England. In the broad and honest light of day Babylon erected her temple to the love goddess. In the murk and dishonest gloom of night England builds her fane

to the same divinity. Even did I feel disposed to discuss the point, this is not the place to debate whether the canons of physiology are fixed against the canons of monogamy; but the practice of Christian England declares that they are. Then, in the name of God, why not honestly say so? Why *know* that the woman is a wanton and a harlot and the man a reprobate and a debauchee, and yet give them all respect and honour "till they are found out"? Found out, indeed! Their intimates knew their turpitude full well; but "found out" means acting so that their peccadilloes come to be examined in the law-courts and exposed in the newspapers. Is this a healthy state of affairs? Are there no truth and sincerity left? If we are not honest, does it lessen our guilt to pretend that we are? Cannot man meet man with a naked face, and speak to him heart to heart? Why must he wear a mask? A man is no more responsible for moral depravity than for physical disease! they are twin brothers—Siamese twins. To his friend no man is ashamed to confess his physical malady; then why ashamed to admit his tendency to moral delinquency? Sin or no sin, to be honest and brave is surely better than to be a hypocrite and a coward. Society must, in its own sanitary interests, isolate the leper; society must, in its own fiscal interests, deal with the thief; but there is no valid reason why the one should be treated with more harshness than the other. In the suppression of crime, as in the suppression of disease, the aim should be reformation, not retaliation; but the whole Christian theory, including the damnable vindictiveness of the Christian hell, has taught the world's foremost races a different lesson.

Let us for fifty years study heredity, and leave theology alone; and, at the end of the five decades, our doxology will be a victorious pæan over the vanquishing of Disease and Crime. But, in the meantime, in the name of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we go on marrying wastrel to wastrel, consumption to consumption, intemperance to intemperance, cancer to cancer, idiocy to idiocy, and then wonder that the progeny has only body enough to nurse disease and only will sufficient to indulge in crime. We ignore the laws of existence and environment, and, with our own hands, make the whips with which Nature scourges us. We starve because we have not force enough to survive in the keen competition of "the survival of the fittest;" and, venomous as serpents and stupid as asses, we turn round upon those who *are* the fittest, just as reasonably as Snowdon might quarrel with the Alps because of their superior height. Do you elevate woman by setting her to the task of breeding blockheads? Are you likely to improve the race by enfeebling the minds of the mothers of that race by an insidious administration of immoral Jewish fables, administered in the holy name of religion? What sort of mental and ethical stamina do you expect in a child whose mother was a religious imbecile and whose father was a moral hypocrite? And may I ask yet another question?—When, with your army of women in pit and factory doing the work of beasts, and your legions of women on the streets making a living by a method which no other she-beast has yet attempted, will you cease to hypocritically cant and whine about Christianity elevating woman?

## CHAPTER X.

*Christianity the Foster-Mother of Credulity and Ignorance—Intellectual Conviction versus Hysterical Conversion—Revivalism and Illegitimate Births—"All Night with Jesus"—Ancient Christian Fanaticism—Modern Christian Fanaticism—The Brighton "Agape-mone"—"A Night's Experience"—Expensive Consequences of 'Arry and 'Arriet having been Filled with the Holy Ghost.*

THE essential essence of Christianity is opposed to that deliberate and judicial self-restraint which forms the barrier against licentiousness and sexual riot. Whatever it be—alcohol or gospel—that deranges the intellect, and consequently weakens the will that binds man to the instincts of his higher and nobler self, minimises the guarantee that woman shall be pure. The essential essence of Christianity is a derangement of the intellect, an embargo upon the exercise of the judgment, and a premium upon credulity—in theological parlance, *faith*. It has ever laid stress upon the seeing of visions and the dreaming of dreams. From its infancy downward it has tabooed literature and philosophy, and assured its votaries that "not many wise are called." St. Jerome declares that he was dragged, in vision, to the tribunal of Christ and terribly threatened, and even scourged, for the grievous sin of reading Cicero, Virgil, and Horace.\* This divine flagellation of St. Jerome for reading Virgil may be accepted as the refrain of the song of Christianity

\* Vid. Oper. Hieron., lib. iv.

from the first century down to the nineteenth. The Romish sect has its *Index Expurgatorius*, excluding the volumes which are permeated with the ripest thought of the human race. The Protestant sect, ever meaner and sillier than its venerable rival, has no written *Index Expurgatorius* ; but it has an unwritten one, with which it, in its glimmering myopia, does its best to place the Titan of Science under the ghoulish of Theology. Ask for the books written by the world's strongest and most fearless thinkers in any library where the Protestant priest has his way, and you will ask in vain. They dare not admit into the hands of their dupes even the writings of a pen like mine, so confident are they that they have the truth and that "truth is great and shall prevail."

Every day I am assured by correspondents that Christianity is not a thing that can be attained to by thought and study. The thing that is needful, I am reminded, is "getting a new heart," which is only a synonym for "losing your head." Christianity is not a thing of intellectual conviction ; it is a thing of hysterical conversion. If it were even a thing of healthy emotionalism, I, for one, should have much to plead in its favour. But, essentially, it is a thing of delirium and hysteria, of "finding Jesus" and losing your reason. The mainspring of its entire mechanism is outpourings of the Holy Ghost, libations independent of all the laws of hydrostatics and all the canons of hydrodynamics. From the earliest Christians to the latest Christians it is the same old, old story of "whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth."

Like the Bourbons, Christianity proper learns nothing and forgets nothing. It has now Booth and Moody ; of old it had Tertullian and Cyprian. The ministrations of Booth and Moody result in carnality and an excess of illegitimate births. The ministrations of the early fathers were kindred in character and had kindred results. And

Christianity is the faith that has purified and ennobled woman ! We have now a cold and conventional sacerdotalism, a very different thing from Christism ; but the genuine faith, as understood by the uneducated Jesus and his illiterate fishermen, we have among us still. What it was to the populace of the first it is to the populace of the nineteenth century, just for the reason that the mob is always the mob, and that undisciplined intellects and unbridled emotions are as natural to the ruck of mankind as are their two legs apiece. Christianity originated among the ignorant, and among the ignorant alone it lives. Christianity as held by the educated through traditional and conventional forces, if explained to Jesus of Nazareth, would drive him out of his senses. The cultured quasi-religion of Farrar is only an interested make-believe of modern conventional civilisation. The religion of Booth is the religion of Jesus ; and how much it tends to the purity of woman or the dignity of man all the world knows.

The "Salvation Army," with its licentious "All night with Jesus," has in some shape or other obtained in Christendom for the last eighteen centuries, and, by way of elevating woman, has led to greater sexual voluptuousness than any other influence whatever. Christ and bastardy were as notorious in the days of Montanus as they are in the days of Booth. Once drive your wits out and put the Holy Ghost in their place, and the population increases amazingly without any attention being paid to such trifles as bridal ceremonies and wedding rings. And this Holy Ghost, ever since he was invented, seems to have operated precisely as he does in the Salvation Army to-day. He was directly concerned with the paternity of Jesus ; and, since, indirectly concerned with the paternity of untold millions. The necessity of the new birth is insisted upon ; but the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, resulting in "Revivals,"

is, in the very nature of things, responsible for myriads of new births. He is much readier to provide new births than to provide new bread, and consequently the rate-payers, who are indifferent to the Holy Ghost and the saints who, by his divine favour, he has rendered prolific, have to put their hands in their pockets and pay for the results of an ancient and vile Asiatic superstition.

I have said this immoral "Salvation Army" craze and the peccadilloes of the Holy Ghost are as old as Christianity. Let us see. "The divine censure," says Cyprian,\* "does not cease to chastise us, neither by night nor by day; for, besides nightly visions, even boys among us are filled with the Holy Ghost, and, in fits of ecstasy, see, hear, and utter things with which the Lord sees fit to admonish and instruct us." Athenagoras† affirms "that, while they (certain of the early Christians) were under the divine impulse, they were transported out of their senses and delivered in ecstasy what was inspired, being mere organs of the Holy Spirit, just as a pipe or flute is of him who blows into it." And Justin Martyr‡ remarks "that the spirit of God descending from above made use of them as of an instrument, just as the quill strikes the harp or lyre to reveal to us the knowledge of divine or heavenly things." Tertullian§ observes "that he who has the spirit within him must necessarily be deprived of his senses, especially whenever he beholds the glory of God or when God speaks to him, as being then overshadowed by the divine power." Philo¶ puts it thus, that an eminent Christian must be eminently insane. "The human mind is, by Moses, symbolically called the sun. While our mind,

\* "Epist. ad Cler.," ix.

† "Legat. pr. Christian."

‡ "Cohort. and Gent."

§ "Adv. Marcon," i. 4.

¶ "Philo Quis. Divinor. Hæer. Oper.," lib. i.

therefore, shines and exerts itself within us, spreading as it were a meridian light through the soul, we are then in our right senses, without any divine influx. But, when the mind goes down, then a divine ecstasy and prophetic madness falls upon us ; for, when this divine light shines, the human sets ; and, when that sets, this again rises. ....For the mind is driven out of us when the divine spirit comes in ; and, when this again quits us, the other returns ; for it is not fit that mortal should cohabit with immortal."

So much for the insanity which was the glory and crown of ancient Christianity. Does the faith to-day tread in the solid path of wisdom and self-restraint? Has it learnt anything ; has it forgotten anything? We shall see. "Rhodes Clements, a farmer living near Leavenworth, Kan., attended a revival meeting the other week, and was converted. On his way home, in company with a religious lunatic, he developed violent insanity, killed his companion with a club, and, when found, had torn the dead man's heart from his body and was devouring it like a wild beast. He was overpowered and placed in an asylum. Two other men in the neighbourhood have since gone crazy owing to the prevailing religious excitement." The foregoing is from the first newspaper I lifted at random. I have, elsewhere,\* given one or two typical instances of Christian madness. To fill a volume with such instances would be an easy but horrible task. From another newspaper which lies before me I extract a typical account of a modern Revival Meeting :—

"In the Assembly Hall, Edward Street, Brighton, for some time past, a Mr. Woods, who announced himself as a faith-healer and a preacher of the Gospel, has been

\* "God and His Book," pp. 232-34.

carrying on a mission. At first the proceedings at the Assembly Hall were of the usual description of such gatherings. They have been described in the local press, and nothing out of the way would seem to have occurred at them beyond the ordinary display of heated fanaticism into which a subject for cure by faith must be worked before the impending regeneration of the physical body can be consummated.

“Things are somewhat altered now, and the proceedings which take place nightly at the old Assembly Hall are exciting a great deal of excitement, not to say scandal, in the neighbourhood.

“Under the title of ‘Agapemone,’ Greek for ‘love-abode,’ a conventional establishment of a singular kind, consisting of persons of both sexes, was founded at Charlynch, near Bridgewater, by Mr. James Prince, formerly a clergyman of the Church of England. He was afterwards joined by a Mr. Starkey, also a clergyman. Hence the designation, ‘Starkeyite,’ usually applied to this sect.

“Mr. Prince’s eloquence was of a peculiar kind. So strong was it, and mentally pungent in its nature, that when he was preaching loud howlings were heard in the barn where he used to hold forth. He seemed to fascinate all who came within his ken. Neighbouring clergymen’s families, farmers, smugglers, and everybody who heard him, were fatally influenced. He called himself ‘The Lord,’ and placed himself on a level with Jesus Christ. People went before him ‘bare-headed,’ in their fatuous belief of his divine power.

“Although he has not attained this high pinnacle in the minds of his disciples, it is alleged that Mr. Wood, the faith-healer, had ambitions that way. Adjoining the Assembly Hall is his residence. As Mr. Prince established a home for all who wished to live with him, so has Mr. Wood. Already a lady whose sister lives in

Brighton has fallen into his views concerning the desirability of being under the immediate ken of her pastor. She is a helpless invalid, and a comparatively wealthy woman. It is stated that she has advanced Mr. Wood £3,000 to purchase the Assembly Hall, or has purchased it herself.

“Poorer people than Miss Webb—such, we believe, is the lady’s name—have been induced to reside with Mr. Wood. Some he has ordered to come and live with him and dispose of their furniture, which he afterwards disposes of for ‘the cause.’

“Others, it is said, do not want any pressing to take this course, and do it voluntarily. They all declare, however, that when they do this they are under a manifestation of the Holy Ghost. Hearing a good deal of the ‘Manifestations,’ an *Evening Times* reporter sought some particulars of the proceedings connected with the establishment. He writes as follows :—

#### “A NIGHT’S EXPERIENCE.

“Proceedings of a startling character have recently been going on at a building well known in Brighton—namely, the Assembly Hall, in Edward Street. There, every night, occurs a Saturnalia of Sentimentalism, which, if not speedily stopped, gives promise of a speedy crop of religious lunatics in Brighton. To plunge at once *in media res* : I went to the Assembly Hall on Sunday night for the purpose of personally witnessing what has created so much excitement in the locality.

“The building has become noted for the many religious demonstrations of a varied character that have been made within its walls. But the present proceedings seem to throw completely into the shade all former operations. Mr. Wood’s conduct of faith-healing exhibitions a short time since created some stir in the town. Since then things have been going on very quietly at the

Assembly Hall until the last two or three months, when Mr. Wood has introduced into his services what he terms 'manifestations of the Holy Ghost.' These proceedings want to be seen to be believed. Latterly it has been difficult to get into the meetings, as, in consequence of the great indignation expressed by certain individuals at the proceedings, the entrances are sternly guarded. First one has to go through the ordeal of being closely scanned by a man stationed at a gate at the entrance hall. Then there is a large double door opening into the room, on each side of which men are stationed, and only by their consent is admittance gained, there being a code of signals between the outside door-keeper and those within.

"Arrived within, one sees nothing but a rather extensive hall of the ordinary kind. The congregation is seated on chairs and forms listening intently to the preaching of Mr. Wood, a venerable-looking old man, with olive-complexioned face and long grey beard. Suddenly there arises a gentle tapping of feet on the floor. From a soft unobstructiveness this reaches in volume till every member of the congregation seems banging away on the floor with his or her feet for dear life. Groans and ejaculations imploring pardon or mercy arise from the excited congregation. All the while the old man with the grey beard goes on preaching his peculiar tenets, unmoved at the din around him. Suddenly a listener rises up in apparent agony and falls down on the floor. Then arises a scene which is mild to liken to a room full of mad people. Some fall on the floor in apparent convulsions, and kick and groan, rolling over each other and bruising themselves in their frenzy. Others start up and career round and round the room, howling and praising the name of the Lord. Finally they too sink down exhausted, and others take their places.

“Thus the orgie is kept up; and all the time the old man with the grey beard is speaking, or, having worked his hearers up to an almost unsupportable frenzy, laughs and chats with his assistant or lieutenant who sits by his side and those within.

“The meeting is conducted in the usual manner—at first, with the exception of slight ejaculations, Mr. Wood preaching what probably he terms an improvement on the ordinary Gospel. As he increases in warmth of manner, however, a slight knocking sound is heard from the feet of several. This is the ‘manifestation of the Holy Ghost.’ ‘The manifestations’ do not, as a rule, commence until a late hour—ten o’clock or half-past.

“The scene is much more disgusting than impressive. Both males and females shout and dance about the room, and the rolling on the floor is indulged in indiscriminately. They lie shouting at the top of their voices, kicking and waving their arms about, or, as it often happens, lying in a sort of trance, probably from exhaustion. All this is ascribed by Mr. Wood as the ‘working of the Holy Spirit,’ which he admits he cannot account for.

“Nor is this all. It is alleged that some of these people, while in this trance-like state, see the Saviour. At Sunday night’s meeting, for instance, a woman (one of the members) stood forward and said that when she was suffering from a diseased heart, while she was under a ‘manifestation,’ she saw the Saviour three times, and each time he bore on his body the words, ‘I will heal thee.’ ‘And he has healed me,’ she continued. She added that her daughter had had a similar experience, and was also being made strong. The same evening, while chatting with the outside door-keeper, he informed the writer that his young daughter went under the ‘manifestations’ at home for an hour, two hours, and

even three hours at a time, and she had also seen Jesus-Christ.”\*

I have been present at meetings similar to that herein described. Men delirious that they have “found Jesus,” and young women rolling about on the floor, filled to such repletion with the Holy Ghost as to utterly disregard decency in dress and attitude, is a state of affairs well calculated to secure the purity and elevation of woman! A morbid and intense hyper æsthesia sets at naught the dictates of reason and breaks the bridle of self-control; and the poor-law guardians are puzzled as to what to do with the pauper infants that add to the earth’s want and misery, owing to ’Arry having found Jesus, and ’Arriet having been filled with the Holy Ghost.

\* *Sussex Evening Times*, Dec. 14th, 1886.

## CHAPTER XI.

*The Ignorant Alone are Christians—Jesus a Man of the Mob—The Gods of the Vulgar have Always been Repudiated by the Educated and Thoughtful—The Essential Christian Temperament Gravitates in the Direction of Sensuality—A Holy Man's Love-letters to another Holy Man's Wife—All Hyper-æsthesia Tends to Sensuality—Christian Foreign Missions: their Immorality—Leave "the Poor Heathen" Alone.*

It may be urged that this hyper-æsthesia and consequent sensuality can be predicated only of the ignorant. But, pray thee, who besides the ignorant are Christians? For whom is Christianity except for the ignorant? I never yet met a thoughtful and well-read man or woman who was an orthodox Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, or Parsee. No dogmatic religion whatever will stand the acid-test of thought. I deny not that there are thoughtful men who call themselves Christians; but discuss with them, and you will find that their Christianity is not the Christianity of Jesus or of Paul. It is not a living faith; it contributes no vital spark to the spiritual life. It is a specious repudiation of all that it is essential for Christianity to retain if it is to colour the tendency of morals and leave its impress upon social life. The educated who retain it at all retain it as a symposium of attenuated polemics and weakly quibbling metaphysics. Some persuade themselves that they are still Christians because, in their unconscious moral cowardice, they should be terrified to find that they had crossed thought's Rubicon and marched parasangs away from the faith of

their childhood. They go on trying to build the heavy masonry of their manhood upon the basis of kindergarten toys they laid down when they were children. Some, again, abler but less honest, give nominal adherence to the faith of the vulgar for considerations of pounds, shillings, and pence. Judas Iscariot is not the only person who has made thirty pieces of silver out of Jesus. Like Judas in their cupidity and treachery, they are unlike Judas in that they do not despair and hang themselves. Their tendency is to hang the like of me and all such as will not hold their peace, but will persist in exposing and attempting to ruin an ancient and profitable delusion.

Jesus was a man of the mob; his disciples and Church Fathers were men of the mob, and they taught a religion for the mob. Who else wanted a religion? The educated never had a religion, in the technical sense, and they never will. It is notorious that the educated classes in Greece and Rome no more believed in the pantheon than the learned of England or Germany believe in the calendar of Christian saints. The unlearned, in all places and in all times, have been the same—ready receptacles for gods and marvels and madness. The educated classes of different places and times differentiate somewhat, but the uneducated never: there are many ways of moving; there is but one way of standing still. The Christian mob has its hysterical conversion by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; the pre-Christian pagan mob had its “divination by fury” and the similar divine phrenzy connected with the Delphic Pythia and the Cumæan Sibyl.\* The wise of those days, as the wise of these, regarded the spectacle with, according to their temperament, sympathetic or contemptuous pity. Cicero, † for instance, asks in raillery :

\* See Virg. *Æn.* vi. 102.

† *De Div.* ii. 54.

“What authority can that madness have which you call divine, that a wise man should not be able to foresee what a madman can, and that he who has lost all his senses should presently acquire divine ones?” It is readily perceived why the Holy Ghost scourged St. Jerome for reading Cicero.

Even with the half-educated the essential Christian temperament seems to gravitate readily in the direction of lust and lechery. Our criminal courts bear evidence that, in sexual and unnatural offences, a certain mental and moral order of the Christian clergy are notoriously conspicuous. The Hebrew Scriptures themselves, often disgusting and occasionally voluptuous, lend themselves readily to the conducting of amours of which, in daylight, the world does not approve. The following incident may serve as a specimen of the pious profligacy not uncommon in the faith that has done so much to purify and elevate woman:—

“A sensational divorce case is about to occupy the New York tribunals. The petitioner is the Rev. Timothy A. Brown, a Methodist preacher, who, last year, married a quadroon young enough to be his granddaughter. The co-respondent is another preacher, the Rev. William J. Pymm, who is described as ‘a full-blooded negro.’ A few months ago Mr. Pymm occupied the pulpit of Mr. Brown’s chapel on a certain Sabbath evening, the minister himself being absent at another service. Mr. Brown returned to his home earlier than he was expected, and discovered a man climbing out of his bedroom window. He snatched up an axe and gave chase; but the supposed burglar escaped by swimming across an adjacent river. Next day Mr. Brown was unpleasantly enlightened by reading a letter sent to his wife by the promising young parson who had taken his duty on the preceding evening, which letter he chanced

to intercept, and the tone of it may be judged from this extract :—

If he did see us last night, as I escaped with difficulty by the window, what signified it to grieve or to be incapacitated by disastrous regret? I always now, by the grace of God, carry a defensive weapon, and some day, if an overruling Providence ordains that I carve that old black nigger's anatomy into pie-meat, it will be his own fault. I will not imbibe so much again; but I was depressed, and the Scripture says (Proverbs xxxi. 6), Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto him that is heavy of heart.

Mr. Brown, amazed, horrified, and furious, then searched his spouse's writing-table, and found dozens of letters, many of which have been printed in the New York papers. Here are a couple of extracts :—

I will be along Tuesday evening on the wheels of the whirlwind to see you when that rigging old black nigger of yours is on his round perverting the gospel, and then, as Lord Byron says, you will rise and cling to my embrace, for, as the Scripture says (see Ecclesiastes iii. 5), there is a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, and we must try to obey the Scripture and sweet love when the old nigger is away. Oh, Octavia, why did you not keep yourself alone for me? Why did you covenant to marry that contemptible object of scorn?

Glory, hallelujah, Amen, Octavia, how I admire, love, worship, and adore you; and, as the Scripture says (see Solomon's Song i. 2), let me kiss thee with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine. Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou wiltest meet me? Will it be in the little cabin by the creek's silent shore? Behold thou art fair, my love (see Solomon's Song i. 15,) behold thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes. Read all Solomon's Song through; it means you and me."

The Christian hyper-æsthesia, with its nude man-god, is peculiarly the hyper-æsthesia of incontinency; but I am, of course, free to admit that *all* states of abnormal excitation tend to sensuality, whether they are inspired by the fervour of Jesus-worship or the horrors of death and the grave. When the pestilence was doing its ter-

rible work in Messina, in 1743, even those who recovered gave themselves up to such atrocious lewdness that *they violated the dead bodies of young women who had died of the plague.*\* This is only an ordinary specimen incident of war or pestilence or abnormal circumstances that destroy the equilibrium upon which moral self-restraint is based. The true aim of living is philosophic calmness, not religious or demoniacal hysteria. A staid and educated balance of all the mental and moral and physical faculties, if it does not draw a man nearer to "God," will do something towards making man himself a god.

Those who find the money to equip Christian missionaries may mean good, but they, nevertheless, do evil. The various mission funds furnish a living for a number of canting and half-educated idlers for whom there is no room at home in the gospel-mongering line. For the man who chafes against his "fate's invidious bar," and finds in this old country no room for his energies, and therefore bids a reluctant but firm adieu to the land that contains the hearths of all his living friends and the graves of all his dead ancestors, I have nothing but sympathising respect, as he departs to expend his honest toil amid the strangeness of new associations and an untried world. But I cherish reprobation and disdain for the dapper and canting prig, with black coat, white choker, and soft, useless hands, who leaves our shores to ruin "the poor heathen," to vilify the women, and, eventually, exterminate the men—to introduce brandy and bibles and swearing and lying and gunpowder, and maladies that decency cannot name. The black coat goes first—the red coat follows. The bible takes the lead, but the bayonet is not far behind; the gospel may be active in the front, but gunpowder is ready in the rear. Where is the "heathen" nation we have Chris-

\* See Dr. Sylvester Graham's "Lectures on Chastity," p. 43.

tianised? The vacuity of Erewhon answers, Where? Where are the savage races we have attempted to Christianise? A mournful Nemesis answers, They are in their graves. The land in which they lived is Christianised; but that land knows them no more. Primitive truth and simple valour are in the tomb, and gin-shops and gospel-shops and gambling-hells and brothels and cheats and liars cover the realm where such curses or Christian civilisation were erst unknown—where, if all were wild and barbaric, it was at least honest and pure; where simple man was compatible with his simple environments, where life was a savage epic and death a religious dream, where the pure sky was not sullied with the smoke of cities and the breath of lies, where heaven lay near, and the meridian sun was the shield of the Eternal and the midnight stars were the eyes of God.

How long, O women of England, in your noble generosity and emotional benevolence, will you contribute to funds and get up bazaars that the apostles of canting imposture may be enabled to leave our shores to force down the throats of the heathen the dogmas of a pernicious superstition, the tenets of a baleful lie? It takes a savage of the meanest capacity to believe in your Bible and “find” your Jesus. From your gentle infancy upward *you* have been taught the Christian puerilities and immoralities. They have, unconsciously, stultified and deadened the facet of your intellectual perception, with which they come in contact; so that it is impossible for you to perceive how ludicrous and incredible they are to those who have not been trained as you have been trained. You, with all your hereditary and educational prejudices, fail to see the monstrous pretensions of “the blessed gospel;” but he is a very savage indeed who fails to perceive them. A simple Zulu chief asked Bishop Colenso questions which that erudite prelate could not answer, and set him to

inditing a work to which all the learning and all the piety of Christendom will never furnish an effective reply. A belief in your Scriptures is entirely incompatible with the intellectual bent of any modern people, either savage or civilised. Pray till your knees are as hard as horn, howl to heaven till you are as hoarse as a raven ; but you will neither reverse nor gainsay the irresistible fact—A belief in your Scriptures is quite incompatible with the mental bent of any modern people. Christianity does not succeed in widening her borders and in strengthening her stakes, in spite of your gold being found in tons and your priests in tens of thousands. Christianity is dying. As I have shown elsewhere,\* the Banner of the Cross does not at this hour wave over such wide regions of the earth as it did a thousand years ago. Christianity is dying—boding news to the priest, but to the world glad tidings of great joy.

The green sod over their graves is the testimony of how savage peoples have been Christianised. Begin how it may among a primitive people, the missionary effort eventuates in war and bloodshed, murder and extermination. O ladies of England, if you really cannot leave "the poor heathen" undisturbed, and turn your attention to the dirty and unromantic heathen English at your own doors, do send some other message than that your gospel brings. The message is absurd, inapplicable, fatal.

\* See "God and His Book," chap. xxiv.

## CHAPTER XII.

*The Gospel of the Mecca Camel-Driver v. the Gospel of the Nazareth Carpenter—Testimony of Joseph Thomson—The Christian Slave-owner—The March to the Sea Coast—The Slave-ship—Slave-procreation—The Quadroon.*

IF you must send a message to primitive peoples, send them the gospel of the Mecca Camel-driver rather than that of the Nazareth Carpenter. To the "poor heathen" the glad tidings associated with Jesus bring demoralisation and extinction; the glad tidings linked with the name of Mohammed are not in their effects so pernicious and baleful. The illustrious geographer, Joseph Thomson, himself a Christian, is constrained to bear the following testimony\* to the influence of Mohammedanism among the African negroes:—

"When I reached Central Soudan the sights and scenes I there witnessed burst upon me like a revelation. I found myself in the heart of Africa, among undoubted negroes; but how different from the unwashed, unclad barbarians it had hitherto been my lot to meet in my travels in Africa! I could hardly believe I was not dreaming when I looked around me and found large well-built cities, many of them containing 10,000 to 30,000 inhabitants. The people themselves, picturesquely and voluminously dressed, moved about with that self-possessed sober dignity which bespeaks the man who has

\* In the *Contemporary Review*.

a proper respect for himself. I saw on all sides the signs of an industrious community, differentiated into numerous crafts, evidence sufficient to show how far advanced they were on the road to civilisation. I heard the rattle, the tinkle, and the musical clang of workers in iron, in brass, and in copper. I could see cloth being made in one place, and dyed, or sewn into gowns or other articles of dress, in other places. In the markets, crowded with eager thousands, I could see how varied were the wants of these negro people, how manifold the productions of their industry, and how keen their business instincts. Almost more remarkable than anything else, *no native beer or spirits, nor European gin and rum, found place in their markets.* Clearly there were no buyers, and therefore no sellers.

“Outside the towns, again, no forest covered the land; the density of the population and its numerous requirements had made the virgin forest a thing of the past, and its place was taken by various cereals, by cotton and indigo, and other vegetable productions which minister to the inner and outer man. What could have produced this great change? for that a change had occurred could not be doubted. Certainly contact with Europeans had had *nothing to do with it.* The character of the industries, the style of art, indicated a certain amount of Moorish influence, giving them the direction which they had assumed. How had the first great steps been taken? No Moors or Arabs were to be seen among the people. No such races held the reigns of government, and, by their powerful influence, caused the introduction of new arts and industries. Evidently, whatever had been done had been done through the free aspirations of the negroes toward higher things. I was left long in ignorance of the agency which had thus transformed numerous tribes of savages into semi-civilised nations, ruled by powerful sultans, who administered justice of a high order (for

Africa), and rendered life and property safe. That agency was almost exclusively Mohammedanism."

What shouts of pious jubilation this statement would have elicited through Christendom if, to the creed of Christ and not that of Mohammed, Thomson could have attributed that negro civilisation and industry! Happy are these sons of Ham under the Crescent; miserable would be their fate under the Cross. What have Jesus and his faith ever done for the negro? He has been made a slave, and the question has been raised as to whether or not he had a soul. Whether woman has a soul has also, at various times, been a subject of Christian speculation. Happy negroes of Mohammed and Fatima; wretched negroes of Jesus and Magdalene! The Christian, quoting texts from his Bible, fell upon a harmless and defenceless people and shipped them over the ocean to do the work of beasts. The Christian slave-owner elevated woman by tearing her away from her husband and children and father and mother and native land to toil for his profit, with the lash of the whip ever liable to descend upon her naked back and limbs. The captive families had sometimes to march for hundreds of miles from their homes to the sea coast in order to be shipped for the cotton plantations. They were tied together in groups, bound together by thongs, and prodded on with sharp sticks, and slashed at with whips; and, manacled as they were together in rows, the stronger had to help to bear along the weaker.

Down glared the sun of the tropics. On, in front of their mounted drivers, with whips and fire-arms, marched, lashed to beams of wood, the men and women and children of Africa. Fatigue was insupportable, hunger a torment, and thirst an agony. The limitless waste of desert sand blistered and burnt and blazed like hell. No oasis, no palm-tree—only a boundless canopy of flaming sky; only a measureless ocean of fiery sand; only a

remnant of human beings frantic with thirst, mad with suffering. There is now not one in ten of those who were driven away from their happy homes by the white Christian. For miles on miles the dead lie behind in their thousands. The survivors, where possible, have drunk the blood of the dead to assuage their phrenzied thirst. Behind there is a death trail of hair and bones and stench, and vultures, tearing at carnage-ribbons made of human bowels. That larger jumble of bones was a man, that smaller a woman, that smallest a child. In front, chained to the beams, now much too long for their purpose, straggle on, in the phrenzy begot of suffering, the comparatively few in whom life is not extinct. Loud are the oaths and the curses of the mounted followers of Jesus. Merciless are their prods, remorseless their whips, and, ever and anon, the report of their muskets rings through the hot air, in the interests of *discipline*.

On stagger the beams, and the wretches that are chained to them, swollen, blistered, and bloody, and burnt and battered almost out of human shape. Their huge and parched tongues loll out of their heads, their eyes are wild with the light of insanity. The sand is stained with the marks of dysentery and great drops of blood from lacerated backs and limbs; and, ever and anon, a dead man, or woman, or child, is detached from the beam, flung back upon the sand, and left to the vultures. This is the species of civilisation Christianity introduced among the negroes, and the Christian priesthood supported the traffic, and Bible texts were preached from to condone the enormities of crime.

Then comes the Christian ship-owner, eager for the Mammon of Unrighteousness, to export the wretched remnant to the land of their slavery. Man, woman, and child of the survivors are stowed into the hold of the vessel in lodgments more dirty and confined and horrible than those in which any modern ship stows cattle.

Man, woman, and child are packed promiscuously into the same seething hold by day and by night, close as sardines are packed in a tin. For Christianity has ennobled man and elevated woman, and lent a halo of innocence to the life of the child.

The ship sets sail. Some phrenzied and half-dead relics of the awful march through the desert are pushed in among the hardy and more fortunate, in the hope that under the influence of the sea voyage, they may recover, and, in the American or West Indian market, make some dollars pass from the pocket of the Christian purchaser into the pocket of the Christian vendor. Some times this sordid hope was realised. At other times the over-exhausted and diseased did not recover. They died, standing among the living, and without space to lie down. The corpses were dragged out from amid the stench and filth and flung into the sea, where the shark became their sexton, his belly their tomb, and his rows of teeth their terrible epitaph.

But, occasionally, they had not been flung overboard in time to prevent the evils of contagion or infection. God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."\* But the dominant white man on the deck was scatheless, and the servile black man in the hold was ill, in dozens, in scores, then in hundreds. The plague threatened to visit with its indiscriminating terrors the dominant whites—the captain and crew. These dominant whites must be saved at all hazards. The hatches are nailed down, to prevent the escape therefrom of the cries of misery, the howls of delirium, and the germs of pestilence. Too late!—the white men have caught the plague; they die to a man. Down amid suffocation and darkness and disease, under the nailed hatches, lie

\* Acts xvii. 26.

three hundred human beings, men and women, indistinguishably mixed and intertwined, naked, rotten, and loathsome ; for Christianity ennobles man and elevates woman and casts a halo of innocence round the life of the child !

The wind blows, the sails are spread ; but dead hands are on the ropes. There is a dead man at the windlass, and a corpse at the helm ; and dead men lie on the deck, with grinning teeth and empty sockets glaring and staring up at the red, fierce sky. For the talons of the shrieking sea-fowl have bored out the eyes and torn away the lips and cheeks from the rows of teeth that there lie clenched in a ghastly grin. The slave-ship, this time, is a loss, not a profit. The ship is a coffin—nay, a graveyard, a floating graveyard, in which lie buried and unburied over three hundred human beings. On drifts that graveyard. Never more till the blare of the trump of the Archangel wakes the dead shall that crew respond to the call of “ All hands ahoy ! ” On drifts the necropolis. By day a blood-red sun glares down upon it from a copper-coloured sky. Solemn Night mourns over it with her silene shield and her starry eyes. Now the wind blows, and the ship drifts like fury. Now there is a calm, and the ship is motionless, or wheels slowly round on the axis of the centre of her keel. There rises a hurricane : on the vessel flies, as if impetuous to hurry her dead to hell. There is a rock ahead. There is a crunch and a crash, and a hollow roll of waters ; and the three hundred and over go down without a cry, and the sea-birds rise reluctantly from the feast of corpses as the waves close over the deck. This is no hyperbolic scene, O Christ, but simply a phase of the devil-work that has been done by those zealous in thy cause, and who quoted from the Book of God in support of their devilry. Behold the religionists and the religion which have done so much to elevate woman and

ennoble man and to effect the brotherhood of the human race !

And not here, even here, ends the record of how Christianity has civilised the negro. Over the degradation and ignominy of the slave-market, and Christians buying heathen men and women as they buy brute beasts, I draw the curtain in anger and shame. I dare not entrust myself to make special reference to the revolting fact of husbands being separated from their wives, and of some huge negro, reserved for the purpose, being, at stated times, let in among the negresses, that he might impregnate them, and thus provide a new relay of slaves, so that the Christian owner of these negresses might become rich, and keep concubines, and endow a church. Nay, not content on all occasions with the huge and healthy negro, who was kept just as a stallion is kept, the Christian slave-owner would personally supplement the offices of the human stallion. Thus a Christian man would register his abhorrence of those whom he pretended not to regard as human beings ! Thus his own quadroon children, born to him by his female slaves, became his slaves. Thus his revolting adulteries increased his property and his worldly substance, and placed him in a position by which his chapel could be enriched and his God be glorified. All his slaves were not pure negroes ; a few of them were quadroons, and when they were flogged the blood that reddened the lash of the whip was the blood that flowed in his own veins. How repulsive is the task of referring to matters to which no decent-minded man can allude without a shudder of horror ! But this Mokanna of Christianity cants and lies till, in avenging rage, I feel irresistibly impelled to tear away the veil ; and, if the face it concealed be unspeakably hideous, the fault is not mine : I did not make the face. By day and night I labour to transform those ghastly features into lineaments more

simple and honest and human ; or, failing that, to dash them to pieces with the axe of destruction.

Not always did the owner have the whips of his own drivers red with the blood of his own children. These children were liable to be sold to other planters, that their Christian fathers might coin gold out of their slavery and shame. I remember, when I was very young, reading Longfellow's verses, "The Quadroon Girl," and they left a melancholy and imperishable impression upon my memory. In the little epic the Planter and the Slave-dealer are brought together to do business. The Planter evinces an amount of reluctance to sell, because, on this occasion, the particular slave for which a price has been offered is his own daughter :—

" Before them, with her face upraised,  
In timid attitude,  
Like one half curious, half amazed,  
A quadroon maiden stood.

" Her eyes were large and full of light,  
Her arms and neck were bare ;  
No garment she wore save a kirtle bright  
And her own long, raven hair.

" And on her lips there played a smile,  
As holy, meek, and faint,  
As lights in some cathedral aisle  
The features of a saint.

" " The soil is barren—the farm is old,"  
The thoughtful Planter said ;  
Then looked upon the Slaver's gold,  
And then upon the maid.

" His heart within him was at strife  
With such accursed gains ;  
For he knew whose passions gave her life,  
Whose blood ran in her veins.

" But the voice of Nature was too weak ;  
He took the glittering gold !  
Then pale as death grew the maiden's cheek,  
Her hands as icy cold.

“The Slaver led her from the door,  
He led her by the hand,  
To be his slave and paramour  
In a strange and distant land !”

But this father would be a perfect repertory of Scripture texts. In the local gospel-shop his voice would ring out sonorously in the Wesleyan hymns, he would whine piously in the prayer, he would let his dollars ring ostentatiously into the plate to support the local gospel-grinder, or to carry bible and brandy to “the poor heathen ;” and he would devoutly murmur, *Amen !* when the gospel-grinder snivelled that Christianity had elevated woman and ennobled man ! Tear the veil off your hideous face, O Mokanna ! Would to God I could rend the skin off also, in the bitter detestation of Hypocrisy and in the temporal and eternal interests of the Human Race !

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Christian Repudiation of Slavery—Bible Texts in Support of Slavery—"If his master have given him a wife" !—This "Wife" at the End of Six Years—The Awl and the Door-post—Inhumanity to Man—The Real Blasphemy.*

"OH ! but," urges the Christian apologist, "the slavery which undoubtedly demoralises man and degrades woman is not Christian ; it is anti-Christian, and opposed to the Gospel with which Christ has made us free ! When Christianity came into the world it found slavery an established institution ; and it was Christianity that ultimately abolished it." Christianity, with her claws cut by humanitarian morals and her fangs extracted by the softening influence of modern civilisation, is ashamed of slavery, and now the above is found everywhere as her weak and fatuous apology. Let us examine it.

Granted that slavery obtained when Christianity was first ushered into the world. Had God himself, the God of the Christians, given any sanction or encouragement to this pre-Christian slavery ? Most distinctly he had. In the Holy Bible, of which he is the author, he ordains that certain human beings shall be slaves. Some 2,000 years ago he encouraged slavery, and he is the same God yesterday, to-day, and forever : he changeth not. Two thousand years ago or more we have his minute in favour of slavery ; and, down to the date of the latest writing from his hand with which he has favoured us, he has never rescinded that minute. Is my word on this point doubted ? Then to such as doubt

my word I will give God's word. In the interests of those who swear by the Bible, but do not read it, I furnish the following texts :—

“Both thy bondmen and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you ; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you ; of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land ; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession ; they shall be your bondmen forever.”\*

Those who urge that it was the heathendom that existed before the birth of Christianity that is responsible for slavery had better find some way of getting these verses in Leviticus expunged from the Book of God. May I suggest that they appoint a solemn fast day, in which they may importune their deity in prayer to ask him if he really wrote these verses, and whether, if he did write them, he really meant what he wrote ?

After, by the prayerful day of solemn fast, they have disposed of the foregoing passage, their God and they will still have to explain away the following verses, the tenour of which has such an obvious bearing upon the ennobling of man, the purity of the home, and the elevation of woman :—

“If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve ; and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself ; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself.”†

\* Lev. xxv. 44-6.

† Exodus xxi. 2-4.

“If his master have given him a wife!” just as his master might see fit to give his bull a cow, or make provision for the procreation of any of his other profitable cattle! “Given him a wife!” This is moral, this is dignified; this, of course, must have tended to the elevation of woman. The slave’s wife, as arranged by Jehovah, had no voice in the selection of the man with whom she was compelled to pass her life; and he, on the other hand, had no voice in the selection of the woman who was to be his wife. *Wife* indeed! I blush to write that holy word in such a horrible connection. The Lord our God, in his sacred book, calls this degraded she-creature a wife; but my cheek burns with shame to use the brutally-ironical nomenclature of the Lord our God. A wife who is a chattel, and not a person; a wife who belongs, not to herself, but to a slave-owner; a wife who belongs, not to her husband, but to a man who owns both herself and her husband; a wife whose labour, whose chastity, whose children, whose life, belong, not to herself nor to her husband, but to a man who bought her with a price, and set her apart to a particular man, that by him she might breed slaves, and thereby enrich the master to whom both she and her slave-husband (!) belonged! No intellectual light, no moral illumination, no comfort, no rest, no leisure, no home, no love; only toil and whips and degradation, and the coarsely-brutal engendering of new arms and legs and thews and sinews for servitude. *Wife!* O God, the mockery! The mare is sent out to the green field with her foal, the swallow nestles and warms her young in her clay cabin under the eaves, and the hare suckles the leveret under the hedge-row on the wold. But no such bliss of sacrifice and service and affection and tenderness vivifies and thrills the life of the slave-mother of the Lord our God. Her services cannot be spared; she cannot nurse and suckle her

child without monetary loss to her master, whose property she is. These chattels, the slave children, are valuable ; but it is necessary only that they should be so reared that they shall be strong enough to toil. It is not necessary—indeed, it is undesirable—that they should have the feelings of women or the instincts of men. The mixed and promiscuous rearing of them is relegated to old crones unfit for more laborious service. In many of the modern establishments the slave mothers saw their children but seldom. Thus, as far as any particular child was concerned, the mother was often uncertain whether she was the mother or not ; and, as to who was the father, there often existed a still greater uncertainty ; for, of course, the master had a prior claim to the husband, if he should care to exercise it or to delegate his privilege to any of his drunken white associates, or to any of his other black male slaves. In such relations as these the holy words, *husband* and *wife*, are used by the God whom the Christians accept and which I reject. With this revolting signification are the words “husband” and “wife” used in the Bible, and the Bible is the source of England’s greatness.

But to return to Jehovah’s special Biblical slaves. The husband at the end of six years of slavery might claim his freedom and depart. But, according to the arrangement of the Lord our God, he could not take the wife with him which his master had given him. “If his master have *given* him a wife.” If his master have given him a wife out on loan is clearly the meaning of the “inspired penman.” His master gave him a wife by which he might procreate slaves withal ; he also gave him a spade with which he might dig ; but neither the wife nor the spade was his absolutely. He could take neither the wife nor the spade with him when he left that master’s service. With the wife with which he had been provided he had reared children, with the spade with

which he had been provided he had reared wheat ; but the wife and the children and the spade and the wheat he had to leave behind him. Such is the God Jehovah's lofty standard of ethics ; such his conception of the moral elevation and intellectual dignity of the human race. And, remember, the slave this time is not one " of the nations of the heathen." He is an Israelite, one of God's own chosen people ; one of the posterity of Abraham, with whom he made an everlasting covenant. The slave this time, who has got the loan of a woman and the loan of a spade, is not an Amorite or a Moabite or Jebusite. The words of the sacred book are, " If thou buy a *Hebrew* servant."

But Jehovah has not quite done with his Hebrew slave. The slave can, as we have seen, claim his freedom at the expiry of six years ; but, if he depart, he must leave his wife and children behind him. Dear is freedom, dear the domestic ties. But Jehovah's Hebrew slave cannot have both. If his attachment to his wife and children is such that he cannot leave them, then he must give up his freedom forever and end his life in slavery. If, on the other hand, he should elect to claim his freedom, he must leave his wife and children and never see them more. If the slave should elect to remain with his wife and children, Jehovah's express words are, " Then his master shall bring him unto the judges ; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post ; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl ; and he shall serve him *forever*."\* If you show love for your wife and children, Jehovah punishes you for the unnatural crime by nailing your ear to a door-post preparatory to dooming you to penal servitude for life !

Even if the existence of such a God as this were

\* Exodus xxi. 6.

proved, I should absolutely refuse to do him honour. I should arraign him for his merciless inhumanity to man. In the creed we find that the Son spent three days in hell. If the Holy Ghost is responsible for the twenty-first chapter of Exodus from which I have just quoted, how long had he been previously in hell in order to become conversant with such hellishness? The Bible is a voluminous work, and notoriously inconsequent, irrelevant, and heterogeneous. If God ever condescended to write a book at all, there are, in the Bible, some sublime and poetic imagery not unworthy of the pen of God. But to assert that the major portion of the Bible is written by God is the rankest blasphemy which it is possible for man to perpetrate, and a blasphemy of which I shall never be guilty. When some future Tischendorf unearths the original MSS. of the Holy Scriptures and discovers that they are in the clear and unmistakable handwriting of the devil, I shall give this Tischendorf the Second a credence which I have never extended to Chillingfleet and the other Protestant divines who find in every word and every letter, from the first verse in Genesis to the last verse in Revelation, the tracery of the flaming pen of the Lord of Hosts.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*The Bible and Slavery—Beating “his Maid”—To Murder Add Torture—The Beaten “Maid”—The Drifting of the Poisonous Seed—Advantage of the “Maid-servant” of the United States Over the “Maid-servant” of the Bible—Testimony of Frederick Douglass—And thus Christianity Made Itself Known to Non-Christian Races.*

I HAVE not yet drawn attention to all the Lord our God has got to say in his holy book on the subject of slavery. Here is another minute he has, in his divine benevolence, jotted down on the subject :—

“ If a man smite his servant or his maid with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished. Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished ; for he is his money.”\*

Thus, according to the benign arrangement of Jehovah, if a man, to elevate her, beat “ his maid ” with a rod till she die under his pure, refining, and elevating blows, “ he shall be surely punished.” But if, with his rod, he do not quite beat out the lamp of life, but leave it sufficient strength to flicker on for a day or two before it, with a farewell glimmer, expires in the darkness of death, the God-indemnified murderer shall go unpunished ! This because “ the Lord our God is good, and his mercy endureth forever.” He graciously provided in his book, which is the source of England’s greatness, that, if you

\* Exodus xxi. 20-1.

murder a woman outright, you "shall be surely punished;" but that, if to murder you add torture, you may murder a woman with impunity.

Oh, it were mercy to the hapless maid that she should be slain upon the spot and thrust coffinless into the grave or thrown contemptuously to the dogs and vultures! But for the extension of this mercy her master and murderer would "be surely punished." To secure himself against punishment he must not murder her outright. With a "rod"—say the handle of an axe, or the first "rod" that comes to his infuriated hand—he may break in her skull and batter her face till it bears no trace of the features of humanity. Her poor helpless hands, which were held up in vain to save her head, may be swollen out of shape, discoloured, dislocated, and shattered. The splintered ends of her broken ribs may peer through her flesh and skin. Still, she was in the vigour of lusty life, and the golden bowl is not even yet completely broken, nor unloosed the silver cord. In her scant and humble raiment, bedabbled with mire and stiffened with blood, she is flung upon a litter of straw, to linger out the appointed period that, by the express edict of the God of the Bible, will exempt her master and murderer from all punishment on her account. There she lies for the lapse of an awful day, for the whole of an unspeakable night. To her day and night are one, for through the bloody and battered mass which once was her face the brightness of the sun or the lustre of the moon shall visit her eyes no more. In that battered mass there is one gash, not the widest and most horrible, which is recognised to be her mouth. The swollen lips are opened, and through the blood-clots and the broken teeth another slave-maiden is ordered to pour a few drops of a stimulant, to keep the sufferer in her suffering a few hours longer, so that the slave-owner may get out of the matter unscathed.

And God sanctioned that battered figure and that bloody straw, and God gave that vigorous tenacity of life that holds out during this day and night of suffering. God screwed up the nerves to endure these pangs of pain and agony. God made the air that is fashioned into groans by that shapeless mouth and by these ruptured lungs. These blue flies on the gory straw, and these wolves crunching human bones and tearing a human heart, are the undertakers whom God has sent to bury this woman whom the Bible has elevated. Do I believe that God ever ordered this? I do not; I will not, although a hundred Bibles should proclaim it in thunder. Do I believe that God could be guilty of this? I do not; and I will persist in this unbelief, even if you threaten me with the roar of a thousand hells.

And, oh, unspeakable mercy would it have been to the human race if Jehovah and his Jews had kept their Bible to themselves! But, in ages of which they had never dreamed, and in regions of which they had never heard, their crude mythology and cruel edicts took dire effect. Down through long centuries the Bible was a hone on which were sharpened millions of swords; the Bible was an anvil upon which were hammered and fashioned millions of fetters. O that the baneful God and the fateful Book had never been heard of, save on that Mediterranean strand and among the vines and olives of the Syrian hills! But, like poisonous seeds driven by the wind of Fate, they took root on a continent of which Moses had never heard. They drifted into the crevices of the Rocky Mountains; they sprang to luxurious life on the shores of the Mississippi; their upas branches darkened the Andes and cursed the cities of Mexico and the civilisation of Peru. And on the plains of the greatest Republic the world has ever seen the slave bent over his toil and writhed under the lash, with the Bible ever flung in his face and the words of Almighty

God ever dinned into his ears to justify the keeping of him in slavery and ignominy.

The maid-servant of the Bible was claimed to be the legitimate mother of the maid-servant of the United States. But, in the United States, the master could kill the maid outright ; it was not indispensable that he should, besides murdering, torture her. One instance furnished by Frederick Douglass, still alive while I write, and now one of the most venerable and honoured men in America, will illustrate that, in murdering a Christian slave, torture was not indispensable, as it was in the murdering of a Jewish slave. "The wife of Mr. Giles Hicks," writes Frederick Douglass, "living but a short distance from where I used to live, murdered my wife's cousin, a young girl between fifteen and sixteen years of age, mangling her person in the most horrible manner, breaking her nose and breast-bone with a stick, so that the poor girl expired in a few hours afterwards. She was immediately buried, but had not been in her untimely grave but a few hours before she was taken up and examined by the coroner, who decided that she had come to her death by severe beating. The offence for which this girl was thus murdered was this :—She had been set that night to mind Mrs. Hicks' baby, and during the night she fell asleep and the baby cried. She, having lost her rest for several nights previous, did not hear the crying. They were both in the room with Mrs., Hicks. Mrs. Hicks, finding the girl slow to move, jumped from her bed, seized an oak stick of wood by the fireplace, and with it broke the girl's nose and breast-bone, and thus ended her life. I will not say that this most horrid murder produced no sensation in the community. It did produce sensation, but not enough to bring the murderess to punishment. There was a warrant issued for her arrest ; but it was never served. Thus she escaped, not only punishment, but even the pain

of being arraigned before a court for her horrid crime."

On this continent of which Jesus never heard women were flogged in thousands, by the direct sanction of the Christian Church. "My master," says the quondam slave who is now the Hon. Frederick Douglass, "found religious sanction for his cruelty. As an example, I will state one of many facts going to prove the charge. I have seen him tie up a lame young woman and whip her with a heavy cowskin upon her naked shoulders, causing the warm red blood to drip; and, in justification of the bloody deed, he would quote this passage of Scripture: 'He that knoweth his master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.' Master would keep this lacerated young woman tied up in this horrid situation four or five hours at a time. I have known him to tie her up early in the morning and whip her before breakfast; leave her, go to his store, return at dinner, and whip her again, cutting her in the places already made raw with his cruel lash. The secret of master's cruelty towards Henny is found in the fact of her being almost helpless. When quite a child, she fell into the fire and burnt herself horribly. Her hands were so burnt that she never got the use of them. She could do very little but bear heavy burdens. She was to master a bill of expense; and, as he was a mean man, she was a constant offence to him. He seemed desirous of getting the poor girl out of existence. He gave her away once to his sister; but, being a poor gift, she was not disposed to keep her. Finally my benevolent master, to use his own words, 'set her adrift to take care of herself.' Here was a recently-converted man holding on upon the mother and, at the same time, turning out her helpless child to starve and die! Master Thomas was one of the many pious slave-holders who hold slaves for the very charitable purpose of 'taking care of them.'"

God and his Bible have elevated woman. For another specific instance of *how* God and his Bible have elevated her I refer to the testimony of Frederick Douglass, no anti-slavery romancer like Harriet Beecher Stowe, but a man who, as a slave, was an eye-witness of the horrible scenes he describes, and on whose body are still traceable the scars of wounds inflicted under a brutal system, enjoined by the Old Testament and connived at by the New. Where, by pious and God-fearing Christians, woman had so much done to refine and elevate her, generous efforts were, of course, put forward to dignify and ennoble man. I have space and temper to quote on this head one illustration only from Douglass : "Mr. Gore once undertook to whip one of Colonel Lloyd's slaves of the name of Demby. He had given Demby but a few stripes, when, to get rid of the scourging, he ran and plunged himself into a creek, and stood there at the depth of his shoulders, refusing to come out. Mr. Gore told him that he would give him three calls, and that, if he did not come out at the third call, he would shoot him. The first call was given. Demby made no response, but stood his ground. The second and third calls were given with the same result. Mr. Gore, then, without consultation or deliberation with any one, not even giving Demby an additional call, raised his musket to his face, taking deadly aim at his standing victim, and in an instant poor Demby was no more ; his mangled body sank out of sight, and blood and brains marked the water where he had stood."

Are these blood-curdling atrocities the work of wild, godless heathen or of Agnostics and anti-Christians? No ; they are the work of men who have "found Jesus," whose voice is the voice of prayer, who delight in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and who carry to their horrible work the Bible and the Lash, that the former may justify and even sanctify the latter. I am an

open enemy of the Church ; do not take this statement on my unsupported authority. Frederick Douglass was, and continues to be, an exceptionally zealous Evangelical Christian ; yet, in truth, he feels constrained to make the following significant admission : “ In August, 1832, my master attended a Methodist camp-meeting, held in the Bay-side, Talbot county, and there experienced religion. I indulged a faint hope that his conversion would lead him to emancipate his slaves, and that, if he did not do this, it would, at any rate, make him more kind and humane. I was disappointed in both these respects. It neither made him humane to his slaves nor emancipate them. If it had any effect on his character, it made him more cruel and hateful in all his ways ; for I believe him to have been a much worse man after his conversion than before. Prior to his conversion he relied upon his own depravity to shield and sustain him in his savage barbarity ; but, after his conversion, he found religious sanction and support for his slaveholding cruelty. His house was the house of prayer. He prayed morning, noon, and night. He very soon distinguished himself among his brethren, and was soon made a class-leader and exhorter. His activity in revivals was great, and he proved himself an instrument in the hands of the Church in converting many souls. His house was the preachers' home. They used to take great pleasure in coming there to put up ; for, while he starved us, he stuffed them. We had three or four preachers there at a time.”

And thus Christians made themselves known to non-Christian races ! Thus, as living epistles known and read of all men, by the cultured benignity of their example they stood like a wall of fire round the inviolable purity of woman and guarded, as with the sword of the archangel, the sanctity of the home. Alas that men should esteem so lightly the clay of which men are

formed and adore so blindly the dreams of which gods are made! A god that, girt with omnipotence, can sit up in heaven and know of a woman being flogged on earth shall never be worshipped by me. A faith that alleges that there is such a god shall ever find in me a pitiless and implacable enemy.

## CHAPTER XV.

*Did Christianity Enslave Only Inferior Races?—English Men and Women were Sold into Slavery—Sale of the Scots Covenanters into Slavery—Bothwell Brig and Greyfriars' Kirk-yard—The "Crown" and her Passengers—December 10th, 1679—"By Babel's Streams"—Wreck of the "Crown"—The Moul Head, Orkney.*

BUT this Christian slavery did not degrade men and women; it simply enslaved inferior races who were already racially and congenitally degraded. It made chattels of the descendants of Ham, and of them only; and that was justifiable, for had not Ham's God-fearing father cursed him and predicted of him, "a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren"? O Christendom, blush for the vile lie that your horrible slavery did not add to the degradation and misery of the simple and innocent children of the desert!

But even if, by an expression in your baleful old book, you were justified in buying the sons of Ham as you would buy calves, and selling the daughters of Ham as you would sell pigs, what justification would you plead for selling those who, by no stretch of unscrupulous ingenuity, could be construed to be descendants of the mythical Ham? I think, in reply to this query, I hear pious Christians deny the charge that they ever sold into slavery any save the sons and daughters of degraded races and undeveloped civilisations. Against this denial I must shock Christian piety by enlightening Christian ignorance. Christians have a knack of forgetting what it is embarrassing to remember, and of not knowing that

which it would be inconvenient to know. But Truth forgets nothing, whether the memory be sweet or bitter, and accounts no knowledge inconvenient. Be it known, then, that Christians, again quoting their bible and serving their deity, have sold into slavery men who were *not* of inferior races, men who did *not* belong to undeveloped civilisations, men who were *not* Pagan, but Christian? Need I be the Nemesis to remind my Christian countrymen that the sale of English men and women to the American plantations went on merrily during the reign of the first three Georges, and that in Scotland there were slaves down till the beginning of the present century? Are the Lowland Scots of an inferior race? Are they the products of an undeveloped civilisation? Are they not Christian?

Well, not in the dim and distant ages, but in the latter end of the seventeenth century, there were hundreds of Scotsmen, mixed up with Negroes, doing the work of beasts, and reddening the lash of their drivers with the hero-blood that won Bannockburn Moor and glowed in the gules of glory on the tragic slopes of Flodden Hill. Christians, quoting your Scriptures and singing hymns to your God, did you sell Negroes only into slavery? Nay, verily, you sold also the Scots, in your divine effort to elevate woman and ennoble man. You sold the Lowland Scots, whom the naked truth, apart from patriotism, compels me to claim as, take them for all in all, the finest race that exists under the circuit of God's heaven. They have their faults; but a little tract that has not, and never had, two millions of population all told, and yet had produced a Wallace, a Burns, a Scott, and a Carlyle, and scores of stars which in the firmament of history can never set, is no common corner of the Lord's vineyard, but is a land of which Man may be proud, and of which God has no cause to be ashamed.

And yet, only 200 years ago, the Lowlands of Scot-

land were a hunting ground for slaves. Who hunted for the slaves? Christians. Who were the slaves? Christians. In the American plantations, along with the Negro of Coromandel and Mozambique, the Scotsman of Ayrshire and Galloway toiled under the conditions of the most degraded slavery. Why were the Sproats, the Donaldsons, the Bryces, the Edgars, and the Kennedys of the Annan, the Nith, and the Dee, smarting under the whip of the "driver," and dying under the terrible sun of the tropics? Simply because they had been Christians of a very intense type, and they had got the worst of it in conflict with a type of Christian hardly less intense. These naked slaves were Scotland's stubborn Covenanters, who had taken *dourly* to the Bible, supplemented by the sword. But the Lord was, as usual, on the side of the strongest battalions. Devouring piety and grim valour could not enable them to hold their own at Rullian Green, did not empower them to break the ranks of Monmouth at Bothwell Brig, nor to escape from their sky-roofed prison in Greyfriars' Churchyard; and, as a consequence—there they are. There they are in the Barbadoes, far away from the brecken and the heather, far away from the desolate moor and the gloomy fir, far away from the conventicle and the moorland psalm, far away from the sermons of Henderson, the hymns of Cargill, and the prayers of Peden.

"They dinna see the broom  
Wi' its tassels on the lea,  
Nor hear the lintie's sang  
O' their ain countrie."

I have limned, and not with over-melodramatic pigments, the slave ship with her coprophagistic\* crew and

\* When the revolting symptom of *coprophagism* broke out among the slaves in their passage it was usual to throw them overboard.

with her three hundred dead going down into the ocean grave. The actual experiences of zealous Christian shipping equally zealous Christian into slavery affords at least one incident as picturesquely tragical. I will put that incident on record here, and may it remain in everlasting remembrance as a witness of how, for the love of heaven, Christianity has hated man—how, for the fear of God, Christianity has elevated woman. At the battle of Bothwell Brig, when, for lack of gunpowder on their part, the Covenanters were compelled to allow the royal forces to cross the Clyde, there was no longer a battle ; there was only a bloody massacre. Plaids and pitchforks and bible texts were but indifferent weapons when opposed to lance and steel plate and destrel and terrible cavalier oaths and blasphemies as rank as ever rang through the vaults of hell. Many were cut down in flight ; many were slaughtered where they stood, in their grim fanaticism quoting their text or singing their psalm, determined to give their life as an evidence that they never retreated an inch before the troops of the Man of Sin and the hosts of Belial. But the sword grew sick of massacre, and a large number of the insurgents were made prisoners and marched off to Edinburgh, where, there being no gaol accommodation for them, they were driven into Greyfriars' Churchyard. There, in the open air, exposed to semi-starvation and all the inclemency of the season, they remained for well nigh five months, the slightest attempt at escape being met with a volley of musketry.

Demented by privation and religion, some went raving mad, some tried to escape, or were supposed to have tried to escape, and were shot, and some died of wounds and disease ; but, when nearly five months had expired, there were 257 of them still alive—the skeletons and wrecks of brave and manly men, who, whatever were their follies and errors, had the courage of their convic-

tions, and, undrilled peasants as they were, had dared on the battlefield to try the issue against the British Crown. Two hundred and fifty-seven of them who had been possessed of youth and strength and constitutions of iron were still alive. What was to be done with them? Why spend money on the wretched crusts that were flung to them daily—why waste powder in shooting them? A truly Christian expedient, prompted by the ever repudiated yet ever accepted Gospel of Mammon, came to the rescue. Could these fanatically religious prisoners of war not be bartered for filthy lucre? Could these temples of the Holy Ghost not be sold to be yoked in with Negroes to draw ploughs, and have the said temples of the Holy Ghost well scourged with many stripes? Yes; this remnant of Bothwell Brig had a money value. These servants of God, by other servants of the same God, could be offered up on the altar of Mammon. They were bargained over to a holy man, William Paterson, a merchant of Leith. Paterson had a ship yclept the "Crown," and with this ship he essayed to transport his countrymen to America to be sold as slaves.

The "Crown" had barely accommodation for 100 men; but into her hold were crushed the 257 who had borne arms for Christ and his covenanted Kirk. In the hold there was not room to lie down; the decencies of life were impossible: there was plenty of dirt and very little food. There was no light and no comfort; but ever and anon rose the prayers of misery and the psalms of delirium. The weather was wild, cold, stormy, and tempestuous. Day was dark and night darker still. No sun shone through the drifting snow, no star through the murk and mist; and the wilderness of waters raged and boiled and plunged over the deck and leapt over the yard arms, and the cordage was stiff with ice and grisly with snow. Never since God was invented had he

more enthusiastic devotees and more heroic souls than these 257, who sang psalms to him day and night, and who, on the battlefield, had faced three kingdoms for his sake! Wodrow has put it on record that all they had suffered since, at Bothwell Brig, the banner of Christ went down in blood was as nothing to what the devoted remnant were suffering now. So severe was the weather and so stormy the sea that, a fortnight after leaving Leith, the "Crown" had got no further than the Orkney Isles.

On the night of December 10th, 1679, some of the inhabitants of Orkney caught, now and again, sight of a vessel through the drifting storm. The vessel was evidently in the direst distress. The sky was black, flakes of snow alternated with pelting sleet, the wind roared like an angry demon, the billows flung themselves into mountains, and the chorus of the ocean's thunder-song shook the foundations of the world. The eye could not discern what was sea and what was land, what was mountain and what was cloud. But ever and anon, for a moment, in the comparative lull of the wind and the wave, was an interlude of human voices, pitched in the key of agony and ranging the gamut of despair. Scott of Tankerness, at the head of two or three seamen, manned a boat and led a forlorn hope into the ocean. With mighty voice Scott cried to the captain of the ship—the ship was the "Crown"—to steer to a certain point to avoid destruction. The captain cried back, "If the vessel cannot ride where she is, she may go to ——!" She could not ride where she was, and to —— she went. More terrible blew the wind. The anchor held fast, but the cable snapped like a thread; and, like a mad thing rushing on to perdition, the "Crown" dashed shoreward, where jagged rocks stretched far out like the great saws of the god of the sea. As the "Crown" drove before the wind to her inevitable doom, down in the

darkness, the Covenanters joined together and sang the hundred and thirty-seventh psalm :—

“ By Babel’s streams we sat and wept,  
 While Zion we thought on ;  
 In midst thereof we hung our harps  
 The willow trees upon ;  
 For there a song required they  
 Who did us captive bring ;  
 Our spoilers called for mirth and said,  
 A song of Zion sing.  
 O how——”

This psalm, which through years of fierce persecution had rung over the Scottish moorlands and waked the echoes of the Scottish hills, had often been interrupted before, as the sentinel espied in the distance the dancing plumes and the shining blades of the men of blood ; and the conventicle had, on the spur of the moment, to make up its mind whether it would fight or flee. But now the psalm was interrupted by a mightier than Claverhouse, a fiercer than Dalzell, a more merciless than Lag. The “ Crown,” drifting before the tempest, had struck, with the impact of a thunderbolt, a ledge of rock projecting into the waves. The holy and brave, the men from whose loins I am sprung, the men whose blood boils in my veins as I write, were still below in the dark, *with the hatches battened down* by the order of the captain’s wife, who had had her brains dashed out by the falling rigging the moment she gave the fiendish command.

But now there is no deck, no hold, no mast, no hatches ; that jutting rock of the Orkneys has left the “ Crown ” a shattered and shapeless ruin. To the shore, O God—to the shore ! In vain ! Some, by the waves, are dashed against it lifeless ; some, but far fewer, are dashed against it living, and clamber up the Moul Head. But, even on the shore, the remnant who had fought under the banner of the Lord at Bothwell had not seen

an end of their suffering. They were weak with hunger, faint with fatigue, their limbs stiffened under their frozen clothes, and they were blinded by the drifts of snow which were dashed in their faces by the December wind. They sank in death in the fields round Deerness ; and round Scarvating, each beside his pool of frozen blood, lay more than one noble but unknown hero of the Covenant, under the cliff from the summit of which he had fallen in the snow and the darkness.

Of the 257 more than 200 perished on that fatal 10th of December. Their flesh never writhed under the driver's whip, they never in slavery sang the songs of Zion and Scotland. The frowning headland of the Moul is their only monument, and the waves round the shores of the distant Orkneys sing their requiem forever and forever.

And forever and forever shall the valiant and free souls of the human race execrate the accursed creed that shipped these men to slavery, and yet cants with a hypocrisy nearly as incredible as it is revolting that it has been a benign influence, that it has been the benefactor of the human race, that it is to it we owe the fact that our men are noble and our women pure !

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Jesus Passively Responsible for the Slave Trade—Too Busy Walking on Water and Cursing Fig-trees to Attend to such a Trifle as Slavery—"Render unto Cæsar the Things which are Cæsar's"—The World's Real Redeemers—Passages from the New Testament Supporting Slavery—Where Jesus is Most Honoured Woman is Most Dishonoured—The Position of Woman among the "God-fearing Boers."*

"OF course the Old Testament favours slavery," concedes the Christian apologist; "but the old dispensation was done away with in Christ, and the New Testament contains no passage which sanctions man having property in man." In spite of the untenability and even absurdity of this plea, I have heard it advanced over and over again by those who love their New Testament, who swear by their New Testament, who swear *on* their New Testament, who do everything respectful to it except read it.

In the time Jesus is claimed to have lived slavery was an institution. Every nation around him had endorsed it, no nation whatever had repudiated it. Man held property in man. Man sold man, immortal soul and all—the immortal soul for which this Jesus had come to die. Living bones and thews and sinews were publicly sold, and those who bought them had the right—and exercised it—to turn them to servile drudgery. Human backs were sold that human hands might lacerate them with rods and thongs; but Jesus protested not. Human hearts, with all their tender emotions, with all their holy

yearnings, with all their heroism, with all their love, were sold ; but this Jesus stood by and was dumb. The blood-guiltiness of keeping slaves devolves upon Jesus ; for he who actively or passively condones a crime is *particeps criminis* with him who perpetrates it. The records of his life are replete with vituperation against many of the social, personal, and ecclesiastical angles with which, in his self-sufficient impracticability, he came in contact. He could curse like a trooper anything, from a fig-tree up to a city like Chorazin ; but it is not on record that he ever cursed slavery. There is plenty of "Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees!" but in all his maledictions there is not the faintest echo of an expression like "Woe unto you slaveholders !" He was an irregular, itinerant, and unqualified preacher, and he was jealous of the Scribes and Pharisees, as the herbalist and quack is jealous of the qualified and successful medical practitioner. The Scribes and Pharisees were men of learning, culture, family, and social position, and were, as a rule, men of unblemished reputation. They had pursued the studies which discipline and balance the intellect, while he, alas, was not privileged to associate with more refined companions than Galilee villagers and peasants, nor to breathe a more intellectual atmosphere than that of a carpenter's shop. He assailed his superiors with that bitter and vulgarly-expressed jealousy which a carpenter preacher of the present hour might be expected to entertain against gentlemen and scholars like Archdeacon Farrar and the Bishop of Durham. The most ignorant of all ignorance is that ignorance which is too ignorant to suspect that it is ignorant. It is amusing ; but, to the humane mind, the amusement it affords is compassionately alloyed with pity.

Jesus was visionary and eccentric, and, except when carried away by the gusts of his irascible temper, meant well ; but, besides lacking in mental equilibrium and a

practical turn for affairs, he had no idiosyncratic force and originality, no invincible determination of will, no exalted level of moral sympathy, no genius whatever, and even no talent of the exceptional and commanding order. The instrument of his reform was a pair of scissors, which he used petulantly in the pruning of twigs. Not his to wield the axe with mathematical precision and titanic force on the trunk of the tree. He could set himself to the nugatory task of inveighing against "long prayers," and against the "tithing of mint and rue and all manner of herbs;" but beyond these shallow trifles he had neither the flight of perception nor the grasp of intellect to go. He found the people in rags and on the dunghill; he found Cæsarism in purple and on the throne; but such a bold conception as to revolutionise this state of things, or even to ameliorate it, apparently never occurred to him. With the circumscribed mental and moral range of a mediocrity, he advised "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." He had never seen a republic, nor, apparently, realised a theocracy; he had seen only a kingdom, and therefore heaven itself was, to him, only "the kingdom of heaven." He could enjoin men to *pray*—any servile priest can do that; but he never had the heroism to say to men, BE FREE! He could call those whom he detested "vipers" and "devils;" but these terms he flung at men as good, or better, than himself, and for trifling differences from himself on matters of hair-splitting doctrine or paltry ceremony.

To the mountain peaks of human grandeur Jesus had never the strength to climb; to the abysmal valleys of human abasement he had never the courage to descend. Into the celestial temple of Thought he could not enter, and it was not his to cross the threshold of Passion's flaming fane. Round him all the world through were the lashing of whips and the clanking of chains; but he spake no word of disapproval thereat: he was too much engaged

in walking on the water and in drowning Gadarean swine. Far away down the corridor of the ages were the unborn reformers, who were to be the real redeemers who were to break asunder and forever the fetters of the slave. "Infidel" France, with her public repudiation of Jesus, led the battle-van of Freedom; and, on a continent of the existence of which Jesus had never dreamed, the unconquerable rearward squadrons were led on by the Parkers, the Pilsburys, the Garrisons, the Phillips, and the Wrights—heretics to a man, who, knowing nothing of the rights of heaven, struck valiantly at the wrongs of earth, and conferred a service on the human race compared with which the immaculate conception is a comic myth and the crucifixion a tragic dream.

But does the New Testament endorse the institution of slavery? Let us see.

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour."\*

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters."†

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling."‡

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."§

The Christian apologist's temerity would exceed his discretion who, in the face of these passages, would contend that the New Testament does not set its endorsement upon slavery. Drowning men grasp at straws, and desperate polemics grasp at shadows. I think I hear an opponent, strong in credulity, but weak in criticism, impress upon me with a piously triumphant smile that the word in the passages I have quoted is "servant," *not* "slave." True; but the New Testament claims to

\* 1 Tim. vi. 1.

† Titus ii. 9.

‡ Ephesians vi. 5.

§ 1 Peter ii. 18.

be "translated" out of the "original tongues," as every pious sophist knows; and we will take the pious sophist's advice and turn to "the original tongues." It is unfortunate for the pious sophist and other "followers of the lamb" and members of the fraternity "yours truly in the bowels of Jesus" that the word translated "servant" is δούλος, and that all Hellenic lexicographers, from Schleusner to Liddell and Scott, render δούλος a *slave*, a *bondman*. In Greek there are such distinct words for hired servants as *πελα*, *μισθιος*, and *θητες*. Moreover, the very passages I have quoted were used by slave-owners and their parson-myrmidons for ages to justify the holding of slaves; and it was not till civilisation and humanitarian ethics revolted against the institution of slavery that it became discredited before the bar of the civilised world, that the Greek lexicon became an awkward witness, and the Holy Ghost a writer it was extremely difficult to effectively defend.

It is not following Jesus, or rather the flagitiously complex system he is popularly believed to have originated, that has made man be true to man and honourable to woman. Rather, in proportion as men have abandoned the hallucinations connected with Jesus have they had the intellectual width and the moral elevation to be generous to man and noble to woman. To-day it is where rudeness and crudeness and narrowness hold the strongest sway that Jesus is treated with the highest respect and Woman with the lowest dishonour. Those whom Mr. Gladstone referred to as "the God-fearing Boers" of the Transvaal furnish, perhaps, the best type of unadulterated Christian that is now to be found on the surface of our planet. They are deeply imbued with the religious sentiment of Holland, their mother-land, rich with the memories of torture-flame and martyr-blood and the divine valour of religious heroics, Their governmental system is not complicated; their

society is simple ; their lives are blameless when tried by the standard of the negative virtues. They are, indeed and of a truth, "the God-fearing Boers." The New Testament is in their hands almost as often as the rifle. They have never read a line of sceptical literature. They live in that Arcadian ignorance which alone is congenial to Jesus and the reception of his gospel. That being so, how do they elevate and honour woman ? They, with the New Testament in their hands and hymns upon their lips, elevate her upon the triangle and honour her with the "cat."

The editor of the *Eastern Province Herald* writes from Port Elizabeth, calling attention to the following sickening story of Boer brutality in the Transvaal. He says : "We take it from the *Transvaal Advertiser*, and the accuracy of the account is vouched for by that paper :—'My name is Sara. I am about twenty-four years of age. On Monday last I was discharged from the Pretoria gaol, after being imprisoned for two months. I was sent to prison because I was said to have been impudent to a white woman. I was not impudent, but Mrs. D. said that I had enticed the girl Rachel to run away. The Fieldcornet came with a black constable and said, "Catch that impudent woman, and take her to the prison." Maraba said that I should be taken to the Landdrost first. I was taken to the Landdrost. The Landdrost said that I must pay a fine of £3, or go to the tronk for two months and receive twenty-five lashes. Mrs. D. said that I had come to entice her girl away, and that Charlotte was the impudent one. Charlotte was fined £1 10s., which was paid. Rachel was fined £1 10s., which was paid by S. Coetzee, and she had to work it out. I was fined £3 ; but, as I could not pay, I was sent to the tronk, and ordered to get twenty-five lashes. I was locked up for three weeks, and then the Landdrost come to the tronk and ordered

me to receive the twenty-five lashes while he stood by. I was tied up by the wrists and legs, and was flogged until I fainted. The blood came out of my back where I was flogged. I had all my clothes taken off with the exception of my chemise, which was held round my loins. It was after breakfast that I was flogged. When the Landdrost came I was washing his clothes. When I recovered from my faint I found myself on the blanket. In the night of the day that I was flogged they sent for a doctor. He pulled open my mouth, and put some stuff to my nose. I think he came in the middle of the night. The next day I was told to go and finish the washing of the Landdrost's clothes. His maid, Mavisa, who was in the tronk, told the Landdrost that I would not wash the clothes. I did not say so; but I could not wash, as my back was too sore. Mavisa had been twice flogged by order of the Landdrost. The first time she had fifteen lashes, which were inflicted in the men's yard. She was stripped, her chemise being tied about her as mine was. She was then flogged on her shoulders. She was put in the tronk for two days on that occasion. When she went out she went to the Landdrost's house, and, as she refused to work in consequence of her back being sore, she was sent back for four days, and to receive a flogging of twenty-five lashes. As her back was too raw to be flogged again in the same place, I was told to roll up her chemise, so that she could be flogged lower down. That flogging took place in the women's yard. Mr. Van Reenen was present, and the woman was flogged by "Jack." Van Reenen would not let me be beaten at first, because, he said, I was too weak. About three weeks after I was put in the tronk the Landdrost came up in order to see that his sentence on me was carried out, and I was tied up and flogged in his presence, the Landdrost standing in front of me. When the Landdrost was told that I would not finish the

washing of his clothes he ordered me to be put in the stocks, and I was kept in the stocks for two days and two nights, and kept without food the whole time. I know of six women being flogged while I was in the tronk. All were flogged with the cat-o'-nine-tails, and all were beaten by Jack, who does all the flogging in the gaol.'”

So much for the position of woman in a simple and God-fearing community, uncontaminated with the vices of the higher civilisations of Europe. So much for men who never heard of Herbert Spencer, who would burn “God and His Book,” who read only their New Testaments, and who know only Christ and him crucified.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*Conservatism of Christianity—The Book of the Rocks versus the Book of God—Clerical Utterances in Support of Slavery—The Selling of Living Human Flesh—The Golgotha of History—Clerical Opinion on the Slave Marriage—Infecundity and Mortality among Slaves—The Testimony of Haines and Falconbridge—The Pious Mother and her Sailor Boy.*

As Christianity, half vanquished by Humanity, is now ashamed of slavery and repudiates it, it devolves upon us, in the cause of truth, to show that an effective repudiation is impossible. Christianity, although it pretends to be a divine *eidolon*, majestic as heaven and mighty as God, is only a base and opportunist Proteus that is ever altering its form and fashion to suit the secular exigencies of the ages through which it drags its hypocritical career. As long as it possibly could it stood by its flat and immovable earth, and did its best to keep the earth immovable by thrusting Galileo and Copernicus into the dungeon. As long as it could it represented the world as "created" in six literal days; but to prevent itself from becoming a laughing-stock it got to extending the "days" into "indefinite periods;" the seventh day, on which God rested, being, of course, one of these "indefinite periods," although it is still limited to twenty-four hours; and the other days alluded to in the same conjunction have become "indefinite periods" to assist the professional gospel-monger out of a quandary: he presumes upon the crass non-intelligence of the devout, and upon their being too pious to discover that, if "the

first day" consisted of several millions of years, there is nothing to show that "the seventh day" comprised a shorter period—nothing except the fact that geology demands that the six days should be of enormous duration, and that theology does not demand that the seventh day should be so long: it requires longer for certain flora and fauna to live and flourish and pass away than for a parson to preach a sermon, a day of twenty-four hours being quite long enough for that. Christianity, moreover, in spite of its Bishop Usher and other pious chronologists, has had to give up its paltry 6,000 years since the "creation" of the world. By this childish computation this religion of ignorance stood as long as it could possibly stand. Usher, the theologian, had read the age of the world in the biblical chronology of the patriarchs; but Lyell, the geologist, read the age of the world in the geologic strata of the earth's crust. Benet Dowler and others found the remains of men who had, incontestably, lived thousands of years before the biblical date of the "creation" of the world; and again, to prevent himself from being a laughing-stock, the theologian had to confess himself overmastered by the geologist: the Book of the Rocks gave the lie to the "Book of God." "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," quoth the Bible; and, obedient to the mandate of the Bible, the flames of torture burnt for terrible century upon century, and in the name of God the cinders and ashes of multitudes of women were blown by the wind over the fields of Christendom. Down to modern times the learned and humane Sir Matthew Hale, blinded by Bible-leaves, set the law in motion against witchcraft; and God's anointed king, James I., Defender of the Faith, and to whom the authorised version of the Bible is dedicated, wrote a book in favour of Biblical barbarity.

The rise of keener intelligence, bringing "sweeter manners, purer laws," engendered a cult of men who

shrank from the biblical barbarity with horror, and resolved to burn "witches" to death no more, in spite of the Bible and Moses and God. Irresistibly impelled by the wholesome breeze of public opinion, the theologian retrimmed his sails, and, steering with the current, gave up Moses and the Bible and God. It was precisely so with slavery. Because it found support in the baneful Bible, Christianity supported it till the latest possible hour. The Rev. Professor Drew mouthed only the language of millions of his co-religionists when he said "slavery was established by divine authority among even the elect of heaven, the children of Israel."\* The Rev. James Smylie, M.A., Mississippi, simply gave expression to the sentiment that animated the breast of untold multitudes of the followers of Jesus when he thus harangued: "If slavery be a sin, and advertising and apprehending slaves, with a view to restore them to their masters, is a direct violation of the divine law, and if the buying, selling, or holding of a slave for the sake of gain is a heinous sin and scandal, then verily three-fourths of all the Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians in eleven States of the Union are of the devil."†

In regard to the slave trade, "the noblest eloquence was expended.....in vain.....There were many strictly Christian people who, like ants, made it a solemn law to themselves to follow in the track over which the burden of their faith was first carried, and who, holding the same belief that was held before the Flood, were convinced, and not to be put out of their conviction by any human means, that the slave trade (or slavery, for it was all one to them) was an old Scriptural institution."‡

The same work, in treating of the difficulties which

\* *The Quarterly Christian Spectator*, 1838, p. 25.

† "Five Hundred Thousand Strokes for Freedom," Tract p. 20.

‡ Bell's "Life of Canning," pp. 214-15.

lay in the path of the Abolitionists, bears special stress upon the antiquity of the institution and the direct sanction it receives from the Book of God. "The greatest stress of all was laid on the antiquity of slavery. This was a difficulty which paralysed many persons of tender conscience. They felt.....that slavery was cruel, that it blighted human beings, crushed the god-like part of them, and reduced them to the condition of the lower animals. But it was a *Sacred Institution* ; it had flourished in the earliest ages ; it had a *Divine Origin*."\*

I have said enough to establish inexpugnably the fact that both the Old and New Testaments countenance slavery, and that the abhorrent institution has, during the last eighteen centuries, found in the ministers of Christ its most zealous apologists and most redoubtable champions. I have, moreover, already given one or two lurid glimpses into the abyss of this hellish traffic. I have placed an enormously heavy responsibility for the maintenance and intensifying of the horrors of slavery upon the shoulders of the Christian Church. And, to every sane judgment, it must appear incontestable that, if Christianity for 1800 years fostered the slave trade, Christianity's claim to have elevated woman or to have ennobled man is not only not based on truth, but is founded upon a most audacious and truculent falsehood.

Several who are clear of the suspicion of being Christian apologists have advised and remonstrated with me on the hypothesis that, for melodramatic and rhetorical effect, the furtive glimpses of the abominations of the slave trade which I have already given are too highly coloured. I would, for the reputation of human nature, that this were the case. I earnestly wish that, in the interests of the race to which I belong, I could, in the light of the facts of the case, throw upon the picture I

\* Bell's "Life of Canning," p. 218.

have drawn a less hellish glare of iniquity. No pen ever wielded by mortal will have, on the one hand, subtle casuistry enough to exonerate Christianity from guilty participation in the slave trade ; nor, on the other hand, will ever pen in the hand of man born of woman be able to fire the heart and brain of human kind with a true and adequate conception of the degradation and suffering and crime involved in the selling of living human flesh. No plague that ever tainted the globe, no war that ever devastated our planet, has, to the extent that slavery has done, left its blight and its curse upon the race of man. Exaggerate ! I cannot exaggerate. If I indulge in the most extravagant figure, it falls far short of the literal truth ; if I betake myself to the wildest hyperbole, it is dwarfed by the tremendous iniquity of my subject. Christian slavery is the Golgotha of History. Its mountains are of human bones, its rivers are of human blood, its rains are of human tears, and the winds that roar over it forever and ever are the concentrated cries of suffering and shrieks of agony from untold millions to whom the book of knowledge was never opened, who never tasted of the cup of joy, for whom there was no freedom, no wife, no child, no home ; nothing but years of cant and prayer and toil and flogging, till the grave opened its door in mercy to let the bleeding and weary exile in.

Christian slavery is now almost, if not altogether, a thing of the past. It is rapidly receding from the memories of living men and finding its place in the page of history. Many, I apprehend, of the younger of my readers know next to nothing about it. That an iniquity so unspeakable should have found its support in sermons and prayers down almost till yesterday is a fact so astounding that, at first blush, to many, it will be hardly credible. It therefore devolves upon me, in this connection, to indicate briefly what slavery actually was.

And when it is heard from the pulpit that Christianity has elevated woman and humanised the race, the hearer can point to slavery and assert that the pulpit lies. I shall ~~take~~ mainly as my authorities the Reports of Parliamentary Commissions, public documents, and the works of accredited African travellers.

I have already stated that the "marriage" between slaves was no marriage. In 1835 the Savannah River (Baptist) Association was asked the question, "Whether, in a case of involuntary separation of such a character as to preclude all prospect of future intercourse, the parties ought to be allowed to marry again?" And the answer of the Association was, "That such a separation, among persons situated as our slaves are, is, civilly, a separation by death; and they believe that, *in the sight of God*, it would be so viewed.....The slaves are not free agents, and a dissolution by death is not more entirely without their consent and beyond their control than by such separation."

The Rev. Dr. R. I. Brickenridge says: "The system of slavery denies to a whole class of human beings the sacredness of marriage and of home, compelling them to live in a state of concubinage; for, in the eye of the law, no coloured slave-man is the husband of any wife in particular, nor any slave-woman the wife of any husband in particular; no slave-man is the father of any children in particular, and no slave-child is the child of any parent in particular."

The Rev. C. Jones said of the slave marriage: "It is a contract of convenience, profit, or pleasure, that may be entered into or dissolved at the will of the parties, and that without heinous sin or injury to the property interests of any one."

And yet for Christianity it is claimed that "it elevated poverty from a curse into a beatitude.....It sanctified marriage from little more than a burdensome convention.

into little less than a blessed sacrament.”\* “Elevated poverty,” “blessed sacrament” indeed! Does the pulpit take its dupes for irredeemable idiots that it dares to insult their intelligence with such mendacious effrontery?

The law of propagation had set its canon against the sexual relationships that Christianity had made obligatory among slaves. The race could not breed effectively in slavery. However great the number of slaves that might be introduced into America, they died fast and multiplied slowly, and had still to be drained in vast numbers from Africa that the white Christian might, through their toil and death, make a friend of the Mammon of Unrighteousness. Dr. Bowring† wrote: “I have heard it estimated that five or six years are sufficient to carry off a generation of slaves, at the end of which time the whole has to be replenished. This is one of the causes of their low market-value. When they marry *their descendants seldom live*; in fact, the laws of nature seem to repel the establishment of hereditary slavery.”

Captain Haines, R.N., in his evidence before the Parliamentary Commission‡ in regard to the voyage of exile over the Atlantic, spoke of the pestilential crowding between decks, “where the scalding perspiration was running from one to the other, covered also with their own filth, and where it is no uncommon occurrence for *women to be bringing forth children*, and men dying by their side, with, full in their view, living and dead bodies chained together; and the living, in addition to all their other torments, labouring under the most famishing thirst.”

Falconbridge, who had acted as surgeon on board a

\* Farrar's "Life of Christ," pp. 728-29.

† "The Slave Trade and its Remedy," p. 193.

‡ Class B., p. 70.

slave-ship, gave his evidence before the Commission, and bears testimony that on the voyage across the Atlantic the most unbounded license was given to the whites as regarded the slave-women; and he admitted that they (the Christian whites) "are sometimes guilty of such brutal excesses as disgrace human nature." The noble (?) English sailor, with his proverbial white-haired mother praying for him far away in her cottage in the Devonshire village, the family Bible on the window-sill and the roses clustering over the door, was let loose for a brutal carnival upon these poor women from the banks of the Gambia or the Bonny River. The brothers of the women were there; the children of the women were there; the husbands of the women were there, witnesses of inconceivable brutality, of unspeakable shame. The women were dying of nostalgia and seasickness. "My profession requiring it," says Falconbridge, "I frequently went down among them, till, at length, their apartments became so extremely hot as to be sufferable for only a very short time. But the excessive heat was not the only thing which rendered their situation intolerable. The deck—that is the floor of their rooms—was so covered with the blood and mucus which had proceeded from them, in consequence of the flux, that it resembled a slaughter-house. It is not in the power of human imagination to picture to itself a situation more dreadful or more disgusting."\* And these women, in the presence of their brothers, children, and husbands, were the victims of the God-fearing English sailor. The proverbial Bible his mother gave him at parting, and between its leaves a lock of hair from English Dora, his sweetheart and the pride of the village, were in his sea-chest. And yet among those pitiable women, dying of dysentery and loaded with

\* Falconbridge, p. 19, etc.

chains, he is indulging in orgies at the bare thought of which average human nature shudders. And still in that cottage far away in Devonshire the aged mother prays and prays for Harry, her sailor boy, and the gilt of the big Bible gleams on the window-sill; and the roses, blushing in sunshine, cluster over the door. And in the ancient parish church, the spire of which, from among the trees, rises up into the quiet air of heaven, the vicar preaches in favour of Slavery, and thanks God that England is not as other nations are; that she has an open Bible; that she is the foster-mother of the valour of man and the modesty of woman; that her influence for good is felt in every clime; and that her sails whiten all the sea-paths of the world. And GOD listens to all this and tolerates it? Never! A thousand times rather would I be an atheist and deny God's existence than deem for a moment that he was a compound of ignorant brute, canting hypocrite, and malignant fiend.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*The Christianising of Slaves—The Slave's Indebtedness to the Gospel of Peace and Goodwill—The Affections of Uncivilised Races—Devotion of an Uneducated Mother—Frederick Douglass and his Mother—The Flogging of Aunt Hester—The WOMAN versus the LADY.*

IT is enjoined by the Koran that no Mohammedan can hold another Mohammedan in slavery. But the Bible, indiscriminating in its brutality, allows its votaries to enslave whomsoever they can and will. Thousands of negro children from the Soudan, Kordofan, and the region of the Somauly were, in Maryland, Virginia, and Georgia, taught the sacred truths of Christianity—taught that God is love, and that the whale swallowed Jonah, and that Jesus died to save them, and that the sun and the moon stood still. Poor children who had no childish days, with your toil-deformed limbs and your bleeding backs, what earnest and ardes you have had of the love of this God of the Christians! Would it not have been better that you had never heard of this deity, and that you had been left in your dusky nudity to play on the shores of Lake Tchad and to romp among the pebbles on the banks of the Bahr? This Christian gospel, it is claimed, sheds a halo of tenderness over the life of the child. What halo of tenderness has it and its professors shed over your lives? Your fathers were butchered in defending you. Your mothers were subjected to the nameless shame which is more poignant than disease or the lash. They were shipped along with you; but they

died, and were flung overboard to the sharks. Your mothers, to these masters of yours that speak of their God as one of loving kindness and tender mercy, were simply chattels, worth so many dollars apiece. They were more than that to you. You were suckled on these poor breasts, now withered away by starvation. You were kissed by those lips which death has made cold; and that woman's heart which the shark has devoured loved you as no heart shall ever love you again.

You are taught to prate about your father which art in heaven by those who slew your father who wert on earth; and you are told about a God of love by those who dishonoured your mother and threw her to the sharks—your mother who, though only a poor black woman from Africa, had more love than ever glowed in the hearts of all the gods that ever cursed the earth. Out in a distant and a cruel land, under the lash of the whip and the toil of slavery, you retain memories of your liberty and your joy till all was blurred out in the bloody dream of that awful night when, for Christian gold, there was a wild shout, a treacherous surprise, and from under the burning thatch of the hut in which you were born you were snatched away to be the white man's slave—hurried far hence over the door-step red with your father's blood, torn from your mother's arms as her heart-rending cries mingled with the roar of the flames. Verily you have much to be thankful for that you met these Christians and became acquainted with their gospel of peace and goodwill!

Do the less civilised races feel less acutely than ourselves the bitterness of domestic affliction, and realise with less poetic tenderness—

“The sweet, sweet love of daughter,  
Of sister and of wife”?

They do not. While civilisation steadies it at the same

time detracts from the passionate intensity of the domestic emotions. It is not among philosophers, but among those whom supercilious culture designates "savages," that the vestal fire of the human passions burns. It is the mother who brings forth her child in pain and sorrow, who nourishes him from her own kind breast and not from the nipples of a hireling nurse, who makes with her own hands his long clothes and his first jacket, who earns the bread he eats with the sweat of her brow ; who, as he stands at her knee, teaches him to read ; who, as he kneels at her knee, teaches him to pray—who really loves her child. Even our artificial modes of life fail to press all the passionate womanhood out of woman ; but it is not from the dainty lady *above* suckling her own children and *above* sleeping with them that we must expect the keenest emotion and the most self-sacrificing love. A woman loses much of the holy love that makes her a woman whose children, when young, are with the nurse, and when grown-up are at the boarding-school. Better that she should share with them the scanty meal, letting the smallest share fall to herself—that she should watch over them in their sickness, night after night, in weary and anxious vigil. The altar of the holiest affection can be reached only through the refining fires of self-sacrifice.

I remember, when a child, hearing of the devotion of a poor Highland mother, journeying on foot in the middle of winter to a Highland *clachan* some miles away. She was a young wife and carried upon her back her first-born and only boy, wrapped in a ragged Highland plaid. Murky grew the heavens, and down upon rock and frozen heather and withered brown brecken fell the silent snow. Day died away into night ; but, with murky vapours, the moon and stars were blotted out of the sky, and the wind howled down the solemn glen, and sent the snow flying in drifts from the darkened and

trackless hills. Torrents roared and thundered through the gloom. Frowning precipices and deep chasms were masked by the whirling drifts, and peril and death lurked in every footstep. Amid the gloom, the falling snow, the thundering torrent, and the groaning trees, the young mother was blinded and dazed. She crept into the shelter of a rock to wait till the morning rose. Next day she was found lying under the shelter of the rock with her child in her arms. The child was asleep from the cold. The mother, too, was asleep : in the sleep to which morn and noon and night are alike. She had on only her chemise and one thin petticoat ; of all her other clothing she had divested herself that she might wrap it round her child. They with difficulty extracted the child from her frozen arms. Her, the shepherd's young wife, they carried to the auld kirk-yaird down in the glen to lay her to rest among the lowly and unmonumented dead—the songs and the laurels being reserved for deeds of more meretricious and less meritorious heroism. The son who owed his life to the self-sacrificed life of this noble, nameless mother developed into a youth with a soul that soared above the Arcadian simplicity of herding sheep among his native hills. He enlisted into one of the Highland regiments and followed the banner of his country through the bloodiest fields of the Peninsula. A veteran who had stood shoulder to shoulder with him through the brunt of Wellington's campaigns, and who knew him well, told me the tale. On the awful slope at Waterloo, where the "Greys" flashed their swords in the air and charged with the hoarse battle-cry of "Scotland for ever!" this hero-son of one of Scotland's hero-mothers added the torrent of his blood to the red sacrifice by which Waterloo was won. If beyond death there be glory and recognition for the humble but heroic dead, may that mother and son have that glory and recognition ! If on the other side of death there be only

annihilation, may the memory of the true and brave who have gone out into the darkness tend to impart a dash of valour and nobility to our stale and stunted lives !

Frederick Douglass, to whom I have already adverted, refers on one page, and on one page only, to his mother ; but the sentence or two in which he alludes to her speak volumes of heroism and tenderness and devotion. Any delicacy of moral sentiment was an inconvenient trait in a slave, and to suppress the domestic affections and effectively brutalise the instincts children, as I have shown, were not permitted to know their own parents. Douglass writes : “ I never saw my mother, to know her as such, more than four or five times in my life ; and each of these times was very short of duration, and at night. She was hired by a Mr. Stewart, who lived about twelve miles from my home. She made her journey to see me in the night, *travelling the whole distance on foot, after the performance of her day's work.* She was a field hand, and a whipping is the penalty of not being in the field at sunrise.....I do not recollect ever seeing my mother by the light of day. She was with me in the night. She would lie down with me and get me to sleep ; but long before I waked she was gone. Very little communication ever took place between us. Death soon ended what little we could have while she lived, and with it her hardships and suffering. She died when I was about seven years old.” Than this poor negro woman visiting her little boy stealthily in the night there is nothing grander of its kind in the heroic annals of the human race. I honour woman as I sneer at unsexed charlatans like Semiramis, Jeanne Pucelle, and Black Agnes of Dunbar. Far over them in honour Humanity would, if it understood the “ carl hemp ” of its own dignity, place this poor negress, Harriet Bailey, with her twelve miles' walk after a hard day's work was over, and another twelve miles' walk before another hard day's work

began, and all for the bliss of an hour or two's sleep with her little boy upon her breast, the child she had borne to her white Christian master, who degraded her and scourged her. The life of degradation and toil and sorrow and weariness, with no association that could elevate and with every environment that could brutalise, left this poor black slave still a woman, and such a woman, too, as the world will honour when it flings aside dainty frivolity and turns away from "Society Beauties" to recognise in the strength of its pathos and devotion what womanhood means.

Toil-worn and weary, and yet twenty-four miles' walk in the dark, and while she should have slept. The extent of her sacrifice will be the better comprehended when we keep in mind that Harriet Bailey would have been flogged if, even for once, after her twenty-four miles' walk in the dark, she had failed to be in the field at sunrise. And what a flogging meant may be learnt from Douglass's own words. He thus describes the infliction of punishment upon his aunt: "Aunt Hester went out one night—where or for what I do not know—and happened to be absent when my master desired her presence. She was a woman of noble form and of graceful proportions, having very few equals and fewer superiors in personal appearance among the coloured or white women of our neighbourhood. Before he commenced whipping Aunt Hester he took her into the kitchen and stripped her from neck to waist, leaving her neck, shoulders, and back entirely naked. He then told her to cross her hands, calling her, at the same time, a ——. After crossing her hands, he tied them with a strong rope, and led her to a stool under a large hook in the joist, put in for the purpose. He made her get upon the stool, and tied her hands to the hook. She now stood fair for his infernal purpose. Her arms were stretched at their full length, so that she stood upon the

ends of her toes. He then said to her : ' Now, you ——, I'll learn you how to disobey my orders !' and, after rolling up his sleeves, he commenced to lay on the heavy cowskin, and soon the warm, red blood (amid heartrending shrieks from her and horrid oaths from him) came dripping to the floor."

Douglass's aunt incurred this brutal flagellation, and his mother risked it every time—poor, toil-worn creature that she was—that she walked twenty-four miles in the dark to kiss her little slave-child and sleep with him a few hours in her bosom. Was the young wife of the Highland shepherd incapable of the higher maternal instincts? Was this poor negress in Maryland lacking in natural affection and the devotion and self-sacrifice which sanctify motherhood? They two were both poor and uneducated women. They were only *women* ; neither of them could lay claim to the prostituted title of *lady*. Ah, friends, ye know little of human nature who deem that there can be no grandeur of soul, no quivering sensitiveness to pain, and no heroic devotion among the uneducated and poor ! I deliberately charge Christianity with the most terrible outrages upon the souls and bodies of the poor and the helpless. Much on this head I have already shown : more I shall forthwith proceed to show.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*150,000 Human Beings per Annum for the Flesh-mongers—Christian Fomentation of War among the African Tribes—180% of Clear Profit on Human Flesh!—A Negro Village in Peace, in Fire and Massacre—The Spoils from the Carnage—Letter of William Wilberforce—Village-breaking—Our Former and Recent Career of Blood in the Soudan.*

UPWARDS of 150,000 human beings were, for many, many, mournful years in succession, conveyed from Africa over the Atlantic to be sold as slaves! Realise it! 150,000 human beings! And keep in mind that this 150,000 does not by any means represent all that the slave trade affected even to the point of unspeakable misery and brutal death. It incurred much—yea, appalling—waste of life to place that 150,000 human beings among the flesh-mongers of America. By careful statistics made before England had yet freed her slaves, it was calculated that, for every *ten* human beings who were fairly placed on the American slave farms, *fourteen* had perished. Ten African slaves in America represented a loss to Africa of twenty-four human beings. In placing the ten in slavery the fourteen were lost.

- (1) In the original seizure in Africa.
- (2) In the march to the coast and detention there.
- (3) In the middle passage.
- (4) In the sufferings after capture and after landing.
- (5) In the initiation into slavery, or the "seasoning," as the planters termed it.

To obtain slaves the professors of the gospel of peace

and goodwill originated and fomented ever-recurring and merciless wars among the African tribes. The prisoners taken in battle were bought by Christian gold, and at a price which, even allowing for the fearful death-rate, allowed *180 per cent. of clear profit*. Pious merchants, supported by the Old Testament, the New Testament, and all the prayer-forces, from the Archbishop of Canterbury down to the holy wastrel howling in his Little Bethel, bought human beings at from £7 to £8 apiece, and generally managed to sell them for £70, £80, or £100 each, and all for Christ's sake—Amen. A hundred thousand pulpits sanctified the deed. Cowardly and dastardly beyond anything not civilised and Christian were the means employed by the traders to obtain fellow human beings for slavery. There, shaded by their palm trees and refreshed by their wells, the clay walls and straw roofs of a number of African villages cluster in langour and peace. The women are lilting the songs of their tribe as they return from the well or cook the simple repast of a simple life. The children are playing about as children ever have done and ever will, whether *their colour be black or white, and whether they be born under torrid heat or amid eternal snow*. The men are in the cultivated spaces round the villages, cultivating rice and [corn and yams, and some of the more adventurous are at a distance hunting in the forest depths for ivory or amid the river sands for gold. The sun sets over the ridge of hills, and “at one stride comes the dark.” Christianity and treachery and hell are at work. The white traders have bribed the prince of another tribe to massacre this. There is a rattle of fire-arms, a roar of voices, and a thousand straw roofs in flames. For miles the country is in a blaze, and dark human forms are seen to disappear in the smoke and to struggle in the fire. Thousands of shrieking women, timid children, and men

madly grappling amid a fiery hurricane of clubs and spears reel and stagger and appear and disappear as the wind blows the flames to madness or the calm allows them to sink in smoke.....The deed of guilt and blood is done. The men of the doomed tribe were taken by surprise ; most of them have fallen defending their wives and children and homes ; fallen victims to Christian treachery and Christian gold ; fallen fighting like lions.

The victorious chief or prince has now his prisoners of war—many hundreds of women and children, and a comparatively small number of men. The men are not prisoners of war ; they are dead. These women and children and men are now offered to the Christian slave-dealer. Such sordid inhumanities as I have referred to, and in which Christendom was deeply engaged for generations, have so far passed out of the memories of living men, and militate so bitterly with our national sentiment of pride and self-righteousness, that I deem it necessary to specifically prove my position in order to have it accepted. The celebrated African traveller, Bruce, describing the slave-hunting expeditions in Abyssinia, writes : “The grown-up men are all killed and then mutilated, parts of their bodies being always carried away as trophies ; several of the old mothers are also killed, while others, frantic with fear and despair, kill themselves. The boys and girls of a more tender age are then taken off in brutal triumph.”\*

William Wilberforce, a Christian more humane and enlightened than his creed, wrote a letter to his constituents, in which, on the authority of Mungo Park, he sets forth that “The King of Bambarra, having declared war against Kaarta, and divided his army into small detachments, over-ran the country and seized on the inhabitants before they had time to escape ; and, in a few days,

\* Bruce’s “Travels in Abyssinia.”

the whole kingdom of Kaarta became a scene of desolation. This attack was soon retaliated; Daisy, King of Kaarta, took with him 800 of his best men and surprised, during the night, three large villages near Kooniakary, in which many of his traitorous subjects had taken up their residence; all these, and, indeed, all the able-bodied men who fell into Daisy's hands, were immediately put to death.\* All this hate and slaughter were engendered by the followers of Christ to, under the sanction of their "Holy Scriptures" and their clergy, facilitate their accursed money-making out of—

"Fettered flesh and devastated mind."

For, further on in the same letter, Mr. Wilberforce remarks: "In another part of the country we learn, from the most respectable testimony, that a practice prevails called *village-breaking*. It is precisely the *tegria* of Mr. Park, with this difference: that, though often termed making war, it is acknowledged to be practised *for the express purpose of obtaining victims for the slave market.*"† Mr. Wilberforce proceeds to expatiate upon the horrible savagery of these intestinal wars, "the resort of ships to the coast," plying for the hellish traffic in human flesh, being the signal for carnage and cruelty such as perhaps never under any other auspices blotted with blood the annals of the human race.

Professor Smith, who was, in 1816, attached to Captain Tuckey's expedition to the Congo, writes: "Every man I have conversed with acknowledges that, if white men did not come for slaves, the wars which, nine times out of ten, result from the European Slave Trade would be proportionately less frequent."‡

\* Wilberforce's "Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade," p. 392.

† *Ibid.*, p. 23.

‡ Tuckey's "Expeditions," etc., p. 187.

In 1822 the British Minister at Paris declared : “ There seems to be scarcely a spot on that coast (from Sierra Leone to Cape Mount) which does not show traces of the slave trade, with all its attendant horrors ; for, the arrival of a ship in any of the rivers on the windward coast being the signal for war between the natives, the hamlets of the weaker party are burnt, and the miserable survivors carried off and sold to the slave traders.” Yet you will ever hear from the pulpit about the blessings which our commerce has carried to every shore that has been touched by an English keel. According to the execrable hypocrisy of the Christian preacher, the sails of our ships have been and are the white wings of the Angel of Peace ; at the sound of our voices the desert is made glad, and the wilderness rejoices and blossoms as the rose !

In the memory of the youngest of us our troops were in the Soudan, rattling forth the message of peace from the muzzles of Gatlings. We were there, of course, in the interests of the nobility of man and the elevation of woman ; and the Archbishop of Canterbury composed a special form of prayer to be said in all the churches for the success of the British arms. We did not tell the truth ; we are such piously canting hypocrites that we cannot tell the truth. We were there for “ filthy lucre,” as we call it—although it, and it only, is our Lord and our God. We were there in the interests of the holders of Egyptian bonds. We are lying charlatans, who must ever mix up our bayonets with prayers and our shot with psalms. Prayed for at home, and with our army chaplains there, we reddened the desert with torrents of as brave blood as ever flowed in human veins. It was not the first time that greed, sanctified by prayers, had taken us to the Soudan. Often previously the desert had, indeed, before us, blossomed as the rose—blossomed with the rank carnage-roses of Death.

Major Denham visited that country in 1823, and writes : "On attacking a place, it is the custom of the country instantly to fire it ; and, as they (the villages) are all composed of straw huts only, the whole is shortly devoured by the flames. The unfortunate inhabitants fly quickly from the devouring element, and fall immediately into the hands of their no less merciless enemies, who surround the place. The men are quickly massacred, and the women and children lashed together and made slaves."\* In treating of one of the conspiracies entered into in order to foment war and obtain slaves, Major Denham writes : "The results were as favourable as the most savage confederacy could have anticipated. *Three thousand unfortunate wretches were dragged from their native wilds and sold to perpetual slavery ; while probably double that number had been sacrificed to obtain them.*"† So much as a specimen of previous experiences of Christianity in the Soudan. "The women and children lashed together and made slaves." I suppose it is this sort of fact Archdeacon Farrar refers to when he claims for his faith that "it elevated the woman ; it shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."

\* Denham and Clapperton's "Travels in Africa," p. 164.

† *Ibid.*, p. 116.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Commodore Owen's Evidence—Heathen Honour Run Mad—Annihilation of a Whole Tribe—Ashmun's Evidence—Human Beings Bartered for Necklaces of Beads—Laird and Oldfield's Evidence—Rev. Mr. Fox's Evidence—Pulpit Cant and Hypocrisy—Intensity of the Domestic Affections of the Negroes, and their Attachment to their Homes.*

WHEREVER Christian ships have gone, flying the Union Jack and carrying the Bible, they have, of course, always quickened the pulse of commerce and fostered the peaceful pursuits amid which woman is elevated and the child "shrouded with a halo."\* Commodore Owen, who was employed in the survey of the eastern coast of Africa in the years 1823-24, gives an insight into how the peaceful industries were fostered and encouraged. "The riches of Zulimaine," he writes, "consisted in a trifling degree of gold and silver, but principally of grain, which was produced in such quantities as to supply Mozambique. But *the introduction of the slave trade stopped the pursuits of industry*, and changed those places where peace and agriculture had formerly reigned into the seat of war and bloodshed. Contending tribes are now constantly striving to obtain, by mutual conflict, prisoners, as slaves for sale to the Portuguese, who excite these wars, and fatten on the blood and wretchedness they produce." Speaking of Inhambane, he says: "The

\* How can anything be *shrouded* with a *halo*? The slipshod rhetoric is on a par with the impudent travesty of the truth.

slaves they do obtain are the spoils of war among the petty tribes, who, were it not for the market they thus find for their prisoners, would, in all likelihood, remain in peace with each other, and probably be connected by bonds of mutual interest."

The following may serve as a specimen of Christian rapacity and carnage, taking advantage of heathen truthfulness and honour run mad. "The following incident I relate, not for its singularity, for similar events take place perhaps every month in the year, but it has fallen under my own observation, and I can vouch for its authenticity. King Boatswain, our most powerful supporter and steady friend among the natives (so he has uniformly shown himself), received a quantity of goods on trust from a French slaver, *for which he stipulated to pay young slaves*—he makes it a point of honour to be punctual to his engagements. The time was at hand when he expected the return of the slaver, and he had not the slaves. Looking around on the peaceable tribes about him for his victims, he singled out the Queahs, a small agricultural and trading people of most inoffensive character. His warriors were skilfully distributed to the different hamlets, and, making a simultaneous attack on the sleeping occupants in the dead of the night, accomplished, without difficulty or resistance, in one hour, *the annihilation of the whole tribe*. Every adult man and woman was murdered, every hut fired. Very young children generally shared the fate of their parents; the boys and girls alone were reserved to pay the Frenchman."\* Young children and their parents slaughtered together in multitudes! This, no doubt, "elevated woman and shrouded, as with a halo of sacred innocence, the tender years of the child." Slavery was enjoined by

\* Mr. Ashmun, agent of the American Colonial Society, in his letter from Liberia to the Board of Directors in 1823.

the Christian Scriptures and vigorously defended by every sect of the Christian Church; and the way of obtaining slaves to which I have alluded was the only practicable one, and neither from its sprawling-mats nor its grunting-box did the Church of Christ raise even the faintest whisper of remonstrance; and, undoubtedly, but for this said Christian Church, the humane instincts of civilisation would have triumphed and the slave trade would have been abolished generations before it was abolished.

The persistent and indisputable support of the slave trade, even if it had never been connected with any other curse of the human race, would alone be enough to give the lie to the Christian Church, when it, presuming upon the credulous ignorance of its dupes, lays claim to have exalted the character and refined the emotions of mankind, and to have taught the world lessons of loving kindness and tender mercy. So fatally true is this position that I feel justified in dealing with it to an extent disproportioned to the extent of my work; but not disproportioned to its importance and significance. I must, on this tragic head, give line upon line and precept upon precept till the most prejudiced Christian apologist can have no alternative but to admit that Christianity supported slavery with all her might, and that slavery degraded the slave and the slaver alike, and, for generation upon generation, turned back the shadow upon the dial of the world.

“Wars increase with the demand for slaves, and the demand is urgent in proportion to the scarcity. And that the slaves in these belligerent tribes are becoming scarce there can be no doubt. Every method of kidnapping and violence is resorted to at the instigation of these fiends. They are always to be found near the scene of warfare, ready to purchase with merchandise the unhappy victims of wars that they themselves excite for

the purpose.”\* “The cause of the destructive war which had raged in the Sherbro’ for the last eighteen months .....is completely under the influence of the slaving chiefs and factors settled in the neighbourhood.”†

Slavery has “produced the most baneful effects, causing anarchy, injustice, and oppression to reign in Africa, and exciting nation to rise up against nation, and man against man ; it has covered the face of the country with desolation. All these evils, and many others, has slavery accomplished ; in return for which the Europeans, for whose benefit and by whose connivance and encouragement it has flourished so extensively, have given to the artless natives ardent spirits, tawdry silk dresses, and paltry necklaces of beads.”‡

“Scarcely a night passed but we heard the screams of some unfortunate beings that were being carried off into slavery by these villanous depredators. The inhabitants of the towns in the route of the Felatahs fled across the river on the approach of the enemy.....A few days after the arrival of the fugitives a column of smoke, rising in the air, about five miles above the confluence, marked the advance of the Felatahs ; and in two days afterwards the whole of the towns, including Addah Cuddah and five or six others, were in a blaze. The shrieks of the unfortunate wretches that had not escaped, answered by the loud wailings and lamentations of their friends and relations (encamped on the opposite bank of the river) at seeing them carried off into slavery, and their habitations destroyed, produced a scene which, though common enough in the country, had seldom, if ever before, been witnessed by European eyes, and showed to me, in a more striking light than I

\* *Colonisation Herald*, April 29th, 1837.

† *Class A.*, 1826, p. 7.

‡ Lander’s “Records,” vol. i., p. 38.

had hitherto beheld it, the horrors attendant upon slavery.”\*

“The neighbourhood of McCarthy’s Island is again in a very disturbed state. Scarcely are the rains over, and the produce of a plentiful harvest gathered in, ere the noise of battle and the din of warfare is heard at a distance, with all its attendant horrors. Mothers (“elevated”!), snatching up their children (“shrouded with a halo”!), with a few necessary articles, flee for their lives. Towns, after being pillaged of as much cattle, etc., as the banditti require, are immediately set on fire; columns of smoke ascend the heavens; the cries of those who are being butchered may be more easily conceived than expressed, and those who escape destruction are carried into the miseries of hopeless slavery.”†

Another Wesleyan minister, the Rev. Mr. Morgan, wrote, about the same date, from the Gambia, this characteristic specimen of preacher’s cant: “I feel confident that the slave trade has established feuds among them [the African tribes round the Gambia], by which they will be embroiled in war for generations to come, *unless the disposition be destroyed by the Christian religion*, or their circumstances be changed by civilisation.” The wars would continue unless arrested by “the Christian religion”! Why, by incontrovertible testimony, the wars were originated and fomented by Christians, and under the direct sanction of “the Christian religion”! A parallel to Mr. Morgan’s proposition would be that of a highwayman standing over his victim, who is bleeding to death, and remarking to him: “Sir, I have wounded you, and you are perishing through loss of blood. I will now stab you through the heart in order to save

\* Laird and Oldfield’s “Narrative,” pp. 149, 247.

† Rev. Mr. Fox, Wesleyan missionary at Gambia, in a letter dated January 5th, 1838.

your life." Verily the unspeakable impudence of the canting hypocrisy of the professional pietist is like the peace of God, which passeth understanding.

I have contended that the fire of the domestic and social affections is more intense in savage and untutored than in civilised and educated man. The attachment of the negroes to their homes and families was proverbial. In defence of their hearths and their dear ones they fought with the most desperate courage. The turtle-dove of the idyl pines away and dies when her mate is no more ; but the negro woman of authenticated fact cared nothing as to what became of herself when her husband was slain. The family instinct was intense, and the very children felt that all that was worth living for was gone when their father's blood was poured out under the steel or the bullet purchased by Christian gold. When attacked they were no cravens. A year of slavery would degrade a demigod, and the enslaved negro, under the lash and the gospel, was as spiritless and disgusting a specimen of humanity as the most morbid imagination could picture ; but the negro, un-enslaved and un-Christianised, was simple, artless, manly, and brave, and attached to his straw hut and his children and their dusky mother with a heroic passion to which the phlegmatic blood of civilisation is a stranger. Against their enemies "they throw," writes T. Fowell Buxton, "their long, poisoned javelins, covering themselves with their shields ; while their wives and children stand by them and encourage them with their voices. But, when the head of the family is killed, they surrender without a murmur.....When the negroes are taken their strong attachment to their families and lands is apparent. They refuse to stir, some clinging to the trees with all their strength ; while others embrace their wives and children so closely that it is necessary to separate them with the sword ; or they are bound to a horse, and are dragged

over brambles and rocks until they reach the foot of the mountain, bruised, bloody, and disfigured. If they still continue obstinate (not to leave their homes), they are put to death.”\* It was notorious that, even after they had been put aboard ship, many of the exiles died of *nosalgia*, or home-sickness—a malady which has hardly ever been known to have carried off a “civilised” man or woman with his or her wider, and consequently less intensified, loves and sympathies. It is further notorious that, when the slaves, during their voyage across the Atlantic, were allowed to go upon deck, high and strong “nets” were placed along the bulwarks to prevent them leaping overboard, and that these nets, supplemented by loaded muskets and drawn swords, were not sufficient to prevent great numbers from finding death by leaping into the roaring ocean, rather than meet the endurance of life, torn away from their native land and those who were the objects of their simple and vehement love.

\* “The Slave Trade,” pp. 93-4.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*The Caractacus of Africa—The Incomputable Miscry—Slaughter Incurred in Obtaining Slaves—An English City Built with Human Bones—Terrible Slaughter of the American Aborigines—A Deliberate Choice to go to Hell to Escape the Christians.*

PRIDE of race and love of native land are not confined to “civilisation’s” simpering products in silk hats, kid gloves, and patent leather boots.

We can sympathise with our own Caractacus, torn away from his home in Britain to grace a Roman triumph, for he was one of our own kith and kin, and those who vanquished and exiled him were not Christians, and the event reaches away back into ancient history. But we have no sympathy with many a nameless brave as patriotic as Caractacus, who was vanquished and exiled by Christians, and that not in the far-off epochs of the ancient world. Abyssinia had her warriors, Soudan had her heroes, no whit less noble, no whit more savage, than Caractacus. It ill becomes a Christian poet to sing of their misfortunes and their valour: only one poet, as far as I am aware, has ventured so to sing. When a boy I was wont to recite the following lines by William Cullen Bryant, which I now inscribe from memory:—

Chained in the market-place he stood,  
A man of giant frame,  
Amid the gathering multitude  
That shrunk to hear his name—

All stern of look and strong of limb,  
 His dark eye on the ground ;  
 And silently they gazed on him,  
 As on a lion bound.

Vainly but well that chief had fought—  
 He was a captive now ;  
 Yet pride, that fortune humbles not,  
 Was written on his brow.  
 The scars his dark, broad bosom wore  
 Showed warrior true and brave ;  
 A prince among his tribe before,  
 He could not be a slave.

Then to the conqueror he spake :  
 “ My brother is a king ;  
 Undo this necklace from my neck,  
 And take this bracelet ring,  
 And send me where my brother reigns,  
 And I will fill thy hands  
 With store of ivory from the plains  
 And gold-dust from the sands.”

“ Not for thy ivory nor thy gold  
 Will I unbind thy chain ;  
 That bloody hand shall never hold  
 The battle-spear again.  
 A price thy nation never gave  
 Shall yet be paid for thee ;  
 For thou shalt be the Christian's slave,  
 In lands beyond the sea.”

Then wept the warrior chief, and bade  
 To shred his locks away ;  
 And, one by one, each heavy braid  
 Before the victor lay.  
 Thick were the platted locks and long,  
 And closely hidden there  
 Shone many a wedge of gold among  
 The dark and crispèd hair.

“ Look, feast thy greedy eye with gold  
 Long kept for sorest need :  
 Take it—thou askest sums untold,  
 And say that I am freed.

Take it—my wife, the long, long day,  
 Weeps by the cocoa-tree,  
 And my young children leave their play  
 And ask in vain for me.”

“I take thy gold ; but I have made  
 Thy fetters fast and strong,  
 And ween that by the cocoa-shade  
 Thy wife will wait thee long.”  
 Strong was the agony that shook  
 The captive’s frame to hear,  
 And the proud meaning of his look  
 Was changed to mortal fear.

His heart was broken—crazed his brain :  
 At once his eye grew wild ;  
 He struggled fiercely with his chain,  
 Whispered, and wept, and smiled ;  
 Yet wore not long those fatal bands,  
 And once, at close of day,  
 They drew him forth upon the sands,  
 The foul hyena’s prey.

So much for the typical Caractacus of the negro race. So much from a Christian poet who attunes his lyre to the immortalising of Christian cupidity and cruelty and shame.

Thus it is mournfully apparent that mere slaughter, mere slavery, terrible though they were, do not by any means represent the awful total of Christianity’s guilt and crime. There is, more poignant than all this, and underlying all this, the measureless anguish, the incomputable agony, which Christian civilisation will never understand. This country and cult cannot comprehend the surcharged heart, bursting, breaking, finding anodyne only in delirium and death. There are tortures more fearful than the impact of bullet, than the stab of bayonet, and mothers leaping into the sea with their children in their arms writes more terribly than a pen of flame, speaks more appallingly than a voice of thunder, of that pain

which is less endurable than the sword's gash or the bayonet's stab. And, England, understand it or not, you are responsible for this. Christianity, comprehend it or not, this guilt lies at your door. From the sunny palms of Africa, from the brackish algæ of the Atlantic's floor, millions of skulls grin at you and millions of tongues that are dust or slime proclaim you hypocrite, tyrant, and curse; and if, in some unplaced nucleus of the universe, there be a God who can avenge, and who will, never a Gomorrah suffered as you must for the mountains of bones your guilt has piled, for the oceans of blood your crime has spilt. That you, O Church of Christ, have elevated woman and rendered the life of the child beautiful and joyous is a lie of which the arch-Ananias of hell might be justly proud.

Do I make too much of slavery? Do I base upon it too wide a generalisation, and found upon it too sweeping a condemnation? Those who allege this have not grasped the magnitude of the guilt I expose and denounce. Slavery, not only with the passive sanction, but with the active support, of the Christian Church, obtained, not for years, but for centuries. Was the scale of cruelty and anguish and misery a small one? "Villaut, who was on the Gold Coast in 1663, tells us that, in *one* of these 'skirmishes,' above 60,000 men were destroyed; and Bosman says that, in *two* of these 'skirmishes,' the outrage was so great that above 100,000 men were killed upon the spot. Mr. Devaynes also informs us that, while he was in the country, one of these 'skirmishes' happened.....in which 60,000 lost their lives."\* "I verily believe that the far greater part of the wars in Africa would cease if the Europeans would cease to tempt them by offering goods for slaves; and, although they do not bring legions into the field, their wars are

\* Lord Munchester, on "The Slave Trade," p. 42.

bloody. *I believe the captives reserved for sale are fewer than the slain.*"\*

I leave, with this faint but significant indication of its magnitude, this appallingly colossal monument of carnage and guilt. England's daughters are pure and lovely. Even if this be so, how many of Africa's daughters has England degraded and bestialised? England's children are joyous and blest. Even if this be so, how many of Africa's children has England made joyless and curst? Is England great? Aye; and her Manchester is built with human bones, cemented with human blood; and the whirr of her million wheels are the cries of as yet unavenged and innocent anguish and agony.

And the cruel depopulation of Africa, the guilt of which lies at the door of the Church of Christ, is not all. America itself was being as mercilessly depopulated in order to make room for the Christian planter and his slaves. The villages and wigwams of a brave and noble race disappeared from the face of the earth in flame and blood and brandy, and where for thousands of years the gloomy forests had whispered and the Hiawathas of the limitless ages had sung, there was the crack of the Christian's slave-whip in the field and the whine of his psalm in the chapel. For the space at my command I have dealt at such length with Christianity's horrid participation in the slave trade that I have room to give only one specimen of her track of blood among the aborigines of America. This time my model Christians will be the Spaniards, an even more profoundly religious people than the English. I will quote the words of a bishop of the Romish Church.

"The West Indies swarmed with multitudes of people, as an emmet-hill swarms with emmets. But they were murdered, and most cruelly made away with by the

\* Rev. John Newton.

Spaniards and the priests, though they never committed any offence that deserved punishment of man. When the country was discovered these murderers entered like wolves and tigers long famished, and did nothing but tear them in pieces and torment them by cruelties never heard or read of before.....The miserable people died on the roads when carrying burdens for their oppressors. If, through faintness, they sank down, they had their teeth broken by the pommels of the Spanish swords to make them rise and go. These tormentors spared neither children nor old persons, nor even women with child, nor such as lay in child-bed ; but would rip them up and chop them in pieces as if they had been butchering lambs. They would lay wagers who would most readily and nimbly despatch them. They kept dogs for hunting down the Indians, and fed them on the bodies they caught ; keeping great numbers in chains, whom they murdered like swine when their dogs were hungry. One man, wanting meat for his dogs, took a child from its mother, and, chopping it in pieces, flung it down for their eating. [Thus was "the woman elevated" and the "halo of sacred innocence" flung over "the tender years of the child" !] A woman who was sick and dreaded the dogs hung herself, having tied her child to her feet. An especially gratifying deed was to set up thirteen low gibbets *in honour of Christ and his twelve apostles*, and to hang and burn thirteen persons on each. [This amiable and humane experiment could not fail to make "Christ and his twelve apostles" loved and revered by the aborigines of America.] They threw down from a high cliff seven hundred men together, who fell like a cloud to the ground and were battered to pieces. *In three months they famished seven thousand infants.* [This fact, no doubt, imparts a radiance to the "halo of sacred innocence" which the Christian Church claims to have flung over "the tender years of the

child.”] On one day they massacred two thousand sons of the chief natives, and dishonoured and slaughtered thousands of females [to “elevate” them] in a manner that cannot be mentioned. In the island of Cuba a prince, having called his people together, showed them a cask full of gold and jewels, and told them it was the Spanish God. After they had danced awhile around it he threw it into the river, because, said he, if the Spaniards know we have it, they will kill us to get at it. This prince was afterwards taken and burnt by them. At the stake a friar told him of Christ and the matters of our faith, which, if he would believe, he might go to heaven; if not, he must needs go to hell. The prince, after a pause, asked the friar if the Spaniards went to heaven. The friar said they did. The prince then, without any pause, replied that he would not go to heaven, but to hell, that he might be free from such a cruel people.

\* \* \* \*

“Thus more than ten realms greater than Spain are turned into a wilderness. *Twenty-seven millions* of souls perished within the space of forty years. In Hispaniola, also, three millions. In five small islands near it, half a million. In another district, full five millions. In Peru, above four millions.”

If sending untold myriads of the human race prematurely, in violence and blood, to the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of hell be the ennobling of man, the elevating of woman, and the blessing of childhood, then, of a verity, Christianity has ennobled man, elevated the woman, and blest the child!

## CHAPTER XXII.

*Encouragement of the Slave Trade Chargeable upon Papist and Protestant Alike—The Slave-ship “Jesus” —The Slave-ship “Jehovah”—Wilberforce’s Contrast between Christian England and “Infidel” France—Lloyd Garrison and Abner Kneeland—Evidence of Lord Brougham—Evidence of Theodore Parker—Support of the Slave Trade by the Whole of the Christian Clergy—Slave Marriage—Clerical Testimony in Favour of the Slave Trade—Burning of the Belly with a Red-hot Iron.*

THE blot of slavery, like the infamy of persecution, defaces the escutcheon of Papist and Protestant alike. Neither can, as far as slavery is concerned, say to the other, “Stand back; I am holier than thou.” Popery, having had the longer lease of life and the stronger sceptre of power, has, of course, reddened the lash of the slave-driver and the sword of the persecutor deeper in the veins of humanity than Protestantism has done; but where Protestantism has lagged behind her elder and stronger sister it has been for lack of power, not through lack of will. When it is demonstrated that slavery, as an institution, has elevated woman, Protestant Christianity will be in a position to put in her claim, along with that of the Scarlet Lady of Babylon, as having exerted herself valiantly to render woman elevated, refined, and pure.

“In the reign of Elizabeth the English mind put forth its energies in every direction, exalted by a purer religion

and enlarged by new views of truth.....Four years after the accession of Elizabeth John Hawkins and Thomas Hampton fitted out three vessels, and, with a hundred men, sailed for Sierra Leone, where they collected 300 negroes.....and took them to St. Domingo, where they were sold as slaves. King Philip (of Spain) would not sanction the transaction. A second expedition was fitted out, and Elizabeth actually gave the leader one of the best ships in the service to be employed in the trade. The name of this ship was *Jesus* ; but we have no record that any of the ardent religionists about the Court, any of the zealous Protestants or eloquent preachers, noticed the unfitness of the name.....Not only did the Queen thus aid Hawkins, but she gave another ship to Davis Corlet, bound on a similar expedition. Hawkins captured or purchased from Portuguese traders about 400 slaves, not without escaping many dangers, as, with an edifying piety, he acknowledged, by 'the aid of Almighty God, who never suffers his elect to perish.' At that time the English people did not want foreign slaves for their own use. There were labourers enough and to spare at home ; and, indeed, a sort of slavery, by which sturdy vagrants were made to work, and practically sold to the highest bidder, was a familiar institution.....Beggars who were vagabonds were whipped, burnt through the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron, and virtually made slaves of by being apportioned to some employer to work without wages for a year, to be imprisoned if they ran away once, treated as felons for a second offence of the kind, and very summarily hanged if they ran away a third time."\*

The Elizabethan ship, the *Jesus*, with its 400 slaves, and the pious Hawkins, "by the aid of Almighty God," is a choice specimen of the first fruit of the glorious Reformation. Reformation indeed ! There was a refor-

\* "The Elizabethan Age," No. 15.

mation, or rather deformation, of certain sacerdotal haberdashery and ceremonial, and a reformation of certain Church estates into the hands of an aristocratic and rapacious laity—some juggling as to whether, at the Eucharist, the eater ate Christ, or only a wafer that stood for Christ; and a catalogue of miserable *nugæ* of this sort were the be-all and end-all of the ever-to-be-adored “Reformation.” No new light from the holy sheen of heaven, or even from the lurid glare of hell, illumed the flat wilderness of Meanness or dazzled the sordid eyes of Mammon. The world continued to march to the same old tune of dirt and drivel, and to be the same shabby and unirradiated world it had ever been. There was only a slight appoggiatura observable in the tune to which mankind had marched for a thousand years. There was a trifling variation—not for the better—in acknowledging the headship of Henry VIII. instead of that of the Pope; but the lash fell, as before, on the back of the slave, and all the olden abominations lived and flourished.

We have seen that there was a celebrated slave-ship named after God the Son. We do not know whether any bottom engaged in the trade in human flesh has been named after God the Holy Ghost; but there was a notorious slave-ship that bore the honoured name of God the Father. The brig *Jehovah*, which had landed 700 sick slaves at Ponta Negra, was in 1837 honoured by being referred to in a Royal Commission. Not only was slavery ordained by the deity, but his parsons of all sects supported it, his followers employed slaves in hundreds of thousands, and the great slave-ship of the seventeenth century was the *Jesus* and a prominent slave-ship of the nineteenth century the *Jehovah!*

If slavery exalted woman, then Christianity's claim to have exalted her is indisputable. When, in the long lapse of the generations, Humanity, in the development of its inherent moral instincts, began to be ashamed and

abhorrent of the system, the Christian Church, bible in hand, stepped to the front and supported it. Where Christianity was weak Slavery was weak; where Christianity was strong Slavery was strong. Wilberforce, himself a Christian, had, in effect, to admit this when, in his anti-slavery advocacy, he contrasted the respective attitudes of "Infidel" France and Christian England. "What," asked he, "would some future historian say in describing two great nations—the one accused of promoting anarchy and confusion and every human misery, yet giving liberty to the Africans; the other country contending for religion, morality, and justice, yet obstinately continuing a system of cruelty and injustice."\* When William Lloyd Garrison inaugurated his Abolitionist advocacy in Boston, he found the doors of every church and hall in the city closed against him, except Julian Hall, owned by the "Infidel," Abner Kneeland, who had been in prison for blasphemy. In 1830 Henry (afterwards Lord) Brougham elicited the horror, if not the pity, of the House by narrating how a Christian minister, the Rev. Thomas Wilson Bridges, flogged his female slave for not cooking his dinner quite to his mind. This holy man (follower of the Jesus who never uttered a word against slavery) had the woman properly flogged, in order to elevate her and justify the Christian claim. "She was," said Brougham, "stripped of every article of dress and flogged (by two men) till the back part of her, from the shoulders to the calves of her legs, was one mass of lacerated flesh." While the Abolitionist movement was struggling against desperate odds for the recognition of its claims, Theodore Parker wrote: "At this day 600,000 slaves are directly and personally owned by men who are called 'professing Christians,' members in good fellowship of the Churches of this land; 80,000

\* Speech in the House of Commons, February 18th, 1796.

owned by Presbyterians, 225,000 owned by Baptists, 250,000 owned by Methodists—600,000 slaves in this land owned by men who profess themselves Christians and in churches sit down to take the Lord's Supper in the name of Christ and God."

On February 4th, 1835, there was a great pro-Slavery convention held at Charleston, at which "the clergy of all denominations attended in a body," and formed the life and soul of the Convention. Well might Wilberforce exclaim: "What witness, then, has, as yet, been borne by the Church in these slave states against this *almost universal sin*? How has she fulfilled her vocation? She raises no voice against the predominant evil; she palliates it in theory, and in practice she shares in it. The mildest and most conscientious of the bishops of the South are slaveholders themselves.....The bishops of the North sit in open convention with their slave-holding brethren, and no canon proclaims it contrary to the discipline of their church to hold property in man and treat him as a chattel."\*

The following may stand as a special and direct specimen of how Christianity has elevated woman: "A reverend Professor of the Methodist Church has decided that it is perfectly lawful for an owner to separate husband and wife, and that, if there be any sin in the case, it rests upon the shoulders of the slaves, who ought not to have taken vows which their condition disqualifies them from keeping. A Baptist Association in Virginia have granted permission to a slave member to take a second wife, his first having been sold in another part of the country; and another Association in Georgia is reported to have voted that a separation of man and wife, by sale or

\* "History of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, pp. 421, 426.

*hire*, to such a distance as precludes personal intercourse, is considered by God as equivalent to death.”\*

It was resolved by the Presbytery of Harmony, South Carolina : “ That slavery has existed from the days of those good old slave-holders and patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (who are now in the kingdom of Heaven), to the time when the Apostle Paul sent a runaway home to his master Philemon, and wrote a Christian and fraternal letter to his slave-holder, which we find still stands in the canon of the Scriptures ; and that slavery has existed ever since the days of the Apostle, and does now exist.”†

The Rev. Bishop Meade thus addressed a congregation of slaves : “ Your masters and mistresses are God’s overseers, and, if you are faulty towards them, God himself will punish you for it in the next world.....Now, when *correction* is given you, you either deserve it or you do not deserve it. But, whether you really deserve it or not, it is your duty, and Almighty God requires that you bear it patiently.”

The Rev. E. D. Simons said : “ These extracts from holy writ unequivocally assert the right of property in slaves.”

The Rev. Thomas Witherspoon said : “ I draw my warrant from the scriptures of the Old and New Testament to hold the slave in bondage.”

The Rev. Mr. Crowder said : “ Slavery is not only countenanced, permitted, and regulated by the Bible, but it was positively instituted by God himself.”

The Rev. Dr. Wilbur Fisk wrote : “ The New Testament enjoins obedience upon the slave as an obligation due to a present rightful authority.”

\* Jay’s “ Miscellaneous Works on Slavery,” p. 428.

† “ The Church as it Is ; or, The Forlorn Hope of Slavery,” by Parker Pillsbury ; pp. 13, 14.

The Rev. Moses Stuart, of Andover, a scholar and theologian, said: "The precepts of the New Testament respecting the demeanour of slaves and their masters beyond all question recognise the existence of slavery."

The Rev. Dr. Taylor, of Yale College, said: "I have no doubt that, if Jesus Christ were now on earth, he would, under certain circumstances, become a slaveholder."

The Rev. R. Furman, D.D., said: "The right of holding slaves is clearly established in the holy scriptures, both by precept and example;" and at his death the advertisement announcing the sale of his effects specified the following chattels: "A library of a miscellaneous character, chiefly theological; twenty-seven negroes, some of them very fine; two mules, one horse, and an old waggon."

So much for the goods which a bountiful God had bestowed upon the Rev. R. Furman, D.D. And, O happier to have been the stupidest book in his library "chiefly theological," better to have been either of his two mules, or the one horse, or a wheel of the old waggon, than to have been one of those "twenty-seven negroes, some of them very fine"! The mule was not worked so hard or flogged so mercilessly, and when he was ill he would have the attentions of the veterinary surgeon. Where a board or a spoke of the old waggon failed it would be strengthened, and the patch daubed over with paint. The slave, too, was repaired when he or she went wrong physically; not, however, like the waggon, with putty and nails and timber and paint. He or she was repaired by having *his or her belly burnt with a red-hot iron*. That, under God, was the Christian mode of repairing a slave. It took some skill to repair an old waggon; but to doctor a slave was exceedingly simple. You had only to put the poker in the fire till it was red-hot, and "elevate" your woman, as

Archdeacon Farrar has it, by burning her belly with this red-hot poker. This would give the poor slave-woman a blessed foretaste of the amenities of the Christian hell, and of the loving-kindness of the Christian God, whose "mercy endureth forever." The poker would have been heated oftener, and the patient would have yelled her gratitude more frequently, but that slaves were terrified to admit they were ill.\*

\* "No slave dares to be ill or unable to walk ; but, when the poor sufferer dies, the master suspects there must have been 'something wrong inside,' and regrets not having liberally applied the *usual* remedy of burning the belly with a red-hot iron" ("Cassie's Travels," vol. ii., p. 89).

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Christian Slavery more Degrading and Cruel than any Other—Slavery in Rome, Tiro—Slavery in Greece, Æsop—A Contrast—Mohammedan Slavery—An East End Specimen of “Elevated” Woman and of the “Halo of Sacred Innocence”—The “Halo of Sacred Innocence” at Denmead—Desperate Retention of Pulpits and Stipends—The Devout Mountebank.*

WHERE, except under Christian auspices, can we find a slavery so degraded and grinding as that to which we have so hurriedly referred? Nowhere in the history of the world, ancient or modern. The Christian minister never tires of indoctrinating his credulous dupes with the impression that the world, before the introduction of Christianity, was a wild and almost chaotic Saturnalia, reeking with blood and black with crime. This species of teaching is well enough for him who is so busy getting bread for his stomach that he has no time to get books for his head, and who gives out his “soul” to the parson to be “saved,” just as he gives out his shoes to the shoemaker to be soled. We have now some idea of what slavery was like in the Christian world. In spite of the minister of Christ, let us take a glance at what it was like in the Heathen world, and judge whether it was under Jupiter or under Jesus that the institution attained to its brutal degradation and hellish virulence.

“The physician who attended the Roman in his sickness, the tutor to whom he committed the education of his son, the artists whose works commanded the admira-

tion of the city, were usually slaves. Slaves sometimes mixed with their masters in the family, ate habitually with them at the same table, and were regarded by them with the warmest affection. Tiro, the slave, and afterwards the freed-man of Cicero, compiled his master's letters, and has preserved some in which Cicero addressed him in terms of sincere and delicate friendship.....Pliny poured out his deep sorrow for the death of some of his slaves, and endeavoured to console himself with the thought that, as he had emancipated them before their death, they had at least died free men. Epictetus passed at once from a slave to the friendship of an emperor.\*

Æsop, whose moral fables are the delight of the nursery, and the epitomised wisdom of which are commensurate with the observation and thought of the sage, was a Grecian slave. Fortunately for him, as a slave, he bore his fardels six hundred years before your Christ was born. Happy for him, he was reared under the auspices of Zeus and Pallas and Aphrodite, not under the auspices of Jehovah and Jesus and the Virgin Mary. If he had been born in England in the sixth century after Christ, and not in Phrygia in the sixth century before Christ, instead of his talents being recognised, instead of his being manumitted, he would have been snubbed for his impertinence in having brains above his station, and, for insubordination, have been tied to a triangle and flogged till every quivering fibre of his back was lacerated and acting as a thrilling string in the harp of pain. By the welting of bloody thongs he would have been taught to fear God and to obey those placed over him in station. Write fables, indeed ! The fearful fables of torture would, in red ink, have been scribbled over his naked back with that pen of despotism, the scourge. What Christian would have taught a born

\* Lecky's "History of European Morals," vol. i., p. 323.

slave to write? What Christian would have encouraged a born slave to think? What Christian would have raised the bleeding and blistered feet of the born slave from their pathway of toil and pain and set them on the highway of immortal renown? No Christian slave-owner in America 1800 years after Christ would have done so; but a Pagan slave-owner 600 years before Christ did so, and for some four-and-twenty centuries the wisdom of the Fables of Æsop have been before a world that, above all things, lacks in wisdom—lacks more in wisdom than it lacks in bread; for bread eaten by a fool is bread as completely wasted as if it had been flung into the fire. Even if it had been possible for a Christian slave-owner to have voluntarily freed his born slave, he would not have associated with him afterwards; he would have sneered at his vulgarity and complained of his smell. Christians never got very near their slaves, except, in the name of Christ and him crucified, to flog the men and to flog or violate the women. But Æsop, the manumitted slave of olden Greece, strode from his humility and thralldom to the very steps of the throne; he passed over the sacred precincts of Delphi; as a flamen, linking mortal men with the immortal gods, he was delegated to lay royal sacrifice upon the shrine of Apollo. Stepping over the shattered fetters of his serfdom, his origin forgotten and his talents remembered, he basked in the radiance of the crown of Lydia and became the friend and adviser of Croesus, a king who trod on diamonds, and who stood to the neck in gold—a king to whom our German beggars are as is the phosphorescence of a dung-hill to the splendour of the sun at noon. Christendom, do you say that you have promoted the brotherhood of man and the sisterhood of woman, and pushed forward the gospel of peace and goodwill? Christendom, do you say this? Then, Christendom, you lie. Six centuries before your Christ was born or invented a

nobler manhood than yours, a grander brotherhood than you ever knew, centred around Athena's tower and blest the fields around grey Marathon !

Christendom, as I have already pointed out, the slavery that obtained in the realms of the hated Mahoun was freedom, compared with the slavery that obtained in you. Your ignorance is opaque, your self-righteousness intolerable, and your cant as incredible as your Gospels. No merchants of earth or hell ever bartered with human flesh as you have done, in the name of your God and his son, the carpenter ; no chains ever corroded upon human limbs as yours have done ; no scourges have ever been drunk with human gore like yours. Your Jehovah is a fiery demon, and your meek Jesus the Jeffries of a Bloody Assize, that for well nigh two thousand years has cursed as with a blight and a canker the bud and blossom of the world. And all this amid sickening self-righteousness and revolting cant. With exultation we can contrast the slaves under Mohammed with the slaves under Jesus.

“Above all, the slaves, who had been cruelly ill-used by the Goths and Romans, had cause to congratulate themselves upon the change. Slavery is a very mild and humane institution in the hands of a good Mohammedan. The Arabian Prophet, while unable to do away with an ancient institution, which was nevertheless repugnant to the socialistic principles of Islam, did his utmost to soften the rigours of slavery. ‘God,’ said he, ‘hath ordained that your brothers should be your slaves ; therefore, him whom God hath ordained to be the slave of his brother, his brother must give him of the food which he eateth himself, and of the clothes wherewith he clotheth himself, and not order him to do anything beyond his power.....A man who ill-treats his slave will not enter into Paradise.’ There is no more commendable action in Mohammedan morals than to free slaves,

and such enfranchisement is enjoined by the Prophet especially as an atonement for an undeserved blow or other injustice. In Andalusia the slaves upon the estates that had passed from the Christians into the possession of Moslems were almost in the position of small farmers; their Mohammedan masters, whose trade was war, and who despised heartily such menial occupations as tilling the soil, left them free to cultivate the land as they pleased, and only insisted on a fair return of products. Slaves of Christians, instead of being hopelessly condemned to servitude all their lives, were now provided with the simplest possible road to freedom they had only to go to the nearest Mohammedan of repute, and repeat the formula of belief, 'There is no God but God, and Mohammed is His Prophet,' and they became immediately free.\*

"Halo of sacred innocence," indeed, "round the tender years of the child"! Even now that slavery is abolished, after eighteen centuries of Christianity, we have multitudes of "elevated" women of whom the following, referred to by Mr. W. Winton at a recent Church of England temperance meeting, is a specimen, Mr. Winton said: "I have witnessed scenes in London—the Metropolis of Christian England—that would make a heathen shudder. I remember a woman one day saying to me, 'Will you go in that room and see what is going on?' I went there, and found a cradle in the middle of the floor, and in it was a dying boy of three or four years of age. A woman was sitting stupidly drunk at the foot of the cradle. The sound of my footsteps awoke her, and I said, 'What are you doing here?' She said, 'I don't know.' I said, 'This boy is dying.' 'Well,' she said, 'let him die.' I asked her, 'Where is the mother? Is she out at the corner shop?' The

\* "The Moors in Spain," by Stanley Lane-Poole, pp. 48-9.

woman said, 'Yes.' The landlady, hearing me, came upstairs. She was sober. She said, 'The mother is round the corner; she has been there since six o'clock this morning'—it was then one o'clock in the day. I asked, 'Does she know he is dying? Won't she come in?' The woman said, 'No.' 'Then,' I said, 'I will bring a policeman to see the sight.' The scene was horrid. The woman, when she heard what I said, rushed to the public-house and told the mother that I was there, and was about to bring in a policeman to see the sight. She came, and brought six other women with her; they cursed and swore as they came upstairs, and on entering the room I said, 'Look here, this boy is dying; he has no one to moisten his lips; nothing in the world is done to ease his pain.' She said, 'Let him die; one less in the world; he will be better off;' and these seven women took hands and danced round the cradle. They cursed, and swore, and sang; and in the middle of it the boy died, and there was never a tear shed."

"Halo of sacred innocence"! Let us take a glance just at a little arc of that halo as it coruscated at Denmead under the auspices of the St. Pancras Board of Guardians. Mr. Purchase said that at one place he found four children sleeping in one room with a thatched roof, the beds at one end being as high as the sloping roof. A woman named Sylvester had six children of her own, two from Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and one from St. Pancras Guardians. These boys were sleeping three in a bed, and some of them covered with itch and festering sores. Three of the children (two from Dr. Barnardo's and the one from St. Pancras) were in a deplorable condition, and no doctor attending them. An old man named Henry Sullivan, a dockyard pensioner, whose income amounted to 6s. per week, had two children from St. Pancras and two from Dr. Barnardo's

Homes. When he visited this house these boys were at their dinner, standing round a table; one of them was eating out of a broken gallipot, and another out of a broken basin. The only food he saw them having consisted of pieces of pork rind, and pieces of bread and potatoes. The whole family used the same towel, which was a piece of sacking, and did not appear to have been washed for two months; several children *suffered from itch and lice*, and he thought they should not remain longer with these foster parents, who no doubt looked upon the allowance for supporting these children as a necessary part of their income.

Beatified with itch and shrouded as with a halo of sacred lice might be recommended as an alternative reading to that furnished by Archdeacon Farrar. The metaphor would not be more mixed, and the words would be nearer the truth.

The "Church of God" itself will not now contend that slavery had a tendency to elevate woman. The Holy Scriptures contain the same texts in support of slavery that they did in the servile ages; but even the clergy themselves have, over and over again, been compelled to divest themselves of the distorted spectacles of Judaic myth, and desert a stereotyped God to march in step with the progressive battalions of the army of Man. The pro-slavery texts are still in the Scriptures. The Holy Ghost wrote these texts; but the writings of the Holy Ghost are discredited and out of harmony with modern ideas. The Christian priesthood stood up for this Holy Ghost and his writings as long as it was safe, as long as it was practicable. Strong pressure came, and it was found necessary to give up the Holy Ghost or give up their nefarious profession, and they elected to give up the Holy Ghost. They have given up the "six days," they have given up the flat earth, they have given up polygamy, they have given up witchcraft, they have given

up slavery, in spite of the Holy Ghost having written explicitly enough in favour of all of them ; but one thing these ministers of Christ have *not* given up—they have not given up their pulpits and their stipends.

The world never tries to move on but a barricade of pulpits is thrown across its path and a volley of Scripture texts is hurled in its face. Of all the race of mountebanks your devout mountebank is the most contemptible. As long as his cowardice will allow him, he resists all reform. When, in the interests of the God Mammon, it would be impolitic to resist further, the preacher of "the Gospel of Truth," under the prompting of "the Father of Lies," turns round and takes credit for having effected the very reforms that have been effected in spite of him, and which he did his best to hinder. With an effrontery, happily unknown outside the pale of sacred mendacity, the Christian clergy are never tired of assuring their dupes that it was Christianity that abolished slavery ! This is quite as true as the assertion that it is to Christianity that woman owes her elevation and purity. Paul speaks of lying for the glory of God. If God can be glorified by lies, then is he glorified indeed !

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*“Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”—Demoniacal Possession, influence of the Doctrine in “Elevating” Woman—The “Taxæ Cancellariæ Apostolicæ”—The Witch—Jesus and the Casting out of Devils—If there be no Devil, the Mission of Christ was Supere-rogatory—The Inherent Good in Human Nature Begins to Reject the Barbarous Dogmas of an Ancient Faith—The First State Blow at Witchcraft—Colbert and the Norman Parliament—To Abolish the Devil is Practically to Abolish Christ—James I. and Witchcraft—The Place of the Devil in Popular Theology—Eaters versus Thinkers—Demoniacal Possession in Maryport.*

I now come to Witchcraft, a Biblical and almost exclusively Christian horror. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live”\* is the mandate of Holy Writ; and, in obedience thereto, have been enacted some of the most unholy deeds that ever disgraced the annals of the human race. The coming under demoniacal possession and the revolting cruelties it involved fell with a special vengeance upon woman, and was one of the Christian agencies by which she was “elevated” through many pious and brutal centuries. The number of wizards was small, the number of witches exceedingly large. An old writer on the subject assures us that “to every wizard there are ten thousand witches.” When Christianity was in its prime, when “Infidelity” was as yet unknown, man,

\* Exodus xxii. 18.

in the aggregate, was an ignorant serf and woman was the serf of this ignorant serf. Likely under the influence of the blessed Gospel, which has "elevated" her, she would have been exterminated altogether had she not been indispensable as the minister of ecclesiastical and military lust, and for breeding corruption for the cloisters and carnage for the battlefield. To whom in particular she conceived the supply for corruption and bore this food for carnage she was hardly in a position to say. When the Christian creed was in its zenith womanly purity was in its nadir. The lord of the serf, be he bishop or baron, had a legal right to lead away the bride from the altar and cohabit with her, and, at his pleasure, restore her to the bridegroom. With this subject I shall deal more fully in another chapter. The Church greedily extended indulgences and absolutions to the most revolting domestic and sexual impurities. According to the *Taxæ Cancellariæ Apostolicæ*, on payment of two ducats you could murder your wife if you wished to marry another. Each act of infanticide cost only a ducat ; and, for the same tax, you could practise abortion. On payment of three ducats, the minister of Jesus Christ might cohabit with a nun, even within the sacred walls of the convent, or with his own mother or sister, or with any mother or sister or wife that might kneel before him in the sanctified lewdness of the confessional.

Can we wonder that woman, constitutionally modest, congenitally imaginative, turned thus aside from the deep and legitimate channel of her being into the fœtid marshes and zymotic swamps of ecclesiastical licentiousness and military brutality, recoiled upon herself, viewed the whole world as under the dominance of the Evil Principle, and herself, personally, possessed of the Devil—in fact, a Witch? In this self-condemning morbidity had she not the support of Jesus himself? Did he not believe in persons being possessed of evil spirits? Did

he not cast seven devils out of his friend, Mary Magdalene? Did he not cast a legion of devils out of the man who dwelt among the tombs? "We have Jesus Christ living within us" is one of the hackneyed expressions of pulpit cant; but no one, as formerly, will now admit that they have Satan living within them. This diabolical tenancy has got out of fashion with theologians and their dupes. But, in the Christian Scriptures, this Satan is certainly as distinct a personage and as active a principle as is Jesus Christ himself. According to the myth, it was to circumvent the malign influence of this very Satan that Jesus came down to be the hero in the drama, the chief *tableaux* of which were Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Ascension. Historically, if there be no devil there is no Jesus; logically, if there be no occasion for Satan there is no occasion for Christ. The world of to-day is letting Satan die. You seldom hear him referred to in the trimming inanities of the pulpit; but he is constantly alluded to in the jocular blasphemies of the "rough." Satan is ignored, and his hell has been allowed to go out at all "respectable" places of worship, although it still blazes away with all its brimstone at Spurgeon's Tabernacle, and a few other still remaining strongholds of crude credulity and atavistic ignorance.

It is because, at last, the ineradicable potentiality for good which is inherent in human nature is wrenching and shattering the fetters of Christian dogma that the devil is neglected and hell allowed to smoulder into ashes. They two have a lofty and indubitable place in the holy oracles of the Christian God; but they are too barbarous for millions of humane hypocrites who have not the courage to proclaim they are not Christian. It is because Christianity is dismembered and dying that witchcraft is dead. It is dead in spite of the fulminations of the Old Testament and the didactics of the New. Before we could kill witchcraft we had to half

kill Christianity. Before we could give up the burning of Christian women we had to throw the minotaur of the Christian faith on his back and wrench out his fangs. Before witchcraft went the devil had to go in all but name, although, if Christianity be true, he is a terrible reality, more than a match for the whole three persons of the Trinity, and who, in spite of the "redemption" and the unremitting ministrations of the Holy Spirit, drags down the pride and flower and numerical force of the human race to the torments of the Lake of Fire.

Yet the first State blow at witchcraft was a State blow at the existence of Satan. The first Act of Parliament meant to abolish witchcraft had, of course, to begin by abolishing the devil. In 1672 Colbert carried a measure in the Parliament of Normandy commanding the judges to exclude processes of witchcraft, and he laid the axe to the root of the tree by depriving Satan of his legal existence. The friends of religion were seized with alarm, and took no pains to conceal that they cared less that women should be burnt in thousands than that the Church of Christ should be weakened by heresy. Against Colbert, who, however, stood his ground indomitably, the theological and witch-burning party expostulated thus: "The Devil is nothing less than a dogma intimately connected with all others. To dare to set aside the Eternal Conquered, is it not to lay a sacrilegious hand upon the Eternal Conqueror? To doubt the acts of the former leads one to doubt the acts of the latter, and the miracles that he wrought for the express purpose of combatting the devil. The columns that support the heavens have their foundations in the deep abyss; he who would recklessly remove the foundation is in danger of breaking the ceiling."

But Colbert let what the clergy admitted to be the "foundations" of Christianity go rather than taint the air of heaven any longer with the fumes of the burning

flesh of women—burning, shrivelling, hissing, agonising by the command of “the Lord our God,” who thundered forth through his amanuensis, Moses, “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” But Colbert was in advance of his age. He was one of those men born on the mountain-tops of time, and who look down pityingly into the mists and vapours which lie over the abysses of human folly and the gulfs of human crime. He who abolished the devil and devil-possession practically abolished Christ and the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit. For long after his age there were those who stood piously up for the devil and let their piety blossom into misery for man and unutterable suffering for woman. One, almost a contemporary of Colbert, who swayed the sceptre of a wider rule and held the orb of a mightier royalty, maintained with Jesus of Nazareth that the devil was liable to enter woman, and held that such woman as he should enter should be destroyed by fire.

“The High and Mighty Prince James, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland,” to whom the Bible, the source of England’s greatness, is dedicated, wrote a volume on witchcraft and devil-possession. Well was the Lord’s anointed warranted in serving the Lord by attempting to carry into execution the Lord’s will as expressed in Holy Writ, in Exodus xxii. 18, and Leviticus xx. 17. Here is a specimen from the book of the heaven-anointed King :—

*Question.*—“What forme of punyshmente thinke ye merites magiciens and witches?”

*King.*—“They ought to be put to deathe, according to the law of God.

*Question.*—“But what kynde of deathe, I pray you?”

*King.*—“It is commonly by fyre.

*Question.*—“But ought no sex, age, nor rank to be excused?”

*King.*—“None at all ———”

And Archbishop Whitgift, a great sermon-spinner in his day, and of whom we hear occasionally even yet, declared, "Verily, the King spake by the spirit of God."

Till this very hour there are, in this country, millions of men and women who are as convinced of the Devil's existence as they are of their own, and who are more deferential to him than they are to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the Virgin Mary at their back. They are more deeply moved by the fear of the Devil than by the love of God; and, if it were not for the Devil and his red, roaring hell, they would not have enough of the teleological about them to trouble about God at all. The vulgar and selfish problem, "How am I to escape hell?" is the only problem in which the genuine evangelical Christian is really interested. "Are you saved?" is an ever-recurring motto of Revivalism. "Where shall I spend eternity?" is a favourite watchword on the scrolls of the Salvation Army. In its last analysis the Christian religion is merely a fear of the Devil. Of course, an idea so crude and rude and morbid can glimmer only in the skulls of the common herd. But, then, Christianity is a thing of the common herd. It is a creed for babes and sucklings; the wise and prudent always regarded it with pity and contempt, and ever will. To find Byron or Shelley sitting with their hair on end for dread of hell; to witness Darwin puzzling as to whether or not he was "saved;" to behold Tyndall wasting his wind in prayer; to hear Herbert Spencer declare he was "safe in the arms of Jesus;" to behold Mill before "the throne of grace," and Carlyle "washed in the blood of the Lamb," would be as astounding a phenomenon as the Greek Kalends or a round square.

God and heaven and the Devil and hell are real entities only with Mary Ann the housemaid and of those who, through all the ages, have had Mary Ann the housemaid's amount of brains and sum of attainments. But every

999 persons in a thousand are merely Mary Anns. They are born simply to believe in the God that happens, for the time being, to be fashionable in the country of their birth, and to pin their terrors to the first devil they hear of. And when the blind leaders of the blind say to them, "Canonise!" they canonise; and when they say unto them, "Burn!" they burn. Scores of otherwise kindly and intelligent men and women have gravely assured me that, for my assaults on the popular superstitions of the vulgar, I shall yet suffer eternal torment. Some have appeared to lament the fact; while others seemed to rejoice that there was a hell to retaliate for such wickedness as mine. Such a poor little brute is the ordinary manikin, and so aptly do the tenets of the Christian faith fit in with his ignorance and brutality!

No thinker believes in the Devil, or pretends to know much about God; but, then, mankind, in the mass, are eaters, not thinkers. Educated people are humane; but, then, few people are educated. The uneducated—I do not say the unlearned—are humanly capricious and cruel, and their creed makes them fiendishly so. If you do not believe as they believe, although you have thought all your days and they have never thought in all their life, for differing from them they can piously contemplate you, a fellow-creature, burning in hell! And I am threatened and hated because I attack a creed like this! From a belief in the Devil to believing in the Devil taking possession of a woman is only a step, and a legitimate one; and the next step, also a legitimate one, is to burn to death the woman so possessed. All the three steps are incontestably Scriptural and Christian. Christians proper—those unaffected by the leaven of modern sentiment—still believe in the Devil. They still believe in demoniacal possession; and, but for the terror of modern intelligence and scepticism, they would still burn the heretic. Only the other day, in connection with

the Maryport Home Mission, the attendances were large, and there was much "spiritual awakening." The principal evangelist was a person of the name of Carr.

"At half-past two o'clock an open-air meeting was held in John Street. After a procession was formed the people marched down to the hall, singing as they went. Mr. Carr spoke on the subject of ghosts, first reading about the witch of Endor. He said ninety-nine out of the hundred stories about ghosts were fictions; but he could tell them a true story, which was vouched for by two Plymouth Brethren. A young woman who attended one of their meetings was converted, and she told them that she had been possessed of a devil, which tormented her fearfully. She went to a certain person in the immediate neighbourhood, who told her that, as long as she wore the ring which was then placed on her finger, she would never be troubled. She had worn the ring for two years, and she had not been attacked. The men prayed about the matter, and the decision they came to was that the ring should be removed. On removal it was found that inside the ring was printed, 'Don't trouble this woman till she's in hell.' Immediately the ring was withdrawn fits came upon the woman, and she was tormented for nearly two hours before the demon left her, and after this she never had another attack. He was not a believer in ordinary ghost-stories; but he believed that people were troubled with devils the same as they were when the Saviour was on the earth. The evening meeting was attended by about 2,000 people."\*

In a small town like Maryport 2,000 persons could be brought to countenance diablerie like this! Thus Christianity exalts the intelligence and refines the sentiment of the masses. According to pious Carr and his devout myrmidons, the Devil was in that young woman.

\* *West Cumberland Times*, May 18th, 1887.

Then why did they not burn her? Why did they dare to disobey their God and the heaven-anointed king to whom their God's Bible is dedicated? Because woman is now protected against Christianity by the triple ramparts of secularistic opinion; and before those ramparts God and king alike are baffled.

## CHAPTER XXV.

*Witches Examined for the Devil's Mark—The Fife-shire Witches—Lilly Eadie—Belief in Witchcraft Implies no Greater Stretch of Credulity than do the Fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Faith—Homage to the Prince of Hell—Blackstone's Belief in Witchcraft—The Witchcraft Edicts of the Papal Chair—Holocausts of Witches—The Protestant Englishman's Argument—Protestantism a more Merciless Witch-burner than Catholicism—A Good Friday Practice in Certain Convents of Paris.*

CHRISTIANITY was nothing if not indecent. "The Book of God," upon which England's greatness depends, and which England's daughters carry to church but fortunately do not read, has an instance of a wife giving her maid-servant to her husband to have commerce with, and that not in secret, but in the presence of the wife and actually while the maid-servant sat upon her lap.\* And this is only one revoltingly indecent incident among many which sanctifies and refines Holy Writ. When Jehovah issued the mandate, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," he, it is true, did not give a list of the distinguishing marks by which a witch might be detected. He left the *modus operandi* of the detection to the obscene ingenuity of his people; and in this case they fully justified their Lord in the confidence he had reposed in them by leaving the matter to their discretion.

If a young woman were accused of witchcraft on the

\* Gen. xxx. 2-5.

most frivolous accusation from some person unknown—from her own father or mother, or from her own little sister or lisping child—in conformity with the Biblical command, and in the interests of our most holy religion, the young woman would require to be *examined*. The examination consisted in a search all over the person for what was known as the seal of the Devil, an invisible mark which the Evil One was, by demonologist juriconsults, believed to place somewhere on the bodies of his own elect. One fact rendered this seal or mark discoverable—it was insensible to pain.

If a woman, therefore, was suspected of having received the invisible but malign mark, it was the practice to denude her and prick her all over the body with a long needle, driving it deep into the flesh at every prod, that the examiners might observe whether the puncture bled and whether the accused felt pain on the spot punctured. The examiners invariably began and pushed forward their examination with the most persistent zeal on those parts of the person which decency in all times and ages has suggested should be draped. Fancy, ye who still hang on by the modern remains of a barbarous and moribund faith, a young woman of comparatively recent days—for the punishment of witches is not so very long discontinued—held there, naked, in the hands of the followers of and the ministers of Christ, subjected to indecencies of which we cannot venture to think, much less attempt to describe. The young woman may have borne your name and have belonged to your family, and may have lived only a generation or two before you. Over her lithe form, over her white skin scarred here and there by blue marks from the grasp of pious but brutal hands, and over the blood-stains from the punctures, like rose-leaves lying on a lustrous statue of marble, streams the redundant wealth of her dark brown hair, and with which, in her maidenly modesty, she attempts to veil

herself from the gross and lustful gaze of the worshippers of the God who commanded, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." Question after question from the Papist friar or from the Puritan pastor or Presbyterian minister; and the needle is thrust hundreds of times into the tender and writhing flesh; and, amid pious texts in favour of Christ and in disfavour of the Devil, there was cruelty that makes one shudder and indecency which cannot be named. Brother, think that woman your sister; husband, fancy that woman your wife; father, imagine that woman your daughter, and tell me how you feel to the God and the Book and the Church that covered motherhood with infamy and maidenhood with shame.

In my native land I have stood, on the Fife shore of the Frith of Forth, on the daisied grass that was, only last century, a fiery Gehenna where maidens as lovely and mothers as leal as ever blessed man with their love or home with their faith perished in the devouring fire; perished with the Bible thundering, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live;" perished with the Kirk of Scotland plying the flaming faggots and the fiery straw round woman's tender flesh, that writhed and shrunk and hissed in agony. I stood ankle-deep amid the grass and the buttercups where, only in last century, the fires burnt out and left the ground covered with cinders and charred bones and remnants of half-roasted viscera. And why had I daisies there now instead of charred bones, and yellow buttercups instead of roasted hearts? Because now the Bible is weak and the Newspaper is strong; because Jehovah has begun to die, and Man has begun to live; because Humanity has dared to become a rebel to heaven and its Book, and loyal to earth and its happiness; because the fangs of the falsely-called Church of God are broken, and men and women are awakening from the horrible nightmare of Calvary and its skulls.

Down opposite the ancient and decaying village of Torryburn, I stood on the great stone door-step that lies over the rifled grave of Lilly Eadie, one of the last of the Fifeshire witches. The stone is within tide-mark of the Frith of Forth. On it no rustic moralist has engraved a line; the chisel of no Old Mortality has touched that unhallowed monolith. But the god of the sea has covered it over with sleet and shells, and written epitaphs upon it with clinging sea-weed.

Witches were not buried. Their charred ashes were blown away by the wind, their entrails eaten by dogs, and their bones crunched by sows. A fiery death above, and no cool grave below, for them. Had not the God of the Bible cursed them?—how could a believer in the Bible lift a spade to inter their unhallowed remains? But this Lilly Eadie, of a yet vivid local tradition, was *buried*, because she died on the way from the prison to the fire which had been piled up on the village green to receive her. So she was buried; but not in “consecrated ground,” not where any other human being was buried, but on the debateable land, the border mark between the earth and the ocean, on the line in which they meet in battle twice during each revolution of the globe on its axis, where the waves leap and the shingles abrade, where the waters roar and the sea-gull shrieks unearthly requiem. No bed for her in the resting place of her fathers, no grave among the sweet and lonely kirk-yards of Fife, among the odorous white roses and the fragrant thyme.

About thirty years ago drunken vandalism broke into Lilly Eadie’s earth-and-ocean tomb. Her skull fell into the hands of a Dunfermline antiquary, the father of Noel Paton; part of her coffin I saw nailed to a fowl-house, and part of her thigh-bone was used by the village shoemaker to polish the edges of the soles of the boots of fishermen and hinds. A fragment of her coffin, which I

brought away, lies before me as I write. It is more real and more significant than any fragment of "the true cross" that ever casket enclosed in any abbey or monastery of the world. It is a symbol of Christian iniquity and hellish wrong. Whether the mandate to be cruel to woman comes from the height of the Celestial or the abyss of the Infernal, I hate it and curse it; and I will not obey. And here, over the fragment of your coffin, Lilly Eadie, I re-dedicate my pen and soul and spirit to the destruction of what yet remains of the accursed creed that sent you prematurely to that grave between the earth and the sea.

Belief in the exquisitely irrational and incredible follows as a necessary corollary from the creed that imposes such stultification upon its victims as a belief in the snake story of the Fall, with its correlated myth, the stick-and-nail story of the Redemption, and all the paraphernalia of the sun and moon standing still, a talking ass, a man living inside a whale, seven devils coming out of a woman, a legion of devils going into a drove of pigs, the death of some one atoning for the "sins" of other people, water-walking, thaumaturgic fish-catching, and a dead carpenter getting out of his grave and flying to heaven. Deluded dupes, who can be induced to believe, or to believe that they believe, in utterly irrational gibberish like this, have not indeed a step further to go on the road of credulity, or *faith*, in order to believe in the maddest and the silliest nostrums that ever witchcraft advanced. When a dupe could be found who believed in the Pentateuch and the Synoptic Gospels it was certainly not difficult to induce him to believe that "witches were able, with the assistance of the Devil, not only to foretell events, but to produce mice and vermin; to deprive men or other animals, by touching them or merely breathing upon them, of their natural powers, and to afflict them with diseases; to

raise storms ; to change themselves into cats and other beasts, etc. That the compact with the Devil was sometimes express, whether oral or written, when the witch abjured God and Christ, and dedicated herself wholly to the Evil One, or only implied, when she actually engaged in his service, practised infernal arts, and renounced the sacraments of the Church. That the express compact was sometimes solemnly confirmed at a general meeting, over which the Devil presided, and sometimes privately made by the witch signing the articles of agreement with her own blood, or by the Devil writing her name in his Black Book."

With those who believed in Genesis and gave credence to Matthew no further stretch of feeble and credulous *faith* was demanded to believe that the witch's contract with the Evil One was "sometimes of indefinite duration, and, at others, for a certain number of years. That the witch was bound to be obedient to the Devil in everything. That General Assemblies of witches were held yearly, or oftener, in which they appeared entirely naked and besmeared with an ointment made from the bodies of unbaptised infants. That from these meetings they rode from great distances on broomsticks, pokers, goats, hogs, or dogs ; the Devil taking the chair under the form of a goat. That here they did homage to the Prince of Hell, and offered him sacrifices of young children, etc., and practised all sorts of license until cock-crowing." And that, if a confession of compact with the Evil One could not be extorted by the painful punctures of the needle or the wrenching tortures of the rack, the suspicion of witchcraft could be confirmed or removed by tying together the thumbs of the suspected person and throwing her into a lake or river : if she did *not* sink, her guilt was established, and she was taken out and burnt to death ; if she *did* sink, she was drowned.

These monstrosities of belief, and the equally mon-

strous fables about the world being "created" in six days, about a virgin bearing a son and "wise men" following a star, went homogeneously together hand in hand. "To deny the possibility—nay, actual existence—of witchcraft and sorcery," writes no lesser an authority than Blackstone,\* "is at once flatly to contradict the revealed Word of God in various passages both of the Old and New Testament; and the thing itself is a truth to which every nation in the world hath, in its turn, borne testimony, either by examples, seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws, which at least suppose the possibility of commerce with evil spirits."

Rightly recognising it to be an integral part of the Christian system, in 1484 Pope Innocent VIII. issued a bull directed against witches and wizards. Moreover, the form of procedure in trial for the offence was laid down and enforced in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (Hammer of Witches) which was issued by the Papal authority. The bull of Innocent was successively enforced by Pope Alexander VI., in 1494; by Leo X., in 1521; and Adrian VI., in 1522. Under the auspices of these bulls woman was indeed "elevated" by the blessed Christian faith which has done so much to make her happy and pure. The gory needle was thrust millions of times into woman's naked and writhing body; the rack creaked and crunched; the prisons were full of women, and of lechers who took advantage of their horrible helplessness; the lakes and rivers splashed and sent up the gurgling death-cry of maiden and mother; and in every Christian town and hamlet, under the divine "Thus saith the Lord," the fires burnt devilishly that fed upon woman's living flesh. In Geneva 500 witches perished in three months of the year 1515. In a single year 1,000 witches were put to death in the diocese of Como, in Würzburg. From the

\* "Commentary on the Laws of England," bk. iv., ch. 4, sec. 6.

date of Innocent's bull down to the extinction of burning for witchcraft, it has been calculated that not fewer than 100,000 women suffered shameful and agonising death in Germany alone, under the refining auspices of the religion that has done so much to "elevate" woman and to "shroud as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child" !

Papists ! Whenever, in this England, you write anything that reflects unfavourably upon historic Christianity, your English Christian assures you that Christianity is not responsible for the turpitude, and that it must be set down to the malevolent heresies and flagitious morals of the Church of Rome. For many centuries there was no Christianity at all save that represented by the Church of Rome ; so our Protestant Englishman's argument amounts to an admission that, for century upon century, Christianity was extinct. He who promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," did not keep his promise, but disappeared from the earth for hundreds of years, till, at length, he returned at the period of "the glorious Reformation." I make the Protestant Englishman heartily welcome to the inevitable deduction from his proposition. Moreover, may I assure him that, as far as witchcraft is concerned, Protestantism is a more atrocious sinner than Catholicism ? Protestant Elizabeth passed a statute against witchcraft in 1562, and Protestant James I., "Defender of the Faith," passed a like statute in 1603, Lord Bacon being a member of the Parliament that passed the measure. But even the rigours with which witchcraft was prosecuted under Elizabeth and James pale their ineffectual fires before the fearful atrocities in that direction perpetrated in the still more emphatically Protestant days of the Commonwealth, and in Scotland when that grimmest of all Protestant sects, Presbyterianism, became firmly established. In England alone 30,000 of the wives and maidens of

our race are calculated to have cruelly and ignobly perished under the "Thus saith the Lord" of "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." The enactment against witchcraft remained unrepealed on our statute-book down till the year 1736! Scotland did not burn her last witch till 1722; and Switzerland followed the advice of the Bible down till 1780, from which date she has ventured to defy God and reserve her women from the flames.

But the long ages of pious barbarism towards woman left their mark of pain and evil upon the world for generations. So little did true religionists think of woman and human kindness, and so much did they think of Jesus Christ and cruelty, that in some of the convents in Paris, not so very long ago, a horrible representation of the Crucifixion was enacted on Good Friday. Women were literally nailed through the hands and feet to crosses and left to agonise for several hours in memory of the bloody fable of Calvary. One woman at least died in great agony after the nails had been drawn from her hands and feet;\* but, with this malign faith, what matters the agonising death of a woman, or of a million of women, so that God be glorified!

\* See Baron Grimm's Correspondence.

## CHAPTER XXVI

*Christian Baths—The Adamites—“The Disease of the Cloister”—A Papist Burning to Death his Own Two Daughters—Rose Allin—Wife of Philip le Deux—Evidence of Fox, the Martyrologist—Ireland’s Contribution to the “Elevation” and the “Halo.”*

GENERALLY speaking, to write an account of the agencies which have been at work in effecting the degradation of woman in Europe would be tantamount to writing an account of the progress and power of the Christian religion on that continent. I do not feel it my province to write a consecutive ecclesiastical history. I can touch only upon a few points out of many, and accentuate them so as to undrape them of the veil of cant and hypocrisy with which Christian historians have shrouded them. Hurriedly, in passing, I may point to the notorious fact that, for ages, in Europe, there were no baths, except in such parts of that continent as were held by the Mohammedans. Among the Christians there was plenty of godliness; but the cleanliness which is proverbially next to godliness was entirely absent. At last the Christians got baths—public baths, as the Pagans of antiquity had had many centuries before Christianity had been invented. But even when, at last, the Christians erected baths, they could not use them with the decency common to other religionists. If they *must* have clean skins, they would have these clean skins at the expense of dirty morals. The followers of the Lamb, and their dear sisters in Christ, went to the baths promiscuously, in a state of perfect nudity.

This devout practice did, of course, contribute its share towards the "elevating" of woman out of all regard for delicacy or even decency.

Also, in passing, may I remark that the *Illuminate* were a Christian sect—no other religion could have a sect so pious and so shameless. The monks of the *Illuminate*—or Adamites, as they sometimes called themselves—as is notorious, went stark naked, as the mythical Adam was, by them, believed to have done before the Fall. The nuns who pinned their faith to the Adamites, but certainly not to the coat-tails of the Adamites, compelled the novices to disport themselves as Eve disported herself in Paradise before the talking serpent had entered an appearance, and before, as yet, the Lord God had sewed fig-leaves together and made her an apron. So strenuously did this truly Christian sect insist on nudity that it is on record how one of their number, Magdalene Babeu, got severely reprimanded for attempting to cover her person with the end of an altar-cloth. This devout sect held the doctrine that "the body cannot stain the soul," and excellent use they made of this precept. They consecrated their souls to the Church, and then, practically, dedicated their bodies to the Devil. No lewdness nor evil concupiscence could sully him or her who indulged in them under the name of Christ; the heart was inevitably pure if the knee only bent at the name of Jesus. These Adamites and Eveites carried on their devout fantasies in a garden behind the convent. A physician named Ibelin, who made careful diagnosis of the latter, declared that they were suffering from "*the disease of the cloister.*" This Paradise behind the convent differed from the original Paradise in that it had no forbidden fruit. Without shame, they indulged in divine skips and holy somersaults, and the indecency of their language and gestures could not be matched out of that corner of hell which is specially set apart for the damned

among the satyrs and the race of Priapus. And thus was woman "elevated" under the auspices of "our most holy religion," when it invoked the accessories of nudity and Eden. The "halo of sacred innocence round the tender years of the child" was conspicuous in this nude Paradise, which did not pay to shame the tribute of even one fig-leaf. At least, there were plenty of children that Archdeacon Farrar's "halo" might have shrouded. But the shrouding with a halo took the form of being smothered by pillows; and a hole in the convent grounds and a sprinkling of quicklime finished the tale of sacred infanticide.

With, perhaps, the exception of the most delirious drunkenness, no influence whatever has steeled the heart against the natural affections as Christianity has done. Well and truly did the Nazarene anticipate the results of his doctrines when he gave utterance to the revolting text: "For I am come 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."\* The poet exclaimed:—

"Some feelings arc to mortals given  
With less of earth in them than heaven ;  
And, if there be a human tear  
From passion's dross refined and clear—  
A tear so limpid and so meek  
It would not stain an angel's cheek,  
'Tis that which pious fathers shed  
Upon a duteous daughter's head."

But even the love of the father for his daughter was subverted and poisoned and envenomed by the coils and the slime of this fatal snake of Palestine. A gentleman of Valladolid found that his two daughters had some leanings toward the Protestant Tweedledum, whereas

\* Matt. x. 35, 36.

his own leanings were toward the Papist Tweedledee : he had, for Christ's sake, his girls thrown into a dungeon. From the darkness of this dungeon they were led to the glare of the burning faggots at the stake. So strenuous was he that God be glorified, that, with his own hands, he cut down the branches of certain trees that grew on his own estate to make the pyre to burn his own flesh and blood. Nay, more ; as his two daughters, young, innocent, and lovely, guiltless of all guilt, except some trifling heresy anent this terrible Jesus, stood there before him in their beauty and bloom, he asked to have the honour of applying the light to the faggots with his own hand. He applied the flaming torch, and, when the evening fell, a few blackened bones and some remnants of charred viscera half-buried in ashes were all that remained of the sweet girls who had loved him ; who, as children, had gambolled round his knees ; who, as maidens, had cheered his hours of sadness with the songs of the Cid and the trill of the soft guitar. And all his fellow-Christians applauded him because, for some conundrum about Jesus the Jew, he had sacrificed his Spanish girls.

If Archdeacon Farrar and those who rhapsodise with him would take even a cursory glance at the annals of martyrology, they would find an irrefutable and terrible denial of their lie about the faith they are paid to preach when they assert that it has elevated woman and rendered pure and happy the life of the child. At the hands of Christians—and not in their capacity of human beings, but in their capacity of zealous Christians—women and children have suffered more revolting indignity, more shameless cruelty, than ever they have suffered under any other malign influence that has yet blighted the world. From the abyss of shame and from the Golgotha of torture tens of thousands of women, with their eyes agonised and their hair on flame, shriek

up from the Orcus of history that I am right, and that Archdeacon Farrar is wrong.

The girl, Rose Allin of Colchester, waves to me her hand with the tendons divided from the flesh by fire, to emphasize how Christianity and its professors "elevated" her, simply because she had not been regular in her attendance at church.

Whether what Archdeacon Farrar says be true I ask the woman at Nonne who, for Christ's sake, was dragged out of her hiding place and ravished in the presence of her husband before a sword was placed in her hand with which, by force, she was compelled to take his life.

Whether Christianity has "elevated" woman I ask the wife of Philip le Deux. After the followers of the Lamb had murdered the husband "they went to his wife, who was then attended by the midwife, expecting every moment to be delivered. The midwife entreated them to at least stay the murder till the child, which was the twentieth, should be born. Notwithstanding this, they thrust a dagger up to the hilt into the poor woman. Anxious to be delivered, she ran into a corn-loft; but thither they pursued her, stabbed her in the belly, and then threw her into the street. By the fall the child came from the dying mother, and, being caught by one of the Catholic ruffians [quite as humane as the Protestant ruffians], he stabbed the smiling infant and then threw it into the river." Thus was this woman "elevated," and thus did her child obtain its "halo."

From the glorious records of the Gospel of Peace and Goodwill I will permit the martyrologist, Fox, to give another instance of "elevation" and the "halo": "Some they stripped naked, and, after offering them the most infamous insults, they stuck them with pins from head to foot, and lanced them with pen-knives; and sometimes, with red-hot pincers, they dragged them by the nose. Sometimes they tied fathers and husbands,

while they ravished their wives and daughters before their eyes." That a Christian priesthood should do this in the seventeenth century was divinely audacious; but that a Christian priesthood should claim in the nineteenth century that Christianity has elevated woman is as divinely mendacious.

Let us come to Irish soil; and a more generous and warm-hearted race than the Irish do not exist under the circuit of the sun. But Ireland is intensely Christian, hence her canker and her curse. In Ireland, for Christ's sake, "many women of all ages were put to deaths of the most cruel nature. Some in particular were fastened by their backs to strong posts, and, being stripped to the waists, the inhuman monsters [but excellent members of the Church of Christ] cut off their breasts with shears, which, of course, put them to the most excruciating torments; and in this position they were left till, from loss of blood, they expired.....Even unborn infants were dragged from the womb.....Many unhappy mothers were hung naked on the branches of trees, and, their bodies being cut open, the innocent offspring were taken from them and thrown to dogs and swine. And, to increase the horrid scene, they would oblige the husband to be a spectator before he suffered himself."

Also in Ireland a certain woman, because she was not doctrinally quite sound on transubstantiation and the mass, "they beat with such savage barbarity that she had scarce a whole bone left, after which they threw her into a ditch; but, not satisfied with this, they took her child, a girl of about six years of age, and, after ripping up her belly, threw her to her mother, there to languish till she perished."

Still in Ireland: "One poor woman they hung on a gibbet, with her child, an infant about a twelvemonth old, the latter of whom was hung by the neck with the hair of its mother's head, and in that manner finished its

short but miserable existence." And this and hundreds, if not thousands, of like instances in the country which, of all countries, would leave woman respected and childhood happy but for the bloody trail of Christism over the length and breadth of the Green Isle. The wildest orgie up to the knees in Irish whiskey is as nothing to the infernal orgie that is celebrated when the generous and impulsive Celt is up to the eyes in Irish Christianity: *teste* the ruined buildings and the blood-stained pavements of Belfast even in the very year in which I write these lines. But for his infatuated absorption in the Galilean superstition the chivalrous and light-hearted Irishman, full of spontaneous devotion and natural gallantry, would venture his life to gratify even the girlish whim of Kathleen or Norah. Christism has imbrued the hands of Irishmen in woman's blood, and I know of no other influence that could so degrade a race so knightly. But for the priests and their terrible Christ the beautiful and solitary lady of the days of Brian Boru could still walk unharmed from the one end of Ireland to the other:—

“ On she went, and her maiden smile  
 In safety lighted her round the green isle :  
 And blessed forever is she who relied  
 Upon Erin's honour and Erin's pride.”

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*“Thrusting Straight at the Throat of the Old Dragon”  
—The Evidence of Jane Bohorquia—Of the Piedmontese Valley—Of Martha Constantine—Of Magdalene Bertino, Mary Raymondet, and Others—Fearful Evidence from Guernsey—Papist v. Protestant Persecution—Execution of the Countess of Salisbury.*

SHALL I go on giving specimen upon specimen of women whom Christianity has “elevated,” and of children whom Christianity has “shrouded as with a halo”? The task is a hideous one; but I stand in desperate conflict against overwhelming imposture and a worldful of sham and cant and falsehood; almost alone on the earth, I war against the millions of Christendom, and what would be illegitimate for other pens is legitimate for mine. You may count all the real writers on the fingers of the one hand who are striving to do what I am striving to do. My purpose is too tremendous and my struggle against overwhelming odds all too desperate for me to bathe myself in perfumes, array myself with ribbons, and, with a debonair smile and a light rapier, parry with the dilettante grace of a fencing master. With both hands I grasp the hilt of a claymore, notched with clanging blows upon helmet and hauberk and red with the stains of battle, and thrust straight at the throat of the Old Dragon, fenced round by a hundred thousand pulpits and armed to the teeth with a panoply of lies.

I call up the shade of the young girl, Jane Bohorquia, to confront Archdeacon Farrar. Her elder sister, for

some heresy about this blood-stained Christ, had been racked and then burnt to ashes. In a mad moment of her torment she had confessed her sister Jane to be, like herself, a heretic. Jane was accordingly seized by the orthodox followers of the Lamb. They found she was pregnant, so they desisted from putting her to the rack till her child should be born. As soon as the child was born it was taken away from its heretic mother to be brought up in the orthodox phase of the Christian superstition. The young mother still weak from the throes of child-birth, because she was not quite correct in her opinions about a mythical character known as Jesus, had her body torn almost to pieces upon the rack, from which she was taken and flung upon the floor of the dungeon to die.

For evidence of the "elevation" and the "halo" I appeal to that village in the Piedmontese valley where, when not a man was left to defend them, they that followed the Lamb, in the name of that Lamb, fell upon 150 women and children. For the glory of God and of his Christ, they first ravished and then slaughtered the former, and, taking the latter by the legs, they dashed out their brains against the rocks and the trees. Trees of that awful valley, and ye rocks jutting from the hills, tell with your mosses dark with gore, tell with your lichens bloody red, covered with the pulp of bespattered brains mingled with shreds and tresses of childhood's wavy hair, tell what Christianity has done to "shroud as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."

Archdeacon Farrar, did you and yours ever hear of a young woman of the name of Martha Constantine? Apparently not. So permit me to introduce you to her. She may be able to give you a valuable hint for the next edition of your "Life of Christ." In the Valley of the Piedmont the followers of Christ, and in the special

employ of the Church of Christ, as was the custom of your saints, violated Martha Constantine ; and, after their orgie of lust, they cut the two breasts off their yet living victim and fried them and set them as a dainty repast before one or two of their comrades, who ate them without suspecting what they were. Will you be good enough to keep this in mind when next you feel constrained to write about Christianity elevating woman, and will you ask yourself the question, What influence other than this baleful Christianity could ever have incited to such deeds as those with which now I deal? I have read history, and I know of no other influence which has been so potent in transforming man into a fiend and in changing earth into hell. Has your reading of history been wider and deeper than mine? If so, pray enlighten me, and tell me where I am to find the parallels to the father lighting the faggots round his own daughters at Valladolid, and to the fried breasts of Martha Constantine of Piedmont.

Archdeacon Farrar, this ghastly panorama of contradiction which I unrol before you is all painted from the pages of Protestant historians, the historians of your own Church. Are you unacquainted with them? If yes, you have written in culpable ignorance the passage on which I join issue. If no, you have written against the clearest light, written for profit and for praise, in utter disregard of fact. So be it. I am what perhaps you and the world would call foolish enough to be a man of a different mould. I would be Christian if I could. I would be orthodox were I able. But, with me, Truth is greater than Christianity and Right grander than Orthodoxy ; and, in their interests, I am content to tread, poor and neglected, the cold, barren, and persecuted path of the heretic.

But I return to my task of giving a few more items on the interminable list of those who, from their graves,

bear evidence to the truth of your allegations anent the "elevation" and the "halo." Magdalene Bertino could tell you a good deal about the "elevation." For being suspected of being incorrect on some moot point in theology she "was stripped naked, her head tied between her legs, and thrown down one of the precipices." Mary Raymondet, of the same town, La Torre, might also be of use to you, O Archdeacon Farrar. She, for not being sound on some contested doctrine taught, or supposed to have been taught, by your Christ, had her flesh cut from her bones slice by slice till she expired. Magdalen Pilot, for a similar offence, shared a similar fate. "Ann Charboniere had one end of a stake thrust up her body, and, the other end being fixed in the ground, she was left in that manner to perish." Perhaps you might obtain a hint or two about the "elevation" from this Ann Charboniere.

"Peter Fontaine had a beautiful child ten years of age, named Magdalene, who was ravished and murdered by the soldiers. Another girl of about the same age they roasted alive at Villa Nova; and a poor woman, hearing the soldiers were coming towards her house, snatched up the cradle in which her infant son was asleep and fled towards the woods. The soldiers, however, saw and pursued her, when she lightened herself by putting down the cradle and child, which the soldiers no sooner came up to than they murdered the infant, and, continuing the pursuit, found the mother in a cave, where they first ravished her and then cut her to atoms." That mother outraged and murdered in a cave could tell you something about the "elevation," and that child of hers, done to death in its cradle, should be quite an authority upon the "halo."

"Lucy, the wife of Peter Besson.....being in an advanced state of pregnancy, determined, if possible, to escape from such dreadful scenes as everywhere

surrounded her. She accordingly took two young children, one in each hand, and set off towards the Alps. But, on the third day of the journey, she was taken in labour among the mountains and delivered of an infant, who perished through the inclemency of the weather, as did the other two children, for all three were found dead by her side, and herself just expiring, by the person to whom she related the above circumstances. Francis Gross, whose father was a clergyman, had his flesh slowly cut from his body into small pieces, and put into a dish before him. Two of his children were minced before his sight, while his wife was fastened to a post to behold these cruelties practised upon her husband and offspring. The tormenters, at length tired of exercising their cruelties, decapitated both husband and wife." Lucy Besson and the wife of Francis Gross should be exceptionally valuable witnesses anent the "elevation" and the "halo."

The island of Guernsey possesses its own fearful record of Christianity's responsibility for the "elevation" and the "halo." Mrs. Perotine Massey and her daughters were accused of the dark and atrocious crime of not being regular attendants at church. When they found themselves in danger they solemnly promised to go to church regularly for the future. But this promise availed them not ; some one, they never knew who, had declared them heretics. They differed in some jot or tittle from their orthodox teachers on a subject on which neither they nor their orthodox teachers, nor anybody else, know anything ; and, for this, they must die the death. This bone of contention, Jesus of Nazareth, had, unfortunately, got a firm hold of Guernsey ; and it was inevitable that blood should be shed and that fire should be kindled.

"The day of execution having arrived, three stakes were erected ; the middle post was assigned to the mother, the eldest daughter on her right hand and the

younger on the left. They were strangled previous to burning; but, the rope breaking before they were dead, the poor women fell into the fire. Perotine, at the time of her inhuman sentence, was largely pregnant; and now, falling upon her side upon the flaming faggots, presented a singular spectacle of horror! Torn open by the tremendous pangs she endured, she was delivered of a fine male child, which was rescued from its burning bed by the humanity of one W. House, who tenderly laid it on the grass. The infant was taken to the provost, and by him presented to the bailiff, when the inhuman monster decreed it to be recast into the fire that it might perish with its heretical mother"!

Archdeacon Farrar, this woman of St. Peter's Port in Guernsey, this Perotine Massey, with her child born in the fire, and all for Christ's sake, could descant to you upon Christianity's influence in the "elevation" of woman and the power it has exercised in "shrouding as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child." The ashes of Perotine Massey, mingled with those of her fire-born babe, were blown away from St. Peter's Port over the fields of the island of her nativity and into the sea that surrounds it. The dust of herself and her boy may make whiter the lily in the cottager's garden, and sweeter the forget-me-not under the hedges of her native isles. Speak to these and to the butterfly and wild bee that alight upon them anent what Christianity did for her and for her boy in the merry month of May, in the year 1556, and of what in all its era, and all over the world which it has embittered and cursed, Christianity has done for her sex.

It is no answer to me to remind me that I have been citing the cruelties of Papist men upon Protestant women and children. Both Papists and Protestants are Christians, and they are both alike to me. Protestantism is the more recent, the meaner, and the weaker of the two

great Christian schisms. But, in proportion to its opportunity and its power, it has perhaps even surpassed Roman Catholicism, as I could easily demonstrate were this the place and time to do so. With the false and bitter biases of religious sectaries, we have heard of Bloody Mary, but never of Bloody Elizabeth, although Elizabeth was by far the bloodier of the two. As William Cobbett puts it: "For every drop of blood shed by Mary, Elizabeth shed a pint." Mary racked and burned, and Elizabeth racked and disembowelled and beheaded. During nearly the whole of Elizabeth's long reign the disembowelling of Papists was as common as ditchwater. Elizabeth's *forte* as a queen was disembowelling. Mary burnt you for being a Protestant, and Elizabeth took your inside out for being a Papist. Such were the tender mercies of King Henry's royal daughters, each zealous for the glory of the kingdom of this terrible Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

If the Papists slew Martha Constantine, the Protestants did to death the noble and venerable Countess of Salisbury. Borne down by the weight of over seventy years, this stately noblewoman was dragged from the prison to the scaffold. "Lay your head on the block," commanded the masked executioner. "No," answered the Countess proudly, "my head shall never bow to tyranny: it never committed treason; and, if you will have it, you must get it as you can." The executioner hewed at her with his axe; and as she walked across the scaffold, receiving blow upon blow, the blood ran down the long grey hair that hung over her neck and shoulders. She was felled at last and beheaded. Her blood reeked up into the air, as glorious blood as had ever flowed in human veins, for the aged countess was the last of the line of the Plantagenet kings.

Thus, for the other side of Jesus Christ and his Church, died the mother of Cardinal Pole; and thus, or some-

how thus, for the other side of Jesus Christ and his Church, perished a great host, whom no man can number; and, in spite of their voices still crying up in protest from History's bloody abyss, the dapper and perfumed hirelings of a dying faith mock at these cries of martyrdom and agony, and pretend that they are anthems about happiness and haloes! Falsehood is still on the throne and Truth still on the scaffold; but how long, O Lord, how long?

## CHAPTER XXVIII:

*Demoniacal Possession of Children—When Christianity is Taken, what we have Left—“God Prefers One Deed of Charity to a Thousand Prayers”—How to Teach a Child—A Child Set to Herd a Flock of Toads—Conjuring with the Word “Jesus.”*

THE memory of the credulity and crudity and cruelty of prosecution for Witchcraft is dying away. In spite of an inherent conservatism, the world moves, and the stale events of this age are the basis for the romantic history of the next. From a highly-accredited Spanish source\* I shall give a few glimpses of the *diablerie* of demoniacal possession, the hellishness of entering into a ratified conspiracy with Satan, and a hurried glance at the philosophical calibre and religious cult of a world that has only recently passed away.

O for the “halo of sacred innocence over the tender years of the child” of which the Christian rhetorician speaks! A religion that would be in keeping with the innocence of childhood, the purity of maidenhood, and the intellect of manhood would, without the attestation of miracles, convince me that it came from God. I am in open and implacable rebellion against the religion that *is*; but I would be the devotee, the preacher, and, if called upon, the martyr, of the religion that *might be*. The man of Nazareth was right when he predicated that the kingdom of heaven was made up of little children and such as they. Life cannot be all dawn and morn-

\* D. Leandro Fernandez.

ing; but life's dawn is sublimer than its noon and holier than its sunset. It was in recognition of this that Wordsworth sang of our childhood:—

“But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.”

I envy not the man who cannot retreat from the heat and burden of life's sweltering noon to life's cool morning twilight and find companionship with a child. He who cannot allow a child to take sip for sip with him out of the same cup, who cannot stoop from the dome of lingual profundities to teach a child to lisp “Mamma,” who cannot dandle a child upon his knees, or lie in the sunlight that flickers through the overshadowing tree and teach a child to know the blue-bell, the crawler, and the daisy, excites not my envy, however powerful and distinguished he may be. I would rather have the affection of one child than the approving “huzza” of ten thousand adult fools. I would rather have the love of one woman than walk knee-deep among the laurels of deathless renown. A child's life should be steeped in all that is pure and innocent; a woman's life should be imbued with all that is lovely in thought and form, and all that is holy in sentiment and aspiration. But the atmosphere of the Christian faith stunts the soul of the child and brutalises that of the woman. If childhood is to be happy and womanhood is to be holy, we must suppress Jehovah and his Book, and blot out Christ and his Cross. We must rise above the crudity and cruelty of the Book and the bloody agony of guiltless innocence on the Cross. We owe it to this Book and this Cross that this fair planet is ruthless with thorns and gloomy with clouds, that Ignorance is mighty and Bigotry merciless, and that between the cradle and the coffin there is the trail of the serpent down the cheerless Valley of the Shadow.

Give us for the Book and the Cross the path to the realisation of man's most sacred hopes and wings to follow in the flight of man's immortal yearnings. Away with the foul myth of Jehovah and his vengeance met by Jesus and his blood. The sunlight of to-day smites upon a Memnonium that peals forth an anthem that should silence the barbaric cries of the olden ghouls that thundered from Olympus or shrieked from Calvary. Love is not dead : let us invoke her to sing to us from the vesper star, and time all our hopes and longings to the marching-tune of a sinless world. Music is not dumb : strike her lyre till the chords of your being thrill with the throb and pulse of the universe. Art is with us still : let the white marble flash from the clustering of the myrtle leaves, green amid the murmur of fountains, and inspire into the stainless stone the majesty of the immortal gods. Poetry has not bade us farewell : clasp her zone and attune her lyre ; throw into her melodies the might of Amphion, and set the mountains of earth to drink the inspiration of the olden era when the stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Throw the redundance of the soul into the measured witchery of words ; and, with the fire of Genius, set the gloomiest caverns of Dis aglow. Learning is not extinct. The sheen of day or the lamp of night shines upon the pages of the best minds of the men who wrote when the world was young : follow them into their homes ; follow them into their sanctuaries ; follow them into their tombs ; and, noting their disadvantages and profiting by their errors, make your life grander and nobler and wider and manlier than theirs. Science slowly unveils her arcana. She lures you on till you are out of reach of the barbarous old hell and the equally barbarous old heaven. She bids you read her riddles, and points you up to the stars flaming on the arch of night and down to among the stone ribs of the world. Is there not ample

room and verge enough here for the manifestation and exercise of man's sublimest potentialities? Why fetter the tremendous exuberance of being with Jehovah and his Book and Jesus and his Cross?

That man is a slave who subscribes to dogmas devised by any other man whatever. The man was never yet religious who learnt his religion from a book and had it expounded to him by a priest. Religion lies deep under the majesty and mystery of his own being. His undefined and undefinable GOD sits somewhere in the inscrutable awfulness of existence—a necessary and yet only dimly imagined postulate, too exalted for human praise, too majestic to be pervious to human blame. Man's sphere is not among gods, but among men. His pertinent query is not, Does God want a prayer, but Does man want bread? Not, Is God impatient for a litany, but Is man dying of thirst? O man, dream ontological dreams of sublimity and glory; but your chronic sphere is not in dreaming, but in working. It is licit to see visions of the wings and the harps of heaven; but it is indispensable to grasp the spades and the hammers of earth. If I might dogmatise anent that which towers above all dogmatism, I should hereby guarantee that God prefers one deed of human charity to a thousand prayers, and the thatch of the humblest shed where human love is found to the loftiest dome that ever blazed over temple raised to him under the name of Zeus or Jove or Jah.

The practical aspect of my religion finds its arena of action wherever the tear of sorrow is to be wiped away, wherever the pangs of suffering are to be alleviated, wherever vicious might tramples upon virtuous right, wherever an instructed priestcraft takes mean advantage of the uninstructed multitude. My religion enjoins upon me to be faithful to reason and reverential to that which transcends reason, and to cultivate a toleration as broad as the heavens for every erring mortal, and a hostility

fierce as Megæra for the error into which he fell. If for this there be any god that will strike me, I must submit to be struck ; if for this there be any fiend that will torture me, I must submit to be tortured. With a religion like mine there would have been no religious persecution ; there would have been no slavery ; there would have been no witchcraft. I should teach the child to be in ecstatic harmony with all that is loveable and lovely—with the flashing sun and the flying cloud, with the pale blanch of the lily and the crimson blush of the rose, with the plunging wave, with the weird, wild forest ; with the rippling lake and the wind in the reeds ; with the lone, red moors and the bee on the heather, and the night-clouds sailing over the moon and forming eye-lashes to the stars, which are the myriad eyes of God. Standing on this mystic border-line between two eternities, I should lead the child on the path of light and love, so that, should that child not live to be a man or a woman, I could know that its life was happy and pure and sweet and spiritual, and that during its days of pilgrimage it was as joyous and beautiful as is the red butterfly that now lights upon the dandelion bloom upon my darling's grave.

Christianity never brought up a child after this fashion. It glories in bringing up its children with rankling ideas about the God and heaven and the Devil and hell. And, till recently, and perfectly in keeping with the homogeneity of the system, this blessed religion, so-called of Christ, taught girl-children that they were liable to become witches ; that they could be possessed of devils, like Mary Magdalene ; and that they could be set to the herding of fiends in the guise of toads. The following extract will show what Christian childhood was liable to when, not as now, Christianity is weak, but when, as formerly, Christianity was strong :—

“Whenever the teachers wished to make witches of

those who had not arrived at years of discretion they obtained their consent by first giving them some apples, nuts, or other nice things, and asking them if they would like to go to a place where they would enjoy themselves very much with other children. And in these haunts they employed them in keeping a flock of toads, which the witches and the devils had gathered in the fields for making poisons and other infectious things, warning the children that they must treat them with much veneration, and that those who did not would be cruelly punished. These toads are devils in the form of toads, who accompany the witches and lead them on to greater wickedness. They are dressed in cloth or velvet of different colours, fitted to the body, with only one opening, which is buttoned under the stomach, with a hood in the form of a child's cap; which dress never wears out, but always remains the same. The toads carry their heads raised, and, in face and form, very much resemble the President of the devils; they wear upon their neck some little bells. They have to be supported with bread, wine, and other kinds of food which they convey to their mouth with their hands; and, when this is not given to them, they ask for it. Beltrana Jarque relates that she served as wet-nurse to one of these toads. The toads have the care of waking their masters, and telling them when it is time to go to the meeting; and the Devil gives them those animals, among other things, that they may extract from them water for anointing themselves before going to the meetings, and for making the powders and poisons with which they work so much evil. And always, when they go to their meetings (which take place on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of every week, after nine o'clock at night), they anoint themselves with the said water, and the little toad accompanies them, opening the doors or windows, or putting them through cracks, chinks, or

very small holes. In their meetings, besides the dancing, they amuse themselves by going out in different disguises to chase away the passers-by, and thus prevent discovery. They confessed that they had come out in the said manner to frighten away the miller, Martin de Ayamur, one night when he was going from the town to his mill ; and that he, defending himself with a stick, had inflicted a blow upon Maria Preconà, who, on receiving it, gave a loud cry, and was very unwell for some days. All the witches confessed that, in consoling the said Maria Preconà on account of the blow that she had received, they told her that she alone was to blame, for having approached so near. They relate many other evil deeds which they committed, and tricks which they played to frighten people away in this manner ; also that the Devil always told them who were the persons that did not say grace at dinner or supper-time, and did not pray to God, so that they might go to their houses to do them harm. While in their meetings they cannot name the holy name of Jesus, nor that of the Virgin Mary, except to curse it. Thus Maria Irarte relates that, being one night in the meeting, there arrived a French girl, a very good dancer ; and as, in dancing, she would jump as high as to the top of the highest houses, Maria, very much astonished, exclaimed : ' Jesus ! what have we here ? ' and, in a wink, everything disappeared, she remaining alone in the dark. They all recount remarkable events which they have witnessed on account of the holy name of Jesus being mentioned."

Who can deny that "the holy name of Jesus" was relevantly enough associated with all this monstrous incantation and cruel absurdity ? The hocus-pocus of his name being used as a spell to conjure with is all but obsolete ; but the hocus-pocus of eating bread and deeming it his flesh, and of drinking wine and accounting it his blood, is still one of the most awful of religious

rites. The faith that will give sanction to such irrational mummary on the one hand can only with a very bad grace seek to abolish it on the other. If sprinkling water on a child's brow and muttering over it a charm referring to Jesus is believed to have something to do with the eternal salvation of that child, why should not the mention of the name of this Jesus arrest the antics or the demon-dancers, as recorded by Maria Irarte? O Christ, the follies and crimes you have sanctioned, or have been believed to have sanctioned, have well nigh ruined the world!

## CHAPTER XXIX.

*The Credulity Necessary for the Reception of the Gospel Narratives is Sufficient to Embrace Belief in Witchcraft—Diabolical Ceremonies Attending the Initiation of a Witch—Witchcraft Believed in by Hale, Bacon, and Blackstone—Witches and their Intercourse with the Devil—A Scottish Witch Story—"Where were You, O Christ?"—Modern Rather than Ancient Christianity Responsible for Witchcraft—The Dancing Mania—Christianity "Taken in Excess"—"The Baleful Thing."*

THOSE who have been scripturally familiarised with the Devil, and are prepared to believe that he carried away their God, the Nazarene, and set him on the highest pinnacle of the temple, are in the suitable frame of mind to believe that the Devil who could starve and tempt the Lord himself forty days in the wilderness could readily play fearful havoc with mere creatures of the said Lord's creation, mere worms of the dust. Consequently, we are quite prepared to find it gravely reported that "the Devil, to propagate this abominable sect [of witches], avails himself of the oldest witches, whose business it is to be teachers and masters of the art ; and that they cannot take to their assemblies any one whom they would persuade to be a witch without his first consenting to be such and promising to apostatise. And he having thus consented and promised, on one of the nights appointed for assembling, the teacher who has converted him to witchcraft goes to his bed, or the place where he

is sleeping, about two hours before midnight; and, having first awakened him, anoints him with a deep green-coloured, foul-smelling water on the hands, forehead, breast, private parts, and soles of the feet, and then carries him through the air, the Devil taking him out through the doors and windows, or through any hole or crevice; and they very quickly reach the place appointed for the assemblies, when the first thing that takes place is the presentation of the novice to the Devil, who is seated in a chair, which sometimes appears to be made of gold, and, at others, of black wood, with a grave, majestic, and lofty air, and very sad, ugly, and disagreeable countenance; his eyes are round, large, widely opened, inflamed, and frightful; his beard like that of a he-goat; his body and figure between that of a man and a goat; his hands and feet like those of human beings, except that the fingers and toes are all of the same length, sharp towards the ends, with scratching nails; the hands crooked, like those of a bird of prey, and the feet like those of a goose. He has a harsh and frightful voice, which, when he speaks, sounds like the braying of an ass, except that the voice is low; and the words that he speaks are so badly pronounced that they cannot be clearly understood; and he always speaks in a sad, hoarse voice, although with much gravity and haughtiness; and his countenance is very melancholy, and always wears a look of displeasure. And when the witch teacher presents to him the novice he says: 'Sir, I bring and present this one to thee;' and the Devil manifests his gratitude, and says he will treat him well, so that others may come with him. Then the novice is commanded to kneel before the Devil, and abjure those things which the witch, his teacher, has taught him, and in the manner prescribed by her; he next repeats after the Devil the words by which he is to apostatise. He curses first God, the Virgin Mary, his mother, all the

saints, baptism, confirmation, and the chrisms, his godfather and godmother, his parents, his faith, and all Christians ; and then receives the Devil as his Lord and God, who says to him that he is not in future to have for his Lord and God that of the Christians, but himself ; after that the novice worships him, kissing his left hand, his mouth, his breast, in that part where the heart is situated, and other parts of his body. The Devil then extends his left hand, and, passing it from the head down to the left shoulder, or other different parts of the body, makes a mark by driving in a nail, and takes out from it some blood, which he gathers up in a cloth or vessel ; the novice feels a very great pain, which continues for a month, and the mark remains all his life ; and afterwards he marks upon him, in the small pupil of the eyes (without pain), a small toad, which serves as a sign by which witches know each other. The Devil then gives the teacher a few silver pieces, in payment for that slave, and a toad wearing clothes, which is a devil in that form, that it may serve as a guardian angel to the novice. And it is an extraordinary circumstance that the mark made by the Devil with his nail is of such a nature that the part wounded by it becomes dead, so that, even though it be pierced with needles and pins, no pain is felt." This crudity of belief herein implied is not a whit less monstrous than the fables of the faith upon which, even at this benighted hour, England boasts that she bases her hopes of salvation. These details of demonology were credited by such Christians as Sir Matthew Hale, Bacon, and Blackstone, and in consequence of this credence, for the greater glory of God and of his Christ, tens of thousands of women suffered ignominy and torture and death. And yet, forsooth, Christianity has "elevated" woman !

The same demonologist informs us that "we are told by Miguel de Goyburn that a few times in the year he

and the oldest witches made the Devil an offering, which was very pleasing to him ; for doing which they went to the churches, disinterred the dead bodies, which were already decayed, and took from them the small bones of the feet and all the cartilaginous parts, which they considered very savoury ; all which things they gather up in some little baskets, and cover up the graves again ; and they have with them a light, which they declare is very dark. John Eichlar says that when the witches go upon these excursions alone, without the Devil, the light which they carry is the arm of a child that has died without baptism ; that they light the fingers of it as though it were a torch, and that it is of such a nature that the witches see by it. They afterwards present those bones to the Devil, and he eats them with his teeth, which are very large, and white as those of a negro. The Devil teaches them to make, of toads, dead bodies, and other things, powders and poisons, which they use for destroying crops at harvest time and doing injury to the people and their flocks."

Scotland was extremely Christian, and so, of course, believed implicitly in witchcraft and gave herself up to all the degrading credulity therein involved. The following may serve as a type of a Scottish witch tale :—

The scene of the story is the "Muir road," leading from Largs to Greenock ; the main personage a sailor lad, travelling home from the latter to the former place for the purpose of seeing his friends ; the time the gloaming of October 31st—the well-known Hallowe'en still observed in many parts of Scotland, and strictly observed in the wilds of Galloway when I was a child. The sailor had imbibed pretty freely before leaving Greenock, and, although the night threatened to be dark and the weather stormy, he ascended the hill with a light heart and a firm step, and was soon "careering it" merrily on the long and barren moor which stretches

between Loch Thom and what is not inaptly termed "the Back o' the Warl"—certainly as sublimely dreary a road as I ever set foot on. As the sailor went on, the sun set, and every half-hour gave additional evidence that a terrible storm was gathering. He threw a scrutinising glance towards the hill-top to ascertain whether "Auld Dunrod and his cummers" (a notorious wizard and his witch myrmidons) were there at their infernal orgies; but the fast-increasing darkness soon shut everything from his view. At length the storm lashed itself into a hurricane.

It was with the greatest difficulty that the sailor continued his journey. He had now reached that part of the moor where the rugged road runs alongside the "Rotten Burn," and every flash of lightning revealed to him the dangerous nature of his path. At length, on approaching the southern extremity of the moor, near where the present farm of Outerwards is situated, he perceived what he took to be the light of a candle shining through a cottage window. Approaching nearer, he discovered that what he supposed to be a cottage was an old ruinous hut, without roof, or door, or windows. Mustering courage to look in, he saw a woman, *evidently a witch*, busy preparing diabolical hell-broth in a simmering cauldron. A large fire blazed in the centre of the ruined hut, and what particularly struck the sailor was the fact that, although the winds were raging without, not a breath seemed stirring within. Not a single blade of grass was moved on the grassy floor, not a single drop of rain fell into the fire. Like 'Tam O' Shanter, the sailor "glowered" for a time "amazed and curious," and was greatly perplexed as to what he should do; but at length, contrasting the warm, comfortable appearance of the interior with the imminent perils to which he had been exposed outside, he determined to enter. Assuming as easy an air as possible, and doffing his dripping "sou'-

wester," he shuffled into the diabolical hut. The old woman was at first inclined to resent the intrusion; but, on second thoughts, she agreed to give the wanderer shelter for the night, "provided he took nae notice o' ought that he heard or saw done in the howf that nicht." Her guest readily agreed, and was conducted to a dark corner of the ruin, where he lay down, and was comfortably covered with an old tattered grey plaid.

But the excitement had driven away all idea of sleep, and so he determined to watch as well as he could the infernal proceedings. In a short time several other witches entered the ruin, and the foremost of the party, having completed her charms and exorcisms, lifted something from the cauldron, which had the appearance of a nightcap. This was wrung and dried with much cabalistic ceremony, and then, placing it on her head, she cried, "Hilloa for Cantyre!" and in a moment up she flew out at the chimney head and was seen no more. In two or three seconds, however, the nightcap fell "wi' a thud" on the floor, evidently falling from a considerable distance; and another witch, placing it on her head, cried "Hilloa for Cantyre!" and in a similar manner disappeared. At last, the whole party having ascended, Jack came forth from his corner and examined the cap, which the last witch, like the others, had thrown back on the floor. He then, half in sport, placed it on his head, and crying, "Hilloa for Cantyre!" as he had heard the witches do, up he flew, and, before he could recover his self-possession, he was half-way across the Sound of Kilbrannan, following in the wake of the witches who had preceded him. "'Twas now in for a penny, in for a pound;" so, wrapping himself up closely in the grey plaid, he determined to pass muster as a witch. In a short time the baleful party alighted on a bare headland, in the vicinity of the Mull of Cantyre, where was assembled a vast number of witches and warlocks, waiting the arrival of their lord

and master, the Devil. This terrible personage shortly put in an appearance, and, after receiving the homage of his vassals, proposed that they should adjourn and “haud their Hallowe’en” *in the wine cellars of the King of France!*—a proposal which was received with acclamation, and soon the whole party, the sailor included, were in mid-air, winging their way towards the French capital.

The storm was now past, and the clear, full moon shed a silvery radiance over land and sea, affording the party a magnificent bird’s-eye-view of the hills and plains of “merrie England.” In due time the whole party arrived in Paris, and, entering the wine-cellars of the King, they commenced their carousal. All went well until the sailor, getting somewhat elevated by the wine, happened to emit an oath, in which the sacred name of “Jesus” was mentioned. Instantly the utterer of the oath was struck under the table insensible, and by the time he had recovered the whole party had vanished. Escape from the vaults in which he was enclosed was impossible, and here he was found in the morning by the servants of the French King, and, without ceremony, taken away to be hanged as a burglarious thief. His case was now desperate; but, suddenly recollecting that he still possessed the enchanted nightcap, he drew it from his pocket and desired the hangman, as a last dying request, to allow him the favour of being hanged in his own nightcap. This the hangman readily granted. The cap was put on, the priest retired, the multitude were in expectation; but, just as the fatal noose was about to be applied, the sailor cried, “Hilloa for Cantyre!” when up he flew, leaving the hangman and the crowd to gaze after him in mute astonishment long after distance had concealed his eagle flight from their view. He soon reached Cantyre, whence he found his way to Largs, and lived long and happily, often recounting, with much ghastly humour, the

wondrous tale of his midnight adventures with the Devil and the witches of Inverkip.

“If a’ stories be true, that’s nae lee.” It is at least as true as Gospel; and for ages it and its like were an integral part of the Gospel; and the God who, through his amanuensis, Moses, wrote “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live,”\* can hardly plead quite guiltless of the cruelty and credulity of Inverkip.

Why should not one of the devils that were cast out of Mary Magdalene, or one of the devils that ran into the herd of swine, teach his pupils how to make talismanic powders out of corpses and toads? Jesus Christ, *you*, if you lived—and, if you did not live, those who invented you—are responsible for much, if not all, of this devilry. The basis of your faith, O Christ, is in hell, which is *non est*, and its summit is in heaven, which does not exist. Nevertheless, in your creed’s credulous ignorance and bigoted barbarity—which are dying out now simply because the whole system is dying—you have made countless millions wear the cap and bells of fools; and, alas, the cap has been on fire, and the bells have jingled in blood! The ashes which the winds have scattered over a thousand hills were the ashes of tens or thousands of women who perished for thy name’s sake, O Jesus of Nazareth! Your Church now admits that they perished by mistake; but where have you given your Church authority to say so? Where were you, O Christ—were you high in heaven, or were you deep in hell—when you stood aside and allowed these women to perish *by mistake*?

In concluding my hurried treatment of this painful subject, I claim to point out that it is essentially modern, and not ancient, Christianity that is responsible for the popular belief in witchcraft and the unspeakable

\* Exodus xxii. 18.

cruelties which that belief involved. As far back as the Council of Tours, A.D. 813, it was enjoined upon the priests to discourage the popular belief in witchcraft; and long before the Council of Tours St. Cyprian had declared that "the prestiges of witchcraft consist in the insanity of the ignorant." Under the more or less strenuous discouragement of the Church, the belief in witchcraft languidly flourished down till the era of the Reformation, when Protestantism and its open Bible gave the hellish superstition a new and vigorous lease of life and polluted the air of Europe with the stench of woman's flesh burning in the market-places and in the fields, amid the hooting of pious and God-fearing, but fanatical and insensate, multitudes. The vaunted open Bible ushered in a liberated Devil, and the tracks of his feet in the Old World and the New were blood and torture and flame. True, a belief in a prosecution for witchcraft ran *pari passu* with the Inquisition; but the witchcraft of that period was not witchcraft pure and simple, but merely one of the aggravated symptoms of heresy.

The Dancing mania, however, of 1374\* was set down as demoniacal possession on a large and organised scale. The mania was the result of credulous ignorance, operated upon by theological terrors, and is one of the many monstrosities of madness, lasciviousness, and devilry for which the Church of Christ is responsible. Men lost the use of their limbs, often they lost their reason, and often they lost their lives. And "the women, over-excited by the frantic dance, felt desires less diabolical [than the men], but more lewd, and yielded to the greatest disorders, giving themselves up to the first man they met, whether he was an acquaintance or not, a stranger or a relation."† Thus, at this

\* See Saladin's Historical Pamphlets: The Dancers.

† "History of Persecutions," vol. i., p. 204.

period, a free reception of the gospel that bears the name of Christ "elevated the woman."

Desperate polemics, like the proverbial drowning man, grasp at straws, and they may, controversially, remind me that this male madness and female lewdness were the result of an inordinate excess of gospel. Then the divine founder of such gospel, if he had been benevolent, would have so fashioned it that it could not be taken in excess with the effect of making thousands of men fiendish maniacs and thousands of women shameless courtesans. How is it that an intense love of the Lord and a fierce hatred of the Devil will drive you into being a raving maniac? Love of the principle of good and hatred of the principle of evil should make a man's life sublime; and, as that hatred and that love become intensified, he should rise in wisdom and in righteousness till he puts off the parvitude of mortal man and puts on the glory of the immortal gods. But no: the more Christianity, the less wisdom and righteousness; the more wisdom and righteousness, the less Christianity. There is hardly a real man of exceptional mental strength alive upon the earth at the present hour but Christianity sits lightly upon him, or has been thrown off altogether. There is hardly a mental weakling that we know of who is not more or less pious and concerned about such revolting crudities as "fire and brimstone" and "the blood of Jesus." Christianity is a code by weaklings and for weaklings. An Augustine may, by dint of a subtle intellect, elaborate it; a Xavier, by a heroic life, may glorify it; but it inevitably falls to its dead level—a bundle of vulgar and impossible dogmas that either find you mad or leave you so. The baleful thing originated among the rabble of Jerusalem and the refuse of Rome, and never, except among the world's human riddlings and slag and refuse, has it had real power and genuine dominance. It is an intoxicant for the untutored masses;

an intoxicant nearly as good as whiskey, and much cheaper ; a toxicological elixir which made harlots of the Women-Dancers of 1374, and which, as statistics prove, increases the fecundity of the Hallelujah Lasses of to-day. An influence indeed to "elevate" woman ! English women never will be elevated till they break the iron gates of their theologic prison-house, and till they stand outside that prison-house in the realm of Liberty, their brow fanned by the fresh air of God ; and till, in their clearer vision, Jehovah takes his place with Odin, Mary shakes hands with Cinderella, and Jesus and his cross and Calvary are bracketted with Arthur and his sword and Avalon.

## CHAPTER XXX.

*Immorality of Primitive Christianity—The Trade of a Parson—"Can the Influence of a Thing like This be Bracing?"—A String of Dirty Beetles—Clerical Hypocrisy and Cant.*

IT is admitted by the Christian apologist, that mammoth of learning, Dr. Lardner,\* that one of the grandest men that ever wore the purple of the Cæsars put men and women to death on the mere admission that they were Christians; and it is admitted by another learned Christian apologist, Milner, that Antoninus well knew the pernicious and grossly immoral sect with which he had to deal. What stronger evidence is required than this alone that the early Christians (who set on foot the institutions which have evolved the purity and elevation of woman!) were the sect of brutal and incestuous libertines so utterly abhorred, not for their creed, but for their *crimes*, that, as Tertullian admits, heathen husbands would rather see their wives degraded to common prostitutes than converted to Christianity. Jude† mentions the Agapæ by name, and the translators have rendered αγαπαι "Love Feasts." Paul‡ also refers to them, and so does Peter § so these festering sores upon human nature seem to have festered under the auspices of Christianity as soon as that pernicious faith had left

\* See Lardner's "Testimony," vol. ii., p. 215.

† Verse 12.

‡ 1 Cor. xi. 20-34.

§ 2 Peter ii. 10-15.

its manger. Marcus Aurelius, Pliny, and Valerian put the Christians to death merely because they were *Christians*—that fact alone implying that the culprits were guilty of the most horrible crimes against human nature. The Roman Emperors, I repeat, calling the testimony of history to my support, *never* persecuted for religious opinion; but they were always prepared to suppress flagrant crimes against society and the state. Eusebius himself\* lets us pretty well into the secret of what the word "Christian" had been used to connote. He represents Æmilianus as attempting to persuade Dionysius and his friends not to become Christians, but to *turn to the course of nature, and not to indulge in those practices which are contrary to nature.*

Is this true, or is it not true, O ye interested hirelings of a pernicious faith? The authors I quote to support me are yours, not mine. You dare not say I misquote them. But you do not read them, for they contain facts it is not convenient for you to know. The trade of a parson is learnt like the trade of a tailor; and, the apprenticeship once served, the object is to make as much money out of it as possible, and with the least friction and trouble. Historic, scientific, or philosophic truth the Church hates, because they overthrow the falsehood that pays. The facts I allege are incontrovertible; but they are non-paying facts. True, the preaching of them would enlighten mankind; but it would do away with the stipend of the priest. Ignorance is, indeed, the mother of Devotion; and the business of the gospel-monger is to foster ignorance, not to dispel it. Those who tend fat oxen, says the proverb, must themselves be fat. And, concordantly, they who foster ignorance must themselves be ignorant. There is hardly anywhere in the region of opaque intelligence any more ignorant and

\* "Hist. Eccles.," lib. vii., c. 11.

narrow-minded person than your ordinary clergyman. The bloom of his youth was wasted in the emasculation of mere gerund-grinding. Before his mind had opportunity to wax strong and manly, by subscription to the tenets of a sect it became enveloped in a strait-jacket of cast-iron, that rendered growth impossible. Thought would involve heresy, heresy would involve expulsion from the sect, and expulsion from the sect would mean social ruin and death in the workhouse. The parson, of all men, is the man who dare not and who cannot think. If he think, the thought-force breaks the articles of the conventional creed to which he has subscribed as easily as Samson rent asunder the withes; and then the preacher, instead of being a blind leader of the blind, becomes a seeing leader of the blind, but feels constrained, all the same, to lead them into the ditch. He has to take his choice between being a ranting ignoramus and a canting hypocrite, and the former alternative, because it is the lazier one, is the one generally adopted. And thus the professional sermon-spinner is, take him for all in all, the most contemptible person in the community—a sleek and microcephalous ninny, a silly thing of namby-pambyism and haw-haw and tea and twaddle.

Under our Christian institutions, this is the creature that exercises such a powerful influence over our women. Can the influence of a thing like this be bracing and wholesome upon the moral nature of any woman ever born? The very profession of the pulpit poodle is a falsehood, and his life is a lie. Wherever he goes he carries the plague—the curse of mental death and moral dissolution. Idle, sleek, insinuating, generally well-clad and well-fed, the clergy are, in all lands, the veriest assassins of the chastity they eulogise in their pulpits and murder in their practice. I fearlessly appeal to the records of the Police and Divorce Courts to testify whether the ministers of the Most High God do not figure more

notoriously in all the ineffable crimes of incontinency than do any other of the learned professions, or even any of the unlearned professions, such as shoemaking or ditch-digging. It is not often any scavenger of ethics can be found to catalogue the feculence of the so-called ministers of Christ. As we lift the newspaper, and observe that the Rev. Timothy McHolyjaws has debauched a young girl at a Sunday class and then eloped with her mother, with a shrug of disgust we turn over to another column with the hope that our eye may rest upon some healthier paragraph, not horrid with bestiality and leprous with lust.

But not long ago a statistician in America\* imposed upon himself the revolting, albeit not altogether useless, task of chronicling the sexual offences of the servants of Jesus Christ, our Lord; and, through a sense of duty which overmasters my repugnance, I venture to give a short extract from his very lengthy chronicle.† A new edition of this chronicle is issued each year, brought up to date, and giving, in alphabetical order, name, residence, church, and offence:—

“Rev. G. F. Mercedith, Peoria, Ill., seduced six married sisters, and eloped with the wife of Bro. O’Brien.

“Rev. Thomas B. Newly committed adultery everywhere he went. He preached in New York City, Central City, Col., Ravenswood, N.Y., and Lambertville, N.J.

“Rev. J. B. Pinman, Worcester, Mass., in 1882 had to resign on account of criminal conduct.

“Rev. John Newell, formerly of Lafayette, Ind., and Clark’s Hill, Ind., in 1879 committed adultery with Rev. Komcr’s wife.

“Rev. B. Phillips, Barnesville, O., was expelled from the M.E. for wanton conduct with Miss Alma Fuller.

\* M. E. Billings.

† “Crimes of Preachers.”

“Rev. Shaw, Flora, Ind., adultery, incest with Mrs. Josie Shaw, his son’s wife.

“Rev. R. Schneider, Mt. Ternon, Ind., adultery, seduction, elopement with a girl of seventeen ; deserted wife and family.

“Rev. M. Stillwill, Englishville, Mich., adultery with Sister Barrows.

“Rev. C. Teal, who preached at Ironton, Wis., in 1881 was arrested for incest, seduction, and adultery with his own daughter, who was only fifteen years old.

“Rev. Kerr B. Tupper, of Chicago, Ill., 1881, adultery, seduction, and bastardy with a girl. She left babe in his wood-house.

“Rev. Edward H. Ellis, 1882, Thomaston, Me., adultery, seduction, and elopement with Mrs. John E. Rose.

“Rev. Dr. W. A. Hyde, Leadville, Col., 1882, adultery, seduction, elopement with a sister ; deserted wife and children ; arrested by his son.

“Rev. J. R. Palmen, Mountain Peak, Tex., 1882, indecent exposure of person to a number of little girls, pupils under his care ; immoral assault on Miss Ida Scott.

“Rev. James D. Podd, Baptist, Chicago, Ill., adultery, seduction, bastardy, with Cora Wheeler.

“Rev. R. F. Parshall, Oakland, Cal., Baptist, immoral assault on many ladies and young sisters.

“Rev. Whipple, Madison, O., rape on girl eleven years of age, he seventy ; arrested and imprisoned.

“Rev. Thomas Dugan, Mason City, Ill., 1880, rape upon his young housekeeper.

“Rev. Dale, New Castle, Ill., 1878, immoral assault on two girls, one twelve, other fourteen ; fled.

“Rev. W. J. Johnson, Eureka, Ill., 1876, adultery, seduction, elopement with wife of John S. Brayman, leaving her children.

“Rev. J. F. Hooper, Petatuma, Cal., 1883, breach of promise; engaged to three ladies; fled to escape tar and feathers.

“Rev. G. W. Gaines, Centralia, Ill., 1879, adultery, seduction of Miss Maria Delly; took her to a conference with him; occupied same room with her at hotel.

“Rev. David D. Willson, Henrietta, Tex., 1881, rape and adultery upon Mrs. Hickman; fled.

“Rev. Julius Wittrup, Winfield, N.J., Methodist, 1876, immoral assault on his niece, a girl of sixteen.

“Rev. Dr. R. H. Williams, Milwaukee, Wis., 1882, adultery in brothel; attempted suicide.

“Rev. John Allison, Presbyterian, Jessup, Ia., 1882, immoral assault, and indecent proposals to Mrs. Alice Moffit.

“Rev. William Allen, Osgoode, Ont., Methodist, adultery, seduction, bastardy with Eliza Hume; got her married.

“Rev. I. Comstock, Reno, Kan., rape, adultery, on thirteen-year-old daughter of Mr. Anderson; arrested; in prison at Leavenworth.

“Rev. White, Little Rock, Ark., 1881, murder, adultery, seduction of a young girl, attempted an abortion; killed the girl; he fled.

“Rev. John Wood, Cedar Falls, Ia., Presbyterian, adultery, seduction of two young girls of fourteen and sixteen.

“Rev. Henry Woodry, Knox County, Ind., Methodist, adultery, seduction of Mary Shoef; arrested.

“Rev. J. A. Wilson, Jewell City, Kansas, 1880, adultery with his own sister.

“Van der Bone, or Van der Born, Saginaw, Mich., Catholic, 1880, adultery with parishioner's wife; caught *flagrante delictu* by Catherine Burke.

“Rev. A. J. Warren, North Vernon, Ind., Methodist, adultery, elopement with Sister Stanton.”

I could go on and on with this feculent and revolting list ; but I have no desire to press the charge unduly against our reverend pastors and masters. The crimes of incontinency are only malefactory protests against the gulf that yawns between the edicts of Society and the laws of Nature. And, as long as the bridging over or this gulf is the problem before which Sociology stands powerless and Ethics bewildered, a feeling of shuddering mercy may be extended to them who fall into the bridgeless, and up to this time unbridgeable, chasm, whether they be clerical or lay.

But what I resent is the whining and canting hypocrisy of the clerical Thyesteses and Œdipuses and Tarquins. It is that "Stand back ; I am holier than thou" assumption of the hypocrite of the pulpit that makes his "fall from grace" so hideous and so hellish. If, like the mass of honest and manly men, he would make no vaunt and no squeamish affectation of virtue, but simply do his best and take his chance, I, for one, would be silent about his delinquency, and I should, in secret, lament his fall. But, in all Christian time, from the first century to the nineteenth, this simulacrum of virtue has deceived unwary woman. In her trusting innocence, she has looked to the minister of Christ as to the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, and the minister of Christ has betrayed her. Among the men of the world her chastity may have its more or less open enemies ; but in every church she has a secret enemy—a Judas who would betray the daughter of man with a prayer. The Christian priest's facilities for effecting the moral ruin of women are very great, and all experience testifies that he has used these facilities with the most direful effect. In spite of the insidious and baleful familiarities of the confessional, I question whether the papist monk is, upon the whole, a more leprous curse in any family than is the Methodist sneak or the vulgar and ebullient

ranter of street-corner evangelicalism. In the eyes of pure and simple girlhood they are all men separated from the world and dedicated to a vocation which is not of the earth, earthy. The heart can have no purer object round which to centre its affections, and the conscience no diviner pillow on which to lay its head in repose.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

*The Identity of Religious and Erotic Emotion—The Manual of Père Huguet—From Jesus the Abstract to Jones the Concrete—The Case of Don Gurlino—The Clergy's Facilities for the Ruin of Woman—What the Elevation of Woman Implies—Burning at the Stake, Boiling in Oil, and Disembowelling as "Elevating" Influences.*

MOREOVER, religious and erotic emotion, if not generically one and the same thing, are at least two golden threads spun from the one distaff of the heart's holiest love, and which, in their spinning, ever and anon touch and intertwine with each other. I state it as no quip of levity, but as a simple psychological fact: In the maiden's heart, *When God is near, Man is not far off*. Once interest a lady in Jesus, and it is not difficult to interest her in Jones. A woman is a woman first, and, if a lady at all, a lady afterwards. It matters not whether she be a countess or a cook; with her there is but one step between Jesus and Jones. I care not whether she be the stately duchess kneeling at the confessional in silk stiff enough to stand alone, or the "Hallelujah lass" following the tambourine with a devout hop-step-and-jump, the love of God is synonymous with the desire of Man, and I submit that there is no reason to be ashamed of the fact; but there is much reason to be ashamed of the advantage which the priesthood take of the fact.

Elderly or ill-favoured ladies who have given up Jones in despair take to Jesus with fanaticism and madness. Younger and lovelier women strike an equilibrium

between Jesus and Jones, and thereby preserve their beauty and their reason. The very formularies of the Christian faith and practice recognise the psychological fact to which I have referred, and they throw sufficient of Jones into Jesus to subserve at once the purposes of sanctity and sin. For instance, a religious manual by Père Huguet, and designed for girls, "the dear daughters of Holy Mary," among other invocations and adjurations contains the following :—

"Live Jesus, whose love consumes me by night and day."

"Live Jesus, live his power, live his seductive love."

"Live Jesus when he animates me with a delight that gives me life."

"Live Jesus when his mouth touches me with an amorous kiss."

"Live Jesus when he calls me my sister, my dove, my beautiful one."

"Live Jesus when his good pleasure reduces me to nudity."

"Live Jesus when his endearments fill me with chaste delight."

Substitute Jones, and make the young maiden cry—

"Live Jones when his good pleasure reduces me to nudity,"

and you will become revoltingly aware of the Sapphic voluptuousness of expression that is put into the mouths of our maidens by the Church which claims to have "elevated" woman.

It is fatuous sophistry to urge that the love for Jesus and the love for Jones are generically dissimilar. Woman has but one heart, one venue of erotic passion. The Church knows this fact and acts upon it. It recognises that Jesus, the mere abstraction, would utterly fail to

excite amatory fervour. So it passes on to Jesus the concrete, and envisages him on canvas or in marble, with free-sweeping and symmetrical human limbs and lineaments, and all but in a state of nudity. And the art of the priest is to work up woman to a state of religious hysterics before this all but nude figure of a young and lithesome man. And, the result? The result all experience of sacerdotalism teaches. There is but a step, and a short-one, between "divine love" and human sensuality, and, in all ages of the Church, this step has been taken. Human nature is only human nature, and it is more generous to expect too little from human nature than to expect too much. Psychic though love may be, by incontrovertible law its manifestations are organic, and cannot possibly be divorced from sex. And why should we blush to acknowledge that this is the truth? The fervour of the young and innocent neophyte is spontaneously transferred from the handsome Jesus to the handsome priest. God is an abstraction; but a concrete substitute is found, and for centuries has been found, in his ministering servant. He who acts as proxy to woo a maiden to love another usually succeeds in inducing her to love himself. The priest woos the maiden to give her heart to God; and the aspirations of divinity are dashed in the realisations of infamy. "Luther speaks of a fish-pond at Rome, situated near a convent of nuns, which, having been cleared out by order of Pope Gregory, disclosed at the bottom over 6,000 infant skulls; and of a nunnery at Neimburg, in Austria, whose foundations, when searched, disclosed the same relics of celibacy and chastity."\* Women seduced wholesale and children murdered in holocausts, and yet, forsooth, Christianity has "elevated woman and shrouded as with a halo of sacred innocence the tender years of the child."

\* "Isis Unveiled."

It is a far cry to Luther, say you, and the feet of modern civilisation have trampled upon the neck of the too dominant shame and crime of three hundred years ago. "The feet of modern civilisation" have done no such thing. The said feet have not yet trampled the life out of the Christian creed, and, till that is effected, we must submit to be cursed by the passion which devotion excites, and of which the ministers of Christ fail not to take advantage. If it be a far cry to Luther, is it a far cry to the loathsome list we gave from "The Crimes of Preachers," or to the time of which the following is a record?

"The criminal court of Turin has lately been occupied with the hearing of a case which has spread consternation and shame through many of the most respectably connected families in the Sardinian capital, and constitutes not a little to increase the feelings of dislike growing up of late towards the Catholic clergy. The trial which has excited such a sensation in Turin was that of Don Gurlino, attached in the capacity of second curate, first to the Church of San Carlo, afterwards to that of the Carmelite order. Among his regular professional duties were, of course, those connected with the Confessional, and these duties he violated in a manner so foul and so atrocious that no less than *thirty-three young girls* would appear to have fallen victims to his systematic and scientific profligacy. Not more than forty years of age, possessing singularly handsome face and figure, Don Gurlino combined with the natural influence wielded over the mind of the youthful penitent by a spiritual guide the influence not less natural of his own personal attractions. Both influences were skilfully brought to bear in the exciting privacy of the Confessional. All the opportunities which it affords of gradually yet surely tainting the mind were employed, and employed with a too fatal success. The wretch was, it

appears, in the habit of accompanying his oral temptations with the appliances and means of obscene books and lascivious prints to heighten and accelerate their effect. Working on the passions by a graduated scale of literary and pictorial excitement, the curate of S. Charles and the Carmelites could seize for his infernal ends the exact moment when the unsuspecting confidence of girlhood prepared for him an easy prey.

“But Gurlino was at last detected by the very means which he had employed. The relations of a young creature, one of his latest victims, found in her possession an obscene print, and insisted on her telling them from whom she had procured it. The girl refused for some time; but, yielding to their menaces, stammered forth the name of her confessor. She added that, not she alone, but likewise several of her young friends, had received from Don Gurlino immoral books and prints, and, debauched by his arts, had yielded up their honour to their *spiritual guide*. The relatives at once communicated the facts to, and deposited the prints with, the district police magistrate, who lost no time in communicating with the higher law authorities, and these latter at once instituted criminal proceedings against the priest. Although the trial was conducted with closed doors, enough of the evidence transpired to fill all Turin with horror and indignation. The guilty acts of the criminal appear to have extended over a term of several years. The full extent of his debaucheries during all that period cannot, of course, be ascertained. One fact, however, is beyond all doubt, that, on the trial itself, *thirty-three young girls* bore testimony to the adoption towards themselves of the wicked acts of seduction with which the criminal stood charged. On this overwhelming mass of evidence Don Gurlino was found guilty, and sentenced by the Central Court of Turin to seven years' solitary confinement.”\*

\* The *Times*, May 16th, 1860.

*Thirty-three young girls* admitted that they had been dishonoured by this minister of Christ. How many more could have appeared in court to give similar evidence will never now be recorded in the annals of shame. I ask any man who knows the world—and those who really know it are never wholly pessimistic in regard to it—if any man, short of a Christian minister, could have had the facility, even if he had had the will, to thus debauch wholesale the daughters of his neighbours? The plain truth is, the hyperæsthesia that Jesus-worship demands of sensitive and susceptible woman is the inevitable *gradus* from devotion to debauchery, the *nexus* between Jesus and Jones, As it was in the beginning, now is and ever shall be. And yet, in the face of this inexpugnable theory and history's terrible testimony as to its practice, Archdeacon Farrar and other watchmen on the watch-tower of the living God proclaim therefrom the withering and ironical lie that Christianity has elevated woman and sanctified the home!

To elevate woman implies the pursuit of the duties and the pleasures of life along the lines of the least resistance and under the direct auspices of loving kindness and tender mercy. To develop a pure and lofty human soul, you must eschew all that is brutal, degrading, and cruel, and widen and brighten the arena in which the moral sense has to develop and unfold. True, the sweetest lips that love ever kissed wax white and cold, and over the brightest and happiest hearth must fall the shadow of dusky Death. True, the rose that sheds its fragrance through the garden where the children play also blossoms over the grave in which the children are at rest. But these devastations effected by the marching files of Fate do not blight woman's tenderness, or sully even with a breath the mirror disc of woman's purity. Of such is the legitimate furnace by which the dross of the lower passions is purged away, and the pure gold of the

ennobled soul left to fling its lustre over the mountain-tops of human joy and into the valley-depths of human woe. Those who have never suffered have never lived. She who has never dropped a tear on the white drapery of the dead has never yet learnt to impress love's holiest kiss on the brow of the living.

But, if pain and sorrow elevate and refine, brutality and cruelty debase and degrade. Have the brutality of punishment for Witchcraft and the cruelty of Slavery ever refined and purified a human heart since the world began? I trow not. Paul claims for our bodies that they are temples of the Holy Ghost; but it has been the function of the religion which Paul did much to establish to defile and outrage and ruin this so-called temple of the Holy Ghost. I have already dealt with inhumanities and cruelties and tortures till my heart is sick—inhumanities and cruelties and tortures under Christian auspices, and for which Christianity is responsible. Alas for the desecrated and wrecked temples of the Holy Ghost! Away back in the early dawn of our Christian civilisation, and forward into comparatively modern times, burning at the stake was a common and acceptable form of punishment for an interminable list of crimes. It was commonly regarded as an easier death than hanging, and was, therefore, inflicted on criminals of less flagitious offence, and on women. In some instances, however, the condemned was ignited and choked simultaneously, in order to give her the advantage of both systems. Women were frequently drowned, too, especially adulteresses and witches; being generally put in a bag along with a cat or a snake, and cast into a pond. For the former, the frail delinquents whom men had seduced, smothering in mud was not infrequently prescribed. In 1599 the High Court of Edinburgh sentenced Grissel Mathon "to be taken to the North Loch and there drowned until she be

dead." In Bavaria, *circa* 1450, the wife of Duke Albert the Pious was, by order of her father, sacked up and dropped off a bridge; but she got free, and was about to reach the bank when the executioner thrust a long pole into her hair and held her down till life was extinct. In France, about the same period, it was legal to bury people alive, and much later a special law was passed in England conferring upon a criminal of unusual talent the distinction of being boiled in oil. Plain boiling in water was common enough; and in the executioner's expense account for the last sad rites of Friar Stone, at Canterbury, are the following items:—

	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Paid two men who sat at the kettle and parboiled him	...	1 0
To three men that carried the quarters to the gates and set them up	... ..	1 0

The law under which boiling was done was repealed in the time of Edward VI., not without the gravest apprehensions that the repealing Act would unsettle the foundations of public security; but as late as 1786 a woman previously strangled was publicly burned opposite Newgate Prison. George III. put an end to the practice in 1790. Disembowelling, which was at one time in high religious favour, has been discontinued for some centuries, except as a mark of signal disfavour to a criminal already past the need of bowels.

Pain may, sorrow may, have elevated and purified our mothers and our sisters; but taking the inside out of the temple of the Holy Ghost, or boiling the agonised temple of the Holy Ghost in oil never had any influence except to brutalise and degrade.

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