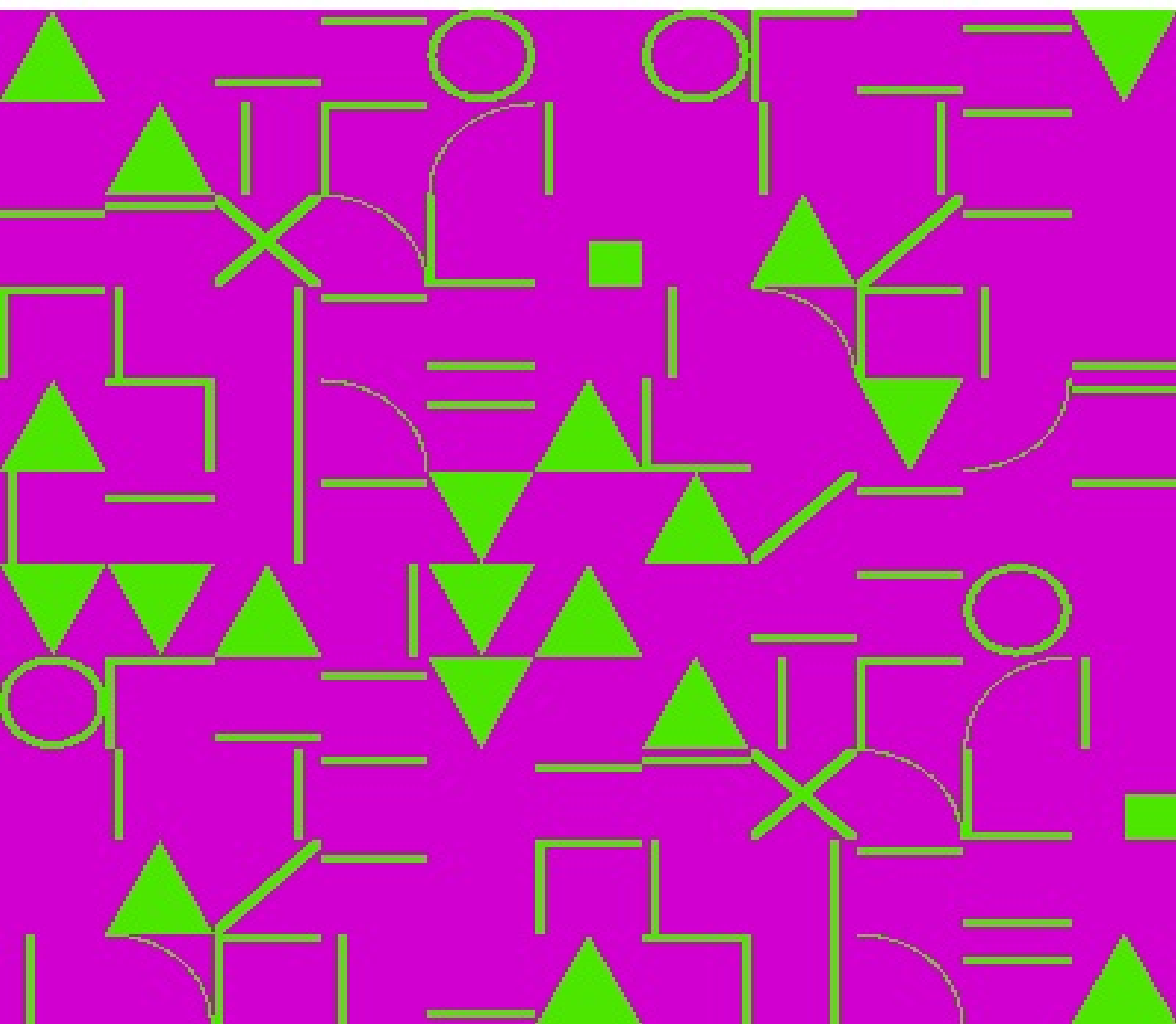


# A Few Words About the Devil, and Other Biographical Sketches and Essays

Charles Bradlaugh



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\*\*\* START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DEVIL \*\*\*

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# A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DEVIL,

# **AND OTHER BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES AND ESSAYS**

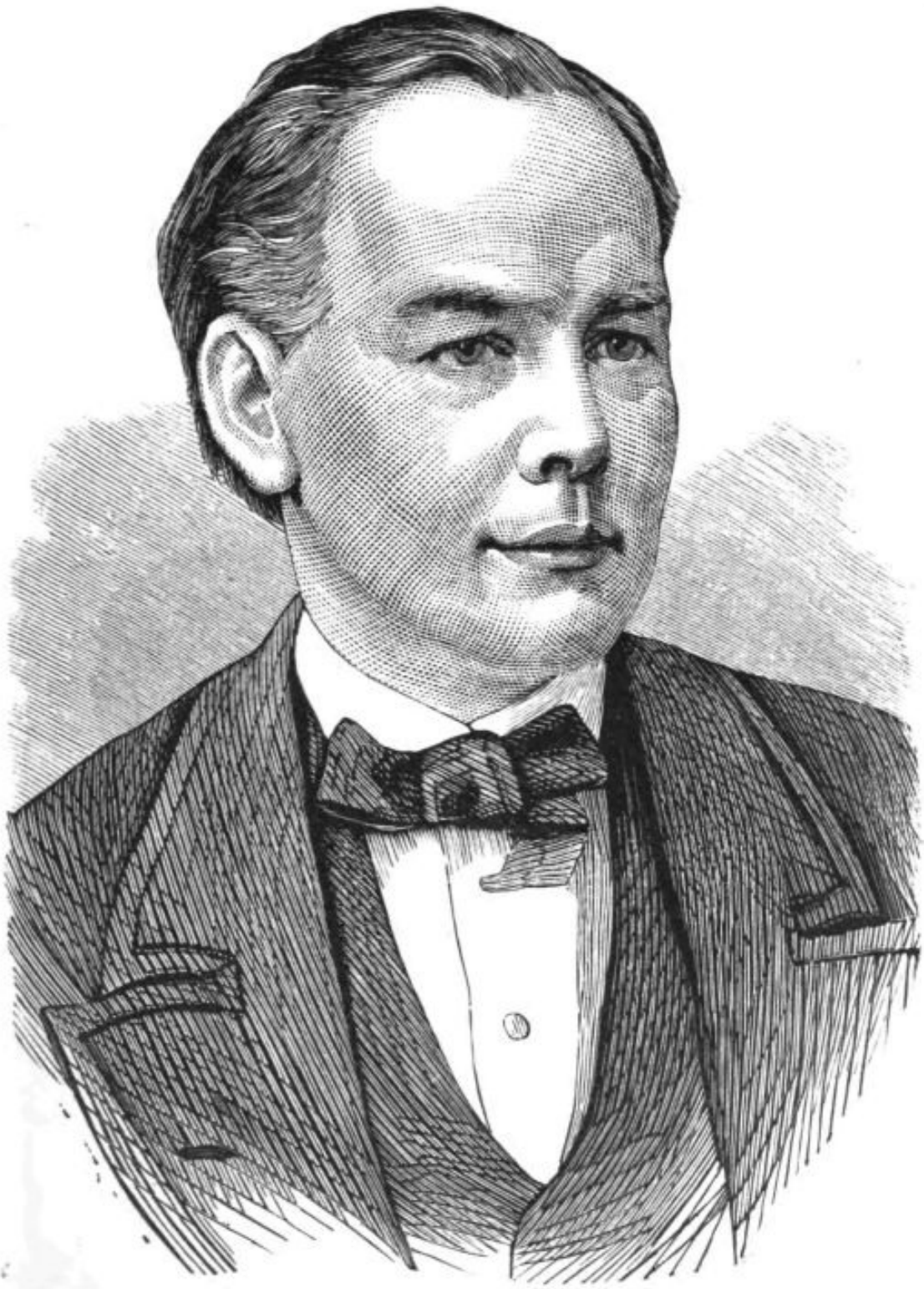
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**1874.**

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*Charles Bradlaugh.*

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES BRADLAUGH.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DEVIL

NEW LIFE OF DAVID.

NEW LIFE OF JACOB.

NEW LIFE OF ABRAHAM.

NEW LIFE OF MOSES.

NEW LIFE OF JONAH

WHO WAS JESUS CHRIST?

WHAT DID JESUS TEACH?

THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

THE ATONEMENT.

WERE ADAM AND EVE OUR FIRST PARENTS?

A PLEA FOR ATHEISM.

IS THERE A GOD?

HAS MAN A SOUL?

LABOR'S PRAYER.

POVERTY: ITS EFFECTS ON THE PEOPLE.

WHY DO MEN STARVE?

THE LAND QUESTION.

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**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CHARLES  
BRADLAUGH.**

## A PAGE OF HIS LIFE.

At the request of many friends, and by way of farewell address on leaving for America, I, for the first time in my life, pen a partial autobiographical sketch. I do not pretend that the narrative will be a complete picture of my life, I only vouch the accuracy of the facts so far as I state them. I have not the right in some cases to state political occurrences in which others now living are involved, nor have I the courage of Jean Jacques Rousseau, to photograph my inner life. I shall therefore state little the public may not already know. I was born on the 26th September, 1833, in a small house in Bacchus Walk, Hoxton. My father was a solicitor's clerk with a very poor salary, which he supplemented by law writing. He was an extremely industrious man, and a splendid penman. I never had the opportunity of judging his tastes or thoughts, outside his daily labors, except in one respect, in which I have followed in his footsteps. He was passionately fond of angling. Until 1848 my life needs little relation. My schooling, like that of most poor men's children, was small in quantity, and, except as to the three R's, indifferent in quality. I remember at seven years of age being at a national school in Abbey Street, Bethnel Green; between seven and nine I was at another small private school in the same neighborhood, and my "education" was completed before I was eleven years of age at a boys' school in Coalharbor Street, Hackney Road. When about twelve years of age I was first employed as errand lad in the solicitor's office where my father remained his whole life through. After a little more than two years in this occupation, I became wharf clerk and cashier to a firm of coal merchants in Britannia Fields, City Road. While in their employment the excitement of the Chartist movement was at its height in England, and the authorities, frightened by the then huge continental revolution wave, were preparing for the prosecution of some of the leaders among the Chartists. Meetings used to be held almost continuously all day on Sunday, and every week-night in the open air on Bonner's Fields, near where the Consumption Hospital now stands. These meetings were in knots from fifty to five hundred, sometimes many more, and were occupied chiefly in discussions on theological, social, and political questions, any bystander taking part. The curiosity of a lad took me occasionally in the week evenings to the Bonner's Fields gatherings. On the Sunday I, as a member of the Church of England, was fully occupied as a Sunday-school teacher. This last-named fashion of passing Sunday was broken suddenly. The Bishop of London was announced to hold a confirmation in Bethnal Green. The incumbent of St. Peter's, Hackney Road, the district in which I resided, was one John Graham Packer, and he, desiring to make a good figure when the Bishop came, pressed me to prepare for confirmation, so as to answer any question the Bishop might put. I studied a little the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the four Gospels, and came to the conclusion that they differed. I ventured to write the Rev. Mr. Packer a respectful letter, asking him for aid and explanation. All he did was to denounce my letter to my parents as Atheistical, although at that time I should have shuddered at the very notion of becoming an Atheist, and he suspended me for three months from my office of Sunday-school teacher. This left me my Sundays free, for I did not like to go to church while suspended from my teacher's duty, and I, instead, went to Bonner's Fields, at first to listen, but soon to take part in some of the discussions which were then always pending there.

At the commencement I spoke on the orthodox Christian side, but after a debate with Mr. J. Savage, in the Warner Place Hall, in 1849, on the "Inspiration of the bible," I found that my views were getting very much tinged with Freethought, and in the winter of that year, at the instigation of Mr. Packer, to whom I had submitted the "Diegesis" of Robert Taylor, I—having become a teetotaler, which in his view brought out my infidel tendencies still more vigorously—had three days given me by my employers, after consultation with my father, to "change my opinions or lose my situation." I am inclined to think now that the threat was never intended to have been enforced, but was used to terrify me into submission. At that time I hardly knew what, if any, opinions I had, but the result was that sooner than make a show of

recanting, I left home and situation on the third day, and never returned to either.

I was always a very fluent speaker, and now lectured frequently at the Temperance Hall, Warner Place, Hackney Road, at the small Hall in Philpot Street, and in the open air in Bonner's Fields, where at last on Sunday afternoons scores of hundreds congregated to hear me. My views were then Deistical, but rapidly tending to the more extreme phase in which they ultimately settled. I now took part in all the gatherings held in London on behalf of the Poles and Hungarians, and actually fancied that I could write poetry on Kossuth and Mazzini.

It was at this time I made the acquaintance of my friend and co-worker, Mr. Austin Holyoake, at his printing office in Queen's Head Passage, and I remember him taking me to John Street Institution, where, at one of the pleasant Saturday evening gatherings, I met the late Mrs. Emma Martin. At Mr. Austin Holyoake's request, Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, to my great delight, presided at one of my lectures in Philpot Street, and I felt special interest in the number of the *Reasoner* which contained a brief reference to myself and that lecture.

I wrote my first pamphlet, "A Few Words on the Christian's Creed," about the middle of 1850, and was honored by Dr. Campbell of the *British Banner* with a leading article vigorously assailing me for the lectures I had then delivered. After leaving home I was chiefly sheltered by Mrs. Sharpies Carlile, with whose children, Hypatia, Theophila, and Julian, I shared such comforts as were at her disposal. Here I studied hard everything which came in my way, picking up a little Hebrew and an imperfect smattering of other tongues. I tried to earn my living as a coal merchant, but at sixteen, and without one farthing in my pocket, the business was not extensive enough to be profitable. I got very poor, and at that time was also very proud. A subscription offered me by a few Freethinkers shocked me, and awakened me to a sense of my poverty; so telling no one where I was going, I went away, and on the 17th of December, 1850, was, after some difficulty, enlisted in the Seventh Dragoon Guards. With this corps I remained until October, 1853, being ultimately appointed orderly-room clerk; the regiment, during the whole of the time I remained in it, being quartered in Ireland. While I was in the regiment I was a teetotaler, and used often to lecture to the men in the barrack-room at night, and I have more than once broken out of Portobello barracks to deliver teetotal speeches in the small French Street Hall, Dublin. Many times have I spoken there in my scarlet jacket, between James Haughton and the good old father, the Rev. Dr. Spratt, a Roman Catholic priest, then very active in the cause of temperance. While I was in the regiment my father died, and in the summer of 1853 an aunt's death left me a small sum, out of which I purchased my discharge, and returned to England, to aid in the maintenance of my mother and family.

I have now no time for the full story of my army life, which, however, I may tell some day. Before I left the regiment I had won the esteem of most of the privates, and of some of the officers. I quitted the regiment with a "very good character" from the Colonel, but I am bound to add, that the Captain would not have concurred in this character had he had any voice in the matter. The Lieutenant-Colonel, C. P. Ainslie, earned an eternal right to grateful mention at my hands by his gentlemanly and considerate treatment. I can not say the same for my Captain, who did his best to send me to jail, and whom I have not yet quite forgiven.

On returning to civilian life I obtained employment in the daytime with a solicitor named Rogers, and in the evening as clerk to a Building Society; and soon after entering this employ I began again to write and speak, and it was then I, to in some degree avoid the efforts which were afterward made to ruin me, took the name "Iconoclast," under which all my anti-theological work down to 1868 was done. I give Mr. Rogers' name now for he is dead, and malice can not injure him. Many anonymous letters were sent to him to warn him of my irreligious opinions; he treated them all with contempt, only asking me not to let my propaganda become an injury to his business.

Soon after my discharge from the army I had a curious adventure. While I was away a number of poor



men had subscribed their funds together and had erected a Working Man's Hall, in Goldsmith's Row, Hackney Road. Not having any legal advice, it turned out that they had been entrapped into erecting their building on freehold ground without any lease or conveyance from the freeholder, who asserted his legal right to the building. The men consulted me, and finding that under the Statute of Frauds they had no remedy, I recommended them to offer a penalty rent of £20 a year. This being refused, I constituted myself into a law court, and without any riot or breach of the peace, I, with the assistance of a hundred stout men, took every brick of the building bodily away, and divided the materials, so far as was possible, among the proper owners. I think I can see now the disappointed rascal of a freeholder when he only had his bare soil left once more. He did not escape unpunished, for to encourage the others to contribute, he had invested some few pounds in the building. He had been too clever; he had relied on the letter of the law, and I beat him with a version of common-sense justice.

I lectured once or twice a week in the small Philpot Street Hall, very often then in the Hall of Science, City Road, and then in the old John Street Institution, until I won myself a name in the party throughout the country. In 1855 had my first notable adventure with the authorities in reference to the right of meeting in Hyde Park, and subsequently gave evidence before the Royal Commission ordered by the House of Commons, presided over by the Right Hon. Stuart Wortley. I was very proud that day at Westminster, when, at the conclusion of my testimony against the authorities, the Commissioner publicly thanked me, and the people who crowded the Court of Exchequer cheered me, for the manner in which I denied the right of Sir Richard Mayne, the then Chief Commissioner of Police, to issue the notices forbidding the people to meet in the Park. This was the first step in a course in which I have never flinched or wavered.

In 1855 I undertook, with others, the publication of a series of papers, entitled "Half-Hours with Freethinkers," the late John Watts being one of my co-workers. I also by myself commenced the publication of my "Commentary on the Pentateuch," which has since been entirely re-written and now forms my "Bible: what it is."

During the autumn of 1857 I paid my first lecture visit to Northampton. Early in 1858, when Mr. Edward Truelove was suddenly arrested for publishing the pamphlet, "Is Tyrannicide Justifiable?" I became Honorary Secretary to the Defense, and was at the same time associated with the conduct of the defense of Simon Bernard, who was arrested at the instigation of the French Government for alleged complicity in the Orsini tragedy. It was at this period I gained the friendship of poor Bernard, which, without diminution, retained until he died; and also the valued friendship of Thomas Allsop, which I still preserve. My associations were from thenceforward such as to encourage in me a strong and bitter feeling against the late Emperor Napoleon. While he was in power I hated him, and never lost an opportunity of working against him until the *decheance* came. I am not sure now that I always judged him fairly; but nothing, I think, could have tempted me to either write or speak of him with friendliness during his life. *Le sang de mes amis etait sur son ame*. Now that the tomb covers his remains, my hatred has ceased; but no other feeling has arisen in its place. Should any of his family seek to resume the Imperial purple, I should remain true to my political declarations of sixteen years since, and should exert myself to the uttermost to prevent France falling under another Empire. I write this with much sadness, as 1870 to 1873 have dispelled some of my illusions held firmly during the fifteen years which preceded. I had believed in such men as Louis Blanc, Lodru Rollin, Victor Hugo, as possible statesmen of France. I was mistaken. They were writers, talkers, and poets; good men to ride on the stream, or to drown in honest protest, but lacking force to swim against, or turn back, the tide by the might of their will. I had believed too in a Republican France, which is yet only in the womb of time, to be born after many pangs and sore travailing.

In 1859 I saw Joseph Mazzini for the first time, and remained on terms of communication with the great Italian patriot until the year 1869, from time to time bringing him correspondence from Italy, where my business sometimes took me. After 1869 we found ourselves holding diverse opinions on the Franco-

Prussian question—Mazzini went for Prussia, I for France—and I never saw him again.

In June, 1858, I held my first public formal theological debate with the Rev. Brewin Grant, B.A., at that time a Dissenting Minister at Sheffield. Mr. Grant was then a man of some ability, and if he could have forgotten his aptitudes as a circus jester, would have been a redoubtable antagonist. During this year I was elected President of the London Secular Society, in lieu of Mr. George Jacob Holyoake, who had theretofore led the English Free-thought party, but who has of late years devoted himself more completely to general journalistic work.

In November, 1858, I commenced editorial duties with the *Investigator*, formerly conducted by the late Robert Cooper, which I continued until August, 1859. It had but a small circulation, and was financially a very great failure. For the encouragement of young propagandists, I may here insert a little anecdote of my early lecturing experience. I had lectured in Edinburgh in mid-winter, the audience was small, the profits microscopical. I, after paying my bill at the Temperance Hotel, where I then stayed, had only a few shillings more than my Parliamentary fare to Bolton, where I was next to lecture. I was out of bed at five on a freezing morning, and could have no breakfast, as the people were not up. I carried my luggage (a big tin box, corded round, which then held books and clothes, and a small black bag), for I could not spare any of my scanty cash for a conveyance or porter. The train from Edinburgh being delayed by a severe snow-storm, the corresponding Parliamentary had left Carlisle long before our arrival. In order to reach Bolton in time for my lecture, I had to book by a quick train, starting in about three-quarters of an hour, but could only book to Preston, as the increased fare took all my money, except 4 1/2d. With this small sum I could get no refreshment in the station, but in a little shop in the street outside I got a mug of tea and a little hot meat pie. From Preston, I got with great difficulty on to Bolton, handing my black bag to the station-master there as security for my fare from Preston, until the morning. I arrived in Bolton about quarter to eight; the lecture commenced at eight, and I, having barely time to run to my lodgings, and wash and change, went onto the platform cold and hungry. I shall never forget that lecture; it was in an old Unitarian Chapel. We had no gas, the building seemed full of a foggy mist, and was imperfectly lit with candles. Everything appeared cold, cheerless, and gloomy. The most amusing feature was that an opponent, endowed with extra piety and forbearance, chose that evening to specially attack me for the money-making and easy life I was leading. Peace to that opponent's memory, I have never seen him since. It was while in Scotland on this journey I made the acquaintance, and ultimately won the friendship, of the late Alexander Campbell, of Glasgow—a generous, kindly-hearted old Socialist Missionary, who, at a time when others were hostile, spoke encouragingly to me, and who afterward worked with me for a long period on this journal [*The National Reformer*]. Occasionally the lectures were interfered with by the authorities, but this happened oftener in the provinces than in London. In March, 1859, I was to have lectured in Saint Martin's Hall on "Louis Napoleon," but the Government—on a remonstrance by Count Walewski, as to language used at a previous meeting, at which I had presided for Dr. Bernard—interfered; the hall was garrisoned by police, and the lecture prevented. Mr. Hullah, the then proprietor, being indemnified by the authorities, paid damages for his breach of contract, to avoid a suit which I at once commenced against him. Later in the same month I held a debate in Northampton with Mr. John Bowes, a rather heavy, but well-meaning, old gentleman, utterly unfitted for platform controversy. The press now began to deal with me tolerably freely, and I find "boy," "young man," and "juvenile appearance" very frequent in the comments. My want of education was an especial matter for hostile criticism, the more particularly so when the writer had neither heard nor seen me.

Discussions now grew on me so thick and fast that even some of the most important debates may perhaps escape notice in this imperfect chronicling. At Sheffield I debated with a Reverend Dr. Mensor, who styled himself a Jewish Rabbi. He was then in the process of gaining admission to the Church of England, and had been put forward to show my want of scholarship. We both scrawled Hebrew

characters for four nights on a black board, to the delight and mystification of the audience, who gave me credit for erudition, because I chalked the square letter characters with tolerable rapidity and clearness. At Glasgow I debated with a Mr. Court, representing the Glasgow Protestant Association, a glib-tongued missionary, who has since gone to the bad; at Paisley with a Mr. Smart, a very gentlemanly antagonist; and at Halifax with the Rev. T. D. Matthias, a Welsh Baptist Minister, unquestionably very sincere. All these were formal debates, and were reported with tolerable fullness in the various journals. In the early part of 1860 I, aided by my friends at Sheffield, Halifax, and other parts of England, projected the *National Reformer* in small shares. Unfortunately just after the issue of its prospectus, Joseph Barker returned from America, and was associated with me in the editorship. The arrangement was peculiar, Mr. Barker editing the first half of the paper and I the second. It was not precisely a happy union, and the unnatural alliance came to an end in a very brief period. In August.1861, I officially parted company with Joseph Barker as editor. We had been practically divorced for months before: the first part of the paper usually contained abuse of those who wrote in the second half. He came to me originally at Sheffield, pretending to be an Atheist and a Republican, and soon after pretended to be a Christian, and spoke in favor of slavery. I am sometimes doubtful as to how far Mr. Barker deluded himself, as well as others, in his various changes of theological and political opinions. If he had had the slightest thoroughness in his character, he would have been a great man; as it is, he is only a great turn-coat.

In June, 1860, I debated again with the Reverend Brewin Grant, every Monday for four weeks, at Bradford, and during this debate had a narrow escape of my life. In one of my journeys to London, the great Northern train ran through the station at King's Cross, and many persons were seriously injured. I got off with some trifling bruises and a severe shaking.

Garibaldi having at this time made his famous Marsala effort, I delivered a series of lectures in his aid, and am happy to be able to record that, though at that time very poor, I sent him one hundred guineas as my contribution by my tongue. This money was chiefly sent through W. H. Ashurst, Esq., now Solicitor to the General Post Office, and among the letters I preserve I have one of thanks from "G. Garibaldi," for what I was then doing for Italy.

In this year I debated for four nights with Dr. Brindley, an old antagonist of the Socialists, at Oldham; for two nights with the Rev. Dr. Baylee, the President of St. Aidan's College, at Birkenhead, where a Church of England curate manufactory was for some time carried on; and for two nights with the Rev. Dr. Rutherford, of Newcastle. Dr. Rutherford has since so identified himself with the cause of the Tyneside workers, that I read with regret any harsh words that escaped me in that debate. Although during late years I have managed to keep all my meetings free from violence or disorder, this was not always so. In October, 1860, I paid my first visit to Wigan, and certainly lectured there under considerable difficulty, and incurred personal clanger, the resident clergy actually inciting the populace to physical violence, and part destruction of the building I lectured in. I, however, supported by one courageous woman and her husband, persevered, and despite bricks and kicks, visited Wigan again and again, until I had, *bon gre malgre* improved the manners and customs of the people, so that now I am a welcome speaker there. I could not improve the morals of the clergy, as the public journals have recently shown, but that was their misfortune not my fault. In the winter of 1860, I held two formal debates in Wigan, all of which were fully reported in the local journals; one with Mr. Hutchings, a respectable Nonconformist layman, and the other with the Rev. Woodville Woodman, a Swedenborgian divine.

Early in 1861 I visited Guernsey in consequence of an attempt made by the Law Courts of the Island to enforce the blasphemy laws against a Mr. Stephen Bendall, who had distributed some of my pamphlets to the Guernseyites, and had been condemned to imprisonment in default of finding sureties not to repeat the offense. Not daring to prosecute me, although challenged in writing, the authorities permitted drink and leave of absence to be given to soldiers in the garrison on condition they would try to prevent the lecture,

and the house in which I lectured was broken into by a drunken and pious mob, shouting "Kill the Infidel." My antagonists were fortunately as cowardly as they were intolerant, and I succeeded in quelling the riot, delivering my lecture in spite of all opposition, although considerable damage was done to the building.

Shortly after this I visited Plymouth, where the Young Men's Christian Association arranged to prosecute me. They were, however, a little too hasty, and had me arrested at an open air meeting when I had scarcely commenced my speech, having only uttered the words: "Friends, I am about to address you on the bible." Having locked me up all night, and refused bail, it was found by their legal adviser that a blunder had been committed, and a charge of "exciting a breach of the peace, and assaulting the constable in the execution of his duty," was manufactured. It was tolerably amusing to see the number of dinners, suppers, and breakfasts, all accompanied with pots or cups of Devonshire cream, sent in to the Devonport Lock-up, where I was confined, by various friends who wanted to show their sympathy. The invented charge, though well sworn to, broke down after two days' hearing, under the severe cross-examination to which I subjected the witnesses. I defended myself, two lawyers appeared against me, and seven magistrates sat on the bench, predetermined to convict me. Finding that the evidence of the whole of the witnesses whom I wished to call was to be objected to, because un-believers in hell were then incompetent as witnesses according to English law, I am pleased to say that several Nonconformists, disgusted with the bigotry and pious perjury of my prosecutors, came forward. The result was a triumphant victory, and a certificate of dismissal, which I wrung from the reluctant bench of great unpaid. I was not yet satisfied; some of the magistrates had tried to browbeat me, and I announced in court that I would deliver the lecture I had been prevented from delivering to an audience assembled in the borough, and that I should sue at law the Superintendent of Police who had arrested me. The first portion of my defiance was the most difficult to give effect to; not a hall could be hired in Devonport, and nearly all the convenient open land being under military jurisdiction, it was impossible to procure the tenancy of a field for an open-air meeting. I, however, fulfilled my promise, and despite the police and military authorities combined, delivered my lecture to an audience assembled in their very teeth. Devonport, Stonehouse, and Plymouth form one garrisoned and fortified town, divided by the River Tamar. All the water to the sea is under the separate jurisdiction of Saltash, some miles distant. I obtained a large boat on which a temporary platform was built, and this boat was quietly moored in the River Tamar on the Devonport side, about two fathoms from the shore. Placards were issued stating that, acting under legal advice, I should address the meeting and deliver the prevented lecture "near to the Devonport Park Gates." Overwhelming force was prepared by the Devonport authorities, and having already erred by too great haste, this time they determined to let me fairly commence my lecture before they arrested me. To their horror I quietly walked past the Park Gates where the crowd was waiting, and passing down a by-lane to the river side, stepped into a little boat, was rowed to the large one, and then delivered my lecture, the audience who had followed me standing on an open wharf, all within the jurisdiction of the Borough of Devonport, and I being about 9 feet outside the borough. The face of the Mayor ready to read the riot act, the superintendent with twenty-eight picked policemen to make sure of my arrest, and a military force in readiness to overawe any popular demonstration—all these were sights to remember. I am afraid the Devonport Young Men's Christian Association did not limit themselves to prayers and blessings on that famous Sunday.

As I had promised, the authorities refusing any apology for the wrongful arrest, I commenced an action against Superintendent Edwards, by whom I had been taken into custody. The borough magistrates indemnified their officer and found funds to resist me. I fought with very little help save from one tried, though anonymous friend, for Joseph Barker, my co-editor, but not co-worker, in our own paper, discouraged any pecuniary support. The cause was made a special jury one, and came on for trial at Exeter Assizes. Unfortunately I was persuaded to brief counsel, and Sir Robert Collier, my leader,

commenced his speech with an expression of sorrow for my opinions. This damaged me very much, although I won the case easily after a long trial. The jury, composed of Devonshire landowners, only gave me a farthing damages, and Mr. Baron Channell refused to certify for costs. I was determined not to let the matter rest here, and myself carried it to the Court *in Banco*, where I argued it in person for two whole days, before Lord Chief Justice Erie and a full bench of Judges. Although I did not succeed in improving my own position, I raised public opinion in favor of free speech, and the enormous costs incurred by the borough authorities, and which they had to bear, have deterred them from ever again interfering either with my lectures or those of any other speaker, and I now have crowded audiences in the finest hall whenever I visit the three towns. These proceedings cost me several hundred pounds, and burdened me with a debt which took long clearing off.

In 1802, I held a four nights' discussion with a Dissenting clergyman, the Rev. W. Barker. My opponent was probably one of the most able and straightforward among my numerous antagonists. About this time a severe attack of acute rheumatism prostrated me, and having soon after to visit Italy, I, at first under medical advice, adopted the habit of drinking the light Continental wines, and although continuing an advocate of sobriety, I naturally ceased to take part in any teetotal gatherings.

In the struggle between the Northern and Southern States of America, my advocacy and sympathies went with what I am glad to say was the feeling of the great mass of the English people—in favor of the North; and my esteemed friend, and then contributor, W. E. Adams, furnished most valuable aid with his pen in the enlightenment of public opinion, at a time when many of our aristocracy were openly exulting in what they conceived to be the probable break-up of the United States Republic. During the Lancashire cotton famine I lectured several times in aid of the fund.

I began now also to assume a much more prominent position in the various English political movements, and especially to speak on the Irish Church and Irish Land questions. On the Irish questions, I owe much to my late co-worker and contributor, poor Peter Fox Andre, a thoroughly honest and whole-souled man, whose pen was always on the side of struggling nationalities.

One of the disadvantages connected with a public career is, that every vile scoundrel who is too cowardly to face you openly can libel you anonymously. I have had, I think, my full share of this kind of annoyance. Most of the slanders I have treated with utter contempt, and if I had alone consulted my own feelings, should probably never have pursued any other course. Twice, however, I have had recourse to the judgment of the law—once in the case of a clergyman of the Church of England, who indulged in a foul libel affecting my wife and children. This fellow I compelled to retract every word he had uttered, and to pay £100, which, after deducting the costs, was divided among various charitable institutions. The reverend libeler wrote me an abject letter, begging me not to ruin his prospects in the Church by publishing his name; I consented, and he has since repaid my mercy by losing no opportunity of being offensive. He is a prominent contributor to the *Rock*, and a fierce ultra-Protestant. He must have greater confidence in my honor than in his own, or fear of exposure would compel him to greater reticence. The other case arose during the election, and will be dealt with in its proper order.

It was my fortune to be associated with the Reform League from its earliest moments until its dissolution. It is hardly worth while to repeat the almost stereotyped story of the successful struggle made by the League for Parliamentary Reform. E. Beales, Esq., was the President of the League, and I was one of its Vice-Presidents, and continued nearly the whole time of its existence a member of its executive. The whole of my services and journeys were given to the League without the slightest remuneration, and I repeatedly, and according to my means, contributed to its funds. When I resigned my position on the executive I received from Mr. George Howell, the Secretary, and from Mr. Beales, the President, the most touching and flattering letters as to what Mr. Beales was pleased to describe as the loyalty and utility of my services to the League. Mr. George Howell concluded a long letter as follows: "Be pleased to accept

my assurance of sincere regards for your manly courage, consistent and honorable conduct in our cause, and for your kindly consideration for myself as Secretary of this great movement on all occasions." These letters have additional value from the fact that Mr. Beales, whom I sincerely respect, differs widely from me in matters of faith, and Mr. Howell is, fortunately, far from having any friendly feeling toward me. It was while on the Executive of this League that I first became intimately acquainted with Mr. George Odger, and had reason to be pleased with the straightforward course he pursued, and the honest work he did as one of the Executive Committee. Mr. John Baxter Langley and Mr. R. A. Cooper were also among my most prominent co-workers.

My sympathy with Ireland, and open advocacy of justice for the Irish, nearly brought me into serious trouble. Some who were afterward indicted as the chiefs of the so-called Fenian movement, came to me for advice. So much I see others have written, and the rest of this portion of my autobiography I may write some day. At present there are men not out of danger whom careless words might imperil, and as regards myself I shall not be guilty of the folly of printing language which a government might use against me. My pamphlet on the Irish Question, published in 1866, won a voluntary letter of warm approval from Mr. Gladstone, the only friendly writing I ever received from him in my life.

At Huddersfield, the Philosophical Hall having been duly hired for my lectures, pious influence was brought to bear on the lessee to induce him to break the contract. Fortunately what in law amounted to possession had been given, and on the doors being locked against me, I broke them open, and delivered my lecture to a crowded and most orderly audience. I was arrested, and an attempt was made to prosecute me before the Huddersfield magistrates; but I defended myself with success, and defeated with ease the Conservative solicitor, N. Learoyd, who had been specially retained to insure my committal to jail.

In 1868 I entered into a contest with the Conservative Government which, having been continued by the Gladstone Government, finished in 1869 with a complete victory for myself. According to the then law every newspaper was required to give sureties to the extent of £800 against blasphemous or seditious libel. I had never offered to give these sureties, as they would have probably been liable to forfeiture about once a month. In March, 1868, the Disraeli Government insisted on my compliance with the law. I refused. The Government then required me to stop my paper. I printed on the next issue, "Printed in Defiance of Her Majesty's Government." I was then served with an Attorney-General's information, containing numerous counts, and seeking to recover enormous penalties. I determined to be my own barrister, and while availing myself in consultation of the best legal advice, I always argued my own case. The interlocutory hearings before the Judges in Chambers were numerous, for I took objection to nearly every step made by the government, and I nearly always succeeded. I also brought the matter before Parliament, being specially backed in this by Mr. Milner Gibson, Mr. John Stuart Mill, and Mr. E. H. J. Crawford. When the information was called on for trial in a crowded court before Mr. Baron Martin, the Government backed out, and declined to make a jury; so the prosecution fell to the ground. Strange to say, it was renewed by the Gladstone Government, who had the coolness to offer me, by the mouth of Attorney-General Collier, that they would not enforce any penalties if I would stop the paper, and admit that I was in the wrong. This I declined, and the prosecution now came on for trial before Baron Bramwell and a special jury. Against me were the Attorney-General, Sir R. Collier, the Solicitor-General, Sir J. D. Coleridge, and Mr. Crompton Hutton. I found that these legal worthies were blundering in their conduct of the trial, and at *nisi prius* I let them obtain a verdict, which however, I reversed on purely technical grounds, after a long argument, which I sustained before Lord Chief Baron Kelly and a full court sitting in Banco. Having miserably failed to enforce the law against me, the Government repealed the statute, and I can boast that I got rid of the last shackle of the obnoxious English press laws. Mr. J. S. Mill wrote me: "You have gained a very honorable success in obtaining a repeal of the mischievous Act by your persevering resistance." The Government, although beaten, refused to reimburse

me any portion of the large outlay incurred in fighting them.

It has always been my ambition to enter Parliament, and at the General Election for 1808 I, for the first time, entered the arena as a candidate. I was beaten; but this is scarcely wonderful. I had all the journals in England except three against me. Every idle or virulent tale which folly could distort or calumny invent was used against me. Despite all, I polled nearly 1,100 votes, and I obtained unasked, but not ungratefully listened to, the public acknowledgments from the Mayor of the borough, also from one of my competitors, Mr. Charles Gilpin, as to the loyal manner in which I had fought the contest through.

During the election struggle libels rained from all sides. One by the late Mr Capper, M. P., seeking reelection at Sandwich, was the monstrous story, that in the open square at Northampton I had taken out my watch and defied God to show his power by striking me dead in five minutes. Challenged for his authority Mr. Capper pretended to have heard the story from Mr. C. Gilpin, M. P., who indignantly denied being any party to the falsehood. I insisted on an apology from Mr. Capper, which being refused I sued him, but he died soon after the writ was served. The story was not an original invention by Mr. Capper; it had been reported of Abner Kneeland thirty years before, and is still a favorite one with pious missionaries at street corners. A still more outrageous slander was inserted in the *Razor*, a pseudo-comic weekly. I compelled this journal to give a full apology, but not until after two years' litigation, and a new trial had been ordered. When obliged to recant, the Christian proprietor became insolvent, to avoid payment of the costs. Unfortunately born poor, my life had been one continued struggle, and the burden of my indebtedness was sorely swollen in this and similar contests.

Probably the most severe, and to me certainly the most costly, struggle has been on the oath question. Formerly it was a fatal objection against the competency of a witness who did not believe in a Deity and in a future state of rewards and punishments. Several attempts had been made to alter the law, but they had all failed; and indeed Sir J. Trevelyan's measures only provided for affirmation, and did not seek to abolish the incompetency. In a case in which I was plaintiff in the Court of Common Pleas, my evidence was objected to, and I determined to fight the matter through every possible court, and to get the law changed if possible.

I personally argued the case before Lord Chief Justice Bovill and a full Bench, in the Court of Common Pleas, and with the aid of the present Mr. Justice Denman and the late Lord Chancellor Hatherly, the law was twice altered in Parliament. Before victory was ultimately obtained I had to carry the case into the Court of Error, and I prepared and sent out at my own cost more than two hundred petitions to Parliament. Ultimately the Evidence Amendment Act, 1869, and the Evidence Further Amendment Act, 1870, gave Freethinkers the right to enter the witness box, and I won my suit. The Christian defendant finished by becoming bankrupt, and I lost a terribly large sum in debt and costs. The original debt and interest were over £300, and the costs of the various proceedings were very heavy.

In the winter of 1870 the Mirfield Town Hall, which had been properly taken and paid for for two nights' lectures, was refused by the proprietors, who barricaded the hall, and obtained a great force of police from the neighborhood. In order that the law might be clearly settled on this matter, I brought an action to try the question, and although the late Mr. Justice Willis expressed himself strongly in my favor, it was held by Mr. Justice Mellor at *nisi prius* that nothing, except a deed under seal or an actual demise, would avail. A mere agreement for a user of a hall was a license revocable at will, even when for a valuable consideration. This convinced me that when hall proprietors break their contracts, I must enforce my rights as I did at Huddersfield, and have done in other places.

During the Franco-Prussian struggle I remained neutral until the 4th of September. I was against Bismark and his blood-and-iron theory, but I was also against the Empire and the Emperor; so I took no part with either. I was lecturing at Plymouth the day the *decree* was proclaimed, and immediately after wrote my first article in favor of Republican France. I now set to work and organized a series of meetings

in London and the provinces, some of which were cooperated in by Dr. Congreve, Professor Beesly, and other prominent members of the Positivist party. These meetings exercised some little effect on the public opinion in this country, but unfortunately the collapse on the part of France was so complete, and the resources commanded by Bismark and Moltke so vast, that, except as expressing sympathy, the results were barren. In October, 1870, I, without any previous communication from myself to them, received from the Republican Government at Tours a long and flattering letter, signed by Leon Gambetta, Adolphe Cremieux, Al Glais Bizoin, and Admiral Fourichon, declaring that they, as members of the "Gouvernement de la Defense Nationale, reunis en delegation a Tours," "tiennent a honneur de vous remercier chaleureusement du noble concours que vous apportez a la cause de la France." On the 2d of February, 1871, M. Tissot, the Charge d'Affaires of France in England, wrote me: "Quant a moi, mon cher ami, le ne puis que constater ici, comme je l'ai deja fait, comme je le ferais toute occasion, la dette que nous avons contractee envers vous. Vous nous avez donne votre temps, votre activite, votre eloquence, votre ame, la meilleure partie de vous meme, en un mot; la France que vous avez ete seule a defendre ne l'oubliera jamais." This is probably a too flattering estimate of my services to France, but coming from the official representative of the French Republic, I feel entitled to insert it. In September, 1871, Monsieur Emmanuel Arago, member of the Provisional Government of the 4th of September, wrote the following words upon the letter which had been sent me, as above mentioned, in October, 1870, by the Delegate Government of Tours: "En lisant cette lettre, j'eprouve tres vivement le regret de n'avoir pu, en-ferme dans Paris, joindre ma signature a celles de mes collegues de la delegation de Tours. Mr. Bradlaugh est et sera toujours dans la Republique notre concitoyen."

During 1870, 1871, and 1872, I held several debates with the Rev. A. J. Harrison, formerly of Huddersfield. The first at Newcastle, in the splendid Town Hall of that place, was attended by about 5,000 persons. The second debate at Bristol, was notable from being presided over by Professor Newman. The third discussion was at Birmingham, and was an attempt at the Socratic method, and the last platform encounter, was in the New Hall of Science, London. Of the Rev. Mr. Harrison it is enough I should say that, a few weeks since, when rumor put my life in danger, he was one of the first to write a kindly and unaffected letter of sympathy to Mrs. Bradlaugh.

When the great cry of thanksgiving was raised for the recovery of the Prince of Wales, I could not let it pass without protest. While he lay dangerously ill I had ceased to make any attack on himself or family, but I made no pretense of a grief I did not feel. When the thanksgiving day was fixed, and tickets for St. Paul's were sent by the Lord Chamberlain to working men representatives, I felt it right to hold a meeting of protest, which was attended by a crowded audience in the New Hall of Science.

The "right of meeting" has given me three important occasions of measuring swords with the Government during the last few years, and each time defeat has attended the Government. The first, the Hyde Park meeting, where I acted in accord with Mr. Beales, to whom as chief, let the honor go of this conflict. The second was on the 31st July, 1871, under the following circumstances. A meeting had been held by Mr. G. Odger and some of his friends in Hyde Park, on Sunday the 30th of July, to protest against the grant to Prince Arthur; this meeting was adjourned until the following evening. Late on the Sunday afternoon, the adjourned meeting was forbidden by the Government. Early on Monday morning Mr. Odger applied to me to give the friends the benefit of my legal knowledge and personal influence. I consented, and the Government persevering, I took my share of the responsibility of the gathering, and signed with Mr. Odger a new notice convening the meeting. The Home Office not only served us also with a written prohibition, but threatened and prepared to use force. I immediately gave Mr. Bruce notice that the force would be illegal, and that it would be resisted. At the last moment, and in fact only some half hour before the meeting commenced, the Government abandoned its prohibition, and an enormous meeting of a most orderly character was held in absolute defiance of the authorities.



The more recent case was in December, 1872, when finding that Mr. Odger, Mr. Bailey, and others, had been prosecuted under some monstrous and ridiculous regulations invented by Mr. Ayrton, I, on my own responsibility, determined to throw down the gauntlet to the Government. I did this most successfully, and soon after the opening of Parliament the obnoxious regulations were annulled.

It is at present too early to speak of the Republican movement in England, which I have sought, and not entirely without success, to organize on a thoroughly legal basis. It is a fair matter for observation that my lectures on "The Impeachment of the House of Brunswick," have been delivered to crowded audiences assembled in some of the finest halls in England and Scotland, notably the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, the Town Hall, Birmingham, the Town Hall, Northampton, and the City Hall, Glasgow. It is, as far as I am aware, the first time any English citizen has, without tumult or disorder and in buildings belonging to various Municipalities, directly challenged the hereditary right of the reigning family.

In penning the foregoing sketch I had purposely to omit many facts connected with branches of Italian, Irish, and French politics. I have also entirely omitted my own struggles for existence. The political parts are left out because there are secrets which are not my own alone, and which may not bear full telling for many years to come. The second, because I hope that another year or two of hard work may enable me to free myself from the debt load which for some time has hung heavily round me.

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE DEVIL

To have written under this head in the reign of James Rex, of pious memory, would have, probably, procured for me, without even the perusal of my pamphlet, the reputation of Dr. Faustus, and a too intimate acquaintance with some of the pleasant plans of torturing to death practiced by the clever witch-finders of that day. I profess, however, no knowledge of the black art, and am entirely unskilled in *diablerie*, and feel quite convinced that the few words I shall say about his Satanic Majesty will not be cause of any unholy compacts in which bodies or souls are signed away in ink suspiciously red.

In many countries, dealing with the Devil has been a perilous experiment. In 1790, an unfortunate named Andre Dubuisson was confined in the Bastile, charged with raising the Devil. To prevent even the slightest apprehension on the part of my reader that I have any desire or intent toward placing him unpleasantly near a black-visaged, sulphureous-constituted individual, horned like an old goat, with satyr-like legs, a tail of unpleasant length, and a disposition to buy a body from any unfortunate wight ready to dispose of it, I have only to assert my intention of treating the subject entirely from a biblical point of view. Doubtless I ought to do this; the Christian Devil is a bible institution. I say, \ advisedly, the Christian Devil, because other religions have boasted their Devil, and it is well to prevent confusion. But I frankly admit that none of these religions have the honor of a Devil so devilish as our own. Indeed our Devil ought to be the best: it costs the most. No other religion besides our own can boast the array of Popes, Bishops, Conferences, Rectors, Incumbents, and paid preachers of various titles. And all these to preach against the Devil!

It is necessary, before entering upon my subject, that I should confess my little ability to do it justice. I am unable to say, certainly, whether I am writing about a singular Devil or a plurality of Devils. In one text "Devils" are mentioned,\* recognizing a plurality; in another, "the Devil,"\*\* as if there was but one. We may, however, fairly assume that either there is one Devil, more than one, or less than one; and, having thus cleared our path from mere numerical difficulties, we will proceed to give the Devil his due. Satan appears either to have been a child of God, or, at any rate, a most intimate acquaintance of the family; for we find that on "a day when the children of God came to present themselves before the Lord, that Satan came also among them;"\*\*\* and no surprise or disapprobation is manifested at his presence. The conversation narrated in the Book of Job as occurring between God and the Devil has, for us, a value proportioned to the rarity of the scene, and to the high character of the personages concerned.

\* Leviticus xvii, 7.

\*\* Luke iv, 2.

\*\*\* Job i, 6

We are, therefore, despite the infidel criticism of Martin Luther, who condemns the Book of Job as "a sheer *argumentum fabulæ*" determined to examine carefully the whole particulars for ourselves; and, in so doing, we are naturally surprised to find God, the omniscient, putting to Satan the query, Whence comest thou? We cannot suppose God, the all-wise, ignorant upon the subject, and we can not avoid a feeling of astonishment that such an interrogatory should have been made. Satan's reply, assuming its correctness—and this the text leaves us no reason to doubt—increases our surprise and augments our astonishment. The answer given is, "From going to and fro in the earth, and from going up and down it," In remarking on this answer, I do not address myself to those wretched persons who, relying on their reason and common sense, ignore the divine truth. I address myself to the true believer, and I ask, is he not astonished to find, from his bible, that Satan could have gone to and fro in the earth, and walked up and

down, and yet not have met God, the omnipresent, occasionally during his journeying? The Lord makes no comment on Satan's reply, but says, "Hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?" It is rather extraordinary that God should wish to have the Devil's opinion on the only good man recorded as then living in the world: the more extraordinary when we know that God is all-wise, and knew Satan's opinion without asking it, and that God is immutable, and, therefore, would not be influenced by the expression of the Devil's opinion when uttered. Satan's answer is, "Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blest the work of his hand, and his substance is increased in the land; but put forth thine hand now and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face." What is God's reply to this audacious assertion? Does he express his determination to protect the righteous Job? Does he use his power to rebuke the evil tempter? No. "The Lord said unto Satan, Behold all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put forth not thine hand." And this was Job's reward for being a perfect and upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil. He was not sent to the Devil, but the Devil was sent to all that he had. And he lost all without repining—sons, daughters, oxen, asses, camels and sheep, all destroyed, and yet Job sinned not. Some divines have urged that we here get a beautiful picture of patience and contentment under wrong and misfortune. But I reply that it is not good to submit patiently to wrong, or to rest contented under misfortune. I urge that it is manlier far to resist wrong, nobler far to wage war against wrong, better far to carefully investigate the causes of wrong and misfortune, with a view to their removal. Contentment under wrong is a crime, voluntary submission under oppression is not the virtue some would have it to be.

"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord [as if God's children could ever be absent from him], and Satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth? a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against HIM TO DESTROY HIM WITHOUT CAUSE."

Can God be moved against a man to destroy him without a cause? If so, God is neither immutable nor all-wise. Yet the bible puts into God's mouth the terrible admission that the Devil had moved God against Job to destroy him without cause. If true, it destroys God's goodness; if false, then the bible is no revelation.

But Satan answered the Lord and said, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life; put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face."

Does the Lord now drive the Devil from his presence? Is there any expression of wrath or indignation against his tempter? Not so. "The Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand, but save his life." And Job, being better than everybody else, finds himself smitten in consequence with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. The ways of the Lord are not as our ways, or this would seem the reverse of an encouragement to virtue.

We turn over the pages of our bible for further information on this diabolic theme.

After reading the account of the numbering by David attentively, one is puzzled by the apparent contradiction, that in one place "God" and in another "Satan" occurs.\*

\* 1 Chron. xxi, 1; 2 Sam. xxiv, 1

But it may be that there is more harmony between God and the Devil than ordinary men are aware. Unfortunately, we have not the advantage of great scholarship, but one erudite commentator on the bible tells us, in speaking of the Hebrew word Azazel: "This terrible and venerable name of God, through the

pens of biblical glossers, has been *a Devil, a mountain*, a wilderness, and a he-goat."\* Well may incomprehensibility be an attribute of Deity, when, even to holy and reverend fathers, God has been sometimes undistinguishable from a he-goat or a Devil. Goats and Devils are alike represented with horns and tails. We trust that profanity will not enlarge on this sad confusion of ideas. Not possessing great lingual acquirements, we adhere to the English bible, believing that religion can never be improved by mere common sense, or human effort. We admire, without understanding, the skill of the Missionary, who makes the word "Mooigniazimoongo" an equivalent for God in the Sooahelee dialect, and who represents "original sin" to the Ottomi Indian by the word "Teacatzintiliztlatlacolli," and who recommends the Delaware to repentance as "Schiwelendamowitchewagan."

We do not wonder that in these translating thaumaturgic exploits God and Devil get mistaken for each other.

God is a spirit. Jesus was led up of the Spirit to be tempted of the Devil; and it is also true that spirits are very likely to lead men to the Devil. Too intimate acquaintance with whisky toddy overnight is often followed by the *delirium tremens* and blue-devils on the morrow. We advise our readers to eschew alike spirituous and spiritual mixtures. They interfere sadly with sober thinking, and play the Devil with your brains.

The history of the temptation of Jesus by the Devil has been dealt with in another essay.\*\* Yet it may be well to add the opinion of a Church of England divine in this place: "That the Devil should appear personally to the Son of God *is certainly not more wonderful* than that he should, in a more remote age, have appeared *among* the sons of God, in the presence of God himself, to tempt and torment the righteous Job."

\* G. R. Gliddon's extract from "Land's Sagra Scritura," chap. iii, sec. 1.

\*\* "Who was Jesus Christ?" p. 8.

But that Satan should carry Jesus, bodily and literally, through the air—first to the top of a high mountain, and then to the topmost pinnacle of the temple—is wholly inadmissible, it is an insult to our understanding.\* It is pleasant to be able to find so many clergymen, in these days, zealously repudiating their own creeds. I am not prepared to speak strongly as to the color of the Devil; white men paint him black, black men white; but, allowing for the prejudices of dark-colored and fair-skinned believers, an invisible green would not be an unreasonable tint. We presume that he is not colorless, as otherwise the Evangelists or the persons present would have labored under considerable difficulties in witnessing the casting out of the Devil from the man in the synagogue.\*\* This Devil is described as an unclean Devil, and it is, therefore, a fair inference that there are some clean Devils as well as dirty Devils. Printer's Devils are mostly unclean Devils, but then they are only little Devils, and we must not make too much of them. Nearly all the Devils seem to talk, and it has therefore been conjectured by some bachelor metaphysicians that they are of the feminine gender, but I see no reason to agree in this, and my wife is of a contrary opinion. The Devils are probably good Christians—one text tells us that they believe and tremble. It is a fact with some poor Devils that the more they believe the more they tremble. We are told in another text that the Devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He will have extremely bad taste, however, if he eat up the lean and bony working-classes, while so many fat bishops and stout archdeacons remain unconsumed.

\*"Christian Records," by the Rev. Dr. Giles, p. 144.

\*\* Luke iv, 35, 36.

Devils should be a sort of eternal salamander, for we are told there is everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his angels,\* and that there is a lake of brimstone and fire, into which the Devil was cast.\*\* Perhaps instead of being salamander they will, while in the fire, be rather of the 'otter tribe; but this is a

question which Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, who is a far better judge of brimstone than myself, would be more competent to settle. The Devil has, at least upon one occasion, figured as a controversialist. He disputed with the archangel Michael, contending about the body of Moses;\*\*\* and in these degenerate days of personality in debate it is pleasant to know that the religious champion, unlike the Grants, Coopers, and Brindleys of the present period, was very civil toward his Satanic opponent. The Devil was once imprisoned for 1,000 years in a bottomless pit.\*\*\*\* If a pit has no bottom, it seems but little confinement to shut the top; but with faith and prayer, even a good foundation may be obtained for a bottomless pit.

It is urged by some that the Devil was the serpent of Genesis—that is, that it was really Satan who, in this guise, tempted Eve. There is this difficulty in the matter: the Devil is a liar,\*\*\*\*\* but in the interview with Eve the serpent seems to have confined himself to the strict truth.\*\*\*\*\* There is, in fact, no point of resemblance—no horns, no hoof, nothing except the tail—which can be in any way identified.

\* Matt, xxv, 41.

\*\* Jude, 9.

\*\*\* John viii, 44.

\*\*\*\* Rev. xxi, 10.

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\*\*\*\*\* Genesis iii, 4, 5, 22.

The Old Testament speaks a little of the Devils, sometimes of Satan, but never of "The Devil," and it seems almost too much, in Matthew, to usher him in, in the temptation scene, without introduction, and as if he were an old acquaintance. I do not remember reading, in the Old Testament, anything about the lake of brimstone and fire; this feature of faith was reserved for the warmth of Christian love to inspire; the Pentateuch makes no reference to it. Zechariah, in a vision, saw "Joshua, the High-Priest, standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him."\* Why the Devil wanted to resist Joshua is not clear; but as Joshua's garments were in a very filthy state, it may be that he was preaching to the Priest the virtues of cleanliness. It is often said that cleanliness is next to godliness; I honestly confess that I should prefer a clean sinner to a dirty saint. Jesus said that one of the twelve disciples was a Devil,\*\* but I am not prepared to say whether he meant the unfaithful and cowardly Peter, to whom he intrusted the keys of Heaven, or Judas who sold him for money, just as would nearly any bishop of the present day. The bishops preach that it is as difficult for a rich man to get into Heaven as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle; yet they enrich themselves, and their families, as greedily and carelessly as if they, at any rate, never expected to smell brimstone as a consequence. You are told to resist the Devil, and he will flee from you;\*\*\* if this be true, he is a cowardly Devil, and thus does not agree quite with Milton's picture of his grand, defiant, almost heroism. But then Milton was a poet, and true religion has but little poetry in it.

\* Zechariah iii, 1.

\*\*John vi, 70.

\*\*\*James iv, 7.

Jeroboam, one of the Jewish monarchs, ordained priests for the Devils,\* and this may be the reason why, at the present day, all the orthodox clergy are gentlemen in black. In the time of Jesus, Satan must, when not in the body of some mad, deaf, dumb, blind, or paralytic person, have been in Heaven; for Jesus, on one occasion, told his disciples that he saw Satan, as lightning, fall from Heaven.\*\* Of course, this would betoken a rapid descent, but although a light affair, it is no laughing matter, and we reverently leave it to the clergy to explain the text. Jesus told Simon Peter that Satan desired to have him, that he might sift him as wheat;\*\*\* in this text it may be urged that Jesus was chaffing his disciple. Paul, the apostle, seems to have looked on the Devil much as the magistrates of Guernsey, Devonport, and Yarmouth look on the

police, for Paul delivered Hymeneus and Alexander unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.\*\*\*\*

Revivalists are much indebted for their evanescent successes to Hell and the Devil, if the following extract from the experience of a Christian preacher be reliable:

"Thomas English was one of those very noisy and active preachers who do so much in promoting revivals." he would tell his hearers of "dwelling with devouring fire, bearing everlasting burning, roasting on the Devil's spit, broiling on his gridiron, being pitched about with his fork, drinking the liquid fire, breathing the brimstone fumes, drowning in a red-hot sea, lying on fiery beds,"\*\*\*\*\* etc.

\* 2 Chron: xi, 15.

\*\* Luke x, 18.

\*\*\* Luke xxii, 31.

\*\*\*\* 1 Tim. i, 20.

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In the present year the vulgar tirades of Reginald Radcliffe, Richard Weaver, and C. H. Spurgeon (some of them delivered in Exeter Hall) will serve to evidence that the above quotation is not the exaggeration which some might think. In London, before crowded audiences, Mr. Weaver, without originality, and with only the merit of copied coarseness, has called upon the Lord to "shake the ungodly for five minutes over the mouth of Hell." Mr. Spurgeon has drawn pictures of Hell which, if true and revealed to him by God, are most disgustingly frightful, and which being, as we believe, false, and but the creation of his own vulgar, morbid fancies, induce, on our part, a feeling of contempt as well as disgust.

The Wesleyans, some years since, made the Devil a prominent feature in the famous "Fly-Sheet" controversy, so much so that a Wesleyan, speaking and writing on the subject, suggested that the authors of the "Fly-Sheets" were Devils, and another once-Wesleyan writer says: "The first thing which made me inquire about the Devil was that I thought him abused. I thought him bad enough, but could not help fearing that people told lies about him. R. S——, a very zealous prayer-leader, stole some oats, and imputed the blame to the Devil. T. C—— got drunk, and complained in the love-feast that the Devil had been very busy with him for some time, and then took him in an unguarded moment. B. S—— was detected in lying, and complained that Satan had gained the advantage over him. Old George White burned his fingers in lighting his pipe, and declared that it was the Devil that caused him to do it; and Farmer Duffy horsewhipped his wife, and said that he did it to beat the Devil out of her. This make me desirous to know what influence the Devil really had, and I was stimulated to this inquiry by my friend, Mr. Trelevan, who assured me that the Devil was as necessary as the Almighty to the orthodox faith."\* The fashionable preachers in the neighborhood of Belgravia mostly eschew the Devil, and avoid the taint of brimstone; treacle is the commodity they dispense.

\* "Pilgrim's Progress from Methodism to Christianity."

For myself, the only Devil I know is that black Devil ignorance, fostered by knavery and tyranny; a Devil personified by the credulous many, and kept up in the past by the learned but treacherous few, who preferred to rule the masses by their fears, rather than to guide them through their love. This devil has, indeed, not been a roaring lion, but a cowardly and treacherous boa constrictor; it has enveloped in its massive folds glorious truths, and in the fierceness of its brute power has crushed them in its writhings. But oh! a glorious day is coming: amid the heretofore gloom of night the bright rays of the rising sun are piercing, the light of truth dispels the mists of ignorance. Bright facts drive out dark delusions; mighty truths triumph over pious frauds, and no longer need men be affrighted by the notion of an omnipotent fiend, wandering through the earth, ever seeking their damnation.

Yes—to partially adopt the phraseology of a writer in "Macmillan's Magazine"—I do refuse to see in God a being omniscient as omnipotent, who puts us into this world without our volition, leaves us to

struggle through it as we can, unequally pitted against an almost omnipotent and supersubtile Devil, and then, if we fail, finally drops us out of this world into Hell-fire, where a legion of inferior Devils find constant and never-ending employment in inventing fresh tortures for us; our crime being that we have not succeeded where success was rendered impossible. No high, no manly, no humane thinkings are developed in the doctrine of Devils and damnation. If a potent faith, it degrades alike the teacher and the taught, by its abhorrent mercilessness; and if a form, instead of a faith, then is the Devil doctrine a misleading sham, which frightens weak minds and never developes strong men.

## NEW LIFE OF DAVID.

In compiling a biographical account of any ancient personage, impediments mostly arise from the uncertainty of the various traditions out of which we gather our biography, and from the party bias and coloring which often pervade and detract from their value. In the present case no such obstacle is met with, no such bias can be imagined, for, in giving the life of David, we extract it from an all-wise God's perfect and infallible revelation to man, and thus are enabled to present it to our readers free from any doubt, uncertainty, or difficulty. The father of David was Jesse, an Ephrathite of Bethlehem-judah. Jesse had either eight sons (1 Samuel xvi, 10, 11, and xvii, 12) or only seven (1 Chron. ii, 13 to 15), and David was either the eighth son or the seventh. Some may think this a difficulty to commence with, but such persons will only be those who rely on their own intellectual faculties, or who have been misled by Colenso's arithmetic. If you, my dear reader, are in any doubt, at once consult some qualified divine, and he will explain to you that there is really no difference between eight and seven when rightly understood with prayer and faith, by the help of the spirit. Arithmetic is an utterly infidel acquirement, and one which all true believers should eschew. In proof of this, I may observe that the proposition three times one are one is a fundamental article of the Christian faith. David's great grandmother was the holy harlot Rahab, and his grandmother was a lady who when unmarried went in the night and lay at the feet of Boaz, and left in the morning before it was light enough for any one to recognize her like her grandson she was "prudent in matters." When young, David tended his father's sheep, and apparently while so doing he obtained the reputation for being cunning in playing, a mighty valiant man, and a man of war and prudent in matters. He obtained his reputation as a soldier early and wonderfully, for he was "but a youth," and God's most holy word asserts that when going to fight with Goliath he tried to walk in armor, and could not, for he was not accustomed to it (1 Samuel xvii, 39, Douay version). Samuel shortly prior to this anointed David, and the spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward. If a man takes to spirits his life will probably be one of vice, misery, and misfortune, and if spirits take to him the result in the end is nearly the same. Saul being King of Israel, an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. The devil has no ear for music, and Saul was recommended to have David to play on a harp in order that harmony might drive this evil spirit back to the Lord who sent it. The Jews' harp was played successfully, and Saul was often relieved from the evil spirit by the aid of David's ministrations. There is nothing miraculous in this; at the people's concerts many a working man has been released from the "blue devils" by a stirring chorus, a merry song, or patriotic anthem. David was appointed armor-bearer to the king, but curiously enough this office does not appear to have interfered with his duties as a shepherd; indeed the care of his father's sheep took precedence over the care of the king's armor, and in the time of war he "went and returned to feed his father's sheep." Perhaps his "prudence in matters" induced him thus to take care of himself.

A Philistine, one Goliath of Gath (whose hight was six cubits and a span, or about nine feet six inches, at a low computation) had defied the armies of Israel. This Goliath was (to use the vocabulary of the reverend sporting correspondent of a certain religious newspaper) a veritable champion of the heavy weights. He carried in all two cwt. of armor, offensive and defensive, upon his person, and his challenge had great weight. None dared accept it among the soldiers of Saul until the arrival of David with some food for his brethren. David volunteered to fight the giant, but Saul objecting that he was not competent to take part in a conflict so dangerous, David related how he pursued a *lion and a bear*, how he caught *him* by his beard and slew *him*. David's offer was accepted, he was permitted to fight the giant. In one verse David slew the Philistine with a stone, in another verse he slew him with the giant's own sword, while in 2 Samuel, c. xxi, v. 19, we are told that Goliath the Gittite was slain by Elhanan. Our translators, who



have great regard for our faiths and more for their pulpits, have kindly inserted the words "the brother of" before Goliath. This saves the true believer from the difficulty of understanding how Goliath of Gath could have been killed by different men at different times. David was previously well known to Saul, and was much loved and favored by that monarch. He was also seen by the king before he went forth to do battle with the gigantic Philistine. Yet Saul had forgotten his own armor-bearer and much-loved harpist, and was obliged to ask Abner who David was. Abner, captain of the king's host, familiar with the person of the armor-bearer to the king, of course knew David well; he therefore answered, "As thy soul liveth, O king, I can not tell." One day the evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul and he prophesied. Men who are spiritually inclined often talk great nonsense under the influence of spirits, which they sometimes regret when sober. It is, however, an interesting fact in ancient spiritualism to know that Saul prophesied with a devil in him. Under the joint influence of the devil and prophecy, he tried to kill David, and when this was repeated, even after David had married the king's daughter (for whose wedding trousseau he had procured an interesting and delicate offering by the slaughter of two hundred men), then to save his own life David fled to Naioth, and Saul sent there messengers to arrest him, but the king's messengers having all become prophets, in the end Saul went himself, and this time the spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he stripped off his clothes and prophesied as hard as the rest. What he prophesied about we do not know. In fact, the priests have made so great deduction from the profits during the plenitude of their power, that there has been little which is profitable in connection with religion left for the people.

David lived in exile for some time, having collected around him every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented. Saul made several fruitless attempts to effect his capture, with no better result than that he twice placed himself in the power of David, who twice showed the mercy to a cruel king which he never conceded to an unoffending people. David having obtruded himself upon Achish, King of Gath, and doubtful of his safety, feigned madness to cover his retreat. He then lived a precarious life, sometimes levying a species of blackmail upon defenseless farmers. Having applied to one farmer to make him some compensation for permitting the farm to go unrobbed, and his demand not having been complied with, David, who is a man after the heart of the God of mercy, immediately determined to murder the farmer and all his household for their wicked reluctance in submitting to his extortions. The wife of farmer Nabal compromised the matter. David "accepted her person" and ten days afterward Nabal was found dead in his bed. David afterward went with six hundred men and lived under the protection of Achish, king of Gath; and while thus residing (being the anointed one of a God who says "Thou shalt not steal,") he robbed the inhabitants of the surrounding places; being also obedient to the statute "Thou shalt do no murder," he slaughtered, and left neither man nor woman alive to report his robberies to King Achish; and as he "always walked in the ways" of a God to whom "lying lips are an abomination," he made false reports to Achish in relation to his actions. Of course this was all for the glory of God, whose ways are not as our ways. Soon the Philistines were engaged in another of the constantly recurring conflicts with the Israelites. Who offered them the help of himself and band? Who offered to make war on his own countrymen? David, the man after God's own heart, who obeyed his statutes and who walked in his ways to do only that which was right in the sight of God. The Philistines rejected the traitor's aid, and saved David from the consummation of this baseness. While David was making this unpatriotic proffer of his services to the Philistines, his own city of Ziklag was captured by the Amalekites, who were doubtless endeavoring to avenge some of the most unjustifiable robberies and murders perpetrated by David and his followers in their country. David's own friends evidently thought that this misfortune was a retribution for David's crimes, for they spoke of stoning him. The Amalekites had captured and carried off every thing, but they do not seem to have maltreated or killed any of their enemies. David was less merciful. He pursued them, recaptured the spoil, and spared not a man of them, save 400 who escaped on camels. In consequence of the death of Saul, David soon after was elevated to the throne of Judah, while Ishbosheth, son of Saul, was made King of Israel. But

Ishbosheth, having been assassinated, David slew the assassins, when they, hoping for reward, brought him the news, and he reigned ultimately over Israel also.

As my religious readers are doubtless aware, the Lord God of Israel, after the time of Moses, usually dwelt on the top of an ark or box, between two figures of gold, and on one occasion David made a journey with his followers to Baal, to bring thence the ark of God. They placed it on a new cart drawn by oxen. On their journey the oxen stumbled and consequently shook the cart, and one of the drivers, whose name was Uzzah, fearing that God might be tumbled to the ground, took hold of the ark, apparently in order to steady it, and prevent it from overturning. God, who is a God of love, was much displeased that any one should presume to do any such act of kindness, and killed Uzzah on the spot as a punishment for his error. This shows that if a man sees the Church of God tumbling down, he should never try to prop it up; if it be not strong enough to save itself the sooner it falls the better for human kind—that is, if they keep away from it while it is falling. David was much displeased that the Lord had killed Uzzah; in fact, David seems to have wished for a monopoly of slaughter, and always manifested displeasure when killing was done unauthorized by himself. Being displeased, David would not take the ark to Jerusalem; he left it in the house of Obed Edom, but as the Lord proved more kind to Obed Edom than he had done to Uzzah, David determined to bring it away, and he did so, and David danced before the ark in a state of semi-nudity, for which he was reproached by Michal. The story is one which, by itself, would be as entertaining to a depraved mind as any Holywell-Street pamphlet, if Lord Campbell's act did not prevent the publication of indecencies. The pages of God's most holy word, we believe, do not come within the scope of the act, and lovers of obscene language may therefore have legal gratification so long as the bible shall exist. The God of Israel, who had been leading a wandering life for many years, and who had "walked in a tent and in a tabernacle," and "from tent to tent," and "from one tabernacle to another," and who "had not dwelt in any house" since the time that he brought the Isrealites out of Egypt, was offered "an house for him to dwell in," but he declined to accept it during the lifetime of David, although he promised to permit the son of David to erect him such an abode. David being now a powerful monarch, and having many wives and concubines, saw one day the beautiful wife of one of his soldiers. To see, with this licentious monarch, was to crave for the gratification of his lust. The husband, Uriah, was fighting for the king, yet David was base enough to steal his wife's virtue during Uriah's absence in the field of battle. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," was one of the commandments, yet we are told by God of this David, "who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart to do only that which was right in mine eyes" (1 Kings, c. xiv, v. 8). David having seduced the wife, sent for her husband, wishing to make him condone his wife's dishonor, as many a man has done in other lands, when a king or prince has been the seducer. Some hold that virtue in rags is less worth than vice when coroneted. Uriah would not be thus tricked, and David, the pious David, coolly planned, and without mercy caused to be executed, the treacherous murder of Uriah. God is all just; and David having committed adultery and murder, God punished and killed an innocent child, which had no part or share in David's crime, and never chose that it should be born from the womb of Bathsheba. After this the king David was even more cruel and merciless than before. Previously he had systematically slaughtered the inhabitants of Moab, now he sawed people with saws, cut them with harrows and axes, and made them pass through brick-kilns. Yet of this man God said he "did that which was right in mine eyes." So bad a king, so treacherous a man, a lover so inconstant, a husband so adulterous, of course was a bad father, having bad children. We are little surprised, therefore, to read that his son Ammon robbed his sister, David's daughter Tamar, of her virtue; and that Ammon was afterward slain by his own brother, David's son Absalom, and are scarcely astonished that Absalom himself, on the house-top, in the sight of all Israel, should complete his father's shame by an act worthy a child of God's selected people. Yet these are God's chosen race, and this is the family of the man "who walked in God's ways all the days of his life."

God, who is all-wise and all-just, and who is not a man that he should repent, had repented that he, had made Saul king because Saul spared one man. In the reign of David the same good God sent a famine for three years on the descendants of Abraham, and upon being asked his reason for thus starving his chosen ones, the reply of the Deity was that he sent the famine on the subjects of David because Saul slew the Gibeonites. Satisfactory reason!—because Oliver Cromwell slew the Royalists, God will punish the subjects of Charles the Second. One reason is to profane eyes equivalent to the other, but a bishop or even a rural dean would show how remarkably God's justice was manifested. David was not behindhand in justice. He had sworn to Saul that he would not cut off his seed—i.e. that he would not destroy Saul's family. He therefore took two of Saul's sons, and five of Saul's grandsons, and gave them up to the Gibeonites, who hung them. Strangely wonderful are the ways of the Lord! Saul slew the Gibeonites, therefore years afterward God starves Judah. The Gibeonites hang men who had nothing to do with the crime of Saul, except that they are his descendants, and then we are told "the Lord was intreated for the land." Perhaps David wanted to get rid of the royal family of Saul. The anger of the Lord being kindled against Israel, and he wanting some excuse for punishing the descendants of Jacob, moved David to number his people. The Chronicles say that it was Satan, and pious people may thus learn that there is little difference between God and the Devil when rightly understood. Both are personifications founded in the ignorance of the masses, and their continuance will cease with their credulousness. David caused a census to be taken of the tribes of Israel and Judah. There is a trivial disagreement to the extent of about 270,000 soldiers between Samuel and Chronicles, but the readers must not allow so slight an inaccuracy as this to stand between them and heaven. What are 270,000 men when looked at prayerfully? The idea that any doubt should arise is to a devout mind at the same time profane and preposterous. Infidels suggest that 1,570,000 soldiers form a larger army than the Jews are likely to have possessed. I can only add that as God is omnipotent, there is no reason to limit his power of increasing or decreasing miraculously the armament of the Jewish nation. David, it seems, did wrong in numbering his people, although we are never told that he did wrong in robbing or murdering their neighbors, or in pillaging peaceful agriculturists. David said, "I have sinned." The king having done wrong, an all-merciful God brought a pestilence on the people, and murdered 70,000 Israelites for an offense which their ruler had committed. The angel who was engaged in this terrible slaughter stood somewhere between heaven and earth, and stretched forth his hand with a drawn sword in it to destroy Jerusalem itself, but even the blood-thirsty Deity of the bible "repented him of the evil," and said to the angel, "It is enough." Many volumes might be written to answer the inquiries—Where did the angel stand, and on what? Of what metal was the sword, and where was it made? As it was a drawn one, where was the scabbard? and did the angel wear a sword belt? Examined in a pious frame of mind, much holy instruction may be derived from the attempt at solution of these problems.

David now grows old and weak, and at last, notwithstanding that he has the advantage of a pretty maiden to cherish him, he wears out, and his death hour comes. Oh! for the dying words of the Psalmist! What pious instruction shall we derive from the deathbed scene of the man after God's own heart! Listen to the last words of Judah's expiring monarch. You who have been content with the pious frauds and forgeries perpetrated with reference to the deathbeds and dying words of the great, the generous, the witty Voltaire, the manly, the self-denying, the incorruptible Thomas Paine, the humane, simple, child-like man, yet mighty poet, Shelley—you who have turned away from these with horror, unfounded if real, come with me to the death couch of the special favorite of God. Bathsheba's child stands by his side. Does any thought of the murdered Uriah rack old David's brain, or has a tardy repentance effaced the bloody stain from the pages of his memory? What does the dying David say? Does he talk of cherubs, angels, and heavenly choirs? Nay, none of these things pass his lips. Does he make a confession of his crime-stained life, and beg his son to be a better king, a truer man, a more honest citizen, a wiser father? Nay, not so—no word or sigh of regret, no expression of remorse or repentance escaped his lips. What does the dying

David say? This foul adulterer, whom God has made king; this red-handed robber, whose life has been guarded by "our Father which art in Heaven;" this perjured king, whose lying lips have found favor in the sight of God, and who when he dies is safe for Heaven. Does David repent? Nay—like the ravenous tiger or wolf, which once tasting blood is made more eager for the prey, he yearns for blood; he dies, and with his dying breath begs his son to bring the grey hairs of two old men down to the grave with blood. Yet this is the life of God's anointed king, the chief one of God's chosen people.

David is alleged to have written several Psalms. In one of these he addresses God in the phraseology of a member of the P. R. praising Deity that he had smitten all of his enemies on the cheek bone and broken the teeth of the ungodly. In these days, when "muscular Christianity" is not without advocates, the metaphor which presents God as a sort of magnificent Benicia Boy may find many admirers. In the eighteenth Psalm, David describes God as with "smoke coming out of his nostrils and fire out of his mouth," by which "coals were kindled." He represents God as coming down from heaven, and says "he rode upon a cherub." The learned Parkhurst gives a likeness of a one-legged, four-winged, four-faced animal, part lion, part bull, part eagle, part man, and if a cloven foot be any criterion, part devil also. This description, if correct, will give some idea to the faithful of the wonderful character of the equestrian feats of Deity.

In the twenty-sixth Psalm, the writer, if David, exposes his own hypocrisy in addition to his other vices. He has the impudence to tell God that he has been a man of integrity and truth; that he has avoided evildoers, although if we are to believe the thirty-eighth Psalm, the vile hypocrite must have already been subject to a loathsome disease—a penalty consequent on his licentiousness and criminality. In another Psalm, David the liar tells God that "he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight." To understand his malevolent nature we can not do better than quote his prayer to God against an enemy (Psalm cix, 6-14):

"6. Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand.

"7. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin.

"8. Let his days be few: and let another take his office.

"9. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

"10. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.

"11. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath: and let the strangers spoil his labor.

"12. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favor his fatherless children.

"13. Let his posterity be cut off: and in the generation following let their name be blotted out.

"14. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord: and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out."

A full consideration of the life of David must give great help to each orthodox reader in promoting and sustaining his faith. While he is spoken of by Deity as obeying all the statutes and keeping all the commandments, we are astonished to find that murder, theft, lying, adultery, licentiousness, and treachery are among the crimes which may be laid to his charge. David was a liar, God is a God of truth; David was merciless, God is merciful, and of long suffering; David was a thief, God says "Thou shalt not steal;" David was a murderer, God says "Thou shalt do no murder;" David took the wife of Uriah, and "accepted" the wife of Nabal, God says "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife;" Yet, notwithstanding all these things, David was a man after God's own heart.

Had this Jewish monarch any redeeming traits in his character? Was he a good citizen? If so, the bible has carefully concealed every action which would entitle him to such an appellation, and in lieu has given us the record of his attempted extortion in the case of Nabal, and furnished us with a notice of his horde of

followers—outlawed, discontented, and in debt. Was he a kind and constant husband? Was he grateful to those who aided him in his hour of need? Nay; like the wounded serpent which, half frozen by the wayside, is warmed into new life in the traveler's breast, and then treacherously stabs him with his poisoned fangs, so David robbed and murdered the friends and allies of the King of Gath, who had afforded him refuge against the pursuit of Saul. Does his patriotism outshine his many vices? Does his love of country efface his many misdoings? Not even this. David was a heartless traitor who volunteered to serve against his own countrymen, and would have done so had not the Philistines rejected his treacherous help. Was he a good king? So say the priesthood now; but where is the evidence of his virtue? His crimes brought a plague and pestilence on his subjects, and his reign is a continued succession of wars, revolts, and assassinations, plottings and counterplots.

The life of David is a dark blot on the page of human history, and our best hope is that if a spirit from God inspired the writer, then that it was a lying spirit, and that he has given us fiction instead of truth.

## NEW LIFE OF JACOB.

It is pleasant work to present to the reader sketches of God's chosen people. More especially is it an agreeable task to recapitulate the interesting events occurring during the life of a man whom God has loved. Jacob was the son of Isaac; the grandson of Abraham. These three men were so free from fault, their lives so unobjectionable, that the God of the bible delighted to be called the "God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." It is true, Abraham owned slaves, was not exact as to the truth, and, on one occasion, turned his wife and child out to the mercies of a sandy desert. That Isaac in some sort followed his father's example and disingenuous practices, and that Jacob was without manly feeling, a sordid, selfish, unfraternal cozenor, a cowardly trickster, a cunning knave, but they must nevertheless have been good men, for God was "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." The name Jacob is not inappropriate. Kalisch says: "This appellation, if taken in its obvious etymological meaning, implies a deep ignominy; for the root from which it is derived signifies *to deceive, to defraud*, and in such a despicable meaning the same form of the word is indeed used elsewhere (Jeremiah ix, 3). Jacob would, therefore, be nothing else but the crafty *impostor*; in this sense Esau, in the heat of his animosity, in fact clearly explains the word, justly is his name called Jacob (cheat) because he has cheated me twice" (Genesis xxvii, 30). According to the ordinary orthodox bible chronology, Jacob was born about 1836 or 1837 B. C, that is, about 2,168 years from "in the beginning," his father Isaac being then sixty years of age. There is a difficulty connected with Holy Scripture chronology which would be insuperable were it not that we have the advantage of spiritual aids in elucidation of the text. This difficulty arises from the fact that the chronology of the bible, in this respect, like the major portion of bible history, is utterly unreliable. But we do not look to the Old or New Testament for mere commonplace, everyday facts; or if we do, severe will be the disappointment of the truthseeker; we look there for mysteries, miracles, paradoxes, and perplexities, and have no difficulties in finding the objects of our search. Jacob was born, together with his twin brother, Esau, in consequence of special entreaty addressed by Isaac to the Lord on behalf of Rebekah, to whom he had been married about nineteen years, and who was yet childless. Infidel physiologists (and it is a strange, though not unaccountable, fact that all who are physiologists are also in so far infidel) assert that prayer would do little to repair the consequence of such disease, or such abnormal organic structure, as would compel sterility. But our able clergy are agreed that the bible was not intended to teach us science; or, at any rate, we have learned that its attempts in that direction are most miserable failures. Its mission is to teach the unteachable; to enable us to comprehend the incomprehensible. Before Jacob was born God decreed that he and his descendants should obtain the mastery over Esau and his descendants—"the elder shall serve the younger."\* The God of the bible is a just God, but it is hard for weak flesh to discover the justice of this proemial decree, which so sentenced to servitude the children of Esau before their father's birth.

Jacob came into the world holding by his brother's heel, like some cowardly knave in the battle of life, who, not daring to break a gap in the hedge of conventional prejudice, which bars his path, is yet ready enough to follow some bolder warrior, and to gather the fruits of his courage. "And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field: and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents." One day Esau returned from his hunting faint and wearied to the very point of death. He was hungry, and came to Jacob, his twin and only brother, saying, "Feed me, I pray thee,"\* "for I am exceedingly faint."\*\* In a like case would not any man so entreated immediately offer to the other the best at his command, the more especially when that other is his only brother, born at the same time, from the same womb, suckled at the same breast, fed under the same roof? But Jacob was not a man and a brother, he was one of God's chosen people, and one who had been honored by God's prenatal selection. "If a man come unto me and hate not his brother, he can not be my disciple." So taught Jesus the Jew, in after time, but in this earlier age Jacob the Jew, in practice, anticipated the later doctrine. It is one of the misfortunes of theology, if not its crime, that profession of love to God is often accompanied with bitter and active hate of man. Jacob was one of the founders of the Jewish race, and even in this their pre-historic age, the instinct for driving a hard bargain seems strongly developed. "Jacob said" to Esau, "Sell me this day thy birthright." The famished man vainly expostulated, and the birthright was sold for a mess of pottage.

\* Gen. xxv, 30

\*\*Douay version.

If to-day one man should so meanly and cruelly take advantage of his brother's necessities to rob him of his birthright, all good and honest men would shun him as an unbrotherly scoundrel and most contemptible knave; yet, less than 4,000 years ago, a very different standard of morality must have prevailed. Indeed, if God is unchangeable, divine notions of honor and honesty must to-day be widely different from those of our highest men. God approved and endorsed Jacob's conduct. His approval is shown by his love afterward expressed for Jacob, his endorsement by his subsequent attention to Jacob's welfare. We may learn from this tale, so pregnant with instruction, that any deed which to the worldly and sensible man appears like knavery while understood literally, becomes to the devout and prayerful man an act of piety when understood spiritually. Much faith is required to thoroughly understand this; *for example*, it looks like swindling to collect poor children's halfpence and farthings in the Sunday schools for missionary purposes abroad, and to spend thereout two or three hundred pounds in an annual jubilatory dinner for well-fed pauper parsons at home; and so thought the noble lord who wrote to the *Times* under the initials S. G. O. If he had possessed more faith and less sense, he would have seen the piety and completely overlooked the knavery of the transaction. Pious preachers and clever commentators declare that Esau despised his birthright. I do not deny that they might back their declaration by scripture quotations, but I do deny that the narrative ought to convey any such impression. Esau's words were, "Behold I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright be to me?"

Isaac growing old, and fearing from his physical infirmities the near approach of death, was anxious to bless Esau before he died, and directed him to take quiver and bow and go out in the field to hunt some venison for a savory meat, such as old Isaac loved. Esau departed, but when he had left his father's presence in order to fulfill his request, Jacob appeared on the scene. Instigated by his mother, he, by an abject stratagem, passed himself off as Esau. With a savory meat prepared by Rebekah, he came into his father's presence, and Isaac said, "Who art thou, my son?" Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord. The Lord loved Jacob, yet Jacob lied to his old blind father, saying, "I am Esau, thy first-born." Isaac had some doubts: these are manifested by his inquiring how it was that the game was killed so quickly. Jacob, whom God loved, in a spirit of shameless blasphemy replied, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." Isaac still hesitated, fancying that he recognized the voice to be the voice of Jacob, and again questioned him, saying, "Art thou my very son Esau?" God is the God of truth and loved Jacob, yet Jacob

said, "I am." Then Isaac blessed Jacob, believing that he was blessing Esau: and God permitted the fraud to be successful, and himself also blessed Jacob. In that extraordinary composition known as the Epistle to the Hebrews, we are told that by faith Isaac blessed Jacob. But what faith had Isaac? Faith that Jacob was Esau? His belief was produced by deceptive appearances. His faith resulted from false representations. And there are very many men in the world who have no better foundation for their religious faith than had Isaac when he blessed Jacob, believing him to be Esau. In the Douay bible I find the following note on this remarkable narrative: "St. Augustine (X. contra mendacium c. 10), treating at large upon this place, excuseth Jacob from a lie, because thi's whole passage was mysterious, as relating to the preference which was afterward to be given to the Gentiles before the carnal Jews, which Jacob, by prophetic light, might understand. So far it is certain that the first birthright, both by divine election and by Esau's free cession, belonged to Jacob; so that if there were any lie in the case, it would be no more than an officious and venial one." How glorious to be a patriarch, and to have a real saint laboring years after your death to twist your lies into truth by aid of prophetic light. Lying is at all times most disreputable, but at the deathbed the crime is rendered more heinous. The death hour would have awed many men into speaking the truth, but it had little effect on Jacob. Although Isaac was about to die, this greedy knave cared not, so that he got from the dying man the sought-for prize. God is said to love righteousness and hate iniquity, yet he loved the iniquitous Jacob, and hated the honest Esau. All knaves are tinged more or less with cowardice. Jacob was no exception to the rule. His brother enraged at the deception practiced upon Isaac, threatened to kill Jacob. Jacob was warned by his mother and fled. Induced by Rebekah, Isaac charged Jacob to marry one of Laban's daughters. On the way to Haran, where Laban dwell, Jacob rested and slept. While sleeping he dreamed; ordinarily dreams have little significance, but in the bible they are more important. Some of the most weighty and vital facts (?) of the bible are communicated in dreams, and rightly so; if the men had been wide awake, they would have probably rejected the revelation as absurd. So much does that prince of darkness, the devil, influence mankind against the bible in the daytime, that it is when all is dark, and our eyes are closed, and the senses dormant, that God's mysteries are most clearly seen and understood. Jacob "saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top thereof touching heaven; the angels of God ascending and descending by it, and *the Lord leaning upon the ladder*." In the ancient temples of India, and in the mysteries of Mithra, the seven-stepped ladder by which the spirits ascended to heaven is a prominent feature, and one of probably far higher antiquity than the age of Jacob. Did paganism furnish the groundwork for the patriarch's dream? "No man hath seen God at any time." God is "invisible." Yet Jacob saw the invisible God, whom no man hath seen or can see, either standing above a ladder or leaning upon it. True, it was all a dream. Yet God spoke to Jacob; but perhaps that was a delusion too. We find by scripture that God threatens to send to some "strong delusions, that they might believe a lie and be damned." Poor Jacob was much frightened, as any one might be, to dream of God leaning on so long a ladder. What if it had broken and the dreamer underneath it? Jacob's fears were not so powerful but that his shrewdness and avarice had full scope in a sort of half-vow, half-contract, made in the morning. Jacob said, "If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I shall come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." The inference deducible from this conditional statement is, that if God failed to complete the items enumerated by Jacob, then the latter would have nothing to do with him. Jacob was a shrewd Jew, who would have laughed to scorn the preaching, "Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

After this contract, Jacob went on his journey, and reached the house of his mother's brother, Laban, into whose service he entered. "Diamond cut diamond" would be an appropriate heading to the tale which gives the transactions between Jacob the Jew and Laban the son of Nahor. Laban had two daughters. Rachel, the youngest, was "beautiful and well-favored;" Leah, the elder, was "blear-eyed." Jacob served for the pretty one; but on the wedding-day Laban made a feast, and gave Jacob the ugly Leah instead of the



pretty Rachel. Jacob being (according to Josephs) both in drink and in the dark, it was morning ere he discovered his error. After this Jacob served for Rachel also, and then the remainder of the chapter of Jacob's servitude to Laban is but the recital of a series of frauds and trickeries. Jacob embezzled Laban's property, and Laban misappropriated and changed Jacob's wages. In fact, if Jacob had not possessed the advantage of divine aid, he would probably have failed in the endeavor to cheat his master; but God, who says "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor anything that is thy neighbor's," encouraged Jacob in his career of criminality. At last, Jacob, having amassed a large quantity of property, determined to abscond from his employment, and taking advantage of his uncle's absence at sheepshearing, "he stole away unawares," taking with him his wives, his children, flocks, herds, and goods. To crown the whole, Rachel, worthy wife of a husband so fraudulent, stole her father's gods. In the present day the next phase would be the employment of Mr. Sergeant Vericute, of the special detective department, and the issue of bills as follows:

"ONE HUNDRED SHEKELS REWARD,

Absconded, with a large amount of property,

JACOB, THE JEW.

Information to be given to Laban, the Syrian, at Haran, in the

East, or to Mr. Serjeant Vericute, Scotland Yard."

But in those days God's ways were not as our ways. God came to Laban in a dream and compounded the felony, saying, "Take heed thou speak not anything harshly against Jacob."\* This would probably prevent Laban giving evidence in a police court against Jacob, and thus save him from transportation or penal servitude. After a reconciliation and treaty had been effected between Jacob and Laban, the former went on his way "and the angel of God met him." Angels are not included in the circle with which I have at present made acquaintance, and I hesitate, therefore, to comment on the meeting between Jacob and the angels. Balaam's ass, at a later period, shared the good fortune which was the lot of Jacob, for that animal also had a meeting with an angel. Jacob was the grandson of the faithful Abraham to whom angels also appeared. Perhaps angelic apparitions are limited to asses and the faithful. On this point I do not venture to assert, and but timidly suggest. It is somewhat extraordinary that Jacob should have manifested no surprise at meeting a host of angels. Still more worthy of note is it that our good translators elevate the same words into "angels" in verse 1, which they degrade into "messengers" in verse 3. John Bellamy, in his translation, says the "angels were not immortal angels," and it is very probable John Bellamy was right.

\* Genesis xxxi, 24, Douay version.

Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, and heard that the latter was coming to meet him followed by 400 men. Jacob, a timorous knave at best, became terribly afraid. He, doubtless, remembered the wrongs inflicted upon Esau, the cruel extortion of the birthright, and the fraudulent obtainment of the dying Isaac's blessing. He, therefore, sent forward to his brother Esau a large present as a peace offering. He also divided the remainder of his flocks, herds, and goods, into two divisions, that if one were smitten, the other might escape; sending these on, he was left alone. While alone he wrestled with either a man, or an angel, or God. The text says "a man," the heading to the chapter says "an angel," and Jacob himself says that he has "seen God face to face." Whether God, angel, or man, it was not a fair wrestle, and were the present editor of *Bell's Life* referee, he would, unquestionably, declare it to be most unfair to touch "the hollow of Jacob's thigh" so as to put it "out of joint," and, consequently, award the result of the match to Jacob. Jacob, notwithstanding the injury, still kept his grip, and the apocryphal wrestler, finding himself no match at fair struggling, and that foul play was unavailing, now tried entreaty, and said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." Spirits never appear in the daytime, when, if they did appear, they could be seen and examined; they are more often visible in the twilight, in the darkness, and in dreams. Jacob would not let

go, his life's instinct for bargaining prevailed, and probably, because he could get nothing else, he insisted on his opponent's blessing before he let him go. In the Roman Catholic version of the bible there is the following note: Chap, xxxii, 24. *A man, etc.*

"This was an angel in human shape, as we learn from Osee (xii, 4). He is called *God* (xv, 28 and 30), because he represented the son of God. This wrestling in which Jacob, assisted by God, was a match for an angel, was so ordered (v. 28) that he might learn by this experiment of the divine assistance, that neither Esau nor any other man should have power to hurt him." How elevating it must be to the true believer to conceive God helping Jacob to wrestle with his own representative. Read prayerfully, doubtless, the spiritual and inner meaning of the text (if it have one) is most transcendental. Read sensibly, the literal and only meaning the text conveys is that of an absurd tradition of an ignorant age. On the morrow Jacob met Esau:

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept.

"And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said these are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

"And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself."

The following expressive comment, from the able pen of Mr. Holyoake, deserves transcription: "The last portion of the history of Jacob and Esau is very instructive. The coward fear of Jacob to meet his brother is well delineated. He is subdued by a sense of his treacherous guilt. The noble forgiveness of Esau invests his memory with more respect than all the wealth Jacob won, and all the blessings of the Lord he received. Could I change my name from Jacob to Esau, I would do it in honor of him. The whole incident has a dramatic interest. There is nothing in the Old or New Testament equal to it. The simple magnanimity of Esau is scarcely surpassed by anything in Plutarch. In the conduct of Esau we see the triumph of time, of filial affection, and generosity over a deep sense of execrable treachery, unprovoked and irrevocable injury." Was not Esau a merciful, generous man? Yet God hated him, and shut him out of all share in the promised land. Was not Jacob a mean, prevaricating knave, a crafty, abject cheat? Yet God loved and rewarded him. How great are the mysteries in this bible representation of an all-good and all-loving God thus hating good and loving evil. At the time of the wrestling, a promise was made, which is afterward repeated by God to Jacob, that the latter should not be any more called Jacob, but Israel. This promise was not strictly kept; the name "Jacob" being used repeatedly, mingled with that of Israel in the after part of Jacob's history. Jacob had a large family; his sons are reputedly the heads of the twelve Jewish tribes. We have not much space to notice them: suffice it to say that one Joseph, who was much loved by his father, was sold by his brethren into slavery. This transaction does not seem to have called for any special reproof from God. Joseph, who from early life was skilled in dreams, succeeded by interpreting the visions of Pharaoh in obtaining a sort of premiership in Egypt; while filling this office he managed to act like the Russells and the Greys of our own time. We are told that he "*placed* his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land." Joseph made the parallel still stronger between himself and a more modern head of the Treasury Bench; he not only gave his own family the best place in the land, but he also, by a trick of statecraft, obtained the land for the king, made slaves of the people, and made it a law over the land of Egypt that the king should be entitled to one-fifth of the produce, always, of course, excepting and saving the rights of the priest. Judah, another brother, sought to have burned a woman by whom he had a child. A third, named Reuben, was guilty of the grossest vice, equaled only by that of Absalom the son of David; of Simeon and Levi, two more of Jacob's sons, it is said that "Instruments of cruelty were in their habitations;" their conduct, as detailed in the 34th chapter of Genesis, alike shocks by its treachery and its mercilessness. After Jacob had heard that his son Joseph was governor in Egypt, but before he had journeyed farther than Beer-sheba, God spake unto him in the visions of the night, and probably forgetting that he had given him a new name, or being more

accustomed to the old one, said, "Jacob, Jacob," and then told him to go down into Egypt, where Jacob died after a residence of about seventeen years, when 147 years of age. Before Jacob died he blessed, first the sons of Joseph, and then his own children, and at the termination of his blessing to Ephraim and Manasseh we find the following speech addressed to Joseph: "Moreover, I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow." This speech implies warlike pursuit on the part of Jacob, of which the bible gives no record, and which seems incompatible with his recorded life. The sword of craft and the bow of cunning are the only weapons in the use of which he was skilled. When his sons murdered and robbed the Hivites, fear seems to have been Jacob's most prominent characteristic. It is not my duty, nor have I space here, to advocate any theory of interpretation, but it may be well to mention that many learned men contend that the whole history of Jacob is but an allegory. That the twelve patriarchs but typify the twelve signs of the zodiac, as do the twelve great gods of the Pagans, and twelve apostles of the gospels.

From the history of Jacob it is hard to draw any conclusions favorable to the man whose life is narrated. To heap additional epithets on his memory would be but waste of time and space. I conclude by regretting that if God loved one brother and hated another, he should have so unfortunately selected for his love the one whose whole career shows him in a most despicable light.

## NEW LIFE OF ABRAHAM.

Most undoubtedly father Abraham is a personage whose history should command our attention, if only because he figures as the founder of the Jewish race—a race which, having been promised protection and favor by Deity, appear to have experienced little else besides the infliction, or sufferance of misfortune and misery. Men are taught to believe that God, following out a solemn covenant made with Abraham, suspended the operations of Nature to aggrandize the Jews; that he promised always to bless and favor them if they adhered to his worship and obeyed the priests. The promised blessings were, usually, political authority, individual happiness and sexual power, long life, and great wealth; the threatened curses for idolatry or disobedience: disease, loss of property and children, mutilation, death. Among the blessings: the right to kill, plunder, and ravish their enemies, with protection, while pious, against any subjection to retaliatory measures. And all this because they were Abraham's children!

Abraham is an important personage. Without Abraham, no Jesus, no Christianity, no Church of England, no bishops, no tithes, no church rates. But for Abraham England would have lost all these blessings. Abraham was the great-grandfather of Judah, the head of the tribe to which God's father, Joseph, belonged.

In gathering materials for a short biographical sketch, we are at the same time comforted and dismayed by the fact that the only reliable account of Abraham's career is that furnished by the book of Genesis, supplemented by a few brief references in other parts of the bible, and that, outside "God's perfect and infallible revelation to man," there is no reliable account of Abraham's existence at all. We are comforted by the thought that Genesis is unquestioned by the faithful, and is at present protected by Church and State against heretic assaults; but we are dismayed when we think that, if Infidelity, encouraged by Colenso and Kalisch, upsets Genesis, Abraham will have little historical claim on our attention. Some philologists have asserted that Brama and Abraham are alike corruptions of Abba Rama, or Abrama, and that Sarah is identical with Sarasvati. Abram, is a Chaldean compound, meaning father of the elevated, or exalted father [———] is a compound of Chaldee and Arabic, signifying father of a multitude. In part V of his work Colenso mentions that Adonis was formerly identified with Abram, "high father," Adonis being the personified sun.

Leaving incomprehensible philology for the ordinary authorized version of our bibles, we find that Abraham was the son of Terah. The text does not expressly state where Abraham was born, and I can not therefore describe his birthplace with that accuracy of detail which a true believer might desire, but I may add that he "dwelt in old time on the other side of the flood." (Joshua xxiv, 2, 3.) The situation of such dwelling involves a geographical problem most unlikely to be solved unless the inquirer is "half seas over." Abraham was born when Terah, his father, was seventy years of age; and, according to Genesis, Terah and his family came forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and went to Haran and dwelt there. We turn to the map to look for Ur of the Chaldees, anxious to discover it as possibly Abraham's place of nativity, but find that the translators of God's inspired word have taken a slight liberty with the text by substituting "Ur of the Chaldees" for "Aur Kasdim," the latter being, in plain English, *the light of the magi, or conjurers, or astrologers*. [———] is stated by Kalisch to have been made the basis for many extraordinary legends, as to Abraham's rescue from the flames.

Abraham, being born—according to Hebrew chronology, 2,083 years after the creation, and according to the Septuagint 3,549 years after the event—when his father was seventy, grew so slowly that when his father reached the good old age of 205 years, Abraham had only arrived at 75 years, having, apparently,

lost no less than 60 year's growth during his father's lifetime. St. Augustine and St Jerome gave this up as a difficulty inexplicable. Calmet endeavors to explain it, and makes it worse. But what real difficulty is there? Do you mean, dear reader, that it is impossible Abraham could have lived 135 years, and yet be only 75 years of age? Is this your objection? It is a sensible one, I admit, but it is an Infidel one. Eschew sense, and, retaining only religion, ever remember that with God all things are possible. Indeed, I have read myself that gin given to young children stunts their growth; and who shall say what influence of the spirit prevented the full development of Abraham's years? It is a slight question whether Abraham and his two brothers were not born the same year; if this be so, he might have been a small child, and not grown so quickly as he would have otherwise done. "The Lord" spoke to Abraham, and promised to make of him a great nation, to bless those who blessed Abraham, and to curse those who cursed him. I do not know precisely which Lord it was that spake unto Abraham. In the Hebrew it says it was [———] Jeue, or, as our translators call it, Jehovah; but as God said (Exodus vi, 2) that by the name "Jehovah was I not known" to either Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob, we must conclude either that the omniscient Deity had forgotten the matter, or that a counterfeit Lord had assumed a title to which he had no right. The word Jehovah, which the book of Exodus says Abraham did not know, is nearly always the name by which Abraham addresses or speaks of the Jewish Deity.

Abraham having been promised protection by the God of Truth, initiated his public career with a diplomacy of statement worthy of Talleyrand, Thiers, or Gladstone. He represented his wife Sarah as his sister, which, if true, is a sad reproach to the marriage. The ruling Pharaoh, hearing the beauty of Sarah commended, took her into his house, she being at that time a fair Jewish dame, between 60 and 70 years of age, and he entreated Abraham well for her sake, and he had sheep and oxen, asses and servants, and camels. We do not read that Abraham objected in any way to the loss of his wife. The Lord, who is all-just, finding out that Pharaoh had done wrong, not only punished the king, but also punished the king's household, who could hardly have interfered with his misdoings. Abraham got his wife back, and went away much richer by the transaction. Whether the conduct of father Abraham in pocketing quietly the price of the insult—or honor—offered to his wife is worthy of modern imitation, is a question I leave to be discussed by Convocation when it has finished with the Athanasian Creed. After this transaction we are not surprised to hear that Abraham was very rich in "silver and gold." So was the Duke of Marlborough after the King had taken his sister in similar manner into his house. In verse 19 of chapter xii, there is a curious mistranslation in our version. The text is: "It is for that I had taken her for my wife," our version has: "*I might have taken her.*" The Douay so translates as to take a middle phrase, leaving it doubtful whether or not Pharaoh actually took Sarah as his wife. In any case, the Egyptian king acted well throughout. Abraham plays the part of a timorous, contemptible hypocrite. Strong enough to have fought for his wife, he sold her. Yet Abraham was blessed for his faith, and his conduct is our pattern!

Despite his timorousness in the matter of his wife, Abraham was a man of wonderful courage and warlike ability. To rescue his relative, Lot:—with whom he could not live on the same land without quarreling, both being religious—he armed 318 servants, and fought with four powerful kings, defeating them and recovering the spoil. Abraham's victory was so decisive that the king of Sodom, who fled and fell (xiv, 10) in a previous encounter, now met Abraham alive (see v, 17), to congratulate him on his victory. Abraham was also offered bread and wine by Melchisedek, King of Salem, priest of the Most High God. Where was Salem? Some identify it with Jerusalem, which it can not be, as Jebus was not so named until after the time of the Judges (Judges xix, 10). How does this King, of this unknown Salem, never heard of before or after, come to be priest of the Most High God? These are queries for divines—orthodox disciples believe without inquiring. Melchisedek was most unfortunate as far as genealogy is concerned. He had no father. I do not mean by this that any bar sinister defaced his escutcheon. He not only was without a father, but without mother also; he had no beginning of days or end of life, and is

therefore probably at the present time an extremely old gentleman, who would be an invaluable acquisition to any antiquarian association fortunate enough to cultivate his acquaintance. God having promised Abraham a numerous family, and the promise not having been in any part fulfilled, the patriarch grew uneasy and remonstrated with the Lord, who explained the matter thoroughly to Abraham when the latter was in a deep sleep, and a dense darkness prevailed. Religions explanations come with greater force under these or similar conditions. Natural or artificial light and clear-sightedness are always detrimental to spiritual manifestations.

Abraham's wife had a maid named Hagar, and she bore to Abraham a child named Ishmael; at the time Ishmael was born, Abraham was 86 years of age. Just before Ishmael's birth Hagar was so badly treated that she ran away. As she was only a slave, God persuaded Hagar to return, and humble herself to her mistress.

Thirteen years afterward God appeared to Abraham, and instituted the rite of circumcision—which rite had been practiced long before by other nations—and again renewed the promise. The rite of circumcision was not only practiced by nations long anterior to that of the Jews, but appears, in many cases, not even to have been pretended as a religious rite. (See Kalisch, Genesis, p. 386; Cahen, Genese, p. 43) After God had "left off talking with him, God went up from Abraham." As God is infinite, he did not, of course, go up; but still the bible says God went up, and it is the duty of the people to believe that he did so, especially as the infinite Deity then and now resides habitually in "heaven," wherever that may be. Again the Lord appeared to Abraham, either as three men or angels, or as one of the three; and Abraham, who seemed hospitably inclined, invited the three to wash their feet, and to rest under the tree, and gave butter and milk and dressed calf, tender and good, to them, and they did eat; and after the inquiry as to where Sarah then was, the promise of a son is repeated. Sarah—then by her own admission an old woman, stricken in years—laughed when she heard this, and the Lord said, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh?" and Sarah denied it, but the Lord said, "Nay, but thou didst laugh." The three then went toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them as a guide; and the Lord explained to Abraham that some sad reports had reached him about Sodom and Gomorrah, and that he was then going to find out whether the report was reliable. God is infinite, and was always therefore at Sodom and Gomorrah, but had apparently been temporarily absent; he is omniscient, and therefore knew everything which was happening at Sodom and Gomorrah, but he did not know whether or not the people were as wicked as they had been represented to him. God, Job tells us, "put no trust in his servants, and his angels he charged with folly." Between the rogues and the fools, therefore, the all-wise and all-powerful God seems to be as liable to be mistaken in the reports made to him as any monarch might be in reports made by his ministers. Two of the three men, or angels, went on to Sodom, and left the Lord with Abraham, who began to remonstrate with Deity on the wholesale destruction contemplated, and asked him to spare the city if fifty righteous should be found within it. God said, "If I find fifty righteous within the city, then will I spare the place for their sakes." God being all-wise, he knew there were not fifty in Sodom, and was deceiving Abraham. By dint of hard bargaining, in thorough Hebrew fashion, Abraham, whose faith seemed tempered by distrust, got the stipulated number reduced to ten, and then "the Lord went his way."

Jacob Ben Chajim, in his introduction to the Rabbinical bible, p. 28, tells us that the Hebrew text used to read in verse 22: "And Jehovah still stood before Abraham;" but the scribes altered it, and made Abraham stand before the Lord, thinking the original text offensive to Deity.

The 18th chapter of Genesis has given plenty of work to the divines. Augustin contended that God can take food, though he does not require it. Justin compared "the eating of God with the devouring power of the fire." Kalisch sorrows over the holy fathers "who have taxed all their ingenuity to make the act of eating compatible with the attributes of Deity."

In the Epistle to the Romans, Abraham's faith is greatly praised. We are told, iv, 19, 20, that:

"Being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb."

"He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God."

Yet, so far from Abraham giving God glory, we are told in Genesis, xvii, 17, that:

"Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old, and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?"

The Rev. Mr. Boutell says that "the declaration which caused Sarah to 'laugh,' shows the wonderful familiarity which was then permitted to Abraham in his communications with God."

After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham journeyed south and sojourned in Gerar, and either untaught or too well taught by his previous experience, again represented his wife as his sister, and Abimelech, king of Gerar, sent and took Sarah. As before, we find neither remonstrance nor resistance recorded on the part of Abraham. This time God punished, *a la* Malthus, the women in Abimelech's house for an offense they did not commit, and Sarah was again restored to her husband, with sheep, oxen, men-servants, and women-servants, and money. Infidels object that the bible says Sarah "was old and well stricken in age;" that "it had ceased to be with her after the manner of women;" that she was more than ninety years of age; and that it is not likely King Abimelech would fall in love with an ugly old woman. We reply, "*chacun a son gout*?" It is clear that Sarah had not ceased to be attractive, as God resorted to especial means to protect her virtue from Abimelech. At length Isaac is born, and his mother Sarah now urges Abraham to expel Hagar and her son, "and the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son;" the mother being only a bondwoman does not seem to have troubled him. God, however, approving Sarah's notion, Hagar is expelled, "and she departed and wandered in the wilderness, and the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs." She had apparently carried the child, who being at least more than fourteen, and according to some calculations as much as seventeen years of age, must have been a heavy child to carry in a warm climate.

God never did tempt any man at any time, but he "did tempt Abraham" to kill Isaac by offering him as a burnt offering. The doctrine of human sacrifice is one of the holy mysteries of Christianity, as taught in the Old and New Testament. Of course, judged from a religious or biblical standpoint, it can not be wrong, as, if it were, God would not have permitted Jephtha to sacrifice his daughter by offering her as a burnt offering, nor have tempted Abraham to sacrifice his son, nor have said in Leviticus, "None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death" (xxvii, 29), nor have in the New Testament worked out the monstrous sacrifice of his only son Jesus, at the same time son and begetting father.

Abraham did not seem to be entirely satisfied with his own conduct when about to kill Isaac, for he not only concealed from his servants his intent, but positively stated that which was not true, saying, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." If he meant that he and Isaac would come again to them, then he knew that the sacrifice would not take place. Nay, Abraham even deceived his own son, who asked him where was the lamb for the burnt offering? But we learn from the New Testament that Abraham acted in this and other matters "by faith," so his falsehoods and evasions, being results and aids of faith, must be dealt with in an entirely different manner from transactions of every-day life. Just as Abraham stretched forth his hand to slay his son, the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and prevented the murder, saying, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son." This would convey the impression that up to that moment the angel of the Lord was not certain upon the subject.

In Genesis xiii, God says to Abraham, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward and westward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I

give it, and to thy seed for ever. Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for I will give it unto thee." Yet, as is admitted by the Rev. Charles Boutell, in his "Bible Dictionary," "The only portion of territory in that land of promise, of which Abraham became possessed" was a graveyard, which he had bought and paid for. Although Abraham was too old to have children *before* the birth of Isaac, he had many children *after* Isaac is born. He lived to "a good old age," and died "full of years," but was yet younger than any of those who preceded him, and whose ages are given in the bible history, except Nahor.

Abraham gave "all that he had to Isaac," but appears to have distributed the rest of the property among his other children, who were sent to enjoy it somewhere down East.

According to the New Testament, Abraham is now in Paradise, but Abraham in heaven is scarcely an improvement upon Abraham on-earth. When he was entreated by an unfortunate in hell for a drop of water to cool his tongue, father Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in thy life-time thou receivedst thy good things, and now thou art tormented," as if the reminiscence of past good would alleviate present and future continuity of evil.



## NEW LIFE OF MOSES.

The "Life of Abraham" was presented to our readers, because, as the nominal founder of the Jewish race, his position entitled him to that honor. The "Life of David," because, as one of the worst men and worst kings ever known, his history might afford matter for reflection to admirers of monarchical institutions and matter for comment to the advocates of a republican form of government. The "Life of Jacob" served to show how basely mean and contemptibly deceitful a man might become, and yet enjoy God's love. Having given thus a brief outline of the career of the patriarch, the king, and the knave, the life of a priest naturally presents itself as the most fitting to complement the present quadrifid series.

Moses, the great grandson of Levi, was born in Egypt, not far distant from the banks of the Nile, a river world-famous for its inundations, made familiar to ordinary readers by the travelers who have journeyed to discover its source, and held in bad repute by strangers, especially on account of the carnivorous Saurians who infest its waters. The mother and father of our hero were both of the tribe of Levi, and were named Jochebed and Amram. The infant Moses was, at the age of three months, placed in an ark of bulrushes by the river's brink. This was done in order to avoid the decree of extermination propounded by the reigning Pharaoh against the male Jewish children. The daughter of Pharaoh, coming down to the river to bathe, found the child and took compassion upon him, adopting him as her son. Of the early life of Moses we have but scanty record. We are told in the New Testament that he was learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians,\* and that, "when he was come to years he refused by faith\*\* to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Perhaps the record from which the New Testament writers quoted has been lost; it is certain that the present version of the Old Testament does not contain those statements. The record which is lost *may* have been God's original revelation to man, and of which our bible *may* be an incomplete version. I am little grieved by the supposition that a revelation may have been lost, being, for my own part, more inclined to think that no revelation has ever been made. Josephus says that, when quite a baby, Moses trod contemptuously on the crown of Egypt. The Egyptian monuments and Exodus are both silent on this point. Josephus also tells us that Moses led the Egyptians in war against the Ethiopians, and married Tharbis, the daughter of the Ethiopian monarch. This also is omitted both in Egyptian history and in the sacred record. When Moses was grown, according to the Old Testament, or when he was 40 years of age according to the New, "it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel." "And he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew." "And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand." The New Testament says that he did it, "for he supposed that his brethren would understand how that God, by his hand, would deliver them."\*\*\*\*

\* Acts, vii, 21.

\*\* Hebrews, xi, 24.

\*\*\* Acts, vii, 25.

But this is open to the following objections: The Old Testament says nothing of the kind; there was no man to see the homicide, and as Moses hid the body, it is hard to conceive how he could expect the Israelites to understand a matter of which they not only had no knowledge whatever, but which he himself did not think was known to them; if there were really no man present, the story of the after accusation against Moses needs explanation: it might be further objected that it does not appear that Moses at that time did even himself conceive that he had any mission from God to deliver his people. Moses fled from the wrath of Pharaoh, and dwelt in Midian, where he married the daughter of one Reuel, or Jethro. This name is not of much importance, but it is strange that if Moses wrote the books of the Pentateuch he was

not more exact in designating so near a relation. While acting as shepherd to his father-in-law, "he led the flock to the back side of the desert," and "the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire:" that is, the angel was either a flame, or was the object which was burning, for this angel appeared in the midst of a bush which burned with fire, but was not consumed. This flame appears to have been a luminous one, for it was a "great sight," and attracted Moses, who turned aside to see it. But the luminosity would depend on substance ignited and rendered incandescent. Is the angel of the Lord a substance susceptible of ignition and incandescence? Who knoweth? If so, will the fallen angels ignite and burn in hell! God called unto Moses out of the midst of the bush. It is hard to conceive an infinite God in the middle of a bush; yet as the law of England says that we must not "deny the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be of divine authority," in order not to break the law, I advise all to believe that, in addition to being in the middle of a bush, the infinite and all-powerful God also sat on the top of a box, dwelt sometimes in a tent, afterward in a temple; although invisible, appeared occasionally; and being a spirit without body or parts, was hypostatically incarnate as a man. Moses, when spoken to by God, "hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." If Moses had known that God was *invisible* he would have escaped this fear.

God told Moses that the cry of the children of Israel had reached him, and that he had *come down* to deliver them, and that Moses was to lead them out of Egypt. Moses does not seem to have placed entire confidence in the phlegmonic divine communication, and asked, when the Jews should question him on the name of the Deity, what answer should he make? It does not appear from this that the Jews, if they had so completely forgotten God's name, had much preserved the recollection of the promise comparatively so recently made to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. The answer given according to our version is "I am that I am," according to the Douay, "I am who am." God, in addition, told Moses that the Jews should spoil the Egyptians of their wealth; but even this promise of plunder so congenial to the nature of a bill-discounting Jew of the bible type, did not avail to overcome the scruples of Moses. God therefore taught him to throw his rod on the ground, and thus transform it into a serpent, from which pseudo-serpent Moses at first fled in fear, but on his taking it by the tail it resumed its original shape, Moses, with even other wonders at command, still hesitated; he had an impediment in his speech. God cured this by the appointment of Aaron, who was eloquent, to aid his brother. God directed Moses to return to Egypt, but his parting words must somewhat have damped the future legislator's hope of any speedy or successful ending to his mission. God said, "I will harden Pharaoh's heart that he shall not let the people go." On the journey back to Egypt God met Moses "by the way in the inn, and sought to kill him." I am ignorant as to the causes which prevented the omnipotent Deity from carrying out his intention; the text does not explain the matter, and I am not a bishop or a D. D., and I do not therefore feel justified in putting my assumptions in place of God's revelation. Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh, and asked that the Jews might be permitted to go three days' journey in the wilderness; but the King of Egypt not only refused their request, but gave them additional tasks, and in consequence Moses and Aaron went again to the Lord, who told them, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty; but by my name Jehovah was I not known unto them." Whether God had forgotten that the name of Jehovah was known to Abraham, or whether he was here deceiving Moses and Aaron, are points the solution of which I leave to the faithful, referring them to the fact that Abraham called a place\* Jehovah-Jireh.

\* Genesis xxii, 14

After this Moses and Aaron again went to Pharaoh and worked wonderfully in his presence. Thaumaturgy is coming into fashion again, but the exploits of Moses far exceeded any of those performed by Mr. Home or the Davenport brothers. Aaron flung down his rod, and it became a serpent; the Egyptian magicians flung down their rods, which became serpents also; but the rod of Aaron, as though it had been a Jew money-lender or a tithe collecting parson, swallowed up these miraculous competitors, and the Jewish leaders could afford to laugh at their defeated rival conjurors. Moses and Aaron carried on the

miracle-working for some time. All the water of the land of Egypt was turned by them into blood, but the magicians did so with their enchantments, and it had no effect on Pharaoh. Then showers of frogs, at the instance of Aaron, covered the land of Egypt; but the Egyptians did so with their enchantments, and frogs abounded still more plentifully. The Jews next tried their hands at the production of lice, and here—to the glory of God be it said—the infidel Egyptians failed to imitate them. It is written that "cleanliness is next to godliness," but we can not help thinking that godliness must have been far from cleanliness when the former so soon resulted in lice. The magicians were now entirely discomfited. The preceding wonders seem to have affected all the land of Egypt; but in the next miracle the swarms of flies sent were confined to Egyptians only, and were not extended to Goshen, in which the Israelites dwelt.

The next plague in connection with the ministration of Moses and Aaron was that "all the cattle of Egypt died." After "all the cattle" were dead, a boil was sent, breaking forth with blains upon man and beast. This failing in effect, Moses afterward stretched forth his hand and smote "both man and beast" with hail, then covered the land with locusts, and followed this with a thick darkness throughout the land—a darkness which *might* have been felt. Whether it was felt is a matter on which I am unable to pass an opinion. After this, the Egyptians being terrified by the destruction of their first-born children, the Jews, at the instance of Moses, borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, jewels of gold, and raiment; and they spoiled the Egyptians. The fact is, that the Egyptians were in the same position as the payers of church rates, tithes, vicars' rates, and Easter dues: they lent to the Lord's people, who are good borrowers, but slow when repayment is required. They prefer promising you a crown of glory to paying you at once five shillings in silver. Moses led the Jews through the Red Sea, which proved a ready means of escape, as may be easily read in Exodus, which says that the Lord "made the sea dry land" for the Israelites, and afterward not only overwhelmed in it the Egyptians who sought to follow them, but, as Josephus tells us, the current of the sea actually carried to the camp of the Hebrews the arms of the Egyptians, so that the wandering Jews might not be destitute of weapons. After this the Israelites were led by Moses into Shur, where they were without water for three days, and the water they afterward found was too bitter to drink until a tree had been cast into the well. The Israelites were then fed with manna, which, when gathered on Friday, kept for the Sabbath, but rotted if kept from one week day to another. The people grew tired of eating manna, and complained, and God sent fire among them and burned them up in the uttermost parts of the camp; and after this the people wept and said, "Who shall give us flesh to eat? We remember the fish we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic; but now there is nothing at all beside this manna before our eyes." This angered the Lord, and he gave them a feast of quails, and while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the anger of the Lord was kindled, and he smote the Jewish people with a very great plague.\*

\* Numbers xi.

The people again in Rephidim were without water, and Moses therefore smote the Rock of Horeb with his rod, and water came out of the rock. At Rephidim the Amalekites and the Jews fought together, and while they fought, Moses, like a prudent general, went to the top of a hill, accompanied by Aaron and Hur, and it came to pass that when Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when he let down his hands Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy, and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon, and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side and the other on the other side, and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun, and Joshua discomfited Amalek, and his people with the edge of the sword. How the true believer ought to rejoice that the stone was so convenient, as otherwise the Jews might have been slaughtered, and there might have been no royal line of David, no Jesus, no Christianity. That stone should be more valued than the precious black stone of the Moslem; it is the corner-stone of the system, the stone which supported the Mosaic rule. God is everywhere, but Moses went *up* unto him, and the Lord called to him *out* of a mountain and came to him *in* a thick cloud, and

descended on Mount Sinai *in* a fire, in consequence of which the mountain smoked, and the Lord *came down upon the top* of the mountain and called Moses *up* to him; and then the Lord gave Moses the Ten Commandments, and also those precepts which follow, in which Jews are permitted to buy their fellow-countrymen for six years, and in which it is provided that, if the slave-master shall give his six-year slave a wife, and she bear him sons or daughters, that the wife and the children shall be the property of her master. In these precepts it is also permitted that a man may sell his own daughter for the most base purposes. Also that a master may beat his slave so that if he do not die until a few days after the ill-treatment, the master shall escape justice because the slave is his money. Also that Jews may buy strangers and keep them as slaves for ever. While Moses was up in the mount the people clamored for Aaron to make them gods. Moses had stopped away so long that the people gave him up for lost. Aaron, whose duty it was to have pacified and restrained them, and to have kept them in the right faith, did nothing of the kind. He induced them to bring all their gold, and then made it into a calf, before which he built an altar, and then proclaimed a feast. Manners and customs change. In those days the Jews did see the God that Aaron took their gold for, but now the priests take the people's gold, and the poor contributors do not even see a calf for their pains, unless indeed they are near a mirror at the time when they are making their voluntary contributions. And the Lord told Moses what happened, and said, "I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people. Now, therefore, let me alone that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them." Moses would not comply with God's request, but remonstrated, and expostulated, and begged him not to afford the Egyptians an opportunity of speaking against him. Moses succeeded in changing the unchangeable, and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Although Moses would not let God's "wrath wax hot" his own "anger waxed hot," and he broke, in his rage, the two tables of stone which God had given him, and on which the Lord had graven and written with his own finger. We have now no means of knowing in what language God wrote, or whether Moses afterward took any pains to rivet together the broken pieces. It is almost to be wondered at that the Christian Evidence Societies have not sent missionaries to search for these pieces of the tables, which may even yet remain beneath the mount. Moses took the calf which they had made and burned it with fire and ground it to powder and strewed it upon water and made the children of Israel drink of it. After this Moses armed the priests and killed 3,000 Jews, "and the Lord plagued the people because they had made the calf which Aaron had made."\* Moses afterward pitched the tabernacle without the camp; and the cloudy pillar in which the Lord went, descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle; and the Lord talked to Moses "face to face, as a man would to his friend."\*\* And the Lord then told Moses, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live."\*\*\* Before this Moses and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, "saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone,... and upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand; also they saw God, and did eat and drink."\*\*\*\*

\* Exodus xxxiii, 35.

\*\* Ib. xxxiii, 11.

\*\*\* Ib. xxxiii, 20.

\*\*\*\* Ib. xxiv, 9.

Aaron, the brother of Moses, died under very strange circumstances. The Lord said unto Moses, "Strip Aaron of his garments and put them upon Eleazar, his son, and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people and shall die there." And Moses did as the Lord commanded, and Aaron died there on the top of the mount, where Moses had taken him. There does not appear to have been any coroner's inquest in the time of Aaron, and the suspicious circumstances of the death of the brother of Moses have been passed over by the faithful.

When Moses was leading the Israelites over Moab, Balak the King of the Moabites sent to Balaam in order to get Balaam to curse the Jews. When Balak's messengers were with Balaam, God came to Balaam also, and asked what men they were. Of course God knew, but he inquired for his own wise purposes, and Balaam told him truthfully. God ordered Balaam not to curse the Jews, and therefore the latter refused, and sent the Moabitish messengers away. Then Balak sent again high and mighty princes under whose influence Balaam went mounted on an ass, and God's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he sent an angel to stop him by the way; but the angel did not understand his business well, and the ass first ran into a field, and then close against the wall, and it was not until the angel removed to a narrower place that he succeeded in stopping the donkey; and when the ass saw the angel she fell down. Balaam did not see the angel at first; and, indeed we may take it as a fact of history that asses have always been the most ready to perceive angels.

Moses may have been a great author, but we have little means of ascertaining what he wrote in the present day. Divines talk of Genesis to Deuteronomy as the five books of Moses, but Eusebius, in the fourth century, attributed them to Ezra, and Saint Chrysostom says that the name of Moses has been affixed to the books without authority, by persons living long after him. It is quite certain that if Moses lived 3,300 years ago, he did not write in square letter Hebrew, and this because the character has not existed so long. It is indeed doubtful if it can be carried back 2,000 years. The ancient Hebrew character, though probably older than this, yet is comparatively modern among the ancient languages of the earth.

It is urged by orthodox chronologists that Moses was born about 1450 B. C., and that the Exodus took place about 1401 B. C. Unfortunately "there are no recorded dates in the Jewish Scriptures that are trustworthy." Moses, or the Hebrews, not being mentioned upon Egyptian monuments from the twelfth to the seventeenth century B. C. inclusive, and never being alluded to by any extant writer who lived prior to the Septuagint translation at Alexandria (commencing in the third century B. C.), there are no extraneous aids, from sources alien to the Jewish Books through which any information, worthy of historical acceptance, can be gathered elsewhere about him or them.\*

Moses died in the land of Moab when he was 120 years of age. The Lord buried Moses in a valley of Moab, over against Bethpeor, but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day. Josephus says that "a cloud came over him on the sudden and he disappeared in a certain valley." The devil disputed about the body of Moses, contending with the Archangel Michael,\*\* but whether the devil or the angel had the best of the discussion, the bible does not tell us.

De Beauvoir Priaulx,\*\*\* looking at Moses as a counselor, leader, and legislator, says: "Invested with this high authority, he announced to the Jews their future religion, and announced it to them as a state religion, and as framed for a particular state, and that state only.

\* Gliddon's Types of Mankind: Mankind's Chronology, p. 711.

\*\* Jude, v. 9.

He gave this religion, moreover, a creed so narrow and negative—he limited it to objects so purely temporal, he crowded it with observances so entirely ceremonial or national—that we find it difficult to determine whether Moses merely established this religion in order that by a community of worship he might induce in the tribe-divided Israelites that community of sentiment which would constitute them a nation; or, whether he only roused them to a sense of their national dignity, in the hope that they might then more faithfully perform the duties of priests and servants of Jehovah. In other words, we hesitate to decide whether in the mind of Moses the state was subservient to the purposes of religion, or religion to the purposes of state."

The same writer observes\* that, according to the Jewish writings, Moses "is the friend and favorite of the Deity. He is one whose prayers and wishes the Deity hastens to fulfill, one to whom the Deity makes known his designs. The relations between God and the prophet are most intimate. God does not disdain to answer the questions of Moses, to remove his doubts, and even occasionally to receive his suggestions, and to act upon them even in opposition to his own predetermined decrees."

\* Questiones Mosaicæ p. 418.

## NEW LIFE OF JONAH

Jonah was the son of Amittai of Gath-hepher, which place divines identify with Gittah-hepher of the Children of Zebulun. Dr. Iuman says that Gath-hepher means "the Heifer's trough." Gesenius translates it "the wine-press of the well." Bible dictionaries say that Gath-hepher is the same as el-Meshhad, and affirm that the tomb of Jonah was "long shown on a rocky hill near the town." The blood of Saint Januarius is shown in Naples to this day. Nothing is known of the sex or life of Amittai, except that Jonah was his or her son, and that Gath-hepher was her or his place of residence; but to a true believer these two facts, even though standing utterly alone, will be pregnant with instruction. To the skeptic and railer, Amittai is as an unknown quantity in an algebraic problem. Jonah was not a very common proper name, [———] means a dove, and some derive it from the Arabic root—to be weak, gentle; so that one meaning of Jonah, according to Gesenius, would be feeble, gentle bird. The prophet Jonah was by no means a feeble, gentle bird; he was rather a bird of prey. Certainly it was his intention to become a bird of passage. The date of the birth of Jonah is not given; the margin of my bible dates the book of Jonah B. C. cir. 862, and my bible dictionary fixes the date of the matter to which the book relates at "about B. C. 830." If from any reason either of these dates should be disagreeable to the reader, he can choose any other date without fear of anachronism. Jonah was a prophet; so is Dr. Cumming, so is Brigham Young; there is no evidence that Jonah followed any other profession. Jonah's profit probably hardly equaled that realized by the Archbishop of Canterbury, but he had money enough to pay his fare "from the presence of the Lord" to Tarshish. The exact distance of this voyage may be easily calculated by remembering that the Lord is omnipresent, and then measuring from his boundary to Tarshish. The fare may be worked out by the differential calculus after evening prayer.

The word of the Lord came to Jonah; when or how the word came the text does not record, and to any devout mind it is enough to know that it came. The first time in the world's history that the word of the Lord ever came to anybody, may be taken to be when Adam and Eve "heard the voice of the Lord" "walking in the Garden" of Eden "in the cool of the day." Between the time of Adam and Jonah a long period had elapsed; but human nature, having had many prophets, was very wicked. The Lord wanted Jonah to go with a message to Nineveh. Nineveh was apparently a city of three days' journey in size. Allowing twenty miles for each day, this would make the city about 60 miles across, or about 180 miles in circumference. Some faint idea may be formed of this vast city, by adding together London, Paris, and New York, and then throwing in Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Marseilles, Naples, Spurgeon's Tabernacle. Jonah knowing that the Lord did not always carry out his threats or perform his promises, did not wish to go to Nineveh, and "rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord," The Tarshish for which Jonah intended his flight was either in Spain or India or elsewhere. I am inclined, after deep reflection and examination of the best authorities, to give the preference to the third-named locality. When Cain went "out of the presence of the Lord," he went into the Land of Nod, but whether Tarshish is in that or some other country there is no evidence to determine. To get to Tarshish, Jonah—instead of going to the port of Tyre, which was the nearest to his reputed dwelling, and by far the most commodious—went to the more distant and less convenient port of Joppa, where he found a ship going to Tarshish; "so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them into Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord." Jonah was, however, very short-sighted. Just as in the old Greek mythology, winds and waves are made warriors for the gods, so the God of the Hebrews "sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." Luckily she was not an old leaky vessel, over-laden and heavily insured; one which the sanctimonious owners desired to see at

the bottom, and which the captain did not care to save. Christianity and civilization were yet to bring forth that glorious resultant, a pious English ship-owner, with a newly-painted, but, under the paint, a worn and rusty iron vessel, long abandoned as unfit, but now fresh named, and so insured that Davy Jones' locker becomes the most welcome haven of refuge. "The mariners were afraid.... and cast forth the wares" into the sea to lighten the ship. But where was Jonah during this noise? Men trampling on deck, hoarse and harsh words of command, and the fury of the storm troubled not our prophet. Sea-sickness, which spares not the most pious, had no effect upon him. "Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship, and he lay and was fast asleep." The battering of the waves against the sides disturbed not his devout slumbers; the creaking of the vessel's timbers spoiled not his repose. Despite the pitching and rolling of the vessel Jonah "was fast asleep." Had he been in the comfortable berth of a Cunarder, it would not have been easy to sleep through such a storm. Had he been in the hold of a smaller vessel on the Bay of Biscay, finding himself now with his head lower than his heels, and now with his body playing hide and seek among loose articles of cargo, it would have required great absence of mind to prevent waking. Had he only been on an Irish steamer carrying cattle on deck, between Bristol and Cork, with a portion of the bulwarks washed away, and a squad of recruits "who cried every man to his God," he would have found the calmness of undisturbed slumber difficult. But Jonah was on board the Joppa and Tarshish boat, and he "was fast asleep." As the crew understood the theory of storms, they of course knew that when there is a tempest at sea it is sent by God, because he is offended by some one on board the vessel. Modern scientists scout this notion, and pretend to track storm waves across the world, and to affix storm signals in order to warn mariners. They actually profess to predict atmospheric changes, and to explain how such changes take place. Church clergymen know how futile science is, and how potent prayers are, for vessels at sea. The men on the Joppa vessel said, "every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah." It was always a grave question in sacred metaphysics as to whether God directed Jonah's lot, and, if yes, whether the casting of lots is analogous to playing with loaded dice. The Bishop of Lincoln, who understands how far cremation may render resurrection awkward, is the only divine capable of thoroughly resolving this problem. For ordinary Christians it is enough to know that the lot fell upon Jonah.

Before the crew commenced casting lots to find out, they had cast lots of their wares overboard, so that when the lot fell on Jonah it was much lighter than it would have been had the lot fallen upon him during his sleep. Still, if not stunned by the lot which fell upon him, he stood convicted as the cause of the tempest and the crews. "Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou? And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men-knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not; for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord, and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee. So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging." No pen can improve this story; it is so simple, so natural, so child-like. Every one has heard of casting oil on troubled waters. It stands to reason that a fat prophet would produce the same effect. What a striking illustration of the power of faith it will be when bishops leave their own sees in order to be in readiness to calm an ocean storm. Or if not a bishop, at least a curate; and even a lean curate, for with sea air, a ravenous appetite, and a White Star Line cabin bill of fare of breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, and supper, fatness would soon be



arrived at. In the interests of science I should like to see an episcopal prophet occasionally thrown overboard during a storm. The experiment must in any case be advantageous to humanity; should the tempest be stilled, then the ocean would be indeed the broad way, not leading to destruction; should the storm not be conquered, there would even then be promotion in the Church, and happiness to many at the mere cost of one bishop. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." Jesus says the fish was a whale. A whale would have needed preparation, and the statement has an air of *vraisemblance*. The fish did swallow Jonah. "Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Poor Jonah! and poor fish! Poor Jonah, for it can scarcely be pleasant, even if you escape suffocation, to be in a fish's belly with too much to drink, and no room to swallow, and your solids either raw or too much done. Poor fish! for even after preparation it must be disagreeable to have one's poor stomach turned into a sort of prayer meeting. Jonah was taken in; but the fish found that taking in a parson was a feat neither easy nor healthy. After Jonah had uttered guttural sounds from inside the fish's belly for three days and three nights, the Lord spake unto the fish, and the fish was sick of Jonah, "and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." Some skeptics urged that a whale could not have swallowed Jonah; but once, at Todmorden, a Church of England clergyman, who had been curate to the Reverend Charles Kingsley, got rid of this as an objection by assuring us that he should have equally believed the story had it stated that Jonah had swallowed the whale. And then the word of the Lord came to Jonah once more, and this time Jonah obeyed. He was to take God's message to the citizens of Nineveh. "And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Should Jonah come to London in the present day with a similar message, he would meet scant courtesy from our clergy. A foreigner and using a strange tongue, he would probably find himself in Colney Hatch or Hanwell. To come to England in the name of Mahomet or Buddha, or Osiris or Jupiter, would have little effect. But the Ninevites do not seem even to have raised the question that the God of the Hebrews was not their God. They listened to Jonah, and "the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water: but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." The consumption of sackcloth for covering every man and beast must have been rather large, and the Nineveh sackcloth manufacturers must have had enormous stocks on hand to supply the sudden demand. The city article of the *Nineveh Times*, if such a paper existed, would probably have described "sackcloth firm, with a tendency to rise." Man and beast, all dressed in or covered with sackcloth! It would be sometimes difficult to distinguish a Ninevite man from a Ninevite beast, the dress being similar for all. This is a difficulty, however, other nations have shared with the Ninevites. Men and women may sometimes be seen in London dressed in broadcloth and satins, and, though their clothing is distinguishable enough, their conduct is sometimes so beastly that the naked beasts are the more respectable.

Nineveh was frightened, and Nineveh moaned, and Nineveh determined to do wrong: no more. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." God, the unchangeable, changed his purpose, and spared the city, which in his infinite wisdom he had doomed. "But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry." It was enough to vex a saint to be sent to prophesy the destruction of the city in six weeks, and then nothing at all to happen. "And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish." Jonah did not like to be a discredited prophet and cried, "Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. Then said the Lord, Doest thou well to be angry?" Jonah, knowing the

Lord, was still curious and uncertain as well as angry. He was a prophet and a skeptic. "So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city. And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death. Then said the Lord, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not labored, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that can not discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" The Lord seems to have overlooked that Jonah had more pity on himself than the gourd, whose only value to him was as a shade from the sun. Jonah, too, might have reminded the Lord that there were more than 120,000 persons similarly situated at the deluge and at the slaughter of the Midianites, and that the "much cattle" had never theretofore been reckoned in the divine decrees of mercy.

Here ends the new life of Jonah. Of the prophet's childhood we know nothing; of his middle age no more than we have here related; of his old age and death we have nothing to say. It is enough for good Christians to know that "Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." According to Jesus the story of Jonah is as true as Gospel.

# WHO WAS JESUS CHRIST?

Many persons will consider the question heading this pamphlet as one to which the Gospels have given a sufficient answer, and that no further inquiry is necessary. We, in reply, point out that while the general Christian body affirm that Jesus was God incarnate on earth, the Unitarian Christians, less in numerical strength, but numbering a large proportion of the more intelligent and humane, absolutely deny this divinity; and even in the earliest ages of the Christian Church heretics were found who scrupled not to deny that Jesus had ever existed in the flesh. Under these circumstances, it is well to prosecute the inquiry to the uttermost, that our faith may rest on sure foundations.

The history of Jesus Christ is contained in four books, or gospels. We know not with any degree of certainty, and have now no means of knowing, when these gospels were written, we know not where they were written, and we know not by whom they were written. Until after the year A. D. 200, no author, except Irenæus, professes to mention any gospels by Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, and there is no sufficient evidence to identify the gospels we have with the writings to which Irenæus refers. The Church has, however, kindly provided us with an author for each gospel, and the early Fathers have proved there ought to be four gospels, because there are four seasons, four principal points to the compass, etc. Our duty is simply to believe. With regard to the gospel first in order, it is true that divines themselves disagree as to the language in which it was written. Some allege that the original was in Hebrew, others deny that our Greek version has any of the characters of a translation. This increases our difficulty, but if we wish for temporal welfare we must believe with the party which is most fashionable, and if we simply wish for truth, we had better disregard all parties and avoid their creeds. Our authorized English translation of the four gospels is made from the received Greek version; this version was made at Alcalá in Spain, and the MSS. from which it was obtained were afterward sold by the pious Christians and manufactured into sky-rockets by one Torjo, a firework maker. So that the same Christians who threaten us with the pains of hell if we reject the gospels, actually condemned their own books to brimstone and fire. The only variation in the mode of burning is this—the holy MSS., when made into sky-rockets, were shot upward and burnt in their ascent to the heavenly regions, and we are to burn in our descent into the lower regions of the bottomless pit.

We do not know the hour, the day, the month, or the year, in which Jesus was born. The only point on which divines generally agree is, that he was not born on Christmas Day. The Oxford chronology places the matter in no clearer light, and more than thirty learned authorities give us a period of over seven years difference in their reckoning. The place of his birth is also uncertain, as may be ascertained by careful reference to the text. For instance, the Jews in the very presence of Jesus reproached him that he ought to have been born at Bethlehem, and he never ventured to say, "I was born there." (John vii, 41, 42, 52.)

Jesus was the son of David the son of Abraham (Matthew i), and his descent from Abraham is traced through Isaac, who was born of Sarai (whom the writer of the Epistle to Galatians, chap, iv, v. 24, says was a covenant and not a woman), and ultimately through Joseph, who was not only not his father, but is not shown to have had any relationship to Jesus at all, and through whom the genealogy should not be traced. There are two genealogies in the four gospels which have the merit of contradicting each other, and these in part may be collated with the Old Testament genealogy, which has the advantage of agreeing with neither. Much prayer and faith will be required in this introduction to the history of Jesus. The genealogy of Matthew possesses peculiar points of interest to a would-be believer. It is self-contradictory, counts thirteen names as fourteen without explanation, and omits the names of three kings

without apology. Matthew (i, 13), says Abiud was the son of Zorobabel. Luke says Zorobabel's son was Rhesa. The Old Testament contradicts both, and gives Meshullam and Hananiah and Shelomith, their sister (1 Chron. iii, 19), as the names of Zorobabel's children. Some Greek MSS. insert "Joram" into Luke iii, 33. I do not know whether we shall be damned for omitting or for inserting Joram: those who believe had better look to this. Jesus was born without a father after his mother had been visited by the angel Gabriel, who "came in unto her" with a message from God. His reputed father, Joseph, had two fathers, one named Jacob, the other named Heli. The divines feeling this to be a difficulty, have kindly invented a statement that Heli was the father of Mary. The birth of Jesus was miraculously announced to Mary and to Joseph by visits of an angel, but they so little regarded the miraculous annunciation that they marveled soon after at things spoken by Simeon, which were much less wonderful in character. Jesus was the Son of God, or God manifest in the flesh, and his birth was first discovered by some wise men or astrologers. The God of the bible, who is a spirit, had previously said that these men were an abomination in his sight, and he therefore, doubtless, preferred them to be his first visitors in the flesh to keep up his character for incomprehensibility. These men saw *his* star in the East, but it did not tell them much, for they were obliged to come and ask information from Herod the king. Herod inquired of the chief priests and scribes; and it is evident Jeremiah was right, if he said, "The prophets prophecy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means," for these chief priests, like the Brewin Grants and the Brindleys of the present day, misquoted to suit their purposes, and invented a false prophecy by omitting a few words from, and adding a few words to, a text until it suited their purpose. The star, after they knew where to go, and no longer required its aid, led the wise men and went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. The story will be better understood if the reader will walk out at night and notice some star, and then see how many houses it will be over. The writer of the third gospel does not appear to have been aware of the star story, and he therefore invents an angel who tells some shepherds; but as this last named adventure does not appear to have happened in the reign of Herod at all, perhaps Jesus was born twice. After the wise men had left Jesus, an angel warned Joseph to flee with him and Mary into Egypt, and Joseph did fly and remained there with the young child and his mother until the death of Herod; and this was done to fulfill a prophecy. On referring to Hosea (xi, 1), we find the words have no reference whatever to Jesus, and that, therefore, either the tale of the flight is invented as a fulfillment of the prophecy, or the prophecy manufactured to support the tale of the flight. The Jesus of the third gospel never went into Egypt at all in his childhood; perhaps there were two Jesus Christs?

When Jesus began to be about thirty years of age he was baptized by John in the river Jordan. John, who knew him, according to the writer of the first gospel, forbade him directly he saw him; but, according to the writer of the fourth gospel, he knew him not, and had, therefore, no occasion to forbid him. God is an "invisible" "spirit," whom no man hath seen (John i, 18), or can see. (Exodus xxxiii, 20); but John, who was a man, saw the spirit of God descending like a dove. God is everywhere, but at that time was in heaven, from whence he said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Although John heard this from God's own mouth, he did not always believe it, but sometime after sent two of his disciples to Jesus to inquire if he were really the Christ (Matthew xi, 2, 3).

Immediately after the baptism, Jesus was led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. I do not know anything about either "the spirit" or "the devil" here mentioned, and the writer does not explain anything about them; he speaks of them familiarly, as old acquaintances. Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights, and in those days he did eat nothing. Of course it would be difficult to find a more severe fast—forty days and nights is a long period to abstain from food. Moses fasted twice that period. Such fasts take place in religious books, but they are seldom found in every-day life. Such fasts are nearly miraculous. Miraculous events are events which never happened in the past, do not take place in the present, and never will occur in the future. Jesus was God, and by his power as God fasted. This all must

believe. The only difficulty is, to understand on the hypothesis of his divinity, what made him hungry. When Jesus was hungry the devil tempted him by offering him stones, and asking him to make them bread. We have heard of men having hard nuts to crack, but that stones should be offered to a hungry man for extempore bread-making hardly seems a probable temptation. Which temptation came next is a matter of doubt. The Holy Ghost, which the clergy assert inspired Matthew and Luke, does not appear to have inspired them both alike, and they relate the story of the temptation in different order. According to one, the devil next taketh Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and tempts him to throw himself to the bottom, by quoting Scripture that angels should bear him in their arms. Jesus was, however, either a disbeliever in Scripture, or remembered that the devil, like other gentlemen in black, grossly misquoted to suit his purpose, and the temptation failed. The devil then took Jesus to an exceedingly high mountain, from whence he showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory thereof, in a moment of time, which was very quick. It is urged that this did not include a view of the antipodes, but only referred to the kingdoms then known. If this be true, it must have been a long look from Judea to China, which was then a known kingdom. The eye of faith will, however, see things afar off and sometimes will also see things which are not. The mountain must have been very high—much higher than the diameter of the earth; it must have been solid in proportion, therefore would have capsized the earth in its revolutions, if even temporarily placed upon it. The devil then offered Jesus, who was the same as God, and therefore omnipotent, all the kingdoms of the world, if he, Jesus the omnipotent God, would fall down and worship his own creature, the devil. Some object that if God is the creator and omnipotent ruler of the world, then the devil would have no control over the kingdoms of the world, and that the offer could be no temptation as it was made to Jesus, who was both God omnipotent and all-wise, as well as man. These objectors may easily be answered by asserting that it requires a proper submission of the intellect, and an abhorrence of worldly reason, in order properly to understand these books. After this Jesus taught the multitudes. His teachings will form the subject of a separate tract. We are here only endeavoring to answer our preliminary question by a narration of his history.

After the temptation, Jesus is alleged to have worked many miracles, casting out devils, and otherwise creating marvels among the inhabitants of Judea. Bedevilment is now at a sad discount, and if a second Jesus of Nazareth were in this heretical age to boast that he possessed the power of casting out devils, he would stand a fair chance of expiating his offense by a three months' penance with hard labor in the highly polished interior of some borough jail. Now if men be sick and they have a little wisdom, the physician is resorted to, who administers medicine to cure the disease. If men have much wisdom they study physiology, while they have health, in order to prevent sickness altogether. In the time of the early Christians prayer and faith (James v, 14, 15) occupied the position of utility since usurped by rhubarb, jalap, *et similibus*. Men who had lost their sight in the time of Christ were attacked not by disease but by the devil; we have heard of men seeing double who have allowed spirits to get into their heads. In the days of Jesus one spirit would make a man blind, or deaf, or dumb; occasionally a number of devils would get into a man and drive him mad. We do not doubt this, nor do we ask our readers to doubt. We are grieved to be obliged to add that although we do not doubt the story of devils, neither do we believe them. Our state of mind is neither that of doubt, nor of absolute conviction of their correctness. On one occasion, Jesus met either one man (Mark v, 2) or two men (Matthew viii, 28) possessed with devils. I am not in a position to advance greater reasons for believing that it was one man who was possessed than for believing there were two in the clutches of the devils. The probabilities are equal—that is, the amount of probability is not greater upon the one side than upon the other—that is, there is no probability on either side. The devils knew Jesus and addressed him by name. Jesus was not so familiar with the imp, or imps, and we find inquired the name of the particular devil he was addressing. The answer given in Latin would induce a belief that the devils usually spoke in that tongue. This may be an error, but, of course, it is well to give consideration to every particular when we know we are to be eternally damned if we

happen to believe the wrong statement. Jesus wanted to cast out the devils, this they do not seem to have cared about, but they appear to have had a decided objection to being cast out of the country. Whether Palestine was the native country of the devils, and that therefore they were loth to quit it, I know not, but it is likely enough, as Christianity is alleged to have had its rise there. A compromise was agreed to, and at their own request the devils were transferred to a herd of swine. People who believe this may be said to "go the whole hog." The Jesus of the four gospels is also alleged to have fed large multitudes of people under circumstances of a most ultra-thaumaturgic character. To the first book of Euclid is, prefixed an axiom that "the whole is greater than its part." John Wesley is alleged to have eschewed mathematics lest it should lead him to Infidelity. John Wesley was wise, for if any man be foolish enough to accept Euclid's axiom, he will be compelled to reject the miraculous feeding of 5,000 people with five loaves and two small fishes. It is difficult under any circumstances to perform a miracle. The original difficulty is rather increased than diminished by the assertion that after the multitude had been fed, twelve baskets full of fragments remained. Perhaps the loaves were very large or the baskets very small.

Jesus is related to have walked on the sea at a time when it was very stormy, and when, to use the words of the text, "the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew." Walking on the water is a great feat if it be calm, but when the waves run high it is still more wonderful. Perhaps it was because Jesus must have been often engulfed by the angry waves, that one sect prefers baptism by complete immersion. We admire this miracle; we know how difficult it is for a man to keep his head above water in the affairs of life.

The miracle of turning water into wine at Cana, in Galilee, is worthy of considerable attention, in the endeavor to answer the question, Who was Jesus Christ? Jesus and his disciples had been called to a marriage feast, and when there the company fell short of wine. The mother of Jesus to whom the Catholics offer worship, and pay great adoration, informed Jesus of the deficiency. Jesus, who was very meek and gentle, answered her in the somewhat uncourteous and unmeaning phrase, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." His mother seemed to have expected a miracle by her conduct, yet if the fourth gospel speak the truth, that was the beginning of miracle working on the part of Jesus. Perhaps something had previously happened which is not recorded, and which would explain this apparent inconsistency. We must exert our faith to fill up any little gap which may be in the way of salvation. Jesus having obtained six waterpots full of water, turned them into wine. Teetotalers who reject spirits in bottles, but accept spiritual teachings, and who can not believe God would specially provide means of drunkenness, urge that this wine was not of intoxicating quality. We will hope their hypothesis is a correct one, but there is nothing to justify it in our text. In fact, the curious connection between the phrase "well drunk" and the time at which the miracle was performed, would almost warrant the allegation that the guests were already in such a state as to render unnecessary the administration of further intoxicants. The moral effects of this miracle are not easily conceivable by carnal minds.

Shortly after this Jesus went to the temple, and in a meek and quiet manner, with a scourge of small curds drove thereout the cattle dealers and money changers who had assembled there in the ordinary course of their business. It is hardly probable that the Jews would have permitted this without violent resistance to so rough a course of procedure. The writer of the fourth gospel placed this event very early in the public life of Jesus. The writer of the third gospel fixes the occurrence much later. Perhaps it happened twice, or perhaps they have both made a mistake in the time.

The Jesus of the four gospels is alleged to have been God all-wise; being hungry, he went to a fig-tree, when the season of figs was not yet come. Of course there were no figs upon the tree, and Jesus then caused the tree to wither away. This is an interesting account to a true orthodox trinitarian. Such a one will believe: first, that Jesus was God, who made the tree, and prevented it from bearing figs; second, that God the all-wise, who is not subject to human passions, being hungry, went to the fig-tree, on which he

knew there would be no figs, expecting to find some there; third, that God the all-just then punished the tree because it did not bear figs in opposition to God's eternal ordination. This account is a profound mystery to a truly religious man. He bow's his head, flings his carnal reason away, and looks at the matter in a prayerful spirit, with an eye of faith. Faith as a grain of mustard seed will remove a mountain. The only difficulty is to get the grain of faith; all is easy when that is done. The "eye of faith" is a great help, it sometimes enables men to see that which does not exist. Jesus had a disciple named Peter, who, having much faith, was a great rascal and denied his leader in his hour of need. Jesus was previously aware that Peter would be a rascal, and he gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and told him that whatsoever be bound on earth should be bound in heaven. Many an honest man has been immured in a dungeon, and has had the key turned on him by a rascally jailor. It is to be regretted that the like should be promised for all eternity. Peter was to have denied Jesus three times before the cock should crow (Matt. 26, 34). The cock was doubtless an infidel cock, and would not wait. He crowed before Peter's second denial (Mark xiv, 68).

Commentators urge that the words used do not refer to the crowing of any particular cock, but to a special hour of the morning called "cockcrow." The commentators have but one difficulty to get over, and that is, that if the gospel be true, their explanation is false.

Peter's denial becomes the more extraordinary when we remember that he had seen Moses, Jesus, and Elias talking together, and had heard a voice from a cloud say, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." If Peter could thus deny Jesus after having heard God vouch his divinity, and if Peter not only escapes punishment but gets the office of gatekeeper to heaven, how much should we escape punishment and obtain reward, who only deny because we can not help it, and who have no corroborative evidence of sight or hearing to compel our faith?

The Jesus of the first gospel promised that, as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so he (Jesus) would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Yet he was buried on Friday evening, and was out of the grave before Saturday was over. Of course this is susceptible of explanation; you must have faith and believe that in some other language something else was said which ought to be translated differently. Or, if you can not believe thus, then you must have faith until you stretch the one day and part of another day, and one night and part of another night, into three days and three nights.

Our orthodox translators have made Jesus perform a curious equestrian feat on his entry into Jerusalem. The text says, they "brought the ass and the colt and put on them their clothes and set him thereon." Perhaps this does not mean that he rode on both at one time.

On the cross, the Jesus of the four gospels, who was God, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" God can not forsake himself. Jesus was God himself. Yet God forsook Jesus, and the latter cried out to know why he was forsaken. This is one of the mysteries of the holy Christian religion which, "unless a man rightly believe without doubt he shall perish everlastingly."

At the crucifixion of Jesus wonderful miracles took place. "The graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the grave after his resurrection and appeared unto many." We do not know which saints these were. Whether they numbered among them St. Abraham, who permitted his wife to incur the risk of dishonor, and who accepted riches to gild his shame; who turned his wife into the desert with one bottle of water and some bread. Saint Lot, of whom the less said the purer our pages; Saint Judah, who wanted to burn alive a woman he had gotten with child; Saint Jacob, the liar and cheat; Saint Joseph, the model prime minister, who bought the people's rights with their own corn; Saint Moses, the conjuror, who killed 3,000 Jews because his own brother Aaron had persuaded them to make a golden calf; Saint Jael, the blessed above all women, because she drove most treacherously a nail into the skull of a sleeping guest; Saint Samson, who slew one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass;

Saint Gideon, who frightened a large body of Midianites, with trumpets, pitchers, and lanterns. Poor Midianites, they had all been exterminated long before Gideon's time; it must have been an extraordinary providence to bring them into life in order to frighten them; but God's ways are not as our ways. This is a digression—in plain language, we do not know who "the saints" were. They "appeared unto many," but there is not the slightest evidence that any one ever saw them. Their "bodies" came out of the graves, so we suppose that the bodies of the saints do not decompose like those of ordinary human beings. As the saints rose, so did Jesus. As they had their bodies, so had he. He must have much changed in the grave, for his disciples did not know him when he stood on the shore (John xxi, 4).

According to the first gospel Jesus appeared to two women after his resurrection, and afterward met eleven of his disciples by appointment on a mountain in Galilee. We do not know when the appointment was made; the only verse on which divines rely as being capable of bearing this construction is Matt, xxxi, 32, and that voice is silent both as to place and time—in fact, gives no promise of any meeting whatever. According to the second gospel, he appeared first to one woman, and when she told the disciples they did not believe it. Yet we are bound to unhesitatingly accept that which the disciples of Jesus rejected. We have an advantage which perhaps the disciples lacked. We have several different stories of the same event, and we can select that which appears to us the most probable. The disciples might have been so unfortunate as to have only one account. By the second gospel we learn that instead of the eleven going to Galilee after Jesus, he came to them as they sat at meat. In the third gospel, we are told that he first appeared to two of his disciples at Emmaus, and they did not know him until they had been a long time in his company—in fact, according to the text, it was evening before they recognized him, so we suppose the light of faith supplied the want of the light of day. Unfortunately directly they saw him they did not see him, for as soon as they knew him he vanished out of their sight. He immediately afterward appeared to the eleven at Jerusalem, and not at Galilee, as stated in the first Gospel. Jesus asked for some meat, and the disciples gave him a portion of a broiled fish and of a honeycomb, and he did eat. In these degenerate days it is hard to believe in a ghost eating fried fish, yet we must try to do it for our soul's sake, which otherwise may be burned for ever in the fire that is never quenched. There is certainly nothing more improbable in God the Son eating broiled fish after he was dead, than there is in believing God the Father ate dressed calf, tender and good, prepared for him by Abraham (*vide* Genesis xviii). A truly pious and devout mind will not look at the letter which killeth, but for the spirit which maketh alive. Jesus was afterward taken up into heaven, a cloud received him, and he was missed. God of course is everywhere, and heaven is not more above than below, but it is necessary we should believe that Jesus has ascended into heaven to sit on the right hand of God, who is infinite and has no right hand. Our question at the commencement was, "Who was Jesus Christ?" Was he a man?—surely not. Born without a father, in the lifetime of Herod, according to Luke. Residing in Egypt, according to Matthew, at a period in which, if Luke be true, he never could have visited Egypt at all. His whole career is, not simply a series of improbabilities, not simply a series of absurdities, but, in truth, a series of fables destitute of foundation in fact.

Who was Christ? born of a virgin. So was Chrishna, the Hindoo god incarnate. The story of Chrishna is identical in many respects with that of Jesus. The story of Chrishna was current long prior to the birth of Jesus. The story of Chrishna is believed by the inhabitants of Hindostan and disbelieved by the English, who say it is a myth, a fable. We add that both are equally true, and that both are equally false.

Who was Jesus Christ? A man or a myth? His history being a fable, is the hero a reality? Do you allege that it was impossible to forge books so large as the gospels? then the answer is that Christians were skilled in the art of forging epistles, gospels, acts, decrees of councils, etc. Will you urge that this only applies to the Romish Church? Then you will admit that your stream runs from a polluted fountain? Who was Jesus Christ? Who was Saint Patrick, who excelled the reptiles from Ireland? Who was Fin ma coul?



Who was Odin? Perhaps there was a man who really lived and performed some special actions attracting popular attention, but beyond this Jesus Christ is a fiction.

# WHAT DID JESUS TEACH?

The doctrines of Jesus may be sought for and found in a small compass. Four thin gospels are alleged to contain nearly the entirety of his sayings, and as most Englishmen are professedly Christians, it might be fairly supposed that the general public were conversant with Christ's teachings. This, however, is not the case. The bulk of professors believe from custom rather than from reading. They profess a faith as they follow a fashion—because others have done so before them. What did Jesus teach? Manly self-reliant resistance of wrong, and practice of right? No; the key-stone of his whole teaching may be found in the text, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."\*

\* Matthew v, 3.

Is poverty of spirit the chief among virtues, that Jesus gives it the prime place in his teaching? Is poverty of spirit a virtue at all? Surely not. Manliness of spirit, honesty of spirit, fullness of rightful purpose, these are virtues; but poverty of spirit is a crime. When men are poor in spirit, then do the proud and haughty in spirit oppress and trample upon them, but when men are true in spirit and determined (as true men should be) to resist and prevent evil, wrong, and injustice whenever they can, then is their greater opportunity for happiness here, and no lesser fitness for the enjoyment of further happiness, in some may-be heaven, hereafter. Are you poor in spirit, and are you smitten; in such case what did Jesus teach? "Unto whom that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other."\* "Twere better far to teach that "he who courts oppression shares the crime." Rather say, if smitten once, take careful measure to prevent a future smiting. I have heard men preach passive resistance, but this teaches actual invitation of injury, a course degrading in the extreme.

Shelley breathed higher humanity in his noble advice:

"Stand ye calm and resolute,  
Like a forest close and mute,  
With folded arms and looks, which are  
Weapons of an unvanquished war."

There is a wide distinction between the passive resistance to wrong and the courting of further injury at the hands of the wrongdoer. I have in no case seen this better illustrated than in Mr. George Jacob Holyoake's history of his imprisonment in Gloucester Jail,\*\* where passive resistance saved him from the indignity of a prison dress, and also from compulsory attendance at morning prayer in the prison chapel, which in his case would have been to him an additional insult. But the teaching of Jesus goes much beyond this kind of conduct; the poverty of spirit principle is enforced to the fullest extent—"Him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee, and from him that taketh away thy goods, ask them not again."\*\*\* Poverty of person is the only possible sequence to this extraordinary manifestation of poverty of spirit.

\* Luke vi, 29.

\*\* "Last trail by Jury for Atheism."

\*\*\* Luke vi, 29, 30.

Poverty of person is attended with many unpleasantnesses; and if Jesus knew that poverty of goods would result from his teaching, we might expect some notice of this. And so there is—as if he wished to keep the poor content through their lives with poverty, he says, "Blessed be ye poor for yours is the kingdom of God."\* "But woe unto you that are rich, for you have received your consolation."\*\* He pictures one in hell, whose only related vice is that in life he was rich; and another in heaven, whose only related virtue is that in life he was poor.\*\*\* He at another time tells his hearers that it is as difficult for a

rich man to get into heaven as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.\*\*\*\* The only intent of such teaching could be to induce the poor to remain content with the want and misery attendant on their wretched state in this life, in the hope of a higher recompense in some future life. Is it good to be content with poverty? Nay, 'tis better far to investigate the cause of such poverty, with a view to its cure and prevention. The doctrine is a most horrid one which declares that the poor shall not cease from the face of the earth. Poor in spirit and poor in pocket. With no courage to work for food, or money to purchase it! We might well expect to find the man who held these doctrines with empty stomach also; and what does Jesus teach?—"Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled."\*\*\*\*\* He does not say when the filling shall take place, but the date is evidently postponed until the time when you will have no stomachs to replenish. It is not in this life that the hunger is to be sated. Do you doubt me, turn again to your Testament and read, "Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger."\*\*\*\*\* This must surely settle the point.

\* Luke vi, 20.

\*\* Luke vi, 24.

\*\*\* Luke xvi, 19–81.

\*\*\*\* Luke xviii, 25.

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\*\*\*\*\* Luke vi, 25.

It would be but little vantage to the hungry man to bless him by filling him, if, when he had satisfied his appetite, he were met by a curse which had awaited the completion of his repast. Craven in spirit, with an empty purse and hungry mouth—what next? The man who has not manliness enough to prevent wrong will probably bemoan his hard fate, and cry bitterly that so sore are the misfortunes he endures. And what does Jesus teach?—"Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh."\* Is this true, and if true, when? "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."\*\* Aye, but when? Not while they mourn and weep. Weeping for the past is vain; 'tis past, and a deluge of tears will never wash away its history. Weeping for the present is worse than vain—it obstructs your sight. In each minute of your life the aforesaid future is present-born, and you need dry and keen eyes to give it and yourself a safe and happy deliverance. When shall they that mourn be comforted? Are slaves that weep salt teardrops on their steel shackles comforted in their weeping? Nay, but each pearly overflow, as it falls, rusts mind as well as fetter. Ye who are slaves and weep, will never be comforted until ye dry your eyes and nerve your arms, and, in the plenitude of your manliness,

"Shake your chains to earth like dew,  
Which in sleep have fallen on you."

Jesus teaches that the poor, the hungry and the wretched shall be blessed? This is not so. The blessing only comes when they have ceased to be poor, hungry and wretched. Contentment under poverty, hunger and misery is high treason, not to yourself alone, but to your fellows. These three, like foul diseases, spread quickly wherever humanity is stagnant and content with wrong.

\* Luke vi, 31.

\*\* Matthew v, 4.

What did Jesus teach? "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."\* So far well, but how if thy neighbor will not hear thy doctrine when thou preacheth the "glad tidings of great joy" to him? Then forgetting all thy love, and with bitter hatred that a theological disputant alone can manifest, thou "shalt shake off the dust from your feet," and by so doing make it more tolerable in the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for your unfortunate neighbor who has ventured to maintain an opinion of his own, and who will not let you be his priest.\*\* It is, indeed, a mockery to speak of love, as if love to one another could result from the dehumanizing and isolating faith required from the disciple of Jesus. Ignatius Loyola

in this, at least, was more consistent than his Protestant brethren,\*\*\* "If any man come unto me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he can not be my disciple."\*\*\*\*\* "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set men 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 they shall be of his own household."\*\*\*\*\*" "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands for my sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."\*\*\*\*\* The teaching of Jesus is, in fact, save yourself by yourself. The teaching of humanity should be, to save yourself save your fellow.

\* Matthew xix, 19.

\*\* Matthew x, 14,15.

\*\*\* Luke xiv, 26.

\*\*\*\* Matthew x, 84—86.

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The human family is a vast chain, each man and woman a link. There is no snapping off one link and preserving for it an entirety of happiness; our joy depends on our brother's also. But what does Jesus teach? That "many are called, but few are chosen;" that the majority will inherit an eternity of misery, while it is but the minority who obtain eternal happiness. And on what is the eternity of bliss to depend? On a truthful course of life? Not so. Jesus puts Father Abraham in Heaven, whose reputation for faith outstrips his character for veracity. The passport through Heaven's portals is faith. "He that believeth and baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned."\* Are you married? Have you a wife you love? She dies and you. You from your first speech to your last had ever said, "I believe," much as a clever parrot might say it, if well taught. You had never examined your reasons for your faith for, like a true believer should, you distrusted the efficacy of your carnal reason. You said, therefore, "I believe in God and Jesus Christ," because you had been taught to say it, and you would have as glibly said, "I believe in Allah, and in Mahomet his prophet," had your birthplace been a few degrees more eastward, and your parents and instructors Turks. You believed in this life and awake in Heaven. Your much-loved wife did not think as you did—she could not. Her organization, education and temperament were all different from your own. She disbelieved because she could not believe. She was a good wife, but she disbelieved, A good and affectionate mother, but she disbelieved. A virtuous and kindly woman, but she disbelieved. And you are to be happy for an eternity in Heaven, while she is writhing in agony in Hell.

\* Mark xvi,16.

If true, I could say with Shelley, of this Christianity, that it

"Peoples earth with demons, hell with men,  
And heaven with slaves."

It is often urged that Jesus is the Savior of the world, that he brought redemption without let or stint to the whole human race. But what did Jesus teach? "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritan enter ye not."\* These were his injunctions to those whom he first sent out to preach. "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," is his hard answer to the poor Syrophenician woman who is entreating succor for her child. Christianity, as first taught by Jesus, was for the Jews alone, and it is only upon his rejection by them that the world at large has the opportunity of salvation afforded it. "He came unto his own and his own received him not,"\*\* Why should the Jews be more God's own than the Gentiles? Is God the creator of all? and did he create the descendant of Abraham with greater right and privilege than all other men? Then, indeed, is great and grievous injustice done. You and I had no choice whether we would be born Jews or Gentiles; yet to the accident of such a birth is attached the first offer of a salvation which if accepted, shuts out all beside. The Kingdom of Heaven is a

prominent feature in the teachings of Jesus, and it may be well to ascertain, as precisely as we can, the picture drawn by God incarnate of his own special domain. 'Tis likened to a wedding feast, to which the invited guests coming not, servants are sent out into the highways to gather all they can find—both good and bad. The King comes in to see his motley array of guests, and findeth one without a wedding garment.

\* Matt. x, 5.

\*\* John i, 11.

The King inquired why he came into the feast without one, and the man, whoso attendance has been compulsorily enforced, is speechless. And who can wonder? he is a guest from necessity, not choice, he neither chose the fashion of his coming or his attiring. Then comes the King's decree, the command of the all-merciful and loving King of Heaven: "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Commentators urge that it was the custom to provide wedding garments for all guests, and that this man is punished for his nonacceptance of the customary and ready robe. The text does not warrant this position, but assigns, as an explanation of the parable, that an invitation to the heavenly feast will not insure its partakal, for that many are called, but few are chosen. What more of the Kingdom of Heaven? "There shall be joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."\* Nay, it is urged that the greater sinner one has been, the better saint he makes, and the more he has sinned, so much the more he loves God. "To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."\*\* Is not this indeed asserting that a life of vice, with its stains washed away by a death-bed repentance, is better than a life of consistent and virtuous conduct? Why should the fatted calf be killed for the prodigal son?\*\*\* Why should men be taught to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness?

These ambiguities, these assertions of punishment and forgiveness of crime, instead of directions for its prevention and cure, are serious detractions from a system alleged to have been inculcated by one for whom his followers claim divinity.

\* Luke xv, 7.

\*\* Luke 7, 47.

\*\*\* Luke xv, 27.

Will you again turn back to the love of Jesus as the redeeming feature of the whole? Then, I ask you, read the story of the fig-tree\* withered by the hungry Jesus. The fig-tree, if he were all-powerful God, was made by him, he limited its growth and regulated its development. He prevented it from bearing figs, expected fruit where he had rendered fruit impossible, and in his *infinite love* was angry that the tree had not upon it that which it could not have. Tell me the love expressed in that remarkable speech which follows one of his parables, and in which he says: "For, I say unto you, that unto every one which hath shall be given, and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. But those, mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me."\*\* What love is expressed by that Jesus who, if he were God, represents himself as saying to the majority of his unfortunate creatures (for it is the few who are chosen): 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'\*\*\*

\* Matt xxi, 18-22; Mark xi, 12-24.

\*\* Luke xix, 26, 17.

\*\*\* Matt, xxv, 41.

Far from love is this horrid notion of eternal torment. And yet the popular preachers of to-day talk first of love and then of

"Hell, a red gulf of everlasting fire,  
Where poisonous and undying worms prolong  
Eternal misery to those hapless slaves,  
Whose life has been a penance for its crimes."

In reading the sayings attributed to Jesus, all must be struck by the passage which so extraordinarily influenced the famous Origen.\* If he understood it aright, its teachings are most terrible. If he understood it wrongly, what are we to say for the wisdom of teaching which expresses so vaguely the meaning which it rather hides than discovers by its words? The general intent of Christ's teaching seems to be an inculcation of neglect of this life, in the search for another. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life."\*\* "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.... take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?.... But seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." The effect of these texts, if fully carried out, would be most disastrous; they would stay all scientific discoveries, prevent all development of man's energies. It is in the struggle for existence here that men are compelled to become acquainted with the conditions which compel happiness or misery. It is only by the practical application of that knowledge, that the wants of society are understood and satisfied, and disease, poverty, hunger, and wretchedness, prevented. Jesus substitutes "I believe," for "I think," and puts "watch and pray," instead of "think and act." Belief is made the most prominent feature, and is, indeed, the doctrine which pervades, permeates, and governs all Christianity. It is represented that, at the judgment, the world will be reproved "Of sin because they believe not." This teaching is most disastrous; man should be incited to active thought: belief is a cord which would bind him to the teachings of an uneducated past.

\* Matt. xix, 12.

\*\* Matt, xxiv, 41.

Thought, mighty thought, mighty in making men most manly, will burst this now rotting cord, and then—shaking off the cobwebbed and dust-covered traditions of dark old times, humanity shall stand crowned with a most glorious diadem of facts, which, like gems worn on a bright summer's day, shall grow more resplendent as they reflect back the rays of truth's meridian sun. Fit companion to blind belief in slave-like prayer. Men pray as though God needed most abject entreaty ere he would grant them justice. What does Jesus teach on this? What is his direction on prayer? "After this manner pray ye: Our Father, which art in heaven." Do you think that God is the Father of all, when you pray that he will enable you to defeat some other of his children, with whom your nation is at war? And why "which art in Heaven?" Where is Heaven? you look upward, and if you were at the antipodes, would look upward still. But that upward would be downward to us. Do you know where Heaven is, if not, why say "which art in Heaven?" Is God infinite, then he is in earth also, why limit him to Heaven? "Hallowed be thy name." What is God's name? and if you know it not, how can you hallow it? How can God's name be hallowed even if you know it? "Thy kingdom come." What is God's kingdom, and will your praying bring it quicker? Is it the Judgment day, and do you say "Love one another," pray for the more speedy arrival of that day on which God may say to your fellow, "depart ye cursed into everlasting fire?" "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." How is God's will done in heaven? If the devil be a fallen angel, there must have been rebellion even there. "Give us this day our daily bread," Will the prayer get it without work? No. Will work get it without the prayer? Yes? Why pray then for bread to God, who says, "Blessed be ye that hunger.... woe unto you that are full?" "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." What debts have you to God? Sins? Samuel Taylor Coleridge says, "A sin is an evil which has its ground or origin in the agent, and not in the compulsion of circumstances. Circumstances are compulsory, from the absence of a power to resist or control them: and if the absence likewise be the effect of circumstances.... the evil derives from the circumstances.... and such evil is not sin."\* Do you say that you are independent of all circumstances, that you can control them, that you have a free will? Mr. Buckle says that the assertion of a free will "involves two assumptions, of which the first, though possibly true, has never been proved, and the second is unquestionably false. These assumptions are that there is an independent faculty, called consciousness, and that the dictates of that faculty are infallible."\*\* "And lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from evil." Do you think God will possibly lead you into temptation? if so, you can not think him all-good, if not all-good he is not God, if God, the prayer is a blasphemy.

\* "Aids to Reflection," 1843, p. 200.

\*\* "History of Civilization," vol. i, p. 14.

I close this paper with the last scene in Jesus' life, not meaning that I have—in these few pages—fully examined his teachings; but hoping that enough is even here done to provoke inquiry and necessitate debate, Jesus, according to the general declaration of Christian divines, came to die, and what does he teach by his death? The Rev. F. D. Maurice it is, I think, who well says, "That he who kills for a faith must be weak, that he who dies for a faith must be strong." How did Jesus die? Giordano Bruno, and Julius Caesar Vanini, were burned for Atheism. They died calm, heroic defiant of wrong. Jesus, who could not die, courted death, that he, as God, might accept his own atonement, and might pardon man for a sin which he had not committed, and in which he had no share. The death he courted came, and when it came he could not face it, but prayed to himself that he might not die. And then, when on the cross, if two of the gospels do him no injustice, his last words—as there recorded—were a bitter cry of deep despair, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The Rev. Enoch Mellor, in his work on the Atonement, says, "I seek not to fathom the profound mystery of these words. To understand their full import would require one to experience the agony of desertion they express." Do the words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" express an "agony" caused by a consciousness of "desertion?" Doubtless they do; in fact, if this be not the meaning conveyed by the despairing death-cry, then there is in it no meaning whatever. And if those words do express a "bitter agony of desertion," then they emphatically contradict the teachings of Jesus. "Before Abraham was, I am." "I and my father are one." "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." These were the words of Jesus, words conveying (together with many other such texts) to the reader an impression that divinity was claimed by the man who uttered them. If Jesus had indeed been God, the words "My God, my God," would have been a mockery most extreme. God could not have deemed himself forsaken by himself. The dying Jesus, in that cry, confessed himself either the dupe of some other teaching, a self-deluded enthusiast, or an arch-imposter, who, in the bitter cry, with the wide-opening of the flood-gates through which life's stream ran out, confessed aloud that he, at least, was no deity, and deemed himself a God-forsaken man. The garden scene of agony is fitting prelude to this most terrible act. Jesus, who is God, prays to himself, in "agony he prayed most earnestly."\* He refuses to hear his own prayers, and he, the omnipotent, is forearmed against his coming trial by an angel from heaven, who "strengthened" the great Creator. Was Jesus the son of God? Praying, he said, "Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."\*\* And was he glorified? His death and resurrection most strongly disbelieved in the very city where they happened, if, indeed, they ever happened at all. His doctrines rejected by the only people to whom he preached them. His miracles denied by the only nation where they are alleged to have been performed; and he himself thus on the cross, crying out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Surely no further comment is needed on this head, to point more distinctly to the most monstrous mockery the text reveals.

\* Luke, xxii, 44.

\*\* John, xvii, 2.

To those who urge that the course I take is too bold, or that the problems I deal with are too deep or sacred, I will reply in Herschel's version of Schiller,

Wouldst thou reach perfection's goal,  
Stay not! rest not!  
Forward strain,  
Hold not hand, and draw not rein.

Perseverance strikes the mark,  
Expansion clears whatever is dark,  
Truth in the abyss doth dwell,  
My say is said—now fare the well.

## THE TWELVE APOSTLES.

All, good Christians, indeed all Christians—for are there any who are not models of goodness?—will desire that their fellow-creatures who are unbelievers should have the fullest possible information, biographical or otherwise, as to the twelve persons specially chosen by Jesus to be his immediate followers. It is not for the instruction of the believer that I pen this brief essay; he would be equally content with his faith in the absence of all historic vouchers. Indeed a pious worshiper would cling to his creed not only without testimony in its favor, but despite direct testimony against it. It is to those not within the pale of the church that I shall seek to demonstrate the credibility of the history of the twelve apostles. The short biographical sketch here presented is extracted from the first five books of the New Testament, two of which at least are attributed to two of the twelve. It is objected by heretical men who go as far in their criticisms on the Gospels as Colenso does with the Pentateuch, that not one of the gospels is original or written by any of the apostles; that, on the contrary, they were preceded by numerous writings, since lost or rejected, these in their turn having for their basis the oral tradition which preceded them. It is alleged that the four gospels are utterly anonymous, and that the fourth gospel is subject to strong suspicions of spuriousness. It would be useless to combat, and I therefore boldly ignore these attacks on the authenticity of the text, and proceed with my history. The names of the twelve are as follows: Simon, surnamed Peter; Andrew, his brother; James and John, the sons of Zebedee; Andrew; Philip; Bartholomew; Matthew; James, the son of Alphaeus; Simon, the Canaanite; Judas Iscariot; and a twelfth, as to whose name there is some uncertainty; it was either Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus, or Judas. It is in Matthew alone (x, 3) that the name of Lebbaeus is mentioned thus: "Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus." We are told, on this point, by able biblicists, that the early MSS. have not the words "whose surname was Thaddaeus," and that these words have probably been inserted to reconcile the gospel according to Matthew with that attributed to Mark. How good must have been the old fathers who sought to improve upon the Holy Ghost by making clear that which inspiration had left doubtful! In the English version of the Rheims Testament used in this country by our Roman Catholic brethren, the reconciliation between Matthew and Mark is completed by omitting the words "Lebbaeus whose surname was," leaving only the name "Thaddaeus" in Matthew's text. This omission must be correct, being by the authority of an infallible church. If Matthew x, 3, and Mark iii, 18, be passed as reconciled, although the first calls the twelfth disciple Lebbaeus, and the second gives him the name Thaddaeus, there is yet the difficulty that in Luke vi, 16, corroborated by John xiv, 22, there is a disciple spoken of as "Judas, not Iscariot." "Judas, the brother of James." Commentators have endeavored to clear away this last difficulty by declaring that Thaddaeus is a Syriac word, having much the same meaning as Judas. This has been answered by the objection that if Matthew's Gospel uses Thaddæus in lieu of Judas, then he ought to speak of Thaddaeus Iscariot, which he does not; and it is further objected also that while there are some grounds for suggesting a Hebrew original for the gospel attributed to Matthew, there is not the slightest pretense for alleging that Matthew wrote in Syriac. It is to be hoped that the unbelieving reader will not stumble on the threshold of his study because of a little uncertainty as to a name. What is in a name? The Jewish name which we read as Jesus is really Joshua, but the name to which we are most accustomed seems the one we should adhere to.

Simon Peter being the first named among the disciples of Jesus, deserves the first place in this notice. The word "Simon" may be rendered, if taken as a Greek name, *flatnose* or *ugly*. Some of the ancient Greek and Hebrew names are characteristic of peculiarities in the individual, but no one knows whether Peter's nose had anything to do with his name. Simon is rather a Hebrew name, but Peter is Greek,



signifying a *rock* or *stone*. Peter is supposed to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and his second name may express his stony insensibility to all appeals by infidels for admittance to the celestial regions. Lord Byron's "Vision of Judgment" is the highest known authority as to Saint Peter's celestial duties, but this nobleman's poems are only fit for very pious readers. Peter, ere he became a parson, was by trade a fisher, and when Jesus first saw Peter, the latter was in a vessel fishing with his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea of Galilee, Jesus walking by the sea said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."\* The two brothers did so, and they became Christ's disciples. The successors of Peter have since reversed the apostles' early practice: instead of now casting their nets into the sea, the modern representatives of the disciples of Jesus draw the seas into their nets, and, it is believed, find the result much more profitable. When Jesus called Peter no one was with him but his brother Andrew; a little further on, the two sons of Zebedee were in a ship with their father mending nets. This is the account of Peter's call given in the gospel according to Matthew, and as Matthew was inspired by the Holy Ghost, who is identical with God the Father, who is one with God the Son, who is Jesus, the account is doubtless free from error. In the Gospel according to John, which is likewise inspired in the same manner, from the same source, and with similar infallibility, we learn that Andrew was originally a disciple of John the Baptist, and that when Andrew first saw Jesus, Peter was not present, but Andrew went and found Peter who, if fishing, must have been angling on land, telling him "we have found the Messiah," and that Andrew then brought Peter to Jesus, who said, "Thou art Simon, the son of Jonas; thou shalt be called Cephas." There is no mention in this gospel narrative of the sons of Zebedee being a little further on, or of any fishing in the sea of Galilee. This call is clearly on land, whether or not near the sea of Galilee does not appear. In the Gospel according to Luke, which is as much inspired as either of the two before-mentioned gospels, and, therefore equally authentic with each of them, we are told\*\* that when the call took place, Jesus and Peter were both at sea. Jesus had been preaching to the people, who, pressing upon him, he got into Simon's ship, from which he preached.

\* Matthew iv, 18-22.

\*\* Luke v, 1-11.

After this he directed Simon to put out into the deep and let down the nets. Simon answered, "Master, we have toiled all night and taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net." No sooner was this done than the net was filled to breaking, and Simon's partners, the two sons of Zebedee, came to help, when, at the call of Jesus, they brought their ships to land, and followed him. From these accounts the unbeliever may learn that when Jesus called Peter, either both Jesus and Peter were on the land, or one was on land and the other on sea, or both of them were at sea. He may also learn that the sons of Zebedee were present at the time, having come to help to get in the great catch, and were called with Peter; or that they were further on, sitting mending nets with their father, and were called afterward; or that they were neither present nor near at hand. He may also be assured that Simon was in his ship when Jesus came to call him, and that Jesus was on land when Andrew, Simon's brother, found Simon and brought him to Jesus to be called. The unbeliever must not hesitate because of any apparent incoherence or contradiction in the narrative. With faith it is easy to harmonize the three narratives above quoted, especially when you know that Jesus had visited Simon's house before the call of Simon,\* but did not go to Simon's house until after Simon had been called.\*\* Jesus went to Simon's house and cured his wife's mother of a fever. Robert Taylor,\*\*\* commenting on the fever-curing miracle, says: "St. Luke tells us that this fever had taken the woman, not that the woman had taken the fever, and not that the fever was a very bad fever, or a yellow fever, or a scarlet fever, but that it was a great fever—that is, I suppose, a fever six feet high at least; a personal fever, a rational and intelligent fever, that would yield to the power of Jesus' argument, but would never have given way to James' powder. So we are expressly told that Jesus rebuked the fever—that is, he gave it a good scolding; asked it, I dare say, how it could be so unreasonable as to plague the poor old woman so cruelly, and whether it wasn't ashamed of itself; and said, perhaps, *Get out you*

*naughty, wicked fever, you*; and such like objurgatory language, which the fever, not used to being rebuked in such a manner, and being a very sensible sort of fever, would not stand, but immediately left the old woman in high dudgeon." This Robert Taylor, although a clergyman of the Church of England, has been convicted of blasphemy and imprisoned for writing in such wicked language about the bible. Simon Peter, as a disciple, performed many miracles, some when in company with Jesus, and more when separately by himself. These miracles, though themselves un-vouched by any reliable testimony, and disbelieved by the people among whom they worked, are strong evidence in favor of the apostolic character claimed for Peter.

\* Luke iv, 88.

\*\* Matthew viii, 14.

\*\*\* Devil's Pulpit, vol. i., p. 148.

On one occasion the whole of the disciples were sent away by Jesus in a ship, the Savior remaining behind to pray. About the fourth watch of the night, when the ship was in the midst of the sea, Jesus went unto his disciples, walking on the sea. Though Jesus went unto his disciples, and as an expeditious way, I suppose, of arriving with them, he would have passed by them, but they saw him, and supposing him to be a spirit, cried out. Jesus bid them be of good cheer, to which Peter answered, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee."\* Jesus said, "Come," and Peter walked on the water to go to Jesus. But the sea being wet and the wind boisterous, Peter became afraid, and instead of walking on the water began to sink into it, and cried out "Lord save me," and immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter.

Some object that the two gospels according to John and Mark, which both record the feat of water-walking by Jesus, omit all mention of Peter's attempt. Probably the Holy Ghost had good reasons for omitting it. A profane mind might make a jest of an Apostle "half seas over," and ridicule an apostolic gatekeeper who could not keep his head above water.

Peter's partial failure in this instance should drive away all unbelief, as the text will show that it was only for lack of faith that Peter lost his buoyancy. Simon is called Bar-Jonah, that is, son of Jonah; but I am not aware if he is any relation to the Jonah who lived under water in the belly of a fish three days and three nights.

It was Simon Peter who, having told Jesus he was the Son of God, was answered, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonah, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee."\*\* We find a number of disciples shortly before this, and in Peter's presence, telling Jesus that he was the Son of God,\*\* but there is no real contradiction between the two texts. It was on this occasion that Jesus said to Simon, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."

\* Matt, xiv, 23; Mark vi, 45.

\*\* Matt. xvi, 17.

\*\*\* Matt, xiv, 33.

Under these extraordinary declarations from the mouth of God the Son, the Bishops of Rome have claimed, as successors of Peter, the same privileges, and their pretensions have been, acceded to by some of the most powerful monarchs of Europe.

Under this claim the Bishops, or Popes of Rome, have at various times issued Papal Bulls, by which they have sought to bind the entire world. Many of these have been very successful, but in 1302, Philip the Fair, of France, publicly burned the Pope Boniface's Bull after an address in which the States-General had denounced, in words more expressive than polite, the right of the Popes of Rome to Saint Peter's keys on earth. Some deny that the occupiers of the episcopal seat in the seven-hilled city are really of the

Church of Christ, and they point to the bloody quarrels which have raged between men contending for the Papal dignity. They declare that those Vicars of Christ have more than once resorted to fraud, treachery, and murder, to secure the Papal dignity. They point to Stephen VII, the son of an unmarried priest, who cut off the head of his predecessor's corpse; to Sergius III, convicted of assassination; to John X, who was strangled in the bed of his paramour Theodora; to John XI, son of Pope Sergius III, famous only for his drunken debauchery; to John XII, found assassinated in the apartments of his mistress; to Benedict IX, who both purchased and sold the Pontificate; to Gregory VII, *pseudo* lover of the Countess Matilda, and the author of centuries of war carried on by his successors. And if these suffice not, they point to Alexander Borgia, whose name is but the echo of crime, and whose infamy will be as lasting as history.

It is answered, "by the fruit ye shall judge of the tree." It is useless to deny the vine's existence because the grapes are sour. Peter, the favored disciple, it is declared was a rascal, and why not his successors? They have only to repent, and there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine righteous men. Such language is very terrible, and arises from allowing the carnal reason too much freedom.

All true believers will be familiar with the story of Peter's sudden readiness to deny his Lord and teacher in the hour of danger, and will easily draw the right moral from the mysterious lesson here taught, but unbelievers may be a little puzzled by the common infidel objections on this point. These objections, therefore, shall be first stated, and then refuted in the most orthodox fashion. It is objected that all the denials were to take place before the cock should crow,\* but that only one denial actually took place before the cock crew.\*\* That the first denial by Peter that he knew Jesus, or was one of his disciples, was at the door to the damsel,\*\*\* but was inside while sitting by the fire,\*\*\*\* that the second denial was to a man, and apparently still sitting by the fire,\*\*\*\*\* but was to a maid when he was gone out into the porch. That these denials, or, at any rate, the last denial, were all in the presence of Jesus,\*\*\*\*\* who turned and looked at Peter, but that the first denial was at the door, Jesus being inside the palace, the second denial out in the porch, Jesus being still inside,\*\*\*\*\* and the third denial also outside.

\* Matt. xxvi, 34.

\*\* Luke xxii, 34.

\*\*\* John xiii, 38.

\*\*\*\* Mark xiv, 68.

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\*\*\*\*\* Luke xxii, 57., Luke xxii, 58., Luke xxii, 61.

\*\*\*\*\* Mark xiv, 69.

The refutation of these paltry objections is simple, but as none but an infidel would need to hear it, we refrain from penning it. None but a disciple of Paine, or follower of Voltaire, would permit himself to be drawn to the risk of damnation on the mere question of when some cock happened to crow, or the particular spot on which a recreant apostle denied his master.

Two of the twelve apostles, whose names are not, given, saw Jesus after he was dead, on the road to Emmaus, but they did not know him; toward evening they knew him, and he vanished out of their sight. In broad daylight they did not know him; at evening time they knew him. While they did not know him they could see him; when they did know him they could not see him. Well may true believers declare that the ways of the Lord are wonderful. One of the apostles, Thomas called Didymus, set the world an example of unbelief. He disbelieved the other disciples when they said to him "we have seen the Lord," and required to see Jesus, though dead, alive in the flesh, and touch the body of his crucified master. Thomas the apostle had his requirements complied with—he saw, he touched, and he believed. The great merit is to believe without any evidence—"He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, he that believeth not

shall be damned." How it was that Thomas the Apostle did not know Jesus when he saw him shortly after near the sea of Tiberias, is another of the mysteries of the Holy Christian religion. The acts of the apostles after the death of Jesus deserve treatment in a separate paper; the present essay is issued in the meantime to aid the Bishop of London in his labors to stem the rising tide of infidelity.

# THE ATONEMENT.

"Quel est donc ce Dieu qui fait mourir Dieu pour apaiser Dieu?"

Adam's sin is the corner-stone of Christianity; the keystone of the arch. Without the fall there is no redeemer, for there is no fallen one to be redeemed. It is, then, to the history of Adam that the examinant of the atonement theory should first direct his attention. To try the doctrine of the atonement by the aid of science would be fatal to Christianity. As for the man, Adam, 6,000 years ago the first of the human race, his existence is not only unvouched for by science, but is actually questioned by the timid, and challenged by the bolder exponents of modern ethnology. The human race is traced back far beyond the period fixed for Adam's sin. Egypt and India speak for humanity busy with wars, cities and monuments, prior to the date given for the garden scene in Eden. The fall of Adam could not have brought sin upon mankind, and death by sin, if hosts of men and women had lived and died ages before the words "thou shalt surely die" were spoken by God to man. Nor could all men inherit Adam's misfortune, if it be true that it is not to one center, but to many centers of origin that we ought to trace back the various races of mankind. The theologian who finds no evidence of death prior to the offense shared by Adam and Eve is laughed to scorn by the geologist who point to the innumerable petrifications on the earth's bosom, which with a million tongues declare more potently than loudest speech that organic life in myriads of myriads was destroyed incalculable ages before man's era on our world.

Science, however, has so little to offer in support of any religious doctrine, and so much to advance against all purely theologic tenets, that we turn to a point giving the Christian greater vantage ground; and, accepting for the moment his premises, we deny that he can maintain the possibility of Adam's sin, and yet consistently affirm the existence of an All-wise, All-powerful, and All-good God. Did Adam sin? We will take the Christian's bible in our hands to answer the question, first defining the word sin. What is sin? Samuel Taylor Coleridge says, "A sin is an evil which has its ground or origin in the agent, and not in the compulsion of circumstances...." An act to be sin must be original, and a state or act that has not its origin in the will may be calamity, deformity, or disease, but sin it can not be. It is not enough that the act appears voluntary, or that it has the most hateful passions or debasing appetite for its proximate cause and accompaniment. All these may be found in a madhouse, where neither law nor humanity permit us to condemn the actor of sin. The reason of law declared the maniac not a free agent, and the verdict follows, of course *Not guilty*? Did Adam sin?

The bible story is that a Deity created one man and one woman; that he placed them in a garden wherein he had also placed a tree which was good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. That although he had expressly given the fruit of every tree bearing seed for food, he, nevertheless, commanded them not to eat of the fruit of this attractive tree, under penalty of death. Supposing Adam to have at once disobeyed this injunction, would it have been sin? The fact that God had made the tree good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, would have surely been sufficient circumstance of justification on the God-created inducement to partake of its fruit. The inhibition lost its value as against the enticement. If the All-wise had intended the tree to be avoided, would he have made its allurements so overpowering to the senses? But the case does not rest here. In addition to all the attractions of the tree, and as though there were not enough, there is a subtle serpent, gifted with suasive speech, who, either wiser or more truthful than the All-perfect Deity, says that although God has threatened immediate death as the consequence of disobedience to his command, yet they "shall not die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes shall be opened, and ye

shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." The tempter is stronger than the tempted, the witchery of the serpent is too great for the spellbound woman, the decoy tree is too potent in its temptations; overpersuaded herself by the honey-tongued voice of the seducer, she plucks the fruit and gives to her husband also. And for this their offspring are to suffer! The yet unborn children are to be the victims of God's vengeance on their parents' weakness—though he had made them weak; though, indeed, he had created the tempter sufficiently strong to practice upon this weakness, and had arranged the causes predisposing man and woman to commit the offense—if, indeed, it be an offense to pluck the fruit of a tree which gives knowledge to the eater. It is for this fall that Jesus is to atone. He is sacrificed to redeem the world's inhabitants from the penalties for a weakness (for sin it was not) they had no share in. It was not sin, for the man was influenced by circumstances pre-arranged by Deity, and which man was powerless to resist or control. But if man was so influenced by such circumstances, then it was God who influenced man—God who punished the human race for an action to the commission of which he impelled their progenitor.

Adam did not sin. He ate of the fruit of a tree which God had made good to be eaten. He was induced to this through the indirect persuasion of a serpent God had made purposely to persuade him. But even if Adam did sin, and even he and Eve, his wife, were the first parents of the whole human family, what have we to do with their sin? We, unborn when the act was committed and without choice as to coming into the world. Does Jesus atone for Adam's sin? Adam suffered for his own offense; he, according to the curse, was to eat in sorrow of the fruit of the earth all his life as punishment for his offense. Atonement, after punishment, is surely a superfluity. Did the sacrifice of Jesus serve as atonement for the whole world, and, if yes, for all sin, or for Adam's sin only? If the atonement is for the whole world, does it extend to unbelievers as well as to believers in the efficacy? If it only includes believers, then what has become of those generations who, according to the bible, for 4,000 years succeeded each other in the world without faith in Christ because without knowledge of his mission? Should not Jesus have come 4,000 years earlier, or, at least, should he not have come when the ark on Ararat served as monument of God's merciless vengeance, which had made the whole earth a battle-field, whereon the omnipotent had crushed the feeble, and had marked his prowess by the innumerable myriads of decayed dead? If it be declared that, though the atonement by Jesus only applies to believers in his mission so far as regards human beings born since his coming, yet that it is wider in its retrospective effect, then the answer is that it is unfair to those born after Jesus to make faith the condition precedent to the saving efficacy of atonement, especially if belief be required from all mankind posterior to the Christian era, whether they have heard of Jesus or not. Japanese, Chinese, savage Indians, Kaffirs, and others, have surely a right to complain of this atonement scheme, which insures them eternal damnation by making it requisite to believe in a Gospel of which they have no knowledge. If it be contended that belief shall only be required from those to whom the gospel of Jesus has been preached, and who have had afforded to them the opportunity of its acceptance, then how great a cause of complaint against Christian missionaries have those peoples who, without such missions, might have escaped damnation for unbelief. The gates of hell are opened to them by the earnest propagandist, who professes to show the road to heaven.

But does this atonement serve only to redeem the human family from the curse inflicted by Deity in Eden's garden for Adam's sin, or does it operate as satisfaction for all sin? If the salvation is from the punishment for Adam's sin alone, and if belief and baptism are, as Jesus himself affirms, to be the sole conditions precedent to any saving efficacy in the much-lauded atonement by the Son of God, then what becomes of a child that only lives a few hours, is never baptized, and, never having any mind, consequently never has any belief? Or what becomes of one idiot born who, throughout his dreary life, never has mental capacity for the acceptance, or examination of, or credence in, any religious dogmas whatever? Is the idiot saved who can not believe? Is the infant saved that can not believe? I, with some

mental faculties tolerably developed, can not believe. Must I be damned? If so, fortunate short-lived babe! lucky idiot! That the atonement should not be effective until the person to be saved has been baptized is at least worthy of comment; that the sprinkling a few drops of water should quench the flames of hell is a remarkable feature in the Christian's creed.

"One can't but think it somewhat droll  
Pump-water thus should cleanse a soul."

How many fierce quarrels have raged on the formula of baptism among those loving brothers in Christ who believe he died for them! How strange an idea that, though God has been crucified to redeem mankind, it yet needs the font of water to wash away the lingering stain of Adam's crime.

One minister of the Church of England, occupying the presidential chair of a well-known training college for church clergymen in the north of England, seriously declared, in the presence of a large auditory and of several church dignitaries, that the sin of Adam was so potent in its effect that if a man *had never been born, he would yet have been damned for sin!* That is, he declared that man existed before birth, and that he committed sin before he was born; and if never born, would, notwithstanding, deserve to suffer eternal torment for that sin!

It is almost impossible to discuss seriously a doctrine so monstrously absurd, and yet it is not one whit more ridiculous than the ordinary orthodox and terrible doctrine that God, the undying, in his infinite love, killed himself under the form of his son to appease the cruel vengeance of God, the just and merciful, who, without this, would have been ever vengeful, unjust and merciless. The atonement theory, as presented to us by the bible, is in effect as follows: God creates man, surrounded by such circumstances as the divine mind chose, in the selection of which man had no voice, and the effects of which on man were all foreknown and predestined by Deity. The result is man's fall on the very first temptation, so frail the nature with which he was endowed, or so powerful the temptation to which he was subjected. For this fall not only does the All-merciful punish Adam, but also his posterity; and this punishment went on for many centuries, until God, the immutable, changed his purpose of continual condemnation of men for sins they had no share in, and was wearied with his long series of unjust judgments on those whom he created in order that he might judge them. That, then, God sent his son, who was himself and was also his own father, and who was immortal, to die upon the cross, and, by this sacrifice, to atone for the sin which God himself had caused Adam to commit, and thus to appease the merciless vengeance of the All-merciful, which would otherwise have been continued against men yet unborn for an offense they could not have been concerned in or accessory to. Whether those who had died before Christ's coming are redeemed the bible does not clearly tell us. Those born after are redeemed only on condition of their faith in the efficacy of the sacrifice offered, and in the truth of the history of Jesus's life. The doctrine of salvation by sacrifice of human life is the doctrine of a barbarous and superstitious age; the outgrowth of a brutal and depraved era. The God who accepts the bloody offering of an innocent victim in lieu of punishing the guilty culprit shows no mercy in sparing the offender: he has already satiated his lust for vengeance on the first object presented to him.

Yet sacrifice is an early and prominent, and, with slight exception, an abiding feature in the Hebrew record—sacrifice of life finds appreciative acceptance from the Jewish Deity. Cain's offering of fruits is ineffective but Abel's altar, bearing the firstlings of his flock, and the fat thereof, finds respect in the sight of the Lord. While the face of the earth was disfigured by the rotting dead, after God in his infinite mercy had deluged the world, then it was that the ascending smoke from Noah's burnt sacrifice of bird and beast produced pleasure in heaven, and God himself smelled a sweet savor from the roasted meats. To reach atonement for the past by sacrifice is worse than folly—it is crime. The past can never be recalled, and the only reference to it should be that, by marking its events, we may avoid its evil deeds and improve upon its good ones. For Jesus himself—can man believe in him? —in his history contained in anonymous pamphlets uncorroborated by contemporary testimony?—this history, in which, in order to fulfill a prophecy which does not relate to him, his descent from David is demonstrated by tracing through two self-contradictory genealogies the descent of Joseph who was not his father—this history, in which the infinite God grows, from babyhood and his cradle through childhood to manhood, as though he were not God at all—this history, full of absurd wonders, devils, magicians, and evil spirits, rather fit for an



Arabian Night's legend than the word of God to his people—this history, with its miraculous raisings of the dead to life, disbelieved and contradicted by the people among whom they are alleged to have been performed; but, nevertheless, to be accepted by us to-day with all humility—this history, with the Man-God subject to human passions and infirmities, who comes to die, and who prays to his heavenly father (that is, to himself) that he will spare him the bitter cup of death—who is betrayed, having himself, ere he laid the foundations of the world, predestined Judas to betray him, and who dies, being God immortal crying with his almost dying breath, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

# WERE ADAM AND EVE OUR FIRST PARENTS?

This question, Were Adam and Eve our first parents? is indeed one of most grave importance. If the answer be a negative one, it is, in fact, a denial of the whole scheme of Christianity. The Christian theory is that Adam, the common father of the whole human race, sinned, and that by his sin he dragged down all his posterity to a state from which redemption was needed; and that Jesus is, and was, the Redeemer, by whom all mankind are and were saved from the consequences of the fall of Adam. If Adam, therefore, be proved not to be the first man—if it be shown that it is not to Adam the various races of mankind are indebted for their origin, then the whole hypothesis of fall and redemption is dissipated.

In a pamphlet like the present it is impossible to give any statement and analysis of the various hypotheses as to the origin of the human race. I frankly admit that my only wish and intent is, to compel people to examine the bible record for themselves, instead of making it their fetich, bowing down before it without thought. I am inclined to the opinion that the doctrine of a plurality of sources for the various types of the human race is a correct one; that wherever the conditions for life have been found, there also has been the degree of life resultant on those conditions. My purpose in this essay is not to demonstrate the correctness of my own thinking, but rather to illustrate the incorrectness of the Geneiactal teaching. Were Adam and Eve our first parents? On the one hand an answer in the affirmative to this question can be obtained from the bible, which asserts Adam and Eve to be the first man and woman made by God, and fixes the date of their making about 6,000 years, little more or less, from the present time. On the other hand, it seems to me that science emphatically declares man to have existed on the earth for a far more extended period; affirms that, as far as we can trace man, we find him in isolated groups, diverse in type, till we lose him in the ante-historic period; and, with nearly equal distinctness, denies that the various existing races find their common parentage in one pair. It is only on the first point that I attack the bible chronology of man's existence. I am aware that compilations based upon the authorized version of the Old Testament Scriptures are open to objection, and that while from the Hebrew 1,656 years represent the period from Adam to the Deluge generally acknowledged, the Samaritan Pentateuch only yields for the same period 1,307 years, while the Septuagint version furnishes 2,242 years; there is, I am also informed, on the authority of a most erudite Egyptologist, a fatal objection to the Septuagint chronology—*i. e.*, that it makes Methusaleh outlive the flood.\*

The deluge occurred, according to the Septuagint, in the year of the world 2,242, and, by adding up the generations previous to Methusaleh's—

Adam.....	230
Seth.....	205
Enos.....	190
Cainan.....	170
Malaleel.....	165
Jared.....	162
Enoch.....	165
.....	1287

\* Sharpe's History of Egypt, page 196.

—we shall find that he was born in the year of the world 1,287. He lived 969 years, and therefore died in 2,256. But this is fourteen years after the deluge.

The Rev. Dr. Lightfoot, who wrote about 1,644, fixes the month of the creation at September, 5,572 years preceding the date of his book, and says that Adam was expelled from Eden on the day in which he was created.\* In the London *Ethnological Journal*, for which I am indebted to the kindness of its Editor, an able ethnologist and careful thinker, the reader will find a chronology of Genesis ably and elaborately examined. At present, for our immediate purpose, we will take the ordinary. English bible, which gives the following result:

From Adam to Abraham (Gen. v and xi).....	2008
From Abraham to Isaac (Gen. xxi, 5).....	100
From Isaac to Jacob (Gen. xxv, 26).....	60
From Jacob going into Egypt (Gen. xlvii, 9).....	130
Sojourn in Egypt (Exod. xii, 41).....	480
Duration of Moses* leadership (Exod. vii, 7; xxxi, 2).	40
Thence to David, about.....	400
From David to Captivity, fourteen generations (27), about twenty-two reigns.....	478
Captivity to Jesus, fourteen generations, about.....	593
4234 Less disputed 230 years of sojourn in Egypt.....	230

4004 From Adam to Abraham the dates are certain, if we take the bible statement, and there is certainly no portion of the orthodox text, except the period of the Judges, which will admit any considerable extension of the ordinary Oxford chronology.

\* Harmony of the Four Evangelists, and Harmony of the Old Testament.

The book of Judges is not a book of history. Everything in it is recounted without chronological order. It will suffice to say, that the ciphers which we find in the book of Judges, and in the first book of Samuel, yield us, from the death of Joshua to the commencement of the reign of Saul, the sum total of 500 years, which would make, since the exode from Egypt, 565 years; whereas the first book of Kings counts but 480 years, from the going out of Egypt down to the foundation of the temple under Solomon. According to this we must suppose that several of the Judges governed simultaneously.\*

\* Munk's Palestine, p. 231.

In reading Alfred Maury's profound essay on the classification of tongues, I was much struck with the fact that he, in his philological researches, traces back some of the ancient Greek mythologies to a Sanscrit source. He has the following remark, worthy of earnest attention: "The God of Heaven, or the sky, is called by the Greeks *Zeus Pater*; and let us here notice that the pronunciation of Z resembles very much that of D, inasmuch as the word Zeus becomes in the genitive *Dios*. The Latins termed the same God *Dies-piter*, or Jupiter Now in the Veda the God of Heaven is called Dyash-pitai." What is this but the original of our own Christian God, the father, the [———] (*Jeue*) pater of the Old Testament? I introduce this remark for the purpose of shaking a very commonly entertained opinion that the Hebrew Records, whether or not God-inspired, are at any rate the most antique, and are written in a primitive tongue. Neither is it true that Hebrew mythology is the most ancient, nor the Hebrew language the most primitive; on the contrary, the mythology is clearly derived, and the language in a secondary or tertiary state.

What is the value of this book of Genesis, which is the sole authority for the hypothesis that Adam and Eve, about 5,865 years ago, were the sole founders of the peoples now living on the face of the earth? Written we know not by whom, we know not when, and we know not in what language. If we respect the book, it must be from its internal merits; its author is to us unknown. Eusebius, Chrysostom, and Clemens Alexandrinus alike agree that the name of Moses should not stand at the head of Genesis as the author of

the book. As to its internal merit Origen did not hesitate to declare the contents of the first and second chapters of Genesis to be purely figurative. Our translation of it has been severely criticised by the learned and pious Bellamy, and by the more learned and less pious Sir William Drummond. Errors almost innumerable have been pointed out, the correctness of the Hebrew text itself questioned, and yet this book is an unerring guide to the students of ethnology. They may do anything, everything, except stray out of the beaten track. We have, therefore, on the one hand, an anonymous book, which indeed does not take you back so much as 6,000 years, for at least 1,600 years must be deducted for the Noachian deluge, when the world's inhabitants were again reduced to one family, one race, one type. On the other hand, we have now existing Eskimo men, of the Arctic realm; Chinamen, of the Asiatic realm; Englishmen, of the European realm; Sahara negroes, of the African realm; Fuegians, of the American realm; New Zealanders, of the Polynesian realm; the Malay, representative of the realm which bears his name; the Tasmanian, of the Australian realm, with other families of each realm too numerous for mention here; dark and fair, black-skinned and white-skinned, woolly-haired and straight-haired; low forehead, high forehead; Hottentot limb, Negro limb, Caucasian limb. Do all these different and differing structures and colors trace their origin to one pair? To Adam and Eve, or rather to Noah and his family? Or are they (the various races) indigenous to their nature, soils, and climates? And are these various types naturally resultant, with all their differences, from the differing conditions for life persistent to and consistent with them?

The question, then, really is this: Have the different races of men all found their common parent in Noah, about 4,300 years ago? Assuming the unity of the races or species of men now existing, there are but three suppositions on which the diversity now seen can be accounted for:

"1. A miracle, or direct act of the Almighty, in changing one type into another.

"2. The gradual action of physical causes, such as climate, food, mode of life, etc.

"3. Congenital or accidental varieties."\*

We may fairly dismiss entirely from our minds the question of miracle. Such a miracle is nowhere recorded in the bible, and it lies upon any one hardy enough to assert that the present diversity has a miraculous origin to show some kind of reasons for his faith, some kind of evidence for our conviction, and until this is done we have no reason to dwell on the first hypothesis.

Of the permanence of type under its own climatic conditions—that is, in the country to which it is indigenous—we have overwhelming proof in the statue of an ancient Egyptian scribe, taken from a tomb of the fifth dynasty, 5,000 years old, and precisely corresponding to the Fellaah of the present day.\*\*

\* "Types of Mankind," Dr. Nott, p. 57.

\*\* M. Pulzsky on Iconography—"Indigenous Races," p. 111.

The sand had preserved the color of the statuette, which, from its portrait-like beauty, marks a long era of art-progress preceding its production. It antedates the orthodox era of the flood, carries us back to a time when, if the bible were true, Adam was yet alive, and still we find before it kings reigning and ruling in mighty Egypt. Can the reader wonder that these facts are held to impeach the orthodox faith?

On the second point Dr. Nott writes: "It is a commonly received error that the influence of a hot climate is gradually exerted on successive generations, until one species of mankind is completely changed into another.... This idea is proven to be false.... A sunburnt cheek is never handed down to succeeding generations. The exposed parts of the body are alone tanned by the sun, and the children of the white-skinned Europeans in New Orleans, Mobile, and the West Indies are born as fair as their ancestors, and would remain so if carried back to a colder climate."\*

Pure negroes and negresses, transported from Central Africa to England, and marrying among themselves, would never acquire the characteristics of the Caucasian races; nor would pure Englishmen and Englishwomen, emigrating to Central Africa, and in like manner intermarrying, ever become negroes

or negresses. The fact is, that while you don't bleach the color of the dark-skinned African by placing him in London, you bleach the life out of him; and *vice versa* with the Englishman.\*\*

\* "Types of Mankind," p. 58.

\*\* "Indigenous Races of the Earth," p. 458. The alleged discovery of white-skinned negroes in Western Africa does not affect this question: it is not only to the color of the skin, but also the general negro characteristics that the above remarks apply.

For a long time there has been ascribed to man the faculty of adapting himself to every climate. The following facts will show the ascription a most erroneous one: "In Egypt the austral negroes are, and the Caucasian Memlooks were, unable to raise up even a third generation; in Corsica French families vanish beneath Italian summers. Where are the descendants of the Romans, the Vandals, or the Greeks in Africa? In Modern Arabia, 1830 years after Mahomed Ali had got clear of the Morea war, 18,000 Arnaots (Albanians) were soon reduced to some 400 men. At Gibraltar, in 1817, a negro regiment was almost annihilated by consumption. In 1841, during the three weeks on the Niger, 130 Europeans out of 145 caught African fever, and 40 died; out of 158 negro sailors only eleven were affected, and not one died. In 1809 the British Expedition to Walchereen failed in the Netherlands through marsh fever. About the same time, in St. Domingo, about 15,000 French soldiers died from malaria. Of 30,000 Frenchmen, only 8,000 survived exposure to that Antillian island; while the Dominicanized African negro, Tous-saint L'Overture, retransported to Europe, was perishing from the chill of his prison in France."

On the third point we again quote Dr. Nott: "The only argument left, then, is that of congenital varieties or peculiarities, which are said to spring up and be transmitted from parent to child, so as to form new races. Let us pause for a moment to illustrate this fanciful idea. The negroes of Africa, for example, are admitted not to be offsets from some other race which have been gradually blackened and changed in a moral and physical type by the action of climate, but it is asserted that 'once, in the flight of ages,' some genuine little negro, or rather many such, were born of Caucasian, Mongol, or other light-skinned parents, and then have turned about and changed the type of the inhabitants of a whole continent. So, in America, the countless aborigines found on this continent, which we have reason to believe were building mounds before the time of Abraham, are the offspring of a race changed by accidental or congenital varieties. Thus, too, old China, India, Australia, Oceana, etc., all owe their types, physical and mental, to congenital and accidental varieties, and are descended from Adam and Eve! Can human credulity go further, or human ingenuity invent any argument more absurd?"

But even supposing these objections to the second and third suppositions set aside, there are two other propositions which, if affirmed, as I believe they may be, entirely overthrow the orthodox assertion "that Adam and Eve, six thousand years ago, were the first pair; and that all diversities now existing must find their common source in Noah—less than four thousand three hundred years from the present time." These two are as follows.

- 1. That man may be traced back on the earth long prior to the alleged Adamic era.
- 2. That there are diversities traceable as existing among the human race four thousand five hundred years ago as marked as in the present day.

To illustrate the position that man may be traced back to a period long prior to the Adamic era, we refer our readers to the chronology of the late Baron Bunsen, who, while allowing about 22,000 years for man's existence on earth, fixes the following dates, after a patient examination of the Nilotic antiquities:

Egyptians under a republican form.....	10,000 B. C.
Ascension of Bytis, the Theban, first Priest King.	9,085
Elective Kings in Egypt.....	7,280
Hereditary Kings in Upper and Lower Egypt (a	

The assertion of such an antiquity for Egypt is no modern hypothesis. Plato puts language into the mouth of an Egyptian first claiming in that day an antecedent 10,000 years for painting and sculpture in Egypt. This has long been regarded as fabulous because it was contrary to the Hebrew chronology.

If this be the result of the researches into Egyptian archæology, the reader will scarcely be surprised to find me endeavoring from other sources to get corroborative evidence of a still more astonishing character.

There are few who now pretend that the whole *creation* (?) took place 6,000 years ago, although if it be true that God made all in six days, and man on the sixth, then the universe would only be more ancient than Adam by some five days. To state the age of the earth at 6,000 years is simply preposterous, when we ascertain that it would require about 4,000,000 of years for the formation of the fossiliferous rocks alone, and that 15,000,000 of years have been stated as a moderate estimate for the antiquity of our globe. The deltas of the great rivers afford corroboration to our position as to man's duration. The delta of the Nile, formed by immense quantities of sedimentary matter, which in like manner is still carried down and deposited, has not perceptibly increased during the last 3,000 years. "In the days of the earliest Pharaohs, the delta, as it now exists, was covered with ancient cities and filled with a dense population, whose civilization must have required a period going back far beyond any date that has yet been assigned to the deluge of Noah, or even to the creation of the world."\*

From borings which have been made at New Orleans to the depth of 600 feet, from excavations for public works, and from examinations in parts of Louisiana, where the range between high and low water is much greater than it is at New Orleans, no less than ten distinct cypress forests divided from each other by eras of aquatic plants, etc., have been traced, arranged vertically above each other; and from these and other data it is estimated by Dr. Benet Dowler that the age of the delta is at least 158,000 years; and in the excavations above referred to human remains have been found below the further forest level, making it appear that the human race existed in the delta of the Mississippi more than 57,000 years ago.\*\*

It is further urged, by the same competent writer, that human bones discovered on the coast of Brazil near Santos, and on the borders of a lake called Lagoa Santa, by Captain Elliott and Dr. Lund, thoroughly incorporated with a very hard breccia, every one in a fossil state, demonstrate that aboriginal man in America antedates the Mississippi alluvia, and that he can even boast a geological antiquity, because numerous species of animals have become extinct since American humanity's first appearance.\*\*\*

\* Gliddon's "Types of Mankind," page 335.

\*\* "Types," pages 336 to 369.

\*\*\* "Types," pages 350 and 357.

With reference to the second point, as to the possibility of tracing back the diversities of the Human Race to an antediluvian date, it is simply sufficient to point on the one side to the remains of the American Indian disinterred from the Mississippi forests, and on the other to the Egyptian monuments, tombs, pyramids, and stuccoes, revealing to us Caucasian men, and Negro men, their diversities as marked as in the present day. Sir William Jones, in his day, claimed for Sanscrit literature a vast antiquity, and asserted the existence of the religions of Egypt, Greece, India, and Italy, prior to the Mosaic era. So far as Egypt is concerned the researches of Lepsius, Bunsen, Champollion, Lenormant, Gliddon, and others, have fully verified the position of the learned president of the Asiatic Society.

We have Egyptian statues of the third dynasty, going back far beyond the 4,300 years, which would give the orthodox era of the deluge, and taking us over the 4,500 years fixed by our second proposition. The fourth dynasty is rich in pyramids, tombs, and statues; and, according to Lepsius, this dynasty commenced 3,426 B. C, or about 5,287 years from the present date.

In reading a modern work on the orthodox side,\* I have been much pained by the constant assumption that the long chronologists must be in error, because their views do not coincide with orthodox teachings. Orthodox authors treat their heterodox brethren as unworthy of credit, because of their heterodoxy. The writer asserts\*\* that the earliest reference to the Negro tribes is in the era of the 12th dynasty. Supposing for a moment this to be correct, I ask what even then will be the state of the argument? The 12th dynasty, according to Lepsius, ends about 4,000 years ago. The orthodox chronology fixes the deluge about 300 years earlier. Will any sane man argue that there was sufficient lapse of time in three centuries for the development of Caucasian and Negro man from one family?

\* "Archaia," by Dr. Dawson.

\*\* "Archaia," page 306.

The fact is that we trace back the various types of man now known, not to one center, not to one country, not to one family, not to one pair, but we trace them to different centers, to distinct countries, to separate families, probably to many pairs. Wherever the conditions for life are found, there are living beings also. The conditions of climate, soil, etc., of Central Africa, differ from those of Europe. The indigenous races of Central Africa differ from those of Europe.

Without pretending, in the present limited essay, to do more than index some of the most prominent features of the case, I yet hope that enough is here stated to interest my readers in the prosecution of future inquiry upon the important question which serves as the title to these pages. I put forward no knowledge from myself, but am ready to listen to the teachings of wiser men; and while I shrink from the ordinary orthodox assertion of Adamic unity of origin, accompanied as it is by threats of pains and penalties if rejected, I am yet ready to receive it, if it can be presented to me associated with facts, and divested of those future hell-fire torments and present societarian persecutions which now form its chief, if not sole, supports.

The rejection of the bible account of the peopling of the world involves also the rejection, as has been already remarked, of the entire scheme of Christianity. According to the orthodox rendering of both New and Old Testament teaching, all men are involved in the curse which followed Adam's sin. But if the account of the Fall be mythical, not historical; if Adam and Eve—supposing them to have ever existed—were preceded on the earth by many nations and empires, what becomes of the doctrine that Jesus came to redeem mankind from a sin committed by one who was not the common father of all humanity?

Reject Adam, and you can not accept Jesus. Refuse to believe Genesis, and you can not give credence to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Paul. The Old and New Testaments are so connected together that to dissolve the union is to destroy the system. The account of the Creation and Fall of Man is the foundation-stone of the Christian Church. If this stone be rotten, the superstructure can not be stable. It is therefore most important that those who profess a faith in Christianity should consider facts which so vitally and materially affect the creed they hold.

# A PLEA FOR ATHEISM.

Gillespie says that "an Atheist propagandist seems a nondescript monster created by Nature in a moment of madness." Despite this opinion, it is as the propagandist of Atheism that I pen the following lines, in the hope that I may succeed in removing some few of the many prejudices which have been created against not only the actual holders of Atheistic opinions, but also against those wrongfully suspected of entertaining such ideas. Men who have been famous for depth of thought, for excellent wit, or great genius, have been recklessly assailed as Atheists by those who lacked the high qualifications against which the spleen of the calumniators was directed. Thus, not only has Voltaire been without ground accused of Atheism, but Bacon, Locke, and Bishop Berkeley himself, have, among others, been denounced by thoughtless or unscrupulous pietists as inclining to Atheism, the ground for the accusation being that they manifested an inclination to improve human thought.

It is too often the fashion with persons of pious reputation to speak in unmeasured language of Atheism as favoring immorality, and of Atheists as men whose conduct is necessarily vicious, and who have adopted atheistic views as a disparate defiance against a Deity justly offended by the badness of their lives. Such persons urge that among the proximate causes of Atheism are vicious training, immoral and profligate companions, licentious living, and the like. Dr. John Pye Smith, in his "Instructions on Christian Theology," goes so far as to declare that "nearly all the Atheists upon record have been men of extremely debauched and vile conduct." Such language from the Christian advocate is not surprising, but there are others who, professing great desire for the spread of Freethought, and with pretensions to rank among acute and liberal thinkers, declare Atheism impracticable, and its teachings cold, barren, and negative. In this brief essay I shall except to each of the above allegations, and shall endeavor to demonstrate that Atheism affords greater possibility for human happiness than any system yet based on Theism, or possible to be founded thereon, and that the lives of true Atheists must be more virtuous, because more human, than those of the believers in Deity, the humanity of the devout believer often finding itself neutralized by a faith with which it is necessarily in constant collision. The devotee piling the faggots at the *auto de fe* of a heretic, and that heretic his son, might, notwithstanding, be a good father in every respect but this. Heresy, in the eyes of the believer, is highest criminality, and outweighs all claims of family or affection.

Atheism, properly understood, is in nowise a cold, barren negative; it is, on the contrary, a hearty, fruitful affirmation of all truth, and involves the positive assertion and action of highest humanity.

Let Atheism be fairly examined, and neither condemned—its defense unheard—on the *ex parte* slanders of the professional preachers of fashionable orthodoxy, whose courage is bold enough while the pulpit protects the sermon, but whose valor becomes tempered with discretion when a free platform is afforded and discussion claimed; nor misjudged because it has been the custom to regard Atheism as so unpopular as to render its advocacy impolitic. The best policy against all prejudice is to assert firmly the verity. The Atheist does not say "There is no God," but he says, "I know not what you mean by God: I am without idea of God; the word 'God' is to me a sound conveying no clear or distinct affirmation. I do not deny God, because I can not deny that of which I have no conception, and the conception of which by its affirmer is so imperfect that he is unable to define it to me." If you speak to the Atheist of God as a creator, he answers that the conception of creation is impossible. We are utterly unable to construe it in thought as possible that the complement of existence has been either increased or diminished, much less can we conceive an absolute origination of substance. We can not conceive either, on the one hand, nothing becoming something, or on the other, something becoming nothing. The Theist who speaks of God



creating the universe, must either suppose that Deity evolved it out of himself, or that he produced it from nothing. But the Theist can not regard the universe as evolution of Deity, because this would identify Universe and Deity, and be Pantheism rather than Theism. There would be no distinction of substance—in fact, no creation. Nor can the Theist regard the universe as created out of nothing, because Deity is, according to him, necessarily eternal and infinite. His existence being eternal and infinite, precludes the possibility of the conception of vacuum to be filled by the universe if created. No one can even think of any point of existence in extent or duration and say here is the point of separation between the creator and the created. Indeed, it is not possible for the Theist to imagine a beginning to the universe. It is not possible to conceive either an absolute commencement, or an absolute termination of existence; that is, it is impossible to conceive a beginning before which you have a period when the universe has yet to be: or to conceive an end, after which the universe, having been, no longer exists. It is impossible in thought to originate or annihilate the universe. The Atheist affirms that he cognizes to-day effects, that these are at the same time causes and effects—causes to the effects they precede, effects to the causes they follow. Cause is simply everything without which the effect would not result, and with which it must result. Cause is the means to an end, consummating itself in that end. The Theist who argues for creation must assert a point of time, that is, of duration, when the created did not yet exist. At this point of time either something existed or nothing; but something must have existed, for out of nothing nothing can come. Something must have existed, because the point fixed upon is that of the duration of something. This something must have been either finite or infinite; if finite, it could not have been God; and if the something were infinite, then creation was impossible, as it is impossible to add to infinite existence.

If you leave the question of creation and deal with the government of the universe, the difficulties of Theism are by no means lessened. The existence of evil is then a terrible stumbling-block to the Theist. Pain, misery, crime, poverty, confront the advocate of eternal goodness, and challenge with unanswerable potency his declaration of Deity as all-good, all-wise, and all-powerful. Evil is either caused by God, or exists independently; but it can not be caused by God, as in that case he would not be all-good; nor can it exist independently, as in that case he would not be all-powerful. Evil must either have had a beginning, or it must be eternal; but, according to the Theist, it can not be eternal, because God alone is eternal. Nor can it have had a beginning, for if it had it must either have originated in God, or outside of God; but, according to the Theist, it can not have originated in God, for he is all-good, and out of all-goodness evil can not originate; nor can evil have originated outside of God, for, according to the Theist, God is infinite, and it is impossible to go outside of or beyond infinity.

To the Atheist this question of evil assumes an entirely different aspect. He declares that evil is a result, but not a result from God or Devil. He affirms that by conduct founded on knowledge of the laws of existence it is possible to ameliorate and avoid present evil, and, as our knowledge increases, to prevent its future recurrence.

Some declare that the belief in God is necessary as a check to crime. They allege that the Atheist may commit murder, lie, or steal, without fear of any consequences. To try the actual value of this argument, it is not unfair to ask, Do Theists ever steal? If yes, then in each such theft, the belief in God and his power to punish has been inefficient as a preventive of the crime. Do Theists ever lie or murder? If yes, the same remark has farther force—hell-fire failing against the lesser as against the greater crime. The fact is that these who use such an argument overlook a great truth—i.e., that all men seek happiness, though in very diverse fashions. Ignorant and miseducated men often mistake the true path to happiness, and commit crime in the endeavor to obtain it. Atheists hold that by teaching mankind the real road to human happiness, it is possible to keep them from the by-ways of criminality and error. Atheists would teach men to be moral now, not because God offers as an inducement reward by and by, but because in the virtuous act itself immediate good is insured to the doer and the circle surrounding him. Atheism would

preserve man from lying, stealing, murdering now, not from fear of an eternal agony after death, but because these crimes make this life itself a course of misery.

While Theism, asserting God as the creator and governor of the universe, hinders and checks man's efforts by declaring God's will to be the sole directing and controlling power, Atheism, by declaring all events to be in accordance with natural laws—that is, happening in certain ascertainable sequences—stimulates man to discover the best conditions of life, and offers him the most powerful inducements to morality. While the Theist provides future happiness for a scoundrel repentant on his death bed, Atheism affirms present and certain happiness for the man who does his best to live here so well as to have little cause for repenting hereafter.

Theism declares that God dispenses health and inflicts disease, and sickness and illness are regarded by the Theist as visitations from an angered Deity, to be borne with meekness and content. Atheism declares that physiological knowledge may preserve us from disease by preventing our infringing the law of health, and that sickness results not as the ordinance of offended Deity, but from ill-ventilated dwellings and workshops, bad and insufficient food, excessive toil, mental suffering, exposure to inclement weather, and the like—all these finding root in poverty, the chief source of crime and disease; that prayers and piety afford no protection against fever, and that if the human being be kept without food he will starve as quickly whether he be Theist or Atheist, theology being no substitute for bread.

When the Theist ventures to affirm that his God is an existence other than and separate from the so-called material universe, and when he invests this separate, hypothetical existence with the several attributes of omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, eternity, infinity, immutability, and perfect goodness, then the Atheist, in reply says, "I deny the existence of such a being."

It becomes very important, in order that injustice may not be done to the Theistic argument, that we should have—in lieu of a clear definition, which it seems useless to ask for—the best possible clue to the meaning intended to be conveyed by the word God. If it were not that the word is an arbitrary term, invented for the ignorant, and the notions suggested by which are vague and entirely contingent upon individual fancies, such a clue could be probably most easily and satisfactorily obtained by tracing back the word "God," and ascertaining the sense in which it was used by the uneducated worshipers who have gone before us; collating this with the more modern Theism, qualified as it is by the superior knowledge of to-day. Dupuis says: "The word God appears intended to express the force universal, and eternally active, which endows all nature with motion according to the laws of a constant and admirable harmony; which develops itself in the diverse forms of organized matter, which mingles with all, gives life to all; which seems to be one through all its infinitely varied modifications, and inheres in itself alone."

In the "Bon Sens" of Cure Meslier, it is asked, "Qu'est ce que Dieu?" and the answer is: "It is an abstract word coined to designate the hidden force of Nature, or rather it is a mathematical point having neither length, breadth, nor thickness."

The orthodox fringe of the Theism of to-day is Hebraistic in its origion—that is, it finds its root in the superstition and ignorance of a petty and barbarous people nearly destitute of literature, poor in language, and almost entirely wanting in high conceptions of humanity. It might, as Judaism is the foundation of Christianity, be fairly expected that the ancient Jewish Records would aid us in our search after the meaning to be attached to the word "God." the most prominent words in Hebrew rendered God or Lord in English are [———] *Jeue*, and [———] *Aleim*. The first word, *Jeue*, called by our orthodox Jehovah, is equivalent to "that which exists," and indeed embodies in itself the only possible trinity in unity—i. e. past, present, and future. There is nothing in this Hebrew word to help you to any such definition as is required for the sustenance of modern Theism. The most you can make of it by any stretch of imagination is equivalent to the declaration "I am, I have been, I shall be." The word [———] is hardly ever spoken by religious Jews, who actually in reading substitute for it, *Adonai*, an entirely different word. Dr. Wall

notices the close resemblance in sound between the word *Yehowa* or *Yeue*, or *Jehovah*, and *Jove*. In fact [———], *Jupiter* and *Jeue*, *pater*, (God the father) present still closer resemblance in sound. *Jove* is also [——] or [——] or [——], whence the word *Deus* and our *Deity*. The Greek mythology, far more ancient than that of the Hebrews, has probably found for Christianity many other and more important features of coincidence than that of a similarly sounding name. The word [——] traced back affords us no help beyond that it identifies *Deity* with the universe. Plato says that the early Greeks thought that the only Gods were the sun, moon, earth, stars and heaven. The word *Aleim*, assists us still less in defining the word *God*, for Parkhurst translates it as a plural noun signifying "the curser," deriving it from the verb *to curse*. Finding that philology aids us but little, we must endeavor to arrive at the meaning of the word "God" by another rule. It is utterly impossible to fix the period of the rise of Theism among any particular people, but it is, notwithstanding, comparatively easy, if not to trace out the development of Theistic ideas, at any rate to point to their probable course of growth among all peoples.

Keightley, in his "Origin of Mythology," says: "Supposing, for the sake of hypothesis, a race of men in a state of total or partial ignorance of *Deity*, their belief in many gods may have thus commenced. They saw around them various changes brought about by human agency, and hence they knew the power of intelligence to produce effects. When they beheld other and greater effects, they ascribed them to some unseen being, similar but superior to man." They associated particular events with special unknown beings (gods), to each of whom they ascribed either a peculiarity of power, or a sphere of action not common to other gods. Thus one was god of the sea, another god of war, another god of love, another ruled the thunder and lightning; and thus through the various elements of the universe and passions of humankind, so far as they were then known.

This mythology became modified with the advancement of human knowledge. The ability to think has proved itself oppugnant to and destructive of the desire to worship. Science has razed altar after altar heretofore erected to the unknown gods, and pulled down deity after deity from the pedestals on which ignorance and superstition had erected them. The priest who had formerly spoken as the oracle of God lost his sway, just in proportion as the scientific teacher succeeded in impressing mankind with a knowledge of the facts around them. The ignorant who had hitherto listened unquestioning during centuries of abject submission to their spiritual preceptors, at last commenced to search and examine for themselves, and were guided by experience rather than by church doctrine. To-day it is that advancing intellect which challenges the reserve guard of the old armies of superstition, and compels a conflict which humankind, must in the end have great gain by the forced enunciation of the truth.

From the word "God" the Theist derives no argument in his favor; it teaches nothing, defines nothing, demonstrates nothing, explains nothing. The Theist answers that this is no sufficient objection, that there are many words which are in common use to which the same objection applies. Even admitting that this were true, it does not answer the Atheist's objection. Alleging a difficulty on the one side is not a removal of the obstacle already pointed out on the other.

The Theist declares his God to be not only immutable, but also infinitely intelligent, and says: "Matter is either essentially intelligent, or essentially non-intelligent; if matter were essentially intelligent, no matter could be without intelligence; but matter can not be essentially intelligent, because some matter is not intelligent, therefore matter is essentially non-intelligent: but there is intelligence, therefore there must be a cause for the intelligence, independent of matter; this must be an intelligent being—i.e., God." The Atheist answers, I do not know what is meant, in the mouth of the Atheist, by "matter." "Matter," "substance," "existence," are three words having the same signification in the Atheist's vocabulary. It is not certain that the Theist expresses any very clear idea when he uses the words "matter" and "intelligence." Reason and understanding are sometimes treated as separate faculties, yet it is not unfair to presume that the Theist would include them both under the word intelligence. Perception is the foundation

of the intellect. The perceptive faculty, or perceptive faculties, differs or differ in each animal, yet in speaking of matter that Theist uses the word "intelligence" as though the same meaning were to be understood in every case. The recollection of the perceptions is the exercise of a different faculty from the perceptive faculty, and occasionally varies disproportionately; thus an individual may have great perceptive faculties, and very little memory, or the reverse, yet memory, as well as perception, is included in intelligence. So also the faculty of comparing between two or more perceptions; the faculty of judging and the faculty of reflecting—all these are subject to the same remarks, and all these and other faculties are included in the word intelligence. We answer, then, that "God" (whatever that word may mean) can not be intelligent. He can never perceive; the act of perception results in the obtaining a new idea, but if God be omniscient his ideas have been eternally the same. He has either been always and always will be perceiving, or he has never perceived at all. But God can not have been always perceiving, because if he had he would always have been obtaining fresh knowledge, in which case he must have some time had less knowledge than now; that is he would have been less perfect; that is, he would not have been God: he can never recollect or forget, he can never compare, reflect nor judge. There can not be perfect intelligence without understanding; but following Coleridge, "understanding is the faculty of judging according to sense." The faculty of whom? Of some person, judging according to that person's senses? But has "God" senses? Is there anything beyond "God" for "God" to sensate? There can not be perfect intelligence without reason. By reason we mean that faculty or aggregation of faculties which avails itself of past experience to predetermine, more or less accurately, experience in the future, and to affirm truths which sense perceives, experiment verifies, and experience confirms. To God there can be neither past nor future, therefore to him reason is impossible. There can not be perfect intelligence without will, but has God will? If God wills, the will of the all-powerful must be irresistible; the will of the infinite must exclude all other wills.

God can never perceive. Perception and sensation are identical. Every sensation is accompanied by pleasure or pain. But God, if immutable, can neither be pleased nor pained. Every fresh sensation involves a change in mental and perhaps in physical condition. God, if immutable, can not change. Sensation is the source of all ideas, but it is only objects external to the mind which can be sensated. If God be infinite there can be no objects external to him, and therefore sensation must be to him impossible. Yet without perception where is intelligence?

God can not have memory or reason—memory is of the past, reason for the future, but to God immutable there can be no past, no future. The words past, present, and future, imply change; they assert progression of duration. If God be immutable, to him change is impossible. Can you have intelligence destitute of perception, memory, and reason? God can not have the faculty of judgment—judgment implies in the act of judging a conjoining or disjoining of two or more thoughts, but this involves change of mental condition. To God, the immutable, change is impossible. Can you have intelligence, yet no perception, no memory, no reason, no judgment? God can not think. The law of the thinkable is that the thing thought must be separated from the thing which is not thought. To think otherwise would be to think of nothing—to have an impression with no distinguishing mark, would be to have no impression. Yet this separation implies change, and to God, immutable, change is impossible. Can you have intelligence without thought? If the Theist replies to this that he does not mean by infinite intelligence as an attribute of Deity an infinity of the intelligence found in a finite degree of humankind, then he is bound to explain, clearly and distinctly, what other "intelligence" he means, and until this be done the foregoing statements require answer.

The Atheist does not regard "substance" as either essentially intelligent or the reverse. Intelligence is the result of certain conditions of existence. Burnished steel is bright—that is, brightness is the necessity of a certain condition of existence. Alter the condition, and the characteristic of the condition no longer exists. The only essential of substance is its existence. Alter the wording of the Theist's objection. Matter

is either essentially bright, or essentially non-bright. If matter were essentially bright, brightness should be the essence of all matter; but matter can not be essentially bright, because some matter is not bright, therefore matter is essentially non-bright; but there is brightness, therefore there must be a cause for this brightness independent of matter; that is, there must be an essentially bright being—i.e., God.

Another Theistic proposition is thus stated: "Every effect must have a cause; the first cause universal must be eternal: *ergo*, the first cause universal must be God." This is equivalent to saying that "God" is "first cause." But what is to be understood by cause? Defined in the absolute, the word has no real value. "Cause," therefore, cannot be eternal. What can be understood by "first cause?" To us the two words convey no meaning greater than would be conveyed by the phrase "round triangle." Cause and effect are correlative terms—each cause is the effect of some precedent; each effect the cause of its consequent. It is impossible to conceive existence terminated by a primal or initial cause. The "beginning," as it is phrased, of the universe, is not thought out by the Theist, but conceded without thought. To adopt the language of Montaigne, "Men make themselves believe that they believe." The so-called belief in *Creation* is nothing more than the prostration of the intellect on the threshold of the unknown. We can only cognize the ever-succeeding phenomena of existence as a line in continuous and eternal evolution. This line has to us no beginning; we trace it back into the misty regions of the past but a little way; and however far we may be able to journey, there is still the great beyond. Then what is meant by "universal cause?" Spinoza gives the following definition of cause, as used in its absolute signification: "By cause of itself I understand that, the essence of which involves existence, or that, the nature of which can only be considered as existent." That is, Spinoza treats "cause" absolute and "existence" as two words having the same meaning. If his mode of defining the word be contested, then it has no meaning other than its relative signification, of a means to an end. "Every effect must have a cause." Every effect implies the plurality of effects, and necessarily that each effect must be finite; but how is it possible from a finite effect to logically deduce a universal, i.e., infinite, cause?

There are two modes of argument presented by Theists, and by which, separately or combined, they seek to demonstrate the being of a God. These are familiarly known as the arguments *a priori* and *a posteriori*.

The *a posteriori* argument has been popularized in England by Paley, who has ably endeavored to bide the weakness of his demonstration under an abundance of irrelevant illustration. The reasoning of Paley is very deficient in the essential points where it most needed strength. It is utterly impossible to prove by it the eternity or infinity of Deity. As an argument founded on analogy, the design argument, at the best, could only entitle its propounder to infer the existence of a finite cause, or, rather, of a multitude of finite causes. It ought not to be forgotten that the illustrations of the eye, the watch, and the man, even if admitted as instances of design, or, rather, of adaptation, are instances of eyes, watches, and men, designed or adapted out of pre-existing substance, by a being of the same kind of substance, and afford, therefore, no demonstration in favor of a designer, alleged to have actually created substance out of nothing, and also alleged to have created a substance entirely different from himself. The *a posteriori* argument can never demonstrate infinity for Deity. Arguing from an effect finite in extent, the most it could afford would be a cause sufficient for that effect, such cause being possibly finite in extent and duration. And as the argument does not demonstrate God's infinity, neither can it, for the same reason, make out his omniscience, as it is clearly impossible to logically claim infinite wisdom for a God possibly only finite. God's omnipotence remains unproved for the same reason, and because it is clearly absurd to argue that God exercises power where he may not be. Nor can the *a posteriori* argument show God's absolute freedom, for, as it does nothing more than seek to prove a finite God, it is quite consistent with the argument that God's existence is limited and controlled in a thousand ways. Nor does this argument show that God always existed; at the best the proof is only that some cause, enough for the effect, existed before it, but there is no evidence that

this cause differs from any other causes, which are often as transient as the effect itself. And as it does not demonstrate that God has always existed, neither does it demonstrate that he will always exist, or even that he now exists. It is perfectly in accordance with the argument, and with the analogy of cause and effect that the effect may remain after the cause has ceased to exist. Nor does the argument from design demonstrate one God. It is quite consistent with this argument that a separate cause existed for each effect, or mark of design, discovered, or that several causes contributed to some or one of such effects. So that if the argument be true, it might result in a multitude of petty deities, limited in knowledge, extent, duration, and power; and, still worse, each one of this multitude of gods may have had a cause which would also be finite in extent and duration, and would require another, and so on, until the design argument loses the reasoner among an innumerable crowd of deities, none of whom can have the attributes claimed for God.

The design argument is defective as an argument from analogy, because it seeks to prove a Creator God who designed, but does not explain whether this God has been eternally designing, which would be absurd; or, if he at some time commenced to design, what then induced him so to commence. It is illogical, for it seeks to prove an immutable Deity by demonstrating a mutation on the part of Deity.

It is unnecessary to deal specially with each of the many writers who have used from different standpoints the *a posteriori* form of argument in order to prove the existence of Deity. The objections already stated apply to the whole class; and, although probably each illustration used by the theistic advocate is capable of an elucidation entirely at variance with his argument, the main features of objection are the same. The argument *a posteriori* is a method of proof in which the premises are composed of some position of existing facts, and the conclusion asserts a position antecedent to those facts. The argument is from given effects to their causes. It is one form of this argument which asserts that man has a moral nature, and from this seeks to deduce the existence of a moral governor. This form has the disadvantage that its premises are illusory. In alleging a moral nature for man, the Theist overlooks the fact that the moral nature of man differs somewhat in each individual, differs considerably in each nation, and differs entirely in some peoples. It is dependent on organization and education: these are influenced by climate, food, and mode of life. If the argument from man's nature could demonstrate anything, it would prove a murdering God for the murderer, a lascivious God for the licentious man, a dishonest God for the thief, and so through the various phases of human inclination. The *a priori* arguments are methods of proof in which the matter of the premises exists in the order of conception antecedently to that of the conclusion. The argument is from cause to effect. Among the prominent Theistic advocates relying upon the *a priori* argument in England are Dr. Samuel Clarke, the Rev. Moses Lowman, and William Gillespie. As this last gentleman condemns his predecessors for having utterly failed to demonstrate God's existence, and as his own treatise on the "Necessary Existence of God" comes to us certified by the praise of Lord Brougham and the approval of Sir William Hamilton, it is to Mr. William Gillespie that the reader shall be directed.

The propositions are first stated entirely, so that Mr. Gillespie may not complain of misrepresentation:

1. Infinity of extension is necessarily existing.
  2. Infinity of extension is necessarily indivisible. Corollary.—Infinity of extension is necessarily immovable.
  3. There is necessarily a being of infinity of extension.
  4. The being of infinity of extension is necessarily of unity and simplicity.
- Sub-proposition.—The material universe is finite in extension.
5. There is necessarily but one being of infinity of expansion.

Part 2, Proposition 1.—Infinity of duration is necessarily existing.

2. Infinity of duration is necessarily indivisible. Corollary.—Infinity of duration is necessarily immovable.

3. There is necessarily a being of infinity of duration.

4. The being of infinity of duration is necessarily of unity and simplicity.

Sub-proposition.—The material universe is finite in duration.

Corollary.—Every succession of substances is finite in duration.

5. There is necessarily but one being of infinity of duration.

Part 3, Proposition 1.—There is necessarily a being of infinity of expansion and infinity of duration.

2. The being of infinity of expansion and infinity of duration is necessarily of unity and simplicity.

Division 2, Part 1.—The simple sole being of infinity of expansion and of duration is necessarily intelligent and all-knowing.

Part 2.—The simple sole being of infinity of expansion and of duration, who is all-knowing, is necessarily all-powerful.

Part 3.—The simple sole being of infinity of expansion and of duration, who is all-knowing and all-powerful, is necessarily entirely free.

Division 3.—The simple sole being of infinity of expansion and of duration, who is all-knowing, all-powerful, and entirely free, is necessarily completely happy.

Sub-proposition.—The simple sole being of infinity of expansion and of duration, who is all-knowing, all-powerful, entirely free, and completely happy, is necessarily perfectly good.

The first objection against the foregoing arguments is that it seeks to prove too much. It affirms one existence (God) infinite in extent and duration, and another entirely different and distinct existence (the material universe) finite in extent and duration. It therefore seeks to substantiate everything and something more. The first proposition is curiously worded, and the argument to demonstrate it is undoubtedly open to more than one objection.

Mr. Gillespie has not defined infinity, and it is possible therefore his argument may be misapprehended in this paper. Infinite signifies nothing more than indefinite. When a person speaks of infinite extension he can only mean to refer to the extension of something to which he has been unable to set limits. The mind can not conceive extension *per se*, either absolute or finite. It can only conceive something extended. It

might be impossible mentally to define the extension of some substance. In such a case its extension would be indefinite; or, as Mr. Gillespie uses the word, infinite. No one can therefore possibly have any idea of infinity of extension. Yet it is upon the existence of such an idea, and on the impossibility of getting rid of it, that Mr. Gillespie grounds his first proposition. If the idea does not exist, the argument is destroyed at the first step.

Mr. Gillespie argues that it is utterly beyond the power of the human mind to conceive infinity of extension non-existent. He would have been more correct in asserting that it is utterly beyond the power of the human mind to conceive infinity of extension at all, either existent or non-existent. Extension can only be conceived as quality of substance. It is possible to conceive substance extended. It is impossible in thought to limit the possible extension of substance. Mr. Gillespie having asserted that we can not but believe that infinity of extension exists, proceeds to declare that it exists necessarily. For, he says, everything the existence of which we can not but believe, exists necessarily. It is not necessary at present to examine what Mr. Gillespie means by existing necessarily; it is sufficient to have shown that we do not believe in the existence of infinity of extension, although we may and do believe in the existence of substance, to the extension of which we may be unable to set limits. But, says Mr. Gillespie, "everything the existence of which we can not but believe is necessarily existing." Then as we can not but believe in the existence of the universe (or, to adopt Mr. Gillespie's phrase, the material universe), the material universe exists necessarily. If by "anything necessarily existing," he means anything the essence of which involves existence, or the nature of which can only be considered as existent, then Mr. Gillespie, by demonstrating the necessary existence of the universe, refutes his own later argument, that God is its creator. Mr. Gillespie's argument, as before remarked, is open to misconception, because he has left us without any definition of some of the most important words he uses. To avoid the same objection, it is necessary to state that by substance or existence I mean that which is in itself and is conceived per se—that is, the conception of which does not involve the conception of anything else as antecedent to it. By quality, that by which I cognize any mode of existence. By mode, each cognized condition of existence. Regarding extension as quality of mode of substance, and not as substance itself, it appears absurd to argue that the quality exists otherwise than as quality of mode.

The whole of the propositions following the first are so built upon it, that if it fails they are baseless. The second proposition is, that infinity of extension is necessarily indivisible. In dealing with this proposition, Mr. Gillespie talks of the *parts* of infinity of extension, and winds up by saying that he means parts in the sense of partial consideration only. Now not only is it denied that you can have any idea of infinity of extension, but it is also denied that infinity can be the subject of partial consideration. Mr. Gillespie's whole proof of this proposition is intended to affirm that the parts of infinity of extension are necessarily indivisible from each other.

I have already denied the possibility of conceiving infinity in parts; and, indeed, if it were possible to conceive infinity in parts, then that infinity could not be indivisible, for Mr. Gillespie says that, by indivisible, he means indivisible, either really or mentally. Now each part of anything conceived is, in the act of conceiving, mentally separated from, either other parts of, or from the remainder of, the whole of which it is part. It is clearly impossible to have a partial consideration of infinity, because the part considered must be mentally distinguished from the unconsidered remainder, and, in that case, you have, in thought, the part considered finite, and the residue certainly limited, at least, by the extent of the part under consideration.

If any of the foregoing objections are well-founded, they are fatal to Mr. Gillespie's argument.

The argument in favor of the corollary to the second proposition is that the parts of infinity of extension are necessarily immovable among themselves; but if there be no such thing as infinity of extension—that is, if extension be only a quality and not necessarily infinite; if infinite mean only indefiniteness or



illimitability, and if infinity can not have parts—this argument goes for very little. The acceptance of the argument that the parts of infinity of extension are immovable is rendered difficult when the reader considers Mr. Gillespie's sub-proposition (4) that the parts of the material universe are movable and divisible from each other. He urges that a part of the infinity of extension or of its substratum must penetrate the material universe and every atom of it. But if infinity can have no parts, no part of it can penetrate the material universe. If infinity have parts (which is absurd), and if some part penetrate every atom of the material universe, and if the part so penetrating be immovable, how can the material universe be considered as movable, and yet as penetrated in every atom by immovability? If penetrated be a proper phrase, then, at the moment when the part of infinity was penetrating the material universe, the part of infinity so penetrating must have been in motion. Mr. Gillespie's logic is faulty. Use his own language, and there is either no penetration, or there is no immovability.

In his argument for the fourth proposition, Mr. Gillespie—having by his previous proposition demonstrated (?) what he calls a substratum for the before demonstrated (?) infinity of extension—says, "it is intuitively evident that the substratum of infinity of extension can be no more divisible than infinity of extension." Is this so? Might not a complex and divisible substratum be conceived by us as possible to underlie a (to us) simple and indivisible indefinite extension, if the conception of the latter were possible to us? There can not be any intuition. It is mere assumption, as, indeed, is the assumption of extension at all, other than as the extension of substance. In his argument for proposition 5, Gillespie says that "any one who asserts that he can suppose two or more necessarily existing beings, each of infinity of expansion, is no more to be argued with than one who denies, Whatever is, is." Why is it more difficult to suppose this than to suppose one being of infinity, and, in addition to this infinity, a material universe? Is it impossible to suppose a necessary being of heat, one of light, and one of electricity, all occupying the same indefinite expansion? If it be replied that you can not conceive two distinct and different beings occupying the same point at the same moment, then it must be equally impossible to conceive the material universe and God existing together.

The second division of Mr. Gillespie's argument is also open to grave objection. Having demonstrated to his own satisfaction an infinite substance, and also having assumed in addition a finite substance, and having called the first an infinite "being"—perhaps from a devout objection to speak of God as substance—Mr. Gillespie seeks to prove that the infinite being is intelligent. He says: "Intelligence either began to be, or it never began to be. That is never began to be is evident in this, that if it began to be, it must have had a cause; for whatever begins to be must have a cause. And the cause of intelligence must be of intelligence; for what is not of intelligence can not make intelligence begin to be. Now intelligence being before intelligence began to be is a contradiction. And this absurdity following from the supposition that intelligence began to be, it is proved that intelligence never began to be: to wit, is of infinity of duration." Mr. Gillespie does not condescend to tell us why "what is not of intelligence cannot make intelligence begin to be;" but it is not unfair to suppose that he means that of things which have nothing in common one can not be the cause of the other. Let us apply Mr. Gillespie's argument to the material universe, the existence of which is to him so certain that he has treated it as a self-evident proposition.

The material universe—that is, matter—either began to be, or it never began to be. That it never began to be is evident in this, that if it began to be, it must have had a cause; for whatever begins to be must have a cause. And the cause of matter must be of matter; for what is not of matter can not make matter begin to be. Now matter being before matter began to be is contradiction. And this absurdity following from the supposition that matter—i. e., the material universe—began to be, it is proved that the material universe never began to be—to wit, is of indefinite duration.

The argument as to the eternity of matter is at least as logical as the argument for the eternity of intelligence. Mr. Gillespie may reply that he affirms the material universe to be finite in duration, and that

by the argument for his proposition, part 2, he proves that the one infinite being (God) is the creator of matter. His words are:

"As the material universe is finite in duration, or began to be, it must have had a cause; for whatever begins to be must have a cause. And this cause must be [Mr. Gillespie does not explain why], in one respect or other, the simple sole being of infinity of expansion and duration, who is all-knowing [the all-knowing or intelligence rests on the argument which has just been shown to be equally applicable to matter], inasmuch as what being, or cause independent of that being, could there be? And, therefore, that being made matter begin to be." Taking Mr. Gillespie's own argument, that which made matter begin to be must be of matter, for what is not matter can not make matter begin to be, then Mr. Gillespie's infinite being (God) must be matter. But there is yet another exception to the preposition, which is that the infinite being (God) is all-powerful. Having, as above, argued that the being made matter, he proceeds, "and this being shown, it must be granted that the being is, necessarily, all-powerful." Nothing of the kind need be granted. If it were true that it was demonstrated that the infinite being (God) made matter, it would not prove him able to make anything else; it might show the being cause enough for that effect, but does not demonstrate him cause for all effects. So that if no better argument can be found to prove God all-powerful, his omnipotence remains unproved.

Mr. Gillespie's last proposition is that the being (God) whose existence he has so satisfactorily (?) made out is necessarily completely happy. In dealing with this proposition, Mr. Gillespie talks of unhappiness as existing in various kinds and degrees. But, to adopt his own style of argument, unhappiness either began to be, or it never began to be. That it never began to be is evident in this, that whatever began to be must have had a cause, for whatever begins to be must have a cause. And the cause of unhappiness must be of unhappiness, for what is not of unhappiness can not make unhappiness begin to be. But unhappiness being before unhappiness began to be is a contradiction; therefore unhappiness is of infinity of duration. But proposition 5, part 2, says there is but one being of infinity of duration. The one being of infinity of duration is therefore necessarily unhappy. Mr. Gillespie's arguments recoil on himself, and are destructive of his own affirmations.

In his argument for the sub-proposition, Mr. Gillespie says that God's motive, or one of his motives, to create, must be believed to have been a desire to make happiness, besides his own consummate happiness, begin to be. That is, God, who is consummate happiness everywhere forever, *desired* something. That is, he wanted more than then existed. That is, his happiness was not complete. That is, Mr. Gillespie refutes himself. But what did infinite and eternal complete happiness desire? It desired (says Mr. Gillespie) to make more happiness—that is, to make more than an infinity of complete happiness. Mr. Gillespie's proof, on the whole, is at most that there exists necessarily substance, the extension and duration which we can not limit. Part of his argument involves of the use of the very *a posteriori* reasoning just considered, regarded by himself as utterly worthless for the demonstration of the existence of a being with such attributes as orthodox Theism tries to assert.

If Sir William Hamilton meant no flattery in writing that Mr. Gillespie's works was one of the "very ablest" on the Theistic side, how wretched indeed must, in his opinion, have been the logic of the less able advocates for Theism. Every Theist must admit that if a God exists, he could have so convinced all men of the fact of his existence that doubt, disagreement, or disbelief would be impossible. If he could not do this, he would not be omnipotent, or he would not be omniscient—that is, he would not be God. Every Theist must also agree that if a God exists, he would wish all men to have such a clear consciousness of his existence and attributes that doubt, disagreement, or belief on this subject would be impossible. And this, if for no other reason, because that out of doubts and disagreements on religion have too often resulted centuries of persecution, strife, and misery, which a good God would desire to prevent. If God would not desire this, then he is not all-good—that is he is not God. But as many men have doubts, a large

majority of mankind have disagreements, and some men have disbeliefs as to God's existence and attributes, it follows either that God does not exist, or that he is not all-wise, or that he is not all-powerful, or that he is not all-good.

Every child is born into the world an Atheist; and if he grows into a Theist, his Deity differs with the country in which the believer may happen to be born, or the people among whom he may happen to be educated. The belief is the result of education or organization. Religious belief is powerful in proportion to the want of scientific knowledge on the part of the believer. The more ignorant, the more credulous. In the mind of the Theist "God" is equivalent to the sphere of the unknown; by the use of the Word he answers without thought problems which might otherwise obtain scientific solution. The more ignorant the Theist, the greater his God. Belief in God is not a faith founded on reason, but a prostration of the reasoning faculties on the threshold of the unknown. Theism is worse than illogical; its teachings are not only without utility; but of itself it has nothing to teach. Separated from Christianity with its almost innumerable sects, from Malometanism with its numerous divisions, and separated also from every other preached system, Theism is a Will-o'-the-wisp, without reality. Apart from orthodoxy, Theism is a boneless skeleton; the various mythologies give it alike flesh and bone, otherwise coherence it hath none. What does Christian Theism teach? That the first man made perfect by the all-powerful, all-wise, all-good God, was nevertheless imperfect, and by his imperfection brought misery into the world, when the all-good God must have intended misery should never come. That this God made men to share this misery—men whose fault was their being what he made them. That this God begets a son, who is nevertheless his unbegotten self, and that by belief in the birth of God's eternal son, and in the death of the undying who died to satisfy God's vengeance, man may escape the consequences of the first man's error. Christian Theism declares that belief alone can save man, and yet recognizes the fact that man's belief results from teaching, by establishing missionary societies to spread the faith. Christian Theism teaches that God, though no respecter of persons, selected as his favorites one nation in preference to all others: that man can do no good of himself or without God's aid, but yet that each man has a free will; that God is all-powerful, but that few go to heaven and the majority to hell; that all are to love God, who has predestined from eternity that by far the largest number of human beings are to be burning in hell for ever. Yet the advocates for Theism venture to upbraid those who argue against such a faith.

Either Theism is true or false. If true, discussion must help to spread its influence; if false, the sooner it ceases to influence human conduct the better for human kind. It will be useless for the clergy to urge that such a pamphlet deserves no reply. It is true the writer is unimportant, and the language in which his thoughts find expression lacks the polish of a Macaulay, and the fervor of a Burke; but they are nevertheless his thoughts, uttered because it is not only his right, but his duty, to give them utterance. And this Plea for Atheism is put forth challenging the Theists to battle for their cause, and in the hope that the strugglers being sincere, truth may give laurels to the victor and the vanquished; laurels to the victor in that he has upheld the truth; laurels still welcome to the vanquished, whose defeat crowns him with a truth he knew not of before.

# IS THERE A GOD?

Some of those who have heard me venture to examine the question of the existence of Deity *viva voce*, have desired to have my reasons for holding the Atheistic position briefly stated, and while I do not pretend to exhaust the subject in these few pages, I trust to say enough to provoke thought and inquiry. I do not say, "There is no God," and the scarcely polite rejoinder of those who quote the Psalmist can not, therefore, be applied with justice toward myself. I have never yet heard living man give me a clear, coherent definition of the word "God," and I have never read any definition from either dead or living man expressing a definite and comprehensible idea of Deity. In fact, it has always appeared to me that men use that word rather to hide their ignorance than to express their knowledge.\*

\* In Sir William Hamilton's Essay on Cousin, I find a note quoting Mr. Piesse on Kant, in which the word God stands as the equivalent for a phase of the unknowable.

Climatic conditions often, and diversity of human race always, govern and modify the meaning conveyed by the word. By "God" one nation or sect expresses love; another, vengeance; another, good; another, wisdom; another, fire; another, water; another, air; another, earth; and some even confound their notion of Deity with that of devil. Elihu Palmer well observes: "The Christian world worships three infinite gods, and one omniscient devil." I do not deny "God," because that word conveys to me no idea, and I can not deny that which presents to me no distinct affirmation, and of which the would-be affirmer has no conception. I can not war with a nonentity. If, however, God is affirmed to represent an existence which is distinct from the existence of which I am a mode, and which it is alleged is not the *noumenon*, of which the word "I" represents only a specialty of *phenomena*, then I deny "God," and affirm that it is impossible "God" can be. That is, I affirm that there is one existence, and deny that there can be more than one. Atheists are sometimes content to say to their opponents, your "proofs" are no proofs, your "evidences" are failures, you do not and can not prove the existence of Deity. This ground may be safe, but the conduct of its occupier is not daring. The swordsman who always guarded and parried, but never ventured cut or thrust, might himself escape unwounded, but he would thus make but little progress toward victory over his opponent.

It is well to show that the position of your antagonist is weak, but it is better to prove that you are strong.

In a paper as limited as the present, it is necessary to be brief both in answer to opponents and in the statements of my own opinions. This is rather intended as the challenging speech of a debate, not as a complete essay on the existence of Deity.

There are two modes in which Theists endeavor to prove the existence of God, and each of these modes is in its turn denounced by Theistic writers—1st, the *a priori*; 2d, the *a posteriori*. Of the former, Pearson, in his "Prize Essay on Infidelity," says: "The *a priori* mode of reasoning is the exclusive idol of many of the German logicians.... But in their hands this kind of reasoning has completely failed. It conducts the mind to no firm resting place; it bewilders instead of elucidating our notions of God, of man, and the universe. It gives us no divine personal existence, and leaves us floating in a region of mere vague abstractions. Such reasonings are either altogether vain or are not really what they profess to be. In our country the name of Dr. Clarke is chiefly associated with the *a priori* argument.... Clarke himself found it necessary to stoop to the argument *a posteriori*, and thereby acknowledged the fallacy of attempting to reason exclusively *a priori*.... The fate of Dr. Clarke's pretended demonstration, and the result, in so far as theology is concerned, of the transcendental reasoning of the continental philosophers, show the futility of

attempting to rise up to the height of the great argument of the existence of God by the *a priori* method alone."

Of the latter, William Gillespie, in his "Treatise on the Necessary Existence of Deity," writes that it "can never make it appear that infinity belongs in any way to God." It "can only entitle us to infer the existence of a being of finite extension, for, by what rule in philosophy can we deduce from the existence of an object finite in extent (and nothing is plainer than that the marks of design which we can discover must be finite in their extent) the existence of a cause of infinity of extension? What, then, becomes of the omnipresence of the Deity, according to those who are content to rest satisfied from the reasoning of experience?... It will be vain to talk of the Deity being present by his energy? although he may not be present by his substance, to the whole universe. For, 'tis natural to ask not so much how it is proved that God is virtually present, though not substantially present, in every part of nature, as what can be meant by being everywhere present by mere energy?" This reasoning can no more make out that the Deity is omnipresent by his virtue, than that he is omnipresent as to his substance.... And, from the inaptitude of the reasoning under consideration to show that immensity, or omnipresence, belongs to God, it will be found to follow, directly and immediately, that his wisdom and power can not be shown to be more than finite, and that he can never be proved to be a free agent... Omnipresence (let it be only by energy) is absolutely necessary in a being of infinity of wisdom. And therefore, 'the design argument' is unable to evince that the Deity is in possession of this attribute. It likewise plainly follows, from the inaptitude of this argument to show that God is omnipresent, that thereby we can not prove infinity of power to belong to him. For, if the argument can not make out that the being it discovers is everywhere present, how can it ever make out that he is everywhere powerful? By careful reflection, too, we may perceive that omnipotence of another kind than power, which can exert itself in all places, requires the existence of immensity. "The design argument" can never evince that God is a free agent....

If we can not prove the immensity or omnipresence of the Deity, we can for that reason never show that he is omniscient, that he is omnipotent, that he is entirely free.... If the Deity can not be proved to be of infinity in any given respect, it would be nothing less than absurd to suppose that he could be proved to be of infinity in any other respect. It "can do no more than prove that at the commencement of the phenomena which pass under its review, there existed a cause exactly sufficient to make the effects begin to be. That this cause existed from eternity, the reasonings from experience by no means show. Nay, for aught they make known, the designer himself may not have existed long before those marks of design which betoken his workmanship." This reasoning "can not prove that the God whom it reveals has existed from all eternity, therefore, for anything it intimates, God may at some time cease to be, and the workmanship may have an existence when the workman hath fallen into annihilation.... Such reasonings can never assure us of the unity of the Deity." Whether there be one God or not, the argument from experience doth by no means make clear. It discovers marks of design in the phenomena of nature, and infers the existence of at least one intelligent substance sufficient to produce them. Further, however, it advances not our knowledge. Whether the cause of the phenomena be one God or many Gods, it pretends not to determine past all doubt.... But did this designer create the matter in which the design appeared? Of this the argument can not convince us, for it does no more than infer a designing cause from certain appearances, in the same way we would infer from finding some well-contrived machine in a desert that a human being had left it there.... Now, because this reasoning can not convince us of such a creation, it can not convince us there is not a plurality of deities, or of the causes of things.... If we can not prove the eternity of God, it is not possible we can prove the unity of God. To say that, for anything we know to the contrary, he may have existed from all eternity, being much the same as saying that, for anything we know to the contrary, there may be another God or many Gods beside." Sir W. Hamilton considered that the only valid arguments for the existence of a God, and for the immortality of the human soul, rest on the ground of

man's moral nature.

Dr. Lyman Beecher issued, some few years since, a series of lectures on Atheism, without merit or fairness, and which are here only alluded to as fairly illustrating a certain class of orthodox opposition. His statements of Atheistic opinions are monstrous perversions, and his answers are directed against the straw man built together by himself. The doctrine of "almighty chance" which Dr. Beecher attacks, is one which I never heard an educated Atheist teach, and the misrepresentation of Freethought objects is so obvious that it can only be effectual with those who have never freed themselves from the trammels which habit and fashion-faith bound upon them in their infancy, and which have strengthened with their growth. The Rev. J. Orr, in his "Treatise on Theism," says, "All inquiry about chance is, however, impertinent in the present day. The idea is an infantine one, possible of entertainment only in the initial state of human knowledge. Chance is *not* the position relied upon by modern Atheism. And when, therefore, the Theist expends the artillery of his argument upon this broken down and obsolete notion, he is intermeddling with the dead, and after accomplishing the destruction of the venerable fallacy, the modern Atheist will likely ask him to come down to the nineteenth century and meet him there."

The only attempt at argument in Dr. Beecher's book is founded on the assumption:

1st. That there is an existence called matter.

2d. That there are certain effects perceivable which can not result from matter.

3d. That therefore there is a God the cause for these effects. Where are there any Materialists who accept Dr. Beecher's limitation of matter? It is a word I do not use myself.

On the question of evil, Coleridge, in his "Aids to Reflection," says: "1st. That evil must have had a beginning, since otherwise it must either be God or a co-eternal and co-equal rival with God. 2d. That it could not originate in God; for if so, it would at once be evil and not evil, or God would be at once God—that is, infinite goodness—and not God." If God be infinite goodness, can evil exist at all? It is necessary above all that we should understand the meaning of each word we use. Some men talk as if their words were intended rather to conceal than to express their ideas. So far as this essay is concerned I will endeavor to avoid this difficulty by explicitly defining each special word I use. Dugald Stewart, indeed, says, "That there are many words used in philosophical discourse which do not admit of logical definition, is abundantly manifest. This is the case with all those words that signify things uncompounded, and consequently unsusceptible of analysis—a proposition, one should think, almost self-evident; and yet it is surprising how very generally it has been overlooked by philosophers."

The advantages, however, accruing from frequent definitions are very great; at the least they serve to explain what was meant by the persons using the word, whereas sometimes two men confuse each word by using words to which each attaches an opposite or a dissimilar value.

Men will talk of "First Cause," and "Intelligent First Cause." Do they know what they mean? I confess I do not, and from the manner in which they use the words, the most charitable conclusion is that they use them because others have done so, and for no worse or better reason. They talk of the "Beauties of Creation," and "Works of the Great Creator." If by creation is meant the origin of existence, then each utterance of the phrase is an absurdity. The human mind is utterly incapable of construing it in thought as possible that the complement of existence has either been increased or diminished. Man can neither conceive nothing becoming something nor something becoming nothing.

Definitions.—1. By existence, or substance, I mean that which is in itself and is conceived *per se*—that is, the conception of which does not require the conception of anything else as antecedent to it. Whenever I use the words universe or matter, I use them in the same sense as representing the totality of existence. Existence can only be known in its modes, and these by their attributes. 2. By attribute, I understand that by which I cognize any mode of existence. Hardness, brightness, color, life, form, etc., are attributes of

conditional existence. 3. By mode, I understand each cognized condition or accident of existence. 4. By eternity I mean indefinite duration; that is duration which is to me illimitable. 5. By infinity, I mean indefinite extension. The axioms, so far as I shall give them, are in the precise language of Spinoza. "1. Everything which is, is in itself, or in some other thing.. 2. That which cannot be conceived through another *per aliud*, must be conceived *per se*. 3. From a given determinate cause, the effect necessarily follows; and, *vice versa*, if no determinate cause be given, no effect can follow. 4. The knowledge of an effect depends on a knowledge of the cause, and includes it. 5. Things that have nothing in common with each other, can not be understood by means of each other—that is, the conception of one does not involve the conception of the other."

Propositions.—Existence is prior to its modes. This follows from definitions 1 and 3, because modes of existence are conceived relatively and in dependence on existence, which is absolutely precedent in such conception. Existences having different attributes have nothing in common with each other. This is founded on definition 1. Existences have nothing in common with each other, can not be the cause of, or affect one another. If they have nothing in common, they can not be conceived by means of each other (per axiom 5), and they can not be conceived as relating to each other, but must be conceived *per se* (per definition 1); and as (per axiom 4) the knowledge of an effect depends on the knowledge of the cause and includes it, it is impossible to conceive any existence as an effect, so long as you can not conceive it in relation to any other existence. By "cause" in the absolute, I mean "existence." In its popular or relative sense, I use "cause" as an effect of some precedent causative influence, itself the cause of some consequent effect, as the means toward an end, in the accomplishment of which end it completes itself.

What fact is there so certain that I may base all my reasonings upon it? My existence is this primary fact; this, to me, indubitable certainty. I am. This logic can neither prove nor disprove. The very nature of proof is to make a proposition more clear to the mind than it was before, and no amount of evidence can in-crease my conviction of the certainty of my own existence. I do not affirm that I am in existence, but I affirm that there is existence. This existence is either eternal, that is, unlimited in duration, that is, indefinite in duration; or else it had a beginning, that is, it has been created. If created, then such creation must be by some existence the same as itself, or by some existence differing from itself. But it can not have been created by any existence the same as itself, because to imagine such, would be to conceive no more than a continuance of the same existence—there would be no discontinuity. "But," says S. T. Coleridge, "where there is no discontinuity, there can be no origination." And it can not have been created by any existence differing from itself, because things which have nothing in common with one another can not be the cause of, or affect, one another. Therefore, this existence has not been created, that is, its duration is indefinite—that is, you can not conceive a beginning—that is, it is eternal. This eternal existence is either infinite in extent, that is, is unlimited in extent, or it is finite, that is, limited. If limited, it must be limited by an existence the same as itself, or by an existence differing from itself. But the same arguments which applied to a limitation of duration, also apply to a limitation of extension. Therefore, this existence is unlimited in extent; that is, is infinite and eternal—that is, there is only one existence. It is at this point that Atheism separates from Pantheism. Pantheism demonstrates one existence, but affirms for it infinite attributes. Atheism denies that attributes can be infinite. Attributes are but the distinguishing characteristics of modes, and how can that be infinite which is only the quality of finity? Men do not talk of infinite hardness or of infinite softness; yet they talk of infinite intelligence. Intelligence is not an existence, and the word is without value unless it strictly comprehend, and is included in, that which is intelligent. The hardness of the diamond, the brilliancy of the burnished steel, have no existence apart from the diamond or the steel. I, in fact, affirm that there is only one existence, and that all we take cognizance of is mode, or attribute of mode, of that existence.

I have carefully abstained from using the words "matter" and "spirit." Dr. Priestly says: "It has

generally been supposed that there are *two distinct kinds of substance* in human nature, and they have been distinguished by the terms *matter*, and *spirit*, or *mind*. The former of these has been said to be possessed of the property of *extension*, viz., of length, breadth and thickness, and also of *solidity* or impenetrability, and consequently of a *vis inertiae*; but it is said to be naturally destitute of all other powers whatever. The latter has of late been defined to be a substance entirely destitute of all extension, or relation to space, so as to have no property in common with matter; and therefore to be properly *immaterial*, but to be possessed of the powers of perception, intelligence, and self-motion. Matter is alleged to be that kind of substance of which our bodies are composed, whereas the principle of perception and thought belonging to us is said to reside in a spirit, or immaterial principle, intimately united to the body; while higher orders of intelligent beings, and especially the Divine Being, are said to be purely immaterial. It is maintained that neither matter nor spirit (meaning by the latter the subject of sense and thought) correspond to the definitions above mentioned. For that matter is not that *inert* substance that it has been supposed to be; that powers of *attraction or repulsion* are necessary to its very being, and that no part of it appears to be *impenetrable* to other parts; I therefore define it to be a substance possessed of the property of extension, and powers of attraction or repulsion; and since it has never yet been asserted that the powers of *sensation* and *thought* are incompatible with these (*solidity or impenetrability*, and, consequently, a *vis inertiae*, only having been thought to be repugnant to them), I therefore maintain that we have no reason to suppose that there are in man two substances so distinct from each other as have been represented. It is likewise maintained that the notion of two substances that have no common property, and yet are capable of intimate connection and mutual action, is absurd."

I do not conceive *spirit or mind* as an existence. By the word *mind*, I simply express the totality of perception, observation, collection, and recollection of perceptions, reflection and various other mental processes. Dugald Stewart, in his "Essay on Locke," says: "We are conscious of sensation, thought, desire, volition, but we are not conscious of the existence of the mind itself."

It is urged that the idea of God is universal. This is not only not true, but I, in fact, deny that any coherent idea exists in connection with the word "God." The chief object to which the emotions of any people were directed in ancient times became their God. When these emotions were combined with vague traditions, and a priesthood became interested in handing down the traditions, and increasing the emotions, then the object becoming sacred was hallowed and adored, and uncertain opinions formed the basis of a creed. Any prominent phenomenon in the universe, which was not understood, was personified, as were also the various passions and phases of humanity. These, in time, were preached as religious truths, and thus diverted the people from inquiry into the natural causes of phenomena, which they accounted for as ordained by God, and when famine or pestilence occurred, instead of endeavoring to remove its cause or using preventive measures against a recurrence of the evil, they sought to discover why the supernatural power was offended, and how it might be appeased, and ascribing to it their own passions and emotions, they offered prayers and sacrifices. These errors becoming institutions of the country, the people, prompted by their priests, regarded all those who endeavored to overturn them by free and scientific thought and speech as blasphemers, and the Religion of each State has, therefore, always been opposed to the education of the people.

Archbishop Whately, in his "Elements of Rhetoric," part 1, chap. ii, sec. 5, urges that "those who represent God or Gods as malevolent, capricious, or subject to human passions and vices, are invariably to be found among those who are brutal and uncivilized." We admit this, but ask is it not the fact that both the Old and New Testament teachings do represent God as malevolent, capricious, and subject to human passions and vices—that is, are not these bible views of God relics of a brutal and uncivilized people?

There is, of course, not room in a short essay like the present to say much upon the morality of Atheism, and it should therefore suffice to say, that truth and morality go hand in hand. That that is moral which



tends to the permanent happiness of all. The continuance of falsehood never can result in permanent happiness; and therefore if Atheism be truthful, it must be moral, if it be against falsehood, it must tend to human happiness.

Yet if quoting great names will have effect, Lord Bacon, who is often quoted against Atheism, also says: "Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation, all of which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, *though religion were not*; but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the mind of men; therefore Atheism never did perturb states, for it makes men wary of themselves as looking no further; and we see the times inclined to Atheism, as the times of Augustus Caesar were civil times; but superstition has been the confusion of many states." George Combe says: "I have known men in whom the reasoning organs were amply developed and well cultivated, who assured me that they could not reach the conviction of the being of a God. I have known such men equal in point of integrity and practical benevolence to the most orthodox believers." In the West Riding of Yorkshire, among the men themselves, a wealthy employer bore favorable testimony to the conduct and intelligence of Atheistic working men. Nay, even the fanatical Dr. Lyman Beecher is obliged to concede that Atheism made converts among "females of education and refinement—females of respectable standing in society."

# HAS MAN A SOUL?

[This lecture was originally delivered to the Sheffield Secular Society, and was printed from the reporter's notes without efficient correction from myself, I, at that time, suffering under a severe attack of acute rheumatism. The lecture has since been often re-delivered; and three editions having been exhausted, I have again corrected and revised the present edition. It is not intended as an answer to the question which forms the title, but it is intended to provoke thought upon this important subject.]

What do you mean by soul? What is the soul? Is it I? Is it the body? Is it apart from the body? Is it an attribute of the body? Has it a separate and distinct existence from the body? What is the soul? If I ask one of those who claim to be considered orthodox men, they will tell me that the soul is a spirit—that the soul lives after the body is dead. They will tell me that the soul is immortal, and that the body is mortal; that the soul has nothing whatever in common with the body; that it has an existence entirely independent of the body. They will tell me that after the body has decayed—after the body has become re-absorbed in the universe, of which it is but a part, that the soul still exists. Is there any proof of the existence of the same individual soul apart from all material conditions? I have endeavored to examine this subject, and, up to the present time, I have not found one iota of proof in support of the positions thus put forward. I have no idea of any existence except that of which I am part. I am. Of my own existence I am certain I think. I am. But what is it that thinks? Is it my soul? Is it "me," and yet distinct from me? I am but a mode of existence. I am only part of the great universe. The elements of which I am composed are indissolubly connected with that great existence which is around me and within me, and which I help to make up. If men tell me I am a compound, and not a compound—a mixture, and not a mixture—a joining together, and not a joining together—of two entirely different existences, which they call "matter" and "spirit," I am compelled to doubt those men. The ability to think is but an attribute of a certain modification of existence. Intelligence is a word by which we express the sum of certain abilities, always attending a certain mode of existence. I find intelligence manifested so far as organization is developed. I never find intelligence without animal organization. I find intelligence manifested in degree, only so far as I find a higher or lower type of organization—that is, I find man's intellectual faculties limited by his organization. But the orthodox tell me that my soul has an immaterial existence, independent of all organization—independent of all climatic conditions—independent of all education. Is that so? When does the soul come into man? When does it go out of man? If the soul is immortal, why is it that standing here, in the prime of health and strength, if part of that roof should fall fracturing my skull, and pressing upon my brain—how is it, if my soul is not subject to material conditions, that it then ceases to act? Is the plaster roof more powerful than my immortal soul? Or is it that intelligence is the necessary result of a certain condition of existence, and that the moment you destroy that condition—the moment you destroy the organization—the result ceases to be realizable? By the course of reasoning you adopt (says the orthodox objector) you reduce man to the same level as the beasts. And why not? I stand on the river's bank, I see there a man full grown, possessed of the physical figure of man, but an idiot—an idiot from his birth upward—one who could not, even if he would, think and act as other men. A little child is there playing on the bank, and the idiot, having large destructive propensities, has thrust the child into the water, and he stands there jabbering and gesticulating while the little child is drowning in the river. And see how half-vacantly, half-triumphantly, he points to the helpless child. A Newfoundland dog has come to the bank; it jumps in and brings the child out and saves its life. Yet theologians tell me that the idiot has a soul, and that the Newfoundland dog has not one. I can not understand these nice distinctions, which make the man so superior to the beast in matters in

which he is positively inferior. Man has doubtless an organization on the whole far superior intellectually to that of any other animal, but he is only superior by virtue of his superior organization and its consequent susceptibility for development or education. Many brutes can see more clearly than man; but they possess not the capability for the manufacture of telescopes to aid their vision. Many brutes can run more swiftly, but they manifest no capacity for the subjugation of a steam power which far outstrips their speed. But man himself, a well-organized, thoughtful, intelligent, well-educated man, by a fall from a horse, by a tile from a roof, may receive an injury to his nervous encephalic apparatus, and may be, even while a man in shape, as low as the brute in the imbecility of his reason, and inferior to the brute in physical strength. There is as much difference between different races of men, there is, in fact, more difference between a pure Caucasian and a Sahara negro, than between the Sahara negro and the infant chimpanzee.

When did the soul come into the body? Has it been waiting from all eternity to occupy each body the moment of birth? Is this the theory that is put forward to man—that there are many millions of souls still waiting, perhaps, in mid air, 'twixt heaven and earth, to occupy the still unborn babes? Is that the theory? Or do you allege that God specially creates souls for each little child at the moment it is born or conceived? Which is the theory put forward? Is it that the soul being immortal—being destined to exist for ever, has existed from all eternity? If not, how do you know that the soul is to exist for ever; when it only comes into existence with the child? May not that which has recently begun to be, soon cease to be? In what manner does the soul come into the child? Is it a baby's soul, and does it grow with the child? or, does it possess its full power the moment the child is born? When does it come into the child? Does it come in the moment the child begins to form, or is it the moment the child is born into the world? Whence is it this soul comes? Dr. Cooper, quoting Lawrence on the "Functions of the Brain," says: "Sir Everard Home, with the assistance of Mr. Bauer and his microscope, has shown us a man eight days old from the time of conception, about as broad and a little longer than a pin's head. He satisfied himself that the brain of this homunculus was discernible. Could the immaterial mind have been connected with it at this time? Or was the tenement too small even for so ethereal a lodger? Even at the full period of uterogestation, it is still difficult to trace any vestiges of mind: and the believers in its separate existence have left us quite in the dark on the precise time when they suppose this union of soul and body to take place." Many of those who tell me that man has a soul, and that it is immortal—that man has a soul, and that the beast has not one—forget or ignore the fact that at a very early stage in the formation of the brain the state of the brain corresponds to that of the avertebrated animal, or animal that is without vertebra. If the brain had stopped in its first month's course of formation, would the child have had a soul? If it would have had a soul, then have avertebrated animals souls also? If you tell me it would not have had a soul, then I ask, How do you know it? and I ask you what ground you have for assuming that the soul did not begin to form with the formation of the brain? I ask you whether it was pre-existing, or at what stage it came? In the second month this brain corresponds then to the brain of an osseous fish. Supposing the development of the child had been then stopped, had it a soul at that time? If so, have fishes souls? Again, if you tell me that the child had not a soul, then, I ask, why not? How do you know it had not? What ground have you for alleging that the soul did not exist in the child? We go on still further, and in the third month we find that brain corresponds then to that of a turtle, and in the fourth to that of a bird; and in the fifth month, to an order termed *rodentia*; sixth, to that of the *ruminantia*; seventh, to that of the *dugitigrada*; eighth, to that of the *quadrumana*; and not till the ninth month does the brain of the child attain a full human character. I, of course, here mean to allege no more than Dr. Fletcher, who says, in his "Rudiments of Physiology," quoted by the author of the "Vestiges of Creation": "This is only an approximation to the truth; since neither is the brain of all osseous fishes, of all turtles, of all birds, nor of all the species of any of the above order of mammals, by any means precisely the same; nor does the brain of the human fetus at any time precisely resemble, perhaps, that of any individual whatever among the lower animals. Nevertheless it may be said to represent, at each of the above-named periods, the aggregate, as it were, of the brains of

each of the tribes stated."

Now, should a birth have taken place at any of the eight stages, would the child thus prematurely born have had a soul? That is the question I propose to you. You who affirm that man has a soul, it lies upon you, here, without charging me with blasphemy—without charging me with ignorance—without charging me with presumption—it lies upon you who affirm, to state the grounds for your belief. At which stage, if at any, did the soul come into the child? At the moment of the birth? Why when a child is born into the world it can scarcely see—it can not speak—it can not think—but after a short time I jingle my keys, and it begins to give faint smiles; and after a few weeks, it is pleased with the jingling of my keys. Is it the soul which is learning to appreciate the sound of the jingling keys, and pleased with them? Is it the immaterial and immortal soul amused and pleased with my bundle of keys? Where is the soul? How is it that the soul can not speak the moment the child is born—can not even think? How is it, that if I keep that child without telling it any thing of its soul until it become fourteen or fifteen years of age, it would then speak and think as I had taught it to speak and think; and if I kept it without the knowledge of a soul, it would have no knowledge of a soul at that age? How is that? Rajah Brooke, at a missionary meeting in Liverpool, told his hearers there that the Dyaks, a people with whom he was connected, had no knowledge of God, of a soul, or of any future state. How is it that the Dyaks have got this soul and yet live knowing nothing whatever about it? And the Dyaks are by no means the only people who live and die knowing nothing of any immortal and immaterial soul. Again you tell me that this soul is immortal. Do you mean that it has eternally existed—has never been created? If so, you deny a God who is the creator of all things. If the soul began at some time to exist, where is the evidence that it will not also at some time cease to exist? If it came into existence with the body's birth, why not cease with the body's death? You say the soul is immaterial; do you mean that it is susceptible to material conditions or do you not? If susceptible to material conditions, what do you mean by its being immortal and immaterial? If not susceptible to material conditions, then explain to me how it is that under good conditions it prospers and advances, and under bad conditions deteriorates and recedes. If a child is born in some of the back streets of our city, and lives on bad food in a wretched cellar, it grows up a weak and puny pale-faced child. If allowed to crawl into existence on the edge of a gutter, imperfectly educated, in fact mis-educated, it steals—steals, perhaps, to live—and it becomes an outcast from society. Is this immortal soul affected by the bodily conditions? or is the soul originally naturally depraved? And if the soul is primarily naturally depraved, why is God so unjust as to give a naturally depraved soul to any body? If not, how is it that this immortal soul, when the body is kept without food, permits the man who has no money to buy food, to steal to satisfy his hunger? You allege that the soul moves my body. You assert that matter is inert, unintelligent; that it is my active, intelligent soul that moves and impels my inert and non-intelligent body. Is my immortal soul hindered and controlled by the state of my body's general health? Does my soul feel hungry and compel my body to steal? Some theologians declare that my soul is immaterial—that there is no means by which I can take any cognizance whatever of it. What does that mean, except that they know nothing whatever about it? Sir W. Hamilton admits that we are entirely ignorant as to the connection between soul and body. Yet many who in so many words admit that they have no knowledge, but only faith in the soul's existence, are most presumptuous in affirming it, and in denouncing those who dispute their affirmation. It is an easy method to hide ignorance, by denouncing your opponent as an ignorant blasphemer.

Joseph Priestley, in his book upon matter and spirit, quotes from Hallet's discourses, as follows; "I see a man move and hear him speak for some years. From his speech I certainly infer that he thinks, as I do. I then see that man is a being who thinks and acts. After some time the man falls down in my sight, grows cold and stiff, and speaks and acts no more. Is it not then natural to conclude that he thinks no more; as the only reason I had to believe that he did think was his motion and his speech. And now that his motion and

speech have ceased, I have lost the only way of proving that he had the power of thought. Upon this sudden death, one visible thing, the one man, has greatly changed. Whence could I infer that the same being consisted of two parts, and that the inward part continues to live and think, and flies away from the body? When the outward part ceases to live and move, it looks as if the whole *man* was gone, and that he, with all his powers, ceases at the same time. His motion and thought both die together, as far as I can discern. The powers of thought, of speech and motion, equally depend upon the body, and run the same fate in case of declining age. When a man dies through old age, I perceive his powers of speech, motion, and thought decay and die together, and by the same degrees. That moment he ceases to move and breathe he appears to cease to think, too. When I am left to my reason it seems to me that my power of thought depends as much upon the body as my sight and hearing. I could not think in infancy; my power of thought, of sight, and of feeling are equally liable to be obstructed by the body. A blow on the head has deprived a man of thought, who could yet see, and feel and move; so naturally the power of thinking seems as much to belong to the body as any power of man whatsoever. Naturally there appears no more reason to suppose that a man can think out of the body than he can hear sounds and feel cold out of the body."

What do those mean who say that man is made up of two parts—matter and mind? I know of only one existence. I find that existence manifested variously, each mode having certain variations of attributes by which it is cognized. One of these attributes, or a collection of certain attributes, I find in, or with, certain modifications of that existence, that is, in or with animal life—this attribute, or these attributes, we call intelligence. In the same way that I find upon the blade of a knife brightness, consequent upon a certain state of the metal, so do I find in man, in the beast, different degrees, not of brightness, but of intelligence, according to their different states of organization. I am told that the mind and the body are separate from one another. Are the brightness and steel of the knife separate? Is not brightness the quality attaching to a certain modification of existence—steel? Is not intelligence a quality attaching to a certain modification of existence—man? The word brightness has no meaning, except as relating to some bright thing. The word intelligence, no meaning, except as relating to some intelligent thing. I take some water and drop it upon the steel, in due course the process of oxidation takes place and the brightness is gone. I drop into man's brain a bullet; the process of destruction of life takes place, and his intelligence is gone. By changing the state of the steel we destroy its brightness, and by disorganizing the man destroy his intelligence. Is mind an entity or result? an existence or a condition? Surely it is but the result of organic activity, a phenomenon of animal life. Dr. Engledue says: "In the same way as organism generally has the power of manifesting, when the necessary stimuli are applied, the phenomena which are designated life; so one individual portion—brain, having peculiar and distinct properties, manifests on the application of its appropriate stimuli a peculiar and distinct species of action. If the sum of all bodily function—life, be not an entity, how can the product of the action of one portion of the body—brain, be an entity? Feeling and intelligence are but fractional portions of life." I ask those who are here to prove that man has a soul, to do so apart from revelation. If the soul is a part of ourselves, we require no supernatural revelation to demonstrate its existence to us. D'Holbach says: "The doctrine of spirituality, such as it now exists, affords nothing but vague ideas; it is rather a poisoner of all ideas. Let me draw your attention to this: The advocates of spirituality do not tell you anything, but in fact prevent you from knowing anything. They say that spirit and matter have nothing in common, and that mortal man can not take cognizance of immortality. An ignorant man may set himself up as an orator upon such a matter. He says you have a soul—an immortal soul. Take care you don't lose your soul. When you ask him what is my soul, he says he does not know—nobody knows—nobody can tell you. This is really that which they do. What is this doctrine of spirituality? What does it present to the mind? A substance unsubstantial that possesses nothing of which our senses enable us to take cognizance." Theologians urge that each of us has a soul superior to all material conditions, and yet a man who speaks can not communicate by his speaking soul so freely with that man who is deaf and dumb; the conditions cramp that which is said to be uncontrolled by any

conditions. If you cut out a man's tongue, the soul no longer speaks. If you put a gag in his mouth, and tie it with a handkerchief, so that he can not get it out, his soul ceases to speak. The immaterial soul is conquered by a gag, it can not utter itself, the gag is in the way. The orthodox say that the soul is made by God; and what do you know about God? Why just as much as we know about the soul. And what do you know about the soul? Nothing whatever. How is it that if the soul is immaterial, having nothing in common with matter, that it is only manifest by material means? and how is it that it is incased and inclosed in my material frame? They affirm that my soul is a spirit—that I receive the same spirit from God. How is it that my spirit is now by myself, and by my mortal body, denying its own existence? Is my mortal soul acting the hypocrite, or is it ignorant of its own existence, and can not help itself to better knowledge? And if it can not help itself, why not, if it is superior to the body? and if you think it a hypocrite, tell me why.

What is meant by the declaration that man is a compound of matter and spirit?—things which the orthodox assert have nothing in common with one another. Of the existence of what you call matter you are certain, because you and I, material beings, are here. Are you equally certain of the existence of mind, as an existence independent and separate from matter? and if you are, tell me why. Have you ever found it apart from matter? If so, when and where? Have you found that the mind has a separate and distinct existence? if so, under what circumstances? and tell me—you who define matter as unintelligent, passive, inert, and motionless—who talk of the *vis inertiae* of matter—tell me what you mean when you give these definitions to it? You find the universe, and this small portion of it on which we are, ceaselessly active. Why do you call it passive, except it be that you want courage to search for true knowledge as to the vast capabilities of existence, and, therefore, invent such names as God and Soul to account for all difficulties, and to hide your ignorance? What do you mean by passive and inert matter? You tell me of this world—part of a system—that system part of another—that of another—and point out to me the innumerable planets, the countless millions of worlds, in the universe. You, who tell me of the vast forces of the universe, what do you mean by telling me that that is motionless? What do you mean by yet pointing to the immeasurable universe and its incalculably mighty forces and affirming that they are incapable of every perceptible effect? You, without one fact on which to base your theory, strive to call into existence another existence which must be more vast, and which you allege produces this existence and gives its powers to it. Sir Isaac Newton says: "We are to admit no more causes of things than are sufficient to explain appearances." What effect is there which the forces of existence are incapable of producing?

Why do you come to the conclusion that the forces of the universe are incapable of producing every effect of which I take cognizance? Why do you come to the conclusion that intelligence is not an attribute—why? What is there which enables you to convert it into a separate and distinct existence? Is there anything? Is it spirit? What is spirit? That of which the mortal man can know nothing, you tell me—that it is nothing which his senses can grasp—that is, no man, but one who disregards his senses, can believe in it, and that it is that which no man's senses can take cognizance of. If a man who uses his senses can never by their aid take cognizance of spirit, then as it is through the senses alone man knows that which is around him, you can know nothing about spirit until you go out of your senses. When I speak of the senses, I do not limit myself to what are ordinarily termed man's five senses—I include all man's sensitive faculties, and admit that I do not know the extent of, and am not prepared to set a limit to, the sensitive capabilities of man. I have had personal experience in connection with psycho-magnetic phenomena of faculties in man and woman not ordinarily recognized, and am inclined to the opinion that many men have been made converts to the theories of spiritualism because their previous education had induced them to set certain arbitrary limits to the domains of the natural. When they have been startled by phenomena outside these conventional limitations they at once ascribed them to supernatural influences rather than reverse their previous rules of thinking.

Some urge that the soul is life. What is life? Is it not the word by which we express the aggregate normal functional activity of vegetable and animal organisms necessarily differing in degree, if not in kind, with each different organization? To talk of immortal life and yet to admit the decay and destruction of the organization, is much the same as to talk of a square circle. You link together two words which contradict each other. The solution of the soul problem is not so difficult as many imagine. The greatest difficulty is, that we have been trained to use certain words as "God," "matter," "mind," "spirit," "soul," "intelligence," and we have been further trained to take these words as representatives of realities, which, in fact, they do not represent. We have to unlearn much of our school lore. We have specially to carefully examine the meaning of each word we use. The question, lies in a small compass. Is there one existence or more? Of one existence I am conscious, because I am a mode of it. I know of no other existence. I know of no existence but that existence of which I am a mode. I hold it to be capable of producing every effect. It is for the man who alleges that there is another, to prove it. I know of one existence. I do not endeavor to demonstrate to you my existence, it needs no demonstration—I am My existence is undeniable. I am speaking to you You are conscious of my existence. You and I are not separate entities, but modes of the same existence. We take cognizance of the existence which is around us and in us, and which is the existence of which we are modes. Of the one existence we are certain. It is for those who affirm that the universe is "matter," and who affirm that there also exists "spirit," to remember that they admit the one existence I seek to prove, and that the onus lies on them to demonstrate a second existence—in fact, to prove there is the other existence which they term spiritual. There can not exist two different substances or existences having the same attributes, or qualities. There can not be two existences of the same essence, having different attributes, because it is by the attributes alone that we can distinguish the existences. We can only judge of the substance by its modes. We may find a variety of modes of the same substance, and we shall find points of union which help to identify them, the one with the other—the link which connects them with the great whole. We can only judge of the existence of which we are a part (in consequence of our peculiar organization) under the form of a continuous chain of causes and effects—each effect a cause to the effect it precedes, each cause an effect of the causative influence which heralded its advent. The remote links of that line are concealed by the darkness of the far off past. Nay, more than this, the mightiest effort of mind can never say, *This is the first cause*. Weakness and ignorance have said it—but why? To cloak their weakness, to hide their ignorance. Knaves have said it—but why? To give scope to their cunning, and to enable them to say to the credulous, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." The termination is in the as yet unknowable future; and I ask you, presumptuous men, who dare to tell me of God and soul, of matter and creation—when possessed you the power to sunder links of that great chain and write, "In the beginning?" I deny that by the mightiest effort of the strongest intellect man can ever say of any period, at this point substance began to be—before this existence was not.

Has man a soul? You who tell me he has a soul, a soul independent of material conditions, I ask you how it is that these immortal souls strive with one another to get mortal benefits? Has man a soul? If man's soul is not subject to material conditions, why do I find knavish souls?—Why slavish souls?—tyrannous souls? Your doctrine that man has a soul prevents him from rising. When you tell him that his soul is not improvable by material conditions, you prevent him from making himself better than he is. Man's intelligence is a consequence of his organization. Organization is improvable, the intelligence becomes more powerful as the organization is fully developed, and the conditions which surround man are made more pure. And the man will become higher, truer, and better when he knows that his intelligence is an attribute, like other attributes, capable of development, susceptible of deterioration, he will strive to effect the first and to guard against the latter.

Look at the number of people putting power into the hands of one man, because he is a lord—surely they have no souls. See the mass cringing to a wretched idol—surely these have no souls. See men

forming a pyramid of which the base is a crushed and worn-out people, and the apex a church, a throne, a priest, a king, and the frippery of a creed—have those men souls? Society should not be such a pyramid, it should be one brotherly circle, in which men should be linked together by a consciousness that they are only happy so linked, conscious that when the chain is broken, then the society and her peace is destroyed. What we teach is not that man has a soul apart and independent of the body, but that he has an ability, an intelligence, an attribute of his body, capable of development, improvable, more useful, according as he elevates himself and his fellows. Give up blind adhesion to creeds and priests, strive to think and follow out in action the result of your thoughts. Each mental struggle is an enlargement of your mind, an addition to your brain power, an increase of your soul—the only soul you have.



## LABOR'S PRAYER.

"Give us this day our daily bread" is the entreaty addressed by the tiller of the soil to the "Our Father," who has promised to answer prayer. And what answer cometh from heaven to this the bread winner's petition? Walk among the cotton workers of Lancashire, the cloth-weavers of Yorkshire, the Durham pitmen, the Staffordshire puddlers, the Cornish miners, the London dock laborers, go anywhere where hands are roughened with toil, where foreheads are bedewed with sweat of work, and see the Lord's response to the prayer, the father's answer to his children! The only bread they get is the bread they take; in their hard struggle for life-sustenance the loaves come but slowly, and heaven adds not a crust, even though the worker be hungry, when he rises from his toil-won meal. Not even the sight of pale-faced wife, and thin forms of half-starved infants can move to generosity the Ruler of the world. The laborer may pray, but, if work be scant and wages low, he pines to death while praying. His prayer gives no relief, and misery's answer is the mocking echo to his demand.

It is said by many a pious tongue that God helps the poor; the wretchedness of some of their hovel houses, found alas! too often, in the suburbs of our wealthiest cities, grimy black, squalid, and miserable; the threadbare raggedness of their garments; the unwholesomeness of the food they eat; the poisoned air they breathe in their narrow wynds and filthy alleys; all these tell how much God helps the poor. Do you want to see how God helps the poor? go into any police court when some little child-thief is brought up for hearing; see him shoeless, with ragged trousers, threadbare, grimy, vest hardly hanging to his poor body, shirt that seems as though it never could have been white, skin dull brown with dirt, hair innocent of comb or brush, eye ignorantly, sullenly-defiant, yet downcast; born poor, born wretched, born in ignorance, educated among criminals, crime the atmosphere in which he moved; and society his nurse and creator, is now virtuously aghast at the depravity of this its own neglected nursling, and a poor creature whom God alone hath helped. Go where the weakly wife in a narrow room huddles herself and little children day after day; and where the husband crowds in to lie down at night; they are poor and honest, but their honesty bars not the approach of disease, fever, sorrow, death—God helps not the line of health to their poor wan cheeks. Go to the county workhouse in which is temporarily housed the wornout farm laborer, who, while, strength enough remained, starved through weary years with wife and several children on eight shillings per week—it is thus God helps the poor. And the poor are taught to pray for a continuance of this help, and to be thankful and content to pray that to-morrow may be like to-day, thankful that yesterday was no worse than it was, and content that to-day is as good as it is. Are there many repining at their miseries, the preacher, with gracious intonation, answers rebukingly that God, in his wisdom, has sent these troubles upon them as chastisement for their sins. So, says the church, all are sinners, rich its well as poor; but rich sinners feel that the chastising rod is laid more lightly on their backs than it is upon those of their meaner brethren. Weekday and Sunday it is the same contrast; one wears fustian, the other broadcloth; one prepares for heaven in the velvet cushioned pew, the other on the wooden benches of the free seats. In heaven it will be different—all there above are to wear crowns of gold and fine linen, and, therefore, here below the poor man is to be satisfied with the state of life into which it has pleased God to call him. The pastor, who tells him this, looks upon the laborer as an inferior animal, and the laborer by force of habit regards the landowner and peer, who patronizes his endeavors, as a being of a superior order. Is there no new form of prayer that labor might be taught to utter, no other power to which his petition might be addressed? Prayer to the unknown for aid gives no strength to the prayer. In each beseeching he loses dignity and self-reliance, he trusts to he knows not what, for an answer which cometh he knows not when, and mayhap may never come at all. Let labor pray in the future

in another fashion and at another altar. Let laborer pray to laborer that each may know labor's rights, and be able to fulfill labor's duties. The size of the loaf of daily bread must depend on the amount of the daily wages, and the laborer must pray for better wages. But his prayer must take the form of earnest, educated endeavor to obtain the result desired. Let workmen, instead of praying to God in their distress, ask one another why are wages low? how can wages be raised? can we raise our own wages? having raised them, can we keep them fixed at the sum desired? What causes produce a rise and fall in wages? are high wages beneficial to the laborer? These are questions the pulpit has no concern with. The reverend pastor will tell you that the "wages of sin is death," and will rail against "filthy lucre;" but he has no inclination for answering the queries here propounded. Why are wages low? Wages are low because the wage-winners crowd too closely. Wages are low because too many seek to share one fund. Wages are lower still because the laborer fights against unfair odds; the laws of the country, overriding the laws of humanity, have been enacted without the laborer's consent, although his obedience to them is enforced. The fund is unfairly distributed as well as too widely divided. Statutes are gradually being modified, and the working man may hope for ampler justice from the employer in the immediate future than was possible in the past, but high and healthy wages depend on the working man himself. Wages can be raised by the work-ing classes exercising a moderate degree of caution in increasing their numbers. Wages must increase when capital increases more rapidly than population, and it is the duty of the working man, therefore, to take every reasonable precaution to check the increase of population and to accelerate the augmentation of capital.

Can working-men, by combination, permanently raise the rate of wages? One gentleman presiding at a meeting of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science for the discussion of the labor question, very fairly said, "It is not in the power of the men alone, or of the masters alone, or of both combined, to say what shall be the amount of wages at any particular time in any trade or country. The men and the masters are, at most, competitors for the division, at a certain rate, of a certain fund, provided by [themselves and] others—that is, by the consumers. If that fund is small, no device can make the rate of profit or rate of wages higher." This is in theory quite correct, if it means that no device can make the total divisible greater than it is, but not if it refers to the increase of profit or wages by partial distribution. In practice, although it is true that if the fund be small and the seekers to share it be many, the quotient to each must be necessarily very small, yet it is also true that a few of the competitors—*i.e.* the capitalists, may and do absorb for their portions of profits an improper and unfairly large amount, thus still further reducing the wretchedly small pittance in any case receivable by the mass of laborers. It is warmly contended that the capitalist and laborer contend for division of the fund appropriable in fair and open field; that the capitalist has his money to employ, the man his labor to sell; that if workmen are in excess of the capitalist's requirements, so that the laborer has to supplicate for employment, wages can not rise, and will probably fall; but that if, on the contrary, capital has need to invite additional laborers, then wages must rise. That is the law of supply and demand brought prominently forward. In great part this is true, but it is not true that capital and labor compete in fair and open field, any more than it is true that an iron-clad war vessel, with heavy ordnance, would compete in fair field with a wooden frigate, equipped with the material in use thirty years ago. Capital is gold-plated, and carries too many guns for unprotected labor.

The intelligent capitalist makes the laws affecting master and servant, which the uneducated laborer must obey, but has no effective voice to alter. The capitalist forms the government of the country, which in turn protects capital against labor; this government the laborer must sustain, and dares not modify. The capitalist does combine, and has combined, and the result of this combination has been an unfair appropriation of the divisible fund. Why should not the laborer combine also? The answer is truly that no combination of workmen can increase the rate of wages, if at the same time the number of laborers

increases more rapidly than the capital out of which their wages must be paid. But the men may combine to instruct one another in the laws of political economy; they may combine to apply their knowledge of those laws to the contracts between employer and employed. They may combine to compel the repeal of unjust enactments under which an unfair distribution of the labor fund is not only possible but certain. Organizations of laborers are, therefore, wise and necessary; the object of such organizations should be the permanent elevation and enfranchisement of the members. No combination of workmen, which merely dictates a temporary cessation from labor, can ultimately and permanently benefit the laborer; while it certainly immediately injures him and deteriorates his condition, making his home wretched, his family paupers. Nor can even co-operative combination, praiseworthy as it certainly is, to procure for the laborer a larger share of the profits of his labor permanently benefit him, except in so far that temporarily alleviating his condition, and giving him leisure for study, it enables him to educate himself; unless, at the same time, the co-operator is conscious that the increase or reduction in the amount of wages depends entirely on the ratio of relation preserved between population and its means of subsistence, the former always having a tendency to increase more rapidly than the latter. It is with the problem of too many mouths for too little bread that the laborer has really to deal: if he must pray, it should be for more bread and for fewer mouths. The answer often given by the workman himself to the advocate of Malthusian views is, that the world is wide enough for all, that there are fields yet unplowed broad enough to bear more corn than man at present could eat, and that there is neither too little food nor are there too many mouths; that there is, in fact, none of that over-population with which it is sought to affright the working man. Over-population in the sense that the whole world is too full to contain its habitants, or that it will ever become too full to contain them, is certainly a fallacy, but overpopulation is a lamentable truth in its relative sense. We find evidences of over-population in every old country of the world. The pest of over-population is the existence of poverty, squalor, wretchedness, disease, ignorance, misery, and crime. Low rate of wages, and food dear, here you have two certain indices of relative over-population. Wages depending on the demand for and supply of laborers, wherever wages are low it is a certain sign that there are too many candidates for employment in that phase of the labor market. The increased cost of production of food, and its consequent higher price, also mark that the cultivation has been forced, by the numbers of the people to descend to less productive soils. Poverty is the test and result of over-population.

It is not against some possible increase of their numbers, which may produce possibly greater affliction, that the working men are entreated to agitate. It is against the existing evils which afflict their ranks, evils alleged by sound students of political economy to have already resulted from inattention to the population question, that the energies of the people are sought to be directed. The operation of the law of population has been for centuries entirely ignored by those who have felt its adverse influence most severely. It is only during the last thirty years that any of the working classes have turned their attention to the question; and only during the last few years that it has to any extent been discussed among them. Yet all the prayers that labor ever uttered since the first breath of human life, have not availed so much for human happiness as will the earnest examination by one generation of this, the greatest of all social questions, the root of all political problems, the foundation of all civil progress. Poor, man must be wretched. Poor, he must be ignorant. Poor, he must be criminal; and poor he must be till the cause of poverty has been ascertained by the poor man himself and its cure planned by the poor man's brain, and effected by the poor man's hand.

Outside his own rank none can save the poor. Others may show him the abyss, but he must avoid its dangerous brink himself. Others may point out to him the chasm, but he must build his own bridge over. Labor's prayer must be to labor's head for help from labor's hand to strike the blow that severs labor's chain, and terminates the too long era of labor's suffering.

During the last few years our daily papers, and various periodicals, magazines, and reviews have been more frequently, and much less partially, devoted than of old to the discussion of questions relating to the laborer's condition, and the means of ameliorating it. In the Legislative Assembly debates have taken place which would have been impossible fifty years since. Works on political economy are now more easily within the reach of the working man than they were some years ago. People's editions are now published of treatises on political economy which half a century back the people were unable to read. It is now possible for the laborer, and it is the laborer's duty, to make himself master of the laws which govern the production and distribution of wealth. Undoubtedly there is much grievous wrong in the mode of distribution of wealth, by which the evils that afflict the poorest stragglers are often specially and tenfold aggravated. The monopoly of land, the serf state of the laborer, are points requiring energetic agitation. The grave and real question is, however, that which lies at the root of all, the increase of wealth as against the increase of those whom it subsists. The leaders of the great trades unions of the country, if they really desire to permanently increase the happiness of the classes among whom they exercise influence, can speedily promote this object by encouraging their members to discuss freely the relations of labor to capital; not moving in one groove, as if labor and capital were necessarily antagonistic, and that therefore labor must always have rough-armed hand to protect itself from the attacks of capital; but, taking new ground, to inquire if labor and capital are bound to each other by any and what ties, ascertaining if the share of the laborer in the capital fund depends, except so far as affected by inequality in distribution, on the proportion between the number of laborers and the amount of the fund. The discussing, examining, and dealing generally with these topics, would necessarily compel the working man to a more correct appreciation of his position.

Any such doctrine as that "the poor shall never cease out of the land;" or that we are to be content with the station in life into which it has pleased God to call us; or that we are to ask and we shall receive, must no longer avail. Schiller most effectively answers the advocates of prayer:

"Help, Lord, help!  
Look with pity down!  
A paternoster pray;  
What God does, that is justly done,  
His grace endures for aye."

"Oh, mother! empty mockery,  
God hath not justly dealt by me:  
Have I not begged and prayed in vain;  
What boots it now to pray again?"

Labor's only and effective prayer must be in life action for its own redemption; action founded on thought, crude thought, and sometimes erring at first, but ultimately developed into useful thinking, by much patient experimenting for the right and true.

# POVERTY: ITS EFFECTS ON THE POLITICAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

"Political Economy does not itself instruct how to make a nation rich, but whoever would be qualified to judge of the means of making a nation rich must first be a political economist."—John Stuart Mill.

"The object of political economy is to secure the means of subsistence of all the inhabitants, to obviate every circumstance which might render this precarious, to provide everything necessary for supplying the wants of society, and to employ the inhabitants so as to make the interests accord with their supplying each other's wants."—Sir James Stewart.

On one occasion in the world's history, a people rose searching for upright life, who had previously, for several generations, depressed by poverty and its attendant hand-maidens of misery, prowled hunger-stricken and disconsolate, stooping and stumbling through the byways of existence. A mighty revolution resulted in much rough justice and some brutal vengeance, much rude right, and some terrific wrong. Among the writers who have since narrated the history of this people's struggle, some penmen have been assiduous and hasty to search for, and chronicle the errors, and have even not hesitated to magnify the crimes of the rebels; while they have been slow to recognize the previous demoralizing tendency of the system rebelled against. In this pamphlet it is proposed to very briefly deal with the state of the people in France immediately prior to the grand convulsion which destroyed the Bastile Monarchy, and set a glorious example of the vindication of the rights of man against opposition the most formidable that can be conceived; believing that even in this slight illustration of the condition of the masses in France who sought to erect on the ruins of arbitrary power the glorious edifice of civil and religious liberty, an answer may be found to the question: "What is the effect of poverty on the political condition of the people."

In taking the instance of France, it is not that the writer for one moment imagines that poverty is a word without meaning in our own lands. The clamming factory hands in the Lancashire valleys, the distressed ribbon weavers of Coventry, and the impoverished laborers in various parts of Ireland and Scotland would be able to give us a definition of the word fearful in its distinctness. But in England poverty is happily partial, while in France in the eighteenth century poverty was universal outside the palaces of the nobles and the mansions of the church, where luxury, voluptuousness, and effeminacy were regnant. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries travelers in France could learn from "the sadness, the solitude, the miserable poverty, the dismal nakedness of the empty cottages, and the starving, ragged population, how much men could endure without dying." On the one side a discontented, wretched, hungry mass of tax-providing slaves, and on the other a rapacious, pampered, licentious, spendthrift monarchy. This culminated in the refusal of the laborers to cultivate the fertile soil because, the tax-gatherer's rapacity left an insufficient remnant to provide the cultivator with the merest necessities of life. Then followed "uncultivated fields, unpeopled villages, and houses dropping to decay;" the great cities—as Paris, Lyons, and Bordeaux—crowded with begging skeletons, frightful in their squalid disease and loathsome aspect.

Even after the National Assembly had passed some measures of temporary alleviation, the distress in Paris itself was so great that at the gratuitous distributions of bread "old people have been seen to expire with their hand stretched out to receive the loaf, and women waiting in their turn in front of the baker's shop were prematurely delivered of dead children in the open streets." The great mass of the people were as ignorant as they were poor; were ignorant indeed because they were poor. Ignorance is the pauper's inalienable heritage. When the struggle is for the means of subsistence, and these are only partially obtained, there is little hope for the luxury of a leisure hour in which other emotions can be cultivated than

those of the mere desires for food and rest—sole results of the laborious monotonousness of machine work; a round of toil and sleep closing in death—the only certain refuge for the worn out laborer. Without the opportunity afforded by the possession of more than will satisfy the immediate wants, there can be little or no culture of the mental faculties. The toiler badly paid and ill-fed, is separated from the thinker. Nobly-gifted, highly-cultured though the poet may be, his poesy has no charms for the father to whom one hour's leisure means short food for his hungry children clamoring for bread. The picture gallery, replete with the finest works of our greatest masters, is forbidden ground to the pitman, the plowman, the poor pariahs to whom the conceptions of the highest art-treasures are impossible. The beauties of nature are almost equally inaccessible to the dwellers in the narrow lanes of great cities. Out of your narrow wynds in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and on to the moor and mountain-side, ye poor, and breathe the pure life-renewing breezes. Not so; the moors are for the sportsmen and peers, not peasants; and a Scotch Duke—emblem of the worst vices of a corrupt and selfish, but fast-decaying House of Lords—closes miles of heather against the pedestrian's foot. But even this paltry oppression is unneeded. Duke Despicable is in unholy alliance with King Poverty, who mocks at the poor mother and her wretched, ragged family, when from the garret or cellar in a great Babylon wilderness they set out to find green fields and new life. Work days are sacred to bread, and clothes, and rent; hunger, inclement weather, and pressing landlord forbid the study of nature 'twixt Monday morn and Saturday night, and on Sunday God's ministers require to teach a weary people how to die, as if the lesson were not unceasingly inculcated in their incessant toil. Oh! horrid mockery; men need teaching how to live. According to religionists, this world's bitter misery is a dark and certain preface, "just published," to a volume of eternal happiness, which for 2,000 years has been advertised as in the press and ready for publication, but which after all may never appear. And notwithstanding that every-day misery is so very potent, mankind seem to heed it but very little. The second edition of a paper containing the account of a battle in which some 5,000 were killed and 10,000 wounded, is eagerly perused, but the battle in which poverty kills and maims hundreds of thousands, is allowed to rage without the uplifting of a weapon against the common enemy.

The poor in France were awakened by Rousseau's startling declaration that property was spoliation, they knew they had been spoiled, the logic of the stomach was conclusive, empty bellies and aching brains were the predecessors of a revolution which sought vengeance when justice was denied, but which full-stomached and empty-headed Tories of later days have calumniated and denounced.

Warned by the past, ought we not to-day to give battle to that curse of all old countries—poverty? The fearful miseries of the want of food and leisure which the poor have to endure are such as to seriously hinder their political enfranchisement. Those who desire that men and women shall have their rights of citizens, should be conscious how low the poor are trampled down, and how incapable poverty renders them for the performance of the duties of citizenship. So that the question of political freedom is really determined by the wealth or poverty of the masses; to this extent, at any rate, that a poverty-stricken people must necessarily, after that state of pauperism has existed for several generations, be an ignorant and enslaved people.

The problem is, how to remove poverty, as it is only by the removal of poverty that the political emancipation of the nation can be rendered possible. It has been ascertained that the average food of the agricultural laborer in England is about half that allotted by the jail dietary to sustain criminal life. So that the peasant who builds and guards his master's haystack gets worse fed and worse lodged than the incendiary convicted for burning it down.

How can this poverty be removed and prevented?

I quote the reply from one who has written most elaborately in elucidation of the views of Malthus and Mill: "There is but one possible mode of preventing any evil—namely, to seek for and remove its cause. The cause of low wages, or in other words of Poverty, is overpopulation; that is, the existence of too

many people in proportion to the food, of too many laborers in proportion to the capital. It is of the very first importance that the attention of all who seek to remove poverty should never be diverted from this great truth. The disproportion between the numbers and the food is the *only real cause* of social poverty. Individual cases of poverty may be produced by individual misconduct, such as drunkenness, ignorance, laziness, or disease; but these and all other accidental influences must be wholly thrown out of the question in considering the permanent cause, and aiming at the prevention of poverty. Drunkenness and ignorance, moreover, are far more frequently the *effect* than the cause of poverty. Population and food, like two runners of unequal swiftness chained together, advance side by side; but the ratio of increase of the former is so immensely superior to that of the latter, that it is necessarily greatly *checked*; and the checks are of course either more deaths or fewer births—that is, either positive or preventive."

Unless the *necessity* of the preventive or positive checks to population be perceived; unless it be clearly seen, that they must operate in one form, if not in another; and that *though individuals may escape them, the race can not*; human society is a hopeless and insoluble riddle.

Quoting John Stuart Mill, the writer from whom the foregoing extracts have been made, proceeds:

"The great object of statesmanship should be to raise the habitual standard of comfort among the working classes, and to bring them into such a position as shows them most clearly that their welfare depends upon themselves. For this purpose he advises that there should be, first, an extended scheme of national emigration, so as to produce a striking and sudden improvement in the condition of the laborers left at home, and raise their standard of comfort; also that the population truths should be disseminated as widely as possible, so that a powerful public feeling should be awakened among the working classes against undue procreation on the part of any individual among them—a feeling which could not fail greatly to influence individual conduct; and also that we should use every endeavor to get rid of the present system of labor—namely, that of employers, and employed, and adopt to a great extent that of independent or associated industry. His reason for this is, that a hired laborer, who has no personal interest in the work he is engaged in, is generally reckless and without foresight, living from hand to mouth, and exerting little control over his powers of procreation; whereas the laborer who has a personal stake in his work, and the feeling of independence and self-reliance which the possession of property gives, as, for instance, the peasant proprietor, or member of a copartnership, has far stronger motives for self-restraint, and can see much more clearly the evil effects of having a large family."

The end in view in all this is the attainment of a greater amount of happiness for humankind. The rendering life more worth the living, by distributing more equally than at present its love, its beauties, and its charms. In one of his most recent publications, Mr. John Stuart Mill observes:

"In a world in which there is so much to interest, so much to enjoy, and so much also to correct and improve, every one who has a moderate amount of moral and intellectual requisites is capable of an existence which may be called enviable; and unless such a person, through bad laws, or subjection to the will of others, is denied the liberty to use the sources of happiness within his reach, he will not fail to find this enviable existence, if he escape the positive evils of life, the great sources of physical and mental suffering, such as indigence, disease, and the unkindness, worthlessness, or premature loss of objects of affection. Yet no one whose opinion deserves a moment's consideration, can doubt that most of the great positive evils of the world are in themselves removable, and will, if human affairs continue to improve, be in the end reduced within narrow limits. Poverty, in any sense implying suffering, may be completely extinguished by the wisdom of society, combined with the good sense and providence of individuals. Even that most intractable of enemies, disease, may be indefinitely reduced in dimensions by good physical and moral education and proper control of noxious influences, while the progress of science holds out a promise for the future of still more direct conquests over this detestable foe."

In a former pamphlet, "Jesus, Shelly, and Malthus," the reader's attention was entreated to this grave

question. In a few pages it is impossible to do more than erect a fingerpost to point out a possible road to a given end. To attempt in a narrow compass to give complete details, would be as unwise as it would be unavailing. My desire is rather to provoke discussion among the masses than to obtain willing auditors among the few, and I affirm it, therefore, as a proposition which I am prepared to support, "That the political conditions of the people can never be permanently reformed until the cause of poverty has been discovered and the evil itself prevented and removed."



# WHY DO MEN STARVE?

Why is it that human beings are starved to death, in a wealthy country like England, with its palaces, its cathedrals, and its abbeys; with its grand mansions, and luxurious dwellings, with its fine inclosed parks, and strictly guarded preserves; with its mills, mines, and factories; with its enormous profits to the capitalist; and with its broad acres and great rent rolls to the landholder? The fact that men, old, young, and in the prime of life; that women, and that children, do so die, is indisputable. The paragraph in the daily journals, headed "Death from Starvation," or "Another Death from Destitution," is no uncommon one to the eyes of the careful reader.

In a newspaper of one day, December 24, 1864, may be read the verdict of a London jury that "the deceased, Robert Bloom, died from the mortal effects of effusion on the brain and disease of the lungs, arising from natural causes, but the said death was accelerated by destitution, and by living in an ill-ventilated room, and in a court wanting in sanitary requirements;" and the verdict of another jury, presided over by the very Coroner who sat on the last case, "that the deceased, Mary Hale, was found dead in a certain room from the mortal effects of cold and starvation;" as also the history of a poor wanderer from the Glasgow City Poor House found dead in the snow.

In London, the hive of the world, with its merchant millionaires, even under the shadow of the wealth pile, starvation is as busy as if in the most wretched and impoverished village; busy, indeed, not always striking the victim so obtrusively that the coroner's inquest shall preserve a record of the fact, but more often busy quietly, in the wretched court and narrow lane, up in the garret, and down in the cellar, stealing by slow degrees the life of the poor.

Why does it happen that Christian London, with its magnificent houses for God, has so many squalid holes for the poor? Christianity from its thousand pulpits teaches, "Ask and it shall be given to you," "who if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?" yet with much prayer the bread is too frequently not enough, and it is, alas! not seldom that the prayer for bread gets the answer in the stone of the paved street, where he lays him down to die. The prayer of the poor outcast is answered by hunger, misery, disease, crime and death, and yet the Bible says, "Blessed be ye poor." Ask the orthodox clergyman why men starve, why men are poor and miserable; he will tell you that it is God's will; that it is a punishment for man's sins. And so long as men are content to believe that it is God's will that the majority of humankind should have too little happiness, so long will it be impossible effectually to get them to listen to the answer to this great question.

Men starve because the great bulk of them are ignorant of the great law of population, the operation of which controls their existence and determines its happiness or misery. They starve because pulpit teachers have taught them for centuries to be content with the state of life in which it has pleased God to call them, instead of teaching them how to extricate themselves from the misery, degradation, and ignorance which a continuance of poverty entails.

Men starve because the teachers have taught heaven instead of earth, the next world instead of this. It is now generally admitted by those who have investigated the subject that there is a tendency in all animated life to increase beyond the nourishment nature produces. In the human race, there is a constant endeavor on the part of its members to increase beyond the means of subsistence within their reach. The want of food to support this increase operates, in the end, as a positive obstacle to the further spread of population, and men are starved because the great mass of them have neglected to listen to one of nature's clearest teachings. The unchecked increase of population is in a geometrical ratio, the increase of food for

their subsistence is in an arithmetical ratio. That is, while humankind would increase in proportion as 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, 256, food would only increase as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. The more the mouths the less the proportion of food. While the restraint to an increase of population is thus a want of food, and starvation is the successful antagonist of struggling human life, it is seldom that this obstacle operates immediately—its dealing is more often indirectly against its victims. Those who die of actual famine are few indeed compared with those who die from various forms of disease, induced by scarcity of the means of subsistence. If any of my readers doubt this, their doubts may be removed by a very short series of visits to the wretched homes of the paupers of our great cities. Suicide is the refuge mainly of those who are worn out in a bitter, and, to them, a hopeless struggle against accumulated ills. Disease, suffering, and misery are the chief causes of the prevalence of suicide in our country, and suicide is therefore one form, although comparatively minute, in which the operation of the law of population may be traced.

From dread of the pangs of poverty, men, women, and children are driven to unwholesome occupations, which destroy not only the health of the man and woman actually employed, but implant the germs of physical disease in their offspring. A starving woman seeking food mixes white lead with oil and turpentine for a paltry pittance, which provides bare existence for her and those who share it; in a few weeks, she is so diseased she can work no longer, and the hospital and grave in turn receive her. Men and women are driven to procure bread by work in lead mines; they rapidly dig their own graves, and not alone themselves, but their wretched offspring, are death-stricken as the penalty; the lead poisons the blood of parent and child alike. Young women and children work at artificial flower-making, and soon their occupation teaches that Scheele's and Schweinfurth green, bright and pleasing colors to the eye, are death's darts too often fatally aimed.

The occupation may be objected to as unhealthy; but the need for food is great, and the woman's or child's wages, wretchedly little though they are, yet help to fill the mouths at home: so the wage is taken till the worker dies. Here, again, the checks to an increase of population all stop short of starvation—the victims are poisoned instead of starved. So where some forty or fifty young girls are crowded into a badly ventilated work-room, not large enough for half the number, from early in the morning till even near midnight, when orders press; or in some work-room where slop clothes are made, and twenty-five tailors are huddled together in a little parlor scarce wide enough for three—they work to live, and die slowly while they work. They are not starved, but is this sort of asphyxiation much better? The poor, are not only driven to unhealthy, but also to noisome, dwellings. There are in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, and other large cities, fearful alleys, with wretched houses, and small ill-ventilated rooms, each room containing a family, the individuals of which are crowded together under conditions so wretched that disease, and often speedy death, is the only possible result. In the East of London, ten, eleven, and, in some cases, fourteen persons have been found sleeping in one wretched little room. Is it wonderful that some of these misery-stricken ones die before they have time to starve? From poverty the mother, obliged to constantly work that the miserable pittance she gets may yield enough to sustain bare life, is unable properly to nurse and care for baby-child, and often quick death, or slow but certain disease, ending ultimately in the grave, is the result.

The poor live by wages. Wages popularly signify the amount of money earned by the laborer in a given time; but the real value of the money-wages is the amount in quantity and quality of the means of subsistence which the laborer can purchase with that money. Wages may be nominally high, but really low, if the food and commodities to be purchased are, at the same time, dear in price. An undue increase of population reduces wages in more than one way; it reduces them in effect, if not in nominal amount, by increasing the price of the food to be purchased; and it also reduces the nominal amount, because the nominal amount depends on the amount of capital at disposal for employ, and the number of laborers seeking employment. No remedies for low wages, no scheme for the prevention and removal of poverty,

can ever be efficacious until they operate on and through the minds and habits of the masses.

It is not from rich men that the poor must hope for deliverance from starvation. It is not to charitable associations the wretched must appeal. Temporary alleviation of the permanent evil is the best that can be hoped for from such aids. It is by the people that the people must be saved. Measures which increase the dependence of the poor on charitable aid can only temporarily benefit one portion of the laboring class while injuring another in the same proportion; and charity, if carried far, must inevitably involve the recipients in ultimate ruin and degradation by destroying their mutual self-reliance. The true way to improve the worker, in all cases short of actual want of the necessities of life, is to throw him entirely on his own resources, but at the same time to teach him how he may augment those resources to the utmost. It is only by educating the ignorant poor to a consciousness of the happiness possible to them, as a result of their own exertions, that you can induce them effectually to strive for it. But, alas! as Mr. Mill justly observes, "Education is not compatible with extreme poverty. It is impossible effectually to teach an indigent population." The time occupied in the bare struggle to exist leaves but few moments and fewer opportunities for mental cultivation to the very poor.

The question of wages and their relation to capital and population, a question which interests a poor man so much, is one on which he formerly hardly ever thought at all, and on which even now he thinks much too seldom. It is necessary to impress on the laborer that the rate of wages depends on the proportion between population and capital. If population increases without an increase of capital, wages fall; the number or competitors in the labor market being greater, and the fund to provide for them not having increased proportionately, and, if capital increases without an increase of population, wages rise. Many efforts have been made to increase wages, but none of them can be permanently successful which do not include some plan for preventing a too rapid increase of laborers. Population has a tendency to increase, and has increased faster than capital; this is evidenced by the poor and miserable condition of the great body of the people in most of the old countries of the world, a condition which can only be accounted for upon one of two suppositions, either that there is a natural tendency in population to increase faster than capital, or that capital has, by some means, been prevented from increasing as rapidly as it might have done. That population has such a tendency to increase that, unchecked, it would double itself in a small number of years—say twenty-five—is a proposition which most writers of any merit concur in, and which may be easily proven. In some instances, the increase has been even still more rapid. That capital has not increased sufficiently is evident from the existing state of society. But that it could increase under any circumstances with the same rapidity as is possible to population is denied. The increase of capital is retarded by an obstacle which does not exist in the case of population. The augmentation of capital is painful. It can only be effected by abstaining from immediate enjoyment. In the case of augmentation of population precisely the reverse obtains. There the temporary and immediate pleasure is succeeded by the permanent pain. The only possible mode of raising wages permanently, and effectually benefiting the poor, is by so educating them that they shall be conscious that their welfare depends upon the exercise of a greater control over their passions.

In penning this brief paper, my desire has been to provoke among the working classes a discussion and careful examination of the teachings of political economy, as propounded by Mr. J. S. Mill and those other able men who, of late, have devoted themselves to elaborating and popularizing the doctrines enunciated by Malthus. While I am glad to find that there are some among the masses who are inclined to preach and put in practice the teachings of the Malthusian School of political economists, I know that they are yet few in comparison with the great body of the working classes who have been taught to look upon the political economist as the poor man's foe. It is nevertheless among the working men alone, and, in the very ranks of the starvers, that the effort must be made to check starvation. The question is again before us: How are men to be prevented from starving? Not by strikes, during the continuance of which food is scarcer than

before. No combinations of workmen can obtain high wages if the number of workers is too great. It is not by a mere struggle of class against class that the poor man's ills can be cured. The working classes can alleviate their own sufferings. They can, by co-operative schemes, which have the advantage of being educational in their operation, temporarily and partially remedy some of the evils, if not by increasing the means of subsistence, at any rate by securing a larger portion of the result of labor to the proper sustenance of the laborer. Systems of associated industry are of immense benefit to the working classes, not alone or so much from the pecuniary improvement they result in, but because they develop in each individual a sense of dignity and independence which he lacks as a mere hired laborer. They can permanently improve their condition by taking such steps as shall prevent too rapid an increase of their numbers, and, by thus checking the supply of laborers, they will, as capital augments, increase the rate of wages paid to the laborer. The steady object of each working man should be to impress on his fellow-worker the importance of this subject. Let each point out to his neighbor not only the frightful struggle in which a poor man must engage who brings up a large family, but also that the result is to place in the labor market more claimants for a share of the fund which has hitherto been found insufficient to keep the working classes from death by starvation.

The object of this pamphlet will be amply attained if it serve as the means of inducing some of the working classes to examine for themselves the teachings of Political Economy. All that is at present needed is that laboring men and women should be accustomed, both publicly and at home, to the consideration and discussion of the views and principles first openly propounded by Mr. Malthus, and since elaborated by Mr. Mill and other writers. The mere investigation of the subject will of itself serve to bring to the notice of the masses many facts hitherto entirely ignored by them. All must acknowledge the terrible ills resulting from poverty, and all therefore are bound to use their faculties to discover if possible its cause and cure. It is more than folly for the working man to permit himself to be turned away from the subject by the cry that the Political Economists have no sympathy with the poor. If the allegation were true, which it is not, it would only afford an additional reason why this important science should find students among those who most need aid from its teachings.

# THE LAND QUESTION.

## LARGE ESTATES INIMICAL TO THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE

Property in land differs from ordinary property. Wealth, which is the accumulated result of labor, is sometimes, but not often, accumulated in the hands of the laborer, and is more frequently accumulated in the hands of some person who has purchased the result of the laborers toil. Such personal wealth is capable of indefinite increase; and the exclusive right to its disposal is protected in the hands of its possessor, so long as he does not avail himself of this legal protection to use the wealth mischievously to his fellows. There would be no incentive in the laborer to economy, or to increased exertion, unless the State gave him reasonable protection in the enjoyment of his savings. Unfortunately, to obtain the protection of the authorities, he has in this country to give up an unreasonably large portion of his earnings to defray the cost of local and imperial Government. During the reign of her present Majesty, imperial taxation alone has increased from about £48,000,000 to £73,833,000. The State has no right to interfere with a man's daily disposition of his personal wealth, merely on the ground that he might have used it more advantageously for his fellows. With land it is quite different; it is limited in extent, and the portions of it capable of producing food with ease to the cultivator are still more limited. Every individual member of the commonwealth has an indefeasible interest in the totality of the land, and no man ought to assert an absolute freehold in land hostile to the interest of his fellow. The land is part of the general soil of the State, and should be held subject to the general welfare of the citizens. No man has a right so to hold land that his tenure is detrimental to the happiness of the dwellers upon it or around it. This principle is already recognized in much of our legislation. A man can not say to a railway company—which has obtained the usual compulsory powers of taking land—"You shall not cross my private estate;" the law would answer, if he did, by saying, "The railway is for the good of the State; you as an individual must give way to the general good, and must lose your land, receiving a fair and reasonable money value for it." This principle should be applied more widely: and if it be for the good of the commonwealth that some of the enormous land monopolies of this country should be broken up, no statesman ought to be deterred by the mere dread of interfering with the so-called rights of private property.

Mr. Mill says: "When the 'sacredness of property' is talked of, it should always be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property. No man made the land. It is the original inheritance of the whole species. Its appropriation is wholly a question of general expediency. When private property in land is not expedient it is unjust." The possession of land involves and carries with it the duty of cultivating that land, and, in fact, individual proprietorship of soil is only defensible so long as the possessor can show improvement and cultivation of the land he holds. To quote again from Mr. John Stuart Mill: "The essential principle of property being to assure to all persons what they have produced by their labor, and accumulated by their abstinence, this principle can not apply to that which is not the produce of labor, the raw material of the earth." Mr. Mill urges that property in land "is only valid in so far as the proprietor of the land is its improver." "In no sound theory of private property was it ever contemplated that the proprietor of land should be merely a sinecurist quartered upon it." Yet, in England and Wales alone, the landlords who received for rent, in the year 1800, £22,500,000, now receive about £67,000,000, and for this have no obligation on them to cultivate. The holding cultivable land in an uncultivated condition in this overcrowded country ought to be made a statutory misdemeanor, the penalty for which should be the forfeiture to the State of the land so left uncultivated, at, say, a twenty years' purchase of its annual return in the neglected or misapplied state in which it was found at the time of

conviction. The true theory of landholding should be that the State should be the only freeholder, all other tenures being limited in character; and cultivation ought to be a special condition of tenancy.... The holder of land should either cultivate it with his own hands, or, as would be most frequently the case, by the hands of others; but in the latter case, the landed proprietor is bound to allow the agricultural laborer to live by his labor. By living I mean that the laborer should have healthy food, shelter, and clothing, and sufficient leisure in which to educate himself and his family, besides the necessary leisure for rest from his labors. At present agricultural laborers do not live; they only drag wearily through a career but little higher in any respect than—and often not half so comfortable as—that of many of the other animals on the estate....

Little boys and girls, in the Midland, Eastern, Southern, and Southwestern counties of England, go into the fields to work, in some instances, soon after six years of age; in very many cases before they are seven years old, and in nearly all cases before they have attained eight. It is true, that the work at first may be the comparatively idle work of scaring birds or tending sheep, but it involves exposure of the child's yet delicate frame in the cold and damp of spring, and then to the heat of the summer sun, from day-dawn to evening. This too often results in the stunted growth and diseased frame found so frequently among the English poor. I say nothing of the demoralization of children consequent on their employment, without regard to sex, in the field gangs. I pass by the fact that work at this early age utterly incapacitates them, as a body, for mental effort. It is enough to declare that no child ought to have to work on the land until he is ten years of age, and if I am told that the fathers—only earning, in the majority of instances, from nine to thirteen shillings per week—need the additional petty wage these wretched babes may bring home, then again I answer, that it is to the landholder's enormous income that the State ought to look for the means of educating the too often worse than savages who are reared on his estate, and who by their labors swell his rent-roll.

That a few landed proprietors should have gigantic incomes, while the mass of the people are so poor—that in Gloucester, the Rev. Mr. Frazer describes "type after type of social life almost degraded to the level of barbarism"—that near Lavenham, "the cottages are unfit for human habitation"—that in Norfolk the Parliamentary returns speak of their dwellings in one as "miserable," in a second as "deplorable," in a third as "detestable," in a fourth as "a disgrace to a Christian community;" while near Docket, we are told, in consequence of the overcrowding of the wretched poor, "the whole atmosphere is sensual, and human nature is degraded into something below the level of the swine." This is a state of things that if the landholders will not redress willingly they must be made to remedy before it is too late.

A few men have vast estates and excessive incomes; the millions have seldom an inch of land until they inherit the grave, and have a starvation wage out of which a proportion is taken back for rent. Take the vast property of the Marquis of Westminster, whose income is credibly stated at something near a million a year; or that of the Duke of Devonshire, amounting to 96,000 acres in the county of Derby alone, without regarding his Irish or other estates; or that of the Duke of Norfolk, whose Sussex estate is fifteen miles in circuit; or that of the Duke of Sutherland, which stretches across and contains the whole of Sutherlandshire from sea to sea; or that of the Marquis of Bute, on which £2,000,000 sterling were spent by his trustees during his minority; or that of the Marquis of Breadalbane, who is said to be able to ride from his own door one hundred miles straight to the sea on his own freehold land; or those of the Duke of Richmond and Lord Leconfield, who between them own nearly the whole of the eastern portion of the county of Sussex, containing nearly 800 square miles. And such estates have a tendency to increase rather than to diminish. In Northumberland, the Ducal proprietor, whose titular rank is derived from the county, is a constant purchaser of any lands put up for sale. Mr. Bright, in 1864, spoke of one nobleman who devoted £80,000 a year of his income to the purchase of additional land.

These large properties must all be broken up; they paralyze the people, and they corrupt their

possessors. We prefer that the breaking up shall be voluntary and gradual, but it must begin at once, for hungry bellies are multiplying daily.

The State ought to put the peasantry in possession of the land, and this might be done in several ways at the same time.

1. There is the Prussian Land System, a modification of which might be made to work well here, and which since 1850 has enabled the smallest occupiers of peasants' land to acquire the proprietorship at twenty years' purchase; the amount of which is paid to the landlord, not in money, but in rent debentures issued by authority of the State, and bearing four per cent, interest, and gradually redeemable by means of the one per cent, difference, which at compound interest extinguishes the principal in a little over forty-one years. The Prussian peasant has, however, two other options: he may pay less by one-tenth to the State bank than the rent he formerly paid to his landlord, in which case the purchase debentures take fifty-six years to redeem; or he may, if he can raise the cash, compel his landlord to accept eighteen years' purchase money of the annual rent. By this means nearly 100,000 peasant proprietors have been created in Prussia. Kent debentures to the extent of many millions have been issued to the landholders, and in less than nineteen years more than one-eighth of the debentures issued have been entirely redeemed and extinguished.

2. The Legislature should declare that leaving cultivable land uncultivated gave the Government the right to take possession of such land, assessing it by its actual return for the last live years, and not by its real value, and handing to the proprietor the amount of, say, twenty years' purchase in Consolidated Stock, redeemable in a limited term of years. The land so taken should not be sold at all, but should be let out to persons willing to become cultivators, on sufficiently long terms of tenancy to fairly recoup his labor and capital to the cultivator, who should yearly pay into the National Treasury, in lieu of all other imperial taxes, a certain proportion of the value of the annual produce.

3. The game laws should be abolished. Game preserving in England is not only injurious, in that it diverts land capable of corn-bearing from the purpose it should fulfill, of growing corn to feed the starving, but it is injurious in that it prevents proper cultivation of surrounding farms, and demoralizes and makes criminals of the neighboring agricultural laborers, creating for them a kind and degree of crime which would be otherwise unknown. Poaching, which is so severely punished, is actually fostered and encouraged by the very landholders who punish it. Pheasants and partridges' eggs are bought to stock preserves; the gamekeepers who buy these eggs shut their eyes to the mode in which they have been procured. The lad who was encouraged to procure the eggs finds himself in jail when he learns that shooting or trapping pheasants gains a higher pecuniary reward than leading the plow horse, or trimming the hedge, or grubbing the plantation. Poaching is the natural consequence of rearing a large number of rabbits, hares, partridges, and pheasants, in the midst of an underpaid, underfed, badly-housed, and deplorably ignorant body of people. The brutal outrages of gamekeepers of which we read so much are the regrettable but easily-traceable measure of retaliation for a system which takes a baby child to work in the fields soon after six years of age, which trains all his worst propensities and deadens and degrades his better faculties, which keeps him in constant wretchedness, and tantalizes him with the sight of hundreds of acres on which game runs and flies well-fed, under his very nose, while he limps ill-fed along the muddy lane which skirts the preserve—game, which is at liberty to come out of its covert and eat and destroy the farmer's crop, but which is even then made sacred by the law, and fenced round by covenants, as in a Leitrim lease. The game laws must go; they starve our population by using land which might be golden to the autumn sun with the waving crop of wheat, barley, and rye; they feed our prisons, and rear a criminal class in our midst, who have to be prosecuted and guarded at great cost, and all because hares and pheasants are higher in the landowners' eyes than human beings.

5. Any person holding more than, say, 5,000 acres of land, should be taxed at a far heavier rate than

those having smaller holdings. That is, presuming, in order to take a figure as basis, the land-tax on 5,000 acres to be at the rate of 1s. per acre, then on every acre above that quantity it should be 2s. per acre up to 10,000 acres, and from thence 5s. per acre up to 15,000 acres, and from thence 10s. per acre up to 20,000 acres, so as to discourage all extravagantly large holdings.

6. The law of primogeniture should be repealed; the settlement of property, except for a widow and her children, be entirely prohibited and some limitation should be put on the power of devise, so as to prevent, say, the Marquis of Westminster from leaving the bulk of his property to his eldest son, while the younger ones are left as noble paupers, to be provided with places and pensions by the nation. Land should be made as easily and as cheaply transferable as any personal chattel.

The present land monopoly must be broken by legislation, or it will be destroyed by revolution.



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